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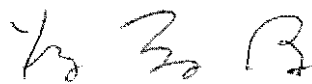
Hometown as Fatherland:

Nanyang Chinese Under Japanese Pan-Asianism
and Pribumi Nationalism in Malaya and Indonesia,
1937-1955

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A dissertation submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Division of Pacific and Asian History
Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies
Australian National University
31 May 2001

I hereby declare that this dissertation, submitted for examination for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Australian National University, represents my own original work and that it has not been previously submitted to this or any other institution in application for admission to a degree, diploma or other qualification.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yong Zong B'.

Tsung-Rong Edwin Yang
30 May, 2001

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Abstract

I argue that for Southeast Asian Chinese the shift from China-oriented identity to local-oriented identity was a particular historical dynamic that came about largely through internal responses to changing political and social conditions. This special historical event can be traced through the discourse of *hua-ren* (華人), ethnic Chinese in rather cultural sense than political sense, which distinguished Southeast Asian Chinese from Chinese in China. The discourse was generated from the debate among Chinese in both Malaya and Indonesia in the 1940s. The main elements which contributed to this debate were traditional and new Nanyang identities, Japanese pan-Asianist propaganda, Chinese experience under Japanese occupation, the Indonesian revolution, the armed struggle of the Malayan Communist Party, ethnic politics in Malaya and Indonesia, and the re-sinization movement in the post-war time era. This dissertation discusses each of these aspects. I intend to build an 'autonomous history' of Southeast Asian Chinese, breaking away from the framework of national history, linking pre-war time and post-war time history, and bringing Chinese and Japanese elements to modern Southeast Asian history.

This study examines the development of a discourse of *hua-ren* identity between Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore before those countries were formed or gained their independence. Specifically, it will illustrate how the term *hua-ren* was used to make distinctions between Chinese within and outside China; its implications for inclusion/exclusion; and its use to maintain Chineseness in the new situation of Southeast Asia. Through the debate on the nature of literature, rights to gain citizenship and the will to keep Chineseness, the thesis will demonstrate how ethnic Chinese negotiated new identities within the new nations during this critical early phase of

nation-formation. I demonstrate and argue in this study that the sources of the new approach to identity among the Southeast Asian Chinese were the Chinese communities themselves and the dramatic political and social changes of the time, not the policy decisions of the Chinese or Southeast Asian national governments. It should be considered as one aspect of the autonomous history of the Southeast Asian Chinese.

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This thesis is based on extensive field research conducted in Canberra, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. I must also thank the staff of the following institutions: the National Library of Australia, the Menzies Library at the ANU, the KMT Archive in Mount Yangmin, the National Library in Taiwan, the Library in Chinese University of Hong Kong, the Library in Waseda University, the Bōeichō Library in Japan, the National Library in Singapore, the Central Library in the

National University of Singapore, the Huazi Data Center, the National Archive in Malaysia, the Library in the University of Malaya, the National Library of Indonesia and Arsip Nasional RI (The National Archives of Indonesia) and others too numerous to list here.

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Note on spelling and transliteration

Chinese Words

The romanization of Chinese words in the text will use either standard Hanyu spelling or the original spelling which usually appeared in primary source material. If the original spelling was widely used, it will be used in the text and the Hanyu spelling will be provided in the footnote when it appears for the first time. The Chinese characters will be provided in footnotes as well if it will help to understand the meaning or to identify people's names, place names or names of institutes. A table of contraposition of those names will be provided in the Glossary. If differing pronunciation of a Chinese term in Chinese languages is meaningful, the spelling will be provided too.

Japanese Words

Japanese words will be romanized in the text and the characters (kanji) will be provided in footnotes. The complete table of Japanese names of persons and institutes will be provided in the Glossary. If the same characters were used in the Chinese language term, then both spellings will be provided in the text. The kanji will appear mainly in traditional form because they were used at that time.

Indonesian/Malay Words

The modern spelling system for Malay/Indonesian words will be considered first if the old spelling of the same words have their counterparts in modern spelling. But names of persons will be kept in their original spelling.

Select Glossary

terms	characters	*	meaning
adat		I.	tradition, customary law, customs
baba	峇峇	I.	mixed people with Chinese and Malay
bang	幫	H.	group, people from the same region.
bangsa		I.	ethnic groups, race, nation (in Malay)
bung		I.	brother, term of address for a man
bunmei kaika	文明開化	J.	civilization
catut	渣突	I.	black market
cukong	主公	I.	wealthy Chinese businessmen associated with Indonesian power-holder
dai nippon	大日本	J.	Great Japan
dai toa	大東亞	J.	Great East Asia, including East and Southeast Asia
dōbun dōshu	同文同種	J.	same culture/language same people
fengxia	風下	M.	name of a magazine, literally 'under the monsoon'
fukan	副刊	M.	auxiliary pages in Chinese newspapers
gotong royong		I.	mutual cooperation, a tradition of work practice in Indonesian village communities.
gunseikan	軍監部	J.	chief of the Japanese military administration
hakko ichiu	八紘一宇	J.	eight corners under one roof, an expression used to describe the wartime vision of a new Asian order.
hanjian	漢奸	M.	Traitor
hayato	隼人	J.	a group of people in ancient Japanese history
heiho	兵補	J.	auxiliary soldiers
hoa kiao	華僑	H.	overseas Chinese
hōkōkai	奉公會	J.	service association
huaqiao	華僑	M.	overseas Chinese
huaren	華人	M.	Chinese, more cultural meaning
huayi	華裔	M.	descendants of Chinese
huazu	華族	M.	Chinese, referring to ethnicity

huiguan	會館	M.	organisations according to regional origins
kakyō	華僑	J.	overseas Chinese
kakyō sōkai	華僑總會	J.	General Association of Overseas Chinese
kampung (kampong)	甘榜	I.	village or quarter of a city
kangriweima	抗日衛馬	M.	repel Japanese and protect Malaya
kenpeitai	憲兵隊	J.	Japanese military police
kerajaan		I.	traditional Malay kingdom
minzoku	民族	J.	ethnic groups, race, nation
minzu	民族	M.	ethnic groups, race, nation
nanshin	南進	J.	southward advance
nanyang	南洋	M.	"South Seas", Southeast Asia
nan'yō	南洋	J.	"South Seas", Southeast Asia
pancasila		I.	the five ideal principals of the Indonesian Republic
pemuda		I.	youth the ideal principal of the Indonesian Republic
peranakan	僑生	I.	local-born Chinese, or qiaosheng in Mandarin
qu zhu da lu	驅逐韃虜	M.	to expel barbarians
rōnin	浪人	J.	"wave man", masterless warriors
singkeh	新客	H.	New comers.
tauke (towkay)	頭家	H.	boss, bigshot, businessman
totok		I.	China-born Chinese
tuan		I.	Mister, boss
zhongguoren	中國人	M.	Chinese, more national meaning

*I: Indonesian or Malay language, J: Japanese, M: Mandarin Chinese. H: Indonesian terms which come originally from Hokkien

Personal names

Personal names	Characters	Mandarin spelling or other spelling
Ang Yan Guan	洪淵源	Hong Yuan Yuan, Ang Jan Goan
Aw Boon Haw	胡文虎	Hu Wen Hu
Cai Xi Yin	蔡錫胤	Cai Xi Yin
Djiauw Kie Sieng	饒啓祥	Rao Qi Xiang
Du Bian	杜邊	Du Bian
Go Gien-tjwan	吳銀泉	Wu Yin Quan
Hu Yu Zhi	胡愈之	Hu Yu Zhi
Kan Hok Hoei	簡福輝	Jian Fu Hui
Kwa Tjoan Sioe	柯全壽	Ke Quan Shou
Lee Khoon Choy	李炯才	Li Jung Cai
Liauw Kian Djoe	廖建裕	Liao Jian Yu
Liem Ching Gie	林清義	Lin Qing Yi
Liem Koen Hian	林群賢	Lin Qun Xian
Liem Sioe Liong	林紹良	Lin Shao Liang
Lim Boon Keng	林文慶	Lin Wen Qing
Lim Lian Geok	林連玉	Lin Lian Yu
Nio Joe Lan	梁友蘭	Liang You Lan
Oei Tiang Tjoei	黃長水	Huang Chang Shui, Oei Tiong Tjoei
Oei Tjong Hauw	黃宗孝	Huang Zong Xiao
Siauw Giok Tjhan	蕭玉燦	Xiao Yu Can
Sun Yat-sen	孫逸仙	Sun Yi Sian, Sun Zhong Shan
Tan Gen Hok	陳根福	Chen Gen Fu
Tan Kah Kee	陳嘉庚	Chen Jia Geng
Tan Malaka	陳馬六甲	Chen Ma Liu Jia
Thio Thiam Tjong	張添聰	Zhang Tian Cong
Tjung See Gan	莊西言	Zhuang Xi Yan

Wang Ching Wei	汪精衛	Wang Jing Wei
Wang Ji Yuan	王紀元	Wang Ji Yuan
Wang Jin Shu	王任叔	Wang Ren Shu, Ba Ren
Wang Yong Li	王永利	Wang Yong Li
Yap Tjwan Bing	葉全明	Ye Quan Ming
Yu Ta Fu	郁達夫	Yu Da Fu

Other Names

English or Indonesian	Chinese characters	Pronunciation in Mandarin
Bagansiapiapi	峇眼亞比	Ba Yan Ya Bi
Bandung	萬隆	Wan Long
Bindjei	民禮	Min Li
Bukit Tinggi	布吉丁宜	Bu Ji Ding Yi
Cirebon	井里汶	Jing Li Wen
Democracy Daily	民主日報	Min Zhu Ri Bao
Jakarta	雅加達	Ya Jia Da
Jambi	占碑	Zhan Bei
Kung Yung Pao	共榮報	Gong Rong Bao
Laboean Deli	老武漢	Lao Wu Han
Lhokseumawe	司馬威	Si Ma Wei
Lombok	龍目	Long Mu
Makasar	望加錫	Wang Jia Xi
Medan	棉蘭	Mian Lan
Nan Chiau Jit Pao	南僑日報	Nan Qiao Ri Bao
Nanyang Critics	南洋評論	Nan Yang Ping Ron
Nanyang Siang Pao	南洋商報	Nan Yang Shang Bao
Oriental Magazine	東方雜誌	Dong Fang Za Zhi
Padang	巴東	Ba Dong
Palembang	巨港	Ju Gang
Pangkalan Brandan	火水山	Huo Shui Shan
Payakumbuh	巴爺公務	Ba Ye Gong Wu

(Payokumbu)		
(Bajakoem Boeh)		
Pekanbaru	北竿	Bei Gan
Pematang Siantar	先達	Xian Da
Pontianak	坤甸	Kun Dian
Progress Weekly	前進週報	Qian Jin Zhou Bao
Selat Panjang	石叻班讓	Shi Le Ban Rang
Sheng Huo Pao	生活報	Sheng Huo Bao
Sin Chew Jit Pao	星洲日報	Xing Zhou Ri Bao
Sin Po	新報	Xin Bao
Sishui ribao	泗水日報	Si Shui Ri Bao
Situbondo	詩都文羅	Shi Dou Wen Luo
Sudao ribao	蘇島日報	Su Dao Ri Bao
Sumatra	蘇門答臘	Su Men Da La
Sumatra Bin Poh	蘇門答臘民報	Su Men Da La Min Bao
Surabaya	泗水	Si Shui
Tangerang	文登	Wen Deng
Tangjong Balei Asahan	亞沙漠	Ya Sha Han
Tasikmalaya	打橫	Da Heng
Tebing Tinggi	直名丁宜	Zhi Ming Ding Yi
Tegal	直葛	Zhi Ge
Tien Sheng Jih Pao	天聲日報	Tian Sheng Ri Bao
Ujung Pandang	錫江	Xi Jiang
United Daily	聯合早報	Lian He Zao Bao
Yogyakarta	日惹	Ri Re

Abbreviations

AMCJA	全馬行動聯盟	All-Malaya Council of Joint Action
Baperki	國籍協商會	Badan Permusyawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia Indonesian Citizenship Consultative Body
CCP	中國共產黨	Chinese Communist Party
CHH	中華會	Chung Hwa Hui, pro-Dutch association in Indonesia
HIAJCS	星洲華僑文化界戰時工作團	Huaqiao Intellectual Anti-Japanese Corps in Singapore
KMT	國民黨	Chinese Nationalist Party, as known Kuomintang
MCA	馬華公會	Malayan Chinese Association
MCP	馬來亞共產黨	Malayan Communist Party
MPAJA	馬來亞人民抗日軍	Malayan Peoples' Anti-Japanese Army
PDTI	印尼中華民主黨	Partai Demokrat Tionghoa Indonesia Indonesian Chinese Democratic Party
PRC	中華人民共和國	People's Republic of China
PT	中華協會	Persatuan Tionghoa Chinese Party in Indonesia
ROC	中華民國	Republic of China
SCBA	海峽華人會	Strait Chinese British Association
SCCC	商務總會	Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce
SHAFU	蘇門答臘華僑反法西斯同盟	Sumatra Huaqiao Anti-Fascist Union
SPAFU	蘇門答臘人民反法西斯同盟	Sumatra People's Anti-Fascist Union
THHK	中華會館	Tiong Hoa Hwee Koan, pan-Chinese association in Java
TSK	奉公會	Tyoo Sangi Kai (Tjuo Sangi)
UCSCA	華校董事聯合會總會 (董總)	United Chinese School Committees' Association
UMNO	巫統	United Malay National Organization

Pertubuhan Kebangsaan Melayu Bersatu

USCTA 華校教師聯合會總會 United Chinese School Teachers' Association
(教總)

Introduction

This dissertation presents the voices of the Chinese of Indonesia and Malaya between the 1930s and the 1950s as their community went through the process of searching for a new identity. The central concern is to explain how and why the Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia reacted as they did to the intense political and ideological changes that took place amongst the indigenous populations of these two countries from the late 1930s to the mid-1950s, an important transitional period for Southeast Asian Chinese. These reactions generated a new approach towards Chinese identity in Southeast Asian nations: Chinese were to become citizens of their countries of residence and to be loyal to the new nations, but to also maintain a certain degree of Chineseness within their local Chinese communities. Chinese communities in Malaya and Indonesia in this period strove to seek a balance between political and cultural identity in a context where identities were unstable.

My argument is that this change in identity was a distinct historical process, that took place within the short space of about two decades and involved a succession of adaptations to new conditions, at an important time of transition in the modern history of Southeast Asia. In this it was different from the gradual process of reorientation of identity that most immigrant populations have gone through. To understand this process, it is necessary to understand the changes of circumstance. The sources of the new approach to identity among the Southeast Asian Chinese were the Chinese communities themselves and the dramatic political and social changes of the time, not the policy

decisions of the Chinese or Southeast Asian national governments. It should be considered as one aspect of the autonomous history of the Southeast Asian Chinese.

The Chinese residents of Indonesia and Malaysia developed a new discourse of Chinese identity during the establishment of new nations when the political situation was not yet clear, so that the process of nation-building gave rise between 1945 and 1949 to a 'discourse of Chineseness' that distinguished between Chinese people in China, and those outside China. It made the term 'Huaren' (ethnic Chinese)¹ become a semantic category with its own distinct meaning and a legal term with impact on policy towards the Chinese. Although the ethnic Chinese communities faced different conditions in each country, many Chinese persons developed a new sense of identity—that maintaining Chineseness did not require political identification with China—through negotiating with the other peoples of the new states at a critical early stage of the process of national construction in both countries. This consciousness can be found in different fields such as literature, rights, and citizenship.

The agreement on sole nationality for Chinese citizens living outside China reached by Zhou Enlai and the Indonesian government at the Bandung Conference of Non-aligned Nations of Asia and Africa in 1955 should not be seen as the reason for this change in identity among the Nanyang Chinese. Rather, it should be seen as developing out of the discourse created as the Southeast Asian Chinese themselves sought for a new identity in the new states. This development in consciousness of identity is of great importance to subsequent relations between Chinese and indigenous people in these two countries,

¹ Huaren (華人).

to the substitution in Southeast Asia after the war of a broadly based discourse of Chineseness for the old discourse of the Chinese sojourner, and to the policies of the People's Republic of China towards the Southeast Asian Chinese.

The interaction between the Chinese communities and the 'host society' in these two countries in that period was important in the example it set for Chinese communities elsewhere of separation of political and cultural identity within a Chinese diaspora. The history of this period has shaped the political and cultural identities of local Chinese communities in Malaysia and Indonesia today. The development of ethnic Chinese identity in Malaysia and in Indonesia has often been seen as producing diametrically opposed types of identity for Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia, as follows: today ethnic Chinese in Malaysia and Singapore (both of which were administered together as British Malaya before 1955) have separated political identity from cultural identity in the framework of a multi-ethnic country, politically shifting their identification from China to their new nations, while maintaining their cultural Chineseness, but until recent times the Chinese of Indonesia remained under the shadow of the assimilation policy, which associates political and cultural identity by demanding that Indonesian Chinese cease from Chinese cultural practices in order to show loyalty toward Indonesia. This study will demonstrate that the principle behind the interaction between Chinese communities and their 'host society' in this period was similar in Malaya and Indonesia, although subsequent developments gave rise to two different types of identity situations. The history of the interaction is important in order better to understand the inter-ethnic relationship between Chinese and indigenous populations: all kinds of tensions in the 'ethnic politics' of Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia today can be traced back to this period. Although the focus of this study is on Malaya and

Indonesia, the post-war environment of the broader Southeast Asian region and the implications for the Chinese diaspora in general will be taken into account.

This study focuses on the national identities of ethnic minorities, rather than on other categories of identity, such as communal or gender identity. The concept of identity used in this study is national identity as perceived in the discursive context of the national community. It is the way a group of people is identified according to their perceived political or cultural relationship with the nation. We understand that people have multiple kinds of identities such as personal, collective, legal, political and other kinds. By the nature of the topic, the main focus of this study is collective identity. The personal identity of some Chinese writers and leaders will be discussed in later chapters because of their representative cases. Political activities and legal struggles of Nanyang Chinese are not the concern of this study, but they will be mentioned when it is necessary. The indigenous discourses of sovereignty will not be mentioned in this study. Some Chinese intellectuals thought that they should have equal rights with so-called 'indigenous people' because Chinese people had their settlements earlier than those 'indigenous people'. It is not necessary to talk about sovereignty for Chinese identity because ethnic Chinese did not claim sovereignty at all.

The word 'Chinese' in this study is used mainly in the Southeast Asian context, and can be defined as Chinese living outside China but still maintaining some degree of interaction with China or so-called 'Chinese culture', physically or spiritually.² People of Chinese descent who were seen by contemporaries as assimilated into the host

society, specifically the *Straits Chinese*, *Baba*, *peranakan* and *mestizo* communities, are not the focus of this study, but will be mentioned when relevant. In most cases, the term 'Chinese' which was used in Chinese sources at the time we are discussing means *totok* Chinese, or Chinese people with Chinese culture. The division between *totok* and *peranakan* among the Chinese population in both Malaya and Indonesia was common in Chinese sources as the Straits Chinese, Baba, and peranakan Chinese were all translated by the same term, *qiaosen*, in the Chinese language.³

The identity of the Southeast Asian Chinese has been conceived differently at different times. With the definition of Chinese above, ethnic Chinese had usually been situated in a 'between two cultures' space. In the first half of this century, Southeast Asian Chinese were still considered to belong to a single, China-centred Chinese culture with some exception of the category of Baba or peranakan Chinese. From a Chinese point of view on their history, this kind of category was temporal. Once they received Chinese education, they would be the same as other Chinese, as Chinese were defined by culture.

The term 'Nanyang' in this study means 'Southeast Asia'.⁴ It is a traditional Chinese term for Southeast Asia, meaning literally 'the South Seas'. Although it is still arguable whether the term Nanyang covered all areas presently known as 'Southeast Asia', 'Nanyang' was used to refer to Southeast Asia in the Chinese media. It became a term

² Go Shukei, *Kakyo honshitsuron*. [The Theory of Essence of Overseas Chinese] (Tokyo: Chikura, 1944).
吳主惠, <華僑本質論>。(東京: 千倉書房, 1944)。

³ Qiaosen (僑生).

⁴ Nanyang (南洋).

of identity among the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia as well as in China, where it referred to Southeast Asian sojourners. Another term which appears in this study is the Japanese term 'Nan'yō', derived from 'Nanyang' and using the same characters. Nanyō includes the South Pacific and Southeast Asia. In contrast, 'Nanyang' refers to Southeast Asia only. The details of the meaning of 'Nanyang' will be explored in greater depth in Chapter Two.

When terms used in Malaya and in Indonesia differ, this dissertation will use a unified terminology for convenience in addressing similar situations existing in both places at the same time. The term 'pribumi' will be used to convey the idea of 'native' in both Malaya and Indonesia, even though this term was in fact mainly used in Indonesia and the term 'bumiputra' was used in Malaya. We should consider another term, *asli*, which also means "native" or "indigenous" in Malay and Indonesian language. *Asli*, was used to indicate the "indigenous" majority in Indonesia, from the Dutch period to the 1940s.⁵ But the term *asli* was used to indicate primitive people in Malaya, or later Malaysia.⁶ It is not a proper term for the situation in which we consider both Indonesia and Malaya. So the term *pribumi* was chosen in this study.⁷ Similarly, 'peranakan' will be used to mean Chinese who had adopted indigenous culture in both places, rather than using

⁵ Charles A. Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 3.

⁶ Robert Knox Dentan, *Malaysia and the "Original People": a Case Study of the Impact of Development on Indigenous Peoples*. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1997), p. 8. Iskandar Carey, *Orang Asli: the Aboriginal Tribes of Peninsular Malaysia*. (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1976).

⁷ More and more publications now selected the term *pribumi* to describe the relationship between ethnic Chinese and indigenous majority for all times. For example, Leo Suryadinata, *Pribumi Indonesians, the Chinese Minority and China*. (Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann, 1978). Kwik Kian Gie and etc. "Pribumi - Chinese Relations" , *The Politics of Economic Development in Indonesia: Contending Perspectives*. Ian Chalmers and Vedi R. Hadiz eds. (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 204-222.

‘baba’, the common Malayan term, as the term *peranakan* was also used in Malaya.⁸ Chinese-speaking circles of the 1930s to the 1950s used the same vocabulary to refer to *pribumi* and *peranakan* in both Indonesia and Malaya, and the Malay language of the time had not yet been codified into Bahasa Malaysia and Bahasa Indonesia.⁹

In this study, I use the oeuvre of a group of ‘Chinese writers’ as links from one period to the next. This group of writers can be called the ‘Feng Xia group’.¹⁰ *Feng Xia* was the name of a Chinese-language weekly, literally meaning ‘Under the Monsoon’, which indicated their concern was Nanyang. It appeared after the Second World War and was run by a group of authors who had gone into hiding for some time in Sumatra during the Japanese occupation. These writers emerged in Southeast Asia to become major leaders of Chinese public opinion immediately after the war, and although they left Southeast Asia in the late 1940s, the debates in which they were engaged are commonly understood to be an important part of the history of the Chinese in Southeast Asia. Their lives and deeds link succeeding historical periods, and link the Chinese in Indonesia to the Chinese in Malaya. These writers will therefore appear at different points in several chapters, but they are discussed in depth in Chapter 5.

⁸ *Peranakan* was used in both Malaysia and Indonesia until recently. For example, Teo, Kok Seong, *The Peranakan Chinese of Kelantan : Culture, Language and Identity of a Chinese Sub-Community in Malaysia*. (Kuala Lumpur, ASEAN Academic Press, 1999). Tan, Chee-Beng, *The Baba of Melaka: Culture and Identity of a Chinese Peranakan Community in Malaysia*. (Pelanduk Publications, 2002).

⁹ Charles Coppel also discussed the usage of *warga negara* and *keturunan* in Indonesia. *Warga negara* means ‘citizens’ and *keturunan* means ‘descendents’. Coppel, Charles A. Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis*, pp. 3-5. But both terms, which could indicate other categories such as Indian or Arab, were not specialised for ethnic Chinese. And these terms were not used in Malaya.

¹⁰ Feng Xia(風下).

The material in this dissertation is ordered chronologically, a chapter for each distinct stage or period. In the chapters dealing with the situation before the Japanese occupation, Indonesia and Malaya will generally be discussed together in relation to the Nanyang Chinese, because at that time there were no developed nation states in the region, and the Chinese of the region used 'Nanyang Chinese' to refer to themselves collectively. Indonesia and Malaysia are also dealt with together in the fourth and fifth chapters, because the focus is on Chinese writers under the Japanese occupation. Indonesia and Malaysia are then dealt with separately in the sixth and seventh chapters, but still from a perspective which compares and contrasts events proceeding in the two countries at the same time.

In Chapter 1, I outline the content and argument of the dissertation, in particular why I chose to investigate this period of Malayan and Indonesian history. The narrative of the Southeast Asian Chinese begins in this period, and this Chinese narrative was the principal source of ideas for Chinese in all parts of Southeast Asia about how their communities should be identified nationally, in the local political context. The research methods used in the dissertation will also be explained in this chapter. The five main themes which provide the analytical framework for the dissertation will be outlined.

Chapter 2 discusses Chinese identification with Nanyang/Southeast Asia in the 1930s, particularly as it was expressed in Chinese writing of the period. Because the Southeast Asian countries were still European colonies then, there was less space for the Chinese to identify as Southeast Asians, but fora were created by the Southeast Asian Chinese literature of the period for the Chinese to imagine 'Nanyang'. In this dissertation I refer to newspapers, academic publications, books and other forms of contemporary literature

in discussing the Nanyang identity of the Southeast Asian Chinese, and how the Chinese intellectual view of Nanyang developed from the output of a number of Chinese writers who travelled south and identified themselves with Southeast Asia.

Chapter 3 discusses the changing relationship between the Chinese in Southeast Asia and the Chinese in China, especially after the start of the war with Japan. In terms of family ties and the structure of local communities, there were very close links between Nanyang and mainland China. After the war began, the Nanyang Chinese press shifted the focus of its concern to China, and also invited a number of Chinese writers to come south and write for the Nanyang press, which made the relationship still closer. However, this development was the turning point that caused the Nanyang Chinese after the war to develop their own distinct identity. During this process, the cultural separation of Nanyang from China gradually manifested itself.

Chapter 4 discusses the impact of the Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia on Chinese concepts of identity. This begins with pre-war Japanese perceptions of Southeast Asia, their understanding of the place of the Chinese in Southeast Asia, and Japanese pan-Asianism. It then turns to the influence of the Japanese occupation on post-war relations between the Chinese and the native Malays and Indonesians, and how changes in this relationship set the foundations for change in the self-identification of the Nanyang Chinese.

