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The Business of Migration: Xiamen in Motion and Transformation

Ong Soon Keong

Abstract

This article examines the post–Opium War development of Xiamen after it was opened as a treaty port. While the British had hoped to use Xiamen as the beachhead for their economic advancement into China, foreign trade through the port failed to take off. Yet by the 1930s, Xiamen was one of the most prosperous and modern cities in China. What drove Xiamen to prosperity was not foreign trade or industrialization; rather, it was its evolution into the preeminent migration hub of Fujian province. This article argues that migration itself was a big business and there was money to be made at every step of the migration process. Individuals and businesses congregated in Xiamen to help move people, which in turn enhanced its business environment. Many emigrants thus returned to reside and invest in Xiamen instead of bringing their money back to their home villages. Their business decisions helped accelerate the urbanization and modernization of the port city in the early 20th century, and overseas Chinese continue to influence the fortune of Xiamen today.

In their introduction to *Cities in Motion: Interior, Coast, and Diaspora in Transnational China*, Sherman Cochran and David Strand suggest that because Chinese cities express and embody flows of goods, information, and people through them, they should be understood “not as stand-alone entities

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but as the sites of enterprise and action that extend beyond city walls, city limits, and regional and national boundaries.”¹ This essay on Xiamen (廈門) takes cue from Cochran and Strand’s conception of cities as “in motion’ as a matter of course” to understand the post–Opium War development of the South Fujian (福建) city, paying particular attention to how it became embedded in a transoceanic labor market and how the movement of emigrants in and out of the city effected its urban transformation.²

Xiamen was one of five ports opened to foreign trade and residence following the signing of the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842. As historian John King Fairbank (1907–1991) reminded us, these new treaty ports were not indiscriminately chosen, nor were they new markets established by and for European trade. Rather, “they were shrewdly chosen as points of entrance into the avenues of Chinese maritime trade which already existed.”³ In the case of Xiamen, the British selected it exactly because it was easily accessible from beyond China and the epicenter of commercial activities in South Fujian.⁴ They thus justifiably had high hopes for Xiamen as a trading port after the war ended. However, after a promising start, foreign trade through the port dwindled before the end of the nineteenth century, and Xiamen failed to be a seaport of any significance for foreign trade during the first half of the following century. Xiamen also did not develop large-scale industries. It only had a paltry 80 factories by the 1930s, while Shanghai (上海), another one of the first five treaty ports, had 6,000.

Notwithstanding Xiamen’s lackluster foreign trade and limited industrial development, it was often mentioned alongside Shanghai and Qingdao (青島) as the most vibrant and prosperous cities in China during the Republican era.⁵ In the 1920s, Xiamen’s land prices and workers’ wages were among the highest in the country, and after a visit to the treaty port, the writer Lu Yan (魯彥) even suggested that it was “the residential district for China’s wealthiest.”⁶ What propelled Xiamen’s progress was the port city’s expanded role as the migration hub for South Fujian. From 1866 until the onset of the Second Sino-Japanese War, more than 100,000 Chinese moved through Xiamen annually leaving or returning to China. Where did these emigrants come from and how did Xiamen facilitate the mass movement of these Chinese? How did Xiamen’s evolution into a “city in motion” affected its relationships with the emigrants and how did they in turn influenced its industrial growth, trade performance, and urban development? By examining the complex inner workings of Xiamen during its treaty port era, this article shows that migration itself was a big business

and there was money to be made at every step of the migration process.⁷ Individuals and businesses in Xiamen found a niche where they could make money and even prosper, which explain their indifference toward foreign trade and industrial development.

1. Trade and Migration before the Opium War

On 14 January 1822, a Chinese merchant junk named *Tek Sing* left Xiamen and rode the northeasterly monsoon toward its destination, Batavia, on the north coast of Java. The *Tek Sing* was a three-masted oceangoing junk with typical Fujianese design: it had a flat-belly, squared-off bow brightly painted in green (Xiamen's official color), and stern rising high out of the water. The *Tek Sing* was also big, one of the largest of its kind: it was approximately 50 meters long, was 10 meters wide, and had a gross burthen of 1000 tons.⁸ When the *Tek Sing* departed Xiamen, its cargo holds were already carefully loaded with over 300,000 pieces of porcelain and a cornucopia of merchandises, including teas, raw silk and nankeens, lacquer ware, bamboo furniture, writing paper, umbrellas, vermilion, glass beads, Chinese pharmacopoeia, and so on.⁹ More significantly, besides 200 crew members, in excess of 1,600 emigrants, including men, women, and children aged between 6 and 70, crowded its decks.¹⁰ The *Tek Sing* thus set sail with a full belly of goods and over 1,800 people on board.

We know about the *Tek Sing* because as it was heading southward, its captain made a fateful decision to deviate from the customary practice of hugging the coastline and stayed out in midocean. The junk hit the Belvidere Reef as it neared Batavia and sunk. Of all the passengers on board, most of them perished along with their conveyance with only 198 fortunate souls saved by a nearby ship.¹¹ In 1999, treasure hunters discovered the remains of the *Tek Sing* wreck and were able to salvage a significant portion of the original porcelain cargo.¹² The tremendous loss of lives and goods associated with the *Tek Sing* incident was unfortunate, but it revealed to us the scale of maritime trade conducted out of Xiamen in the early nineteenth century, the size of potential Chinese emigrants who were ready to go abroad, and the fact that the South Fujian port was more than capable of organizing and sending them overseas.

Located off the littoral of Fujian province and far removed from the traditional political and cultural center of China in the North, Xiamen was historically marginalized within the empire.¹³ During the sixteenth

and early seventeenth centuries, because Xiamen was a nonadministrative city with few officials stationed on the island, it became the haven for smugglers and the favorite rendezvous for outlaws and rebels.¹⁴ But after Zheng Chenggong (鄭成功, aka Koxinga) used it as the hub for his renegade maritime empire against the centralizing Qing State, Xiamen quickly became a major port of call for the numerous junks flying Koxinga's flag and anyone interested in conducting trade with China.¹⁵ Vessels from the British East India Company began to dock at Xiamen from 1676, and goods from Bandung, Siam, Vietnam, and other Southeast Asian countries could be found trading in its markets.¹⁶

After the Zheng regime capitulated in 1683, the Qing court ordered the establishment of the first maritime customs at Xiamen—followed by three more in Zhejiang (浙江), Jiangsu (江蘇), and Guangdong (廣東) provinces—to regulate and tax trade.¹⁷ Needless to say, this move upgraded the former rebel base to a legitimate maritime center of the Qing Empire. In a few decades after the resumption of legal trade, Xiamen flourished into the center of an intricate and multilayered coastal trading network—which the historian Ng Chin-keong has aptly dubbed the “Amoy (Xiamen) network”—that reached as far as Manchuria in the North and Macao in the South, and even extended beyond the Chinese empire. The *Xiamen Gazetteer* (廈門志 *Xiamen zhi*) of 1839 testified:

