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Singapore's Earliest Philanthropists 1819-1867

Philanthropy in Asia: Working Paper No. 8

Yu-lin Ooi

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Yu-lin Ooi is Senior Researcher with the Asia Centre for Social Entrepreneurship and Philanthropy (ACSEP), documenting the journey of philanthropy in Singapore's social history.

In this paper she chronicles for the first time the work of Singapore's earliest philanthropists, from its founding by Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles in 1819 until its transfer to the Colonial Office in 1867 as a Crown Colony with the Straits Settlements.

Yu-lin has a multi-disciplinary background, and works with written, visual, verbal and spatial data. Past work includes documentaries, exhibitions, and publications. She studied History at the National University of Singapore, Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, and Media at Boston and Stanford Universities.

Yu-lin has a particular interest in rediscovering the forgotten worlds of women in Singapore's past, in particular the lives of Peranakan women. With ACSEP she has published "The Emergence of Chinese Women Philanthropists in Singapore, 1900-1945: The Sisterhoods of the *Sor Hei,"* and "Philanthropy in Transition: An Exploratory Study of Asian Women and Philanthropy in Singapore , 1900-1945." Her most recent paper "Grassroots Giving, Identity, and Philanthropy, Singapore 1919-1959) includes the contributions of women to the rebuilding of Singapore.

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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 over the past two centuries starting with 1819.

This particular paper presents a record and examination of the contributions of Singapore's earliest philanthropists from Singapore's founding in 1819 until it became a Crown Colony in 1867.

Research Aims

There are two aims to this study.

- The first is to present a chronological account of these works in order of each person's date of arrival in the new settlement and covering people of all races. This gives us an overview of philanthropy and the actions of early settlers as a cohort.

- The second is to discuss how philanthropy emerged in the new colony through an examination of what needs were most common in Singapore in its first days and what kind of philanthropic response these drew out of new settlers. By examining these responses, we then consider what part these early contributions played in the story of giving and philanthropy in Singapore over the past 200 years.

Chapter Breakdown

Chapter 1 introduces the paper and its aims.

In Chapter 2, we examine the founding of Singapore from the perspective of the roles that Raffles, Farquhar, and Crawfurd played in introducing philanthropy to Singapore, and in shaping the character of Singapore's new population, attracting a group of migrants of unusual wealth and ambition for a frontier town.

Chapter 3 explores how and why the local population of new migrants stepped into the role of philanthropists. We trace how Singapore grew into a port city with its innately multi-racial character; how colonial policy was deficient in the oversight of society; and how some philanthropists took the initiative to care for their communities and became de facto leaders in these emerging ethnic enclaves.

Chapter 4 presents readers with a first record of the work of 28 philanthropists found to have contributed to Singapore from 1819 to 1867. This data was culled from extant secondary sources. It provides an overview of giving and the nature of early needs as Singapore developed. It also reveals that various ethnic groups had common concerns, and that primary needs were met first.

The last chapter looks at key findings.

Key Findings

1. **Philanthropy was part of Singapore's landscape from its earliest days as a British colony.**
   Philanthropic contributions are recorded as early as 1820, just one year after its founding. This is because Singapore did not start off poor, as the pioneer town was helped by an influx of migrants coming from close by at the behest of Raffles and Farquhar, quite a few of whom were already established merchants and traders.

   First contributions went to the building of temples and a mosque, with Raffles himself giving generously to start a "Singapore Institute" towards general education.

2. **Early philanthropic contributions focused on meeting primary needs.**
   Here we suggest that matters of life and death were the most important needs for early travellers, which became the focus of early philanthropy. The most important need for first settlers in Singapore was to have places of worship. This was common across the different ethnic enclaves. The next key need was the

buying of burial grounds followed by that of medical facilities.

3. **Colonial Singapore created new opportunities for migrants to be philanthropists.**
   The new colony of Singapore opened avenues for people to be philanthropists when they might otherwise not have had the chance to so contribute in their original homelands.

   In Singapore, any person of wealth, *despite* his background, was a welcome contributor if he wanted to give to better the community, and in fact was often elevated to leadership status precisely due to personal wealth, and because of initiative, ability and a good record as a canny entrepreneur.

   Contributions were varied and took various forms. We see individual donations and the funding of key structures as the most obvious forms of giving, yet there are frequent mentions of collective giving. There was inter-racial community developing as well, and collective drives also went towards the renovation of the Tan Tock Seng Pauper Hospital. Land grants emerge as another form of help, and bequests and endowments for the future community became more common.

4. **Community creation and the ethos of a multi-racial society were contingent consequences of early philanthropy.**
   In providing places of worship, philanthropists grounded the various emerging ethnic enclaves in the new settlement, and created the foundations of community.

   A place of worship not only fulfilled the needs for key rites of passage in life and in death in a strange land, but also established a physical convergence point where incoming migrants of the same languages and beliefs could naturally gather. Community functions and systems developed collaterally, gradually creating a sense of belonging and society. Informal organisations and the first social constructs in Singapore followed.

Thus, we see the start of various groupings as people aligned themselves by language, place of birth, trade, caste, religion, name, and so forth. These eventually became important pillars of society. We thus suggest it was from these places that Singapore society would grow.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we propose that Singapore's earliest philanthropists were instrumental in the creation of community in Singapore's pioneering days through their contributions to meet society's immediate needs.

Their initiatives would provide the basis for security for like others in an alien land, with subsequent contributions providing the growing population of Singapore with a foundation of safety, society, and social infrastructure upon which the next generations would later build.

We further suggest that through the character of the population of Singapore, many were now encouraged to become philanthropists, gaining recognition in a society where wealth and ability were valued above tradition.

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1. Background

ACSEP Working Papers on Philanthropy in Singapore over 200 years

This study is a part of the series of ACSEP working papers aimed at chronicling, for the first time, key aspects in the journey of giving and philanthropy in Singapore. Given Singapore's history as a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural nation with a British colonial past, it is not surprising that this narrative is a complex story with many facets. As Singapore commemorates 200 years since it was founded as a British colony, it is appropriate that we look back to the very start of philanthropy in the settlement.

Research Aims

This study has two main aims:

1. To make an initial record of Singapore's earliest philanthropists in its first five decades under the British. The need for this is simple – there are currently no coherent accounts about giving at all during this period, and there is a general impression that there was in fact very little philanthropy in Singapore during its infancy.

   Current historical accounts remember the work of Singapore's first hospital founder -Tan Tock Seng- and Naraina Pillai, the builder of Singapore's first Hindu temple. But apart from these few names, little else is known about Singapore's first charitable people. We therefore aim to discover who Singapore's other first philanthropists were, and what needs their money was spent on. (**Note:** the paper will present the work of contributors during this period as a cohort.)

2. From these findings we expect to discover how philanthropy was introduced to Singapore, what forms it took, and why people gave. We will thus gain vital information about how the journey of giving in Singapore started.

Scope of Research

The study will cover three areas:

1. Firstly, we examine the influence of Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, Major-General William Farquhar, and Dr John Crawfurd of the East India Company from the perspective of how they influenced the character of Singapore's early population, and their own roles in philanthropy from the earliest days of Singapore's founding as a colony.

2. Secondly we research the philanthropic scene over the next fifty years until Singapore became a Crown Colony in 1867. We will document who the first philanthropists were, what we can find of their backgrounds, and the nature of their contributions.

3. Thirdly, using this data, we will aggregate our findings to present readers with a table of philanthropists and their contributions. This is to present an overview of their work as a cohort, and to see how philanthropy may have developed over the years.

Period of Study - 1819-1867

Our period of study is the forty years when Singapore was governed by the East India Company - from 1819 to 1858, and the following decade, when it was then under the India Office, until it became a Crown Colony in 1867 along with Malacca and Penang.

The Contexts Framing Research

Three key contexts form the framework for this research:

1. The Historical Context

Singapore was founded as a chess piece in an on-going and bitter colonial war for trade with

China and Southeast Asia. Its importance to the British Empire was purely commercial, and its purpose to out-manoeuvre the Dutch.

Due to the almost entirely economic focus of colonialism, policies for the governance of colonies tended to be strictly non-interventionist which, in turn, led to unregulated migration and poor administration. While Singapore the port flourished, Singapore (the settlement) suffered. As a consequence, the colonial powers overtly encouraged local leaders to step up. Local residents did so in many ways, one of which was through becoming benefactors. This was convenient to the British as philanthropy became a way that leaders could be identified within the new community.

At the time of Singapore's founding, all other ports imposed onerous duties upon shipping. The Free Port concept that Raffles based on Enlightenment ideals was to prove the magnet that brought traders to the island. Within months Singapore had outstripped all nearby ports in popularity because of this policy.

2. The Geographical & Strategic Contexts

Firstly, while the strategic value of the port that Singapore offers is well known now, before Raffles' identification of it, the island had fallen into disuse. Raffles' understanding of its key location - within the major sea lanes and at a turning point of the winds - should be noted as being visionary. Sailing ships were the major form of transport then, and a favourable position with regard to the winds was crucial to bringing ships to port.

Secondly, Singapore was also located within ancient trade routes from China to Africa which brought the much prized spice trade right to the British. Thus identifying and laying claim to Singapore's port must be recognised as a coup by Raffles, a fact that has been forgotten today simply because Singapore's ideal location seems so obvious a fact in hindsight.

3. The Social Context

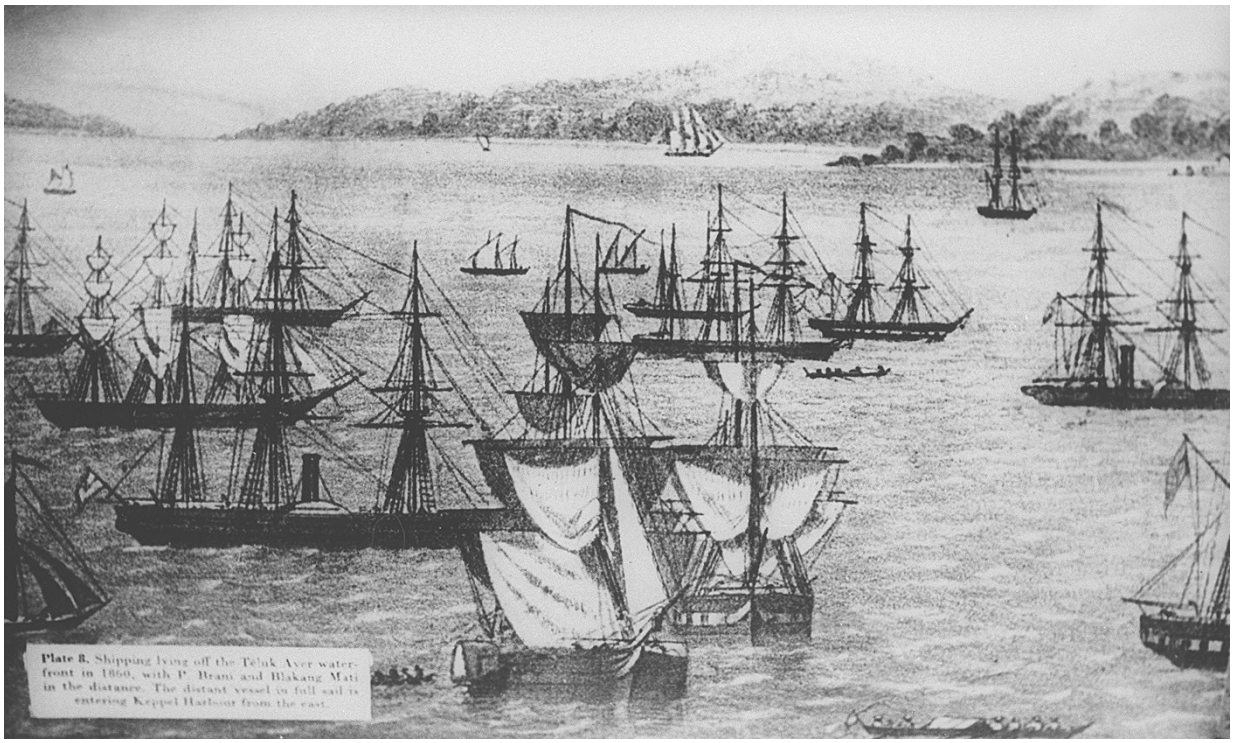
While Singapore was to the British a forgotten island, it was actually located well within a thriving community of traders and merchants and warring kingdoms that had long ago created around it networks for the spice trade, exploration, pilgrimages and political intrigue. Thus while Singapore started as a pioneer town, it was immediately peopled by those who were in established networks of community very close by.

These ancient social systems in which Singapore was embedded must not be forgotten, as it is to its members that Singapore owes both its success and philanthropy. Also of note is that while many migrants who came to Singapore were established and might have had wealth already, they were also informed by world views that are less well remembered today but the values of which directed where money would be spent by Singapore's earliest philanthropists.

Methodology

Historical method has been used as the primary research tool in this paper, with data coming from secondary sources as there are few primary sources available concerning matters of giving in this period of time.

2. Stamford Raffles, William Farquhar and John Crawfurd and their Influence on Philanthropy in Singapore



Singapore Harbour, c.1860
Courtesy of the National Archives of Singapore

In this section, we summarise the founding of Singapore, and examine how Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, first Resident Major-General William Farquhar, and second Resident Dr John Crawfurd not only shaped the *character* of the Singapore-the settlement - but were also, in some instances, directly responsible for introducing the first philanthropists to Singapore themselves.

2.1 A Summary of the Founding of Singapore: 1819-1826

Singapore, the island colony as we know it, was created in a series of steps that were based on sheer nerve with significant risk to all parties concerned.

The first step was taken on 29 January 1819, when Sir Stamford Raffles of the East India Company (EIC) signed a preliminary treaty to set up a trading post. This was agreed with the island's de facto ruler the Temenggong of Johore, one Abd'ur Rahman.

The next step was what is commemorated today as the actual founding of Singapore. On 6 February 1819, Raffles signed a formal treaty with the brand-new ruler de jure, 'His Highness Sultan Hussein Mohamed Shah Sultan of Johor' who represented the Johore-Riau-Lingga Empire and was had been made Sultan by the British for precisely this purpose. This ceremony was accompanied by speeches, gifts, the hoisting of the Union flag, and even gun salutes.[1] Raffles was accompanied by then Major

[1] There are many accounts of the signing of the treaty, one eye-witness account being that of Wa Hakim whose descriptions of "Tuan Raffles" and "Tuan Farquhar" can be found in Frost and Balasingamchow 2009, p 42.

William Farquhar, late of Malacca, who the very next day was left as first Resident to administer the new settlement, as Raffles sailed grandly off to take up his new post in Bencoolen, Sumatra.

Land on Singapore was ceded in stages to the British. In June 1819, a boundary agreement gave up the land between the two rivers Tanjong Mallang and Tanjong Katong, just one cannon-shot deep from the beach. In 1823, an additional treaty ceded the rest of Singapore and its adjacent islands to the East India Company.

Finally, in 1824, a Treaty of Friendship and Alliance and the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of the same year saw the Dutch relinquish both Singapore and Malacca to the British, ending the territorial dispute over whether Singapore was legally British at all. This last treaty was overseen by Singapore's second Resident, Dr John Crawfurd.

2.2 The Legacies of Raffles, Farquhar, and Crawfurd

2.2.1 Raffles - Vision, Energy and Effrontery[2]

> "The infant settlement's survival was little short of a miracle, the result of courage and grit on the spot, the slowness of communications, and a large measure of luck.[3]"

On the face of it, the gradual acquisition of Singapore looks smoothly orchestrated, but hindsight has revealed that, while things were indeed orchestrated, they were not done so by parties in authority.

All signatories on 6 February 1819 were taking a brazen walk backed by no jurisdiction, but by, instead, "courage and grit on the spot.[4]" It was a risk that (very fortunately) paid off for all concerned.

The political context was that Britain and Holland were in a fierce feud for trade with China and the Dutch were edging the British out. In 1817, Raffles had pleaded with the EIC for a rival station in the south of the Malacca Straits, but this fell on deaf ears. Raffles was, however, allowed to survey Aceh instead and sailed out of Penang apparently to do just that in the fateful year of 1819.

In reality, Raffles and William Farquhar were on their way to Singapore, having plotted together for a year to find a port to quash Dutch monopoly. They had no authority to sign any treaties, much less found a station. Meanwhile, the representatives from Johore were handing over an island technically under the jurisdiction of the Dutch, who were hand-in-glove with the de facto ruler of the Johore-Riau-Lingga Empire, the brother of Sultan Hussein.

To our signatories however, these were mere trifles in the obvious face of good sense, strategy and providence, and all went ahead with the fateful signing. While the various complex motives for the parties involved are by now well documented, of relevance to this paper are those of Raffles.

Raffles is remembered as an enigma, an idealist and visionary, strategic yet occasionally very small minded and even venal. However, he is also recognized as

> "...a man of extraordinary vision but for whom Singapore would never have existed.[5]"

One must give Raffles full due for those visionary capabilities. Enamoured of the East, he had focused on the forgotten island of "ancient Singapura" as the best choice to control the China trade, parsing out its strategic value in terms of winds and passage from readings of the ancient civilisations of Southeast Asia.