Chapter 5 follows the progress of a group of Chinese writers who fled from Malaya to Sumatra during the Japanese occupation, in order to point out how they developed ideas on the Indonesian revolution and the Malayan anti-colonial struggle in these special

circumstances. It deals in depth with three of these writers, describing the evolution of their political thought as seen from the evidence of their writing and their actions, and how their ideas subsequently influenced general public opinion among Chinese about their place in the new Southeast Asia.

Chapter 6 discusses how Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia explored the implications of national identification at a time when the external political situation was uncertain, and how the narrative of Chinese perception of themselves as people of Malaya or Indonesia developed. In Malaya, different terminologies arose that distinguished between the Chinese in China and the Chinese in Nanyang, and the cultural sphere of 'Mahua' (Malayan Chinese) arose among Chinese who identified nationally with Malaya.¹¹ In Indonesia the debate confirmed that the Chinese should be on the side of pribumi nationalism, and that they should be able to choose their nationality themselves.

Chapter 7 deals with the community organizations founded in Malaya and Indonesia in the 1950-1955 period that fostered local identity among the Chinese, and with how these organizations addressed the conflict between local identification and Chineseness. I discuss the Chinese Teachers' Federation (UCSTA) in Malaya, in its capacity as representative organ of the educational profession, as an example of how a public organization could promote identification with Malaya while upholding cultural Chineseness. In Indonesia, I examine the Citizenship Consultative Society (Baperki). This organization, established with the aim of achieving citizenship rights and the rights

¹¹ Mahua (馬華).

to learn Chinese language for Indonesian Chinese, helped to create the legal and institutional framework for Chinese education in Indonesia.

The Conclusion sums up the implications of the narratives set out in the preceding chapters. It explains why the Chinese in Southeast Asia developed new concepts of identity in quite a short period of time. Although it was the particular circumstances of this short time that made it possible for the new conceptualisations of identity to develop, the consequences of the change in national identification among the Southeast Asian Chinese have endured.

Chapter 1

The Critical Period for the Nanyang Chinese

Psychologists have long held that the critical period in personal development is that time in which the person develops and establishes a basic personality. This idea can apply to collective identity such as Nanyang Chinese. Many popular opinions among Nanyang Chinese say that the pivotal period in changing Chinese identity in Southeast Asia was the period of the Pacific War, as people use post-wartime and pre-wartime as the main time frame for the issue of Chinese identity in Southeast Asia. I will argue, however, that the shift from a China-centred to a Nanyang-centred identity occurred over a broader time frame. This study treats the transitional period of modern Southeast Asian history from the 1930s to the 1950s, from the British and Dutch colonial era to the post-war era when Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia were becoming independent, as the critical period in the shaping of Nanyang Chinese identity.

I would like to highlight the significance of this research from different angles in this chapter. The scope of this study will go beyond national history because interaction between ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia often took place across national boundaries in the period of the 1930s to the 1950s. In the tradition of 'autonomous history', I will examine the agency of the Southeast Asian Chinese in the construction of their political and cultural identity, rather than regarding them as the objects of government policy or ethnic discrimination. The Japanese occupation is considered in the context of Southeast Asian history, in terms of its implications for domestic politics, social relations and intellectual life, before and after the war. I will pay particular attention to

the development of the term *huaren* as it was used in Southeast Asian Chinese media and public discourse, because the clearest sign of change in thinking about identity is a change in the term for self-reference.

The *Huaren* Discourse and its Southeast Asian Origin

Huaren was chosen as the name of an English language World Wide Web site set up in January 1998 to collect and broadcast information on the 'mistreatment' of ethnic Chinese in Indonesia in particular, and the fate of the global Chinese diaspora in general, after destructive anti-Chinese riots erupted throughout the archipelago of Indonesia in January and February of that year. It seems that this was the first use in the international English language media of the term *huaren*¹, which now is commonly used to refer to the Chinese diaspora in Chinese language media.² For a long time, Chinese of the diaspora have struggled with terminologies such as 'Chinese', 'overseas Chinese', or 'ethnic Chinese' in English, and *zhongguoren*, *huaqiao*, *huaren*, or *huayi* in

¹ Huaren (華人). The meaning of this term will be explained later. All Chinese terms will be spelled in Mandarin according to the standard Pinyin system and given in Chinese characters in footnotes when they appear for first time. If Chinese terms, including persons' names, are better known in other Chinese 'dialects/languages', such as Hokkien, Cantonese, Teochew or Hakka, spelling for that pronunciation will be provided. These 'dialects/languages', which should be treated as different 'languages' from a linguistic point of view, are often called 'dialects' from a Chinese nationalist approach - as with all Chinese dialects, they are mutually intelligible in writing, though unintelligible when spoken, - and this usage has become common among Chinese in Southeast Asia.

² The web site was set up by two ethnic Chinese from different backgrounds. One is a Canadian who was born in Hong Kong, and the other is a New Zealander who came originally from Malaysia. See 'Tragedy and Technology Makes Chinese Unite' The Straits Times, 20 August 1998.

Chinese to refer to themselves.³ The term *huaren* is used by Chinese of the diaspora, particularly Southeast Asian Chinese, to address their condition of being outside China, and to distinguish themselves from the Chinese in China. The promotion by scholars from Southeast Asia of the usage in English of 'ethnic Chinese', which can be seen as a literal translation of *huaren*, instead of 'overseas Chinese,' reflects this dilemma of self-reference, imposed by the situation of being at the same time Chinese, 'overseas' from the perspective of China, and an ethnic minority with real or imputed connections with a foreign country, in the countries where they lived.⁴ The late appearance of this usage in the English-speaking world shows that this semantic struggle and the political impulse behind it has not yet received adequate attention in English language research circles.

The *Huaren* website published information on the fate of ethnic Chinese in Indonesia, which it described as 'the issue commanding the attention of the diverse communities of the Chinese diaspora throughout the world'.⁵ Many efforts have since been made through this web site to compile the general history of Chinese migrants in each country. Some foreign media have commented on this to emphasize how ethnic Chinese are using cyber-technology to communicate and gather together globally.⁶ But

³ Zhongguoren (中國人), Huaqiao (華僑), Huayi (華裔).

⁴ The best example of this by a scholar from Southeast Asia is the book, *Ethnic Chinese as Southeast Asian*, edited by Leo Suryadinata . (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1997). Leo Suryadinata addressed this issue directly in one article in this book, 'Ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia: Overseas Chinese, Chinese Overseas or Southeast Asians?'

⁵ Wang Rui Zhi etc., 'Baoping jinu quanqiu huaren.' *Yazhou zhoukan* [Asia Week, Chinese Version], 29 (3 August 1998--9 August 1998, Hong Kong), p. 40. 王睿智等, <<暴行激怒全球華人>>。《亞洲週刊》, 29 (3 August 1998--9 August 1998): 40.

⁶ For example, Wayne Arnold, 'Chinese Diaspora Using Internet to Aid Plight of Brethren Abroad' *The Wall Street Journal*, 23 July 1998.

the compilation of migration history from each country ironically symbolizes the loss of common memory among the Chinese diaspora in the post World War II era. One of the few things remaining in common is the Chinese term *Huaren*, which is used to refer to all categories of ethnic Chinese, newcomers from China or descendants of Chinese migrants, regardless of what languages they speak, which nationality they are, and where they come from.

Today *huaren* is used to denote people's identity along with other terms which refer to the Chinese diaspora. The usage of *huaren* emphasizes the difference between Chinese in China and ethnic Chinese outside China, which reflects a trend in the discourse of Chineseness to distance the Chinese of the diaspora from the political implications of associating with China. In the post-1940s Cold War environment, this association caused the Chinese of Indonesia and Malaysia to be in danger of being identified as agents of Communism. So *huaren* often qualifies a nationality other than Chinese, as in American *huaren*, Singaporean *huaren* and so on. In this way, the meaning of Chineseness is put into the context of inclusion in other countries, in order to avoid any impression that the Chinese of the diaspora desire to be linked with the 'fatherland', China. By contrast, the terms *zhongguoren* and *huaqiao* emphasise links with China. The most common term for Chinese people is *zhongguoren*, which literally means 'people of Chinese nationality' but is often used to indicate Chinese people generally. *Zhongguoren* is the term most often used to mean 'Chinese' in China and in all other places except Southeast Asia. Since it implies Chinese nationality, it is rejected by ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia today, because the majority of ethnic Chinese are citizens of their country of residence and are unwilling to be addressed as Chinese

nationals.⁷ Another term of self-reference among overseas Chinese is *huaqiao*, the literal meaning of which is 'Chinese sojourners'. This term is seen as inappropriate for ethnic Chinese today because 'Chinese sojourners' is politically loaded in the local context, implying that they are more Chinese than Malaysian or Indonesian. In other overseas Chinese communities in North America, Latin America, Oceania (including Australia), and Europe, where political conditions are different, *huaqiao* is still in common use to indicate Chinese people outside China. The regionally specific political implications of these terms reflects the distinct nature of Chinese identity among the ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia. Only in Southeast Asia is the terminology of Chinese identity so politically sensitive.

Today, the term *huaren* is used more often than any other term in the Chinese language to refer to Chinese of the diaspora anywhere in the world. For the places where we will discuss in this study, there is widespread acceptance at the subjective level of the new ideas of "Yinhua" for ethnic Chinese in Indonesia and "Mahua" for ethnic Chinese in Malaysia nowadays.⁸ There is no generally agreed translation of the term 'diaspora' in the Chinese language so far. *Huaren* has become more popular because its meaning is free from the political implications of *zhongguoren* and *huaqiao*. The first character, *hua*, is a homonym for the character for 'flower', *hua*. It symbolizes the flourishing of

⁷ Gu Hong Ting, *Dongnanya huaqiao di rentong wenti*. [The Problem of Identity of the Southeast Asian Chinese] (Taipei: Lianjing Publishing Co., 1994), pp. 4-5. 古鴻廷, <東南亞華僑的認同問題> (台北: 聯經出版公司, 1994), 4-5. *

⁸ Zau Son Dong, "Dongnanya huaren rentong zhuangbian di ruogan guancha." [Some Observations on Changing Identities of Southeast Asian Chinese] 饒尚東, <東南亞華人認同轉變的若干觀察> *The Ethnic Chinese: Proceedings of the International Conference on Changing Identities and Relations in Southeast Asia*. Teresita Ang See and Go Bon Juan eds. (Manila: Kaisa Para sa Kaunlaran, 1994).

Chinese culture, so that *hua* means Chinese in the cultural sense. The second character, *ren*, means people, so that *huaren* means Chinese people in the cultural sense.

Few people realise that this modern usage of *huaren* has a very short history. It has been used in the Chinese media to distinguish ethnic Chinese living outside China from Chinese in China only since the Second World War, even though the term *huaren* occurs in the Chinese classics.⁹

The tendency for diasporic Chinese to distinguish themselves from China has its origins in Southeast Asia. The details of this development will be explored in this study. The Southeast Asian political context explains why new migrants from mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan to other overseas destinations do not have the same degree of sensitivity to the use of these terms as ethnic Chinese from Southeast Asia. Today Chinese newspapers in the USA, Canada, Australia and other common destinations for Chinese migrants often use *Zhongguoren*, *Huaqiao* and *Huaren* interchangeably.

It is important to trace the origin of this differentiation of usage between *Zhongguoren*, *Huaqiao* and *Huaren* in order to understand the identity of Southeast Asian Chinese.¹⁰

⁹ For example, the Dong Xi Yang Kao (1606) used *huaren* throughout, for instance “華人大潰或逃散，餓死山谷間，橫尸相枕，計捐二萬五千人，存者三百口而已” *Huaren da kui huo taosan, esi shan' gu jian, heng shi xiang zhen, ji juan er wan wu qian ren, cunzhe san bai kou eryi* [The Chinese were defeated and fled, to die of hunger in the mountain valleys, where corpses lay piled on corpses. Twenty-five thousand were lost, and only three hundred remained] (<東西洋考>卷之五呂宋條).

¹⁰ A similar effort had been made by Tan Liok Ee, who compared the usage of *Bangsa* and *Minzi* (民族) in both Malay text and Chinese text for the idea of nation in both context. Tan Liok Ee, *The rhetoric of Bangsa and Minzu: community and nation in tension, the Malay Peninsula, 1900-1955*. (Clayton, Vic.: Centre of Southeast Asian Studies Monash University, 1988).

The process in which ethnic Chinese tried to create new forms of identity for their own communities by differentiating Chinese in the ancestral land and Chinese in Southeast Asian countries will be traced as a specific historical process. Chinese print material published in Southeast Asia shows that the centre of this movement was in the Chinese communities in Malaya (including present day Malaysia and Singapore) and Indonesia.¹¹ The crucial time for the development of this idea was before and after the Second World War. Extensive political and social changes in this period are obvious in both Malaya and Indonesia. In the 1930s, conflict between Japan and China drove overseas Chinese communities to support their ancestral land. The sense of patriotism towards China amongst these communities reached a new high. In the 1950s, on the other hand, many leaders of Chinese communities in Malaya and Indonesia encouraged their members to move in locally oriented directions of political and cultural identity. Within less than two decades, Chinese people in Malaya and Indonesia underwent a dramatic change in their identity. The process of change of identity associated with the rise of the term *huaren* should be traced in order to understand its implications for ethnic Chinese in post-war Southeast Asia.¹²

¹¹ Here, Malaya and Indonesia will be treated more from an issue-oriented approach than a geographical approach. This is because the boundaries between Malaya and Indonesia were still in the process of definition during the 1940s and 50s. So, cities and other places within these new nations will not be specified unless it is necessary. Taking this into consideration, Sumatra will be considered in the Indonesian framework and Singapore in the Malayan framework, even though this sometimes oversimplifies the historical facts.

¹² At the same time, the new terms for ethnic Chinese in Malay or Bahasa Indonesian generated new meaning. The usage of *warganegara* and *keturunan* in Bahasa Indonesia had been discussed by Charles Coppel. See the first chapter of Charles Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis*. (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983).

The evolution of Chinese identity in Malaya and Indonesia is also important in understanding Chinese identity in other Southeast Asian countries. Even though the circumstances of the Southeast Asian Chinese differ from country to country, the discourse of new identities flowed across national boundaries and influenced Chinese elsewhere in the region, through the continuing communication with other Chinese communities in the post-war era. Sooner or later, most Chinese communities in Southeast Asia went through a similar process of identity change. They all experienced the following stages: the rise of Nanyang identity before the Sino-Japanese war, the patriotic movement toward China during the Sino-Japanese war and the reflections inspired by the Japanese pan-Asianist policy of the occupation, and the response of the ethnic Chinese to the rise of nationalism in the Southeast Asian nations after the Second World War. This process created a particular kind of Chinese identity in Southeast Asia, which I would describe as the Southeast Asian model of Chinese identity. This process, which involved major political changes, is different from the process undergone by overseas Chinese in other areas, such as the USA, Britain, Australia, and New Zealand, where the political system and the integrity of the nation have remained stable and change in the perceived national identity of Chinese migrants has been mainly caused by generational change.

Towards the Autonomous History of Southeast Asian Chinese

These changes in use and meaning of the terms for identification reflect the process of identity change among ethnic Chinese as it took place through discussion, debate and social action. Although many English-language studies of the Southeast Asian Chinese

have paid special attention to the issue of identity, few have considered how and why the Southeast Asian Chinese created a discourse to distinguish themselves from the Chinese in China and to express a growing feeling of belonging to the Southeast Asian lands. These studies implied that the change of identity among Southeast Asian Chinese was an inevitable process resulting from two major factors: local nationalism and the rise of communism in China. Under the influence of the Cold War many of these studies asserted that Southeast Asian Chinese would become a fifth column for Communist China. For instance, C. P. Fitzgerald claimed that the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia were the expeditionary force of China.¹³ The existence of ethnic Chinese was seen as a problem to solve. Victor Purcell indicated that this 'problem' drove him to conduct his extensive research on Malayan Chinese and later on Southeast Asian Chinese.¹⁴

The following is an example of this 'problem' approach:

'Apart from its influence on the foreign relations of Southeast Asian countries, the Chinese minority offers an internal problem of fantastic complexity to the nations of the area. Certain aspects of this problem are common to the whole region, such as an increase in the proportion of local-born to the immigrant Chinese population, the growing urbanization of the Chinese community as a whole, the increasing domination by the Chinese of the region's economy, and the ever stronger attraction which the area holds for Chinese immigrants and for the two regimes each claiming to be the government of China. Though the status of the Chinese varies from country to country, all the governments of the area have been setting restrictions on their immigration, education, and political

¹³ Fitzgerald, C. P., *The Third China: the Chinese Communities in Southeast Asia*. (Melbourne: Angus and Robertson, 1965).

¹⁴ See Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Malaya* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948) and Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1965). Purcell addressed this as his main concern in the preface to the first edition.

and economic activities. Generally speaking, four factors determine the relations between the resident Chinese and the governments and peoples of Southeast Asia: Chinese economic domination, their cultural unassimilability, the attitude of the local Chinese toward their homeland, and relations between the Southeast Asian governments and the Peking and Formosa regimes.¹⁵

The solution proposed at that time for the 'Chinese problem' was often that of 'assimilation'. Victor Purcell suggested mixed marriage and religious conversion were the best ways for the Chinese to assimilate into local communities. G. William Skinner's studies comparing the degree of assimilation among Chinese in Java and Chinese in Thailand revealed the same concern.¹⁶ These studies may have been influenced by the model of the 'melting pot' in the United States, as well as by Cold War ideology and fears of a Chinese fifth column.

Studies which addressed the issue of identity among Southeast Asian Chinese as an 'assimilation question' considered social structural factors such as the assimilation strategies of post-colonial national governments, religion, and population structure. Attention to these factors is important to understand the identity issue. But we should also consider the issue from the point of view of Chinese agency, such as Chinese leaders, Chinese writers, Chinese associations, Chinese newspapers, Chinese schools and people who participated in these agents. With this in mind, this study will focus on how the ethnic Chinese interpreted external affairs and what new ideas they developed in response to the changing situation. Statements by ethnic Chinese during this

¹⁵ Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, *Minority Problems in Southeast Asia*. (California: Stanford University Press), p. 3.

¹⁶ George William Skinner, 'The Chinese Minority.' In Ruth McVey, ed. *Indonesia*. (New Haven: HRAP Press. 1963), pp. 97-117.

transition period and memoirs of prominent figures in the Chinese communities will be examined in order to understand their point of view.

Taking these Chinese statements about the new Chinese identity in Southeast Asia into account will help to explain the relationship between the Chinese minorities and Southeast Asian nationalism. For instance, even though there were many disputes between ethnic Chinese and Malay leaders, the Chinese community in Malaya were enthusiastic in support of Malaysian independence in the early 1950s. In Indonesia, even though several serious riots targeting ethnic Chinese took place during the Indonesian revolution, Chinese businessmen were still willing to provide goods and weapons for the Indonesian armed struggle for independence.¹⁷ The factor of rising local nationalism cannot alone explain the change in Chinese identity. The history of Chinese migration indicates that Chinese people have often gone to 'sojourn' in other countries at times when the local political agenda there did not favour them, like Australia in the nineteenth century, and Russia early in the twentieth. The rise of communism in the ancestral land can also not be the only reason for the Chinese of the diaspora reorienting their identity. The cases of North Korean migrants in Japan and Cuban migrants in the United States show that communism is not inevitably a reason for reorientation of identity.

People do not change their concept of their own identity overnight. Without the new concept of Chinese identity which developed in this transition period, ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia may have made other political choices in the post-war situation.

Considering their situation as new migrants in a newly independent country, these foreign nationals might not have built up a sense of belonging to the new country so quickly. Considering their situation as migrants whose fatherland had become a communist state, those who had strong ties with their hometowns and with their relatives might have found it more difficult to distance themselves from these ties. The Chinese minorities' stand towards nationalism in post-war Southeast Asia was the product of decades of debate about Chinese identity. These debates might not have created consensus among Chinese, but they inspired some people to continue to search for new answers concerning their identity. The 1930s were a time when people searched for a new approach and sense of belonging, when several groups of Chinese intellectuals started to address the question of identity, and this preoccupation continued to find expression in their writings and activities during the period of Japanese occupation. The debates about Chinese identity right after the end of the Pacific War were the outcome of this development. This created the foundations for a new distinctive approach to Chinese identity among Chinese migrants in Indonesia and Malaya.

In short, the aim of this study is to construct an 'autonomous history' of the Southeast Asian Chinese and give the Chinese voice to narrate their interaction with the nationalist movements and their evolution of a new identity, separate from China.¹⁸ They were the

¹⁷ Twang Peck Yang, *The Chinese Business Elite in Indonesia and the Transition to Independence 1940-1950*. (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1998).

¹⁸ About the discussion on 'Autonomous History' in the Southeast Asian context, see John R. W. Smail, "On the Possibility of an Autonomous History of Modern Southeast Asia" *Journal of Southeast Asian History*, 2(2): 72-102, 1961, and John R.W. Smail, *Autonomous Histories, Particular Truths : Essays in Honor of John R. W. Smail*. (University of Wisconsin, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1993).

agents of social action and reform as well as the objects of government policy. Taking the impact of the Japanese occupation into account, the characteristics of the transition in Southeast Asia from the colonial era to independence will be addressed. And at the same time, we may redirect the Chinese issue away from the melting pot perspective, influenced by the Cold War mentality, and towards the multiculturalist or human rights perspective.

In the Land of *Orang Melayu*: Beyond National Boundaries

In the Southeast Asian setting, it is not simple to determine who is Chinese, since people have migrated from China to this region for centuries. This study deals mainly with Chinese who lived outside China but still maintained some degree of physical, spiritual or communal interaction with China. This definition of 'Chinese' is based on a study of overseas Chinese by Go Shiyukei in the 1940s.¹⁹ In this study, the terms 'Chinese diaspora', 'ethnic Chinese' and 'Nanyang Chinese' will be used here and there with different emphasis, but throughout 'Chinese' will convey the sense of interaction with China.

We can use another angle to consider the main group of people in this study. As many studies have indicated, the Chinese communities had become a complicated assemblage because of the long history of Chinese migration to the region. It is difficult to generalise about the diverse situations of the various Chinese populations in the region.

¹⁹ Go, Shiyukei, *Kakyo honshitsuron*. [The Essence of the Overseas Chinese] (Tokyo: Chikura, 1944), p. 2.
吳主惠, <華僑本質論>。(東京：千倉書房, 1944), 2.

Wang Gungwu has suggested using a classification into three groups, the 'A, B and C group' theory, to clarify the different meanings of Chineseness.²⁰ This classification linked political consciousness with social status. This study will use a similar scheme to classify Chinese communities by cultural affiliation with China, according to how recently they or their forebears migrated. Of the three groups, the A group is the assimilated population, though in a different sense of 'assimilation' from that associated with post-war Indonesian government policy. It includes *baba* and 'straits Chinese' in British Malaya and *peranakan* in Indonesia. The B group is the Chinese who were born in Southeast Asia but received Chinese education. The people in this group are bi-cultural. The C group is Chinese people born and educated in China. In this study, we will mainly discuss the B and C groups. People of *peranakan* background will be considered only when they were identified as Chinese. Later sections of the thesis will also question the distinction between *peranakan* and *totok* in the post-war period.

I will use a transnational approach to the study of Chinese identities. Investigation of the identity issue among Chinese in two separate territories, Malaya and Indonesia, highlights the cross-border interaction among Chinese communities in Southeast Asia. Until now the framework for studies of modern Southeast Asian history has usually been nationally based. When people working on Southeast Asian history became more cautious to avoid seeing the Southeast Asian subject only from the objectifying eyes of Western colonialists, they tended to pursue Southeast Asian subjectivity in the concepts expressed in the patriotic discourse of the new nations. Chinese sources of this period

²⁰ Wang Gungwu, 'Political Chinese: An Aspect of their Contribution to Modern Southeast Asian History', in Bernhard Grossmann ed., *Southeast Asia in the Modern World*. (Wiesbaden O. Harrassowitz, 1972), p. 117.

have therefore been neglected, because they do not fit the framework of either colonialism or nationalism.

For these reasons, events in which people were involved across national borders have been neglected. For example, the chairman of Baperki, Siauw Giok Tjhan, was encouraged to organise Chinese *peranakan* youth to join the Indonesian Independence movement by Tan Kah Kee, a leader of the Chinese community in Malaya, who went into hiding in Malang during the Japanese occupation.²¹ This kind of linkage, especially instances of 'spiritual' linkage of the type described by Gotō Ken'ichi,²² has been overlooked by scholars working on Malayan (Singaporean and Malaysian) and Indonesian history.

This study follows a group of Chinese writers who went from Singapore to Sumatra in the 1940s as an example of intellectual and spiritual linkage between Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia. Three major figures among them will appear from time to time in different chapters. For these three, during the 1940s, the boundary between Malaya and Indonesia was of little consequence in their efforts to build up a sense of belonging and a will to associate with the indigenous people, the *Orang Malayu*, the Malayu people. Both Malaya and Indonesia were the land of *Orang Malayu*. The issue of identity was similar for them in both places.

²¹ Siauw Giok Tjhan, *Lintas Zaman Perwujudan Integrasi Wajar*. (Jakarta: Yayasan Teratai, 1981). p. 75.

²² Goto Kenichi, "Baperki of Indonesia: Its Formation, Development and Dissolution." *In Tonan Ajia kakyo to chugoku--chugoku kizoku ishiki kara kajin ishiki e*. [Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia and

The three figures will be introduced briefly here, since the details of their accounts of their Nanyang experiences will be discussed in Chapter 5. The first is Yu Ta Fu, a well-known writer in both China and Nanyang. He came to Singapore to edit the literary section of a Chinese journal after the Sino-Japanese war erupted. It is remarkable to note the sudden change of style in this writer who, inspired by a strong humanistic ethos, wrote vehement political essays to arouse anti-Japanese sentiment among the overseas Chinese. The war turned him from a melancholy literary individualist into an enthusiastic fighter against Japanese occupation, resulting in his becoming the leader of an anti-Japanese campaign three years later, when the Pacific War broke out. The whole group of writers were then forced to flee together to Sumatra. In Sumatra Yu disguised himself as a businessman, only to be recruited as an interpreter for the Japanese while incognito and eventually die a tragic death.