After the rescission of the ban on maritime trade, trading vessels of Chinese and foreign origins have congregated at the port of Xiamen. The profits from merchandise of the sea were enough to enrich the government coffers and support the livelihood of the people. . . . [Xiamen's] traders see seafaring as the path to wealth. . . . Several times a year, they headed north to Ningbo, Shanghai, Tianjin, and Jinzhou, south to Guangdong, and opposite to Taiwan; or set sail to Luzon, Sulu, and Batavia in the winter and return in the summer. Returns on trade could reach several to dozens of times the initial investments.¹⁸

By the eighteenth century, commerce in Xiamen was so prosperous and its merchants so wealthy that it won the distinction as the “city of silver,” and even considered by one Liang Zhangju (梁章矩), who spent some years of his youth in Xiamen, as the finest city in the South.¹⁹

After the elevation of Xiamen to the chief port for maritime trade in South Fujian, it also became the meeting place for aspiring emigrants waiting to board one of its junks heading to an overseas destination. To be sure, the migration of South Fujianese predated the Qing dynasty, and its history paralleled that of its overseas trade; after all, “migration

follow(ed) trade routes.”²⁰ Indeed, when maritime activities burgeoned in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, evidence suggests that South Fujianese were already sojourning overseas during this time. By the late sixteenth century, Fujianese overseas had formed small but settled communities in Nagasaki, Manila, Banten, Batavia, and Malacca.²¹

During the Qing dynasty, even though overseas travel and residence were decreed illegal by the court, the imperial prohibition could not stop the exodus of Fujianese. Before the Opium War, hundreds of thousands of Fujianese from Xiamen and its vicinity had moved to Taiwan, and thousands more to the Philippines.²² These large and continuous outflows of Fujianese emigrants were possible because it was common practice for merchant junks to bring along emigrant passengers to augment their profit. In a 1727 memorial to Emperor Yongzheng, the governor-general of Fujian and Zhejiang, Gao Qizhuo (高其倬), deplored the fact that junk captains would smuggle 200 to 300 emigrants on top of their officially declared number of crew and merchants, and charged each of these illegal passengers upward of 8 taels of silver for the voyage. So lucrative were such illegal activities, Gao observed, that junks would carry only a moderate amount of goods but packed the decks with these no-good loafers.²³ And there was certainly no lack of willing Fujianese waiting to board one of these departing vessels. As we have seen in the case of *Tek Sing*, the decks of a sailing junk could be crowded with more than 1,000 illegal emigrants. Hence whether as a trading port or as a launchpad for emigrants, Xiamen seemed to be well positioned to assume the expanded roles with its opening as a treaty port.²⁴

2. Opening for Business

When H. Hamilton Lindsay, a supercargo for the British East India Company, visited Xiamen in 1832, he reported that he “daily saw from 10 to 20 large junks of from 300 to 500 tons burthen enter the harbor, laden with rice and sugar.”²⁵ It is no wonder then that the British were gleefully optimistic with the amount of trade they were about to transact through the new treaty port. Indeed, during the first ten years of the treaty port era, British trade through Xiamen expanded by six times, growing from 380,000 silver dollars in 1843 to over two million silver dollars in 1852.²⁶ This impressive expansion in foreign trade stalled briefly in the 1850s but regained slow and substantial growth after the Second Opium War (1856–60), due in large part to an increase in Xiamen consumption of

opium and cotton piece goods, and also new products like kerosene oil, flour, matches, and metal.²⁷ Unfortunately, the Western commercial community in Xiamen was not able to reap full benefits from this growing Chinese taste for foreign goods. To the contrary, Westerners' influence and presence in the treaty port shrunk over time—in 1880, there were only 24 foreign firms left in Xiamen, far outnumbered by Chinese wholesale houses, of which there were 183.²⁸

The dwindling number of foreign firms in Xiamen reflected the growing disappointment foreign merchants felt toward the treaty port. Unlike Shanghai, which could draw silk, vegetable oils, hides, wood oil, pig bristles, and other export goods that foreign buyers craved from as far inland as the Sichuan province, Xiamen, with a small and circumscribed hinterland, had only tea it could export in abundance.²⁹ Between 1858 and 1864, Xiamen exported four to seven million pounds of its export tea annually. In 1877, the peak year of its local tea export, it shipped in excess of 12 million pounds to foreign countries.³⁰ However, after 1877, the export of Xiamen tea began to tail off gradually, until it averaged between 800,000 and 1.6 million pounds annually throughout 1897–1931.³¹ The main reason for this relatively short period of prosperity in tea trade was the continual deterioration in the quality of Xiamen tea and the dishonest packing of its merchants, resulting in a growing disreputation among foreign buyers. By the end of the nineteenth century, the demand for and consequently the price of Xiamen tea fell to the point that it was “hardly worth the cost of shipment”—many local cultivators simply abandoned growing tea.³² Without tea, as Cecil Bowra, onetime commissioner of customs at Xiamen, lamented, Xiamen had become “the shadow of its former self.”³³ Xiamen's foreign export subsequently slumped to its lowest point and would not recover.

3. Facilitating Migration

Even though Xiamen continued to conduct a respectable amount of business along China's coast after the Opium War, there is no denying that it did not reap full benefits from foreign ambitions to trade through its port.³⁴ Regardless, the opening of Xiamen as a treaty port linked it to the new transoceanic commercial sphere spanning South China and Southeast Asia that the British imperial power helped create, and it was able to take advantage of the global demand for labor to emerge as one of the most important migration hubs in China.

To be sure, Xiamen was popularly remembered as the first center in China for the disreputable trade in Chinese “coolies”—that is, indentured laborers under contract to foreigners. However, this “selling of human piglets,” as the Chinese called it, was active in Xiamen only for a relatively short period—from 1845 until 1852—and by one count, fewer than 18,000 Chinese were shipped abroad.³⁵ What was more consequential to Xiamen though was the concurrent mass movement of free emigrants who moved out of China voluntarily, which lasted until the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War and in significantly larger number. Between 1845 and 1940, more than 4.6 million travelers left China through Xiamen, with the majority of them heading to Southeast Asia, especially the British colony of Singapore (see Table 1).