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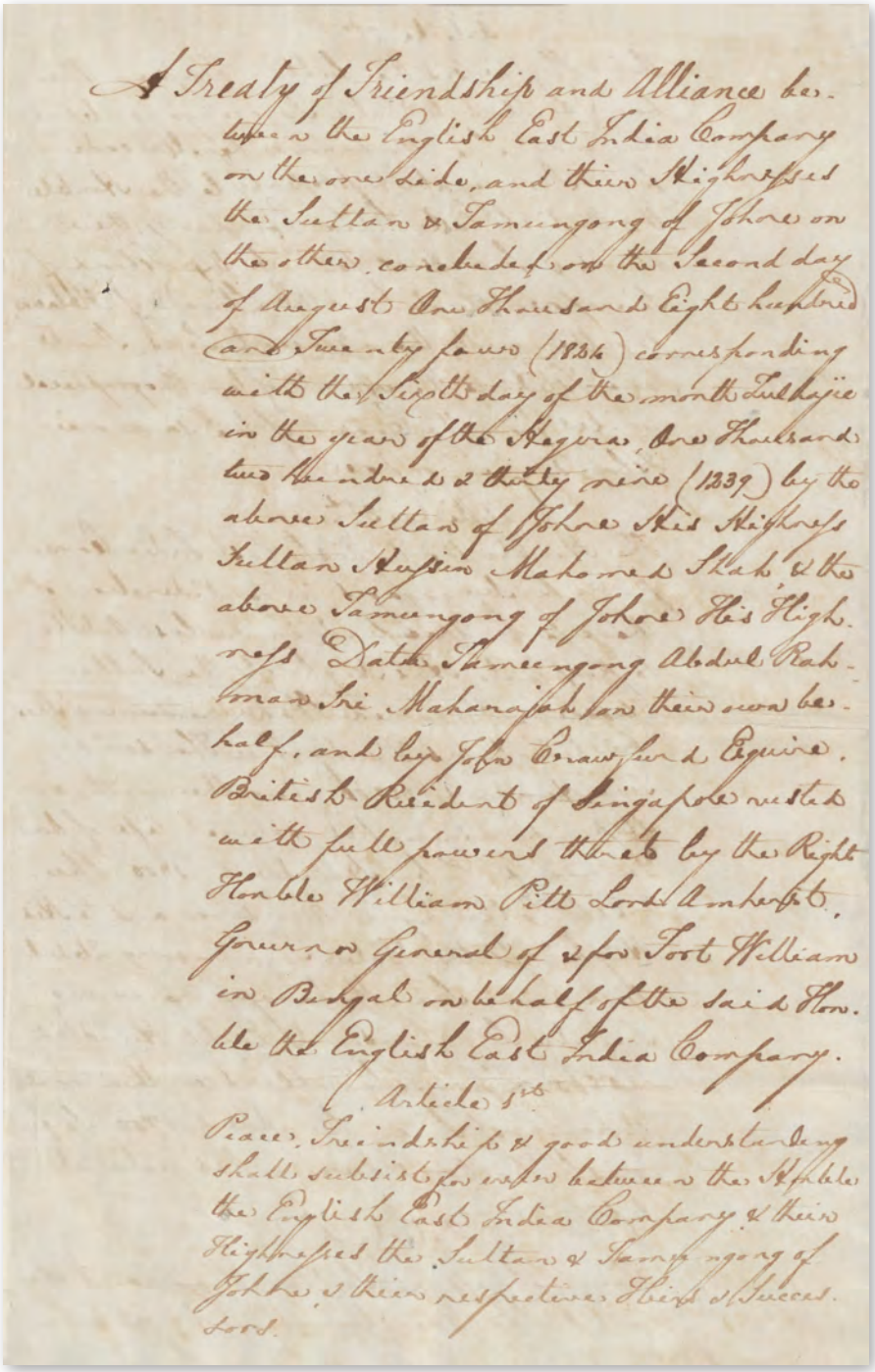
[2] Peh, 2009, quoting John Keay, who points out the "The vision, the energy, and the effrontery, which made Singapore the success that... Penang had never been, were all Raffles."

[3] Turnbull, 1977, p. 11.

[4] Turnbull, 1977, p. 11.

[5] For a thoughtful description of Raffles' life, see Turnbull, 1977, pp. 6-32.



A Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between the English East India Company on the one side, and their Highnesses the Sultan & Tamungong of Johore on the other, concluded on the Second day of August One Thousand Eight hundred and Twenty four (1824) corresponding with the Eighth day of the month Zulhujie in the years of the Hegyra, One Thousand two hundred & thirty nine (1239) by the above Sultan of Johore His Highness Sultan Hussein Mahomed Shah & the above Tamungong of Johore His Highness Datoh Tamungong Abdul Rahmon Sri Maharajah for their own behalf, and by John Crawfurd Esquire, British Resident of Singapore vested with full powers thereto by the Right Honble William Pitt Lord Amherst, Governor General of & for Fort William in Bengal on behalf of the said Honble the English East India Company.

Article 1st

Peace, Friendship & good understanding shall subsist for ever between the Honble the English East India Company & their Highnesses the Sultan & Tamungong of Johore & their respective Heirs & Successors.

Page 1 of 8 of the Record of the 1824 Treaty of Friendship and Alliance, signed on 2 August 1824 by the second British Resident Dr John Crawfurd, Sultan Hussein of Johor and the Temenggong Abdul Rahman ceding sovereignty of Singapore to the British East India Company.

This is a scan of the original scribal copy of the treaty made in 1841, preserved in the Straits Settlements Records collection of the National Archives of Singapore.

Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

In a letter dated 31 January 1819 to a friend called Marsden he told of what he foresaw in Singapore:

> "This place possesses an excellent harbour, and everything that can be desired for a British port ...We here command an intercourse with all the ships passing through the Straits of Singapore. We are within a week's sail to China, close of Siam, and in the very seat of the Malayan Empire...If I keep Singapore...in a few years our influence over the Archipelago, as far as concerns our commerce, will be

fully established... it gives us command of China and Japan, with Siam and Cambodia, Cochin China ... to say nothing of the Islands themselves.[6]"

The Legacies of Raffles

Leaving the growth of the settlement literally overnight to William Farquhar, Raffles would return only a few times to Singapore before his final departure in 1823. However his legacies to Singapore, and to the growth of philanthropy, are considerable.

Raffles was responsible for personally introducing two parties who would be amongst the first philanthropists in Singapore. In May of 1819, he brought supplies and manpower from Penang, among whom was Naraina Pillai, who started a brick kiln, and who then built Singapore's first Hindu temple - the Sri Mariamman temple - between 1820 and 1831.

Raffles also invited Arabs from Sumatra - the Aljunied family - who now added Singapore to their network of bases and built Singapore's first mosque also in 1820, the Masjid Omar in the newly sectioned Chinatown area. Singapore's earliest philanthropists were thus men who were from established settlements in the surrounding area.

But Raffles' other legacies to Singapore were much more far-reaching.

Arriving in 1821 to find the town squalid and unkempt (although prosperous) under Farquhar, the idealistic Raffles was deeply annoyed. He then left what is still considered a key legacy to Singapore – careful town planning. This created the attractive sea front that has characterized Singapore ever since, and would be the first impression that Singapore would create in many minds.[7]

The second, key component of Raffles' legacy relevant to Singapore's future society was the insistence that British law be imposed in Singapore, along with the creation of a constitution and a magistry

"...with due consideration to the usages and habits of the people.[8]"

Raffles banned gambling, slavery, and the sale of opium, all of which would be ignored before and after his presence on the island, but which spoke of his Enlightenment ideals and far-sighted hopes. He fell out badly with Farquhar over this, as money from vice was realistically the only practical way to fund the port.

Raffles' legacy of British law as the backbone of government, while fairly incoherent in its actual enforcement in the first century, would eventually allow the involvement of residents in the running of the settlement, and later birth advocacy, end slavery, encourage suffrage, and plant the ideas of a civil society and individual rights in the minds of Singapore's later inhabitants, just as Raffles had hoped. These would all influence philanthropy in later years, as British ideals began to take hold in society. But he would not live to see this.

Thirdly, Singapore owes Raffles a huge debt in that he insisted from the start that it be, on principle, a *free* port. This immediately brought droves of merchants to Singapore, and with them, money that would eventually aid society, and create the multi-racial mindset of the Port City.

"The port of Singapore is a free port and the trade thereof is open to all ships and vessels of every nation free of duty equally and alike to all.[9]"

Raffles ardently upheld that freedom would break monopoly, and this ideal would be fiercely held onto by local residents against all attempts by the

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[6] Boulger, 1973, p. 311.

[7] Raffles set out residential, government and trading areas around the Singapore River, creating enclaves for the many races that were now pouring into the island. He drained the main commercial area that is now Raffles Place, calling it Commercial Square, to allow for trading and government facilities to be built around it backing as it was on the heart of trade - the Singapore River. Raffles even determined the widths of the roads. Raffles- the civil servant also started up the Post Office, Land Registry, wrote up port regulations, and made plans for a botanical garden.

[8] Peh, 2009, p.35.

[9] Boulger,1973, p. 102.

East India Company to later impose duties of any kind. Raffles proved right, and the freedom to trade would be the magnet that, within weeks, began to draw all and sundry to Singapore.

A final legacy, and significant to this paper, is that Raffles was one of Singapore's first philanthropists himself. Before his departure, Raffles led the first recorded European philanthropic contributions towards building an enlightened society in Singapore. He donated $2,000 of his own money towards the building of "the Singapore Institution" - his dream for higher education which he believed would be "the means to civilizing and bettering the condition of millions.[10]"

In 1823, Raffles sailed from Singapore, never to see her again, dying in England just three years later in 1826.

2.2.2 Farquhar - The Raja Melaka

In the intervening years between her founding and 1822, Colonel William Farquhar's forgotten but not inconsiderable legacy is that he kept the little settlement alive.

Farquhar was, by all accounts, an easy-going, trustworthy man, resourceful and courageous, yet flexible and astute. He had married a local woman in Malacca, (and was spurned for it) and governed there for 23 years when it was a British possession.[11] Good with local politics, he was fondly referred to as "Raja Malacca." Being a practical man, and having been left to run the new free port with no resources, Farquhar set about doing so in the best manner he knew how.

The Legacies of Farquhar

Firstly, Farquhar prepared Singapore against a possible Dutch invasion and it was due to him, as was mentioned previously, that the settlement survived at all.

The Dutch were absolutely livid at the news of Singapore's founding and threatened death to all on the island. Farquhar, left behind with only a group of local fishermen, and "100 discontented Sepoys and one boat[12]" diverted 500 troops to the little settlement and signalled for help from the Company in India. The crisis eventually passed as Singapore's early success as a port quickly outweighed Dutch complaints in the eyes of British Foreign Secretary Castlereagh, who adroitly put said complaints at the end of a very long list of others going on to the Hague.

Farquhar's second contribution relates directly to our investigation into early philanthropy. With Raffles' orders ringing in his ears, Farquhar had to find a way to run a free port without imposing duties. There were already ships in the harbour within weeks of the news of Singapore being noised abroad but no infrastructure to run it, nor any money to pay for it. To solve this problem Farquhar wrote to Malacca announcing the opening of a new free port. Soon an exodus of some 5,000 people, mainly Indian and local-born Straits Chinese, stole out of Malacca, evaded Dutch blockades and made landfall in Singapore.

The flotilla of Malaccans included all kinds of adventurous men - traders, peddlers, carpenters, and miscellaneous others, all of whom were happy to try something new in the excitingly different free port, near home yet away from onerous Dutch duties. These men would now provide Singapore with an essential-inflow of casual labour and offer vital services with which to build the town.

The blank slate of the port allowed many with the opportunity to make a name for themselves. Among them was a young vegetable hawker named Tan Tock Seng, who started provisioning the island, branched out, and who would later succeed enough to fund the island's first hospital. Cash flow began, and services were started up for the port. Farquhar thus established port life with little more than ingenuity and connections, attracting a good

[10] Turnbull,1977, p. 26.

[11] In an extraordinary coincidence, one of Farquhar's descendants from this same marriage, Mr Justin Trudeau, at the time of writing Prime Minister of Canada, would make a visit to Singapore to celebrate his connection with the island.

[12] Turnbull, 1977, p. 10

selection of decent followers and acquaintances to populate the fledgling settlement.

Farquhar also set about the challenging business of creating income on a shoestring. Countering Raffles instructions, he legalized a tax farming system for opium, gambling, and spirits using the money to fund the first public works, police and anti-piracy forces. The former were to serve the inevitably bachelor community of sailors and traders, the latter to manhandle the same community on land and in the surrounding seas into some semblance of order.[13]

It was a fact that Singapore did soon descend into a squalid, lawless place, completely unregulated and bursting with testosterone. Raffles, as mentioned above, arriving for what would be his final visit in 1823 was again duly outraged. In a very shabby moment, he fired Farquhar his former ally, and installed second Resident Dr John Crawfurd in his place. It was, of course true that slaves were being sold within yards of the Resident's house, but Farquhar had done his best and Raffles himself had been blithely absent for years.

When Farquhar left (in high dudgeon), his ship was seen off with tears and a convoy of prahus and boats, while Raffles, departing before, was sent on his way with an address of thanks.

2.2.3 Crawfurd - The Pragmatist

As Raffles sailed away, John Crawfurd promptly "poured cold water on his ideals as "visionary, utopian, and *premature.*[14]"

The Legacies of Crawfurd

Crawfurd was a pragmatic Scotsman who would now set Singapore on course for commercial success. He governed only till 1826, but during that time, he oversaw commerce with a cool head, encouraged vigorous growth in trade and revenue, and guided Singapore's fledgling population along as best he could without either personnel or oversight.

Crawfurd promptly re-started the cash flow from legalized opium, gambling, vice, spirits, and added the sale of gunpowder and pawn-broking – all of which he considered necessary services for any port city in those times. He even allowed cockpits. He was also organized – he put in streetlights and street names. Under him goods of every manner surged into the deep harbour, to be bargained over on ships' decks and in a vast crowded bazaar on what is now Singapore's Padang.

Despite his pragmatism, Crawfurd held close Raffles' ideals of a free port and trade, and abolished anchorage fees. Also familiar with the region, he encouraged the settlement of Chinese, whom he foresaw as "key players" in regional networks.[15]"

Under Crawfurd, Singapore was finally ceded completely to the British in 1824 although the Dutch would continue to aggravate Singapore for decades. In 1826, when Malacca, Penang and Singapore were grouped in the new colonial structure called the Straits Settlements, Singapore surged past both other ports, and outstripped nearby Riau in popularity as well.

Table 1. Singapore's Trade Growth 1821-1856

YEAR	Total Trade in Millions (Spanish Dollars) (Exports and Imports)
1821	$8
1824	$11.9
1833	$16.7
1843	$24.6
1853	$28.9
1856	$55.5

Source: Wong Lin Ken in Andrew Peh (2009) p. 44

In summary, the combined work of Raffles, Farquhar and Crawfurd gave Singapore a flying start and an advantageous introduction to life in the sea lanes.

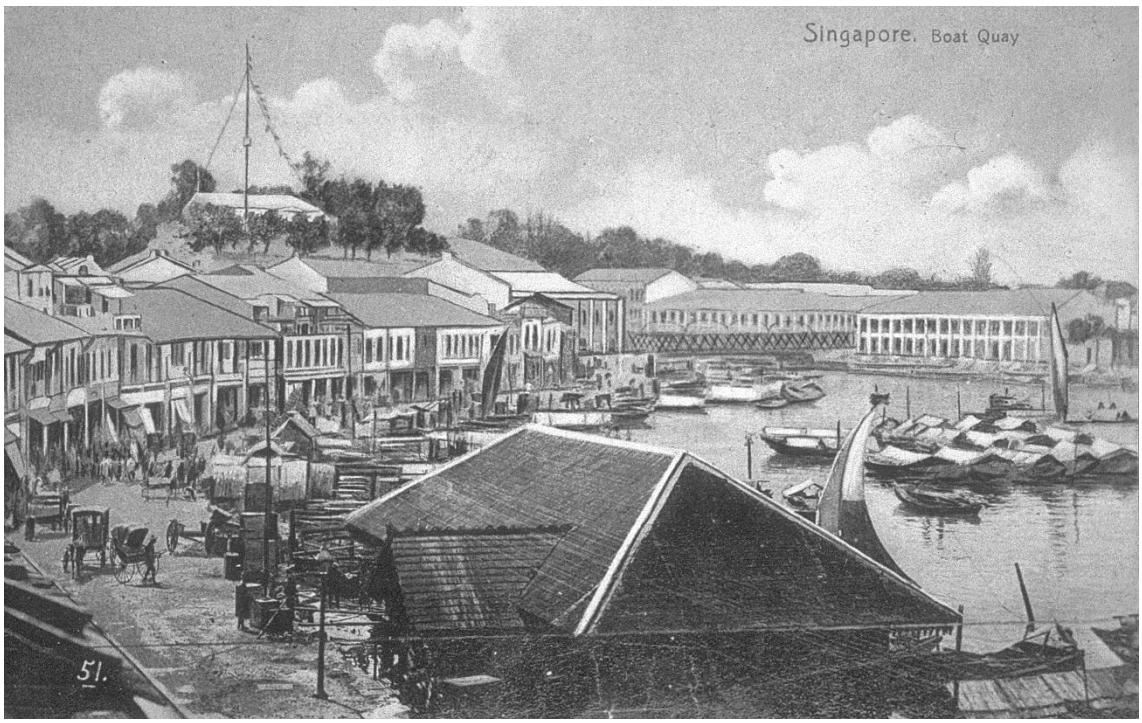
[13] Farquhar's temporary police force tells its own tale – he pressed his son-in-law into service as Superintendent, and eked out money for one constable, a jailer, a writer, and eight peons. Turnbull, 1977, pp. 17-18.

[14] Peh, 2009, p. 38.

[15] Frost & Balasingamchow, 2009, p. 73.

Raffles' vision, insistence on order and British law, and the vital enshrinement of free port principles meant Singapore could hold her own against every other port in the region, and steal trade from most. Farquhar and Crawfurd must be acknowledged as setting the tone for Singapore and its new population – commercial, monied, pragmatic, pioneering and versatile, with a flash of daring and a quickness to adapt and diversify in the new environs of a free port seething with multiple races and rich opportunities.

3. Colonial Policy and Singapore's Growth into a Port City



Boat Quay, Singapore c.1890
Courtesy of the National Archives of Singapore

Within six weeks of its founding, Singapore's harbour had hosted over 100 Indonesian craft, two European merchant ships and a Siamese junk.[16] These presaged the steady increase of every manner of sailing craft soon to jostle in her waters.

On 21 February 1821, the first junk from Amoy in China was recorded, heralding an ever-growing inflow of Chinese into the port who used it as a point of entry to the rich hinterland of adjacent Malaya and the archipelago. A coveted first European trade vessel going to China then docked in July 1821, capturing the much sought-over China-bound traffic.

Over the next two and a half years, the new port would host over 3,000 vessels; from prahus and junks to more and more sailing ships. Singapore seized Riau's rich trade from South Sumatra, took Penang's commerce, and became the favoured port for trade and goods from Siam, Cambodia, Cochin China (Indochina), and India.

Farquhar, then Resident, encouraged all-comers, and Singapore began to take on the nature of a port city, with its typical multi-racial, multi-lingual, multi-enclave profile, with every manner of language and dress seen and heard around the exchange of goods, creating collateral, necessary inter-racial interaction. The port at that time was the "central dynamic force and organizing principle" and the apex of all cities in the seafaring world,[17] and Singapore was fast finding a valued place in that world.

[16] Frost & Balasingamchow, 2009, p. 12.
[17] Reeves, Broeze and Macpherson, 1989, p. 39.

The emerging personality of the settlement also began to take on a tone similar to other port cities. In today's language, we might describe that as being "transnational" or "cosmopolitan", but that does not quite capture the energy and purposeful port-centric world springing up around the docks with all the associated excitement of exotic goods, commerce, services and businesses that the sailing and trading worlds entailed.

Habitués understood the necessary interdependence of themselves upon multiple others, gathered for the purpose of exchange, opportunity and fortune. Singapore was, like other ports, a place where

> "...races, cultures, and ideas as well as goods from a variety of places [would] jostle, mix, and enrich each other and the life of the city.[18]"

3.1 The Multi-Racial Character of Singapore's New Residents

Singapore was thus multi-racial from the start, a characteristic that would both help and hinder the administration of the settlement. Crawfurd recorded in his journal that the population in his day (between 1823 and 1826), was represented by people from all around the region, and ten years later, one George Windsor Earl, a sailor who passed through in 1833 describes the local community as

> "...an epitome of the population of the whole Archipelago, and indeed of Continental India also. Chinese, Malays, Bugis, Javanese, Balinese, natives of Bengal and Madras, Parsees, Arabs, and Cafrees [Africans], are to be found within the circuit of a few miles..." and that "Ships from all parts of the world are constantly arriving... the flags of Great Britain, Holland, France, and America, may often be seen intermingled with the streamers of the Chinese junks and the ... native prahus...[19]"

In terms of numbers, the population of Singapore grew in its first fifty years from an estimated 150 or so local Malays with the occasional Chinese gambier planter in February 1819 to a complex, multi-racial group of 97,000 in 1871.[20]

(**Note:** For a more detailed account of how the key ethnic groups in the first fifty years made their way to Singapore and their key trades, please refer to Box 1.)