The second is Hu Yu Zhi, a most influential political commentator in Singapore at that time. During his exile in Indonesia, he organized a group of Chinese writers, who had gone into exile with him and with whom he remained in contact, to study Bahasa Indonesia and Indonesian society. Later these writers tried to encourage local Chinese youth to do the same, even after they came back to Singapore. Hu learned Bahasa Indonesia while staying in a Medan village during the Japanese occupation, and so adroitly did he master the language that he even compiled an Indonesian-Chinese dictionary and a linguistic text on Indonesian grammar in Chinese. He also derived his pen name, Sabin, from the local name system and kept it even after his return to Singapore, where he edited the influential magazine *Fengxia*, (literally 'Land under the

China: Conversion of the Object of Their Identity from China to the Countries of Residence] (Tokyo: The

Monsoon'). This magazine systematically sought to encourage young Malayan Chinese to identify themselves more closely with the local community.

The third writer is Wang Ren Shu, a novelist who is generally known by his pen name, Ba Ren. He became an expert in Indonesian studies and the first Chinese Ambassador to Indonesia. His stay in Indonesia was an experience that not only remoulded his thinking but also changed his own destiny. He joined the same group of Chinese intellectuals living incognito in Sumatra as Yu and Hu during the Japanese occupation, but decided to remain in Medan after the Japanese left. He founded a pro-democracy union and launched a daily newspaper in Medan. His writing often appeared in Singapore but was mostly about Indonesia. During the conflict between Dutch colonists and local Indonesians in 1948, he was expatriated to China. Two years later he was commissioned as the first Chinese ambassador to Indonesia. After his term as ambassador, he devoted himself to the study of Indonesian history.

Among them, Hu and Wang were later seen as left-wing writers because they were identified as members of the Chinese Communist Party. But the influence of the Chinese writers which was discussed in this study only continued up to 1949 when China became a communist country. Both Hu and Wang were only revealed as members of the Malayan branch of the China Democratic League (CDL), an intellectual organisation which promoted democracy and concerned social issues before 1949. Before 1949, both did not show their membership of Chinese Communist Party and the China Democratic League had not been seen as a pro-Chinese Communist Party

organisation. The writings of Wang and Hu could not be seen as pro-CCP propaganda up to the period which we will discuss in this study. After 1949, all of these Chinese writers which we discussed in this study had left Malaya and Indonesia to go to China. It would be a different story.

To use the lives and thoughts of Yu Ta Fu, Hu Yuzhi and Ba Ren to trace the development of a new consciousness of identity throughout the Southeast Asian Chinese population does not imply the belief that currents of opinion among restricted intellectual circles were the cause of this development, either in the case of the Southeast Asian Chinese or as a rule. They were not without effect on posterity, but their thoughts on the proper place in the world of the Southeast Asian Chinese would not have become the foundation of a consciousness of Chineseness generalised through the Chinese population if these thoughts had not been socialised and publicised through mass Chinese organizations founded in Malaya and Indonesia after the war, and if the general Chinese public had not been mobilised to join these organizations or at least follow their progress by issues that affected all Chinese in the region—Chinese education, and the effects of assimilatory social policies. These writers are studied because, as writers, they published their reflections and opinions on Chinese identity to an extent which Chinese shopkeepers and tradesmen rarely had the time and resources for. Being Chinese and on the spot, they addressed social dilemmas that we can only assume to have faced all Chinese in the region, whether they wrote about it or not.

The category ‘Nanyang’ used in this study includes both Malaya and Indonesia. Before the Pacific War and even in the 1940s, ‘Nanyang Chinese’ would have been a more appropriate categorisation for ethnic Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia than any phrase

using the names 'Malaya' or 'Indonesia'. The distinction between Malaya and Indonesia gradually became significant in the late 1940s. Therefore, the situation in Malaya and Indonesia will be discussed separately in the later chapters, though from a comparative approach.

The Japanese Occupation: Interruption or Continuation?

Both Malaya and Indonesia under European colonial rule before WWII are seen by scholars as plural societies. The Chinese and indigenous communities had only limited cultural and political interaction at that time, with the exception of the *peranakan* and *baba* groups. However, external political events brought about significant changes in less than two decades.

The wartime experience of Japanese rule provided for a sudden encounter between the two communities in the political arena. Since then, the concerns of the Chinese communities have been part of the political agenda in both the new nations. However, the impact of the Japanese occupation on Southeast Asian Chinese identity has been neglected by scholars. Many identify the Second World War overall as the turning point for the evolution of Chinese identity in the region. The experience of Japanese occupation was an important factor in this process, but few scholars who deal with the issue of Southeast Asian Chinese identity have taken it into account.

There are several reasons why relatively little has been written about this issue. One is that the impact of the Japanese occupation on the Chinese in Southeast Asia was

overshadowed by two major events. The first was the development of the Southeast Asian nationalist movement, and the second, the emergence of the Chinese Communist Party in the civil war in China right after the Second World War. It is understandable that these two factors should have been considered the major reasons for the changes in the identity concepts of Southeast Asian Chinese. This is because, on the one hand, the great need for national integration in the new nations led to the desire of policy makers to naturalise or to assimilate the Chinese residents and, on the other hand, the situation in China, first war then Communist revolution, made some Southeast Asian Chinese reluctant to go back there. Compared to the Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia, both of these factors lasted for a longer time and have continued to exert an influence until the present day.

The change in Chinese identities in Malaya and Indonesia predates both national independence and Chinese Communism. It should not be seen as the result of national independence, as the Chinese-language materials of the earlier period show that this impression is misleading. The *Nanyang Shang Pao*, one of the mainstream Chinese newspapers in Singapore, on 8 January 1946 urged Chinese readers to take Malayan citizenship and to join the local political domain rather than to concern themselves only with China's affairs. The author distinguished between the Chinese in China, as *zhongguoren*, and the Chinese in Nanyang (the South Seas), as *Nanyang huazu*. The English translation of both terms is the same, 'Chinese', but the former is defined in Chinese by membership in the Chinese nation (literally 'person of China') while the latter means ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia (literally 'person of Chinese lineage in the South Seas'). This national separation of different kinds of Chineseness was quite widespread in post-war Southeast Asia. Most Chinese in Southeast Asia preferred to

state their ethnicity as *huaren* or *huazu*, not *zhongguoren*. This terminology appeared right after the Japanese occupation and is dominant in Singapore and Malaysia today.

In Indonesia, the issue emerged even earlier. At the meeting of the Indonesian Investigative Committee for Independence Preparation in July 1945, the Chinese representatives proclaimed that the new Republic should give full citizenship to all people of Chinese descent who were living in Indonesia. The Indonesian nationalists basically agreed with them. The idea actually came from the advice of the Japanese, since at that time Indonesia was still under Japanese control, and the Japanese appointed four Chinese representatives to the Committee. If we consider the same issue before the war, only a small group of *peranakan* Chinese (local-born Chinese) ever advocated that *peranakan* Chinese should be able to become Indonesian subjects, and no Indonesian party seriously considered including the Chinese in the new nation. This suggests that the Japanese era was a turning point in changing Chinese identity.

The impact of Japanese occupation on the relations between ethnic Chinese and the nationalist movement will be part of this study too. Although Benedict Anderson has said that the Japanese occupation basically maintained the racial separation policy of European colonialism,²³ the impact of Japanese policy was quite different from the effect of European rule in this area.²⁴ Japanese perceptions of race, racially differentiated policies during the occupation, expression of race perceptions in

²³ Benedict R. O'G. Anderson, 'Light of Asia' In Josef Solverstein ed. *Southeast Asia in World War II: Four Essays*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966).

²⁴ Genevieve Collins Linebarger, 'The Aftermath of Japanese Colonialism in Southeast Asia.' In Robert Strausz-Hupe and Harry W. Hazard eds. *The Idea of Colonialism*. (London: Atlantic Books, 1956).

propaganda, and how ideas of identity and ethnic relations in local society changed from before the war to after the war will be examined. There were differences between Japanese and European colonial structures in terms of ethnic policy towards Chinese which strongly influenced ethnic relations between the Chinese and the indigenous population. By comparing the different meanings of Chinese identity in Southeast Asia before and after the Japanese occupation, the significance of the Japanese factor can be made clear. The effect of the Japanese occupation in Southeast Asia on Chinese identity can be traced to the interaction between the Japanese, the Chinese and native nationalism.

However, the difficulty in dealing with this issue is that the impact seems very indirect, and sometimes paradoxical. We cannot trace Japanese influence on Chinese identity as a sustained cultural influence. The occupation lasted only three and a half years. Even though the Japanese pursued a very strong policy of Japanisation, the Japanese factor was never significant in this region again after this short period of occupation. Soon after the Japanese occupation, the pursuit of independence became the major issue for the indigenous populations of most Southeast Asian countries. Through the process of decolonisation and nation-building, Japanese influence soon abated. So it is very difficult to trace the Japanese influence in Southeast Asia in terms of cultural characteristics among the local population, except for the existence of some Japanese-trained warlords and political leaders. However, the Japanese occupation forced both *pribumi* and Chinese communities to rethink their attitudes towards Western colonialism and sense of identity. It had a 'circuit-breaker' effect.

The Critical Period for the Southeast Asian Chinese Diaspora: the 1930s to the 1950s

Most studies of the Southeast Asian Chinese take ‘pre-war’ and ‘post-war’ for granted as names for distinct historical periods, although the periodisation should be examined from the point of view of tracing Nanyang Chinese agency against the background of external events that traditionally have determined the periodisation.²⁵ Examination of identity issues over a longer period of time will better show the impact of the Japanese occupation. By comparing identity statements of Malayan and Indonesian Chinese just before and just after the Japanese occupation, we can find that ideas of race and attitudes towards other races underwent a fundamental change in this period. A group of Japanese scholars, like Kurasawa Aiko, who deal with Southeast Asian history have suggested taking the 1930s to the 1950s as the transition period, rather than only the war years.²⁶ Over this longer period of time, the basic changes in Southeast Asian history can be seen more clearly. Other historians may see the Second World War as a rupture in Southeast Asian history, but the significance of a rupture is clearer when it is situated in a longer context.

²⁵ Many of these scholars actually came from Chinese communities in Malaya or Indonesia. They did not consider further explanation necessary because this transition period was part of their experience or the experience of their parents’ generation.

²⁶ Kurasawa Aiko, “Sengo tonan ajia sekai keisei no ishizue: 1930 nendai 1950 nendai rekishi saiko” . [The Foundation of the Postwar Southeast Asian World: Rethinking History between the 1930s and the 1950s] *Tonan ajia shi kakukai kaiho*. [Annals of Association of Southeast Asian History]. 63: 10-15. 倉沢愛子, <<戦後東南アジア世界形成の礎: 1930年代1950年代歴史再考>>, <東南アジア史学会会報>, 63: 10-15.

The classification of ethnic Chinese in Australia provides a good illustrative contrast how perception of identity changes over time without external political interruptions. Nowadays in Australia, the classification of Chinese migrants is based on national political boundaries rather than their sub-ethnicity or regional origin in China. Today these Chinese migrants are described as Malaysian Chinese, Philippines Chinese and so on. This is different from the situation in Australia in the first half of this century, when most Chinese migrants were classified by sub-ethnic origins, for instance as Hokkien, Cantonese, Hakka or Hailam. When Laurence W. Crissman, an Australian scholar, mapped the 'segmentary structure' of overseas Chinese communities in Australia in 1967, he found that the sub-ethnic origins of Chinese migrants gave rise to the segmentary units for urban Chinese.²⁷ In 1985, the same author found the phenomenon of segmentation still existed in Chinese communities in Australia, but that the segmentary units were new categories based on political boundaries.²⁸

This change in the categorisation of Chinese migrants in Australia reflects the change within the Southeast Asian Chinese diaspora over the past few decades. It is obvious that in the past five decades, for Southeast Asian Chinese, interaction with their new nations in Southeast Asia has become more important than their links with their regional origins in China. Sub-ethnic groups like Hakka still exist but do not have the same significance as before. It is a different picture from that presented by many early studies of the Chinese communities of Southeast Asia, which indicated that the sense of

²⁷ Laurence W. Crissman, 'The Segmentary Structure of Urban Overseas Chinese Communities,' *Man* (n. s.) 2 (June 1967) 185 -204.

²⁸ Laurence W. Crissman, 'The Segmentation and Integration of the Chinese in Brisbane, Australia' . *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*. (1985).

belonging to their sub-ethnic communities of origin was stronger than that of belonging to the territories where they lived. The importance of this is that Chinese identity is not fixed, even in stable political situations, but changes with the circumstances.

Chapter 2

The Rise of Nanyang Identity in the 1930s

To understand the change of direction in Chinese perceptions of national identity in Southeast Asia, it is necessary to begin with the 1930s. The beginning of change in identity within Southeast Asian Chinese communities can be sensed in the emergence of popular Chinese writing about Southeast Asia and from Southeast Asia. One reason why we need to deal with Southeast Asia as a whole rather than more specifically with Malaya or the Netherlands East Indies is that the Chinese themselves mainly used the category 'Southeast Asian' to describe the Chinese communities of the region, rather than the formal names of the colonies of the time. Although many families descended from early Chinese immigrants had been settled for centuries in various parts of Southeast Asia, and were known as *peranakan*, *baba*, *mestizo*, or other descriptions implying permanent residence, the Chinese population in Southeast Asia was a floating population, particularly from the point of view of the Chinese-speaking people themselves. When these Chinese found a better opportunity in another place, they readily moved. Some prominent Nanyang Chinese who will be dealt with later in this study moved several times within the region before they settled down and became leaders of their communities. Lim Lian Giok, the chairman of USTAC in Kuala Lumpur in the 1950s, was a teacher in a Chinese high school in Java in the 1930s.¹ Wang Ji Yuan, a journalist for a pro-Indonesian Chinese newspaper in Jakarta after

¹ Lim Lian Giok (林連玉, Lin Lian Yu in Mandarin).

WWII, worked in Singapore before he moved to Java during the Pacific War.² Therefore, the category 'Southeast Asia' will be used in discussion of the identity issue before the Second World War, even though the focus is on Malaya and Indonesia.

There are, however, different opinions as to when Chinese residents in Southeast Asia began to have a sense of belonging to the territories where they lived. Yang Song Nian suggested, in his survey of 'new Chinese literature' in Malaya³ that the sense of being locally oriented for Southeast Asian Chinese began to strengthen between 1927 and 1930. Cui Gui Qiang has argued, following his research on the activities of Chinese associations, that the 1950s for the majority of Chinese residents in Malaya were the period of identity shift from being China-oriented to being local-oriented.⁴ But he insisted that the shift was beginning to become evident before the Southeast Asian nations achieved their independence. Hara Fujio suggested that the latter half of the 1950s was the critical period for change in perception of identity among the Chinese in Malaya, because this was when Chinese newspapers changed their format to avoid using signs and terminology containing Chinese national symbols, such as terms of the Chinese calendar.⁵ These studies of Chinese identity change differ over the meaning of 'locally oriented identity', using different indicators to define it.

² Wang Ji Yuan (王紀元).

³ Yang Song Nian, *Xinma zaoqi zuojia yanjiu*, [Studies of Chinese Writers of the Early Period in Singapore and Malaya] (Singapore: Wenxue shuwu, 1988), pp. 1-18. 楊松年, <新馬早期作家研究> (新加坡: 文學書屋, 1988), 1-18. °

⁴ Cui Gui Qiang, *Xinma huaren guojia rentong de zhuanxiang*, [The shifting direction of national identity in Singapore and Malaya] (Singapore: Nanyang Xuehui, 1989). 崔貴強, <新馬華人國家認同的轉向, 1945-1959> ° (新加坡: 南洋學會, 1989). °

⁵ Hara Fujio (原不二夫), *Malaya Chinese and China: Conversion in Identity Consciousness, 1945-1957*, (Tokyo: Institute of Developing Economics, 1997), pp. 98-104.

A definition of locally oriented identity based on the discursive use of the key word 'Nanyang' to refer to the Southeast Asian Chinese will be used here for investigation of the issue of Chinese identity. This discourse actually created new categories which changed in perception of identity of being outside China. By examining different discourses about Southeast Asian Chinese in the 1930s, we find a new kind of identity appearing. It will be called 'Nanyang identity', as this kind of identity was always associated with the term 'Nanyang' in Chinese texts in this period. Although the Chinese term Nanyang had appeared much earlier, the association of the 1930s between Nanyang and Southeast Asian Chinese identity demonstrates a new perception of identity. Nanyang identity had some characteristics which could be seen as locally-oriented, even though it was not strongly associated with any category delimited by political boundaries. It is understandable that this kind of identification was often overlooked, because scholars have paid more attention to post-colonial nationalist movements associated with specific political entities. But to understand Southeast Asian Chinese identity before the defeat of the European colonial powers in Southeast Asia by Japan in the Pacific War, it is essential to understand the importance of the 'Nanyang' concept. It is also advantageous to take Nanyang identity into account in understanding the Chinese response to the new nationalist politics and their ethnic relations with indigenous populations after the war.

Different forms of written material in Chinese in the 1930s will be investigated for their perspective on the identity issue. They include newspapers, academic research, popular essays, school textbooks and literature. In the 1930s, all kinds of Chinese writing used the term 'Nanyang' to indicate the Southeast Asian region, including even places like

Burma where ethnic Chinese went by land rather than sea. Nanyang discourse, which I would define as writing about Nanyang and writing from Nanyang, started to flourish in the 1930s. The emergence of discourse about Nanyang in the 1930s shows that being in Nanyang had acquired a particular significance, differentiated from being in China. The new identity was strongly attached to the term Nanyang. Today, the term *Dongnanya*⁶, directly translated from 'Southeast Asia' in English, has replaced Nanyang as a more neutral term in many formal occasions. But Nanyang is still in common use in spoken and written Chinese to indicate a connection between Chinese people and Southeast Asia. In Singapore, which was the centre of Chinese publishing in the 1930s, this term still conveys a strong feeling of being Chinese in the Southeast Asian region today.

Emerging Nanyang Writing

'Nanyang' traditionally indicates places south of China that can be reached by sea as it means South Sea(s) literally, but it also includes mainland territories south of China reached by road.⁷ For instance, Nanyang has also included the areas of Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Burma, which Chinese immigrants usually reached by land.⁸ There is a general impression that this term has been used for a long time in Chinese literature, since it reflects traditional Chinese attitudes towards this region. But surprisingly the

⁶ Dong-nan-ya (東南亞).

⁷ Xu Yunqiao, *Nanyang shi*. [The History of Nanyang] (Singapore: World Books, 1961), p. 3. 許雲樵, <南洋史>。(新加坡: 世界書局, 1961), 3。

⁸ For example, Ai Wu travelled mostly in Burma. He also used the term "Nanyang" in writing of his experiences. See Ai Wu, *Naaxingji*. [Record of Travels in the South] (Shanghai: Shenghuo Shuju, 1935). 艾蕪, <南行記>。(上海: 生活書局, 1935)。

word Nanyang came into use only late in the Qing Dynasty, in the 1880s. Before this, the names for this region had been 'East Seas' (*Dong Yang*), or 'West Seas' (*Xi Yang*) in the Ming Dynasty.⁹ Before the Ming Dynasty, this region was called 'South Oceans' (*Nan Hai*) or 'Southwest Oceans' (*Xinan Hai*).¹⁰ When a late Qing dynasty intellectual, Wei Yuan, wrote his breakthrough piece, 'Hai guo tu zhi', (The Nation Should Approach the Oceans)¹¹, to persuade the Emperor to change China's inward-looking foreign policy, he called this area 'the Southeast Seas' (*Dongnanyang*)¹². The term Nanyang only came into regular use in Chinese texts after the Qing dynasty sent its first diplomatic representative to Singapore in 1881. After this, Nanyang gradually came to indicate the whole Southeast Asian region.¹³

Writing about Nanyang

Writing was particularly important in shaping pre-war Chinese identity in Southeast Asia. The variety of spoken languages among Chinese migrants in this region meant that no single language could be a basis of solidarity for ethnic Chinese as a whole. Chinese people in Southeast Asia spoke mainly Hokkien, Cantonese, Hakka, Hailam and Teochew, which are not mutually intelligible. In many cases finding a common

⁹ Dong Yang (東洋); Xi Yang (西洋).

¹⁰ Fong Cheng Jun, *Zhongguo Nanyang jiaotongshi*. [The History of Communication by Sea between China and the South Seas.] (Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshu guan, 1937), pp. 1-2. 馮承鈞, <中國南洋交通史> (上海: 商務出版社, 1937), 1-2. °

¹¹ Wei Yuan (魏源) *Hai guo tu zhi* (海國圖志).

¹² Dong nan yang (東南洋).

¹³ Xu Yunqiao, *Nanyang shi*. [The History of Nanyang] (Singapore: World Books, 1961), p. 3. 許雲樵, <南洋史> ° (新加坡: 世界書局, 1961), 3. °

language in which to communicate was a problem when Southeast Asian Chinese met together. Mandarin was decreed to be the national language in China in 1919, but only very few Southeast Asian Chinese residents were able to speak Mandarin.¹⁴ There is only one written form of the Chinese language, though, so written Chinese became the most significant means of communication between Chinese communities.

Before the war, Chinese communities tended to be classified according to their regional origins into *bang* (a Mandarin term meaning 'group'). For example, there were the Hokkien *bang*, the Cantonese *bang*, and the Hakka *bang*. Understanding the sub-ethnic divisions among Southeast Asian Chinese and their organizations helps in understanding the nature of the various identity concepts among Chinese migrants before the rise of Nanyang discourse. The Chinese migrant population in Malaya and Indonesia expanded in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The sense of belonging to a place, among these migrants, was directed toward their regional origin in China rather than to China as a whole. C. F. Yong confirms that classification by regional origins was characteristic of Chinese communities in the pre-WWII era.¹⁵ These affiliations were the centre of social life and represented the shared interests of people from the same region. They referred not only to geographic regions of China but also to spoken languages. People who spoke the same language preferred to migrate to the same area,

¹⁴ Mandarin is based on the dialect spoken in Peking. It was widely spoken in North China but not in South China, where most Nanyang Chinese came from. See Huaqiao zhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Yinni huaqiao zhi*, [History of the Chinese in Indonesia] (Taipei: Qiaowu weiyuanhui, 1977). 華僑誌編委員會, <印尼華僑志> (台北: 僑務委員會, 1977); Huaqiao zhi bianzuan weiyuan hui, *Malaiya huaqiao zhi*, [History of the Chinese in Malaya] (Taipei: Qiaowu weiyuanhui, 1977). 華僑誌編委員會, <馬來亞華僑志> (台北: 僑務委員會, 1977)。

to live together, to work in the same profession, to form their own associations, and even to marry within the group.¹⁶ There were also many associations based on clans, trades or professions, but most of these were also dominated by people with a common regional origin.¹⁷ Chinese schools were also distinguished on the same basis. Organisations representing Chinese from the same region maintained Chinese schools in which the regional dialect was the medium of instruction. But though the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia were sharply distinguished by regional origins, the significance of this differentiation was downplayed in Chinese writing, which was seen as representative of the entire Chinese community.

The earliest Chinese records of Southeast Asia are centuries old. This early literature records life and customs in the South Seas from the viewpoint of the Chinese literati. It was published for elite circles in China. Different kinds of Nanyang literature in Chinese emerged in the 1930s. Chinese newspapers published in the region were the most obvious. In 1927 to 1929, commercial Chinese newspapers started to appear in Southeast Asia. Academic writing about Nanyang, especially Nanyang Chinese history, flourished in China in the 1930s and later in Southeast Asia. Essays on Nanyang frequently appeared in intellectual review magazines as well as popular magazines. There was also a strong need for Chinese textbooks for Southeast Asian Chinese

¹⁵ C. F. Yong, *Chinese Community Structure and Leadership in Pre-War Singapore*. (Singapore: South Seas Society, 1977), pp. 2-5.

¹⁶ Mai Liu Fang (Mak Lau-Fong), *Fangyan rentong*. [Dialect Group Identity: A Study of Chinese Sub-ethnic Groups in Malaya] (Taipei: Zhongyanyuan minzusuo, 1985). 麥留芳, <方言認同> (台北: 中研院民族所, 1985)。

schools. Chinese travel literature about exploration of Nanyang appeared at the same time. All of these phenomena demonstrate the rise of a genre of Nanyang literature after the late 1920s. These kinds of writing sustained different discourses of the Nanyang Chinese. They gave Chinese people, in the homeland or in migrant societies, a clear image of being Chinese in Nanyang.

Emergence of Chinese Newspapers

Some Chinese newspapers started to be published in Southeast Asia early in the twentieth century, but the circulation was very small and the language was classical Chinese. The Chinese sojourners would have found it hard to gain a sense of belonging to their local place through the existing Chinese literature, particularly since these newspapers were published by anti-Qing revolutionary organizations and were concerned first and foremost with Chinese politics. The *Nanyang Sang Pao* and the *Sin Chew Jit Pao* were commercial Chinese dailies first published in the late 1920s.¹⁸ Unlike the newspapers issued early in the century, these dailies did not serve as propaganda agencies of any political party or revolutionary group. There are further difference between these newspapers and the newspapers of the earlier period. First, the

¹⁷ Mai Liu Fang (Mak Lau-Fong), *Fangyan rentong*, [Dialect Group Identity: A Study of Chinese Sub-ethnic Groups in Malaya] (Taipei: Zhongyanyuan minzusuo, 1985). and Mak Lau-Fong, "The Social Alignment Patterns of the Chinese in Nineteenth-Century Penang", *Modern Asian Studies* 1989: 23 (2) 259.

¹⁸ Nanyang Shang Pao (南洋商報), literally 'Nanyang Business Daily', and Sin Chew Jit Pao (星洲日報), which means Singapore Daily, still exist today, though they have been merged into one newspaper, the United Daily (聯合早報) in Singapore. Cuo Nansen ed. *Cong Xingzhou Ribao kan Xingzhou wushinian, 1929-1979*. (Singapore: Sin Chew Jit Pao, 1979). 卓南生編, <從星洲日報看星洲 50 年, 1929-1979>. [50 years of Singapore through the Singapore Daily] (新加坡: 星洲日報, 1979).

language they used was vernacular Chinese rather than classical Chinese. Second, these newspapers emphasised the needs of their readers in Nanyang. They contained news, market reports, literature and advertisements. They were presses which both reflected and shaped the views of the community. They provided a public sphere for Southeast Asian Chinese to share passions and express their own opinions. It fostered a sense of belonging in the Southeast Asian territories for the Chinese residents. Because the first generation of Chinese migrants usually came to Nanyang to earn their living and went back to China after they retired, they did not automatically develop a sense of community with other Nanyang Chinese. But in the late 1920s the Chinese newspapers took on the role of serving all Chinese communities in Nanyang.