Table 1: Emigrants Embarking from Xiamen (1845–1940)

Years	No. of emigrants (thousands)	Years	No. of emigrants (thousands)
1845–1875	260	1906–1910	395
1876–1880	121	1911–1915	425
1881–1885	239	1916–1920	339
1886–1890	317	1921–1925	427
1891–1895	407	1926–1927	358
1896–1900	378	1931–1935	290
1901–1905	436	1936–1940	291

Sources: For 1845–1875, Dai Yifeng, *Quyuxing jingji fazhan yu shehui bianqian: yi jindai Fujian diqu wei zhongxin* (Regional Economic Development and Social Change: Focus on the Modern Fujian Area) (Changsha, Hunan: Yuelu shushe, 2004), p. 311; for 1876–1940, Xiamen shizhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Jindai Xiamen shehui jingji gaikuan* (General Description of Xiamen’s Society and Economics in Modern Times) (Xiamen: Lujiang chubanshe, 1990), pp. 436–447.

Southeast Asia was of course familiar places to Fujian emigrants. As we noted, Fujianese sea merchants had ventured to trade at various Southeast Asian emporiums even before the arrival of Europeans. Xiamen’s connection with Singapore, the small island on the southern tip of peninsular Malaya, also predated its treaty port era. When Sir Stamford Raffles of the British East India Company established Singapore as a free trading port in 1819 and welcomed traders and laborers of all nations to come, Xiamen sent its first trading junk, along with the

expected illegal travelers, in 1821. After Western colonizers stepped up their extractions of Southeast Asian resources, the plantations and mines in their colonies required greatly increased manpower that the natives could not fulfil. Large number of able-bodied men from Fujian thus emigrated to Southeast Asia via Xiamen to meet the labor shortage. Being the focal point of the British empire in this part of the world, Singapore was the first stop for Xiamen emigrants, most of whom were then transhipped to British settlements in Malaya, and Java and Sumatra in the Dutch East Indies. Hence even before it was a treaty port, Xiamen had already formed crucial interlocking links with Singapore in creating a China–Southeast Asia migration route.

Following Great Britain’s defeat of the Qing dynasty and extended its sphere of dominance to the South China Sea, ships, especially those flying British and European flags, could traversed the water between China and Southeast Asia with much more freedom. Xiamen took advantage of the intensified circulations within the region and its link with the British colony to send growing number of Fujianese southward. The stage was thus set for Xiamen to expand its role as the launchpad for streams of Fujian emigrants heading primarily to the colonies in Southeast Asia.

4. The Mechanism of Migration

From 1875 onward, more than 70,000 Fujianese moved out of China through Xiamen annually. While Xiamen was already capable of sending forth almost a couple thousand emigrants every trading season before the Opium War, the logistics of facilitating the mass exodus of Fujianese after the floodgate of migration opened was still a formidable task. This was made possible only because a host of migration-related professions and businesses sprang up in the treaty port to help move people across seas. In Xiamen, emigrant inn owners and ship brokers arranged for the emigrants’ departure, while the supercargoes and business owners in the receiving ports shepherded the new arrivals to plantations, mines or other job destinations. In between, the “headmen,” or *ketou* (客頭) formed the most important link that tied the two ends together.³⁶

a. Headman

The majority of Xiamen’s emigrants came from the rural villages of Fujian, with the prefectures of Quanzhou, Xinghua (興化), and the

autonomous department of Yongchun (永春) sending forth the largest number.³⁷ For a young emigrant from rural Fujian, he probably knew little of the language, custom, or working conditions of the land he aspired to. Even the passage to Xiamen, the port for embarkation, would be a daunting task if he came from Xinghua or Fuzhou (福州) in the North and spoke a different dialect to the people of South Fujian. First-time emigrants thus almost never traveled alone, and they required experienced hands to lead the way and show them the ropes. It was to meet the needs of these new emigrants, or *xinke* (新客), that old-timers, the *laoke* (老客), began to make the most of their knowledge, connections, and mobility to serve as professional headmen for prospective emigrants.

Headmen were usually emigrants themselves who, on their trips back to their home villages, brought friends and relatives along when they again return overseas. They soon found money to be made in this process and abandoned their jobs abroad to become itinerant headmen full-time. The job of the headman was rather straightforward: he was to gather prospective emigrants, prepare the necessary paperwork for them, bring them to Xiamen, accompany them abroad, and help them find jobs overseas. In the early 20th century, there were as many as 1,100 headmen active in Xiamen, and an additional 800 in Shantou (汕頭), and 200 in Hong Kong.³⁸

Since one of the main reasons emigrants left China was to escape the economic hardship at home, many of them were too poor to pay for their own passages. In such cases, the headmen would pay on their behalf but charged the emigrants an annual interest of 30 to 45 percent on the expenses advanced.³⁹ Headmen also made a profit after they arrived at their destinations by charging potential employers several dollars over the passage rate for the service of one of their recruits.⁴⁰

A successful headman could bring along several hundred men on one trip, but the less capable ones could only muster five or six.⁴¹ How well a headman did very much depend on the extent of his social network, which was built essentially on his hometown and native place ties. It was in his home village and nearby towns that he either personally or through intermediaries scouted for prospective emigrants, and being generally short of funds himself, he also looked to fellow townsmen as business partners to loan him money or extend him credits. Most commonly, headmen would enter into a symbiotic business relation with acquaintances from their native place who were successful enough to become proprietors of “emigrant inns” in Xiamen.

b. Emigrant Inns

Emigrant inns constituted the next level in the commercial hierarchy of the migration business. Upon arriving in Xiamen, the headman would lodge his charges in an emigrant inn he was already in a working relationship. In the 1910s, there were as many as 184 emigrant inns in Xiamen, lining the coast of the island near the harbor and also spilling over onto the islet Gulangyu. Like headmen, emigrant inns were also embedded in the same social network based on native place ties, and they visibly displayed their native-place affiliations with door signs and flags that read “Fuqing (福清) Inn,” “Zhangzhou (漳州) Inn,” and so on. At least 11 localities from around Xiamen were represented.⁴²

