Him Mark Lai, "The Guangdong Historical Background, with Emphasis on the Development of the Pearl River Delta Region"
Emma Woo Louie, "Surnames as Clues to Family History"
L. Eve Armentrout Ma, "Chinese Genealogies"
Albert Cheng, "Making Your Family Tree"

According to one definition, genealogy is "a pedigree or list of ancestors, or the study of family history." Thus genealogical research in its strictest sense is a form of historical research. It is subject to the same requirements of documentary evidence as any other type of historical research. Research methods used on Chinese American genealogy, for the generations in this country, are much the same as that for non-Chinese; that is, the historian or family member must seek information from relatives, neighbors and friends of the family, immigration records, manuscript censuses, church records, court records, land records, tax records, death certificates, tombstones, and the like. Many excellent books are available to guide researchers in these areas; therefore this symposium concentrated only on giving guidance in certain areas unique to Chinese American genealogical research.

The following pages give selected presentations from the symposium as subsequently revised by the authors. The order has been altered to give a more logical topical sequence. Due to space limitations, welcoming remarks by the sponsoring organizations have not been included. Neither is "A Brief History of Chinese Immigration to the United States"; however, information on this topic can be found in many books on Chinese American history, such as *A History of the Chinese in California: A Syllabus*, edited by Thomas Chinn, H. Mark Lai, and Philip P. Choy (San Francisco: Chinese Historical Society of America, 1969). The session "Making Your Family Tree" was a workshop and only a sample genealogy is included here for the reader's information.

THE GUANGDONG HISTORICAL BACKGROUND, WITH EMPHASIS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PEARL RIVER DELTA REGION

Him Mark Lai

Some five thousand years ago tribes known collectively as the Huaxia, living in the middle Yellow River basin in North China, had developed their neolithic culture to a fairly advanced state. Of these tribes, two groups located in the southern part of the present Shaanxi Province were led by the legendary Yandi ("Emperor of the South") and Huangdi ("Yellow Emperor") and were the most powerful. Under these rulers and their successors, the Huaxia tribes expanded toward the lower Yellow River and Huai River valleys, where they encountered and absorbed another group of tribes, the Dongyi. By the twenty-first century B.C. the Huaxia, under their semilegendary leader Yu (noted in Chinese history for his control of the floods), had established in Henan the first national state in China, the Xia. This proto-Chinese state and its culture became the basis from which the modern Han Chinese people and culture eventually evolved, and in the process Yandi and Huangdi became acknowledged as the attributed ancestors of all Han Chinese today.[1]

In subsequent centuries the Huaxia people formed a number of contending states in North China. But by the third century B.C. the western border state of Qin had conquered the remaining states to unify the Yellow and Huai river basins and also extended its rule over central and southern China, which was home to numerous non-Huaxia ethnic groups. The creation of this multiethnic empire disseminated the Yellow River people and their culture throughout the realm in a process that continued for centuries. They in turn were influenced by the language and culture of diverse ethnic groups. The largest and most prominent ethnic group at the time of the Qin conquest were the Jingchu in the middle

Yangzi Valley and the Yue (also known as the Baiyue, or "Hundred Yue") in southeast China. Many scholars consider these two groups, together with the Huaxia and Dongyi, to be the basic components forming the Han Chinese people as they evolved from the third century B.C. on.[2] Over the centuries other peoples also invaded and settled in the Yellow River heartland of the Huaxia. The absorption of many features from these other cultures greatly modified and enriched Han Chinese culture as it developed. This contributed greatly to the great regional variations in dialects and diversity in customs among the Han Chinese people.

The genealogical researcher must take into account great regional variations even in the prevalence of surnames. According to China's 1982 census, the top three surnames in China – Li (Cantonese Lee), Wang (Cantonese Wong), and Zhang (Cantonese Jeung), comprise 22.4 percent of the population, or about 200 million people.[3] However, in Guangdong Wang drops to sixth place and is not very common among Cantonese in the Pearl River Delta region, to which a majority of the Chinese in America trace their origins, while the surname Zhang is not even listed among the top ten in the province. On the other hand, in eighth place is Mai (Cantonese Mak), a surname not ranked within the 100 most common surnames in China and not even listed among the 507 surnames in the Baijiaxing (Hundred Families Surnames)![4] Just this demographic difference alone should alert us to the fact that even though Guangdong has a common history with the rest of China, factors unique to the province's history have contributed to distinctive characteristics.

Modern Guangdong is a province about half the area of California and with more than double the population. It is the most southerly coastal province and is shielded from the Yangzi River basin by a mountainous barrier; hence, it is often referred to as Lingnan ("South of the Mountains"). The major river is the West River, which at its discharge into the South China Sea forms with the North River and the East River a common delta known as the Pearl River Delta. Southeast of the delta the Tam River flows through what is known today as Siyi (Sze Yup, "Four Counties" or "Four Districts") to discharge into the Pearl River Delta.[5]

The great majority of Guangdong's inhabitants today belong to one of three major Chinese dialect groups, with Cantonese, or Yue (Cantonese Yuet) dialect speakers,[6] comprising about 52 percent, Hakka speakers 21 percent, and speakers of Fujian-derived dialects about 25 percent of the Guangdong population.[7]

The situation in Guangdong two thousand years or even a thousand years ago, however, was strikingly different.