Why did the Chinese popular press in Southeast Asia come so late in view of the long history of Chinese migration to this region? The history of Chinese migrants to Southeast Asia shows that the composition of the Chinese population in Southeast Asia and the political situation in China made it difficult for mass print media to exist. The imperial government prohibited travel abroad throughout most of the Qing Dynasty.¹⁹ So early Chinese migrations to Southeast Asia consisted of small numbers of people who gathered in ports of trade, until 1860, when the Qing were forced to recognise the right of labourers to go abroad by treaty with Britain and France, which wanted more cheap labour from China to help in the development of Southeast Asia, the West Indies and the colonised African islands. After that the majority of Chinese migrants to Southeast Asia were coolies, contracted workers or small shopkeepers.

¹⁹ According to the Law of The Great Qing 225, 'All officers, soldiers or civilians who go overseas for trade or to settle in the outer islands, must go to the scaffold as condemned rebels. People who come from the same county and who conceal for them will also be sentenced to death.'

The political situation in China did not offer a stable framework by which overseas Chinese could identify themselves as Chinese nationals. Before the establishment of the Republic of China in 1912, the Manchu-dominated Qing government was seen as a foreign regime by the people of South China. The Qing government did not even recognize overseas Chinese as its subjects until 1909. Sun Yat-sen's revolution took *quzhu dalu* (expel Manchu barbarism)²⁰ as its chief rallying-cry. In this situation, identifying themselves as Hokkien, Cantonese, Hakka or Tiochew was natural for Chinese migrants.

The Republican revolution of 1911 changed this situation.²¹ Some intellectuals left China to live among the Chinese residents in the South Seas, working mostly as schoolteachers in Chinese schools or for Chinese newspapers. Involvement in the Republican revolution was limited to a small number of people. The Chinese newspapers which appeared at that time were mainly either for the revolution or anti-revolutionary. In Indonesia, Chinese newspapers began to be published because of the conflict between Republicans and constitutional monarchists in the first decade of the twentieth century. The first modern Chinese daily newspaper in Indonesia was *Sishui ribao*, or 'Surabaya Daily', which began publication in 1903. Another newspaper, *Sudao ribao*, literally 'Sumatra Daily', followed in 1904 in Medan.²² Later in this decade, *Si bin ri bao* in Surabaya, *Su men da la*

²⁰ Qu zhu da lu (驅逐韃虜).

²¹ For details of the Chinese revolutionary movement in Nanyang, see Yen Ching-Hwang, "The Chinese Revolutionary Movement in Malaya (1900-1911)". Ph. D. dissertation, ANU, 1969.

²² *Sishui ribao*(泗水日報), *Sudao ribao*(蘇島日報).

bao in Medan and *Hua duo bao* were very enthusiastic in promoting the Chinese Republican revolution.²³ This was called overseas Chinese nationalism or a 'pan-Chinese movement' by scholars.²⁴

The Chinese newspapers in Singapore started earlier. The first one, *Lat Pau*, (literally 'Straits Daily') started publication in 1881. At the turn of the century, the government of the Manchu Dynasty in China was on the point of collapse, and the revolutionary organization led by Dr. Sun Yat-sen (or Sun Zhong Shan) was regrouping its strength in Nanyang.²⁵ At the same time, the constitutional monarchists represented by Liang Qichao had gone into exile overseas, and some of them broadcast their ideas in Nanyang after the failure of the reforms of 1898 in China. In the last decade of the 19th century, three more Chinese newspapers were established in Singapore. They were *Xing bao* ('Singapore Reporter') *Ri xin bao* ('New Daily News') and *Tian nan ri bao* ('South Skies Daily'). Political activists used these newspapers to publicise their ideas. Some newspapers were even distributed free to attract readers. For example, *Thoe Lam Jit Poh* (*Tunan ribao*) was founded by Chen Chu Nan, who sold his house to launch this newspaper for the cause of the Revolution. The Chinese newspapers of this period were in *wenyan* (classical Chinese), which related to the spoken vernacular much as Latin related to English in the days when classical education was essential for a career in government for English speakers. They were very much a means for the elite to promote

²³ Zhong Guang Xing, *Yinni huaqiao baoye shi*. [The History of Indonesian Chinese Newspapers] (Taipei: Zhengzhong shuju, 1975), pp. 1-3. 鍾廣興, <印尼華僑報業史> (台北: 正中書局, 1975), 1-3。

²⁴ Lea E. Williams, Overseas Chinese Nationalism. *The Genesis of the Pan-Chinese Movement in Indonesia 1900-1916*. (Glencoe: Free Press, 1960).

²⁵ Sun Yat-sen (孫逸仙 in Cantonese) or Sun Yi Xian in Mandarin, Sun' s alternative name, Sun Zhong Shan(孫中山), is the one by which he is generally known in Chinese.

or debate their ideas. It is fair to say that Chinese newspapers prior to the 1930s failed to convey any sense of belonging to the local territories either in Malaya or in Indonesia. Before the Chinese commercial newspapers emerged in the 1930s, Chinese newspapers were an element of elite culture. They expressed very little concern about the indigenous population or local affairs in the Nanyang territories. The main concern of Chinese newspapers in the region was on China, not on Nanyang before the 1930s.

The appearance of the commercial, mass-oriented Chinese newspapers in Southeast Asia changed the situation. The most important base for commercial, mass-oriented Chinese newspapers in Southeast Asia was Singapore. The *Nanyang Shang Pao* (Nanyang Business Daily) started in 1923 and the *Sin Chew Jit Pao* (Singapore Daily) in 1929.²⁶ Both were also issued in other major cities in Southeast Asia. The market for commercial Nanyang news dailies increased because Chinese residents in Southeast Asia were eager to hear news from China after the beginning of the conflict between China and Japan. During the 1930s, many newspapers emphasised how fast they could bring news from China in order to meet the demand that arose after the Manchurian Incident in 1931. Some Chinese newspapers, for example, *I-Kun-Pao* in Malaya, even recorded on the top of Page 1 every day the number of years since the Manchurian Incident occurred. They tried to encourage their readers to keep in mind this national humiliation.

Another reason for the rise of the Chinese popular press was that more educated Chinese migrants began to move to Southeast Asia. The 1920s and 1930s were a time

of development for the Chinese education system in Southeast Asia. There was a demand for teachers from China, since the Chinese education system in Southeast Asia did not produce enough teachers. Many Chinese teachers came to teach in Nanyang Chinese schools in this period. They became an important market for the Chinese press, and sometimes contributed to Chinese newspapers.

Almost all Chinese newspapers in the region in the 1930s had one or two pages of 'Nanyang News'. The topics of Nanyang news were still Nanyang Chinese, either Nanyang Chinese affairs or local news which might influence the interests of Nanyang Chinese. 'Nanyang News' created a sense of being in a common region, Nanyang. The pronoun, 'we', in 'Nanyang News' obviously indicated Chinese who lived in Nanyang. For example, *Sin po*, which was based on Batavia, reported in its page of 'Nanyang News' on a case of confiscation of food products owned by a Chinese immigrant by the Customs of Singapore. The end of this report expressed the hope to improve this kind of situation from the perspective of Nanyang Chinese. It shows that the sense of being in a common region could be easily received through Nanyang Chinese newspapers.²⁷

Research on Nanyang

²⁶ Lim Jim Koon ed., *Our Seventy Years: History of the Leading Chinese Newspapers in Singapore*. (Singapore: Chinese Newspapers Division, Singapore Press Holdings, 1993), p. 25.

²⁷ "Haiwai huaqiao beisou guanyuan liunan: huaqiaoshe chengching caitien sunling fahuan." [Overseas Chinese are harassed by the Customs: the Chinese community demands improvement] *Sin Po*, 28 December, 1936. <<海外華僑備受關員留難: 華僑社呈請財廳迅令發還>>, <新報>, 28 December, 1936.

Another clear indication of the rising discourse of Nanyang was academic research on the Nanyang Chinese. Interest among Chinese intellectuals in Southeast Asia flourished in the 1930s. Traditional intellectual concerns in the Middle Kingdom did not lead to interest in the southern foreign territories. If we look at the bibliography of Chinese literature on Southeast Asia, most publications appeared after 1928.²⁸ The establishment of the Institute of Nanyang Studies at Jinan University in 1928, which was the first research institute of this kind in China, was the beginning of the institutionalisation of social science research on the Southeast Asian Chinese.

Publications about Nanyang increased rapidly in number in the 1930s.²⁹ Scholarship on Southeast Asia, particularly on the topic of the Chinese in Southeast Asia, developed quickly. This new interest in Nanyang was not limited to academics. Popular books and magazine articles were published along with academic works, as the situation of the Chinese gathering in the South Seas now attracted popular interest. Most of them were published in Shanghai or Hong Kong, the major ports for Chinese migrants to come and go by. At this time, only a few publications came out in Singapore or Penang. Some authors might write or edit in Southeast Asia, but still send their manuscripts back to Shanghai or Hong Kong to publish, because Chinese printing was not readily available overseas. Writing about Nanyang in this way bridged China and Nanyang.

²⁸ Institute of Southeast Asia, Nanyang University, *Nan yang yan jiu zhong wen qi kan zi liao suo yin*. (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asia, Nanyang University. 1968) [Index to Chinese Periodical Literature On Southeast Asia, 1905-1966] 南洋大學南洋研究所, <南洋研究中文期刊資料索引> (新加坡: 南洋大學南洋研究所, 1968)。

²⁹ Yao Nan, 'Foreword to *South Sea Culture*', *Sin Chew Jit Pao*, 1 June, 1940. 姚楠, <<南洋文化發刊詞>>, <星洲日報>, 1 June, 1940。

The flourishing of research on Nanyang which occurred in the 1930s grew from the need for mainland Chinese to develop expertise on Nanyang. Increasing academic interest in Nanyang will be discussed subsequently in the context of the establishment of Nanyang Studies at Jinan University. The increased popular interest can be seen in several magazines, which published articles about Nanyang in considerable numbers; for example, *Dong Fang Zazhi* (Oriental Magazine)³⁰ and *Nanyang Pinglun* (the Nanyang Critic)³¹. Many non-academic books based on intensive studies of Nanyang were published in this period. Eventually, daily newspapers started to print feature columns on Nanyang Studies, written by experts for general readers, in the late 1930s.³² The demands of the growing education system also stimulated the quest for better knowledge and understanding of Nanyang. The intellectuals among Chinese migrants were mainly in educational circles. Teachers in Chinese schools in Nanyang demanded suitable textbooks for Southeast Asian students. Huang Su Feng, who lived in Tegal, Java and taught in a small Chinese school, wrote a Nanyang geography textbook based on his survey of the region for use in Chinese schools. He explained that the textbooks in use in Chinese schools only presented the geography of China and were inappropriate for the Nanyang

³⁰ *Dong Fang Zazhi* (東方雜誌), conventionally translated as 'Eastern Miscellany', was an intellectual magazine based in Shanghai.

³¹ *Nanyang Pinglun* (南洋評論), meaning Nanyang Critic, which commenced publication in 1922, featured articles on Nanyang history, geography and folklore.

³² 'Sin Chew' s promotion of South Seas Studies', in Lim Jim Koon ed., *Our Seventy Years: History of the Leading Chinese Newspapers in Singapore*. (Singapore: Chinese Newspapers Division, Singapore Press Holdings, 1993), p. 125.

students, so he was keen to produce appropriate textbooks himself.³³ In another book, he described the pleasures of being in Nanyang in contrast to China, using the word 'paradise' (*leyuan*) to describe Nanyang.³⁴

A major driving force behind this literary production and research was obviously concern with the situation of ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia. This was why most studies of Southeast Asia by Chinese scholars focused only on the Southeast Asian Chinese. Many authors had personal experience of Nanyang, like Li Zhang Fu; some were returned migrants from Nanyang, like Zhang Xiang Shi. Zhang Xiang Shi even published a book with the title of *The South Seas: Centre for the overseas Chinese*, in which he pointed out that his interest in Southeast Asia was only in the Chinese settlers.³⁵ There was a belief that if the fatherland became strong, then Chinese migrants would not suffer discrimination. When the Chinese Republican revolution succeeded, the attitude of the Dutch to the Chinese changed. The export and import quotas that had applied to them were lifted, hotels opened to Chinese and they gained freedom to travel. However, domestic political conflict later brought about reduction of their status again.³⁶

³³ Huang Su Feng, *Kexue di Nanyang Heshu Dong Yindu bian*. [Essays on Science in The Nanyang Islands; Dutch East Indies edition] (Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan. 1931), p. 21. 黃素封, <科學的南洋--荷屬東印度編> (上海: 商務印書館, 1931), 21。

³⁴ Huang Sufeng, *Nantian Leyuan*. [The Paradise of the South] (Shanghai: Shangwu Yishuguan. 1934) p. 98. 黃素封, <南天樂園>。(上海: 商務印書館, 1934), 98。Leyuan (樂園)。

³⁵ Zhang Xiang Shi, *Huaqiao zhongxin zhi nanyang*. [The South Seas: Centre for the overseas Chinese] (Hainan: Haikou Shuju, 1927), p. 3. 張相時, <華僑中心之南洋>。(海南: 海口書局, 1927), 3。

³⁶ Li Zhang Fu, *Nanyang huaqiaoshi*. [The History of the Nanyang Chinese] (Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan. 1929), p. 40. 李長傅, <南洋華僑史>。(上海: 商務印書館, 1929), 40。

The reorganization of Jinan University in 1929 marked the new intellectual respectability of Nanyang Chinese studies. This university was the only one in China established specifically for overseas Chinese students. Before 1928, there were only two departments: the Department of Normal Education and the Department of Commerce.³⁷ The graduates either went to teach in Chinese schools in Southeast Asia or went into business. Those subjects were still considered suitable for the needs of Nanyang Chinese, according to the annual report of 1926. But the university reform plan of 1928 argued that those subjects were not enough for Southeast Asia. For instance, the reform plan expressed the need to set up a Department of Political Economics in this way: 'Because the Nanyang Chinese lack experience and interest in politics, we have set up the subject of Political Economics in order to encourage this interest, which will improve the treatment of the Chinese by the colonial governments.'³⁸

The emergence of Nanyang Chinese studies was stimulated by Japanese interest in this region. The establishment of the Institute of Nanyang Studies at Jinan University was prompted by the Japanese research enterprise in Southeast Asia. The reform plan for Jinan University said 'Considering what the Japanese government has done, setting up the Nanyō Bureau for Southeast Asian affairs, spending a huge amount of money to

³⁷ 'Outline of University Reform' in *Jinan Daxue huaqiao yanjiu suo, Jinan xiaoshi ziliao xuanji*. (Guangzhou: Institute of Overseas Chinese Studies, Jinan University, 1983) [Selected Source Material on the History of Jinan University (1906--1949)], pp. 3-8. 暨南大學華僑研究所, <暨南大學校史資料選輯>。(廣州: 暨南大學華僑研究所, 1983), 3-8.

³⁸ 'Outline of University Reform' in *Jinan Daxue huaqiao yanjiu suo, Jinan xiaoshi ziliao xuanji*. [Selected Source Material on the History of Jinan University. (1906--1949)] (Guangzhou: Jinan Daxue huaqiao yanjiu suo. Institute of Overseas Chinese Studies. Jinan University.1983), pp. 11-14.

conduct research on Southeast Asia, its deep purpose can be known. We have five million people living in Nanyang. We would be well advised to set up a department that will increase our understanding of Nanyang.³⁹

The Japanese academic surveys and economic initiatives drew much attention from Chinese intellectuals working in Nanyang studies. Liu Ji Xuan and Shu Shi Zheng, for example, were concerned about Japanese ambitions towards Nanyang. The Japanese takeover of Taiwan was seen as the beginning of the realization of this ambition. The transfer of the trust territories of the Mariannas and Marshall Islands from Germany to Japan was seen as a big step in Japan's southward advance. These two authors suggested monitoring Japanese actions towards Southeast Asia.⁴⁰ Some scholars decided to move to the field of Southeast Asian studies because of Japanese interest in this region. Li Zhang Fu, for example, was worried about the Japanese southern advance, although he was not quite sure which aspect to be most fearful about. Because of the way southern migration was supported by their government and encouraged by society, he saw that the Japanese would become the enemy of the Chinese migrants, even though the number of Japanese in Southeast Asia was quite small.⁴¹

³⁹ 'Outline of University Reform' in *Jinan Daxue huaqiao yanjiu suo, Jinan xiaoshi ziliao xuanji*. [Selected Source Material on the History of Jinan University. (1906--1949)](Guangzhou: Jinan Daxue huaqiao yanjiu suo. Institute of Overseas Chinese Studies. Jinan University.1983), pp. 10-23. 暨南大學華僑研究所, <暨南大學校史資料選輯> (廣州: 暨南大學華僑研究所, 1983), 10-23。

⁴⁰ Liu Ji Xuan and Shu Shi Zheng, *Zhonghua minzu tuozhi Nanyang shi*. [The History of Chinese Colonization in Nanyang] (Shanghai: Shangwu Chubanshe, 1934), pp.176-177. 劉繼宣、束世澂, <中華民族拓殖南洋史>。(上海: 商務印書館), 176-177。

⁴¹ Li Zhang Fu, *Nanyang huaqiao gaikuang*. [The General Situation of the Nanyang Chinese] (Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan.1934), pp. 42-44. 李長傳, <南洋華僑概況>。(上海: 商務出版社, 1934), 42-44。

This was why the training of Chinese experts in Nanyang studies addressed the importance of Japanese language ability rather than European languages. In Jinan University, language teaching emphasized only Japanese and Malay. The handbook indicated that Japanese language study was to facilitate Nanyang research, 'to learn Japanese is in order to read Japanese publications on Southeast Asia'. But this was not the case with Malay. Malay language ability was seen as important 'in order to serve directly in Southeast Asia'.⁴²

Information about Nanyang appeared in academic works, popular journals and textbooks and changed the direction of discourse about the Nanyang Chinese. The late Imperial tradition of exiling overseas Chinese rebels against the nation, which had been expressed in Qing law, lost its effect on current opinion. Chinese traditional values had not encouraged people to have adventures in foreign lands. Cheng Ho himself went to Nanyang not for adventure but in the Emperor's service, reinforcing the tribute system or pursuing the former emperor.⁴³ Only a few years after Cheng Ho's journeys, all official documents concerning them were burnt, to prevent succeeding emperors developing the same interest. This is why the assistants' travel accounts from Cheng Ho's journeys have become an important source. There was little space in late Imperial China for a genre of travel writing to develop.

⁴² 'Outline of University Reform' in *Jinan Daxue huaqiao yanjiu suo, Jinan xiaoshi ziliao xuanji*. [Selected Source Material on the History of Jinan University, (1906--1949)] (Guangzhou: Jinan Daxue huaqiao yanjiu suo. Institute of Overseas Chinese Studies. Jinan University, 1983), p. 17.

⁴³ Cheng Ho (鄭和).

By the 1930s, though, the motives of the Nanyang Chinese for being in Nanyang were no longer questioned. Instead, their right to be in Nanyang was often the concern of this research. For example, Li Shengwu used many legal cases of protection of overseas nationals to show how overseas Chinese could get legal protection.⁴⁴ The research helped people have a clear idea of Nanyang life, culture and politics. It showed that Chinese had been in Nanyang for centuries, earlier than European settlers. Studying European colonial treatment of Nanyang Chinese, especially abuses, was another major topic of research.⁴⁵ Even research that might not have helped ethnic Chinese to earn their rights in colonial settings prior to World War II became an important source of ideas on gaining rights in Nanyang in later periods.

Nanyang Identity through Literature

Literature was particularly important in forming the Nanyang identity. Literature was the way for an individual to be able to express his or her own idea of identity and to influence readers. Compared to academic writing about Nanyang, literature potentially addressed a broader audience. Here we will examine the following two categories of Nanyang literature: travellers' accounts, and literary sections of Nanyang newspapers, which will hereafter be called 'Nanyang literature'. The travellers' accounts reflected

⁴⁴ Li Shangwu, 'Guojijian jijian paoqiao ming' an.' [Famous Cases of Protecting Overseas Nationals] *Dong Fang Zazhi*, [Eastern Miscellany] 33(19), 1936. 李聖五, <<國際間幾件保僑名案>>, <東方雜誌>, 33(19), 1936。

⁴⁵ Li Sanghen, 'Woguo Nanyang qiaowu de hui gu yu zhanwang.' [Review and Preview of Our Nanyag Affairs] *Dong Fang Zazhi*, [Eastern Miscellany] 33(9): 61-74. (1936). 黎尚桓, <<我國南洋僑務的回顧與展望>>, <東方雜誌>, 33(9): 61-74. (1936)。

images of Nanyang Chinese from the view point of Chinese in China. The Nanyang literature showed self-identity from the view point of Nanyang Chinese. Both helped to shape mainland China's perceptions of Nanyang Chinese.

There is a long tradition of Chinese travellers' accounts of Nanyang. Some very old Chinese records cited in contemporary works on Southeast Asian history are in fact travellers' notes. There are also many travellers' accounts of Nanyang in modern Chinese literature. Travel literature was one of the genres promoted by the Chinese 'New Literature Movement' in the 1920s. Three travellers' accounts of the 1930s will be discussed here: Zheng Jian Lu's *Nan yang san yue ji* (A three months' journey in Nanyang, 1933), Chen Da's *Lang ji shi nian* (Ten years of wandering, 1946) and Ai Wu, *Nanxingji* (Record of Travels in the South, 1935).⁴⁶ Zheng Jian Lu was a publisher, Chen Da a sociologist and Ai Wu a labourer. They all took an interest in the contemporary situation in Nanyang, and their travel notes bear witness to social change in Southeast Asia in an era of transition.

Zheng Jian Lu travelled in Nanyang to collect information for use in editing new textbooks for Chinese schools in Southeast Asia in 1933. Chen Da travelled in Nanyang to comprehend the general situation of the overseas Chinese, in support of a sociological investigation of the home towns (*guxiang*, a term of legal significance as well as general social currency, as Chinese citizens were recorded in local government

⁴⁶ Zheng Jian Lu, *Nan yang san yue ji*. [Three months' journey in Nanyang] (Hong Kong: Zhonghua Shuju, 1933). 鄭健廬, <南洋三月記>。(香港: 中華書局, 1933)。Chen Da, *Langji shinian*. [Ten years of wandering] (Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1946). 陳達, <浪跡十年>。(上海:

and workplace documentation by the place of their birth) of Nanyang Chinese in China. Feeling strong curiosity about their surroundings, they wrote down the details of their journeys in the form of diaries or short stories. From their detailed records and descriptions, we can observe many different aspects of social life in Nanyang. Their travel notes are also useful in conveying the situation of the Chinese communities at that time, since they used networks of Chinese friends and acquaintances to travel in the region. Their travel notes contain rich information on the issues of Chinese education, family and community structure, and ethnic relations between the Chinese and indigenous populations. They reveal much about the outlook and lifestyle of the Nanyang diaspora.

A number of ancient Chinese traveller's records became well known again in this period, because they were often cited in Southeast Asian historical studies. Some were by Buddhist monks, like Fa Xian (399-412) and I-Tsing (671-695), who wrote travel accounts after their journeys to India, Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia,⁴⁷ and some were by government officials, like Zhou Da Guan (1295-1297), Wang Da Yuan (1340-1348) and Chen Lun Jiong (1710).⁴⁸ There is a detailed contemporary description of

商務印書館, 1946)。Ai Wu, *Nanxingji*. [Record of Travels in the South] (Shanghai: Shenghuo Shuju, 1935)。艾蕪, <南行記> (上海: 生活書局, 1935)。

⁴⁷ The dates following the travellers' names in the text below are the years when their journeys took place. Fa Xian (法顯) and I-Tsing (義淨, Yi Jing in Mandarin), Their works were Fa Xian (法顯) *Fo guo ji*. [Notes from the Buddhist Nations] (佛國記) (415), I- Tsing (義淨) *Nan hai ji gui chuan*. [Notes on Returning from the South Seas] (南海寄歸傳) (697).

⁴⁸ Zhou Da Guan (周達觀), Wang Da Yuan (汪大淵), Chen Lun Jiong (陳倫炯), Their travel accounts were Zhou Da Guan (周達觀) *Zhenla fengtu ji*. <真臘風土記> [Record of the customs of Cambodia] (1279) *Daoyi zhilue*. <島夷志略> [Brief record of the islands] (1349), Chen Lun Jiong (陳倫炯) *Hai guo jian wen lu*. [A traveller's account of the Sea Countries] <海國見聞錄> (1710).

Cambodia in the thirteenth century in Zhou Da Guan's *Zhenla fengtu ji*. [Record of the customs of Cambodia], (1279), which became a precious historical record of Cambodia in the ancient time. Cheng Ho's famous journey to Southeast Asia in the fifteenth century (1405-1433) was recorded by his assistants.⁴⁹ These travel accounts became important sources for understanding the past of Southeast Asia, among the general population as well as among scholars. By means of citing ancient Chinese records in contemporary literature, the long-term Chinese connection to Nanyang became common knowledge and helped to build the sense of belonging to Nanyang for Chinese residents, once they considered that Chinese people had been travelling there for centuries.

There are some common characteristics among these modern Chinese travellers' accounts. First, all of the travellers had reasons for travelling through Nanyang. They were not travelling for the sake of it. Their travellers' accounts were by-products of the trip. Second, all of the authors valued the information on other lands and peoples they obtained, and tried to write down the details for their records. A traditional proverb translates as 'Travelling for ten thousand miles is better than reading ten thousand books'.⁵⁰ In some ways, travel is a better source of information than anything else. Third, the authors downplayed their own role in their travel accounts and focused on describing people and places in a foreign land. There was little appreciation of travel in

⁴⁹ Cheng Ho 鄭和 (Zheng He). The records of his assistants were Ma Huan (馬歡) *Ying ya sheng lan*. <瀛涯勝覽> [The splendours of nature in the farthest seas] (1416), Fei Xin (費信), *Xing chuo sheng lan*. <星槎勝覽> [The splendours of nature at the end of the earth] 1436) and Gong Zhen (鞏珍), *Xi yang fan guo zhi*. [Strange countries of the Western Seas] <西洋番國志> (1434).

⁵⁰ Xing wan li lu po wan juan shu (行萬里路破萬卷書), a Chinese saying, meaning 'travelling teaches more than reading'.

the Chinese cultural tradition, so the 'literary traveller' did not exist as a role model. This can be seen as one of the determinants of Chinese travel literature.