The emigrant inns’ basic revenue came from their primary function as lodges for travelers awaiting a Southeast Asia-bound ship. Instead of imposing daily rate, emigrant inns normally charged a fixed amount (for example, 1.20 yuan in the 1910s) per occupant regardless how many days they stayed.⁴³ To augment their income, inn owners were also money-lenders who not only loan operating capital to headmen, but also provided allowances to new emigrants at a 10 to 15 percent interest.⁴⁴ Some inns also doubled as exporters, shipping Fujianese favorites like “pouchong” (包種 *baozhong*) tea and dried fruits to overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. But emigrant inns probably derived their largest profit from the resale of steamship tickets that they acquired from shipping brokers. Because their lodgers were almost obligated to buy from them, emigrant inns could move the tickets easily even after they hiked the ticket prices by 20 to 30 percent when sold to headmen, or 30 to 35 percent when sold to individual emigrants.⁴⁵ Operating an emigrant inn thus could be very lucrative, and the larger ones in Xiamen in the 1930s had working capitals upward of 50,000 yuan.⁴⁶

c. Shipping Brokers

Shipping brokers came into existence because shipping companies in Xiamen could not be bothered to sell steamship tickets to passengers directly. Instead, they utilized Chinese intermediaries—the shipping brokers—to reach out to emigrant inns, headmen, or emigrants on their behalf. For every ticket sold, shipping brokers received a five percent commission from the shipping companies. It was also customary for them to add one or two dollars on top of the shipping companies’ asking price.⁴⁷ This is to say, shipping brokers stood to reap handsome rewards

as they were making money from both sides of the transaction. Given the large number of emigrants leaving Xiamen each year, shipping brokers could gain considerable wealth.

d. Ships for the Emigrants

Having reached Xiamen, the next leg of the emigrants' journey was to board one of the many steamships heading to their destinations. Of course the Fujianese native oceangoing junks were capable of sailing to Southeast Asia. But since wind-powered junks were dependent on the monsoons, they were restricted to one return voyage per year. Moreover, the passage from Xiamen to the Straits Settlements would take between 20 and 30 days, making the journey a rather uncomfortable experience for the emigrants. Hence after steamships appeared in Xiamen with increasing frequency from the 1860s, Fujianese emigrants quickly gravitated to steamship travel for their improved speed and increased safety and comfort.⁴⁸

The strong and sustained demand for sea travel by the Fujianese, not surprisingly, enticed more shipping companies to advance into passenger trade. After the turn of the 20th century, several shipping lines plied the familiar routes between Xiamen and popular destinations in Southeast Asia (see Table 2). Free from the constraints of wind, steamships departed regularly and on fixed schedule. And since most of them were capable of carrying at least 1,000 passengers each trip, under normal circumstances, an emigrant would not have to wait long in Xiamen for a ride.⁴⁹

Table 2: Shipping Companies Servicing Xiamen in the Early 20th Century

Shipping Company or Agent	Destinations from Xiamen	No. of Vessels
Foo Chang Company	Shantou, Hong Kong, Singapore	3
Ho Yuen Company	Shantou, Hong Kong, Singapore, Penang	4
Yang Ho Company	Shantou, Hong Kong, Singapore, Penang, Rangoon	3
Cha Hua Company	Hong Kong, Singapore, Java, Japan	5
Hutchison-Whampoa Company	Hong Kong, Manila	1
Swire Company	Hong Kong, Manila	3
	Shantou, Hong Kong, Singapore	19

Source: Table compiled from Bank of Taiwan, "Overseas Chinese Remittances in the 1910s," in *Overseas Chinese Remittances from Southeast Asia, 1910-1940*, edited by George Hicks (Singapore: Select Books, 1993), pp. 21-24.

Interestingly, emigrants were not allowed to board the ships on their own but had to be led on board by lightermen—or “double-oarsmen” (雙槳 *shuangjiang*) as the locals called them—preengaged by the owners of the inns where they lodged. These double-oarsmen came mostly from coastal villages in the Tong’an (同安) county just to the north of Xiamen, and belonged either to the Chen (陳), the Wu (吳), or the Ji (紀) clans. They were thus migrants too, but their migratory journey ended in Xiamen, where they partook in the port’s migration business by performing a supporting role. By 1934, there were over 2,000 lighters in service in Xiamen, of which the Wu clan controlled about half.⁵⁰ To ensure that their lodgers could go on board the steamers without harassment, inn owners had to liaise with the Wu clan, who would then send double-oarsmen to take the emigrants and their belongings to their ships.

e. Arrivals

Upon arrival at the port of disembarkation, the emigrants were ushered off the steamer to a local inn that their headmen had already made arrangements with before the voyage. Emigrant inns at the destination ports formed the last link in the migration process. In Singapore, the main port of arrival for Xiamen’s emigrants for example, there were at least 29 such inns in the 1910s. Like their counterparts in China, they were embedded in the same native-place network and served exclusively emigrants from the same province. Of the 29 inns in Singapore, seven catered to emigrants from Fujian, five to Canton emigrants, and eight to Shantou emigrants.⁵¹

Besides receiving the emigrants and providing them with accommodation, destination inns were also labor-brokers and the first point of contact for employers looking for labor from China. When an employer in Singapore or the surrounding colonies informed an inn of the number of laborers he required, the inn would either telegraph partner inns in China, or instruct headmen working for it to proceed to China to recruit the laborers. Once the ship with emigrants arrived, the inn would send its staff to greet the headmen and their charges, arrange for their accommodation, and make the proper forward travel arrangements if necessary or deliver the emigrants to their employers. From them, he got immediate payment for the cost incurred. But if the new emigrants arrived without ready employment, the inn and their headmen would help them find jobs.⁵²

From our discussion above, it is important to emphasize that what elevated Xiamen into a migration hub was not just the spike in demand for labor in the Southeast Asian colonies or the ever-growing number of aspiring Fujianese emigrants clamoring for a passage overseas, but the array of people and businesses that converged in Xiamen to partake in the business of moving people, after all, there was money to be made in the migration process. Take steamship tickets for example. Before a steamship ticket reached an emigrant, it had already passed through the hands of shipping brokers, inn owners, and/or headmen. And with each change of hand, the price on the ticket was significantly marked up so the seller could pocket the margins. In the early 1930s, shipping companies priced their tickets at a higher price of 61 yuan each after the British colonial government imposed travel restrictions because of economic depressions. Brokers in turn sold each ticket to inns for 81 yuan, and by the time it was sold to the emigrant, the same ticket cost 101 yuan, representing a 65 percent increase over the original price.⁵³ In view of the amount of profits available, it was actually in the interest of those in the migration business to keep the flow of emigrants going.

