Chinese family business networks in the making of a Malay state: Kedah and the region c. 1882-1941
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When I was doing my fieldwork in Malaysia, many people were very surprised by my peregrinations: I had come from China, studied in the Netherlands, but did research on Malaysian history. How was this possible? Now, it is time to give a brief explanation. I would have never imagined that one day I could have a chance to write a dissertation on Southeast Asian history when I was doing my MA studies on that region. During the academic year 1993-94, thanks to the exchange programme between the University of Amsterdam and Xiamen University, I was able to come to the Centre for Asian Studies Amsterdam (CASA) to study Malaysian history. There I formulated a PhD research proposal that has taken its final shape in this dissertation.

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Needless to say, I bear full responsibility for the shortcomings in this study.

Amsterdam, July 1999