The modern travel accounts which I will discuss here have the same character—they contain rich information about the people and places encountered. The modern Chinese travel accounts of Nanyang are in modern vernacular Chinese, or *bai hua wen*⁵¹, rather than classical Chinese. One of the traditions of Chinese traveller's accounts is to write down the details of places and people; in Chinese terms, *feng tu ren ching* (wind, earth and human nature).⁵² From their all-inclusive records and descriptions, we can observe many different aspects of social life in Nanyang. I will not go into the full details but will focus on why they made the journey and what were their main concerns during their journeys.

Zheng Jian Lu was a senior editor in the Zhonghua publishing company,⁵³ a leading publisher and bookstore dealing in academic and educational books. He spent three months travelling in Nanyang in 1933. His main purpose was to collect information about Southeast Asia in order to edit a new textbook for Chinese schools in Nanyang. At that time, all Chinese printed material used in Nanyang schools came from China, mainly from Shanghai and Hong Kong. The Zhonghua publishing company and bookstore was one of the biggest in China. Zheng told news reporters in Singapore that his company had established a printing factory in Hong Kong, which would be the

⁵¹ *bai hua wen* (白話文), modern colloquial Chinese.

⁵² *feng tu ren ching* (風土人情).

⁵³ Zhonghua Shuju (中華書局).

biggest in South China.⁵⁴ The company wanted to edit a new textbook and print it in Hong Kong for Chinese schools in Nanyang. This was significant news for Chinese schools since local Chinese newspapers in Nanyang in each place he visited reported on his visit when he arrived.⁵⁵ It shows that the need to have Chinese textbooks for Nanyang Chinese was well received.

Zheng travelled through British Malaya, Siam, and the Dutch Indies in 1933. He visited more than 30 places, staying ten or more days in some, only two or three days in others. After he finished his journey, he submitted his business report to the publishing company. The travel notes were edited from his private diary. In the preface he made a short list of topics in which he was interested in the places he visited. They are: (1) local history (2) geography (3) migration regulations (4) visa and custom regulations (5) agricultural products and handcrafts (6) natural features and cultural heritage (7) the general situation of the Chinese community (8) the customs and life of the indigenous people (9) interesting news he read (10) people he met and their conversation.⁵⁶

Though the purpose of his journey was to collect information to use in editing a new textbook, Zheng came to a new degree of awareness of the general situation in Nanyang, compared to existing common knowledge in China. In every place, he collected general information about local history and other matters. He summarised the

⁵⁴ Zheng Jian Lu, *Nanyang san yue ji* [Three months' journey in Nanyang] (Hong Kong: Zhonghua shuju, 1933), p. 40. 鄭健廬, <南洋三月記>。(香港: 中華書局, 1933), 40。

⁵⁵ Zheng Jian Lu, *Nanyang san yue ji* [Three months' journey in Nanyang] (Hong Kong: Zhonghua Shuju, 1933), pp. 313-316. 鄭健廬, <南洋三月記>。(香港: 中華書局, 1933), 313-316。

⁵⁶ Zheng Jian Lu, *Nanyang san yue ji* [Three months' journey in Nanyang] (Hong Kong: Zhonghua Shuju, 1933), p. 16. 鄭健廬, <南洋三月記>。(香港: 中華書局, 1933), 16。

information and entered it in his diary. In the diary, Zheng reported the special attention to migration regulations and visa matters he paid while editing the textbook in its political context. He mentioned several times that the new textbooks from his company would not contravene the law in Nanyang as there were political problems involving some textbooks used in Nanyang. In some places, the governments had banned certain Chinese textbooks, so attention to the regulations was needed in editing the new textbook, to avoid such a situation. Also, he was sensitive towards the treatment of Chinese by the Customs. He said: “ We will collect all kinds of relevant information and discuss with experts in order to edit Nanyang Chinese textbooks. These textbooks should be suitable for Chinese education in Nanyang and will not contravene regulations of governments in Nanyang.”⁵⁷

Education was his main concern during the journey. He visited several Chinese schools in most towns and cities, and outlined the features of Chinese education in Nanyang. He distinguished between two kinds of Chinese schools. One was the *bang* schools, which were maintained through native place associations by a particular dialect group, for instance Cantonese or Hokkien. The second was the school maintained by local community-based funding bodies representing diverse regional groups. He called these schools ‘public schools’. The ‘public schools’ taught in Mandarin, but the *bang* schools taught in their specific dialects. Zheng could speak Cantonese, Hokkien, Tiochew,

⁵⁷ Zheng Jian Lu, *Nanyang san yue ji*. [Three months’ journey in Nanyang] (Hong Kong: Zhonghua Shuju, 1933), p. 41. 鄭健盧, <南洋三月記>。(香港: 中華書局, 1933), 41.。

Shanghai, Fuchou, and Mandarin,⁵⁸ but he seemed to prefer Mandarin as the medium of instruction. He encouraged the trend to turn the *bang* schools into ‘public schools’.

As a businessman, he paid attention to economic life in Nanyang. He recorded the exact prices of different items. He observed that the position of the Chinese in economic life had been challenged by the Japanese, the Indians and the indigenous people. In every place, he read the Chinese newspapers to be up to date with the current situation. For example, when he was in Bangkok, there was a coup on 20 June, 1933, which he described.⁵⁹ When he travelled in the Dutch Indies, he observed that the elite of the indigenous population was organised, and that they called themselves Indonesian. Chinese, of course, were not included in the term ‘Indonesian’. Overall, he addressed the need for new, detailed knowledge of Nanyang.

Chen Da was a professor in the Sociology Department of Qinghua University in Peking. He belonged to the first generation of Chinese sociologists to receive Western training in sociology. He is the author of the only study of the home towns of overseas Chinese in South China in the prewar era.⁶⁰ Today, this book is always cited in discussion of the reasons Chinese people went to Nanyang. Most people who know this book refer to it as an academic text, without realising that Chen actually travelled in Nanyang.

⁵⁸ Zheng Jian Lu, *Nanyang san yue ji*. [Three months’ journey in Nanyang] (Hong Kong: Zhonghua Shuju, 1933), p. 315. 鄭健廬, <南洋三月記>。(香港: 中華書局, 1933), 315.。

⁵⁹ Zheng Jian Lu, *Nanyang san yue ji*. [Three months’ journey in Nanyang] (Hong Kong: Zhonghua Shuju, 1933), p. 145. 鄭健廬, <南洋三月記>。(香港: 中華書局, 1933), 145.。

⁶⁰ Chen Da, *Nanyang huaqiao yu minyue shehui*. [Nanyang Chinese and Fujian and Guangdong Society](Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1938), p. 16. 陳達, <南洋華僑與閩粵社會>。(上海: 商務出版社, 1938), 16.。

Chen Da had also his own purpose for travelling in Southeast Asia in 1934, one year after Zheng Jian Lu's trip. It was to be a field research trip. The places visited are similar to those in Zheng Jian Lu's journey, with the addition of more places on the Indo-Chinese peninsula. However, Chen Da published his book ten years later, after the Sino-Japanese war ended, so his traveller's notes include his trips to Russia, Central China and Southwest China. The trip to Southeast Asia occupies only part of the book.

Chen's report is also a diary-style travel account. In the preface, he explains why he used this style to write his travel notes. As a sociologist, he considered how to record his experience. He thought of several modes of writing, like autobiography and personal memoir. But he thought it was too early to write his autobiography, and the subject was too serious for a personal memoir. He also considered other ways of writing used by American and German sociologists. Eventually, he decided to use the form of notes, or *bi ji* in Chinese⁶¹. That is, a series of short essays in chronological order, each short essay with a title. He concluded that *bi ji* was actually the best writing form for him in this situation. As a sociologist, he always considered people and events from social perspectives. He thought his notes might convey some sociological insight, though they are not structured as a systematic argument in the manner of a sociological study.

His journey originated as a study of the home towns of Nanyang Chinese in South China. He was invited by the Pacific Institute to conduct research on the background of

⁶¹ *bi ji* (筆記).

Chinese migration to Nanyang in 1933, and made a one-year research plan focused on Canton and Fujian. He started his field research in 1934. First he organized an investigating group to collect data for him, then he conducted his research in South China, visiting Amoy, Canton, Shantou, Quanzhou and Zhangzhou.⁶² After this, he set out for Nanyang in order to get a better idea of life there.

Unlike Zheng Jian Lu, Chen Da did not concern himself with local history or geography. He focused on social relationships among Chinese migrants in different places. To gain information, he interviewed people intensively, including local Chinese gentry, Western researchers and non-specialists of all kinds. For example, when he visited an old people's home in Bangka, he interviewed more than ten old men and recorded the basic information about every one, such as how long he had lived on Bangka island, and how many times he had gone back to China in his life.

He also developed a theory about the Nanyang Chinese communities. He defined the first generation of Chinese migrants as *qian min*⁶³, literally 'moving population', and the local-born Chinese as *qiao min*, literally 'moved population'.⁶⁴ He recorded all his observations of the difference between *qian min* and *qiao min*.⁶⁵ When he visited a factory in Java, he also tried to identify the difference between *qiao min* and Malays, the

⁶² Amoy(廈門, Xiamen), Canton(廣州, Guangzhou), Shantou(汕頭), Quanzhou(泉州) and Zhangzhou(漳州).

⁶³ *qian min* (遷民).

⁶⁴ *qiao min* (僑民).

⁶⁵ Chen Da, *Nanyang huaqiao yu minyue shehui*. [Nanyang Chinese and Fujian and Guangdong Society](Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1938), p. 78. 陳達, <南洋華僑與閩粵社會>。(上海: 商務出版社, 1938), 78.。

term for indigenous people. He admitted that it was difficult to tell the difference between the two in appearance, but it was easy to distinguish them by words they used. For example, the local-born Chinese called their boss *Tawkey* and the Malays called the boss *Tuan*.⁶⁶

He also contacted Chinese members of Volksraad in Java and described their political ideas and concerns, so he was familiar with the activities of Partai Tionghoa Indonesia (pro-Indonesian Chinese association in Eastern Indies) and Tiong Hwa Hwea (Chung Hwa Hui, pro-Dutch Chinese association in Eastern Indies). He thought that discrimination in law between Europeans, Chinese and indigenous people was the main stimulus for the Chinese to organise politically. After contacting many local-born Chinese, he concluded that the customs of local-born ethnic Chinese might be close to those of Malays or Europeans in appearance, but their minds were still Chinese minds. The local-born Chinese might marry Malay girls, but their children would still have a Chinese mind.⁶⁷ This reflected the popular opinion on Chinese descendants in the Chinese intellectual cycle.

Ai Wu was a labourer when he travelled in Nanyang. His travel account, *Nanxingji*. (Record of Travels in the South, 1935), was written only after he returned from his journey. During his travels, he had no intention of writing down his experiences.

⁶⁶ Chen Da, *Nanyang huaqiao yu minyue shehui*. [Nanyang Chinese and Fujian and Guangdong Society](Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1938), p. 16. 陳達, <南洋華僑與閩粵社會>。(上海:商務出版社, 1938), 16.。

⁶⁷ Chen Da, *Nanyang huaqiao yu minyue shehui*. [Nanyang Chinese and Fujian and Guangdong Society](Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1938), p. 127. 陳達, <南洋華僑與閩粵社會>。(上海:商務出版社, 1938), 127.。

Unlike Zheng Jian Lu and Chen Da, he did not set out with the purpose of studying Nanyang. It might be that because he was not an academic but a non-specialist of very ordinary social position, his work earned more popular attention and made a more sympathetic impression on his readers.

Ai Wu went to Nanyang (mainly in mainland Southeast Asia today) to earn his living. At the beginning he went to see one of his relatives and asked for a job. It was a similar experience to that of many Chinese workers who went to Nanyang to try their luck. Ai Wu stayed in Nanyang for seven years, then went back to Yunnan, where he started to write down his experiences. In his record, he described relations between the ethnic Chinese, the local indigenous population, Westerners, and other ethnic minorities. His short stories illustrated social relations in Nanyang. After publishing the first short story based on his experiences, he received a lot of encouragement from readers, so he went on to write a series of stories based on his own experience. He eventually published this series of stories as a book, *Nanxingji*.

Even though these travel accounts were written from the view point of Chinese in China, this kind of publication in China helped to create a vivid image of the Nanyang Chinese. The 1930s were also a time when Chinese intellectuals began to move to Southeast Asia in large numbers. Going to Nanyang became a recognised option for Chinese people in China who wanted to change their life. For them, being in China and being Chinese in Nanyang were lives of different status, but exchangeable.

Nanyang Literature

Nanyang Literature here means literary works that appeared in the literature pages, or *fukan* (literally meaning 'auxiliary pages') in the daily Chinese newspapers in Nanyang.⁶⁸ The *fukan* was the most important feature of Chinese newspapers for modern literature. They contained short stories, essays, poems, criticism and all kinds of genres. Even long novels were published in serial form in *fukan*. Today the study of Nanyang literature mainly concerns *fukan*. Why was the *fukan* so important for Nanyang literature? It might be because this was the only form of literature which could be seen as a genuinely local product. Other forms of Chinese literature, even if written by people residing in Southeast Asia, were typically published in China because of the difficulty and great cost still involved in Chinese print technology. Hence there were few publications other than daily newspapers which could be presented as local literature. The Nanyang literature in daily newspapers provides us with good material to analyse consciences in Chinese communities.⁶⁹

According to Fang Xiu, modern Nanyang literature appeared for the first time in the 1920s, following the Chinese 'New Literature Movement' which began in 1919.⁷⁰ From then on vernacular Chinese entirely replaced classical Chinese as the language of the Chinese mass media. However in the early 1920s there was very little modern

⁶⁸ *fukan* (副刊).

⁶⁹ There are many issues which we can discuss by using this material of Nanyang literature. For example, the literature about *towkay* and *coolie* would help for discussion on class conscience. Here we only concentrate on how the sense of being local was generated before the Second World War.

⁷⁰ Fang Xiu, *Mahua wenxueshi lunji*. (Singapore: Wenxie Suwu, 1986) [Essays on the History of Malayan Chinese Literature], p. 19. 方修, <馬華文學史論集>。(新加坡: 文學書屋, 1986), 19.。

Chinese literature related to Nanyang. Identifiably Nanyang literature, as defined by Fang Xiu, began to appear in 1927.⁷¹ However, as Lin Wan Jin pointed out in her study of Chinese writers in Singapore, the influence of Chinese writers from China was still considerable in Nanyang Chinese literature of this period.⁷²

The newcomers were sometimes enthusiastic in building up a Nanyang style for their Chinese communities. From the late 1920s, literature pages appeared in Chinese newspapers in Nanyang, especially in Singapore. One of the early literary supplements was *Huang Dao* (literally 'bold island'), which began in 1927. The slogan was 'bring the local style of Nanyang into work',⁷³ and it was acted on with conviction, as shown in one example:

'Why can we not have an independent kind of literature in Malaya? Look at America! It was only seen as a place to get rich by European people three hundred years ago. Now they have their own literature in America. Why should we, Malayan Chinese, be left behind? Can we not create an independent kind of literature? I don't accept that!'⁷⁴

⁷¹ Fang Xiu, *Mahua xinwenxue jianshi*. [A Short History of New Malayan Chinese Literature] (Kuala Lumpur: Dongcong, 1986), pp. 55-61. 方修, <馬華新文學簡史>。(吉隆坡: 董總, 1986), 55-61。。

⁷² See Lin Wanqing, *Zhongguo zuojia zai Xinjiapo ji qi yingxiang*. [The Chinese Writers in Singapore and their influence] (Singapore: Wanli Publishing Co., 1978). 林萬菁, <中國作家在新加坡及其影響>。(新加坡: 萬里書局, 1978)。

⁷³ Fang Xiu, *Mahua xinwenxue shigao*. [A Preliminary History of New Malayan Chinese Literature] (Singapore: Shijie Publishing Co., 1965). 方修, <馬華新文學新稿>。(新加坡: 世界出版社, 1965)。

⁷⁴ Chen Lian Qing, *Mahua wenyi piping di renwu*. [The Duty of Chinese Literary Criticism in Malaya] (Singapore, 1938). 陳良清, <馬華文藝批評的任務>。(新加坡, 1938).

We can also use Yu Ta Fu's encounters with Chinese youth in Nanyang to illustrate the will towards Nanyang identity. When Yu Ta Fu, a representative figure in the Modern Chinese literature movement in China in 1920s, arrived in Singapore in 1938, the issue of Nanyang style could not yet draw much attention even in Nanyang. Soon after Yu Ta Fu arrived in Singapore, a debate took place over one of his articles, entitled 'Several Questions'. This debate now holds a celebrated place in modern Nanyang literature. He addressed the following questions asked by some Malayan Chinese youths: (1) Why were the topics of most literature in Nanyang the same as those in China? (2) How can Nanyang literature reflect local life in Nanyang? (3) Do we need to have an enlightenment movement in Nanyang? (4) How to popularise literature? Yu replied that the issue of importance was good literature rather than specifically Nanyang literature.⁷⁵ This provoked a series of debates on the issues involved.

Yu's ideas, stemming perhaps from an incomplete knowledge of the actual situation in the local area, did not touch the real concerns of the Malayan Chinese youths. Their eagerness to use literature as a weapon to rouse popular sentiment to support China's resistance led them to believe that literature should reflect social reality rather than pursue the literary values of the traditional intellectual elite. Many local writers wrote articles to voice their dissent. Most either questioned Yu's personal political stance or expressed strong disappointment in his response. Through this debate, we can see signs of the tendency toward localization among Chinese in Southeast Asia. But the context they situated themselves in was the category of Nanyang rather than any new nation in Southeast Asia, as these did not yet exist.

⁷⁵ Yu Ta Fu 'Jige wenti.' [Several Questions] *Xingzhou Ribao*, 21 January, 1939. 郁達夫, <<幾個問

The debate appears to have changed Yu's views on Nanyang literature. From then on, Yu encouraged the local youth to write more literature expressing their true feelings about their surroundings. His article, 'Trip to Melaka', written subsequent to the debate, was in a characteristic Nanyang style and was eventually selected as a representative example of Nanyang literature in Malaysian textbooks.⁷⁶ Yu also supported the localization of intellectual circles by joining the executive committee when the Nanyang China Society, the first Chinese academic association to focus on Nanyang, was founded in 1940. 'Trip to Melaka' appeared in the first issue of the *Journal of the Nanyang China Society*.⁷⁷ We don't know how much Yu was influenced by the debate on his article of 'Several Questions'. Whatever influence the 'Several Questions' debate may have had on Yu, it is true that many Nanyang writers were encouraged by Yu in the direction of cultural localisation. The will to develop true Nanyang literature was realised in the genre of 'Mahua literature' after World War II. Yu Ta Fu's contribution to this genre is recognized by scholars of the history of Mahua literature.⁷⁸

題>>。〈星洲日報〉, 21 January, 1939.。

⁷⁶ The Chinese title is *Maliujia youji* (馬六甲遊記). Wen Zichuan ed. *Yu Dafu nanyouji*. [Yu Dafu's Notes on Travel in the South] (Hong Kong: Shijie Chubanshe, 1983). 溫梓川編 〈郁達夫南遊記〉。(香港: 世界出版社, 1983)。

⁷⁷ Yao Nan, "Mianhuai Yu Ta Fu" [Mourning Yu Ta Fu] in *Huiyi Yu Ta Fu*. [Remembering Yu Ta Fu] (Hunan: Hunan Wenyi Chubanshe, 1986). p. 498. 姚楠, <<緬懷郁達夫>>。陳子善、王自立編。〈回憶郁達夫〉。(湖南: 湖南文藝出版社, 1986), 498.。

⁷⁸ Fang, Xiu 'Yudafu liugei bendi di yibi wenxue yichan.' [The Literary Heritage that Yu Ta Fu Left for Malaya] *Mahua xinwenxue ji qi lishi lunkuo*. [Mahua New Literature and its historical outline] (Singapore:

Influence of Nanyang Identity

Nanyang identity contained two different ways of identities. On one hand, Nanyang Chinese were proud of being Chinese. On the other hand, Nanyang identity emphasised being in Nanyang as a different status. Nanyang identity is a concept implying both China-oriented and local-oriented identification to the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia. This locally oriented identity was not strongly associated with categories of identity delimited by political boundaries. Nanyang identity developed in the 1930s, before the nationalist movements for the new Southeast Asian countries gained power. This development can be seen in so-called 'Nanyang literature' in Chinese, which includes writing in Nanyang, writing for Nanyang and writing about Nanyang. The booming development of Nanyang literature influenced more ethnic Chinese toward seeing their place of residence as home. Being in Nanyang became a kind of personal status which was conceivable and acceptable, once it was given regular expression in mass-market literature, rather than being an economic expedient bearing a distinctly negative social cachet. Thus the literature helped the Chinese communities to build up their own distinctive identity. At the same time, Nanyang identity implied a degree of identification with Chinese culture. Particularly after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937, all concern with political events was focused on China.⁷⁹

Wan Li Publishing Co, 1972). 方修, <<郁達夫留給本地的一筆文學遺產>>。〈馬華新文學及其歷史輪廓〉。(新加坡: 萬里文化企業, 1972)。

⁷⁹ Even the Chinese *peranakan* who founded a political party devoted to Indonesian nationalism were influenced by the Sino-Japanese conflict. The situation brought about a distinction between Chinese *peranakan* and *pribumi*. See below.

The 1930s were an important period for nationalist movements in many parts of Southeast Asia. They were also the period when the ethnic Chinese built up a sense of identity founded on being Chinese in Southeast Asia. This kind of identity was still far away from being a political identity in the modern nation-state sense. But it was because of the association with China that the local nationalist movements, in many cases, kept aloof from the Chinese communities. Most local nationalist movements used features of ethnicity to mobilize the people and gain solidarity. The Chinese immigrants, particularly those who still displayed Chinese cultural characteristics, were seen as outsiders in the nationalists' eyes. The policy of the colonial governments toward the diverse ethnic groups was basically 'divide and rule'. The colonial authorities worked against the possibility of alliance between the Chinese communities and the indigenous population. Traditional ways of thinking among the Chinese communities also worked against this possibility. The mainstream political tendency among the Chinese communities was to obey the law without making any trouble with the authorities.⁸⁰ The development of Nanyang identity connected to the local colonial territories was not involved much with the local nationalist movements before the Second World War.

Even in these conditions, Chinese communities themselves gradually developed a sense of identity centred on being in Southeast Asia in contrast to being in China. This sense of identity was not associated with the colonial governments or the local population but with the Chinese communities themselves. Being in Southeast Asia, in the eyes of Chinese of the 1930s, was a special status compared with that of their relatives who

⁸⁰ Wen Gu Zhi, *Huaren di zhengzhi yizhi*. [The Political Consciousness of Ethnic Chinese] (Kuala Lumpur,

lived in China. In this way a sense of identity for the Chinese in Southeast Asia was generated among the communities without being announced by any government or organisation. In the 1930s, mass circulation literature in Chinese about Southeast Asia socialised this sense of identity, which can be seen in the growing discourse on the topic of 'the Nanyang Chinese'. This discourse itself argues for the existence of a distinctive Nanyang Chinese identity. The discourse of the Nanyang Chinese was not limited by sub-ethnic categories based on political belief, religion, or hometown origin. Investigating mass circulation literature for Southeast Asian Chinese is a good means to evaluate the general situation of cultural and political identity of Chinese residents in Southeast Asia in the 1930s, since it emerged at this time.

Nanyang identity was different from Tiochew identity, Hokkien identity or any of the other forms of social self-identification based on family origin in one region of China. It was a kind of artificial and situational identity, not based on primordial sentiment but more on acquired culture. The concept of Nanyang identity can be seen as the product of two equal and opposed sets of political, legal and material distinctions, each providing an occasion for Nanyang Chinese to consider the issue of their membership in a social category--the distinction between the Chinese and the Malays, Javanese, European colonialists, Indians and others living in Nanyang, and the distinction between themselves and the Chinese living in China.

There were two dimensions to this sense of Nanyang Chinese identity. One was a sense of being in the South Seas, or 'Nanyang' in Mandarin, rather than in the fatherland, China. The other was the strengthening of a sense of being Chinese. Chinese writing, including newspapers, magazines, periodical articles and books, demonstrates that the majority of Chinese residents in Southeast Asia paid more attention to China's affairs than those of Southeast Asia in this period. Except for a small number of *peranakan* Chinese in Indonesia,⁸¹ Chinese people were seen as unchanging, with a strong tendency to preserve their customs and folklore. Many studies emphasize pro-China movements among the Chinese population during the Republican Revolution and the Sino-Japanese war.⁸²

But the 1930s were also a period in which Southeast Asian Chinese built up their sense of being Southeast Asian, or Nanyang Chinese. A discourse about Nanyang Chinese arose in the 1930s which gave Chinese people in Southeast Asia, on the one hand, more

⁸¹ Leo Suryadinata, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Java, 1917-1942*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1981), pp. 72-90. He argues that in pre-war *peranakan* Chinese politics in Indonesia there were three mainstreams: the China-oriented Sin Po group, the pro-Dutch Chung Hwa Hui and the pro-Indonesian Partai Tionghoa Indonesia. As Leo Suryadinata has suggested, the pro-Indonesian group were very small in numbers but their opinion, which differed from the mainstream, achieved significance.

⁸² About the pro-China movement during the Republican Revolution, see Lea E. Williams, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism: The Genesis of the Pan-Chinese Movement in Indonesia 1900-1916*. (Glencoe: Free Press, 1960); Yen, Ching-Hwang, 'The Chinese revolutionary movement in Malaya (1900-1911)', Ph. D. dissertation, ANU. 1969; Yen, Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution: With Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya*, (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1976). About the pro-China movements during the Sino-Japanese war, see Yen, Ching-hwang, 'Overseas Chinese Nationalism in Singapore and Malaya.' *Modern Asian Studies*, 1982, 16(3): 397-425; Leong, Stephen Mun Yoon, 'Sources, agencies and manifestations of overseas Chinese nationalism in Malaya, 1937-1941' Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1976.

consciousness of being Chinese and on the other hand led them to consider what it meant to be in Nanyang.

Chapter 3

China-Nanyang Relations and the Sino-Japanese War, 1937-1942

Although a Nanyang identity developed in the 1930s, it was still far from being a political identity tied to a nation-state. At the same time, Nanyang Chinese developed new feelings of patriotism toward China after 1931 in response to the Sino-Japanese conflict.¹ The conflict drew the attention of Southeast Asian Chinese more to events in China and away from events in the places where they lived. The outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 then prompted Southeast Asian Chinese to take action to assist the fatherland and engendered unprecedented feelings of patriotism toward China. In this chapter, we will examine how the Sino-Japanese conflict influenced the development of Nanyang Chinese identity in the 1930s, and evaluate the impact of the Sino-Japanese War on the identity of Southeast Asian Chinese.

