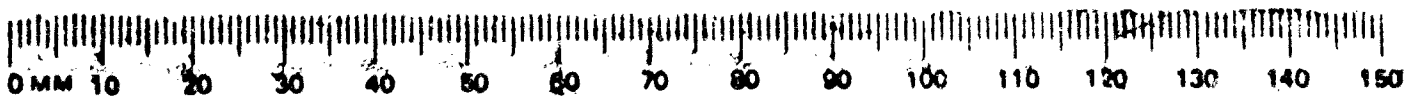


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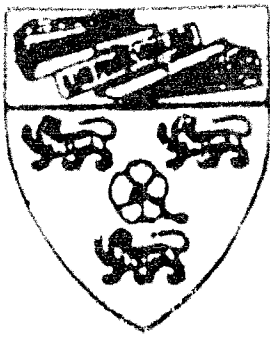
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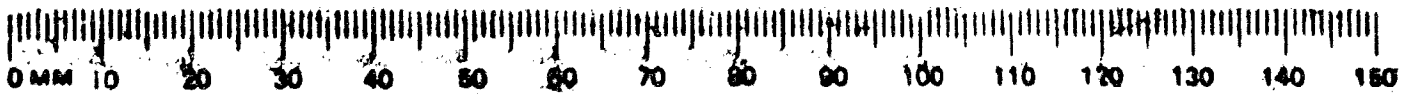
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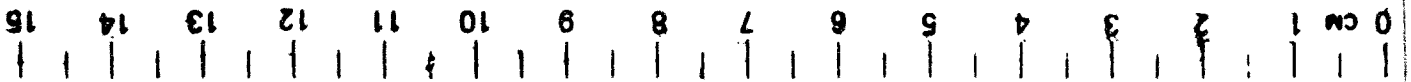




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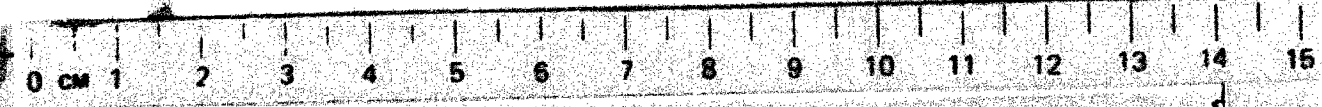
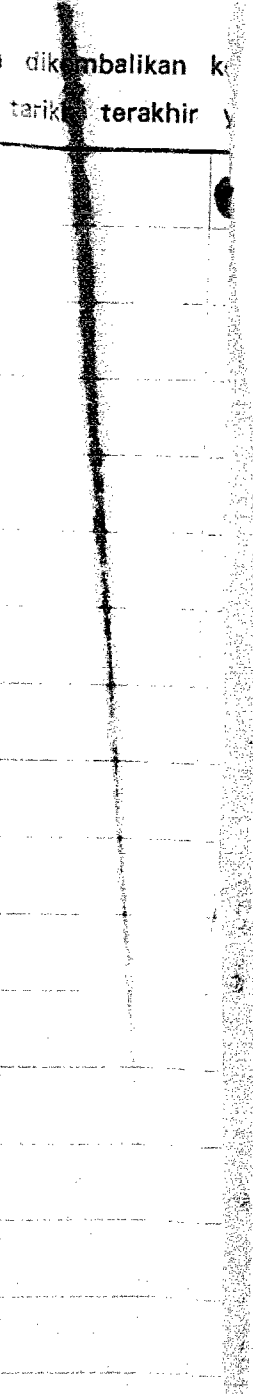
Peari Chu

015804

A Graduation Exercise submitted as
part fulfilment towards the Degree
of Bachelor of Arts in Economics,
University of Malaya.

Kuala Lumpur
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Pearl Chu

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Penang takes its name from the graceful betel-nut palm (pekek Pinang) which is prevalent on the island. The state of Penang consists of the island of Penang, the mainland of Province Wellesley and a few adjacent islands with a total area of 388 square miles. Penang island is about 15 miles long, 9 miles broad and about 108 square miles in area. It lies off the west coast at the northern extremity of the Straits of Malacca. Opposite on the mainland of Malaya lies Province Wellesley which is a strip averaging 8 miles in width and extending 48 miles along the coast, the whole being about 280 square miles. The strait separating Penang from the mainland is in width from 2 to 10 miles.

I EARLY SETTLEMENTS

Before 1786 Penang formed part of the Malay States of Kedah. The Portuguese knew it at the beginning of the sixteenth century as "Pulo Pinang". The first British contact with Penang was in 1592 when Sir John Lancaster anchored off its southern end.