3.2 The Inadequacies of Colonial Administration in the new Colony

Colonial Policies Governing Singapore

After the excitement of her founding and the passionate focus of her first administrators, Singapore after Crawfurd's departure now fell into administrative disorder, becoming the unwanted child of the EIC India office and relegated to the outskirts of political attention. There was little money for the settlement and a pathetically insufficient skeleton staff to run the colony.

In this, the EIC cannot be blamed entirely, as it was treading an unplanned path forced upon them by Raffles – it had only wanted trade, never wanted dominion, and the swift success of Singapore and the emergence of a seething settlement had blindsided the Company.

British foreign policy at that time was, as mentioned earlier, strictly non-interventionist, with no interest whatsoever in political or social administration. There was no plan in place to manage the growth of Singapore – either the port or its people. For the next fifty years, Singapore was governed from afar based on the policies of laissez-faire, non-intervention, and indirect rule that were common to all colonies. As long as the port and trade continued, everything else was left to develop as it would.

Translated, this meant it was every man for himself, and the government kept its distance unless the colony itself was under direct threat of being decimated (as it was during severe riots in 1854).

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[18] Murphey, 1989, p. 225. Retrieved from https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/news-wires-white-papers-and-books/port-cities

[19] Frost and Balasingamchow, 2009, p. 84.

[20] Saw, (1969, March), p. 36.

Success, Unregulated Migration, and Violence

By 1824, the population had grown four times, trade had increased three-fold and the port was crowded with migrants, cargo and merchants. Singapore now had more than 10,000 inhabitants, and more were arriving every day. [21]

There was no oversight, organisation, or protection for the growing community.

> "Hampered by lack of money and shortage of officials, administration was light and lax, providing a semblance of law and order but scarcely touching the lives of the inhabitants. This laissez faire policy and the absence of taxes and restrictions benefited trade but led to deficiencies of government, particularly in the provision of security and social services. It also meant that the different communities retained and developed their own organisations, virtually outside the pale of official administration.[22]"

Despite Raffles' best plans, the town grew where it would, becoming a foetid, swampy place with housing, water, and refuse problems.

More disturbingly, Singapore quickly developed an astonishingly violent undercurrent. Munshi Abdullah, translator for Raffles, noted even in his day that there were "murders every day along Kampong Glam road[23]" with the police themselves among the victims. A city full of men, sudden prosperity, and practically no security, Singapore was a tempting target for much audacious looting and pillaging.

A great deal of blame for this violence has been laid at the door of the Chinese secret societies who were now pouring into the colony secreted amongst labourers from South China searching for work.[24] They brought their grudges and turf wars to Singapore where dialect differences made for some very ugly incidents. It is recorded that Chinese slaughtered other Chinese in their new settlements, including women and children.

There was also much opportunistic crime, again accompanied by extraordinary violence. For the bewildered new townspeople, a curfew was instituted every night at 8 o'clock for the safety of the residents.

> "Weak government, lack of finance, secret-society power and a transitory population combined to make early Singapore a violent place. The main danger came from gang robberies…Gangs of up to two hundred Chinese…raided parts of town every night… ransacking and murdering… the whole town lived in fear. In 1843 violent crime reached such a pitch that the English-speaking merchants held a protest…and persuaded the government to appoint Thomas Dunman, a young commercial assistant as first superintendent of police…[25]"

With the appointment of Dunman, Singapore would eventually attain a faintly effective police force, but it would take him some thirty years to achieve this, in a tenacious and unrewarding uphill battle.

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[21] Turnbull, 1977, p. 35.

[22] Peh, 2009, p. 42.

[23] Munshi Abdullah quoted in Frost and Balasingamchow, 2009, p. 75.

[24] This was the period of greatest migration of Chinese men in search of work from South China, with some 5,000-8,000 labourers arriving in Singapore at one time, with others going onward to America and Australia. Frost and Balasingamchow, 2009, p. 87.

[25] Turnbull, 1977, p. 58.

Table 2. Population of Singapore 1819-1867

YEAR	1819	1821	1824	1827	1836	1849	1860	1867	1871
MALAYS		3000	4,580***						26,141
CHINESE	~30^	1150	3,317***	Chinese overtake Malays	13,749* (879 were Chinese women)	24,790*		65,000	54,572
EUROPEANS			74***						3,790
ARMENIANS			16***						(counted as Europeans?)
ARABS		2	15***						(unknown)
NATIVES OF INDIA		100	756***			23 Parsis	13,000		10,313
BUGIS		600	1,925***						(Subsumed as Malays?)
TOTAL	**150^**	**4724**	**10,683*** **	**16,000**	**24,984***	**59,043***	**80,792**	**84,616**	**94,816**

Sources:
First Census of Singapore
* Tan, 2005, p. 23.
***http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/history/events/2fb8948b-5f16-4a7a-8e3c-7a724e1eb6ad
^Infopedia on Hokkien community
Yen, 2016, p. 97.
Yong, 1992, p. 2.
Turnbull, 1977, p. 40.
Saw, 2012, p. 29.

BOX 1

The Journey to Singapore: Philanthropy emerges in Early Communities

The population in the settlement grew very fast, comprised primarily of traders and merchants who were already established in the area, as well as large numbers of transient, casual labourers from China, India, and the Archipelago. For a detailed account of the backgrounds of such traders, please refer to CM Turnbull's (1977) excellent descriptions in "A history of Singapore, 1819-1965."

Much has been written on how Singapore's multi-racial population came to be, so here we provide only a summary of those who were most prominent in the community as regards philanthropy in the first fifty years after the settlement's founding.

The Malay-Muslims: the Malays, the Arabs, and the Bugis

The Malay-Muslim community, as it is known today, actually comprised many disparate groups.

Sultan Hussein and the Temenggong had gathered a host of followers, and the Sultan was soon joined by his family from Riau "in hundreds of boats.[26]" Their settlement, designated "Kampong Glam" by Raffles, was located between the Arab and Bugis settlements, and was peopled soon by Peninsular Malays from Malacca, and others from Riau, Sumatra, and Bencoolen. Of interest was the Temenggong's son Daeng Ibrahim, who later become a very wealthy man through the harvesting of jungle gutta percha[27], and was, in this community, the only known philanthropist.

Outside the Malay community, the most influential and moneyed of the Malay-Muslims were the Bugis and the Arabs, about whom much generosity is recorded and whose endowments remain a source of benefit to the Muslim community even today.

The Bugis commanded the trade in the archipelago and were known to be ferocious. To the fright of placid Singapore, in February 1820, some 500 of them appeared over the horizon led by one Arong Bilawa, but they were not, in fact, on the warpath, but seeking asylum from the Dutch. Farquhar welcomed them, seeing that they had brought women and children with them and refused to have them extradited, much to the chagrin of the Dutch.

The Bugis were a glad addition to both community and trade and made great contributions to local Malay-Muslim society in their heyday. They were a literate, numerate sea-going force with a formidable appearance, known by their *padewakang* boats, which would appear in a flotilla over the horizon during the South-west Monsoon; exhilarating with their warlike appearance, armed to the teeth, and bearing rich cargoes of gold dust, pearls, opium, aloes and camphor. They commanded the island trade routes, and ruled the spice trade. By embedding themselves in Singapore, the colony now became a key node in their vast trading network and a centre for the spices coveted both in the West and by China.

In the years to come, people of pure Bugis blood would dwindle in number, but not before they had made important marriages with the Arabs that brought together key families and allowed them to leave a legacy of philanthropic contributions in Singapore. Best known among them in these first fifty years was the lady Hajjah Fatimah, who, in the manner of the Bugis was a matriarch of power, who bequeathed land to the local Muslims and endowed them with perpetual aid. He daughters would follow in her footsteps.

As was recounted earlier, Raffles himself had invited the Arabs of Palembang to Singapore, appreciating Arab traders for their acute business acumen.[28]

[26] Turnbull, 1977, p. 14.

[27] Gutta percha is a resin derived from plants that was used to waterproof submarine cables.

[28] Alatas, 1962, p. 26.

He had designated an "Arab Campong" next to the Sultan's quarters in his famed map of Singapore's town plan.

First notables to arrive were scions from the aforesaid Aljunied family - Syed Mohammed bin Hari Aljunied, and his nephew Syed Omar bin Ali Aljunied. They came from Palembang in Sumatra and represented a century of trade between the Hadhramaut (in Yemen today), and the islands of the Eastern Archipelago. Their strengths were in inter-island shipping and brokering pilgrimages to Mecca ("the Haj") which prospered with the large-scale conversion of the Archipelago islands to Islam starting in the 14th century. In the first century of Singapore's colonial existence, the Aljunieds would play a key role as philanthropists, joined later in the century by more families, most prominently the Alsagoffs and the Alkaffs who would add to Arab contributions to the wellbeing of the emerging Muslim community.

The Chinese and the Straits Chinese

The Chinese component of Singapore's new population would become key to her eventual success. They came from many locations around the region and eventually emerged as five communities – the Hokkien, Teochew, Cantonese, Hakka, and Hailam (Hainanese) dialect groups.

There were two distinct groups who converged on Singapore at the start - those who came from nearby Malacca (the Straits Chinese or Peranakan); and those who came from China.

While the former technically fell into the Hokkien dialect group from which their syncretized language arose, the key difference about the Malaccans was that they were generally not single men, but had the backing and stability of families in Malacca just a short boat ride away. Some had financial standing, if not very much, and were accorded prestige by incoming migrants as being "local born" and enviably already settled. To them, Singapore was merely an extension of home.

This advantage was increased by the fact that the Malaccans already had a multi-racial perspective, being a hybrid culture. They were a syncretized people group of Chinese who had intermarried with local women, and later added Portuguese, Dutch, and even British to their family lines as Malacca was sequentially conquered by Europeans and occupied over the centuries.

Having lived through Farquhar's time as Raja, the British were now familiar to the Malaccans. As such these earliest migrants became invaluable middlemen or "compradors" between the British and the Asian community, switching languages with facility. In our list of first philanthropists (see Table 4 below), the Chinese contributors in the first fifty years were dominated by Malaccan-born Straits Chinese.

The mainland Chinese, as was noted, appeared almost immediately after Singapore's founding and were followed by a vast inflow of migrants that continued well up till China closed its doors under Mao Tze Dong.

The majority of these were the "Nanyang" (South Sea) Chinese. Casual labourers began to arrive searching for itinerant work, but ahead of them were overseas Chinese from close by, coming from already sizeable commercial networks operating from Riau, Malacca and Penang, Bangkok, and across to Manila and the main Javanese ports. These overseas Chinese found that Singapore made a better base than other ports due to its lack of duties and central location, and many happily relocated to the settlement, or added it to their established trade networks.

The largest dialect group from the Nanyang were the Hokkiens, who found community with the Malaccan Hokkien-speaking Straits Chinese. While records vary, it is estimated that early Malacca Hokkiens were in the exodus 1,000 from Malacca, with others following from Penang and the Dutch East Indies where Medan was a Straits Chinese centre. These took on the trades of middlemen, merchants, and shopkeepers, later diversifying into

Migrant Chinese in Singapore in Make-shift Housing
Courtesy of the National Archives of Singapore

property, plantations, shipping and banking. Most of Singapore's early philanthropists were Straits Chinese from Malacca.

A good number of Hokkiens from China arrived between 1824 and 1827. Men searching for work arrived in junks from Amoy in southern Fujien province, providing casual or indentured labour for the growing trade-related services in the settlement and then for plantation and tin mining work in Malaya.

In 1848, Seah Eu Chin, the literate and scholarly Teochew leader estimated that there were some 18,527 Hokkiens in Singapore, although a good half were Straits-born, while the other half were *sinkeh* (new guests) coming from China on junks. [29]

A Teochew community also sprang up in Singapore. It was comparable in size to the Hokkiens, for although many would be *sinkeh* from Swatow in

[29] Yan, 2016, p. 49.

Table 3. Chinese by Dialect Group 1848 - 1881

Chinese Dialect Group	Year	Year
	1848*	**1881^**
Teochews	19,000	22,644
Hokkiens (Malacca Chinese/Straits Chinese)	1,000	9,527
Hokkiens (Including Ang Chun people)	9,000	24,981
Cantonese (Macao)	6,000	14,853
Hakka (Keh)	4,000	6,170
Hainanese (Hailam)	700	8,319
Not Stated	-	272
Total Chinese	**40,000**	**86,766**

Sources:
*Yen,1995. p. 78.
^Yong, 1992, p. 3.

southern China like Seah Eu Chin himself, others also came from a network of plantations and farms from Thailand and Bangka.

The Teochews dominated pepper and gambier planting, and later moved in to retail and export businesses, dealing in rice and sugar from Thailand and necessities from China and the Archipelago. Some were also seriously invested in opium farming, with the brother-in-law of Seah Eu Chin founding "the Great Opium Syndicate."

The Cantonese also arrived early, building their first temple in 1820, and records show Cantonese clan associations were also started at that time. They were far fewer in number than the Hokkiens and Teochews. Most Cantonese came from around the Pearl River Delta in Guandong, China, and dominated traditional Chinese medicine, urban services like tailoring and furniture-making, and also dealt in jewels, banking, finance and insurance services.

The South Asians

The South Asian community was, by the nature of their various journeys, a transient and fragmented group, separated by caste, religion and language. It remained a largely bachelor group until as late as the 1930s, due to the practice of migrant rotation and travel restrictions on women coming from the British Raj.

South Asians were present from the first in Singapore, which was founded in the presence of 120 Indian troops. Sepoys of the Bengal Native Infantry were garrisoned on the island, replaced regularly by new troops. There were also a considerable number of camp followers who travelled with the British and provided services to the East India Company, from clerking to laundry. This "bazaar contingent" included washermen (dhobis), tea-makers (chai-wallahs), and milkmen (doodh-wallahs). As the colony grew, the South Asian population increased to 11,501 by 1871.[30]

The number of South Asians fluctuated from 16% of the total population in 1860, dropping to 9% in 1957, where it remains steady thereabouts until today.

Early on, a considerable group of South Asians came from Penang, which had a sizeable community, and from Malacca. The most prominent group of South

[30] Sandhu, 1993, p. 774.

Asians however came from south India, with Tamils dominating the community. The majority came as labour on plantations of sugar and coffee and were particularly transient.

A steady stream of semi-permanent salaried, mercantile and professional men accompanied the rise of the colony. South Indians and Ceylonese manned colonial jobs, the Gujaratis dominated the police and security forces, while Tamils, Chulias, Jawi Peranakans (Indian Muslims who married local women) and Chettiars from the mainland and Malacca provided financial services. Traders from the North included Parsees, Sindhis, Gujaratis and Punjabis who specialised in cloth and jewels.[31]

Singapore was also a penal colony from April 1825 to 1872, with over 2,000 South Asian convicts documented in 1860 .[32] It is to them that Singapore owes the building of many roads, bridges, beautiful buildings and early infrastructure. The prisoners had a hierarchy, with only the most dangerous contained, and the others entrusted with keeping an eye on each other. Some were made foremen and overseers, while others were allowed to take on jobs "after hours" and earned pocket money as domestics, clinic attendants, and watchmen around the island.

The penal colony was considered a showcase for the British convict system. The locals were reportedly frightened by them, but out of this group came one remarkable ex-convict philanthropist, Kunnick [Kunnuck] Mistree, who on gaining his pardon, became a herbalist and doctor, and eventually bequeathed his land to be used for religious purposes. He is the only known philanthropist among ex-convicts who settled in Singapore after their release.[33]

The Europeans

In the earliest days, Europeans who came to Singapore were not tourists – those would come from the 1840s onwards – but men and women of purpose. They were an influential minority, and Singapore hosted British and European merchants, traders, colonials, and seamen of many nations, and those who chose to stay often dug in, choosing life in the East as their lot, as the sail home was dangerous and arduous.

As Crawfurd writes, the first Europeans had a disproportionate influence in society which was convivial and the natural mixed bag of a port city. To him they were

> "...the life and spirit of the Settlement" without whom there would be "neither capital, enterprise, activity, confidence of order.[34]"

This local community were vociferous about the interests of the colony and a thorn in the side of the East India Company, writing countless petitions and complaints to India about the parlous state of Singapore's administration.

One cohort stands out for their immense dedication to the improvement of Singapore. These few men and women were the missionaries. In the early 1800s, missions work in Britain, America, and Europe was often focused on China, but Singapore was an essential stop along the way. Both Protestants and Catholics briefly focused on the Straits Settlements in the efforts to civilize the heathen, but eventually moved on toward China.

However, Singapore owes much to a few feisty missionaries who stayed put, and poured their personal money into building schools and basic welfare facilities in the colony.

Of note were the efforts of Father Jean-Marie Beurel of the Roman Catholic Church, and Benjamin Peach Keasberry, a Protestant whose work is described later in this paper.

[31] Sinha, 2015, pp. 18-19.
[32] Turnbull, 1972, p. 47.
[33] National Archives of Singapore, 2016.
[34] Peh, 2009, quoting Crawfurd (1828), p. 40.

4. Early Philanthropy and Community Creation

4.1 Singapore's First Philanthropists

It was against this background of ineffective governance in the settlement and uncontrolled immigration that we document the emergence of philanthropy.

Given the turbulent nature of the circumstances, one would hope that somehow leaders would arise from the community and bring order to the situation. However the role of philanthropy was much more peaceable, and did, in hindsight, play its own part in creating order in surprising ways.

Singapore' first philanthropists must be noted as being just as much part of the first confused hordes arriving in the port city. However, apart from Malaccan Tan Tock Seng, who started out poor in Singapore, once they had their personal logistics sorted out these first philanthropists were conspicuous for their wealth and standing.

Most were people already familiar with the Straits area, had personal networks of trade and family, and often had family money behind them.

4.2 Community Creation through Meeting Primary Needs for Worship and Burial

The value of the Place of Worship

Despite the chaotic circumstances of the colony the very first philanthropic contributions did not go towards policing the community or towards bettering administration, but towards building places of worship.

This might seem odd to modern sensibilities, but in the context of the times and with the benefit of hindsight, funding such buildings as the first order of business made complete sense. This was because Singapore was seething with multiple ethnic groups, jostling amongst many strangers. But once one had a place of worship established for one's own people, new migrants found an instant safe haven to converge upon in this strange land.