The Sino-Japanese war had a variety of consequences for Nanyang Chinese identity. Previous studies of the relationship between China and the Nanyang Chinese before World War II have mainly focused on the so-called 'National Salvation Movement'.²

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- ¹ Despite some minor conflicts in earlier periods, the Sino-Japanese conflict is counted in this context as beginning with the Manchurian Incident in 1931. The whole decade of the 1930s is here considered to be the period when patriotic feeling toward China developed due to the conflict between China and Japan.
- ² Yoji Akashi, *The Boycott and Anti-Japanese National Salvation Movement of the Nanyang Chinese, 1908-1941* (Wash., D.C.: Georgetown University, 1963). Yoji Akashi, *The Nanyang Chinese National Salvation Movement, 1937-1941*. (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1970). Antonio S. Tan, *The Chinese in the Philippines, 1898-1935: A Study of their National Awakening*. (Q. C.: Garcia Publishing Co., 1972). Leong, Stephen Mun Yoon, 'Sources, Agencies and Manifestations of Overseas Chinese Nationalism in Malaya, 1937-1941.' Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles. 1976. These studies all

In discussing the identity issue, however, we should examine this relationship from a different angle. We should evaluate the different levels of relationships between Nanyang Chinese and China, which were linked to identity shift in the post-war era. There were two different levels of linkage between China and Nanyang before the Pacific War, which began in December 1941. The first was that of the primordial ties of Nanyang Chinese with their hometowns in China. The second level was that of political and legal relations between Nanyang Chinese and the Chinese government. These two levels of linkage were maintained and even reinforced between the start of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 and the start of the Pacific War in 1941. The impact of generation change on this linkage will be discussed in the first section of this chapter. In the second section the focus will be on the impact of the Sino-Japanese War on the Nanyang Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia. The role of the Chinese intellectuals who came to Southeast Asia to launch an anti-Japanese propaganda campaign and their impact on the relationship between China and the Nanyang Chinese will be discussed in the third section.

Relations between China and the Nanyang Chinese

Previous studies of the relationship between China and the Nanyang Chinese before World War II put much weight on Chinese nationalism. But the relationship between the Nanyang Chinese and China should not be considered as a one-way relationship only. Akashi Yōji investigated the relationship in this period in his research on the

focused on the National Salvation Movement as the major theme in the relationship between China and Nanyang Chinese, and used similar ideas of 'Chinese nationalism' to frame this theme.

Nanyang Chinese National Salvation Movement, and concluded that 'The Nanyang Chinese National Salvation Movement was not an example of total patriotism; the Nanyang Chinese could not be expected to be completely altruistic.'³ The problem here is the definition and measurement of 'patriotism' or 'nationalist sentiment'. It would be difficult to expect 'total patriotism' from most groups and in most situations, especially since there is no objective measure by which a historian can assess degrees of patriotism. Pan-Chinese patriotism is doubtlessly a real though numerous factor, but any explanation of this relationship between the Nanyang Chinese and China should also consider other factors.

In this section we will consider how the relationship between Nanyang Chinese and China was affected by the Sino-Japanese War from its outbreak in 1937 to the start of the Pacific War in 1941. This relationship will be examined from two perspectives: the 'hometown' level and the 'national' level.

Interaction with home villages

Primordial attachment is a connection among people who have cultural factors in common, such as descent, race, language, religion and customs. This kind of connection often goes beyond geographical and national boundaries.⁴ In this context, the relationship between the Nanyang Chinese and China operated at the individual or

³ Yoji Akashi, *The Nanyang Chinese National Salvation Movement, 1937-1941*. (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1970), p. 166.

⁴ Clifford Geertz, 'The Integrative Revolution---Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States.' *Old Societies and New States*. (New York: Free Press, 1963), p. 109.

family level. It operated also at the regional or language group level, through relations such as those of Nanyang Chinese community organisations with similar organisations in the provinces of Fujian and Guangdong, or those among Hakkas and Hailamese as language groups. It is important to examine this kind of connection between Nanyang and South China in the 1930s before we discuss connections through political institutions.

The primordial bonds between Nanyang Chinese and their home villages in China in the 1930s were generally still strong, according to many surveys done at that time.⁵ In this period, the majority of Nanyang Chinese still maintained some degree of interaction with their home towns in China. Huang Sufeng, a demographer and geographer, made this judgement and thought it applicable to most parts of Nanyang.⁶ Local-born Chinese children might be sent back by their parents to their home towns in China for a while, either to receive Chinese education or for less classifiable family reasons. These local-born Chinese were regarded as culturally the same as Chinese newcomers, known as *singkeh*,⁷ among the Nanyang Chinese. This relationship has often been neglected by scholars, particularly those who rely on statistical data as the basis for their analysis.

⁵ For example, *Toa Keizai Chosakyoku, Ranryo indo ni okeru kakyō*. [Overseas Chinese in the Netherlands East Indies]. (Tokyo: Toa Keizai Chosakyoku, 1939). 東亞經濟調查局, <蘭領印度に於ける華僑>。東亞經濟調查局華僑叢書。(東京: 滿鉄東亞經濟調查局, 1939) and Chen Da, *Nanyang huaqiao yu Minyue shehui*. [The Nanyang Chinese and Fujian and Guangdong Society] (Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1938). 陳達, <南洋華僑與閩粵社會>。(上海: 商務印書館, 1938)。

⁶ Huang Sufeng, 'Yijiu sanling nian Dong Yindu renkou wenti he huaqiao' (The overseas Chinese and the population problem in the East Indies in the 1930s), *Kexue di nanyang*. [Essays on Science in The Nanyang Islands] (Shanghai: Shangwu Yishuguan, 1931), p. 43. 黃素封, <<一九三〇年東印度人口問題和華僑>>。<科學的南洋>。(上海: 商務印書館, 1931), 43。

⁷ Singkeh (新客).

The statistics on the proportion of local-born Chinese in Chinese communities might not mean much in these circumstances. The local-born Chinese obtained the status of local 'subjects' by Dutch colonial law. But among local-born Chinese, those who maintained direct links with China were, culturally the same in this respect as the *huaqiao*, *singkeh*, *totok*, or any terms commonly understood as applying to 'pure Chinese'. The Chinese government also treated all Chinese descendents as Chinese citizens by Chinese law.

In this period, many Nanyang Chinese supported their extended family in China financially, accepted marriages arranged by the family, and participated in clan affairs in their home villages in China.⁸ This type of interaction with their home villages reflected their world view as it had been shaped by rural life in South China. Most Chinese migrants who arrived in Nanyang were sponsored by people of the same regional origin. In the first few years they might work in shops owned by their sponsors as low-paid workers. After they gained experience in running a small business, they might hope to run their own shops. Most Chinese businessmen in Nanyang went through this process.⁹

Before the war, the Nanyang Chinese community was regarded as a divided society because of the function of language difference as a cause of social segmentation. A survey has demonstrated that the Chinese in Malaya had a strong sense of identity based

⁸ About financial support of relatives in China, see Zheng Linkuan, *Fukuen Kakyoyou No Soukin*. [Remittances from Fujian Huaqiao] (Tokyo: Mantetsu Toa Keizai Chosakyoku, 1942). 鄭林寬 著、池田孝道訳。〈福建華僑の送金〉。(東京：満鉄東亜経済調査局, 1942)。About arranged marriages and clan affairs, see below.

⁹ Nan'yo Kyokai ed. *Nan'yo no kakyō*. [Overseas Chinese in the South Seas] (Tokyo: Nan'yo Kyokai, 1940), p. 8. 南洋協会編，〈南洋華僑〉（東京：南洋協会，1940），8.

on language group.¹⁰ Another survey conducted in 1937 in Fujian and Guangdong provinces showed that most first-generation Nanyang Chinese migrants maintained strong connections with their home villages.¹¹ Some migrants left their wives and children in their home villages. If they were single when they migrated, most of them came back for a few months to have a marriage arranged with a woman from the same region. Bigamous relationships were commonplace, as Nanyang men often married local women and thus frequently supported families in both China and Southeast Asia. This was called *liangtoujia*, the 'two-families system'.¹²

A certain case study shows how Chinese migrants on Billiton island in the Dutch Indies were involved in clan affairs in their home villages in the 1930s. Their home village in south Fujian wanted to build a community hall in 1934. Clan A wanted to build in the south side of the village, and Clan B preferred the north side. The people of Clan B failed to get the result they wanted and so wrote letters to their relatives in Billiton, who held a meeting to discuss this event later. Members of Clan B in Billiton decided to support their clan in China and suggested founding a new school and a new hall for their own clan in their home village separately from the hall proposed by Clan A. They agreed to provide the money for this. With the participation of their relatives on a remote island in Indonesia, this clan group in China found a way to solve their

¹⁰ The period of strong identification with languages/dialect groups among Nanyang Chinese is before 1945. See Li Yi Yuan, *Yige yizhi di shizhen*. [An Emigrant Town] (Taipei: Journal of the Institute of Nationalities, Academia Sinica, 1970), p. 105. 李亦園, <一個移殖的市鎮> (台北: 中研院民族所專刊, 1970), 105.。

¹¹ Chen Da, *Nanyang huaqiao yu Minyue shehui*. [The Nanyang Chinese and Fujian and Guangdong Society] (Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1938), pp.133-135. 陳達, <南洋華僑與閩粵社會> (上海: 商務印書館, 1938), 133-135.。

problem.¹³ This example illustrates the overriding importance of hometown and family identity for Chinese migrants in Southeast Asia.

It is quite understandable that most Chinese migrants in the early twentieth century should have had a stronger orientation towards their regional origins than towards China as a whole. The political situation in China did not offer a stable framework by which overseas Chinese could identify themselves as Chinese nationals. The civil wars between warlords in China in the first fifteen years after the founding of the Republic prevented national integration in China as well as in Southeast Asia. Before 1928, the central government of the Republic of China in Beijing was controlled by the Northern warlords, who were not interested in Southeast Asian Chinese affairs and had little knowledge of South China (the homeland of the Southeast Asian Chinese) and less of the South Seas (Nanyang). So Nanyang Chinese were able to maintain involvement in local affairs in their hometowns in China, but this did not require participation in any organisation or activity above the local level, as the political space for this did not exist.¹⁴ Direct interaction with relatives in China reinforced attachment to the migrant's place of origin. In this way, the Nanyang Chinese could easily maintain their original identity. Many of them chose to go back to their home towns after they retired.

¹² 'liang tou jia' (兩頭家)

¹³ Chen Da, *Nanyang huaqiao yu Minyue shehui*, [The Nanyang Chinese and Fujian and Guangdong Society] (Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1938), pp. 131-133. 陳達, <南洋華僑與閩粵社會> (上海: 商務印書館, 1938), 131-133. °

¹⁴ Yang Jinfa (C. F. Yong), *Zhanqian de Chen Jia Geng yanlun shiliao yu fenxi*, [Tan Kah Kee in Pre-War Singapore: Selected Documents and Analysis] (Singapore, South Seas Society, 1980), p. 13. 楊進發, <戰前的陳嘉庚言論史料與分析>。(新加坡: 南洋學會, 1980), 13. °

The majority of ethnic Chinese in Nanyang came originally from two provinces in the south of China, Fujian and Guangdong. From the Chinese newspapers, we know the main concern of Nanyang Chinese with China was focused on these two provinces. There was a page headed '*Minyue* news' in the Chinese newspapers, which meant news from Fujian and Guangdong.¹⁵ We need to understand these kinds of relationships in order to have a better understanding of Nanyang Chinese responses to China's affairs during the 1930s. For example, when Tan Kah Kee, a prominent Chinese leader based in Singapore,¹⁶ discovered that the Nationalist Party governor of Fujian Province was corrupt, he decided to withdraw support from the Nationalist Party government in China and give his backing to the Communist Party.¹⁷ This was one of many instances which show the importance of the primordial ties between Nanyang Chinese and China.

We should not consider these primordial ties as operating in one direction only. Connections with home towns reinforced China-oriented identity. At the same time, however, ties to the home region could also help migrants to establish a new identity in Nanyang. Nanyang Chinese helped newcomers who were of similar regional or language background to settle in Southeast Asia. During the 1930s, a high proportion of women came to Southeast Asia, either for family reunions or to marry male Chinese migrants. The primordial ties of Nanyang Chinese were built up in this way in Southeast Asia. This helped both to maintain ties with the home region and to help migrant communities put down roots in Nanyang.

¹⁵ Minyue (閩粵), the short forms of the names for Fujian (*min*) and Guangdong (*yue*) provinces.

¹⁶ Tan Kah Kee (陳嘉庚), or Chen Jia Geng in Mandarin.

¹⁷ Tan Kah Kee, *The Memoirs of Tan Kah Kee*. Edited and trans. by A. H. C. Ward, Raymond W. Chu, Janet Salaff. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1994), pp. 202-209.

The Sino-Japanese War cut the direct links between Nanyang Chinese and their hometowns in China, since Japan controlled Fujian and Guangdong provinces. The families who relied on money sent by Nanyang Chinese suffered during this time. As a result many fled from China to Southeast Asia. The primordial ties between Nanyang and China were weaker in the post-war era, and this had considerable impact on the shifting of Nanyang Chinese identity. The practice of Nanyang Chinese men supporting families in both Southeast Asia and China declined rapidly, as families of migrants arrived in Southeast Asia. The families who decided to move to Southeast Asia after the war often tended to see their new places of residence as home.

Political Linkage at the National Level

The Nanyang Chinese community had a strong sense of political identification with China in the 1930s. Politically, most Nanyang Chinese did not identify with either British Malaya or the Dutch Indies, because these were European colonies and there was no room for Chinese to develop their local identity. Legally, except for the Straits Chinese in Malaya and the *peranakan* Chinese in the Dutch Indies, most Chinese people living in the territories were Chinese nationals. After the eruption of the Sino-Japanese War, linkages between China and the Southeast Asian Chinese strengthened the formal political relations between the government of China and the Nanyang Chinese. The sense of patriotism towards China had reached a historical high by the time of the Japanese occupation. Exploring the relations between China and the Nanyang Chinese

at this time helps in understanding the dramatic changes in this linkage before and after the war.

Before the 1930s, governments in China tried many times to build direct institutional links between China and the Nanyang Chinese, but were not very successful. For example, when Sun Yat-sen became president in 1912, he created several positions in his government for representatives of overseas Chinese, and also set up the bureau of 'overseas Chinese affairs', the first such bureau in Republican China.¹⁸ But Sun fell from power the following year and these projects were soon cancelled. In 1918 the Chinese government sent Chinese labourers to work for the European Allies in the First World War and, impelled by this, established an administrative unit to take charge of overseas Chinese affairs.¹⁹ In 1924 this unit asked all Nanyang Chinese to register, but less than 8 percent did so, and the project was soon abandoned.²⁰ Then a special committee for overseas Chinese affairs was set up by the Kuomintang (Nationalist) government in 1928. This committee tried to forge links with overseas Chinese to mobilize manpower and money for the economic development of China. It was no more effective in practice than the scheme of 1924.

¹⁸ Huaqiaozhi bianzuan wuiyuanhui ed., *Huaqiao zhi zongzhi*. [The History of the Overseas Chinese] (Taipei: Qiaowu Weiyuanhui, 1964), p. 524. 華僑志編纂委員會，〈華僑志總志〉(台北：僑務委員會，1964)，524。

¹⁹ Nan'yo keizai kenkyujo ed., *Nan'yo no kakyō*. [Overseas Chinese in the South Seas] (Tokyo: Nanyo Keizai Kankyujo, 1941), pp. 60-61. 南洋經濟研究所編，〈南洋華僑〉(東京：南洋經濟研究所，1941)，60-61。

²⁰ Qiu Hanping, *Huaqiao wenti*. [The Problem of the Overseas Chinese] (Shanghai: Shangwu Yinshuguan, 1937), p. 57. 邱漢平，〈華僑問題〉(上海：商務印書館，1937)，57。

Despite the failure of these schemes, some forms of influence from China had started to spread through the Chinese communities in Nanyang, mainly in the fields of Chinese education and Chinese newspapers. First, Mandarin-medium schools were set up in Southeast Asia. Mandarin had been adopted as the national language of China in 1919. Through the New Culture Movement, which promoted plain Chinese language (*bai hua wen*) as the basic written form for Chinese in order to eliminate illiteracy,²¹ Mandarin-based mass education started to be established in China and later in Southeast Asia. Many schools in Southeast Asia with 'Zhonghua' (China, with emphasis on the cultural meaning) in their names were China-oriented, Chinese-medium schools. However, most schools attended by Chinese children in Indonesia were run by Chinese associations (*huiguan* in Mandarin). For example, one survey conducted in 1931 showed that 13 out of a total of 15 Chinese schools in Batavia were founded by *huiguan*.²² A survey of Chinese schools in the Philippines showed that the media of instruction were still regional languages in the majority of schools. Mandarin was taught from year five as a subject in primary schools, and had not yet become a language in common use in most places in Southeast Asia.²³ Most Nanyang Chinese

²¹ *bai hua wen*, (白話文).

²² Tiansheng Ribao, *Heshu gepu tongqiao xuexiao diaochaibiao*. [Survey of Chinese Schools in the Cities of the Dutch East Indies] (Jakarta: Tiansheng ribao shizhounian jiniance, 1932), pp. 1-3. 天聲日報, <<荷屬各埠同僑學校調查表>>, <天聲日報十週年紀念冊>。(雅加達: 天聲日報, 1932), 1-3.。

²³ Toa Keizai Chosakyoku, 'Hiripin ni okeru kakyo'. *Toa Keizai Chosakyoku*. [Overseas Chinese in the Philippines] (Tokyo: Mantetsu Toa Keizai Chosakyoku, 1939), p. 120. 東亞經濟調查局, <比律賓における華僑>。(東京: 滿鉄東亞經濟調查局, 1939), 120.

either did not know how to speak Mandarin or had learnt it only at school, and had had few chances to use it outside school.²⁴

The contents of Chinese newspapers and other publications in Southeast Asia indicate that the political situation in China was considered more important than the local political situation by Chinese residents in Southeast Asia in the 1930s.²⁵ Chinese newspapers in Southeast Asia before the war show that social distinctions according to regional origin were significant. Every person's regional origin was indicated as an important element of identity if they were mentioned in the local news. News about Nanyang Chinese was printed in the so-called 'Nanyang news' section. If we examine the list of publications in Chinese published in Southeast Asia before the Second World War, most of them were published by regional *huiguan*.²⁶ This indicates that social classification among Nanyang Chinese was predominantly based on their regional origins in China.

There was very little written material in the contemporary Chinese print media to suggest that the Chinese should identify themselves with the local indigenous

²⁴ Li Xuemin and Huang Kunzhang, *Yinni huaqiaoshi*. [The History of the Chinese in Indonesia] (Guangzhou: Guangdong Gaodeng Jiaoyu Chubanshe, 1987), p. 384. 李學民、黃昆章，〈印尼華僑史〉。(廣州：廣東高等教育出版社，1987)，384。

²⁵ Zuo Nansen ed. *Sin Chew Jit Poh, 50th Anniversary Souvenir Magazine, 1929-1979*. (Singapore: Sin Chew Jit Poh, 1979), p. 8. 卓南生編，〈從星洲日報看星洲 50 年，1929-1979〉。(新加坡：星洲日報，1979)，8。

²⁶ Sharon A. Carstens, 'Chinese Publications and the Transformation of Chinese Culture in Malaysia', *Changing Identities of the Southeast Asian Chinese since World War II*. 1985, pp. 2-3.

communities. If we borrow Benedict Anderson's idea of 'imagined community',²⁷ the Nanyang print media before the Second World War did not project an imagined ("Indonesian" or "Malayan") national community incorporating both Southeast Asians and Chinese. Nanyang identity, in the early stages of its development as a generalised form of self-reference among Southeast Asian Chinese, was still Nanyang *Chinese* identity, the character of the Chinese pioneer on the frontier of the civilised world.

Under the Shadow of the Sino-Japanese War

As Akashi Yōji records,

The time was ripe; the national sentiment of the Chinese people everywhere in Southeast Asia was reaching a climax on the eve of the Sino-Japanese war, which broke out in the early morning of July 7, 1937, at Marco Polo Bridge near Peking.²⁸

Patriotism toward China among Nanyang Chinese after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war is illustrated by the so-called National Salvation Movement, which mobilised financial support for the Chinese war effort. Remittances to China from Southeast Asian Chinese were an important element in the funding of China's military campaign.²⁹ The National Salvation Movement during the Sino-Japanese War has been

²⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflection of the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. (London: Verso, 1983).

²⁸ Yōji Akashi, *The Nanyang Chinese National Salvation Movement, 1937-1941*. (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1970), p. 12.

²⁹ Nan'yo Kyokai ed., *Nan'yo no kakyo*. [Overseas Chinese in the South Seas] (Tokyo: Nan'yo Kyokai, 1940), p. 2. 南洋協会編・〈南洋の華僑〉。(東京：南洋協会, 1940), 2.

investigated by scholars such as Akashi Yōji and Victor Purcell.³⁰ Estimates of the remittances from overseas Chinese communities suggest that about one-third of China's military costs were paid by remittances from overseas.³¹ This amount does not include remittances to private or local recipients such as families, relatives, clan associations and local government in the contributors' home towns. If these are included, overseas Chinese paid half of the total costs of China's government. At that time, 86 percent of those overseas Chinese were in Southeast Asia.

Some scholars have argued that the Chinese in Malaya and in Indonesia had different attitudes toward the Salvation Movement. This is because Indonesian Chinese did not fully support economic sanctions on Japanese goods during the National Salvation Movement. Indeed, some even imported more Japanese goods because they yielded high profits.³² Japanese sources list the names of Chinese businessmen who kept on doing business with the Japanese.³³ This indicates that the degree of Chinese patriotism among the Nanyang Chinese varied greatly and that some had little genuine sentiment for the fate of their mainland compatriots.

³⁰ Yōji Akashi, *The Nanyang Chinese National Salvation Movement, 1937-1941*. (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1970). Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*. (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University, 1967).

³¹ Huaqiao xiehui ed. *Huaqiao gemingshi*. [The Revolutionary History of the Overseas Chinese] (Taipei: Zhengzhong Shuju, 1974), p. 688. 華僑協會總會編，〈華僑革命史〉（台北：正中書局，1974），688。

³² Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 463.

³³ Investigation Section, Hwa Nan Bank, *Ran'in shokai nokakyo*. [Chinese Merchants in the Netherlands Indies during the 1930s] (Taipei: Huanan Bank, 1941). 華南銀行調查課，〈蘭印商界華僑〉。（臺北：華南銀行，1941）。。

Mobilisation was a major consequence of the Sino-Japanese war. After the outbreak of war, the main concern throughout the Nanyang Chinese community was how they could help China. Compared to other overseas Chinese communities, the Nanyang Chinese were not only more numerous but also located closer to China geographically. Many different kinds of mobilisation of people and resources took place. Some of them, like the National Salvation Movement and the anti-Japanese boycott, have been well investigated by scholars. There were also other forms of the campaign, such as organising teams of technical workers to go to China, fundraising in order to buy aeroplanes for China, and organising youth corps to participate in combat in China.

Compared to the movements associated with the Chinese Republican revolution in the 1910s, the basic form of the patriotic movement of this period was very different, even though both are described by the same term, 'Chinese nationalism', by scholars.³⁴ In the era of the Chinese Republican revolution, the Chinese communities were divided. The target was internal to China, the Imperial government of the Qing dynasty. Not all of the mobilisations were open. There were various kind of secret movements. In contrast, during the Sino-Japanese war the mobilisation was open instead of secret and, indeed, because of the mood of patriotism, participation was seen as an honour. Later, the colonial governments in Malaya and the Dutch Indies decided to clamp down on the Chinese patriotic movements in their territories as a result of Japanese pressure. The

³⁴ Yen Ching-hwang, 'Overseas Chinese Nationalism in Singapore and Malaya' . *Modern Asian Studies*, 1982, 16(3): 397-425. Williams, Lea E., *Overseas Chinese Nationalism; the Genesis of the Pan-Chinese Movement in Indonesia 1900-1916*, Glencoe: Free Press, 1960. Leong, Stephen Mun Yoon, 'Sources, agencies and manifestations of overseas Chinese nationalism in Malaya, 1937-1941'. Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1976.

Chinese people were outraged and the anti-Japanese sentiment among Chinese turned into anti-colonial sentiment.

The leaders of the National Salvation Movement were China-born and China-educated. That Western-oriented and educated local-born Chinese leaders were left out of the leadership circles confirms the existence of a chasm between the China-oriented Chinese and the West-oriented Chinese. This division within the Chinese community was particularly marked in Singapore-Malaya, where there were both China-centered and British-centered loyalties. The existence of that divided loyalty was public knowledge; Tan Kah Kee, the leader of the Salvation Movement, complained that local-born Chinese did not contribute as much as China-born Chinese. A similar distinction existed in the Dutch Indies between the *singkeh* and the *baba*.³⁵

Another obvious consequence of the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war was to promote solidarity among Chinese in the whole region of Southeast Asia; that is, place of residence in Nanyang as well as sub-ethnicity became less important. In October 1938, a new umbrella organisation was formed which included all Chinese representative associations in Southeast Asia, in response to the call by the major Chinese newspapers for unity to fight the Japanese.³⁶ The Chinese Government strongly supported this organisation and urged Chinese community leaders to organize resistance against the

³⁵ Yoji Akashi, *The Nanyang Chinese National Salvation Movement, 1937-1941*. (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1970), p. 162.

³⁶ The name of this organisation was Nanyang Geshu Huaqiao Chouzen Zuguo Nanmin Zonghui (南洋各屬華僑籌賑祖國難民總會, Southeast Asia Federation of China Relief Funds).

Japanese. Tan Kah Kee was elected chairman of this organisation.³⁷ The Singapore Chinese cultural community set up a wartime working group, and the Singapore Chinese Enemy Resistance Mobilization Committee was established. This group decided to arm the people. This decision made a difference to the subsequent history of Malaya.

Akashi argues that

The clannishness characteristic of Chinese communities was also evident in the exclusion of Hakkas. Except for two Cantonese Hakkas, Fukienese controlled the organisation of the Salvation Movement. Throughout the four-year campaign there appears to have been no attempt to unify the Fukienese and the Cantonese. The rivalry between the Fukienese leader Tan Kah Kee and the Hakka leader Aw Boon Haw did not help solve the unity problem.³⁸

However, this conclusion can be questioned. For example, the following people were Chinese community leaders in Indonesia during the Sino-Japanese War. From this list, we find many examples of people from different regional origins. Hakka were not excluded.