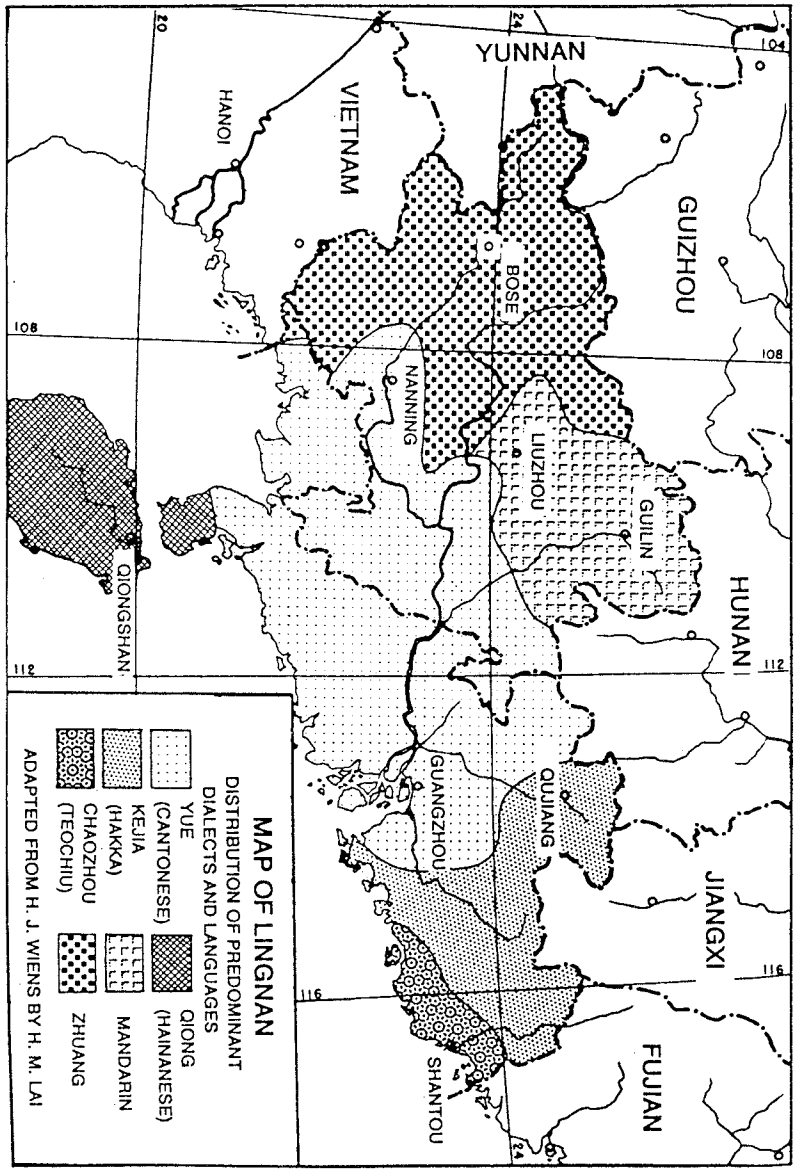
THE YUE

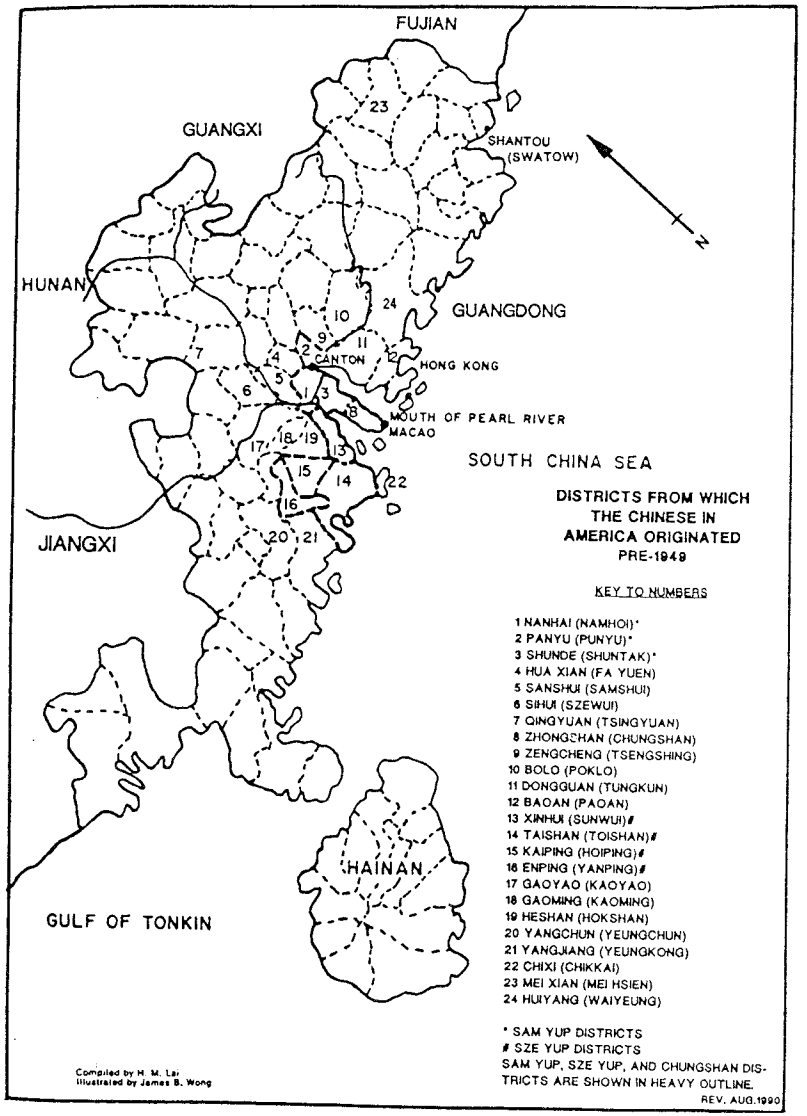
The Cantonese dialect group is found today in the region extending west and south from the Pearl River Delta, up the West River basin all the way to Nanning in neighboring Guangxi Province.[8] There are about fifty million speakers of this dialect within and outside China, including the Sanyi (Cantonese Sam Yup), Sze Yup, and Zhongshan varieties so prevalent among Chinese abroad, especially in the Americas and Hawaii. It is also the dominant language in the cities of Guangzhou (Canton) and Hong Kong. (The accompanying map shows the regions and their dialects today.)