In the uncertain days of sailing, places of worship were the first port of call for any traveller. Many went straight off the boat to their temple or mosque (and later church and synagogue), to give thanks for a safe trip, and from there to meet others and find their way in the new country. The building of such places of worship was so important that it was observed that

> "By the 1850s, [there were] minarets and pagodas [in Singapore's] Asian quarters. In fact Singapore's Asian merchants, hand in hand with their commercial success, funded a spate of religious building that seemed to outstrip the efforts of their European counterparts.[35]"

The value of such places was that they established a micro homeland right in Singapore, providing social and sometimes literal security, and a sense of belonging and safety.

Here migrants could find a growing group of others who spoke the same language, shared their beliefs, and might even come from the same town. Thus places of worship provided not just spiritual comfort of known deities and rites, but became inadvertent focal points around which communities in Singapore began to be created. From giving thanks, people would now look around for job opportunities, make new connections, ask for housing, and know that there was a place they could come to for celebrations, community, and society.

[35] Frost and Balasingamchow, 2009, p. 85

It was from these gatherings that simple social organisations in disorganised Singapore began to emerge. Naturally arising out of commonality, the first networks of kinship, work, relationship and trade became informally established. These further grounded the new ethnic enclaves.

Singapore's earliest places of worship were built in 1820 just one year within its founding. The first mosque was the Masjid Omar Kampong Melaka for Muslims in Chinatown built by Palembang Arab Syed Omar bin Ali Aljunied, while the Sri Mariamman temple for Hindus was started in the same year by Naraina Pillai from Penang and completed in 1827. This gave the many Hindu Sepoys, colonial camp followers and incoming Hindu workers a place to congregate and conduct key rites in the company of other Hindus so far from home. The first Cantonese temple was also built in 1820. In 1828 the Heng San Ting Temple (恒山亭庙) was built by a group of Hokkien men. Several men might come together to initiate such building, supported by other like-minded individuals over the years. Thus collective giving as a form of philanthropy was already emerging, alongside direct donations by individuals.

Having paid for places of worship, philanthropists are next recorded as providing another primary need – buying burial grounds for those unfortunate enough to die away from home, or paying for funerals. Travelers were much comforted if they had the solace of fellow countrymen to bury them in this unknown land, with the correct rites and honours in grounds consecrated by their faiths that would ensure their safe return to their ancestors.

We suggest these initiatives thus might be described as contingently responsible for creating communities out of the many the disparate individual migrants arriving every day in the colony.

The organization of ethnic groups into communities was made easier in that incoming migrants naturally aligned themselves according to language, ethnicity, common locale, caste, and belief with places of worship to be natural gathering points.

While Raffles had originally planned for enclave living, the ethnic groups were so very disparate anyway that they naturally formed such ethnic enclaves, and gradually, a sort of order began to take shape in the new multi-racial landscape of Singapore.

Sri Mariamman Temple in South Bridge Road, Singapore, next to the twin minarets of Jamae Mosque on the right. c.1900

Courtesy of the National Archives of Singapore

4.3 Outcomes of First Philanthropic Contributions

Our data shows that over time, several outcomes emerged from philanthropy.

4.3.1 Philanthropists became de facto Leaders.

As the local population grew, de facto leadership often fell to those who took the initiative to provide for the community. Having funds to help others won respect and gratitude, with benefactors given status and a higher position in the new society.

Such leadership was often a matter of happenstance, rather than due to any political ambition on the part of philanthropists. For most early funders, contributions towards building their own communities were a matter of common sense, need, and self-preservation in the face of an indifferent government and many strangers. Few, if any, had the intention of seizing power from anyone (except perhaps from each other, as in the case of the Chinese secret societies). There was no intent to wrest leadership from the British, although this does not mean that the power of the benefactor was far from everyone's minds. What we can ascertain was that prosperity was the primary focus of the new Singapore society.

4.3.2 Community Organisation and Networks Developed Collaterally

Secondly, as philanthropists contributed to the well-being of the group, the respect of their communities placed them in a position that allowed those who wanted to to further organise and develop their enclaves in new ways.

For example, Tan Kim Ching, son of Tan Tock Seng from Malacca went on to use the temple grounds built by his father to mediate justice and hear matters of dispute in the Hokkien community. Others used their positions to lead the creation of local associations to connect people in their own ethnic groups. These often evolved later into lineage or clan associations tying Singapore to homelands far away while providing local residents with the protection of fictive kin.

There was an economic benefit to such networks as well. The first tentative trade groups, for example of coolies or lightermen, would grow into centres for work placements and became the preserves of various dialects or ethnic groups. These gave Singapore a more efficient economic employment structure whereby workers could be ensured for employers, and incoming migrants could in turn be assured of jobs where their own people dominated a trade.

4.3.3 New Arbiters of Power elevated Philanthropists in Singapore

Thirdly, such leadership in Singapore was predicated upon wealth, not birthright, religion, race, or caste. In the colony as in most port cities, wealth was the arbiter of power, and the rich led the way in deciding how the port should prosper. Those who succeeded had a voice and could be heard in a British colony.

Asian philanthropists, sometimes therefore found themselves newly elevated in terms of social rank. In a port city under democratic British leadership, many men who would never have had the chance to rise in their home cultures now found themselves in informal positions of great power.

Thus philanthropy and generosity created unexpected opportunities for Asians in the new British world of Singapore, where every reasonable voice was valued.

4.3.4 Philanthropy created Connections across Ethnic Boundaries

This brings us to a fourth outcome of leadership through philanthropy. Those of wealth, of whatever ethnicity, now grew into an elite class developing within Singapore society, and many of the richest people of all races gathered together for pleasure or business away from hoi polloi.

With no other society in view but themselves, this disparate group of wealthy men came together to hold entertainments, discuss taxes and riots, and bridged an otherwise vast divide between ethnic groups.

> "Among the upper class respect for material success blurred racial divisions. In the early days the small European society of Singapore was a friendly hospitable community, where differences of wealth, colour, race or age counted for little. They mixed freely with their Asian counterparts and were delighted to welcome strangers and visitors…The affluent enjoyed a constant round of dances, suppers and sporting entertainments …[36]"

Despite the haphazard nature of the settlement growing around them, the new elite learnt to play billiards, shoot tigers, and play cricket together.[37]

Such mutually amicable connections were retained until the arrival of steamships in the 1840s brought more strangers into town, who broke down the settlement into a greater consciousness of race differences. The start of the famed Pacific and Orient Line (P&O) in 1845 provided a regular stream of news, materials and visitors, but sadly...

> "The old free and easy, uniquely Singaporean way of life changed to a more formal, consciously British middle-class society, staid…honest…narrow-minded, reflecting the values of mid-Victorian Britain. The European community drew apart from Asians…While the British Governors, Asian and European merchants continued to hold multiracial dinners, balls and celebrations… much of this conviviality was superficial and people tended increasingly to find relaxation among their own community.[38]"

However, despite the loss of easy friendship, by the middle of the century, the various Asian leaders had gained such authority in the eyes of the many local enclaves they were still consulted often by the colonial administration, and provided insight, mediation in riots, and contributed to arguments on inflation, taxation, port duties, and the inadequacies of the administration of India. And their financial contributions to welfare continued to be sought out.

4.4 Singapore's Early Hokkien Community: An Example of the Interconnection between Philanthropy and Leadership

As an example of how philanthropy and leadership became intertwined in early Singapore society, we present here a brief overview of events in Singapore's Hokkien community during these first, formative decades.

The Chinese were, by far, the largest community in early Singapore, making up two thirds of the population by 1867.[39] As described in Box 1, they were divided into five dialects, with the Hokkien community from south China being the largest. The Hokkiens were made up of both China-born *sinkeh* (new guests) and Malacca-born Straits Chinese in Singapore's first censuses.

In these first years, the role of leadership fell mainly to the Malaccan Straits Chinese. This was because they were in an advantageous position, having some money, enviably considered "local born," and with the backing of family in nearby Malacca. They were not poverty-stricken casual labour cast adrift. Some Straits Chinese also had the advantage of speaking a little English and were familiar with the British, especially the Raja Melaka Farquhar. Most importantly, they had networks or *guan xi* - "connections" - amongst themselves already, allowing them to set to work effectively from the start. They thus had a head start against the migrant *sinkeh* (new guests) from China.

In the initial cohort of Straits Chinese migrants, we see the emergence of philanthropists who also became community leaders, such as Si Hoo Kee, Tan Tock Seng and his son Tan Kim Ching (Tan Tock Seng alone having had a humble start) as well as Tan Kim Seng. Their contributions created a foundation upon which later migrants and the next generation would build.

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[36] Turnbull, 1977, p. 65.

[37] Turnbull, 1977, p. 65.

[38] Turnbull, 1977, p. 66.

[39] See Table 2, in Box 1.

Thian Hock Keng, which means "Temple of Heavenly Happiness", at Telok Ayer Street.
The temple was dedicated to Ma Zu, the goddess of the sea and built between 1839 to 1842 with funding from the Hokkien community, and the support of wealthy patrons. c.1900.
Courtesy of the National Archives of Singapore.

Not all Hokkien philanthropists were Malacca born. *Sinkeh* Tan Che Sang from Fujian helped steady the migration of new Hokkien migrants by standing surety for them at a time of usurious indenture rates. Meanwhile others in this cohort built the first Hokkien temples – clubbing together to build first the Heng San Ting Temple (恒山亭庙) in 1828, and then collectively funding the building of the much larger and grander Thian Hock Keng Temple in 1839. *Sinkeh* worked with Malaccans, making the Hokkien group stronger and creating a sense of unity within the dialect group.

The new temple gave the Hokkien community a spacious, beautiful communal focal point. The grounds of such temples became the haunt of new arrivals, where one could give thanks for a safe trip, seek blessing for new ventures (likely hatched in the same temple grounds), find employment once ashore, share the latest news if just landed, enjoy community, celebrate rites, and later, conduct funerals.

It has been noted that every time a new ship made anchor, locals would race down to hear the latest news from home wherever that might be. By the 1850s, temples were

> "...a hubbub of commercial activity... merchants gathered to share news... and to settle business before moving inside to seek divine protection for their venture... the blessings of the heavens were vitally important.[40]"

As the community grew and social needs grew complex, the tasks of leadership began to expand. Some men took it upon themselves to create order within the group. As was mentioned above, from the premises of the Thian Hock Kheng temple, philanthropist Tan Kim Ching mediated disputes, and paid for and set up schools.

[40] Frost and Balasingamchow, 2009, p. 86

Once gathered together, the little community also naturally began to organize itself, reproducing or iterating familiar social structures from home. The first associations sprang up - the Singapore Hokkien *Huay Kuan* (loosely translated as "clan association") was set up in 1840. This became an umbrella organization uniting other Hokkien groups – such as those with the same surname, or common lineage or trade. The Hokkien *Huay Kuan* would eventually become one of Singapore's most powerful associations up to the time of nationhood in 1959.[41]

The Need for a Hospital

The haphazard administration of the colony was inevitably unable to provide for the medical needs of the local residents. Tan Tock Seng, Tan Kim Ching's father, who had risen to become a respected member of the community, in 1844 paid $5,000 Spanish dollars to build a much-needed Pauper's Hospital, together with a bequest of $2,000 from Cham Chan Seng.

The situation was dire. There were migrants literally dying in the streets, and it is mentioned in several accounts that the locals were ashamed that the situation in the settlement had come to this:

> '...a number of diseased Chinese, lepers and others frequent almost every street in town, presenting a spectacle rarely to be met with, even in towns under a pagan government, and disgraceful in a civilised and Christian country, especially one under the government of Englishmen.[42]'

There was much local support for Tan's efforts, with residents of all ethnicities donating in various ways to the building of it. The colonial administration then negligently let the building languish, until forced by circumstances into finally activating it as a hospital. A detailed account of Tan's work and motivations for building the hospital can be found in Section 6 of this paper.

The Connection between Secret Societies and Early Chinese Communities

It is suggested that leadership in these early days of the Singapore Chinese community must also have meant implicit association with the many secret societies that plagued the settlement with their robberies and feuds. In such a small community, it is quite probable that secret societies were very likely linked to the temples and clans, and that those in leadership were also likely part of both. This is suggested from the fact that apex members in all the Chinese associations were invariably interlinked.[43] It was at the peak of such groupings that members of various societies made connections – that treasured Chinese intangible of *guan xi*. It was only to the British - who steadfastly refused to learn any Chinese - that any societies were considered "secret" at all.

As to the degree of association with the more violent elements of the societies, we cannot speculate here but we know that most Chinese merchants gained a great deal of their wealth from the legalized but unsalubrious trades of opium and revenue farming, gambling, vice, prostitution, and even trafficking. This does imply that such merchants were secret society *leaders*, but it would be credulous to suppose that in such a small population a leader could flourish without the tacit support or protection of the local *mafiosi*. There was no shame in this at this time in history, as the sale of opium was encouraged by the British themselves.

(**Note:** At this point we find that, as in many societies, there had already arisen the always ambivalent tension of money from vice being the source of charitable works.)

4.5 Examples of Community Creation in Other Communities

There is much to examine in our data, but here we will highlight a few examples of similar work by philanthropists in other communities.

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41 Ooi, 2019, p. 65.

42 Straits Times Special Feature. 1961. (link).

43 Tai Landa, 2016, p. 50.

Seah Eu Chin (1805-1883)
Courtesy of the National Archives of Singapore

The Teochew community found a leader in the rather mysterious scholar-turned gambier plantation owner Seah Eu Chin, who bought vast tracts of land for Teochew burials, and started the fore-runner of the Teochew clan association the Ngee Ann Kongsi. His son would go on to lead the Teochew community with purpose in the next generation.

The Arabs and Bugis led community creation among Malay-Muslims, considered de facto leaders by virtue not only of their wealth, but also because of the Arab connection to the birthplace of Islam. The Bugis were deferred to as successful traders in their own right. The earliest recorded woman philanthropist was Bugis Hajjah Fatimah who built a mosque on her own land.

Meanwhile it is mentioned above that the Aljunied family built a mosque in Chinatown, one of the first of many charitable works that they would initiate. The interlinked enclaves subsequently provided amenities to Muslims around the island, such as wells and burial grounds. The Arabs also gave land to causes such as building Tan Tock Seng's Pauper Hospital and donated towards the creation of local infrastructure.

We see a slight difference in giving initiatives among the South Asians, whom, as was explained in Box 1, were unable to form large communities amongst themselves due to high transience, caste differences, fragmentation, and the practice of rotational work placements. Among them, we suggest that individual philanthropists in Singapore acted more in the capacity of benefactors and gave to causes dear to them.

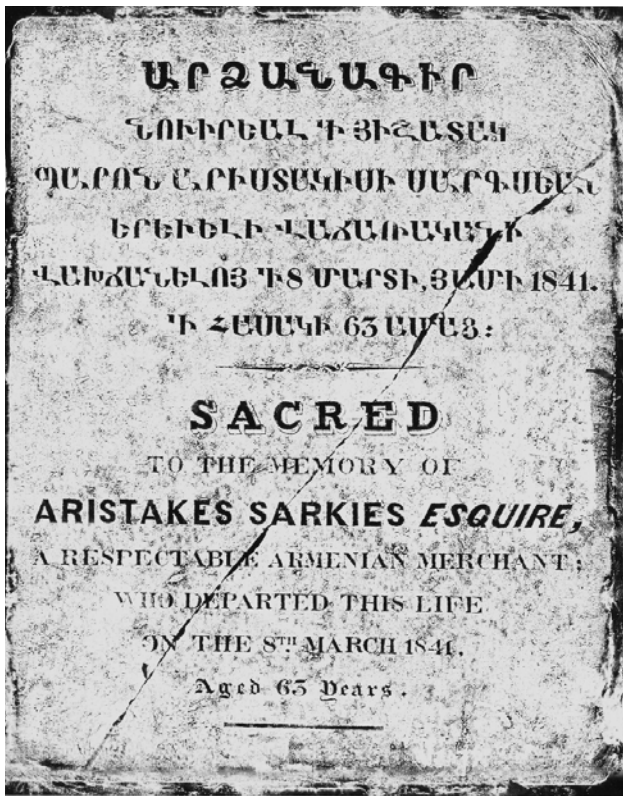
For example, early migrant Naraina Pillai built the Hindus their first temple, and the Hindus were further provided for in a bequest of land for religious use by ex-convict Kunnick [Kunnuck] Mistree, who, after receiving a pardon, made good as a traditional doctor (again see Box 1). Another South Asian, Byramjee Cama , loved education, and gave much towards building and funding education, providing free education for children now born into the community.

The Hajjah Fatimah Mosque
Ministry of Information and the Arts Collection, Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

Of note was the small but influential European community, with early settlers becoming fixtures in local society.

Among the Europeans, we note the unusual contribution of Armenian Aristakes Sarkies, who arrived in 1820 from Malacca with other Armenians. His petition to the Parsees in China for help when local Parsee Muncherjee died resulted in the establishment of a Parsee trust that would manage Parsee burials in Singapore from 1830.

Thus, as local society grew and became more complex, we see a variety of individuals coming forward and, through a mix of efforts together and individually, began to build a community in Singapore. Their contributions were many and varied, which we examine in the following section.



Stone rubbing of memorial plaque of Aristakes Sarkies Esq. Bricked into the walls of Fort Canning Park.
Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

5. A Record Of Singapore's Earliest Philanthropists and their Contributions by Cohort

Using secondary sources, we here present a list of 28 of Singapore's earliest recorded philanthropists in Table 4 below.

By looking at giving chronologically, we gain a mirror of the times, can see what key needs were present in Singapore then, and how these needs began to change as the colony began to develop.

Details of Categorisation

Our findings are presented chronologically: philanthropists are listed according to

- Their date of arrival in Singapore (not according to the dates of their contributions).
- Ethnicity or dialect group
- Occupation or trade
- Contributions (with dates where possible), and
- Remarks have been added with regard to general information that is available about them.

Classification of Type of Contribution

We have found that the contributions of philanthropists fell into broad categories describing similar patterns of need across the different ethnic groups.

We thus have grouped the needs that were being met into these same general categories:

- Community; (including building temples and mosques, organising community activities and providing leadership);
- Medical;
- Education;
- Infrastructure (of the settlement);
- Leadership;
- Collective Donations; and
- Diaspora philanthropy.

The decision to present this material in a table rather than in biographical sketches is deliberate. The intent is not to discuss the lives of philanthropists so much as to discern from their contributions commonality of intent, what was important to society then, how contributions might have fulfilled needs, and to trace any evolution in giving over the years.

Note: Detailed biographies of many of the philanthropists listed here can be accessed online at ACSEP's microsite on philanthropists.