Table 1 Regional Background of the Leaders of Major Chinese Associations in Batavia during the Sino-Japanese War

³⁷ Stephen Mun Yoon Leong: 'Sources, agencies and manifestations of overseas Chinese nationalism in Malaya, 1937-1941'. (Los Angeles: Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, 1976).

³⁸ Yoji Akashi, *The Nanyang Chinese National Salvation Movement, 1937-1941*, (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1970), p. 162.

Chinese Association of Exporters ³⁹	Zhuang Xi Yan (Fukian) Pan Gan Huai (Hakka) Shi Ren Rui (<i>peranakan</i> , born in Java)
Batavia Charity Society ⁴⁰	Qiu Yuan Rong (Hakka) Chen Xing Yan (Fujian) Hong Yuan Yuan (<i>peranakan</i> , born in Java) Lin Sheng Hui (Fujian) Lin Wei Min (Hakka) Ke Quan Shou (<i>peranakan</i> , born in Java)
Aspiration Society ⁴¹	Shi Ren Duan (<i>peranakan</i> , born in Java) Zhuang Xi Ya (Fujian) Qiu Yuan Rong (Hakka) Hong Yuan Yuan (<i>peranakan</i> , born in Java)

There was a pattern to anti-Japanese activism in the 1930s. When one locality organized some kind of anti-Japanese activity, other places would soon follow. For instance, the San Francisco Chinese Association organized a working group to raise funds for anti-Japanese activity a few days after the beginning of the Manchurian Incident. Then Chinese associations in New York and Chicago followed a week later.

³⁹ The name of this organisation in Chinese was Huaqiao Shuru Shanghui (華僑輸入商會). The Chinese characters of the personal names are Zhuang Xi Yan (莊西言), Pan Gan Huai (潘干懷) and Shi Ren Rui (施仁瑞).

⁴⁰ The name in Chinese was 'Bacheng cishan hui' (巴城慈善會). The Chinese characters of the personal names are Qiu Yuan Rong (丘元榮), Chen Xing Yan (陳興硯), Hong Yuan Yuan (洪淵源), Lin Sheng Hui (林盛輝), Lin Wei Min (林偉民), and Ke Quan Shou (柯全壽)

⁴¹ The name in Chinese was Li Zhi She (勵志社). The Chinese characters of the personal names are Shi Ren Duan (施仁端), Zhuang Xi Yan (莊西言), Qiu Yuan Rong (丘元榮), and Hong Yuan Yuan (洪淵源).

Within a few weeks, many towns in the Philippines, Thailand, the Dutch Indies and Malaya had the same kind of groups performing the same kind of fund-raising activities.⁴² In this sense, under the impact of the Sino-Japanese conflict, the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia were no different from other overseas Chinese communities elsewhere in the world.

However, the interaction between China and the Nanyang Chinese community in anti-Japanese activity was even closer than that involving Chinese in other areas. The kinds of interaction between China and Southeast Asian Chinese in anti-Japanese activity can be summarized as follows: first, fund-raising to support the Chinese government, in which sphere Southeast Asian Chinese contributed the majority of the money remitted by overseas Chinese; second, young people went to China to join the army; third, skilled labour was provided from Southeast Asia. Altogether, Southeast Asian Chinese did more than overseas Chinese communities in other regions.⁴³

⁴² Zhang Xi Zhe, 'Kangri zhanzheng shiqi guomin zhengfu de qiaowu gongzuo.' [Overseas Chinese Affairs policy of the Republican Government during the Anti-Japanese War] *Huaqiao Wenti Lunwenji*, 46. [Overseas Chinese Issues] (Zhongguo Qiaozheng Xiehui, 1999) [Association for the Study of Overseas Chinese Politics], p. 1. 張希哲, <<抗日戰爭時期國民政府的僑務工作>>。《華僑問題論文集》。第四十六集。中國僑政學會, 1999, 1。

⁴³ Zhang Xi Zhe, 'Kangri zhanzheng shiqi guomin zhengfu de qiaowu gongzuo.' [Overseas Chinese Affairs policy of the Republican Government during the Anti-Japanese War] *Huaqiao Wenti Lunwenji*, 46. [Overseas Chinese Issues] (Zhongguo Qiaozheng Xiehui, 1999) [Association for the Study of Overseas Chinese Politics], pp. 1-22. 張希哲, <<抗日戰爭時期國民政府的僑務工作>>。《華僑問題論文集》, 第四十六集。(中國僑政學會, 1999), 1-22。

Chinese Intellectuals in Nanyang

After the Sino-Japanese war broke out in 1937, many Chinese intellectuals arrived in Nanyang to contribute to the anti-Japanese campaign or to avoid the war. No matter what their original reasons for coming to Nanyang, their arrival in Southeast Asia further stimulated a strong sense of patriotism toward China among local Chinese. Some wrote articles for newspapers and some became editors. Gradually the Nanyang Chinese newspapers became full of concern about the Chinese struggle with Japan, with a strong sense of patriotism toward China. The newcomers from China in this period, particularly the intellectuals, were seen as one of the main factors stimulating patriotic sentiment among the Chinese communities.⁴⁴

If we consider the role of Chinese intellectuals in the relationship between Nanyang Chinese and China in this period, it is easy to find a paradox. The Sino-Japanese conflict was the force which drew the attention of Nanyang Chinese to China and, at the same time, brought more Chinese intellectuals to Nanyang. Those intellectuals became the main groups to develop and debate the idea of a new identity for Southeast Asian Chinese in the post-war era. Many key figures among them, such as Yu Ta Fu, Hu Yu Zhi, and Bah Ren, arrived in Nanyang in the 1930s because of the Sino-Japanese conflict. I will deal with the intellectual and social histories of their new ideas individually in Chapter 5. Here I will use their experiences to illustrate their engagement with circumstances in Nanyang under the impact of the Sino-Japanese War.

⁴⁴ Ide, Kiwata, *Nan'yo to kakyō*. [The South Seas and the Chinese] (Tokyo: Sanseido, 1941), p. 4. 井出季和太, <南洋華僑>。(東京: 三省堂, 1941), 4. °

At that time, it was common for Chinese intellectuals coming directly from China to Nanyang to take up high positions in Chinese newspapers or Chinese schools.⁴⁵ They were often asked to take charge of the anti-Japanese campaign, because they were supposed to have the authentic knowledge of events in China required to do this job. In the 1930s intellectual exchange between Nanyang and China was still comparatively easy.⁴⁶ Singapore at that time was the centre for Chinese media in Southeast Asia. Singaporean newspapers were influential across the whole region.⁴⁷ This was why most Chinese intellectuals gathered in Singapore in this period. Yu Ta Fu arrived in Singapore in December 1938, and became editor of the literary supplement of *Sin Chew Jit Pao*.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Many Chinese writers arriving in Nanyang followed this pattern. For example, Hu Yu Zhi (胡愈之) came to Singapore in 1940 to become chief editor of *Nan Yang Shang Pao*. Wang Ren Shu (王任叔) was employed as a teacher by the Nanyang Normal College in 1941. Yang Sao (楊騷) came to Singapore as the editor of *Min Chao*, a journal owned by Tan Kah Kee, in 1941. Zhang Chu Kun (張楚琨) arrived in Singapore in 1937 to become editor of the literature section of *Nan Yang Shang Pao*. Gao Yun Lan (高雲覽) came to Muar, Johore to teach in a high school in 1937. Shen Zi Jiu (沈茲九) arrived to become Hu Yu Zhi's assistant at the *Nan Yang Shang Pao* in 1941. Wang Jin Ding (汪金丁) came from Shanghai to Singapore to teach in 1938. Wang Ji Yuan (王紀元) came with Hu Yu Zhi to Singapore in 1941 and became an editor of the *Nan Yang Shang Pao*.

⁴⁶ This exchange did not take place in the direction from China to Nanyang only. For instance, Lim Boon Keng (Lin Wen Qing, 林文慶), a Straits Chinese, became the president of Xiamen University in Amoy in 1935.

⁴⁷ The two major daily newspapers, *Sin Chew Jit Pao* and *Nan Yang Shang Pao*, were issued in all major cities across Southeast Asia and were the major source of information among Chinese intellectual circles in Nanyang.

⁴⁸ Some people suggest that Yu Ta Fu was the first famous Chinese writer to be invited to work in Nanyang because of the war. See Xu Jun Lian, 'Yu Ta Fu xiansheng zai Xingzhou zayi.' [Remembering Yu Ta Fu in Singapore] in Chen Zishan, Wang Zili eds. *Hui yi Yu Ta Fu*. [Remembering Yu Ta Fu] (Hunan:

Yu Ta Fu's life in Nanyang provides a very good example of how a Chinese intellectual came under the influence of the Sino-Japanese War. Before Yu went to Singapore in December 1938, he was an established writer with a strong individualistic style. He had been criticized as 'romantic', 'decadent', and even 'erotic' while he was gaining in fame in the 1920s. This was because his writing was influenced by a Japanese school of novelists, the writers of 'shi shōsetsu' ('private novels' or 'individual novels'). His novels revolved around the themes of individual frustration, anxiety and depression. This style was difficult for adherents of traditional Chinese literary styles to accept. His novels have been depicted as follows: 'His descriptions of abnormal psychology are courageous and truthful, and were greatly admired by the young at the time'. This is representative of opinion about Yu Ta Fu among contemporary literary circles.⁴⁹ But because Yu's fiction came at a time of transformation for Chinese literature in the 1920s, when it catered to a new fashion for individualistic expression, Yu won immediate success and was acclaimed as one of the leading exponents of modern Chinese literature. His successful novels were therefore acclaimed as pioneering works of the new Chinese literature, that had broken with the old Confucian ethical code and opened the way for a new era.

For a writer such as Yu Ta Fu, individual circumstances and emotions were the main focus of his attention. According to a memoir by his son, Yu became interested in

Hunan Wenyi Chubanshe, 1986), p: 479. 徐君濂, <郁達夫先生在星洲雜憶>。陳子善、王自立編。<回憶郁達夫>。(湖南: 湖南文藝出版社, 1986), 479.。

⁴⁹ Ye Wangling, *Selected works of Yu Ta Fu*. [Modern Literature Library] (Shanghai, Zhongyang Shudian, 1937), p. 1. 葉忘憂編, <郁達夫選集>。現代創作文庫。(上海: 中央書店, 1937), 1.。

travel and liked to write of his travel experiences before he came to Singapore. One important reason for his accepting the invitation to work in Singapore was that he wanted to get away from the political atmosphere in China.⁵⁰ After he arrived in Singapore, he still wrote, as he used to do, about his own personal life in detail for newspapers and journals. He published his collection of poems titled 'Narrative Poems of a Ruined Family'⁵¹ in the third month of his stay in Singapore. In these poems he described his feelings of suspicion and frustration about his wife's adultery. Many critics pointed out that while the war was raging in China, it was not the right time to mourn over personal sorrows to the exclusion of the national crisis. But he continued to encourage the local youth to create literature which expressed their true feelings toward the world in which they lived. Yu answered his critics with 'I am not a fighter but only a writer.'⁵² He declined to respond to the expectations of Nanyang Chinese who had been concerned from the beginning about the social and political situation resulting from the Sino-Japanese War.

Soon after, though, people gradually discovered that Yu was a fluent and convincing writer of political essays. He was in fact one of the key figures who wrote political essays in the newspapers to encourage the Nanyang Chinese to support the anti-Japanese campaign. He switched to a new theme and genre, which was to instigate anti-Japanese passions and to support the resistance in China. His style was simple and

⁵⁰ Yu Fei, 'Yu Ta Fu di Xingzhou san nian.' [Yu Ta Fu's three years in Singapore] *Huiyi Yu Ta Fu*. [Remembering Yu Ta Fu] (Hunan: Hunan Wenyi Chubanshe, 1986), p. 452. 郁飛，〈〈郁達夫的星洲三年〉〉。陳子善、王自立編。〈回憶郁達夫〉。(湖南：湖南文藝出版社，1986)，452。

⁵¹ The Chinese title is *Huijia shiji* (毀家詩紀).

⁵² Yu Ta Fu 'Wo dui ni men mei you shi wang.' [I don't feel disappointed in you] *Xingzhou ribao*, 25 January 1939. 郁達夫，〈〈我對你們沒有失望〉〉。〈星洲日報〉，25 January 1939。

forceful, and readily persuaded his readers. Liu Zunqi, his colleague at the *Sin Chew Jit Pao*, described Yu's writing thus: 'On the anti-Japanese war, no matter how many terrible things have happened at the front and behind the lines, Yu always maintains a high degree of optimism in a convincing manner'.⁵³

Many people have confirmed that his articles evoking anti-Japanese sentiment were popular among Nanyang Chinese readers.⁵⁴ An expert on Mahua literature (Malayan Chinese Literature), Fang Xiu, provides a detailed account of how he discovered to his amazement that the anonymous political essays published in *Sin Chew Jit Pao* were penned by Yu Ta Fu. Fang Xiu suggested that Yu's main contribution to Mahua literature was those political essays rather than any other form of literature, and that his writings on political issues were critically important in leading Nanyang Chinese to support China's struggle with Japan.⁵⁵ The career of Yu Ta Fu illustrates a writer who had been only interested in individual emotion turning into a fighter for the whole Chinese nation.

⁵³ Preface by Liu Zunqi to Yu Feng, ed. *The collected overseas writings of Yu Ta Fu*. (Beijing: San Lian Publishing Co., 1990). 劉尊祺, <序>。郁風編, <郁達夫海外文集>。(北京:三聯出版社, 1990)。

⁵⁴ For instance, Xu Jun Lian, 'Yu Ta Fu xiansheng zai Xingzhou zayi.' [Remembering Yu Ta Fu in Singapore] in *Huiyi Yu Ta Fu*. [Remembering Yu Ta Fu] (Hunan: Hunan Wenyi Chubanshe, 1986), p. 479. 徐君濂, <<郁達夫先生在星洲雜憶>>。陳子善、王自立編。回憶郁達夫>。(湖南:湖南文藝出版社, 1986), 479。Also Li Jin Quan 'Yi Yu Ta Fu xiansheng' [Remembering Mr. Yu Ta Fu] *Huiyi Yu Ta Fu*. (Hunan: Hunan Wenyi Publisher, 1986), p. 503. 李金泉, <<憶郁達夫先生>>。陳子善、王自立編。<回憶郁達夫>。(湖南:湖南文藝出版社, 1986), 503。

⁵⁵ Fang, Xiu, 'Yu Ta Fu liugei bendi di yibi wenxue yichan.' [The Literary Heritage that Yu Ta Fu Left for Malaya] *Mahua xinwenxue ji qi lishi lunkuo*. [The New Mahua Literature and its historical outline] (Singapore: Wan Li Cultural Enterprises, 1972). 方修, <<郁達夫留給本地的一筆文學遺產>>。<馬華新文學及其歷史輪廓>。(新加坡:萬里文化企業, 1972)。

When the Pacific War broke out, Yu Ta Fu led 74 representatives of literature and the arts in Singapore in a public manifesto, which proved to be the last political essay published by Yu in Singapore. The text of the statement declared:

Nobody will ever forget the debt in blood the Japanese fascists have mounted towards our ancestral land over the last four years. ... Nobody will stand by and watch while the tragedy is re-enacted in Malaya. ... We must protect our brothers and sisters, our homes and property, and we must protect Malaya'.⁵⁶

We can see here that although the starting point is China, the conclusion is clear that the Malayan Chinese should strive to defend Malaya. This essay reflects the impression that the outbreak of the Pacific War made on Chinese intellectuals and sets an aim for the Malayan Chinese; the defence of Malaya.

Hu Yu Zhi

Hu Yu Zhi's work as a journalist was based in Singapore. He remained in Nanyang for seven years, from December 1940 to March 1948.⁵⁷ Memorial articles after his death in 1989 said he had played an important role in China's new literature movement, had been a prominent publisher in China, and had conducted the Chinese Esperanto

⁵⁶ Yu Ta Fu, 'Open letter to our compatriots from the Chinese literary and cultural workers of Singapore', *Sin Chiew Jit Pao*, 13 December, 1941. 郁達夫, <<新加坡華僑文藝工作者爲防衛馬來亞告僑胞書>>, <星洲日報>, 13 December, 1941.

⁵⁷ Zhang Chu Kun, 'Hu Yu Zhi zai Nanyang di qinian' [Hu Yu Zhi's seven years in Nanyang] Fei Xiao Tong and Xia Yan ed. *Hu Yu Zhi yinxiang ji*. [Our memories of Hu Yu Zhi] (Beijing: Zhongguo Youyi Chubanshe, 1989). 張楚琨, <<胡愈之在南洋的七年>>, 費孝通, 夏衍 編, <胡愈之印象記>。(北京: 中國友誼出版社, 1989)。

promotion campaign.⁵⁸ Hu's Nanyang experience was only a part of his lifelong achievement. From the Malayan point of view, he left Malaya in 1948 after living there temporarily, and never came back to the Malay Peninsula again. It is easy to neglect his role in the history of the Malayan Chinese.

Hu Yu Zhi arrived in Singapore in December 1940, two years after Yu Ta Fu, to work for the leading Chinese newspaper, *Nanyang Shang Pao*, as chief editor. Before he came to Southeast Asia, he was an established writer of fiction as well as a commentator on international politics in China. In Singapore he wrote leading articles for *Nanyang Shang Pao* almost every day in 1941, until the eve of the Pacific War. This was the period when international politics became the real focus of attention for the Nanyang Chinese communities. These articles gained him quite a reputation among the Nanyang Chinese.⁵⁹

Among Hu's articles, the most famous was his series titled 'Protecting Nanyang'. It consisted of six articles under the same main heading. The first appeared on 14 February, 1941. He chose the title 'Protecting Nanyang' to indicate that this was the major responsibility of the Nanyang Chinese. He asserted that protecting Nanyang was the responsibility of the Nanyang Chinese because Nanyang was their second home, and because 'only Nanyang Chinese could claim that they wanted to protect Nanyang as a whole'. He raised the question of who would be willing to fight for the Southeast Asian

⁵⁸ Fei Xiao Tong and Xia Yan ed. *Hu Yu Zhi yinxiang ji*. [Our memories of Hu Yu Zhi] (Beijing: Zhongguo Youyi Chubanshe, 1989). 費孝通, 夏衍 編, <胡愈之印象記>。(北京: 中國友誼出版社, 1989)。

⁵⁹ Yu You, *Hu Yu Zhi zhuan*. [Biography of Hu Yu Zhi] (Beijing: Xinhua Chubanshe, 1993). 于友, <胡愈之傳>。(北京: 新華出版社, 1993)。

territories in fighting colonialism, and suggested that only the Nanyang Chinese would do so, 'for the obvious reason that Nanyang was their lifeline'.⁶⁰

In the second article, Hu discussed how to avoid war in Southeast Asia. He suggested that the local Chinese in Southeast Asia should support China in fighting the Japanese so as to prevent the war spreading to Southeast Asia.⁶¹ He insisted that protecting China (*baowei Zhongguo*) was of higher priority than protecting Nanyang (*baowei Nanyang*). His articles consistently argued that for the Nanyang Chinese, to support China's resistance against Japan was always the first priority. This kind of opinion also appeared in his other articles supporting fund-raising activities by the National Salvation Movement for China.⁶² In the third article of this series, he continued to discuss the relationship between protecting China and protecting Nanyang and argued that his concern was not only with the interests of the Nanyang Chinese but also with those of the other people in Nanyang.⁶³ If China could maintain an effective resistance against Japan, Japan would lose the ability to advance southwards.

In the fourth article, Hu Yu Zhi expressed appreciation of the US government's financial loans to China to support China's resistance. He suggested that the best way

⁶⁰ See Hu Yu Zhi, 'Lun baowei Nanyang' [Protecting Nanyang (1)] *Nanyang Shang Bao*, 14 Feb, 1941. 胡愈之, <<論保衛南洋>>。〈南洋商報〉, 14 Feb, 1941。

⁶¹ See Hu Yu Zhi, 'Zai lun baowei Nanyang.' [Protecting Nanyang (2)] *Nanyang Shang Bao*, 15 Feb. 1941. 胡愈之, <<再論保衛南洋>>。〈南洋商報〉, 15 Feb. 1941.

⁶² For details about this movement, see Yoji Akashi, *The Nanyang Chinese National Salvation Movement, 1937-1941*. (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1970).

⁶³ See Hu Yu Zhi 'San lun baowei Nanyang.' [Protecting Nanyang (3)] *Nanyang Shang Bao*, 17 Feb. 1941. 胡愈之, <<三論保衛南洋>>。〈南洋商報〉, 17 Feb. 1941.

to protect Nanyang was through cooperation between the US and Britain.⁶⁴ In the fifth article, he continued to proclaim that the Americans, British and Dutch should form an alliance to defend Nanyang against Japan. He suggested that economic sanctions against Japan could be the first step for those countries to take in cooperation before entering a military alliance.⁶⁵ Clearly, he had no Southeast Asian perspective at that time. His strategy still relied on the colonial powers and he was unaware of a Malay or Indonesian perspective. His consideration of the coming war in Southeast Asia was still China-centred.

Hu Yu Zhi also responded to the powerful Japanese propaganda campaign for 'Asian liberation'. In the final article of this series, he discussed how to approach the professed Japanese policy to liberate the people of Southeast Asia. He suggested that 'Far East democracy' could defeat the Japanese efforts to recruit the Southeast Asian natives behind the vision of the Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere. He said that the pursuit of freedom and democracy for the people in Nanyang and the protection of Nanyang were indissolubly linked.⁶⁶ 'Far East Democracy' according to Hu meant that Nanyang Chinese could work together with other ethnic groups in order to resist invasion and protect their freedom and dignity once they had achieved democracy.

⁶⁴ See Hu Yu Zhi, 'Si lun baowei Nanyang.' [Protecting Nanyang (4)] *Nanyang Shang Bao*, 18 Feb. 1941. 胡愈之, <<四論保衛南洋>>。〈南洋商報〉, 18 Feb. 1941.

⁶⁵ Hu Yu Zhi 胡愈之(1979) 胡愈之作品選。方修主編。新加坡：上海書局。Hu Yu Zhi zuopin xuan. Fang Xiu edit. Singapore: Shanghai Shuju. [Selected works of Hu Yu Zhi].

⁶⁶ See Hu Yu Zhi, 'Liu lun baowei Nanyang.' [Protecting Nanyang (6)] *Nanyang Shang Bao*, 28 Feb. 1941. 胡愈之, <<六論保衛南洋>>。〈南洋商報〉, 28 Feb. 1941.

That was the way he responded to the Japanese propaganda of liberation for the Southeast Asian races. He maintained this opinion on democracy after the Japanese occupation. Through his intensive publicity work at this critical time, the slogan of 'Protecting Nanyang' became widespread in Nanyang Chinese circles.

The Consequences of the Sino-Japanese Conflict

Akashi Yōji has written that: 'Their anti-Japanese National Salvation Movement in its various forms was the only way the Nanyang Chinese knew in which this minority group could express its national feeling against Japan's injustice toward their fatherland.'⁶⁷ Akashi used the term 'National Salvation Movement' to cover many different kinds of relationship between China and the Nanyang Chinese in this period. The activities of the anti-Japanese National Salvation Movement included soliciting contributions, bond subscriptions, boycotts, investment in China's industrial development, sending combat and non-combat service corps to China, and the 'Buy-Chinese-Products' campaign. Akashi's work mainly focused on structural relationships and organisational activities, and accordingly he argued for a causal relationship between the National Salvation Movement and Nanyang Chinese nationalism as follows:

"When the economic or self-interests of the Nanyang Chinese were not compatible with KMT political interests, the National Salvation Movement began to lose its effectiveness.... This self-interest explains both the decrease of

⁶⁷ Yōji Akashi, *The Nanyang Chinese National Salvation Movement, 1937-1941*. (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1970), p. 167.

enthusiasm as a result of the prolonged drive and the noticeable slackening of boycott and anti-Japanese activities when Japan emerged as a dominant Southeast Asian power in 1941. A general decline in the effectiveness of the National Salvation Movement may be attributed to Nanyang Chinese interest in protection and survival. The behaviour of some business leaders indicated that they did not wish to get involved further in outright anti-Japanese activity when Japan's dominance was imminent in Southeast Asia."⁶⁸

There is a problem in the definition of 'self-interest'. Sometimes, the 'self' here means personal business interests, sometimes it means the interest of the Nanyang Chinese community. Ku Hung Ting, a scholar who did research on this issue, criticized Akashi's conclusion, pointing out that nationalism is not a good explanation for the movement. The causality could have worked in the opposite way. The movement could have generated a sense of nationalism.⁶⁹

The majority of the Chinese population worked in business in most parts of Southeast Asia. 57.6 percent of the Chinese worked in business in Java and 41 percent in Malaya in the early 1930s.⁷⁰ The Chinese communities in Southeast Asia were basically apolitical before the Sino-Japanese conflict, with some exceptions of peranakan politics. Political links with China were strengthened through the practice of anti-Japanese

⁶⁸ Yoji Akashi, *The Nanyang Chinese National Salvation Movement, 1937-1941*. (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1970), pp. 165-166.

⁶⁹ Gu Hong Ting, 'Lun malaiya huaren minzu zhuyi yundong zhi yanjiu.' [Research on the nationalist movement among the Malayan Chinese] in *Dong nan ya huaqiao di rentong wenti*. [The problem of identity among the Southeast Asian Chinese] (Taipei: Lianjing Chubun Gongsi, 1994), pp. 39-40. 古鴻廷, <<論馬來亞華人民族主義運動之研究>>。〈東南亞華僑的認同問題〉(台北:聯經出版公司, 1994), 39-40。

⁷⁰ N. A. Simoniya, *The Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia- A Russian Study*. (New York: Ithaca: Cornell University, 1961), p.57.

activism. Close contact with China's government did not mean that the Nanyang Chinese were directly influenced by the political situation, but it meant that the public space for political issues had been widened. The Southeast Asian Chinese now had their own voice in regard to political issues. Many Chinese writers arrived in Southeast Asia to take part in the propaganda movement. However, even when those writers occupied the most important positions in the Nanyang Chinese newspapers, once they started to work in Nanyang, they tended of necessity to consider issues from the Nanyang Chinese point of view and to express opinions in the way which their Chinese readers could accept.