The Cantonese have mixed antecedents, the primary component being the Yue (Cantonese Yuet, Vietnamese Viet), who first appeared in history more than three thousand years ago in the lower Yangzi Valley in eastern China and then spread southward into the present Fujian, Guangdong, Guangxi, and northern Vietnam. This people had a language, or languages, and culture different from that of proto-Chinese states in the Yellow River basin in the north. About twenty-five hundred years ago there were a number of autonomous or semi-autonomous Yue principalities in southeast China. But when the First Emperor of Qin unified China he also annexed all the Yue states into his empire. At this time Guangdong was an undeveloped semi-tropical frontier region of forests, jungles, and swamps inhabited by wildlife such as elephants and crocodiles. In order to speed development of the land, the emperor forced thousands of people from northern China, most of them convicts, to settle among the native Yue in the new domain.

The Qin empire lasted barely half a century and was brought down by peasant revolts. During the ensuing turmoil in north China, Zhao Tuo, a Chinese official, proclaimed himself king of the Kingdom of Nanyue (Southern Yue), which included what is now Guangdong, Guangxi, and northern Vietnam. Panyu (Cantonese Punyu), the capital, was located on the site of the present city of Guangzhou. Panyu also administered a district with an area roughly covering most of a region recognized today as the Pearl River Delta.

Nanyue remained independent for about a century. Under Zhao Tuo's rule, Chinese settlers were encouraged to intermarry with the Yue, thereby laying the


YUNNAN
VIETNAM
HANOI
GUIZHOU
BOSE
NANNING
LIUZHOU
GUILIN
HUNAN
QIONGSHAN
GUANGZHOU
QUJIANG
JIANGXI
SHANTOU
FUJIAN
104
108
112
116
20
24
MAP OF LINGNAN
DISTRIBUTION OF PREDOMINANT DIALECTS AND LANGUAGES
YUE (CANTONESE)
QIONG (HAINANESE)
KEJIA (HAKKA)
MANDARIN
CHAOZHOU (TEOCHIU)
ZHUANG
ADAPTED FROM H. J. WIENS BY H. M. LAI


FUJIAN
GUANGXI
SHANTOU (SWATOW)
HUNAN
GUANGDONG
CANTON
HONG KONG
MOUTH OF PEARL RIVER
MACAO
SOUTH CHINA SEA
JIANGXI
HAINAN
GULF OF TONKIN
DISTRICTS FROM WHICH THE CHINESE IN AMERICA ORIGINATED PRE-1949
KEY TO NUMBERS
1 NANHAI (NAMHOI)*
2 PANYU (PUNYU)*
3 SHUNDE (SHUNTAK)*
4 HUA XIAN (FA YUEN)
5 SANSHUI (SAMSHUI)
6 SIHUI (SZEWUI)
7 QINGYUAN (TSINGYUAN)
8 ZHONGSHAN (CHUNGSHAN)
9 ZENGCHENG (TSENGSHING)
10 BOLO (POKLO)
11 DONGGUAN (TUNGKUN)
12 BAOAN (PAOAN)
13 XINHUI (SUNWUI)#
14 TAISHAN (TOISHAN)#
15 KAIPING (HOIPING)#
16 ENPING (YANPING)#
17 GAOYAO (KAOYAO)
18 GAOMING (KAOMING)
19 HESHAN (HOKSHAN)
20 YANGCHUN (YEUNGCHUN)
21 YANGJIANG (YEUNGKONG)
22 CHIXI (CHIKKAI)
23 MEI XIAN (MEI HSIEN)
24 HUIYANG (WAIYEUNG)
* SAM YUP DISTRICTS
# SZE YUP DISTRICTS
SAM YUP, SZE YUP, AND CHUNGSHAN DISTRICTS ARE SHOWN IN HEAVY OUTLINE.
REV. AUG.1990
Compiled by H. M. Lai
Illustrated by James B. Wong

basis for the formation of the Cantonese people. In the second century B.C. the Han, successor to the Qin, brought the land under Chinese rule again. Over the next few centuries immigrants from the north flowed steadily into the region, and this influx increased whenever chaotic political upheavals existed in other parts of China to the north. Most of the immigrants settled among the Yue in the West River Valley. The seaport at the Pearl River Delta, first named Guangzhou in A.D. 264, gradually developed into a maritime center where traders of products from the West River Basin met merchants coming from southern Asia and Southeast Asia. Over the centuries many new ideas and products came from abroad via the maritime route. Merchants claiming to be from the Roman empire brought in asbestos cloth during the third century A.D. Bodhidharma, the founder of Chan (Japanese Zen) Buddhism, stepped ashore here during the sixth century. Around the seventh century Islam was introduced into China at this seaport, and a large foreign quarter consisting of Persian and Arab merchants sprang up in the city. Intermarriage with local people was not uncommon, thus introducing an ethnic strain from abroad into the Cantonese population.[9]