Table 4. Singapore's Earliest Philanthropists and their Contributions 1819-1867 [44]

Notes:

- Footnotes in this table are cited fully in the Bibliography at the end of the paper.
- In our period of study, the main coinage used worldwide was the silver Spanish dollar, the only money accepted by the Chinese. References to contributions in this study are inexact, but were probably made in Mexican or Spanish silver dollars. The value of one Spanish dollar in 1850 was worth approximately USD $307 today.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
1	**Feb 1819**	**Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles** ***(1781-1826)***	British	• Agent of the East India Company. • Formerly Lt-Governor of Java.	***COMMUNITY DONATIONS*** • Contributed $2000 to the founding of the Singapore Institute, (adding $4000 of the East India Company's money). • Laid the foundation stone for this on 5 June 1823.	• The Singapore Institute was Raffles' dream for higher education to be introduced to the East. The site would languish for years until occupied by the Singapore Free School in 1837, renamed Raffles' Institution in 1856.
2	**May 1819**	**Naraina Pillai** ***(birth and death dates unknown)***	Tamil, from Penang community (arrived with Raffles on 2nd visit to Singapore)	• Originally chief clerk in Penang. • First building contractor in Singapore. • Retail goods (cloth).	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1821-1831: built first Hindu Temple, Sri Mariamman, on site given by Raffles. • 1827: bought & installed the main deity in the temple. [45] • Its building Involved other Indians from different castes and communities: "[Pillai] used the help of convicts brought by the colonial government from all over India. [46]"	• Sri Mariamman provided more than a place of worship - community, refuge, mediation, and registry of marriages within the Temple. **British Connections:** • Appointed Chief of Indians with authority to settle disputes among Tamils. [47]

[44] Research team: Kimberley Tan Jun Ping and Koh Yu Qi, with additional information by Ng Jie Kang Eric, & Tedd Jong Wei.
[45] Gopal, 2017, p. 149.
[46] Rai, 2014, p. 44.
[47] Liu, 1996, p. 118.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
3	**1819**	**Syed Mohammed bin Hari Aljunied** ***(d.1824)***	Hadhrami Arab from Palembang	• Merchant.	• Business funded good works of Nephew Syed Omar bin Ali.	• Died 1824, soon after arrival.[48]
4	**1819**	**Syed Omar bin Ali Aljunied** ***(1792-1852)*** *or "Pengaran Sherif Omar" as referred to by Raffles himself*	Hadhrami Arab from Palembang, arrived with uncle Syed Mohd.	• Merchant. • Real estate. • Key local landowner. • Retail trade in spices & cottons.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1820: Built first mosque Masjid Omar Kampong Melaka in Chinatown.[49] • Built the Benggali Mosque. • Bought land for burials.[50] ***MEDICAL*** • 1844: Gave land to Tan Tock Seng Hospital.[51] ***INFRASTRUCTURE*** • Wrote to the Municipal Commission offering to build four wells for the community behind Fort Canning (filled in upon his death).[52]	• Broadminded, gave to all who needed help, across the races. • Considered scholarly, cultivated, literate, respected within the new Malay-Muslim circle of Singapore. **British Connections:** • 1837: elected a member of the new European-dominated Chamber of Commerce.[53]
5	**1819**	**Temenggong Daeng Ibrahim** ***(b?-1862)***	Bugis/Malay: son of first Temenggong Abd'ur Rahman	• Trader in gutta percha. • Agents were Paterson & Simons.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • Gave a great feast on St Andrew's Day 1848.[54] • Improved the residence and living conditions for the Temenggong's followers.	**British Connections:** • British acknowledge Daeng Ibrahim's anti-piracy efforts with a "Sword of Honour.[55]" • 1837 Provided intelligence to the British on piratical activitie.[56]

[48] Abdullah, 2006, p. 105.
[49] Yahaya, 2007 , p. 49.
[50] Yahaya, 2007, p. 49.
[51] Yahaya, 2007, p. 52.
[52] Yahaya, 2007, p. 52.
[53] Abdullah, 2006, p. 104.
[54] Suppiah, 2006, pp. 53-4.
[55] Suppiah, 2006, p. 48.
[56] Suppiah, 2006, p. 48.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
6	1819	**Tan Che Sang** 陈叔送 ***(1763-1836,* came at 15)**	Zhangzhou Fujian, China/ Hokkien	• Started with wealth (businesses in Riau, Penang & Malacca). • Tin mining • Real estate: 1826 owned blocks of land in Singapore. • Merchant. • Agent for Chinese junks.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1828: 2nd leader of Heng San Ting Temple (恒山亭庙) with Si Hoo Kee and others, and donated $520 to start it.[57]	• Good relations with William Farquhar- Bought a warehouse along Singapore River from him.[58] • "No social contact with the ruling community and was a strange and withdrawn man.[59]" • Claimed to have had secret society connections and was very influential in the underworld.[60]
7	1819	**Si Hoo Kee** ***(1793-1847)***	Malaccan/ Straits Chinese Hokkien	• Came with wealth (businesses in Malacca). • Tin-mining. • Real estate: owned 7 blocks of land under his name in 1826 and 1827.	***TEMPLE DONATIONS & COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1828: founded Heng San Ting Temple: (恒山亭庙) with Tan Che Sang and donated $764 & made Top Grand Director. [61] • 1839: Donated $2,400 towards the building of Thian Hock Keng Temple. [62]	• Good relations with the British. • Possibly spoke English, Malay, Hokkien. ***DIASPORIC LEADERSHIP*** • 1839: Gave up his leadership position in Heng San Ting Temple, returned to Malacca to head Cheng Hoon Teng temple, top social organisation of the Chinese in Malacca. Valued returning to his roots. [63]
8	1819	**Choa Chong Long** 蔡沧浪/蔡苍浪/ 蔡沧郎 ***(1788-1838)***	Malaccan/ Straits Chinese Hokkien	• Wealthy. • Land owner. • Opium revenue farmer.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • On a plot of land under Government Hill, he erected what his will described as a "house" and a "building for charitable purposes" for the performances of religious ceremonies.[64]	• Spoke English. • Son of Capitan China of Malacca. ***LEADERSHIP*** • One of the first *Kapitan China* of Singapore.

[57] Yen, 2016, p. 88.
[58] Turnbull, 1989, p. 13; Leong, 2004, p. 28.
[59] Turnbull, 1989, p. 13.
[60] Yen, 2016, p. 88.
[61] Yen, 2016, p. 87.
[62] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, p. 36.
[63] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, p. 35; Yen, 2016, pp. 88-89.
[64] Dorsett & McLaren, 2014, pp. 145-146.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
9	1819	**Tan Tock Seng** 陈笃生 ***(1798-1850)***	Malaccan/ Straits Chinese Hokkien (Ancestors from Haicheng in Zhangzhou, Fujian, China)	• Started poor as a vegetable hawker. • 1827, he set up a shop at Boat Quay. • Retailer. • Real estate speculation after accumulating some capital. • Made most of his wealth from lucrative partnerships. • Owned large tracts of prime land, including 50 acres from the site of the railway station & a plot from the Padang to High Street and Tank Road. • Other assets: a block of shophouses. • Owned an orchard and nutmeg plantation with his brother.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1830: donated Spanish $8000 to build Heng San Ting temple. [65] • 1842: 1 of 4 presidents founding Thian Hock Keng Temple, donating $3074.76. [66] • 1843-1850: he took on the responsibility of burying all Chinese paupers who died in the streets. He spent $1073.03 on supplying 1032 coffins. [67] • Gave to many charitable causes. ***MEDICAL*** • 1844: established Tan Tock Seng Paupers' Hospital (now Tan Tock Seng Hospital) at Pearls' Hill at the cost of Spanish $7000. [68] Tan gave $5000 while Cham Chan Seng bequeathed $2000 to the hospital. [69] The Hospital served the poor Chinese community. Tan often personally paying the expenses of patients there. [70] • In the Tan Tock Seng Hospital committee with Hoo Ah Kay (Treasuer) and Seah Eu Chin (Food supply). [71]	**British Connections** Good relations with the British. ***LEADERSHIP*** • One of the first Kapitan China of Singapore. • 1839: took over Heng San Ting leadership. • 1846: Justice of Peace. • An obituary in the *Singapore Free Press* "Much of his time was engrossed in acting as arbitrator in disputes between his countrymen, and many a case ...was through his intervention and mediation nipped in the bud. [72]" **Need for a Hospital:** (Singapore Free Press, 1844) "...a number of diseased Chinese, lepers and others frequent almost every street in town, presenting a spectacle rarely to be met with, even in towns under a pagan government, and disgraceful in a civilised and Christian country, especially one under the government of Englishmen. [73] " Mr Buckley wrote that "... the Government had been slow to recognise the necessity for providing a hospital... . [74] "

[65] Unverified, Anecdotal. Retrieved from Rootsweb: Tan Family Tree.
[66] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, p. 28.
[67] Dhoraisingham & Samuel, 2003, pp. 24, 27.
[68] Buckley, 1902, p. 412.
[69] Song, 2016, p. 91; Buckley, 1902, p. 408.
[70] Song, 2016, p. 66.
[71] Song, 2016, p. 93.
[72] Buckley, 1902, p. 530.
[73] Song, 2016, p. 91.
[74] Song, 2016, p. 92.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
10	***No date***	**Cheang Sam Teo** 章三潮 ***(Unknown)*** *Father of Cheang Hong Lim*	Tiang Thye (Chang Tai) Zhangzhou, Fujian, Hokkien	• Opium and sirih farmer.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1840: Contributed to the construction cost of Thian Hock Keng Temple.[75] • 1849: Founded Chang Tai Clan Association (Tiang Thye Hui Guan) at Hokien Street.[76]	
11	**1820s**	**Tan Kim Seng** 陈金声 ***(1805-1864)*** *Father of Tan Beng Swee, Grand-father of Tan Jiak Kim*	Malaccan/ Straits Chinese Hokkien	• Came with some wealth: Founded Kim Seng & Co. • Trader & Merchant. • Property owner. • Planter. • Tin miner.	***EDUCATION*** • 1849: established first Hokkien School Chongwen Ker (崇文阁) in Thian Hock Keng Temple for tuition in Chinese.[77] • 1854: Founded & endowed Kim Seng Chinese Free School 'Chui Eng Si E', in Amoy Street for Chinese children.[78] ***INFRASTRUCTURE*** • 1857: donated $13,000 to the government to improve the water system in Singapore. This was not completed till 1878.[79] • 1862: Built Kim Seng Bridge, which crosses the Singapore River.[80] • Dedicated to the public the thoroughfare known as Kim Seng Road, leading from River Valley Road to Havelock Road.	• Spoke Malay, English, Dutch, Chinese. **British Connections:** • Good relations with the British. • Made Justice of Peace in 1850. • Appointed Juror in 1864 • Government's designated Chinese leader to succeed Tan Tock Seng. • Very good relations with European trading firms and established branches in Shanghai and Malacca. • On committee to send exhibits to Great Exhibition 1851, Crystal Palace, London. ***DIASPORIC LEADERSHIP & GIVING*** • Had a Malacca base due to inability to take over leadership of Singapore Chinese under Tan Tock Seng/Tan Kim Ching (Zhangzhou group). • 1847: succeeded Si Hoo Kee as the Tingzhu of the Cheng Hoon Teng in Malacca.

[75] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, p. 28.

[76] In 1887, Cheang Hong Lim, Cheang Sam Teo's eldest son, funded the reconstruction of the Tiang Thye Temple in 1887, as the old one built by his father in 1849 was in a deplorable state. See: Singapore. Archives and Oral History Dept. (1983). Chinatown: An album of a Singapore community. Singapore: Times Books International: Archives and Oral History Dept., pp. 48, 50.; Hong Lim complex to have 1,000 flats by 1980. (1978, March 3). The Straits Times, p. 10. Retrieved from NewspaperSG.

[77] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, p. 38.

[78] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, p. 38.

[79] Buckley, 1902, pp. 677-678.; Song, 2016, p. 71.

[80] Savage & Yeoh, 2013, pp. 214–215.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Tan Kim Seng 陈金声 ***(1805-1864)*** *Father of Tan Beng Swee, Grand-father of Tan Jiak Kim*			***MEDICAL*** • Council member and great supporter of Tan Tock Seng Hospital. [81] • During Chinese New Year, he gave patients pork & angpaos (money packets). [82]	• President of the Malacca Eng Choon Association founded in 1800 (oldest Chinese clan association outside China). [83] • Built Kim Seng Bridge in Malacca. [84] Song Ong Siang writes of Tan Kim Seng: "A Chinaman who had come to Singapore, a poor man about thirty years ago, died in March 1864, worth close upon two million dollars... He [became]an extensive merchant, planter and tin miner, had adopted the settlement as his home and had left behind him many memorials of his public spirit and charity.[85]" ***LEADERSHIP & MEDIATION*** • 1854: with Seah Eu Chin, helped the government end violence between the Hokkien and Cantonese secret societies.[86] • From the Yongchun prefecture, he and son Tan Beng Swee failed to wrest leadership of the Hokkiens from the Zhangzhou group in the 1850s. They founded a separate prefecture-based dialect organisation called Yongchun Huiguan (Eng Choon Hui Kuan) in 1867.[87]

[81] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, p. 38.
[82] Buckley, 1902, p. 413.
[83] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, p. 38.
[84] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, p. 38; Song, 2016, p. 68.
[85] Song, 2016, p. 72.
[86] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, p. 38.
[87] Note: Tan Kim Seng passed in 1864, but the Eng Choon Association was only formalised by his son Tan Beng Swee in 1867. See: Yen, 2016, p. 53, 91.; Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, p. 38.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
12	**1823**	**Seah Eu Chin** 佘有進 ***(1805-1883)*** *Father of Seah Liang Seah*	Teochew from Swatow, Cheng Hai, Guangdong, China	• Educated but chose to spend 5 years learning about trade on ships. • Started as clerk on board a Chinese junk, then commission agent supplying the junks trading between Rhio, Sumatra and ports of Malay Peninsula. • Invested in property. • Started gambier & pepper planting, becoming Singapore's "King of Gambier." • Banking. • Insurance.	***MEDICAL*** • General Secretary of Tan Tock Seng Hospital at start.[88] ***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1845: founded Ngee Ann Kongsi for the Teochew community. →With 2 aims: to support religious beliefs and to provide welfare for poor Teochews in Singapore. →Need to deal with the need for burial grounds.[89] • Bought parcels of land for the Kongsi, fronting collective giving by the community.[90] • 1875: Trustee of Teochew Chinese burial ground in Orchard Rd (72 acres).[91] ***EDUCAT***ION • Board member of Raffles Institution. • Import/Export in fish, jewellery, rice, sugar with Thai connections.	**British Connections:** • Good social and business network with European and local business barons.[92] • 1850: Showed political allegiance to British by organizing a deputation of wealthy Chinese merchants to greet Govenor-General, Lord Dalhousie on his visit to Singapore. Received letter of appreciation from Governor Butterworth.[93] • 1851: Grand Juror. • 1853: Granted coveted Naturalisation Certificate status of British & diplomatic protection.[94] • 1864: Chief Grand Juror. • 1867: Justice of Peace (one of the first Chinese to receive this distinction). • 1871: Invited to Queen Victoria's birthday celebration.[95] • A unique honour that was conferred on the Chinese Justices of the Peace – there were five of them in 1872, viz. Tan Kim Ching, Hoo Ah Kay (Whampoa), Seah Eu Chin, Tan Beng Swee and Tan Seng Poh – was their appointment among the Honorary Magistrates.[96] • Retired in 1864, spent remaining years in cultivation of Chinese literature.[97]

88 Tan, 2005, p. 42.
89 Tan, 2005, p. 10.
90 Tan, 2005, p. 42.
91 This union is a family affair. (1953, May 22). The Singapore Free Press. p. 3. Retrieved from Newspapersg.
92 Yen, 2016, pp. 65-66.
93 This union is a family affair. (1953, May 22). The Singapore Free Press. p. 3. Retrieved from Newspapersg.
94 Yen, 2016, pp. 65-66.
95 Yen, 2016, p. 117.
96 Song, 2016, p. 237.
97 This union is a family affair. (1953, May 22). The Singapore Free Press. p. 3. Retrieved from Newspapersg.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Seah Eu Chin 佘有進 ***(1805-1883)*** *Father of Seah Liang Seah*				• Wrote 2 articles: [98] – "Annual Remittances by Chinese Immigrants in Singapore to their Families in China" (1848) – "General Sketch of the Numbers, Tribes and Avocations of the Chinese in Singapore" (1848) ***DIASPORIC GIVING*** • 1874: donated to Bengal Famine.[99] ***LEADERSHIP & MEDIATION:*** • 1854: worked with Tan Kim Seng to quell Hokkien-Teochew riot.[100]
13	**April 1825**	**Kunnick Mistree/ *Kunnuck Mistree* *(1782-1865)***	Tamil, Convict from Kolkata, convicted of larceny. Sent to Singapore from Bencoolen in 1825.	• A dresser in the first convict hospital. • 1846, granted "ticket of leave" to work as he pleased. • Practiced traditional Indian medicine or "native holistic doctor." • Became a property owner after being pardoned.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • Donated land for religious purposes.[101]	**British Connections:** • Aug 1827: Head Surgeon of Straits Settlements noted Mistree "served as a Native Doctor in the General Hospital" at Bencoolen and was "very diligent and attentive.[102]" • 1828: Alex Warrand, Assistant Surgeon commended his "sober and steady conduct.[103]" • 1855: applied to Governor-General in India for a pardon, to be allowed to return to India to die on the banks of the Ganges - approved in 1857.[104] • Even though appeal was granted, he died in Singapore in 1865, leaving behind an estate worth $50,000 to his sons.[105]

[98] Yong Chun Yuan. (2016). Seah Eu Chin. Retrieved from Infopedia.
[99] Bengal famine fund. (1874, May 2). The Straits Times Overland Journal, p. 6. Retrieved from NewspaperSG.
[100] This union is a family affair. (1953, May 22). The Singapore Free Press. p. 3. Retrieved from Newspapersg.
[101] Naidu, 2016, p. 38.
[102] Naidu, 2016, p. 39.
[103] Naidu, 2016, p. 39.
[104] Toh, Wen Li. (2017, October 16). "On the paper trail of 19th-century philanthropist", The Straits Times.
[105] Toh, Wen Li. (2017, October 16). "On the paper trail of 19th-century philanthropist", The Straits Times.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
14	1830	**Hajjah Fatimah binti Encik Sulaiman** ***(1767-1865)***	From Malacca, married the Sultan of Gowa Karaeng Chand Pulih Bugis Royalty	• Part of the extensive Bugis trading families. • Considered a Sultana. • Ship owner with trading post in Singapore, took husband's position on his death.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1845-1846: built the Hajjah Fatimah mosque on the site of her home in gratitude for being saved from thieves and fire.[106]	• Hajjah Fatimah's daughter Raja Siti binti Kerayang Puli was also charitable, becoming a *wakif* and endowing Singapore Muslims with welfare benefits in her will.[107]
15	1830	**Hoo Ah Kay** 胡亞基 **"Whampoa"** 黃埔 ***(1816-1880)***	Birthplace unknown, Possibly Riau or Canton	• Came to help father set up Whampoa & Co. • Ship chandler. • Food supplier.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1879: Founded Poon Yue Association (番禺会馆), served as a gathering place and provided accommodation for people coming from Poon Yue district of Guangdong.[108] • "Whampoa's Gardens, in Cantonese 'Nam-sang-Fa-un', were a place of resort for Chinese, young and old, at the Chinese New Year season - something like a country fair."[109] • 1870: Elected as vice-president of the Agri-horticultural society.[110] ***MEDICAL*** • 1844: Hon. Treasurer, on the first Committee of Management of Tan Tock Seng Hospital.[111]	• Knowledge of English • Well known for generosity "...he has also shown himself a large benefactor of every good and charitable project."[112] **British Connections:** • He was one of the five Chinese gentlemen on the Grand Jury in 1864, viz. Seah Eu Chin, Tan Kim Seng, Tan Beng Swee and Tan Kim Ching.[113] • 1867: unofficial member of the new Legislative Council.[114] • 1869: Member, then 1st Chinese extraordinary member of the Executive Council.[115] • 1867: Justice of Peace. • 1871: Invited to attend the Queen's Birthday Celebrations.[116]

[106] Hack, p. 12. ; Po, 2018, p. 465.
[107] Po, 2018, pp. 475-6.
[108] National Archives, 1986, p. 58.
[109] Song, 2016, pp. 78-79.
[110] Song, 2016, p. 223.
[111] Song, 2016, p. 52.
[112] Song, 2016, p. 75.
[113] Song, 2016, pp. 185-186.
[114] Buckley, 1902, p. 659.
[115] Song, 2016, pp. 80-81.
[116] Song, 2016, p. 226.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Hoo Ah Kay 胡亞基 **"Whampoa"** 黃埔 ***(1816-1880)***			***EDUCATI***ON • 1855: arranged to provision the Girls' School at average charge of $4/mth per child.	• 1871: Director of Tanjong Pagar Dock Co Ltd and Committee of Management of the Singapore Gas Co Ltd. Provisional director of Singapore Railway Company ltd.[117] • 1876: CMG from Queen Victoria.[118] • An unique honour that was conferred on the Chinese Justices of the Peace – there were five of them in 1872, viz. Tan Kim Ching, Hoo Ah Kay (Whampoa), Seah Eu Chin, Tan Beng Swee and Tan Seng Poh – was their appointment among the Honorary Magistrates.[119] ***ACTIVISM*** • Helped to fight for protection for the Chinese coolie migrants and their possessions, leading to the Chinese Immigrant's Ordinance 1880.[120] ***DIASPORIC LEADERSHIP & GIVING*** • Consul of the Qing government and Russia. Japan's Vice-Consul in Singapore.[121] • 1877: Tan Beng Swee, Tan Seng Poh and Whampoa, as respective leaders of the Hokien, Teochew and Cantonese sections of the Chinese here, raised $17,178, which was forwarded to the Shandong Famine Relief Committee.