5. Servicing the Emigrants

As the final stop where China ended and their overseas journey began, Xiamen not only provided aspiring emigrants with the resources and mechanism to leave China but also furnished those already abroad with a variety of means to maintain links to their home villages. In the first place, Xiamen brought South Fujian closer to the emigrants overseas by sending them local products like fresh and dried fruits, salted vegetables, dried fish, ham, vermicelli, prepared tobacco, earthenware, paper, and “pouchong” tea. For overseas Fujianese, the availability of hometown favorites lightened their nostalgia for home; for Xiamen’s merchants, the growing Fujianese communities constituted ready markets they could sell to. Hence, rather than finding new products to sell to Western markets, Xiamen’s merchants focused on satisfying the needs of their fellow provincials abroad.⁵⁴ Similarly, the few mechanized and unmechanized factories on the island only manufactured everyday items like umbrellas, straw mats, and shoes, and had the overseas Chinese as their target customers. In the early 20th century, goods sold to Southeast Asia constituted as high as 70–80 percent of Xiamen’s total export, and increased to more than 90 percent by the 1930s.⁵⁵

Xiamen also served as the crucial link that kept emigrants connected to their loved ones in China by allowing messages, letters, and remittances from afar to flow through to their designated recipients in the hinterlands. It is no secret that poor Chinese peasant became hired laborers overseas so they could help support the families they left behind.⁵⁶ But since it was impractical and impossible for them to travel back every time they received their pay, they had to find ways to send their hard-earned money to China without physically returning. The remittance industry arose to meet this need, and undoubtedly also to benefit from it.

The most primitive way of remitting money back home was of course to entrust it to friends and fellow villagers when they were returning to China. But as the number of emigrants increased, so did the demand to remit money. Soon, professional couriers emerged to take over the task of carrying remittances for immobile emigrants but charged a 10 percent premium on the total amount they carry. The new pursuit proved lucrative enough for some who were able to accumulate enough savings to venture into other undertakings, including the establishment of specialized remittance agencies, the “letter offices” (民信局 *minxinju* or 批信局 *pixinju*).⁵⁷ In the 1880s, there were already 8 letter offices in Xiamen and 12 in Shantou;⁵⁸ overseas in Singapore, there were 49 offices altogether, of which 12 were operated by overseas Fujianese.⁵⁹ The number of letter offices surrounding the South China Sea increased rapidly in the early 20th century, reaching its peak in 1935, with 153 in Xiamen and another 66 in its closest rival Shantou.⁶⁰

The rapid expansion of the remittance industry in Xiamen was testament to the large amount of money consistently remitted by overseas Chinese through the port. From table 3, we can see that in the first 15 years of the 20th century, overseas remittances hovered between 17 and 20 million yuan. Remittances briefly dipped from 1916 to 1918 because of the First World War that began two years prior, but quickly recovered after the war ended and continued to grow over the next decade until it reached its largest amount in 1931. Remittances again fell after 1932 because overseas Chinese communities were hard hit by the Great Depression. Even so, they still managed to remit 40 to 50 million yuan annually up to the Sino-Japanese War.

Table 3: Annual Remittance to Xiamen (in yuan), 1905–1930

Year	Remittance	Year	Remittance
1905	18,900,000	1922	27,900,000
1906	18,900,000	1923	25,700,000
1907	17,600,000	1924	45,900,000
1908	17,800,000	1925	45,000,000
1909	20,000,000	1926	66,000,000
1910	21,600,000	1927	51,800,000
1911	17,800,000	1928	44,800,000
1912	19,100,000	1929	54,200,000
1913	17,600,000	1930	60,000,000
1914	17,200,000	1931	72,000,000
1915	18,500,000	1932	49,700,000
1916	15,000,000	1933	47,900,000
1917	12,800,000	1934	43,300,000
1918	11,800,000	1935	51,230,760
1919	18,900,000	1936	58,355,000
1920	19,200,000	1937	57,116,510
1921	44,000,000	1938	52,929,211

Source: Figure for 1905–34 taken from Wu Chengxi, “Xiamen huaqiao huikuan yu jinrong zuzhi” (Overseas Chinese Remittances and Xiamen’s Financial Institutions), *Shehui kexue zazhi* (Quarterly Review of Social Sciences), Vol. 8, No. 2 (1936), pp. 202–203; 1935–1939 taken from Zheng Linkuan, *Fujian huaqiao huikuan* (The Remittances of Overseas Fujianese) (Fuzhou: Fujian sheng zhengfu mishuchu tongjishi, 1940), p. 32.

Note: According to C. F. Remer, the average value of a yuan between 1894 and 1901 is 0.5 U.S. dollars. This value dropped to 0.46 between 1902 and 1913, and rose to 0.52 between 1913 and 1930. In the 1930s, the value of the Chinese dollar fell to US\$0.29. C. F. Remer, *Foreign Investment in China* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1968).

The large amount of money flowing into Xiamen not only supported the booming remittance industry but also helped bolster the buying power of its denizens, and sustain a relatively thriving consumer market in the treaty port and a comparatively higher standard of living than its surrounding cities and ports.⁶¹ The Republican era economist Zhu Boneng (朱博能) also observed: after vast number of people migrated through Xiamen, the port city “was soon transformed into the ‘Nanyang (南洋) resort’ where overseas Chinese returned for rest and relaxation, and the ‘consumer center’ for the whole of South Fujian.”⁶² Indeed, it is important to point out that Xiamen

was not only the embarkation point of choice for Fujianese emigrants but also their first stop in China on their return home. And many did make a trip back. In 1890, for example, 54,085 persons departed for Southeast Asia via Xiamen while 35,964 returned to it. The same figures for 1900 were 90,358 and 26,225; for 1910, 80,071 and 14,590; and for 1920, 62,419 and 37,693.⁶³ Japanese scholar Kaoru Sugihara estimated that between 1873 and 1939, the percentage of total emigrants returning to China was 80 percent.⁶⁴

For the many weary emigrants returning home, Xiamen offered a welcomed reprieve from their year-round toil in foreign lands, as they could rest and enjoy the urban center for a day or two, and purchase the obligatory gifts for their families before heading inland to their home villages. The willingness of returned emigrants to spend spurred the opening of as many as 5,202 shops in Xiamen by 1935 selling a wide array of goods, including clothes, textiles, shoes, watches, jewelry, bicycles, antiques, furniture, and all sorts of food items.

Besides doing their rounds of necessary shopping, the travelers in Xiamen could also dine in one of the city's many restaurants and coffee or tea houses. They could get a haircut, take a bath in a bathhouse, tour the famous Zhongshan (中山) park and its zoo, go dancing in one of the two Westernized dance halls, or enjoy a movie in a modern cinema, of which the city had 11.⁶⁵ For the less inhibited, they could try their luck in gambling, satisfy their cravings in an opium den, or relax in the company of a prostitute.⁶⁶ Treaty port Xiamen was, in many ways, organized to cater to the legions of emigrants.