In spite of the growing importance of Guangzhou as a port, the delta had not yet become the prosperous and densely populated region we know today. The seaport was on the edge of an island-studded bay. Over time the territories rimming this bay slowly became colonized and were developed, as evidenced by the creation of new districts. In the third century a district named Pingyi ("Suppressed Barbarians") was created on the western shore of the bay, where nonsinicized tribal groups still lived. This district embraced most of the territory of the present Sze Yup and later become known as Xinhui (Cantonese Sunwui) and was known as Gangzhou (Cantonese Kong Chow) during the sixth and seventh centuries. The founding of Pinyi was followed during the fourth century by the creation of a district on the eastern edge of the bay in the East River Delta which included the present Dongguan (Cantonese Tungkun) district. In the sixth century Nanhai (Cantonese Namhoi), west and south of Guangzhou, came into being, carved out of Panyu.[10] But even as late as the sixth century A.D., the West River Valley upriver from the delta was economically more highly developed and more densely populated than the delta or the regions north and east of it.[11]

During the Tang dynasty in A.D. 716 the situation changed when an official, Zhang Jiuling, pushed the government to construct a good road that pierced the mountain barrier connecting his home region in northern Guangdong to the

Yangzi River basin in neighboring Jiangxi Province. This route to Guangdong greatly facilitated immigration and the introduction of Chinese culture and technology from the north.[12] Consequently, northern Guangdong developed rapidly and soon overtook the West River basin to become the most densely populated region of the province.[13] During the Song dynasty this area became the springboard for rapid colonization of the Pearl River Delta region.

The rapid development of Guangdong during the Tang left such a deep impression on the native Guangdongese that even today they continue to refer to China as Tangshan (Mountains of Tang) rather than Zhongguo, to the Chinese language as Tanghua (Speech of Tang) rather than Hanyu, and to the Chinese people as Tangren (People of Tang) rather than Hanren. Around this time the Yue disappeared from history as a separate people. The bulk of the people were absorbed as part of the Han Chinese people. Those who did not become sinicized retreated to less developed areas. Most anthropologists and historians consider their descendants to be modern non-Han ethnic groups such as the She, Yao, Li, Zhuang, and others of southern China.[14]

The Yue made important contributions to Han Chinese culture. According to archaeological evidence, the Yue were the first people in China to practice widespread rice agriculture. They also domesticated the water buffalo as a beast of burden.[15] Many anthropologists believe that the dragon-boat race and the glutinous rice dumpling zong, associated with the dragon-boat festival, were derived from ancient Yue folk religion.[16] In Guangdong, one of the areas where the Yue lingered longest as a separate group, the imprint was especially strong. Cantonese are distinguished from their compatriots in the north by their generally shorter stature and darker skin. The Cantonese dialect not only preserves much of the pronunciation and usage of medieval China, but it also includes many linguistic features in syntax, grammar, and vocabulary inherited from the Yue, similar to those still found in kindred non-Han languages in south China, especially the Zhuang.[17] Cantonese folk culture also has preserved distinctive regional characteristics.

THE ZHUJIHANG LEGEND

With the disintegration of the Tang empire during the tenth century, Guangdong became an independent kingdom, Nanhan (Southern Han), for sixty-seven years. Sheltered by the mountain barrier from the chaos in the rest

of China, Nanhan was economically prosperous. But after the Song unified China, Nanhan again became a part of the Chinese empire. The Song empire, unlike the Tang, was a weak military power and was constantly fending off attacks by the peoples from Mongolia and Manchuria on its northern borders. This steady pressure stimulated migration toward the south to escape the threat and thus further sped up the development of Guangdong. Scholars are generally of the opinion that it was during this period about a thousand years ago that the Cantonese dialect began to take its present form, using Guangzhou speech as the standard.[18]

By this time the deposition of soil from the West, North, and East rivers as they emptied into the South China Sea was gradually turning the shallow bay facing Guangzhou into dry land. The islands were in the process of becoming mountains separated by river channels. During the twelfth century some of the islands in this primordial delta became Xiangshan district (Cantonese Heungshan, now the districts of Zhongshan, Zhuhai, and Doumen), then a relatively poor area noted mostly for its fisheries and salt production.[19]

Toward the end of the Song dynasty one of the most famous tales in Cantonese tradition was recorded. In the year 1273 (one version gave the year as 1131) an imperial concubine with the surname Su (or Hu, depending on the version) incurred the emperor's wrath and fell into disfavor. In secret she fled the palace. At a ferry she met a wealthy merchant, Huang Zhuwan (or Zhang Zhuwan), who was ferrying grain to the capital. Attracted by her beauty, Huang took her back with him to his home in Nanxiong (Cantonese Namhung) in northern Guangdong. Later the emperor discovered the concubine's absence and ordered a search for her. But after trying for a year, officials could not find any trace of her.

Soon afterward Huang punished one of his servants. In revenge the disgruntled man spread the news of the presence of the imperial concubine in the Huang household. This information soon came to the ears of the officials, who, in order to cover up their previous failure to find the concubine, concocted a report of a bandit disturbance in the Nanxiong region. The plan was to dispatch troops to wipe out the population in order to seal their lips.

The people were panic-stricken when they heard the news. Ninety-seven families who lived in Zhujihang (Cantonese Jeu Gei Hong, "Pearl Alley"), a village in the region, met and decided to flee to the south. The group embarked on bamboo rafts and floated down the North River. Their journey finally ended

at Xiangshan, where they scattered to settle in various places in the then relatively undeveloped Pearl River Delta.