[117] Song, 2016, pp. 225-226.
[118] A British honour of Companionship of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, an order of Chivalry bestowed by the Monarch of Britain. See: National Archives. (1986). *History of Chinese Clan Associations in Singapore. S*ingapore: Singapore News & Publications. p. 58.; Song, 1923, pp. 251-252.
[119] Song, 2016, p. 237.
[120] Song, 2016, pp. 245-246.
[121] Song, 2016, p. 81.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Hoo Ah Kay 胡亞基 **"Whampoa"** 黃埔 ***(1816-1880)***				• 1878: Mr Whampoa collected in two days by subscription the sum of about $11,000 for the same purpose.[122] • "The name of Mr Whampoa junior is well known not only in British people, but to Russians, Germans, French, Austrians and other European people. It is also well known to our kinsmen in the United States of America. Thus I may say that Mr Whampoa enjoys a world-wide reputation.[123]"
16	**1837**	**Benjamin Peach Keasberry** ***(1811-1875)***	British national, born in Hyderabad, India	• Came as missionary with wife Charlotte of the London Missionary Society (LMS). • Stayed on when LMS closed down in 1847.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1840: started his own free Malay Boarding School with 12 Orang Laut boys, teaching boys to be literate & numerate; Gave boys vocational training in printing, and provided jobs thereafter.[124] • 1848: Bought land with his inheritance for new school premises, calling it "Mount Zion."[125] • 1843: Bought land in Prinsep Street & started a Malay Mission Chapel[126] • Obliged to pay out of his own pocket the $250/year to house the boys.[127] • 1857: Mrs Keasberry opens a Malay Girls' School, also of good standing.[128]	**Community Support for School** • The Malay school was an institution of good standing & counted among its students the members of the Johore royal family. Temenggong Daeng Ibrahim placed two of his sons, Abu Bakar (who later became the Sultan of Johore) and Abdul Rahman, in his care. **British Connections:** "The government of Singapore hearing of what had been done in education sent a letter to Mr. Keasberry, the Tuan Padre, that His Excellency the Governor who was the first Governor of the Straits Settlements by name Sir Harry St. George Ord... wanted himself to see

[122] Song, 2016, p. 270.
[123] Song, 2016, pp. 252-3
[124] Lee, Gracie. (2016). "Benjamin Keasberry". Retrieved from Infopedia.
[125] Lee, Gracie. (2016). "Benjamin Keasberry". Retrieved from Infopedia.
[126] Sng, 1980, p. 52.
[127] Sng, 1980, p. 53.
[128] Buckley, 1965, p. 322.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Benjamin Peach Keasberry ***(1811-1875)***			***COMMUNITY DONATIONS*** • Keasberry ran the school from earnings of the Mission Press, private donations, & grants from the LMS, the Temenggong and the government.[129] • 1847: Keasberry requests help from the Board of Raffles Institution as well. • The Colonial government approves a yearly grant of $2500.[130]	what had been done as to education among the Malays...His excellency the Governor spoke and addressed the whole assembly and said he was very pleased to ...see for himself what a lot of good had been done ... as to the educating of the Malays of the Colony.[131]"
17	**1837**	**Tan Seng Poh** 陈成宝 ***(1828-1879)*** *Brother-in-law of Seah Eu Chin*	Teochew from Perak, Malaya	• Gambier, pepper • Held the Singapore Opium farm 1863-1868, Johor Opium farm 1866 to 1870. • 1870 to 1879, with Cheang Hong Lim and Tan Hiok Nee formed the powerful business organisation the Great Opium Syndicate.[132] They held monopoly over opium and spirit farms in Singapore, Johor, Malacca, Riau.[133] • Proprietor of "Alexandra" gunowder magazine in 1871.[134]	***EDUCATION: SOLICIT FUNDS*** • 1864: succeeded in raising the $500 required for scholarships for European and Eurasian scholars.[135]	***LEADERSHIP & MEDIATION*** • 1870-1873: First Chinese Municipal Commissioner for his success in business. Song states that: "His genuine public-spirit and his keenness in municipal affairs were shown by the fact that he served for three consecutive terms of three years each.[136]" **British Connections:** • 1871: made Justice of Peace. • 1872: Honorary Magistrate to settle riots among Chinese communities.[137] • 1871: Invited to Queen Victoria's birthday celebration.[138] • A unique honour that was conferred on the Chinese Justices of the Peace – there were five of them in 1872, viz. Tan Kim Ching, Hoo Ah Kay (Whampoa),

[129] Lee, Gracie. (2016). "Benjamin Keasberry". Retrieved from Infopedia.
[130] Sng, 1980, p. 50.
[131] "An Early Malay Educator", 7 May 1926, Page 11, The Singapore Free Press.
[132] Trocki, 1987, p. 58–80.
[133] Lim, 2002, p. 2.; Song, 2016, p. 222.
[134] Song, 2016, p. 189.
[135] Song, 2016, p. 192.
[136] Song, 2016, pp. 190-191.
[137] Tan Seng Poh. (1978, January 10). The Straits Times. p. 6. Retrieved from Newspapersg.
[138] Song, 2016, p. 226

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Tan Seng Poh 陈成宝 ***(1828-1879)*** *Brother-in-law of Seah Eu Chin*				Seah Eu Chin, Tan Beng Swee and Tan Seng Poh – was their appointment among the Honorary Magistrates.[139] ***DIASPORIC GIVING*** • 1877: Tan Beng Swee, Tan Seng Poh and Whampoa, as respective leaders of the Hokien, Teochew and Cantonese sections of the Chinese here, raised the total sum of $17,178, which was forwarded to the Shandong Famine Relief Committee.[140]
18	**1840**	**Jean Marie Beurel (1813-1872)**	French, from Plouguenast, Northern Brittany	• Ordained in the Roman Catholic Mission Entangeres Paris (Paris Foreign Missionary Society). • Went first to Siam. • 1840 put in charge of the Catholic community in Singapore.	***MEDICAL*** • Started House for the sick "Hospital Apostolate.[141]" ***COMMUNITY CREATION: SCHOOL, REFUGE & ORPHANAGE WORK*** • Fund-raising to repair the existing Catholic church. • August 1852: Fr Buerel pays $4000 out of his inheritance for a plot of land on Victoria and Bras Basah Streets for the start of a school.[142] • December 1853, Fr Beurel again pays out of own funds $3000 for adjoining land.[143] • These two parcels will house the Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus School, Women's refuge "The Refuge", Orphanage & "Gate of Hope" for unwanted newborns.[144]	

[139] Song, 2016, p. 237.
[140] Song, 2016, p. 270.; Tan Seng Poh. (1978, January 10). The Straits Times. p. 6. Retrieved from Newspapersg.
[141] Wijeysingha, 2006, p. 251.
[142] Buckley, 1902, pp. 264-5.
[143] Buckley, 1902, pp. 264-5.
[144] Wijeysingha, 2006, p. 261.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Jean Marie Beurel (1813-1872)			• 1854 the Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus opens its doors. ***COLLECTIVE DONATIONS*** • Fr Beurel travels the world to raise funds resulting in $1260 collected in France; $7862 subscribed in Singapore; and $160 from the Masonic Lodge.[145] • 1861: The school is in debt and owes Fr Beurel $2977.57.[146] ***COLLECTIVE DONATIONS: FOR ST JOSEPH'S INSTITUTION (SJI)*** • Fr Beurel collects 1000 francs from France, $100 from the Temenggong from a bet he lost, gains an allowance of $151.80 from the French Government, $25 from the Masonic Lodge, $792 in subscriptions, $60 from the Singapore church Mission.[147] • At the end of the year SJI now owes Fr Beurel 1528.52.[148] ***COLLECTIVE DONATIONS: TO BUILD A CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL*** • Fr Beurel raises funds from France to Singapore to build a new Catholic Church. Donors include the Protestant locals and local Chinese.	

[145] Buckley, 1902, p. 264.
[146] Buckley, 1902, pp. 264-5.
[147] Buckley, 1902, p. 263.
[148] Buckley, 1902, p. 263.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
19	**1840s**	**Khoo Cheng Tiong** 邱正忠 / 邱笃信 ***(1820-1896)*** *Father of Khoo Seok Wan*	Hokkien, from Zhangzhou, Fujian	• Built up his business as rice merchant (with business in Vietnam).	***MEDICAL*** • Generous donor,many causes: raised funds to build Thong Chai Medical Institution, a free medical clinic for the poor, starting up schools and local associations.[149] • President of Thong Chai Medical Institution. ***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1879: donated $400 toward the renovation of Heng San Ting (恒山亭).[150] • With Qiu Ba Zheng (邱八正), managed common cemetery for deceased with the surname Khoo (邱) and Chan (曾).[151] ***EDUCATION*** • 1887: donated $600 to Chui Eng School (萃英书院).[152]	• Honorary titles from China. ***LEADERSHIP*** • Proposed the idea of setting up the Hokkien Clan Association and was widely regarded as one of the leaders of the Hokkien Clan. • President of Thian Hock Keng temple with Tan Kim Ching. • Played pivotal role in the establishment of many temples, educational institutions and associations.[153] • In 1883, Khoo represented the Chinese community in the enactment of the Land Ownership Act.[154]
20	**1848 ?**	**The Alsagoff Family, headed by Abdul-rahman Alsagoff**	Hadhrami Arabs from Yemen, via Java	Traders • Alsagoff & Company was established to serve the archipelago. • Became famous wholesalers in the region.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • Paid for an Imam for the Hajjah Fatimah mosque.[155] • 1852: it was noted that the Alsagoffs held two big feasts annually inviting all Muslims in Singapore to attend.[156]	• Marriage of Ahmed Alsagoff to Raja Fatimah's daughter linked the families and showed the cultural fluidity of the times, enabling them to unite their wealth and endow the community further.[157]
21	**1849**	**Byramjee Hormusjee Cama *(no dates for birth/ death)***	Parsee from Bombay, India	• From Bombay-based Byramjee Hormusjee Cama & Company. Set up Merchants and General Agents.	***EDUCATION*** Interested in education, regularly donated to, and endowed schools: • Endowed a college in India.	**Recognition for his work in education by Sir Song Ong Siang:** "... the [Cama] school was kept up at the expense of Mr Cama as a free school for the children of Chinese

[149] Ong Chong Kai. (2008). Khoo Cheng Tiong. Retrieved from Infopedia.
[150] Ong Chong Kai. (2008). Khoo Cheng Tiong. Retrieved from Infopedia.
[151] Ong Chong Kai. (2008). Khoo Cheng Tiong. Retrieved from Infopedia.
[152] Ong Chong Kai. (2008). Khoo Cheng Tiong. Retrieved from Infopedia.
[153] Ong Chong Kai. (2008). Khoo Cheng Tiong. Retrieved from Infopedia.
[154] Ong Chong Kai. (2008). Khoo Cheng Tiong. Retrieved from Infopedia.
[155] Yahaya, 2007, p. 50.
[156] Yahaya, 2017, p. 50.
[157] Po, 2018, p. 464.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Byramjee Hormusjee Cama ***(no dates for birth/ death)***		• Bombay Cama Insurance Company representatives.	• Started a scholarship in London. • June 1864: started the Cama Free School for local boys, an English school in Tanjong Pagar Road.[158] • Paid for costs to run it, at $100/month for each boy. • Started with 56 Chinese boys. ***MEDICAL*** • 1850: when Tan Tock Seng Hospital had no funds, Mr Cama gave $1000 immediately.[159] ***FRONTED COLLECTIVE DONATIONS FROM LOCALS:*** • Many prominent citizens supported his school: CP Lalla (manager in Byramjee's firm), RC Woods (first editor of the Straits Times) & other invited guests opened the school. • Tan Tock Seng Hospital - Gathered donations from the Parsee community: "The Parsee community of Singapore responded to the call for aid very promptly. On 13th December 1852, Messers Byramjee, Hormusjee Cama & Co. sent the Resident Councillor a cheque for $1,000/- "to be invested in a secure manner and the accruing interest to be appropriated in aid of the funds pertaining to Tan Tock Seng's Hospital."[160]	and others, and was closed on his death. At the end of the first month there were 103 pupils, mostly Chinese. This fact is here recorded as an incentive to the large number of wealthy Chinese of the present day in Singapore to do a great deal more than they have ever yet done in the way of opening and maintaining elementary schools in which children (Chinese as well as other races) may be provided with education, if not free, at all events at a cheap rate."[161]

[158] Savage & Yeoh, 2013, p. 288.
[159] Kanga and Khaneja, 2017, p. 77.
[160] Kanga and Khaneja, 2017, p. 67.
[161] Song, 2016, p. 184.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
22	**1840s**	**Tan Kim Ching** 陳金鐘 ***(1829-1892)*** *Son of Tan Tock Seng, Grand-father of Tan Boo Liat*	Malaccan/ Straits Chinese Hokkien	• Inherited wealth from father. • Saw-mill owner Shipping. • Trading. • Mining. • Rice production (Business in Thailand, Vietnam and Hong Kong).	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • After succeeding his father in 1850, he donated $1700 for the creation of an embankment along the low-lying beach in front of Thian Hock Keng to prevent damage during high tides.[162] • 1878: Founded the Po Chiak Kung (Protector of Chinese) Tan Clan temple with Tan Beng Swee.[163] ***MEDICAL*** • 1852: $2000 for whole cost of enlarging Tan Tock Seng Hospital, others followed by subscription.[164] • 1854: paid additional $3000 to add two wings of wards and improve its management.[165] ***EDUCATION*** • One of the founders of Anglo-Chinese School.[166] • 1889-1949: started Po Chiak School, where boys' occupied one wing of the Po Chiak Kung temple.[167] • 1849: donated $100 to the building of Chung Wen Ge (崇文阁).	• English-educated, spoke Thai & Malay too. • Good relations w Malacca, Thailand, Vietnam, Hong Kong and China. • 1863: on the list of the committee of promoters for Tanjong Pagar Dock Co. Ltd.[168] **British Connections:** • 1865: made Justice of Peace. 1871: Invited to Queen Victoria's birthday celebration.[169] • 1872: made an Honourable Magistrate • First Asian member of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.[170] • He was instrumental in helping the British resolve the succession conflict in Perak and also the mining concession between the two major secret societies of Hai San and Ghee Hin.[171] This led to the signing of the Pangkor Engagement between the British colonial government, the Sultan of Perak and seven Malay chiefs. The colonial government changed its policy of non-intervention in native politics to actively expanding its power on the Malay Peninsula.[172]

[162] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, pp. 38, 40.
[163] "Po Chiak Keng: Only Tans could pray here before 1982". (2017, February 16). The Straits Times.
[164] Buckley, 1902, p. 411.
[165] Buckley, 1902, p. 413. According to Lee Siew Hua, *150 years of caring: the Legacy of Tan Tock Seng Hospital,* (1994, p. 22-23), Tan Kim Ching paid an additional $3,340 when the chief engineer saw that the new building (with two additional wings - one for lepers and the other for women) would cost more than the allocated budget. Tan's widow, Lee Seo Neo, paid for the construction of a female ward in 1858.
[166] Song, 2016, p. 57.
[167] Liu, 1996, pp. 137–139.
[168] Song, 2016, p. 136.
[169] Song, 2016, p. 226.
[170] Song, 2016, p. 57.
[171] Song, 2016, p.153.
[172] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, pp. 38, 40.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Tan Kim Ching 陳金鐘 ***(1829-1892)*** *Son of Tan Tock Seng, Grand-father of Tan Boo Liatt*			• 1854: donated $150 to the building of Cui Ying School (萃英书院).	***DIASPORIC LEADERSHIP & GIVING*** • Honorary titles: Consul-General and Special Commissioner for Japan, Thailand and Russia in the Straits.[173] • 1872: Recipient of the Japanese award of the Third Class Decoration of the Order of the Rising Sun.[174] • 1885: Consul General & Special Commissioner to Siam. • 1886: Consul-General and Special Commissioner for Siam in the Straits Settlements and had the title of *Phya Anukul Siamkitch Upanick Sit Siam Rath* conferred on him by the King of Siam.[175] • 1888: made Municipal Commissioner. • 1889: gave $4000 of $27,600 from local Chinese for China floods.[176] • 1890: Recipient of a special letter and (bought) honour from China for his contribution to the Famine Fund in 1889. He gave $4000.[177] ***LEADERSHIP*** • 1860-1890: Head of Hokkien Huay Kuan. British recognised him as de facto Chinese Kapitan registering and solemnising marriage ceremonies and other civil matters of the Chinese community like arbitrating violent disputes (1872).[178]

[173] Song, 2016, p. 57.; Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, pp. 38, 40.
[174] Song, 2016, p. 134.
[175] Song, 2016, p. 134.
[176] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, pp. 38, 40.
[177] Song, 2016, pp. 134, 351.
[178] Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, 2006, pp.38, 40.; Song, 2016, p. 136.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
23	**1850**	**Wak Tanjong** ***(? - 1890)***	Bugis/Malay from Tanjong Kling, Malacca	• Landowner. • Import & Export business.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • Built a kampong "Kampong Wak Tanjong" in Paya Lebar which attracted settlers.[179] • 1873: built a Mosque to cater to daily prayer needs of the new community living in his kampong.[180]	
24	**1854**	**Wong Ah Fook** 黃亞福 ***(1837-1918)***	Cantonese, Guangzhou, China	• Construction. • Diversified into banking. • 1903: Became a major founder of the Kwong Yik Bank of Singapore. • Revenue farming. • Real estate. • Planting gambier & pepper.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1870: Built a cemetery called the Kwong Wai Siew Peck San Theng. "When their burial grounds in Thomson Road needed expansion, he donated generously again for the purchase of additional loan.[181]" • 1878: Started the Cantonese Association.[182] • Bought land between Punti and Hakka-held areas and named it the Wan'an Cemetery (The Cemetery of Ten Thousand Peace).[183] ***MEDICAL*** • 1910: Founded Kwong Wai Shui Free Hospital.[184] • "Although it was founded and ran by the Cantonese, it was a hospital for all indigent Chinese. Wong Fook donated generously to the hospital's funds and took a a personal interest in its management and a in the welfare of its patients.... My uncles told me that it was his habit	***RECOGNITION*** • 1904: Awarded Setia Mahkota Johor (S.M.J) by the Sultan of Johor. • 1908: Treasurer of Chinese Chamber of Commerce. • "...he had been honoured by the Sultan and had been conferred the Setia Mahkota Johor (Order of the Crown of Johor). When the government was troubled by the shortage of labour in the gambier and pepper plantations, he was one of the Chinese leaders that it called upon for advice." • "The late towkay was always a ready and generous subscriber to all charities and was highly respected by the Chinese community.[188]" ***DIASPORIC GIVING*** • 1902: Donated 2 shophouses for the purpose of forming Cantonese welfare association in Johore.