6. Investing in Xiamen

Even Fujianese emigrants themselves were aware that business opportunities abounded in Xiamen. Hence a significant amount of their money that could have headed back to their home villages in the hinterland remained in Xiamen for investment purposes instead.⁶⁷ Overseas Chinese invested in a wide variety of business ventures in Xiamen; they set up bus companies that connected the treaty port to rural emigrant communities and major regional cities like Shantou and Fuzhou, constituted more than 18 percent of the million yuan textile retail, and founded small factories that manufactured canned fruits, canned vegetables, medicated *samshu* (spirits), vermicelli, and soy sauce.⁶⁸

In the process of investing for profit, enterprising overseas Chinese also made the amenities of modern life available to the denizens of

Xiamen. The treaty port originally had a small electricity company operating a 300-watt generator. In 1934, overseas Chinese invested in the company and augmented its capital to 1.4 million yuan, of which 80 percent were supplied from abroad. The company was thus able to acquire two additional 880-watt and 500-watt generators, and began to supply electricity to both home and commercial users.⁶⁹ Among home users, returned emigrants were also the main subscribers for the company's electricity.

Similarly, Xiamen's first public utility company, the Xiamen Telephone Company (廈門德律風公司 *Xiamen delüfeng gongsi*), was founded in 1907 by local merchant elite Lin Erjia (林爾嘉). Lin supplied half of the starting capital of 40,000 yuan and solicited overseas Chinese financiers to contribute the other half.⁷⁰ In 1922, the Indonesian "Sugar King," Huang Yizhu (黃奕住), raised fund to buy the company from Lin Erjia and pumped in another 200,000 yuan to reinvigorate the faltering enterprise.⁷¹ By 1930, Huang's telephone lines not only reached into the rural districts of Xiamen, but also extended beyond the island to nearby cities including Zhangzhou, Shima (石碼), and Haicang (海滄).⁷² In 1933 and 1934, Huang's telephone company had close to 2,400 subscribed customers, and it was making over 10,000 yuan in profit annually.⁷³

Huang Yizhu was perhaps even better remembered by the residents of Xiamen for providing them with clean running water. Being a small island with no river system, Xiamen had always suffered from a dearth of potable water. In 1923, Huang Yizhu founded the Commercial Xiamen Water PLC (商辦廈門自來水股份有限公司 *Shangban Xiamen zilaishui gufen youxian gongsi*) with an initial capital of 1.1 million yuan. Huang provided 400,000 yuan himself, while the rest was raised among overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. In 1927, the company began delivering drinking water to Xiamen's residents at 53 cents per ton after the completion of a one million ton main reservoir and a water processing plant capable of purifying 5,000 tons of water daily. Huang could genuinely be proud of the fact that his water, after passing through three filtering ponds and a Swiss-made ozone sterilizer, was the cleanest in all of East Asia.⁷⁴ By 1934, the company was providing drinking water to several thousand households on both Xiamen and Gulangyu islands; it even had surplus water to supply foreign ships at 50 cents a ton, bringing in an additional 300,000 yuan annually.⁷⁵

7. Urban Reconstruction

Like major cities across China, Xiamen also undertook a major effort to renovate its disorderly and inefficient city in the 1920s. City wall was torn, old roads were paved and new ones constructed, marshlands and ponds were reclaimed, and new business districts were designated. Dr Wu Lien-teh (伍連德), who revisited the treaty port in the early 1930s, observed that Xiamen had become “modern, picturesque, and sanitary,” a significant improvement from its days of filth, disorder, and disease in the 1910s.⁷⁶

Again, overseas Chinese were the main force behind Xiamen’s urban reconstruction, since it was their money that helped finance the city administrators’ various development projects. These overseas financiers preferred to invest in real estate for its relative security, and during Xiamen’s urban reconstruction phase, its promise of rapid and high return. According to a study conducted by historian Lin Jinzhi (林金枝), of all the 2,688 overseas Chinese who had invested in Xiamen between 1908 and 1938, at least 2,145 of them were involved in real estate. Needless to say, these investors began construction in earnest for maximum profit; one estimate was that from August 1928 to 1930, a total of 3,585 new buildings were erected in Xiamen.⁷⁷ In today’s Xiamen, 60–70 percent of the buildings that line downtown Xiamen’s major thoroughfares, such as Zhongshan Road, Siming (思明) Road, Datong (大同) Road, and Xiahe (廈禾) Road were built in the 1920s and 1930s by overseas Chinese investors.

Overseas Chinese should also be credited for introducing a new building type, the “shop-house” into Xiamen. Known locally as *qilou* (騎樓), these shop-houses were usually two- to four-storied structures built one contiguously to another. The bottom story was for commercial operations while the upper floors acted as residential apartments. The unique feature of the “shop-houses” was that the bottom floor receded a few feet to form a footpath, and since the upper stories projected out over the bottom floor, they acted as an overhang to protect pedestrians and customers from the elements. Built in continuous rows with the façades facing the street, the shops gave customers and pedestrians easy and all-weather access year-round. Due both to their functionality and orderliness, *qilou* quickly became the standard form for buildings that lined the newly paved roads. These shophouses remain the hallmarks of Xiamen’s cityscape today.

8. Xiamen after 1938

As we have seen, the large and continuous flow of emigrants through Xiamen sustained it as an important shipping port from the second half of the nineteenth century through the first four decades of the 20th century. But Xiamen's prominence as a migration hub was severely eroded with the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War. In 1938, as superior Japanese forces encroached on the island, Euro-American and Chinese shipping companies and their steamships began to retreat from Xiamen. While some denizens of the treaty port fled to Southeast Asia, many more escaped to the hinterlands of Zhangzhou and Quanzhou, leading to the sharp decrease in the number of Xiamen travelers to the Straits Settlements from 46,019 in 1937 to 15,406 in 1938 and 7,500 in 1939.⁷⁸ On the other hand, Japanese occupation of Xiamen deprived overseas Chinese of their familiar gateway into China; they thus had to sail first to Hong Kong and Shanghai before making the arduous journey overland to Fujian.⁷⁹ And after Japan ousted European powers from Southeast Asia with shocking ease and speed in 1942, it also took over the shipping lanes between South China and Southeast Asia, thus effectively shutting down the century-old free-flowing human circulations between Xiamen and Singapore. The port of Xiamen suffered greatly during Japanese occupation: by 1941, the number of ships docking at Xiamen's wharfs decreased by more than 50 percent compared to its preoccupation years; it is also estimated that the ravages of war destroyed 1,260 junks, 100 steam vessels, and 470 fishing boats in Xiamen.⁸⁰

After the Second World War ended in 1945, Xiamen's shipping and migration industries welcomed a period of rejuvenation as British, American, and Chinese shipping companies rushed back to reestablish their branches in the port. The huge influx of overseas Chinese from Southeast Asia, either to return home from exile or to reconnect with their loved ones, spurred renewed confidence in passenger trade and enticed local and overseas Chinese merchants to invest in the shipping industry.⁸¹ Xiamen port quickly regained part of its prewar glory, but this recovery was short-lived as the Chinese Civil War (1945–1949) proved to be more disruptive than expected—the ensuing economic recession and massive inflation forced many of Xiamen's shipping companies to close their doors, and the resulting establishment of the People's Republic of China compelled disappointed foreign capital to flee the country.