Many leading clans there today claim descent from these pioneers and the tale is as well known among Pearl River Delta Cantonese as the story of the *Mayflower* is among Anglo-Americans. The ninety-seven families who fled had thirty-three surnames (the numbers vary with different versions) among them. Besides the original thirty-three, another forty clans also claim Zhujihang ancestry, giving a total of seventy-three surnames. If we consider separately different lineages of the same surname, then there are nearly one hundred surnames.[20] Chinese Americans of Cantonese descent whose forebears came from the Pearl River Delta region, especially if they came from Nanhai, Panyu, Shunde, Xiangshan, Dongguan, or Xinhui districts, have a good chance of encountering this tale in their genealogical research.[21]

The Zhujihang tale is not documented in the official histories and there are many variations and contradictions in the details. One Chinese historian believes that the tale may have been derived from the accumulated experiences of the many groups who migrated southward to the Pearl River Delta region in flight from the Mongol armies. For those coming from the north, Nanxiong would have been the first stopping point in Guangdong. This appears to be a plausible explanation. But one thing is certain – settlement of the Pearl River Delta region accelerated during this period. Also during this period large-scale construction began on a network of flood-control levees in the Pearl River Delta. Thus by the thirteenth century the population density in the delta began to approach that of northern Guangdong.[22]

THE HAKKAS AND FUJIANESE GROUPS

A new group entered Guangdong during this same period. The Cantonese, already long settled in Guangdong, called these relatively late arrivals Hakka ("Guest People"). Hakkas claim to be originally from Henan Province. During the fourth century A.D. chaotic conditions in the north forced them to migrate south to central China. Political chaos in the ninth century, toward the end of the Tang dynasty, spurred a second migration to the region just north of Guangdong. The Mongol invasion during the thirteenth century led to the third wave of migration into Guangdong and Fujian. In Guangdong the Hakka settled in the mountainous terrain in the East River basin and the northeastern part of

the province, centering on Meizhou (Mei Xian). The present Hakka dialect, with the standard based on Meizhou speech, took shape during this period.

Over the centuries many seafaring people from neighboring southern Fujian also migrated south to various points along the Guangdong coast. Increased migration from Fujian occurred as a consequence of the Song court's flight from the pursuing Mongols south along the southeast China coast. Sizable colonies of people speaking Fujian-derived dialects appeared in the Han River Delta around Chaozhou (near the present Shantou [Swatow]) in northeast Guangdong as well as in the northeastern part of Hainan Island and the adjourning Leizhou Peninsula in southern Guangdong.[23] In the Pearl River Delta a number settled in the Longdu (Cantonese Lungdoo), Nanlang (Cantonese Namlong) and Sanxiang (Samheung) areas in Zhongshan district, forming enclaves that spoke Fujian-derived dialects in a Cantonese area.

As the Mongol armies steamroll.judyed their way to becoming the first non-Han Chinese people to conquer all of the Chinese empire, Song supporters fought desperate rearguard actions as they retreated southward in Guangdong. They finally reached the end of the road in the Pearl River Delta. The Song imperial court was alleged to have stopped in Kowloon near the present Kai Tak Airport. The court then continued its flight, dodging in and out of the islands that still dotted the Pearl River Delta. Finally in 1279 Song naval forces were routed in a battle at the mouth of the West River near Xinhui, and a loyal Song minister jumped into the ocean with the boy emperor on his back to end the Song dynasty. Today many people in this area have the surname Zhao (Cantonese Chew, Jue) and claim descent from the Song royal line.

MING AND QING EMPIRES

Mongol rule was short-lived, and in the fourteenth century the Ming expelled the Mongol rulers from China. Guangdong's economy continued to develop under the Ming. The production of silk and other textiles, sugar, and handicraft products greatly increased. In the Pearl River Delta, Foshan (Cantonese Fatshan) became known for its skilled steel smelters, while in nearby Shiwan (Cantonese Shek'wan) the ceramic industry became more highly developed in technical quality and variety of products. Commercial activities accelerated as Guangzhou became the largest center of commerce in Guangdong as well as China's most important port for the international maritime trade.

Guangdong merchants also transported the province's products to sell in other parts of China or abroad.[24]

The development of the area was reflected in the creation of additional districts. During this period, in the aftermath of the nineteen-year-long Huang Xiaoyang rebellion in the Pearl River Delta, Shunde (Cantonese Shuntak), the last of the Sam Yup to be created, was founded in 1452, taking away part of the territory of Nanhai.[25] When the Portuguese arrived in the Far East and began aggressively probing the Pearl River estuary defences in the sixteenth century, the Ming government responded. In 1573 it created Xin'an district (Sunon, the present Bao'an) out of the southern part of Dongguan (including the present British colony of Hong Kong) to facilitate coastal defences against these foreign invaders as well as against the forays of Chinese and Japanese pirates lurking in the area.[26]

During this period the Han Chinese were also increasingly encroaching on areas where non-Han Chinese tribes lived. As pressures intensified, the inevitable conflicts broke out, and from the fourteenth through the seventeenth centuries, the Ming government launched numerous military campaigns to suppress tribal uprisings in these areas. In the Pearl River Delta region three of the four districts of Sze Yup, which had Yao populations in the mountainous areas, were formed between mid-Ming and early Qing. Enping (Cantonese Yanping) was established in 1478.[27] In 1498, after suppression of a Yao uprising in the western part of Xinhui, the imperial government created Xinning (Cantonese Sunning, "New Tranquility," the present Taishan [Cantonese Toishan]).[28] At the beginning of the Qing in 1649, the last Sze Yup district, Kaiping (Cantonese Hoiping), was carved from parts of Xinhui, Xinxing, and Enping.[29]

Similar developments took place in other areas of Guangdong. In northeastern Guangdong the Hakka and Chaozhou dialect groups were confronted by She tribes, while settlers in western Guangdong encountered the Zhuang and Yao, and those in southern Guangdong and Hainan Island came face to face with the Li. Eventually many tribes submitted and became sinicized and absorbed as part of the Han Chinese population.[30] But, some retreated before the Han Chinese advance and retained their ethnic identities. In some areas of Guangdong friction between these tribes and Han Chinese, although diminishing in scope, continued into the eighteenth century.