[179] Ariff and Ibrahim, 2015, p. 38.
[180] Ariff and Ibrahim, 2015, p. 38.
[181] Lim, Morrison and Kwa, 1998, pp. 120, 147.
[182] Lim, 2002, pp. 146-7.
[183] Lim, 2002, pp. 51-52
[184] Lim, Morrison and Kwa, 1998, p. 120; Song, 2016, pp. 658-660
[188] "Death of Towkay Wong Ah Fook", 13 September 1918, p. 9. The Straits Times.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Wong Ah Fook 黃亞福 ***(1837-1918)***			to visit the hospital and talk to the patient during his leisure hours." [185] ***EDUCATION*** • 1906: Founded Kwong Shui Primary School.[186] "They [187] (leaders of Cantonese clan association) raised $30,000 and bought a row of eleven shophouses as school's premises. ... intended to serve the needs of the Cantonese community as it taught the Cantonese dialect."	
25	**1858**	**Low Kim Pong/ Liu Jin Bang** 刘金榜 ***(1837-1909)***	Hokkien from Fujian, China	• Trader. • Traditional Medicine. • Banking.	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1898: Founded Buddhist temple Sionglim Temple or Shuang Lin Temple on Balestier Plain (莲山双林寺). Donated 50 acres of land.[189]	**British Connections:** • Member of the Chinese Advisory Board. • Member of the Po Leung Kuk. • Member of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce. • Member of The Royal Society of Arts.
26	**1858**	**Lee Cheng Yan** 李清渊 ***(1841 -1911)***	Malaccan/ Straits Chinese Hokkien	• Trader. • Finance. • Straits Steamship Company Ltd. • Real Estate.	***EDUCATION*** • Founded and endowed Hong Joo Chinese Free School in Serangoon Road, which had over 70 scholars.[190] • One of the original trustees of Gan Eng Seng Free School.[191] • 1906: Committee member of Toh Nam Chinese School in North Bridge.[192] ***MEDICAL*** • Committee member of Tan Tock Seng Hospital.	**British Connections:** • Member of Chinese Advisory Board. • Member of Po Leung Kuk. • Justice of Peace. • Leader of Hokkien community. • Travelled extensively to Europe, China and Japan.

[185] Lim, 2002, pp. 146-147.
[186] Lim, Morrison and Kwa, 1998, p. 120.
[187] Lim, Morrison and Kwa, 1998, pp. 146-147.
[189] Lian Shan Shuang Lin Monastery. (2019). 1898, The Origin. Retrieved from https://www.shuanglin.sg/significant-dates/
[190] Song, 2016, p. 162.
[191] Song, 2016, p. 162.
[192] Song, 2016, p. 162.
[193] Huang, 1985, p. 48.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Lee Cheng Yan 李清渊 ***(1841 -1911)***			***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1895: Founding member of Ee Hoe Hean Club.[193]	
27	**1860**	**Gan Eng Seng** 颜永成/颜錫昆 ***(1844-1899)***	Cantonese, Guangzhou, China	• Contractor, dealing with labour.	***EDUCATION*** • 1885: Founded Gan Eng Seng Free School.[194] along Telok Ayer Street. All expenses were financed by Gan.[195] • "His object in establishing this institution was to provide free education to the children of poor parents in the locality.[196]" • 1893: Gan fully financed the construction and furnishings for the re-location of the school to a new building also in Telok Ayer Street.[197] ***MEDICAL*** • Donor towards Tan Tock Seng Hospital and Thong Chai Medical Hall, where the poor could receive free medical services.[198] • 1892: donated a plot of land for the establishment of the Tan Tock Seng Hospital at Rochor.[199]	***DIASPORIC GIVING*** • He founded a school for the children of the poor at Sam-toh in the Fukien province of China, where his forefathers were born, the Chinese Government recognising this benevolent act by conferring on him a title.

[194] Gan Eng Seng Free School was formerly called the Anglo-Chinese Free School, and was in no way connected with the other Anglo-Chinese School founded a year later by the late Bishop W.F. Oldham. See: Gan Eng Seng School. (2017). Retrieved from https://ganengsengsch.moe.edu.sg/about-us/history/gess-history/

[195] Song, 2016, pp. 383-385.

[196] Song, 2016, pp. 383-385.

[197] Chow Yaw Huah. (2010). Gan Eng Seng School. Retrieved from Infopedia.

[198] His exact contributions to Thong Chai Medical Institution remain unclear. See: Koh, F. (2016, September 15). Former Thong Chai Medical Institution retains traditional oriental charm. The Straits Times.

[199] Song, 2016, pp. 383-385.

[200] Song, 2016, pp. 383-385.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Gan Eng Seng 颜永成/颜錫昆 ***(1844-1899)***			***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • "Thousands of dollars were given away by him to local hospital funds, and he was always ready with his purse to help to bury the indigent.[200]" • 1895: Founding member of the Ee Hoe Hean Club.[201] • "In response to the shortage of schools and hospitals for the poor in Chinatown, he also donated money for free clinics and other public amenities.[202]"	
28	1860	**Tan Beng Swee** 陈明水/陈宪章 **(1828-1884)** *Son of Tan Kim Seng*	Hokkien, Fujian, China	Trader	***COMMUNITY CREATION*** • 1878: co- founded the Po Chiak Kung (Protector of Chinese) Tan Clan temple with Tan Kim Ching.[203] ***MEDICAL*** • 1857: Built a tile-roofed ward for Tan Tock Seng Hospital.[204] • 1879: bore the cost of 3 new wards($5000) in Tan Tock Seng Hospital.[205] • 1879: member of the Committee of Management of Tan Tock Seng Hospital.[206] ***EDUCATION*** • Took over his father's philanthropic work - Kim Seng Chinese Free School on Amoy Street, and opened another in Malacca.[207]	**British Connections:** • 1864: Grand Juror. • 1871: Magistrate of Police. • 1872: Justice of Peace. • A unique honour that was conferred on the Chinese Justices of the Peace – there were five of them in 1872, viz. Tan Kim Ching, Hoo Ah Kay (Whampoa), Seah Eu Chin, Tan Beng Swee and Tan Seng Poh – was their appointment among the Honorary Magistrates.[208] ***DIASPORIC/LOCAL LEADERSHIP & ACTIVISM*** • Head of the Tan Clan Association and Chinese temples in Malacca and Singapore. For seventeen years he was the president of the Chinese Temple in Malacca.

[201] Michael Mukunthan. (1999). Gan Eng Seng. Retrieved from Infopedia.
[202] Michael Mukunthan. (1999). Gan Eng Seng. Retrieved from Infopedia.
[203] "Po Chiak Keng: Only Tans could pray here before 1982". (2017, February 16). The Straits Times.; Song, 2016, p. 257.
[204] Buckley, 1902, p. 413.
[205] Lee, 1994, p. 26. ; Song, 2016, pp. 95, 282.
[206] Song, 2016, p. 132.
[207] Song, 2016, p. 95.
[208] Song, 2016, p. 237.
[209] Song, 2016, p. 270.

	YEAR OF ENTRY	NAME	ORIGIN/ ETHNICITY	OCCUPATION	CONTRIBUTIONS	REMARKS
		Tan Beng Swee 陈明水/陈宪章 **(1828-1884)** *Son of Tan Kim Seng*				• Fervently fought for the rights of the poor and the Chinese community. • 1877: During the great famine in Shandong, North China, Messrs Tan Beng Swee, Tan Seng Poh and Whampoa, as respective leaders of the Hokien, Teochew and Cantonese sections of the Chinese in Singapore, raised the total sum of $17,178, which was forwarded to the Relief Committee. [209] • Proposed to resolve the problem of Chinese piracy in Singapore. [210]

[210] Buckley, 1902, p. 620. ; Song, 2016, p. 130.

6. A Brief Discussion of Early Philanthropy

6.1 Focuses Of Early Philanthropy

From the data above, we see that most early philanthropic efforts were not just to counter a weak colonial administration, but filled a social vacuum for entire ethnic communities that began to arrive and form enclaves in an alien land.

There being no social systems in the colony, there was an immediate need by incoming migrants to create not just structures for trade and economy, but also familiar religious, social, and cultural organizing constructs for newly arriving workers.

An examination of Table 4 as to when giving was done and in what form suggest that contributions were made ad hoc, with availability of money appearing to be a key deciding factor as to when funds could be offered. Contributions also occurred periodically as essential social needs became evident. In some cases it would appear that some causes were contributed to when the donor had gained enough wealth to give toward something he or she particularly believed in as in the case of Byramjee Hormusjee Cama and his school.

6.2 The Evolution of Philanthropy according to Need

On close examination of the chronology of giving, we suggest here that philanthropy in Singapore unfurled in a particular order. Contributions went to meeting primary needs first, and when security for a community had been established, then other causes could follow, such as welfare and education. Based on these findings, we propose that philanthropic contributions were made in the following descending order:

1. Community creation and primary needs:

- Giving went first to founding of places of worship and in the case of the Sri Mariamman temple, payment for the deity in it as well. This was done by individuals or by groups. Sometime after the first decade of settlement, philanthropists then began to pay for funerals and burials, and bought community burial lands. We see this in the case of the Teochews and the Armenian/ Parsee connection. Next, funding or participation went towards administration of the place of worship, as in the case of the early Hokkiens and Arabs.

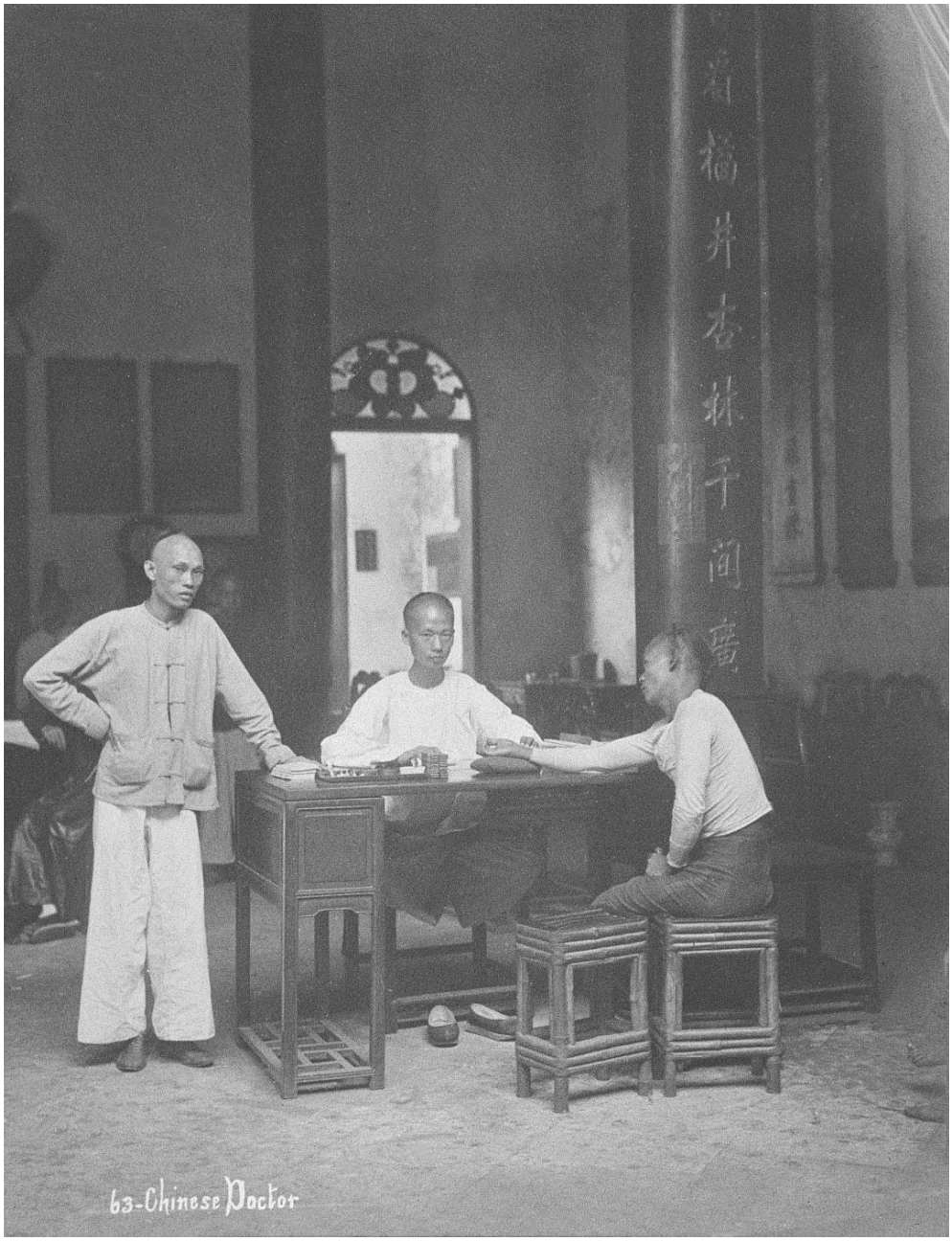
- When these key needs were taken care of, donations then went to the celebration of rites, festivals and feasts as in the example of Daeng Ibrahim.

- Finally, as places of worship became established, we see Chinese leaders starting to organise clan and surname associations to connect fellow dialect members as were done by Tan Kim Seng and Whampoa. Informal associations had already sprung up, but we cannot presume that these were now the formalising of such associations.

2. Providing medical care

- After community was established, it was then apparent that medical welfare was woefully lacking for the common man. Therefore in 1844, following the lead of Malaccan Straits Chinese Tan Tock Seng, community leaders across the races gave towards the building of the Pauper's Hospital, giving money or land towards starting it. The Parsee community, although very small, were, for example, generous donors towards the improvement of the hospital, led by Byramjee Hormusjee Cama, while Syed Allie bin Mohd Aljunied gave the hospital $1,000 in 1854.

- In 1866, Thong Chai Medical Institution was founded providing local Chinese with traditional Chinese medicines.



Chinese doctor tending to patient at Thong Chai Medical Institution on 3 Wayang Street (now 50 Eu Tong Sen Street)

Gretchen Liu Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

3. Providing leadership within enclaves and across Singapore

- As their stature in the fledgling society grew, de facto leaders such as Tan Tock Seng, Tan Kim Ching and Syed Omar bin Ali Aljunied provided mediation and leadership in their own communities as there was no functioning police force on the island, and they were in the best position to create some sort of order among their countrymen.
- In some cases, those who had become "elders" in local high society such as Tan Kim Ching, Hoo Ah Kay, and Seah Eu Chin were also called on as mediators by the colonial administration during major social disruptions. For example they worked across dialect groups and acted for the British to settle major disputes such as the Hokkien-Teochew Riots of 1854.

4. Founding schools and making education available

- Again, as opportunities arose, attempts were made to build schools. The first were dialect schools within temples, followed by the first "free schools" by an assortment of donors, including Byramjee Hormusjee Cama. We see the veneration of education in the local community, which would lead to the support of English education in the next generation.

- Missionaries such as Father Jean-Marie Beurel and Benjamin Peach Keasberry paid considerable sums out of their own pockets to buy land in Singapore to start the first mission schools and continued to fund them as well as long as they could, long after support from their own missions bodies were unable to help them.

5. Aiding in building infrastructure

- Again, as the settlement grew, money was donated to improve infrastructure, local community life, and the settlement. Tan Kim Seng not only built roads to connect growing communities, but donated money towards water works for the local community, money which was sadly frittered away by the colonial government.

- Cheang Hong Lim built around his area of influence houses, roads, a green, a market, and started a fire brigade.

6. Encouraging literacy, communication & providing news

- In 1840, the first Chinese newspaper Sin Chew Jit Poh was edited by philanthropist Khoo Chin Tock, while Benjamin Keasberry ran a printing press.

- The Armenian community would start the Straits Times in 1845, although we note that this is not philanthropy but can be considered as contributing to community building.

- Later in the century, the Arabs would dominate printing in the Islamic community, again providing social interaction if not philanthropy.

7. Diaspora philanthropy

- In some unusual cases, we see fund-raising for overseas causes such as the Chinese giving towards the Shandong Great Famine Relief and towards famine relief in Bengal.

8 Collective Giving towards single or common causes

- An unknown number of local residents of all races also gave collectively to various causes over the course of years, such as the building of churches, mission schools, and towards the improvement of temples and mosques. Many gave to renovations to Tan Tock Seng Hospital and the mainly Protestant local European residents, were generous in donating towards Beurel's Catholic causes.