For the first three decades of the PRC, China was largely isolated from the global economy, and the little amount of foreign trade was transacted through Hong Kong. As a trading port, Xiamen was only limited to coastal connections with Chinese ports like Shantou, Guangzhou, Haikou, and also Hong Kong. This period was also when Xiamen ended its function as a migration hub. On the one hand, China imposed strict control over the movements of its people; on the other hand, the newly independent Southeast Asian countries all instituted varying degrees of restrictions on Chinese immigration. Thus, the flow of people between Xiamen and traditional destinations in Southeast Asia virtually stopped.

With China's reform and opening in 1978, the Chinese government expended much effort to redevelop and modernize the port of Xiamen. Today, Xiamen is one of China's most important cargo and container ports with shipping routes connecting all major ports in the world. Beginning in 1979, Xiamen also resumed passenger trade, allowing travelers to sail from Xiamen to Shanghai, Wenzhou, Guangzhou, Hong Kong, and from 2001, Jinmen in the Republic of China.⁸² However, even as the PRC begins to allow its citizens to move overseas and Southeast Asian countries gradually relax its ban on Chinese immigration, Xiamen does not regain its status as the focal point of Chinese out-migration. This is because with the advent of air travel, international passengers ultimately prefer the speed and comfort of airplanes to passenger ships. With more airports built across the country, aspiring travelers need not congregate in Xiamen to embark on their journeys.

But while it no longer serves as the portal for Chinese emigrants, Xiamen still benefits from its historical connections with the overseas Chinese. In 1980, Xiamen was earmarked as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) to attract foreign investors to set up businesses here under special allowances and exemptions. Not surprisingly, overseas Chinese were the first to heed the SEZ's call for investment—Xiamen's first foreign-owned enterprise and first foreign bank were both owned by Southeast Asian Chinese, and they played a leading role in raising Xiamen's GDP by almost 29-fold to RMB 58.8 billion in twenty years.⁸³ Like during Xiamen's treaty port days, overseas Chinese continue to influence the fortune of the port city.

9. Conclusions

As historian Elizabeth Sinn rightly points out, in the study of migration, scholars have focused primarily on either end of the migration process, that

is, the receiving country and the sending country, but gave little to no attention to places “in-between,” such as migration hubs.⁸⁴ But as this article shows, Xiamen, the migration hub par excellence for Fujian province, played a pivotal role in not only making human movement possible, but also determining the contour of Chinese dispersal. In the first place, the port city provided the mechanism and institutions that allowed aspiring emigrants to travel far and wide; it also furnished the various services that kept Fujianese abroad connected to their home villages.⁸⁵ We also see that after its opening as a treaty port, Xiamen became even more tightly linked to the European colonies in Southeast Asia, especially Singapore. By capitalizing on the new technology of steamship travel, Xiamen funneled an increasing number of Fujianese southward to Singapore, where many of them were then transhipped to colonies in Malaya and the Dutch East Indies. The history of Fujianese migration after the Opium War thus cannot be complete without considering the functions Xiamen played in the process.

On the other hand, as a city in motion, Xiamen evolved in response to its expanded functions as well and was then further transformed when those it helped emigrate returned. Our examination of the inner workings of the treaty port reveals an often-overlooked fact in migration studies, that is, the businesses of moving people and catering to the needs of emigrants were lucrative pursuits. Professionals (such as headmen) and enterprises (such as emigrants inns and shipping companies) congregated in Xiamen to make money from the mass exodus of Chinese, and in the process, they also decidedly transformed the business environment of the treaty port. Xiamen could thus prosper without having to expand foreign trade or develop modern industries.

Xiamen also benefitted from the fact that many overseas Chinese decided to invest in business ventures here instead of just sending their money back to their home villages. Ultimately, their business decisions helped accelerate the urbanization and modernization of the city. By the 1930s, Xiamen was one of the most hygienic, orderly, prosperous, and modern cities in China. But rather than being directly imposed and defined by the West, modernity in Xiamen was brought back by the emigrants and mediated through the Western colonies in Southeast Asia. The value of the overseas Chinese as a reliable source of investment capital and the access to the outside world was thus well-established, such that even though Xiamen no longer serves as a migration hub during the PRC, the Chinese government continues to utilize its connections to the overseas Chinese to call on them to fulfil their historic functions.⁸⁶

Notes

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- 4 Ibid., Vol. 1, p. 155; Ng Chin-Keong, *Trade and Society: The Amoy Network on the China Coast, 1683–1735* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1983).
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- 6 Lin Chuancang, *Fuzhou Xiamen diji zhi yanjiu* (Research on the Land Prices in Fuzhou and Xiamen) (Shanghai: Zhongguo dizheng yanjiusuo, 1936), p. 50; Wang Zijian, “Zhongguo laogong shenghuo chengdu” (The Living Standard of Chinese Laborers), *Shehui kexue zazhi* (Quarterly Review of Social Sciences), Vol. 2, No. 2 (1931), pp. 237–238. According to Wang’s report, a Xiamen worker’s average annual family income in 1930 was 438.84 yuan, while that of Shanghai was 337.20 yuan, Guangzhou, 362.88 yuan, and Fuzhou, 263.88 yuan; Lu Yan, “Xiamen yinxiang ji” (Impressions of Xiamen), in *Lu Yan sanwen xuanji* (Selected Essays of Lu Yan), edited by Shen Shiheng (Tianjin: Baihua wenyi chubanshe, 2004), pp. 77–93.
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- 10 Ibid., p. 22.
- 11 “A Narrative of the Loss of a Chinese Vessel,” *Chinese Repository*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (1837), pp. 149–153.
- 12 Pickford and Hatcher, *Legacy of Tek Sing*.
- 13 Before 1949, “Xiamen” referred to the island of Xiamen and its islet, Gulangyu.
- 14 James A. Cook, “Bridges to Modernity: Xiamen, Overseas Chinese, and Southeast Coastal Modernization” (PhD diss., University of California, San Diego, 1998), p. 33.
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- and the Shaping of the Modern World, c. 1620–1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).
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 - 17 Zhou Kai, *Xiamen zhi* (Xiamen Gazetteer) (1840; repr., Xiamen: Lujiang chubanshe, 1996), p. 23.
 - 18 *Ibid.*, pp. 509, 512.
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 - 23 National Palace Museum, *Yongzheng zhupi yuzhi* (Imperial Endorsed Memorials of the Yongzheng Reign) (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1980), Vol. 176, No. 7.
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 - 25 H. Hamilton Lindsay, *Letter to the Honorable Viscount Palmerston on British Relations with China* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1836), p. 15.
 - 26 Dai, *Quyuxing jingji fazhan yu shehui bianqian*, p. 178.
 - 27 Opium trade became legal at Xiamen when the Qing began taxing its import in 1858. See Li Gui, *Yapian shilue* (Facts about Opium) (Taipei: Wenhai chubanshe, 1991).
 - 28 Cecil A. V. Bowra, “Amoy,” in *Twentieth Century Impressions of Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Other Treaty Ports of China*, edited by Arnold Wright (London: Llyod’s Greater Britain, 1908), p. 820.
 - 29 For Shanghai, see Rhoads Murphey, *Shanghai: Key to Modern China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953). Xiamen’s other major export items were vermicelli, dried fruits, earthenware, hemp sacks, and paper umbrellas, but they had little appeal in Western markets.
 - 30 Bowra, “Amoy,” p. 820; Spreadsheet “XMexpcomp,” in accompanying CD to Thomas Lyons, *China Maritime Customs and China’s Trade Statistics, 1859–1948* (Trumansburg, NY: Willow Creek, 2003).