By the seventeenth century Guangdong again became one of the last Han Chinese bastions when the Ming dynasty lost the empire to the Manchus. During

the Ming retreat to the south, one Ming pretender proclaimed himself emperor in Guangzhou, while for awhile another established his court in Zhaoqing (Cantonese Shiuhing) nearby. After the fall of these pretenders, the Manchus cleared out nests of Ming loyalists, bandit bands, and remaining Yao strongholds. In 1685 Hua Xian (Cantonese Fa Yuen) was formed from parts of Panyu and Nanhai to facilitate the control of bands of brigands and dissidents operating from the area's mountainous region.[31] In 1732 Heshan (Cantonese Hokshan), one of the last districts to be created in the Pearl River Delta region, was established from parts of Xinhui and Kaiping in order to facilitate the defense of settled villages against the depredations of Yao mountaineer tribes in the area.[32]

Earlier the Manchu imperial government had ordered the region along the entire China coast to be evacuated for about fifty *li* (approximately sixteen miles) to provide a buffer zone against attacks from Ming adherents led by Zheng Chenggong (also known as Koxinga), who operated from Taiwan. After the ban was lifted in 1684, many of the original inhabitants did not return and the vacuum was filled by immigrants from other areas with limited arable land. It was during this period that many Hakkas migrated from mountainous east Guangdong into the districts in the Pearl River Delta region. A number settled in former evacuated areas near the ocean, such as the present Zhongshan and the New Territories in Hong Kong. (During this same period other Hakkas were also migrating to Taiwan, Guangxi, and Sichuan.)[33]

In Sze Yup the Hakka population grew rapidly. In Xinning Hakka comprised about a third of the population. Friction between the Hakka and the Cantonese eventually led to a bloody conflict in the Sze Yup area in the mid-nineteenth century. The fighting was especially fierce in Xinning, where the Hakkas were displaced from most of the territory and forced to retreat into the small enclave of Chixi (Cantonese Chikkai).[34] After the fighting ended, many Hakkas chose to leave for southern Guangdong and Hainan.[35] (In the 1980s Hakkas comprise less than 3 percent of the Taishan population.) The economic dislocation caused by this conflict was a major factor impelling emigration of Sze Yup people abroad.

GUANGDONG AND THE WEST

The position of Guangdong on China's southern flank made it the obvious goal of maritime travelers coming from the south and east. Portugal, the first European nation to reach China in 1514, occupied Macao on the southern tip of Xiangshan in 1557 in order to be in a strategic position to control the China trade. From Macao the Jesuit priest Matteo Ricci entered Guangdong, where he stayed at Zhaoqing for several years before departing for the north.[36]

The English, Dutch, French, and Americans soon followed the Portuguese, all wanting their share of the lucrative traffic in silk, tea, porcelain and other Chinese goods. Guangzhou benefited from this commerce, especially after the imperial government decreed in 1757 that it was the only port to be opened to foreign ships. The flourishing trade, however, whetted the appetite of Western merchants and they pressured a reluctant Qing government to open the entire country for trade. Matters came to a head over the British opium trade at the Pearl River Delta. In the ensuing Opium War of 1839-42, China was defeated and was forced to open treaty ports to the West, thus ending China's closed door policy. Hong Kong at the mouth of the Pearl River estuary, became a British colony and developed into an international port, further facilitating maritime contacts with Guangdong.

The constant exposure of Guangdong to influence from abroad led the people to be receptive to change and new ideas. Thus in the modern era Guangdongese were instrumental in introducing modern Western practices and technology; for example, Cantonese were the first Chinese aviators and started some of the first Chinese motion picture companies and earliest department stores in Hong Kong and Shanghai.

The ever-present threat of foreign aggression also stimulated the growth of strong nationalistic sentiments. Thus Guangdongnese played active leadership roles in movements to modernize China. Among the leaders were Hong Xiuchuan, who led the Taiping Rebellion that almost toppled the Manchu dynasty, Kang Youwei and Liang Qichao, who led a movement to reform the Manchu empire, and Sun Yat-sen, the recognized head of the movement to successfully overthrow the two-thousand-year-old imperial system. All were natives of districts in the Pearl River Delta region. Guangdongese were also active participants in the 1905 boycott of American goods in protest against the Chinese Exclusion Act.

The existence of a long maritime frontier in Guangdong resulted in an adventuresome and enterprising people. When the Western nations were developing their colonies and frontier regions during the nineteenth century, hundreds of thousands of emigrants from Guangdong (as well as the present neighboring Fujian, Hainan and Guangxi provinces) went abroad to these new lands. Of the almost thirty million people of Chinese descent living outside the borders of mainland China (Hong Kong and Macao not included) and Taiwan, about six out of ten can trace their ancestry to one of the dialect groups in Guangdong: Cantonese, Chaozhou, or Hakka. The Cantonese emigration was facilitated by the proximity of the international ports of Macao and Hong Kong, and Cantonese became the most widely dispersed, although not necessarily the most numerous, dialect group among the Chinese abroad.[37] In the United States the Cantonese emigrants' presence was even more pronounced, and up to 1965 about 90 to 95 percent of Chinese could trace their roots to the Pearl River Delta and Sze Yup in Guangdong Province.