In the 1770's the East India Company was looking for a suitable place in the Straits of Malacca to serve as a port of call for its ships on the long voyage between India and China. Besides it was anxious to secure its valuable China trade which was in danger as a result of the French war. In Kedah Captain Francis Light, a former midshipman of the Royal Navy had become popular with the Sultan who offered Pulau Pinang in exchange for active intervention against his Siamese enemies. Captain Light recommended its acceptance.

In 1786 Penang was ceded to the East India Company by Sultan Abdullah and Light landed at its fishing village on August 11th taking possession of it on the following day. The island was inhabited only by some Malay fishing folk who lived in the present Tanjung Tokong area. Captain Light set to work to clear a space for a town and a fort. He encouraged his Malay workmen to clear the jungle by firing bags of silver dollars into the forest. The Malays lost no time in cutting down the trees to find the dollars among the roots.

Many settlers came from the mainland and Penang grew rapidly. Chinese and Indian merchants quickly saw the advantages in coming to Penang because it was a free port. In a short time Penang was a busy settlement. Two years after its foundation the population was about 1,000 and by 1804 it was 12,000.

TABLE 1.1

**PEWANG - ANNUAL RATE OF INCREASE
BY RACE 1801-1964**

Period	All Races	Chinese	Malays	Indians
1801 - 1822	7.9	-	-	-
1822 - 1831	4.7	-	-	-
1831 - 1836	2.2	-	-	-
1836 - 1851	1.5	-	-	-
1851 - 1860	1.6	4.6	0.3	4.2
1860 - 1871	0.6	0.1	0.4	2.5
1871 - 1881	3.5	6.3	1.8	3.9
1881 - 1891	2.1	2.6	1.5	2.8
1891 - 1901	0.5	1.1	-0.1	0.5
1901 - 1911	1.0	1.3	0.7	2.0
1911 - 1921	0.8	1.9	-0.4	0.8
1921 - 1931	1.5	2.5	0.5	0.8
1931 - 1947	2.7	2.3	1.3	0.4
1947 - 1957	2.5	2.8	2.0	1.9
1957 - 1964	2.0	2.9	2.9	2.8

Note: Population taken at mid-year.

II POPULATION TREND

The trend of population increase from the beginning of demographic history of the island in 1801 to the present is given in Table 1.1. However, the underlying reasons for population increase before and after the war are very different. Before the war the increase of population was due chiefly to large scale immigration from China, India and Indonesia. During those early days there was frequently an excess of deaths over births - the crude birth rate was high because of the abnormal sex ratio and the death rate being high because tropical disease were not under control. It was the influx of immigrants that caused the population to rise rapidly. Subsequently, however, immigration fell and today migration affects the size of the population very little. Population increase continues because natural increase has taken the place of migrational surplus as the chief factor determining the growth of the population.

The table shows a very high annual rate of increase from 1801

to 1822 about 8 per cent. Under the protection of the British and with the advantages of free trading the Chinese traders who had been going to such places as Malacca, Brunei and Manila found it safer and more profitable to visit Penang instead. But from 1822 to 1831 there was a sharp and continuous drop for a few decades in the rate of increase. In 1819 Singapore was founded by the British and thus Penang as a port of call and free port was seriously threatened. The fall in population increase persisted till 1860 when the rate of increase was almost negligible, only 0.6 per cent with the discovery of tin deposits in 1874 in the Kinta Valley there was an influx of migrants into the Malay peninsula. The trading community in Penang flourished and population increase was rapid especially the Chinese reaching the peak of 6.3 per cent. But with the coming of the Chinese came also secret societies and quarrels. Normal economic activities were hampered and population growth showed a sharp drop to 0.5 per cent between 1891 and 1901.

After this period population took on a gradual increase except for the period of the two World Wars. With more settled conditions the annual rate of increase did not fluctuate so violently as in the 19th century. The rate of natural increase after the war was due to two main factors. First, there has been a decrease in the death rate due largely to the control of tropical disease. In the second place, there has been an increase in the birth rate due partly to a more normal sex ratio. But the natural increase has risen more as a result of a fall in the death rate than as a result of a rise in the birth rate.

Among the three main races the natural increase is rather higher among the Chinese and Indians than among the Malays; the death rate being noticeably lower among the immigrant peoples. The Chinese and Indians are perhaps less conservative than the Malays and so more readily accept Western medicine; the Malay, too, is less often in urban centres where medical attention is most easily available. Moreover, the death rate among Malays is more affected by their age structure which shows a greater proportion of old people. During the period between 1891 and 1901 and World War I there was even a decrease in the annual rate of increase.