- 31 Lyons, *China Maritime Customs*, p. 110.
- 32 China Maritime Customs (CMC), “Decennial Report, Amoy, 1882–1891,” in *Decennial Reports on the Trade, Navigation, Industries, Etc. of the Ports Open to Foreign Commerce in China and Corea and the Condition and Development of the Treaty Port Provinces, 1882–1891* (Shanghai: Statistical Department of the Inspectorate General of Customs, 1893), Vol. 2, p. 498.
- 33 Bowra, “Amoy,” p. 820.
- 34 Ong, *Coming Home to a Foreign Country*, chap. 2.
- 35 Douglas Fix, “Xiamen: Emigrants’ Portal to a Broader World” (Chinese Studies Research Center Working Paper, June 2018). Xiamen was the main hub for coolie trade from 1845 to 1852, after which it was replaced by Macau until 1874 when the trade was banned by the international communities.
- 36 Ong, *Coming Home to a Foreign Country*, chap. 3.
- 37 Fujiansheng danganguan (Fujian Provincial Archives), *Fujian huaqiao dangan shiliao* (Archival Material on Overseas Fujianese) (Beijing: Dangan chubanshe, 1990), Vol. 1, p. 120.
- 38 Bank of Taiwan, “Overseas Chinese Remittances in the 1910s,” in *Overseas Chinese Remittances from Southeast Asia, 1910–1940*, edited by George Hicks (Singapore: Select Books, 1993), p. 31. This study was originally conducted in 1914.
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- 40 Straits Settlements Legislative Council, “Report of Committee Appointed to Consider and Take Evidence upon the Condition of Chinese Laborers in the Colony,” CO 275/19, p. ccli. In the 1870s, headmen charged an employer \$17 to \$20 for a laborer when the passage rate he paid out was \$13 to \$14.
- 41 Bank of Taiwan, “Overseas Chinese Remittances in the 1910s,” p. 31.
- 42 *Ibid.*, pp. 28–30.
- 43 *Ibid.*, p. 9.
- 44 *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- 45 *Ibid.*, p. 26.
- 46 Zhou Zifeng, *Jindai Xiamen chengshi fazhan shi* (A Study of the Urban History of Xiamen) (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 2005), p. 73.
- 47 Bank of Taiwan, “Overseas Chinese Remittances in the 1910s,” pp. 24–25.
- 48 Straits Settlements Legislative Council, “Report of Committee,” p. ccxlii.
- 49 Bank of Taiwan, “Overseas Chinese Remittances in the 1910s,” p. 21.
- 50 *Jiangsheng bao*, 29 April 1934, cited in Zhou, *Jindai Xiamen chengshi fazhan shi*, p. 254.
- 51 Bank of Taiwan, “Overseas Chinese Remittances in the 1910s,” pp. 46–47.
- 52 *Ibid.*
- 53 *Jiangsheng bao*, 4 October 1934, cited in Zhou, *Jindai Xiamen chengshi fazhan shi*, p. 75.

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- 55 Dai Yifeng, "Minnan haiwai yimin yu jindai Xiamen xingsuai" (Emigrants from South Fujian and the Rise and Fall of Modern Xiamen), *Ershiyi shiji* (Twenty-First Century), No. 35 (1996), p. 48.
- 56 For a more elaborate analysis of the relationships between overseas Chinese, their remittances, and China, see Ong Soon Keong, "Chinese, but Not Quite: *Huaqiao* and the Marginalization of the Overseas Chinese," *Journal of Chinese Overseas*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (2013), pp. 1–32.
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- 60 Bank of Taiwan, "Overseas Chinese Remittances in the 1910s," pp. 65–100.
- 61 CMC, "Amoy Decennial Report, 1922–31," in *Decennial Reports on the Trade, Navigation, Industries, Etc. of the Ports Open to Foreign Commerce in China and Corea and the Condition and Development of the Treaty Port Provinces, 1922–1931* (Shanghai: Statistical Department of the Inspectorate General of Customs, 1933), Vol. 2, p. 143.
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- 65 Xiamen gongshang guanggaoshe (Xiamen Industrial and Commercial Advertiser), *Xiamen gongshangye daguan* (A General Description of Industry and Commerce in Xiamen) (Xiamen: Xiamen gongshang guanggaoshe, 1932), pp. 99–100; Jing Xian, *Zuixin Xiamen kuailan*, p. 26.
- 66 Hong Puren and Wu Yangrong, eds., *Jindai Xiamen shehui lueying* (A Glimpse of Modern Xiamen Society) (Xiamen: Xiamen daxue chubanshe, 2000), p. 14.
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- 74 Zhao Dexing, *Huang Yizhu zhuan* (Huang Yizhu: A Biography) (Changsha: Hunan renmin chubanshe, 1998), pp. 209–211.
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- 77 Zhou, *Jindai Xiamen chengshi fazhan shi*, p. 132.
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- 82 *Ibid.*, pp. 114–118, p. 134.
- 83 *Ibid.*, pp. 140–143.
- 84 Elizabeth Sinn, “Moving Bones: Hong Kong’s Role as an ‘In-Between’ Place in the Chinese Diaspora,” in *Cities in Motion*, edited by Sherman Cochran and David Strand (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), p. 248.
- 85 *Ibid.*, pp. 248–249.
- 86 Cook, “Bridges to Modernity”; Ong, “Chinese, but Not Quite.”