From this sketch of the historical development of Guangdong over a period of two thousand years one can see that the introduction of cultural elements as well as migration of people from the north at different periods played major roles in shaping the pace and course of development of the province. Significantly, development did not proceed at the same pace in every part of the province. In spite of the fact that some regions were settled two thousand years ago, other parts remained frontier areas until fairly recent times, especially the areas in the Pearl River Delta and Sze Yup regions, from which many Chinese Americans claim their ancestry. This, then, is the Guangdong heritage of the overseas Chinese and forms the backdrop within which our Guangdong forebears played out their roles in the evolving historical drama.

From the point of view of the genealogical researcher, this history also provides some guidance for evaluating information on one's ancestral tree. Although it is probably true that the remote ancestors of many Guangdongese can be traced to North China and perhaps even to the Yellow Emperor, another fact, obvious from Guangdong history, is that the native Yue and their heirs once formed a significant part of the Guangdong population and have left an obvious physical and cultural imprint on the people. Yet, one finds very few Guangdongese claiming them as ancestors. One suspects, however, they may have more descendants in Guangdong than is generally acknowledged in the genealogies, since many Guangdong genealogists, in seeking social status and prestigious and

respectable ancestral trees, may have been tempted to make claims, often unsubstantiated, to remote ancestors of northern, and hence Han Chinese, as opposed to "southern barbarian" origin. It should also be noted that women, at least some of whom were not of northern Han Chinese origin, are excluded from genealogical considerations when tracing lineages. Also over the centuries there have been numerous changes of surnames for various reasons so that the possession of a certain surname does not necessarily ensure descent from the alleged progenitor of that clan. All these considerations point to the fact that it is not an easy task to do historically rigorous genealogical research. A few families have a reliable genealogy reaching back many centuries. For example, the genealogy of the descendants of Confucius is probably one of the few authentic ones since so much attention had been focused on the family during the entire course of Chinese history. For others the historically reliable part would not extend beyond the progenitor of the local lineage identified with his clan village of origin. In still other cases the situation falls somewhere between the two extremes. In all cases, including the genealogy of Confucius' family, a point is eventually reached beyond which the information is not subject to rigorous historical analysis and can only be considered part of a tradition. Tradition, as long as one recognizes the limitations, of course can continue to be a source of pride and strength to the particular individual and his family.

Notes

1. Huang Chungyue, Zhonghua minzu xingcheng de zuji (Footprints of the formation of the Chinese people) (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 1988) 23-45 (hereafter cited as Formation of the Chinese People).

2. Huang, Formation of the Chinese People, 72-82.

3. Ta Kung Pao, May 4, 1987. The top ten surnames are Li, Wang, Zhang, Liu (Cantonese Lau), Chen (Cantonese Chun), Yang(Cantonese Yeung), Zhao (Cantonese Jue), Huang (Cantonese Wong), Zhou (Cantonese Jau), and Wu (Cantonese Ng).

4. Newcomers News, Dec. 5, 1986. The ten most common surnames in Guangdong are Li, Chen, Yu (variant Yee), Liang (Cantonese Leung), Wu (Cantonese Ng), Wang, Huang, Mai, Ye (Cantonese Yip), and Zhou.

5. The political division xian is translated into English as either "county" or "district." "District" is widely used in English language works on China published before the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and even today; however, "county" is the official translation of the term in the PRC. Since the subject matter of this essay principally covers developments during the pre-PRC period, the writer has chosen to use the term "district" in order to be consistent with the reference materials.

6. The Yue dialect is referred to as baak'wa in Guangdong, as Guangfu speech in Southeast Asia, and as Punti speech in Hawaii. It has also sometimes been referred to as Guangdong wa, or "Guangdong speech," a term which is incorrect since Cantonese is but one of three major dialects in the province. The proper term should be Guangzhou speech, since the pronunciation used in that city is regarded as the standard.

7. Xiong Zhenghui, "Guangdong fangyan de fen qu" (Geographical distribution of Guangdong dialects), Fangyan (Dialects), no. 3 (1987): 161-65.

8. Zhan Bohui, Xiandai Hanyu fangyan (Modern Chinese dialects)(Wuhan: Hubei renmin chubanshe, 1981), 164-65 (hereafter cited as Modern Chinese Dialects).

9. Jiang Zuyuan, Fang Zhiqin, eds., Jianming Guangdong shi (A concise history of Guangdong) (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 1987), 83, 96, 128-29 (hereafter cited as History of Guangdong).

10. Ye Di, Guangdong di ming tan yuan (Explorations into the origins of Guangdong geographical names) (Guangzhou: Guangdong Sheng ditu chubanshe, 1986), 25, 33, 99 (hereafter cited as Guangdong Geographical Names).

11. Tian Fang, Chen Yijun, eds., Zhongguo yimin shi lue (A short history of migrations in China) (Beijing: Zhishi chubanshe, 1986), 47-48 (hereafter cited as Migrations in China.)

12. Jiang and Fang, History of Guangdong, 101, 126. Zhang Jiuling later became the first native Guangdongese to serve as the emperor's prime minister. He was also the most famous Guangdongese poet of that period.

13. Tian and Chen, Migrations in China, 50.

14. Jiang Bingjian, Wu Mianji, Shen Shicheng, eds., Baiyue minzu wenhua (Culture of the Baiyue people) (Shanghai: Xuelin chubanshe, 1988), 113-22 (hereafter cited as Culture of the Baiyue).

15. Ibid., 124, 145.

16. Ibid., 359-64.

17. Wei Qingyin, "Shi lun Baiyue minzu de yuyan" (An Exploratory discussion of the language of the Baiyue people), in Baiyue minzu shi lun ji (Historical articles on the Baiyue people), ed. Chen Guoqiang, Jiang Bingjian, and Wu Mianji (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1982), 289-305.