- Some donors were recorded in articles in the first newspapers such as the Singapore Free Press and the Singapore Chronicle, but otherwise the names of these generous persons will unfortunately remain forgotten, although their actions are remembered in the results of their giving.

6.3 Some Examples of Philanthropy and Goodwill

Having mainly secondary sources as data, we cannot ascribe motivation to many of the donors, and here only suggest possible reasons behind their actions.

Historians such as CM Turnbull suggest that since migration to Singapore overturned traditional hierarchies of status, for the Chinese at least, the gaining of prestige could have been responsible for their generous contributions:

> "Wealth and material success, rather than learning, commanded respect, and rich

> Chinese acquired prestige in building hospitals, schools, poor-houses and markets, and sponsoring entertainments.[211]"

This was not entirely untrue. A common feature among this first cohort of men is that many were on good terms with the British, interacted with them often, and received honours and recognition for their various good works both by the British, and in their own or the greater local community.

Such honours allowed participation by Asian migrants to a limited degree in the local colonial administration and gave them access to decision-making regarding matters of society, taxes, port duties, and influence in the general economic prosperity of the colony. The British in return gained the help of local leaders in mediation and occasions of dispute, so one might say for many, it was a winning situation.

On a less cynical note, our data does suggest much genuine goodwill in many contributions made from personal conviction.

One such cause would be the building of the Pauper's Hospital (now Tan Tock Seng Hospital) where the needs of the poor community were so obvious as to bring shame to the residents and an outcry for intervention.

Tan Tock Seng's Dream of "A Place to Rest In."

We are fortunate that Tan Tock Seng made a record of his motivations as to why he took on building

Portrait of Tan Tock Seng
Margaret Tan Collection, courtesy of National Archives of Singapore

[211] Turnbull, 1977, p. 55.

the hospital. Extracted here is a note written by Tan Tock Seng himself:

> "Generally speaking, people look after each other and assist one another. Those who live in the same village and drink from the same well have fellow feelings. They support each other through [their] illnesses...Moreover, Singapore is situated at the utmost southwest boundary [in relation to China]. It is a place where miasmas repeatedly arise. Therefore, people infected with skin ulcers and leprosy are especially numerous there. Everything... is in disarray. There are no clothes or food to help them in their hunger and cold. Nor are there any houses to shelter them from the wind and rain. People in their exhausted circumstances do not get worse than this. How can one witness this and not feel pain in one's heart?
>
> Formerly the King [of England] planted virtue and extended his mercy. They put those people who were living in "pigsties and barns" into clinics to care for their ills. Nowadays the excellent practices [of the empire] are no longer carried out, and the roadways are crawling [with people]. Conditions are far worse in comparison to those of former days. Yet ever since I began running my business, in my private heart I have always desired to be able to do something for abandoned and suffering people. And yet my ambition was not fulfilled.
>
> Fortunately, Colonel Butterworth of Singapore, Penang, and Malacca and Resident Council Church attended [to this idea] and kept this dream alive. They diligently thought about the pain and suffering of others... and urged me to build a clinic in order to continue earlier accomplishments. Because I always had this intention, I took on this responsibility and did not desist. I sought out a good piece of land without extraneous din and dust. Then people obtained a place to rest in. As for this task, even if one could say that this was an official order that I had to carry out, yet it was not something that betrayed my original intentions.
>
> This is my preface written in the 25th year of the Daoguang reign period, and 1845th year of the English calendar. On an auspicious day in mid-spring. Recorded with care by Tan Tock Seng of Haicheng city in Zhangzhou prefecture, Fujian province.[212]"

Tan's description of life for the common man in Singapore in the 1840s is grim, with no medical care or housing available for those who fell prey to illness in the colony. This account is confirmed by contemporaneous descriptions and shows how the settlement was greatly compromised by the poor government of the East India Company.

The actual running of the hospital, despite Tan's goodwill, was stymied at many turns by the government itself, who first quartered troops in the building until the original Chinese Pauper's Hospital (an attap hut) finally blew over in a storm in 1849.

Even then, the "new" hospital was so wretched that only the desperate could be found in it for many years. In 1857, the hospital committee recorded that

> "No-one will enter who can crawl and beg, unless compelled by the police.[213]"

Determined efforts by many locals finally got the hospital running. A call for public donations in 1852 garnered a generous response from the Parsee community and Syed Alie bin Mohd Aljunied, who donated $1,000 each. Tan Kim Ching, Tan Tock Seng's son, bore the cost of improvements to the building. The hospital moved premises several times, first to Serangoon Road and then Balestier Road, where Tan's widow Lee Seo Neo funded a new women's ward, making her the first Straits Chinese woman philanthropist recorded in Singapore.

The hospital continued to stagger along with poor staffing and was the first publicly funded hospital

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[212] *Translated from the original in Chinese. The Origins of the Tan Tock Seng Hospital, Chinese Epigraphic Materials in Singapore 1819-1911, Caring for you since 1844 © Copyright 2018 retrieved from https://www.ttsh.com.sg/TTSHeritage/origins/*

[213] Turnbull, 1977, p. 64.

in the colony. After Singapore became a Crown Colony, the government finally took it over, and the hospital was relocated yet again to its current location at Moulmein Road. By the end of the century extremely generous donations from more local philanthropists and the community made the hospital a much more salubrious and effective institution.

Gifting from Conviction

Several other unusual gifts are worth noting.

Kunnick Mistree's Bequest of Land for Religious Purposes

The first is that of ex-convict Kunnick [Kunnuck] Mistree, who donated land for religious purposes to Singapore Hindus. His is an encouraging story of a man entrusted with hospital work as a convict, who received letters of commendation from the Governor, and on being granted a most unusual letter of release chose to stay on in Singapore and run his own small medical shop.

While there are records found by Singapore's National Archives of his intent to return eventually to India and in fact a letter granting him the right to do so, Kunnick Mistree died in Singapore, leaving his rich bequest to be enjoyed by other Hindus in the settlement.[214]

Byram Hormusjee Cama's Free School

Another person whose passion is of interest was Byramjee Hormusjee Cama. His belief in education was such that he funded not only a college in India, but provided a scholarship for study in London. His Free School in Singapore was supported by himself and he sponsored local boys to attend it. Sadly, it closed down upon his death.

Hajjah Fatimah's Mosque

The gift of Hajjah Fatimah of the Bugis community was also unusual in that it was in thanksgiving for her having escaped with her life, despite burglary attempts and a lightning strike upon her house.

The Bugis world view not only encompassed a deep devotion to Islam, but had two key concepts that further influenced the conduct of life – *siri* and *pesse* which meant having empathy and compassion respectively. Those who gave should do so not just because it was pleasing, but because being compassionate towards others in need was a highly valued form of personal virtue.[215] Hajjah Fatimah's mosque and bequests went on to care for those in the community around her kampong.

A Passion for Education

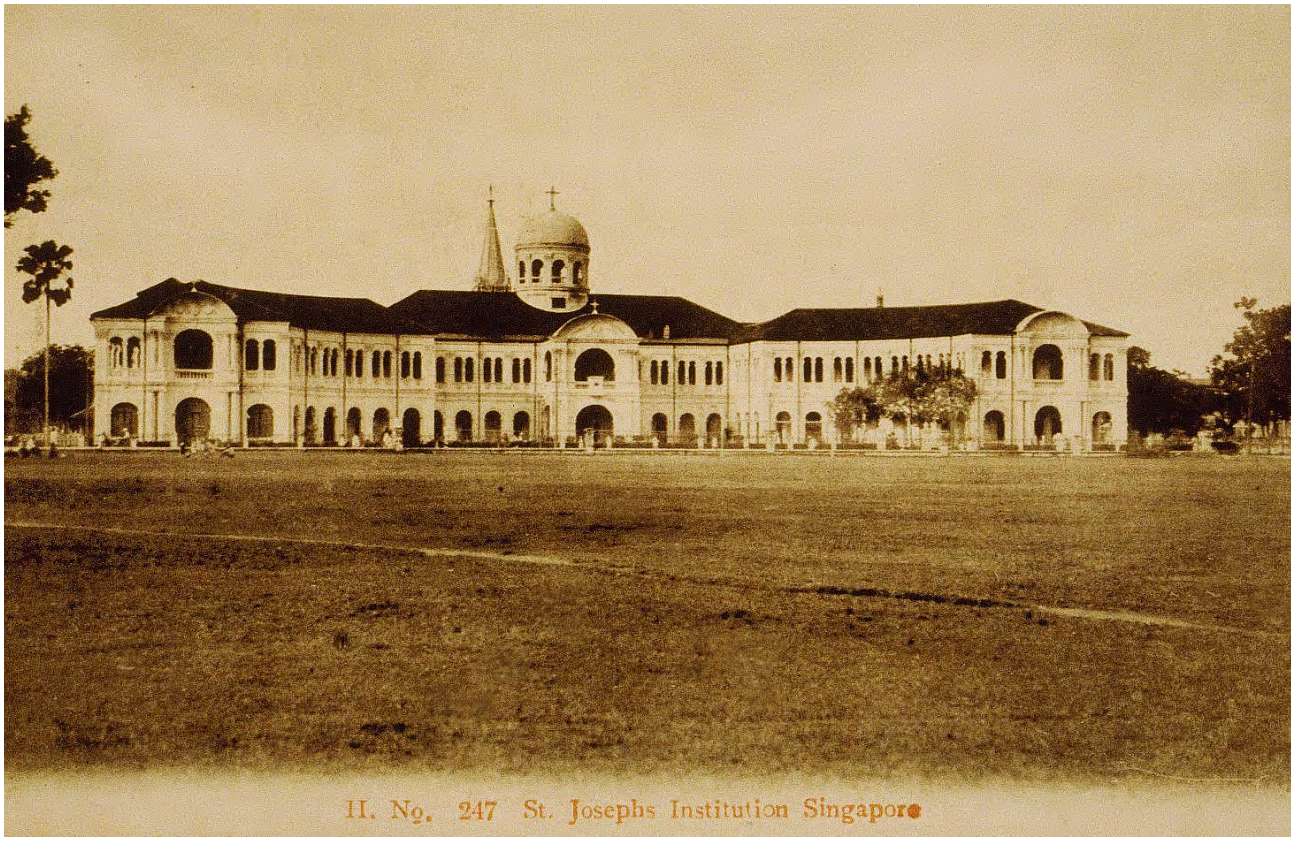
Among the Europeans, key philanthropists were not the businessmen, but the missionaries. While many missionaries were prominent in Singapore, establishing key schools and a legacy of Christian care in education and medicine, we do not classify them as philanthropists as they were in Singapore for just that purpose. However, two missionaries can be considered philanthropists in themselves.

The first was London missionary Benjamin Peach Keasberry – he stayed on after his mission (the London Missionary Society) closed down in Singapore, and used his own savings to buy land for Malay schools which he and his wife then ran. He raised additional funds from the local community as well as through the work of a printing press which gave employment to scholars from his schools.

The second is French Roman Catholic Fr. Jean-Marie Beurel, who poured his personal inheritance into buying land on Victoria Street to fulfil a passionate desire to build an orphanage and school in Singapore. In order to buy land for what would become the Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus and St Joseph's Institution, he not only used his inheritance, paying eventually some $7,000 Spanish dollars from his own inheritance to buy the land, but also tramped round Europe to raise funds.

To his credit, his travels to Europe enabled the founding of the Convent of the Holy Infant

[214] For a full account of the life of Kunnick Mistree, please see the National Archives of Singapore's Citizen Archivist projects.
[215] Ariff, 2017, p. 11



The former St Joseph's Institution (SJI) building at Bras Basah Road, Singapore.
Founded in 1852, the centre block was only completed in 1867, with the side wings designed by Father Charles Benedict Nain ready in 1903.
Courtesy of the National Archives of Singapore

Jesus and its orphanage, staffed by sisters of the Congregation of the Holy Infant Jesus from France. For St Joseph's Institution, Beurel managed to wrest money from the French Government, the local Freemasons, the Temenggong and the local, mainly Protestant community. The Convent opened its doors in 1854.

These are only some of the varied convictions that drove the contributions of Singapore's earliest philanthropists that we can actually document; Raffles' dream institute is, of course, also widely noted; his original hope having been to create a school where locals could relearn the ancient civilisations of the past. His efforts did not go to waste, as the Singapore Institute eventually became a prestigious government school, named after Raffles himself.

Note:

It must be said that the colonial government was guilty of wasting donated monies. The gift by Tan Kim Seng of an immense amount of $13,000 to improve the water system in Singapore was frittered away until finally used for just drainpipes, which were then put up for sale.[216]

[216] Buckley, 1902, p. 677

7. Key Findings & Conclusion

The contributions of these earliest philanthropists had contingent and far-reaching consequences for Singapore much greater than any man alive then would have expected. These would emerge over the years as a second generation came into being, building upon the work of these early men and women. The contributions of the next generation are discussed in another working paper, but here we draw some conclusions about philanthropy in Singapore's first fifty years under the British.

Key findings

To fully appreciate and understand the worth of early contributions, we must see them for what they meant to both donors and recipients in the context of the historical era, and with a consciousness of the Asian world views prevalent at the time. With these as our framework of understanding, here are four key findings from this exploratory working paper.

7.1 Philanthropy was part of Singapore's landscape from its earliest days.

Our data shows that unlike most pioneer towns, Singapore benefitted from philanthropy from its founding days, with earliest contributions recorded in 1820. Furthermore, the number of philanthropists in the settlement was far higher than was expected, with 28 men and women giving generously to various causes before 1867.

Due to the efforts of both Raffles and Farquhar, the small pioneer settlement started off with men of wealth of all races – South Asians, like Naraina Pillai, moneyed Arabs like the Aljunieds, and the Malaccan exodus bringing both stable Straits Chinese and Armenians to her shores, all of whom arrived actually in 1819 or very soon after that. The surrounding trading networks also brought wealthy *sinkeh* as well as the powerful Bugis community to add their generosity to Singapore's growth.

In Table 4, we also see the extraordinary interconnection of individual and group efforts beginning emerging most obviously after the initial decades allowed migrants to establish themselves financially within the local port city community.

7.2 Early philanthropic contributions were focused on primary needs.

Here we suggest that matters of life and death were the most important needs for early travellers, and that these were taken care of first. The most important need for first settlers in Singapore was to have and therefore build places of worship. This was common across the different ethnic enclaves. The next key need that philanthropists fulfilled was the buying of burial grounds for their own ethnic groups.

Medical aid was another essential need for all of Singapore but only in the 1840s was a pauper hospital started by Malaccan émigré Tan Tock Seng for the common good. Tan gave the seed money and the local community, through various collective efforts, kept the initiative alive.

7.3 Colonial Singapore gave new opportunities for philanthropy for Asian migrants.

The new colony of Singapore opened avenues for people to be philanthropists where they might otherwise not have had the chance to so contribute.

As the town grew, we see philanthropy develop in two areas.

The first was among the people themselves. In Singapore, any person of wealth, *despite* his background, was a welcome contributor and, in fact, was often elevated to leadership status because of initiative, ability and a good record as a canny entrepreneur. This meritocratic approach was not only typical of a port city, where commerce

drove the management of the port, but was highly atypical of the traditional Asian societies from which most migrants came. In the 1900s, merchants were the lowest class in Confucian society, while others from South Asia and the Muslim communities were identified by caste, and birth.

However, in Singapore, such niceties were irrelevant. A good head for business, an ability to communicate in English and other languages, and a willingness to lead were hallmarks of a man welcome in the colony. Thus, any philanthropist, from the scholar Seah Eu Chin to the contractor Naraina Pillai were all now part of new Singapore society. They worked together with the weak colonial Government to discuss riots, violence, gang warfare, and the ills of poor infrastructure. More importantly, many were willing to give generously to improve life in the colony.

Philanthropy in Singapore also began to emerge in as varied a set of forms. We see individual donations and the founding of key structures as most obvious forms of giving, yet there are frequent mentions of collective giving - for example four men came together to build the Thian Hock Keng temple. Collective giving also helped fund the Catholic missions, with Protestants and Malay worthies alike donating towards these causes.

There was also inter-racial giving, with the orthodox Armenian Sarkies engaging the community in China so that the Parsees in Singapore might have a burial ground. Numerous collective drives went towards the renovation of the Tan Tock Seng Pauper Hospital. Small communities with large hearts also punched above their weight as in the Parsee community's contribution towards Tan Tock Seng's hospital.

Land grants like Kunnick Mistree's, emerged as another form of help, while as time passes, we also see bequests and endowments to those coming after becoming more common.

7.4 Community creation and the ethos of a multi-racial society were contingent consequences of early philanthropy.

Finally, contingent to the collective efforts of this cohort was the creation of community in Singapore, upon which local society became established. In the historical context, we cannot underestimate how valuable the building of those first places of worship were to incoming Asians. To many migrants, this was the cornerstone of life - social and spiritual. Every home had an altar, and society revolved around belief systems and having one's own deity and place of congregation in Singapore created safety in a new country for migrants. By extension the community could become grounded in Singapore.

These bases would become anchors from which would spiral out any number of important frameworks for society - new connections now made in Singapore connected others with the home country; new networks could be started based on common belief, caste, lineage, dialect, religion, and trade; while rites of celebration, society, life and death could all be entered into as a unit.

Associations arising from these times would later exert great influence in Singapore, with future leaders being the front for very large collectives of a single dialect, caste, or religion. One such example is the Singapore Hokkien *Huay Kuan*, started in 1840 by Tan Tock Seng and his son Tan Kim Ching would still exist a century later and remain a source of communal help.

The building of mosques by the Arabs and Hajjah Fatimah of the Bugis grounded the Malay-Muslim community in the area around Kampong Glam. This created a focal point around which schools and clinics would then spring up from endowments and charitable donations in perpetuity, and which are still in use today. Building upon these endowments, madrasahs, clinics and benevolent funding would later be organised around these first communities.[217]

[217] Ooi, 2015, p. 29.

Thus, from the building of a common gathering place we can then begin to trace the creation of society in Singapore, collateral to but contingent upon the laying down of these first essential facilities by generous people decades ago.

The provision of money for education would play a key role in the shaping of the next generation to enter the scene of Singapore philanthropy. The hard work of the first contributors would give the sons of the same pioneers an education. This, in some cases, would lead to the birth of some of Singapore's greatest social activists, who were not only highly educated, but acculturated, Anglophone, and had a strong sense of civil society based on British values, and allegiance to Singapore and the Crown.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we suggest that Singapore's earliest philanthropists were instrumental in the creation of community in Singapore's pioneering days through their contributions to meet society's immediate needs.

Collateral to their efforts, they laid the basis for security for others in an alien land, with subsequent contributions providing the growing population of Singapore with the foundations of safety, society, and social infrastructure upon which the next generations could expand.

We further suggest that through the character of the population of Singapore, many were now encouraged to become philanthropists, gaining recognition under a new non-Asian administration where wealth and ability were valued above tradition.

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