18. Zhan, Modern Chinese Dialects, 162.

19. Ye, Guangdong Geographical Names, 23.

20. Huang Cibo, Zhuji Hang minzu nan qian ji (Record of the southern migration of people from Zhuji Hang) (Guangzhou:Zhongshan Library, 1957), passim.

21. Chen Lesu, "Zhuji Hang shi shi" (The historical events of Zhuji Hang), Xueshu yanjiu (Scholarly research), no 6 (1982): 71-77.

22. Tian and Chen, Migrations in China, 51-52.

23. Jiang and Fang, History of Guangdong, 136; Yu Guoyang, Nanhai ming zhu: Hainan Dao (Hainan Island: pearl of the South China Sea) (Guangzhou: Guangdong Sheng ditu chubanshe, 1985), 6-7.

24. Jiang and Fang, History of Guangdong, 220-23, 235-39.

25. Ibid., 266.

26. Peter Y. L. Ng, New Peace County: A Chinese Gazetteer of the Hong Kong Region (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1983), 26.

27. Shi Tai, comp., Enping Xian zhi (Gazetteer of Enping District) (1825; reprint, Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1966), 27.

28. Huang Chaozhong, Liu Yaocuan, comp., vol. 1 of Guangdong Yaozu lishi ziliao (Historical materials on the Yao nationality of Guangdong) (Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe, 1984), 299 (hereafter cited as Historical Materials on the Yao 1).

29. Yu Qimou, comp., Kaiping Xian zhi (Gazetteer of Kaiping District) (1933; reprint, Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe, 1966), 20.

30. Jiang and Fang, History of Guangdong, 266-70; Luo Xianglin (aka Lo Hsiang Lin), Kejia yanjiu dao lun (An introduction to the study of the Hakkas in its ethnic, historical, and cultural aspects) (1933; reprint, Taipei: Jiwen shuju, 1975), 75-76 (hereafter cited as Introduction to Study of Hakkas); Jao Tsung-i, "The She Settlements in the Han River Basin, Kwangtung," in Symposium on Historical, Archaeological, and Linguistic Studies on Southern China, Southeast Asia and the Hong Kong Region, ed. F. S. Drake (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1967), 101-9.

31. Wong Yongming, comp., Hua Xian zhi (Gazetteer of Hua District) (1687; reprint, Taipei: Chengwen Chubanshe, 1967), 61-64.

32. Huang and Liu, Historical Materials on the Yao, 54-55.

33. Luo, Introduction to Study of Hakkas, 61-62; Luo Xianglin, Kejia Yuanliu Kao (A study of the origins of the Hakka people) (reprint, Beijing: Zhongguo Huaqiao chuban gongsi, 1989), 28-32 (hereafter cited as Origins of the Hakkas).

34. Qingxiao, "Qing dai Yuedong jiedou shi shi" (History of local fights in Guangdong during the Qing period), Lingnan Xuebao 432 (June 1935): 103-51.

35. Luo, Origins of the Hakkas, 33.

36. Jiang and Fang, History of Guangdong, 255-59, 281-84.

37. There is no accurate census of Chinese abroad as categorized by dialect group. Approximate calculations by the writer based on tabulations and extrapolations from various sources indicate that the Cantonese groups are the most numerous – slightly less than a third of the total overseas Chinese population if Hong Kong and Macao are included. If these political anomalies, which are actually part of the Pearl River Delta, are excluded, then the southern Fujianese (Hokkien) and Chaozhou (Teochiu) dialect groups are more numerous than the Cantonese and the latter drops to third place, running somewhat ahead of the Hakkas (Kheh). Immigrants from Hainan (Hailam), Guangxi (Kwongsai), the Fuzhou area (Henghua, Hokchia, Hokchiu), Taiwan, and the rest of China make up the remainder. The reason for this surprising fact (to Chinese Americans) is obvious, for in Southeast Asia, where more than 90 percent of the Chinese abroad dwell, Vietnam is the only country where Cantonese are the largest group. In all other countries usually either the Hokkien or Teochiu dialect group predominates.

Chinese Glossary

baak'waa	白話
Baiyue	百越
Bao'an	寶安
Chaozhao (Teochiu)	潮洲
Chen clan	陳姓
Chixi	赤溪
Dongguan	東莞
Dongyi	東夷
Doumen	斗門
Enping	恩平
Foshan	佛山
Gangzhou	岡州
Guangzhou	廣州
Hakka (Kheh)	客家
Han nationality	漢族
Henghua	興化

Heshan	鶴山
Hokchia	福清
Hokchiu	福州
Hokkien	閩南
Hong Xiuquan	洪秀全
Hu clan	胡姓
Hua Xian	花縣
Huang (or Zhang) Zhewan	黃（或張）貯萬
Huang clan	黃姓
Huangdi	黃帝
Huaxia	華夏
Jao Tsung-i (Rao Zongyi)	饒宗頤
Jingchu	荆楚
Jingwu	荆吳
Kaiping	開平
Kang Youwei	康有爲
li	里
Li clan	李姓

Li nationality	黎族
Liang clan	梁姓
Liang Qichao	梁啟超
Lingnan	嶺南
Liu clan	劉姓
Longdu	隆都
Mai clan	麥姓
Mei Xian	梅縣
Meizhou	梅州
Nanhai	南海
Nan Han	南漢
Nanlang	南蒗
Nanxiong	南雄
Nanyue	南越
Panyu	番禺
Pingyi	平夷
Qin	秦
Sam Yup	三邑

Zhuhai	珠海
Zhujihang	珠璣巷
zong	粽

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