To understand the consequences of the Sino-Japanese war among the Nanyang Chinese community is essential for understanding of the shift of Chinese identity after the war. Patriotic sentiment towards China reached a historical high point during the war. We should consider this situation as the starting point for the identity issue of the post-war era. The impact of the Sino-Japanese War on the mindset of the Southeast Asian Chinese was great. The effects of the mobilization of Chinese residents in Southeast Asia before the Pacific War could still be seen after the period of Japanese occupation.

Chapter 4

The Turning Point: the Japanese Era, 1942-1945

The era of Japanese occupation (1942-1945) played a very significant role in the modern history of Southeast Asia. The Japanese regime was the only one in modern history to control the whole Southeast Asian region. Though the duration of the Japanese era was very short, less than four years, it was a turning point in the history of most countries in Southeast Asia. Japanese rule or intervention marked the end of the European colonial era in Southeast Asia as well as the beginning of modern national integration for most Southeast Asian nations. This period is also very important in the process of identity change among Nanyang Chinese as it is often described as 'the watershed' in the modern history of Nanyang Chinese.

The impact of the Japanese occupation on Chinese identity should not be seen only in terms of the historical events that took place during the occupation. The first section of this discussion will focus on Japanese perceptions of Southeast Asia, and explain what made their ethnic policy distinctive. The most important impact of the Japanese occupation in the long term was the changes it made in the Southeast Asian political structure and in people's understanding of what was politically important. This will be discussed in the second section of this chapter, 'The Japanese legacy in the structure and agenda of Southeast Asian politics'. The third section will examine the impact of the Japanese occupation on ethnic relations between Chinese and indigenous people in Malaya and Indonesia in the 1940s. Due to the different Japanese attitudes toward Southeast Asian 'natives' and Chinese, the impact of the occupation on this ethnic

relationship was considerable, and led to reorientation of identity within Chinese communities, and of the relationship of the Chinese with indigenous people and with the new nation.

These changes in the relationship between ethnic Chinese and *pribumi* are traced in this study to the influence of Japanese pan-Asianism. The Japanese attempted to develop their own style of colonialism, which differed from that practised by the European powers. Their pan-Asian propaganda initially conveyed brotherhood with Southeast Asian indigenous people but suspicion toward Chinese residents. However, Japanese administrations later found it necessary to use Chinese in the economic and military sectors, which allowed for Chinese and indigenous co-operation. This close contact under these special conditions again influenced the subsequent ethnic relationship. We should investigate the different Japanese perceptions of Southeast Asian Chinese and 'natives' in order to know how and why these policies were made.

The Impact of Japanese Occupation: Pan-Asianism and Ethnic Policy

There are relatively few studies of the Japanese era in Southeast Asian scholarship in English.¹ Among them, the main focus is on the relationship between the Japanese and Southeast Asian nationalists.² Ethnic Chinese are not the major concern. However,

¹ Milton Osborne, *Southeast Asia: An Introductory History*, (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1995), p. 134.

² For example, Benedict Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance, 1944-1946*, (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1972) and Harry Jindrich Benda, 'Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation, 1942-1945,' *Pacific Affairs*, (1955), 28(4): 250-262. Harry Jindrich Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation, 1942-1945*, (The Hague: Van Hoeve, 1958).

Chinese literature on the subject, both academic and non-academic, emphasizes that the Japanese era was the watershed for the change in Nanyang Chinese identity and for ethnic relations. Instead of describing the hardships suffered during the Japanese occupation, as many memoirs written by Southeast Asian Chinese have done, I will record Japanese perceptions and policy towards Southeast Asia and how this related to Nanyang identity. In measuring the impact of the Japanese occupation, the longer term effects will be considered. For example, in Hara Fujio's study, the resettlement schemes of the Japanese occupation were seen to contribute to reorientation of Chinese identity because they led to the founding of the locally oriented political party, the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) in 1949, four years after the end of the Japanese occupation. In this sense, the discussion of the impact of the Japanese occupation will not be limited to the events which happened in this period.

The Significance of the Japanese Occupation

After the invasion of the Dutch East Indies, the archipelago was divided into three administrative units—The Sumatra region was administrated by the Japanese 25th Army, the Java region by the 16th Army, and the remainder of the Indies by the Japanese Navy. Malaya was once under the administration of the Japanese 25th Army, and then separated from Sumatra a year later. For the two future countries, Indonesia and Malaya, the differences and their subsequent effects of the Japanese were very significant. But here I would like to focus only on Japanese ideas of Pan-Asianism and the ethnic policy in this period of time. Pan-Asianism was used as a legitimating idea in Japanese propaganda. How it would be applied to the relationship between ethnic

Chinese and indigenous populations, and its effect on Chinese identity, need further research. Twang Peck Yang's work on the Chinese business elite in Indonesia is an exception to the rule that studies of the occupation have focused on the Indonesian indigenous population (henceforth *pribumi*).³, though his main concern was the business activities of ethnic Chinese rather than identity or ethnic relationships.⁴ Studies of Malaya tend to focus on the impact of the Japanese occupation on ethnic relationships or on the Malay population rather than how this period contributed to the shift in Chinese identity from China-oriented to local-oriented⁵, except for Hara Fujio in his work on Chinese communities in Malaya during the occupation period.⁶

³ For example, Benedict R. Anderson, *Some Aspects of Indonesian Politics Under the Japanese Occupation: 1944-1945*. (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1961) and Harry Jindrich Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam under the Japanese Occupation, 1942-1945*. (The Hague: Van Hoeve, 1958). Also Goto Ken'ichi, *Nihon senryoki idoneshia kenkyu*. [Studies on Indonesia Under Japanese Occupation] (Tokyo: Ryukeishosha, 1989). 後藤乾一 <日本占領期 イドネシア研究>。(東京：龍溪書舎, 1989)。

⁴ Twang Peck Yang, *The Chinese Business Elite in Indonesia and the Transition to Independence 1940-1950*. (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1998).

⁵ Regarding ethnic relationships, see Wan Hashim Wan The, *Race Relations in Malaysia*. (Kuala Lumpur: Heineman, 1983) and Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star Over Malaya: Resistance and Social Conflict During and After The Japanese Occupation, 1941-1946*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1983).

Regarding the impact on Malay people, see Halinah Bamadhaj, *The Impact of the Japanese Occupation of Malaya Society and Politics 1941-1945*. (Auckland: University of Auckland, 1975) and Abu Talib Ahmad, 'The Impact of the Japanese Occupation on the Malay-Muslim Population', in Paul H. Kratoska ed. *Malaya and Singapore During the Japanese Occupation*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1995).

⁶ Hara Fujio ed., *Tonan Ajia kakyo to chugoku--chugoku kizoku ishiki kara kajin ishiki e*. [Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia and China: Conversion of the Object of Their Identity from China to the Residing Countries] (Tokyo: The Institute of Developing Economies, 1993), 原不二夫 (編) 『東南アジア華僑と中国—中国帰属意識から華人意識へ』東京: アジア経済研究所, 1993. (研究双書 436) and Hara Fujio, 'The Japanese Occupation of Malaya and the Chinese Community', in Paul H. Kratoska ed. *Malaya and Singapore During the Japanese Occupation*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1995).

In his well-researched article, "The Japanese Occupation of Malaya and the Chinese Community", Hara Fujio examined the Chinese leaders of different organizations by comparing their background, their behaviour during the Japanese occupation and the quality of their leadership in the post-war era. He concluded that the occupation period did contribute to the transformation of Chinese identity in Malaya, though he did not pursue the implications of this transformation. He stated in his conclusion: '...this situation [forced resettlement of Malayan Chinese, a scheme promoted by the Japanese Military Administration in Malaya] played a part in reorienting the identity of Chinese settlers from China to Malaya. In this sense, Japan contributed to affirming the Malayan identity of the Chinese.'⁷

Japanese occupation policy was not based altogether on objective strategic analysis of the aims and needs of their military administration, but was deeply influenced by the cultural stereotypes then prevailing in Japan about Chinese and *pribumi*. The Japanese occupation makes for very controversial history: as Murai Yoshinori has suggested, two different kinds of historiography are contending in the study of the Japanese occupation in Southeast Asia, and particularly Indonesia, in which the intellectual influence of the needs of post-war Japanese domestic politics clashes with the categorical realities of the dominant Anglo-American world view.⁸ Murai suggested an alternative viewpoint which would bypass the debate of the "great discourse" over Japanese national guilt or

⁷ Hara Fujio, "The Japanese Occupation of Malaya and the Chinese Community", in Paul H. Kratoska ed. *Malaya and Singapore During the Japanese Occupation*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1995), p. 58.

⁸ One is the Allies' historiography, which implies that the Allies stood on the side of justice. Another is "liberation historiography", which emphasizes that Japan did the right thing to help Asian liberation.

the lack of it.⁹ In another article, he suggested a ‘third-party’ position, neither from the Japanese side nor from Southeast Asian nationalist side, for research on the Japanese occupation. He and his co-authors presented two possible perspectives from the experience of other participants in the war and the occupation. One is that of Korean soldiers, who joined the fighting and the administration of occupied territory without the ideology of Asian liberation into which Japanese soldiers had been indoctrinated. Another is from the *romusha*, (*pribumi* recruited as labourers by the Japanese) who cooperated with the Japanese authorities without concern for political aims.¹⁰ The case of the Korean soldiers in a further study also provides a different viewpoint on the history of the Japanese occupation.¹¹ The experience of ethnic Chinese during the Japanese occupation can provide another base for a third party position, perhaps one that further illuminates the operation of cultural stereotypes about races and nations, past and present, and helps to counter their effect. I will discuss Japanese pan-Asianism and Japanese perceptions of and policy towards Southeast Asian ‘natives’ and Chinese from this perspective.

⁹ Murai Yoshinori, ‘Nihongunsei no Seijiryokugaku.’ [The Political Dynamics of Japanese Military Administration in Indonesia] *Tōnan Ajia no Kokusaikankei*. [International Relations in Southeast Asia] (Tokyo: Kobundo, 1991) 村井吉敬, <<日本軍政の政治力学>>。<東南アジアの国際関係>。(東京：弘文堂, 1991)。

¹⁰ Murai Yoshinori (1991), p. 235.

¹¹ Utsumi, Aiko and Murai, Yoshinori, *Sekidoka no chosenjin hanran*. [Revolts of Koreans in Japanese occupied Indonesia] (Tokyo: Keiso shobo, 1980). 内海愛子、村井吉敬共著, <赤道下の朝鮮人叛乱>。(東京：勁草書房, 1980)。

As a late-emerging colonial power, Japan tried hard to learn from the experience of European rule in Southeast Asia. The Japanese conducted extensive surveys of Southeast Asia before the southward advance. They also tried to find ways of governing their colonies which were different from those of the European colonial powers. Pan-Asianism was conceived by the Japanese military as a legitimating ideal before they took action to go southward.

In Japan, a school of thought known as pan-Asianism existed long before the Pacific War. At first, the term "pan-Asianism" referred to East Asia, or to the domain of Kanji culture. Even though many Japanese close to the government had expressed special interest in Southeast Asia for several decades before the Pacific War, the Japanese government only seriously considered taking Southeast Asian territories as colonies of the Japanese empire after the alliance with Germany and Italy was concluded in 1940, one and a half years before the outbreak of the Pacific War.¹² Before this, Southeast Asia had been the recognized purview of European power, while the Philippines were an American colony. Japan's imperial ambitions were focused on China and other East Asian areas, Manchuria, Korea and Taiwan. The association between Japanese pan-Asianism and Southeast Asia came very late.¹³

¹² Hatano Sumio, 'Goukubo to nanshinron,' in Yano Tooru ed. *Tonanaïa to nihon*. (Tokyo: Kobundo, 1991), pp. 147-165. 波多野澄雄, <<国防構想と南進論>>, 矢野暢編 <東南アジアと日本>。(東京: 弘文堂, 1991), 147-165.。

¹³ Myers, Ramon H. and Mark R. Peattie eds., *The Japanese Colonial Empire, 1895-1945*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). Yano Tooru, *Nanshin no keifu*. [Genealogy of 'Southward

Japan launched the concepts of the "East Asia New Order" and "Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere" in 1940 and 1941, just before the advance into Southeast Asia, and used the idea of "Asia for the Asians" as propaganda throughout Southeast Asia during the occupation. The idea of "Asian liberation" was a new element in Japanese colonialism. This colonialist ideology, which claimed to oppose European colonialism, had never been applied when Japan colonised Formosa, Korea, Manchuria or the occupied area of China. Also, when a Japanese pan-Asianism first appeared as a current of political thought in the early 20th century, the reference to "Asia" chiefly meant China, sometimes included India or Korea, but never referred to Southeast Asia. The Japanese notion of pan-Asianism only started to refer to Southeast Asia from the late 1930s.

The impact of Japan's pan-Asian ideology varied across the occupied territories. There are many nations, ethnic groups, religious sects, and language communities in Asia, and the sense of genuine "Asian" identity is arguable. But Japanese military authorities did use the idea of pan-Asianism as propaganda to legitimate their southward advance policy in the Japanese domestic context, and to induce the people of Southeast Asia to cooperate with Japanese administration during the Second World War. Domestically, this idea helped to legitimate the southward advance, with the aim of winning public support and full mobilization. In Southeast Asia, it won the collaboration of some nationalists, such as Sukarno in Indonesia and Aung San in Burma, at the beginning of the Japanese occupation.

Advance'](Tokyo: Chuo Shinsho, 1975). 矢野暢, <「南進」の系譜>。(東京: 中央公論社,

Japanese pan-Asianism had a dual character. As many Japanese scholars, like Miwa Kimitada and Takeuchi Yoshimi, have suggested, the concept actually mixed the ideas of invasion and liberation, and combined official ends-oriented pragmatism and non-official idealism.¹⁴ The concept of pan-Asianism emphasized the need for economic collaboration but was based on presumed cultural affiliation. The Japanese pursued control in Southeast Asia but also supported independence movements. Even though Japan promised to support political independence, the Japanese still emphasized that Japan should be the leader of the co-prosperity sphere. They helped anti-colonialism against the Western powers but strongly encouraged Japanisation as well. They repressed Chinese in the region because they were at war with China and because Chinese were seen as middlemen collaborating with Western colonialists, but they also recruited Chinese because they thought Chinese should contribute to local society. Through Japanese eyes, the Southeast Asian Chinese were sometimes the enemy and sometimes a "brother race" in the "Asian family". Thus, Japanese pan-Asianism was shot through with contradictions.

Pan-Asianism was not exclusively Japanese in its intellectual origins. The concept of pan-Asianism was also well known in China, because it had been developed by Dr. Sun Yat-sen. On 28 November 1924, Dr. Sun gave a series of speeches on pan-Asianism in Kobe, Japan. He said there were two ways of practising pan-Asianism. The first one,

1975). °

¹⁴ Miwa, Kimitada, *Nihon no 1930 nendai: Kuni no uchi to soto kara*. [Japan in the 1930's: an inside and outside view of the country] (Tokyo: Saikosha, 1980). 三輪公忠 <日本の1930年代---国の内と外から>。(東京：彩流社, 1980). °

corresponding to the Confucian ideal of “the king’s way”, was to help other Asian nations to become free from foreign control. Dr. Sun’s follower Wang Ching Wei referred to pan-Asianism to legitimate instituting peace talks with the Japanese. Later he became president of the puppet regime in the occupied area of China. But pan-Asianism in occupied China never developed in the direction of “Asian liberation”. The Chinese people were not asked to help other Asian nationalist movements. If we examine Japanese propaganda in China at this time, we find the only emphases are on cooperation between Chinese and Japanese, social justice in East Asia, and correction of pro-British and pro-American attitudes. There was no idea of “Asian Liberation” for the Chinese people in China.¹⁵

Communist ideology in Asia also suggested the idea of “Asian liberation”. But the Chinese Communist Party did not emphasise pan-Asianism. The declaration of war on Japan by the Chinese Communist Party on 9 December 1941, one day after the Pacific War began, did not express any such idea.¹⁶ Tan Malaka, an Indonesian revolutionary leader and former head of the Communist Party, lived in hiding within the Indonesian Chinese community for more than ten years. He did not ask the Chinese to help the Indonesian struggle for independence.¹⁷ In short, left-wing activists did not use pan-

¹⁵ Zhongri Wenhua Xiehui Guangzhou Fenhui, *Zhongri wenhuaxiehui Guangzhou fenhui gongzuo zhuangkuang baogao*. [Annual Report of the Guangzhou branch of the Association of Chinese-Japanese Culture] (Guangzhou: Zhongri wenhua xiehui guangzhou fenhui, 1941) 中日文化協會廣州分會, <中日文化協會廣州分會工作狀況報告> (廣州: 中日文化協會廣州分會, 1941). °

¹⁶ Zhongguo Gongchandang, “Taipingyang zhanzheng xuanyan.” [The Declaration of the Pacific War by Chinese Communist Party] Yanan: *Jiefang ribao*, 9 December, 1941. 中國共產黨, <<太平洋戰爭宣言>>. 延安<解放日報>, 9 December, 1941. °

¹⁷ Tan Malaka, *Dari Penjara ke Penjara*. (Djogjakarta: Pustaka Murba, 1948) Tan Malaka, Helen Jarvis trans. *From Jail to Jail*. (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Centre for International Studies, 1991).

Asianist sentiment to mobilize the people before the Japanese launched their pan-Asian propaganda, even though there were communications between Asian Communist Parties at the time.

Japanese Ethnic Perceptions and Ethnic Policy

During the Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia, at least in Malaya and Indonesia, Japanese policy was racially oriented, especially in its differing treatment of the Chinese and the other Malay/Indonesian ethnic groups. Japanese ideas about Southeast Asian natives led to their policy of favouring Malay and Indonesian natives. There were romantic "noble savage" ideas about Southeast Asian natives, or Malay/Indonesian natives, expressed in Japanese popular literature. This is likely to have changed the ethnic relationship between Chinese and *pribumi*.

This romanticized idea of Southeast Asian natives, namely the Malay and "Indoneshia" race, gradually developed in Japan during the 1930s. A sense of intimacy between the Japanese people and the native people of Southeast Asia was emphasized in popular discourse. Unlike the contemporary emphasis on the concept of "essence of civilization" in discussion of the relationship between China and Japan, expressed by Japanese terms such as "bunmei kaika" (literally 'civilization and enlightenment')¹⁸ and "dobun doshu" (literally 'the same races using the same characters')¹⁹, this sense of intimacy between Japan and Southeast Asia based itself on ethnography rather than

¹⁸ "bunmei kaika" (文明開化).

¹⁹ "dobun doshu" (同文同種).

civilisation, referring to physical characteristics, items of material culture and racial history.²⁰ At the same time, Japanese perceptions of Southeast Asian Chinese gradually came to contain more contempt and even animosity. Japanese images of *pribumi* and Nanyang Chinese are discussed in turn below.

The Japanese image of the *pribumi*

A great number of books and articles on the geographical and ethnographic situation of Southeast Asia were published in Japan just before the Japanese invaded Southeast Asia. Through them we can compare Japanese racial ideas about Chinese people and Southeast Asian natives. The racial romanticism about these peoples was evidently widespread among the Japanese population, as these books and articles include not only academic works but also publications for general readers. Simplified summaries from ethnographic works appeared everywhere in publications which promoted the Southward Advance policy. The same ideas can be found in propaganda issued in Southeast Asia during the Japanese occupation.²¹

These ethnographic works made the sense of intimacy with the Southeast Asian indigenous people seem more authentic and intense. For example, Matsuoka Shizuo emphasized the close relationship in racial origins among the "Pacific Races", which

²⁰ Nihon Takushoku Kyokai ed., *Nanpo bunken mokuroku*. [Classified Bibliography on the South] (Tokyo: Nihon Takushoku Kyokai, 1942). 日本拓植協会 編, <南方文献目録>。(東京: 日本拓植協会: 1942)。

²¹ Taniguchi, Toratoshi, *Toyo minzoku to taishitsu*, [East Asian Races and their Physical Characteristics.], (Tokyo: Sengabo, 1943). 谷口虎年, <東洋民族と体質>。(東京: 山雅房, 1943)。

included the Japanese as well as the races of Southeast Asia and the Pacific.²² Nishimura Matsugi emphasized that the Japanese race and the races of the South were all "ocean races". The "ocean races", unlike the "Mongolian race" in China, did not bond with territories and could migrate from island to island, so it was easy for "ocean races" to mix blood with other races.²³ One of the origins of the Japanese race was the "Indoneshia" race. He believed that the Japanese race actually shared ancestry with the "Indoneshia" race.²⁴ The appearance of the *Hayato*, who came from the south according to ancient Japanese records, was the evidence.²⁵

It is not unusual for scholars to be interested in the question of ethnic origins, or to present arguments and try to prove them: the identity of the *Hayato* is still an issue in current academic circles. But the Japanese idea of race at this particular period of time was clearly romanticized and subsumed as propaganda under the framework of the Southward Advance and pan-Asianism. For instance, Koyama Eizo analysed the weather, the diseases, and the people of the region in order to prove that the Japanese race were able to settle in the tropics. He concluded that the Japanese should have no problem settling in Southeast Asia, since they possessed the same characteristics as the Chinese and Indians: they were all *Ajia Minzoku* -- Asian races.²⁶ The following

²² Matsuoka, Shizuo, *Taiheiyo minzokushi* [Pacific Ethnography] (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1941). 松岡静雄, <太平洋民族誌>。(東京：岩波書店, 1941)。

²³ Nishimura, Matsugi, *Nanpo minzokushi*. [Ethnography of the South]. (Tokyo: 1942). 西村真次 <南方民族誌>。(東京：1942)。

²⁴ Nishimura, Matsugi, *Nanpo minzokushi*. [Ethnography of the South]. (Tokyo: 1942), 49. 西村真次 <南方民族誌>。(東京：1942), 49。

²⁵ *Hayato* (隼人)

²⁶ In his book, he attributed the "failure" of European settlement in Southeast Asia to the effects of the tropics and explained why Chinese and Indians could live in the region.. Koyama Eizo, *Minzoku to bunka*

paragraph was published in 1914 but is still a good example, showing how common readers were given the message:

"Malays, the natives and the real owners or rulers of the South Seas, even though they appear to have different skin, are actually the same race as the Japanese race, because our ancestors came from the South. Recent anthropology has proved that so clearly that people cannot treat it as nonsense. Even though our bodies are mixed in with the Mongolian race, we still have the same root as the Malays. Because of this, the Japanese people should respect the Malays."²⁷

Several Japanese intellectuals were influenced by this view. There are a number of memoirs which mention Japan's assistance towards the Indonesian independence movement.²⁸

"I believe that the Japanese and Indonesians have been brothers for 2000 years. It is said that the Proto-Malaysians came some 4000 years ago from the central part of Asia to the south, forming the Malayan race on the Malay Peninsula, and then crossed the Malacca Straits to Sumatra. They then spread to Java, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi, forming the races collectively known now as Indonesians. They then went further north, becoming

no shomondai. [Some Problems in Race and Culture] (Tokyo: Haneda, 1943) 小山栄三, <民族と文化の諸問題>。(東京: 羽田書局, 1943).

²⁷ Inoue, Kiyoshi, *Nan'yo to nihon*. [Japan and the South Seas] (1914) pp. 10-11. 井上清 <南洋と日本>。(1914), 10-11.

²⁸ Nishijima, Shigetada, *Shogen: indoneshia dokuritsu kakumei. Ano nihonjin kakumeika no hansei*. [Testimony: a Japanese revolutionary fighter for Indonesian independence] (Tokyo: Shin jinbutsu oraisha,

the Filipinos and the Formosan native tribes in Taiwan. Some 2000 years ago, they finally reached Japan and formed the Japanese race, mixing with the people from the continent. Part of the blood of the Japanese is, therefore, Malaysian, that is, Indonesian."²⁹

The concept of pan-Asianism was used to persuade the masses in occupied Southeast Asia to cooperate with the Japanese military administration. The idea spread to the villages through propaganda and became a new political orthodoxy, leading to differing interpretations among Japanese political workers for the war effort, some of them critical of the military administration. Nishijima Shigetada, a Japanese senior officer, thought that the feudal society of Indonesia had been unintentionally destroyed by the policies of the Japanese military administration.³⁰ Forced labour moved peasants from one village to another, and sometimes from one ethnic group to another ethnic group. Many Indonesian royal families of the Dutch era were seen as betrayed. The training offered by the Japanese-sponsored nationalist organizations inspired the masses.³¹ But the different local ethnic groups gave it different interpretations shortly after the war. In

1975) p. 154. 西嶋重忠 <証言,インドネシア独立革命---あの日本人革命家の半生>。(東京: 1975),154.

²⁹ Fusayama, Takao (1993), *A Japanese Memoir of Sumatra 1945-1946: Love and Hatred in the Liberation War*. Monograph Series 71. Ithaca: Cornell University. p. 21.

³⁰ Nishijima, Shigetada, *Shogen: indoneshia dokuritsu kakumei. Ano nihonjin kakumeika no hansei*. (Tokyo: Shin jinbutsu oraisha, 1975). [Testimony: a Japanese revolutionary fighter for Indonesian independence] p.: 65. 西嶋重忠 <証言,インドネシア独立革命---あの日本人革命家の半生>。(東京: 1975), 65.

³¹ Nishijima, Shigetada, *Shogen: indoneshia dokuritsu kakumei. Ano nihonjin kakumeika no hansei*. (Tokyo: Shin jinbutsu oraisha, 1975). [Testimony: a Japanese revolutionary fighter for Indonesian independence] p.: 154. 西嶋重忠 <証言,インドネシア独立革命---あの日本人革命家の半生>。(東京: 1975),154.

Malaya, Chinese political parties emphasized that the three main races should unite together, while the Malay parties used the same kind of rhetoric, introduced under the occupation, to proclaim "Malaya for the Malays". In Indonesia, at the beginning of the Indonesian struggle for independence, the nationalists accepted that all Asian races should have Indonesian citizenship automatically, in order to earn their support. Some Chinese, influenced by Sun Yat-sen's idea of pan-Asianism, thought that they should retain Chinese identity while supporting Indonesian independence.

The Japanese image of the Nanyang Chinese

Kakyo, the Japanese term for overseas Chinese, was used to describe Nanyang Chinese during the whole period of the Japanese occupation. This Japanese term is a direct transliteration of the Chinese term "*huaqiao*", with the same implications.³² Japanese perceptions of Nanyang Chinese in this period were mixed. China had been regarded as the "core" to Japan's "periphery" and the source of philosophical, literary, religious and material culture to be emulated since the Tang Dynasty. After the Meiji Restoration, however, and particularly after Japan's victory over China in the war of 1894, the Japanese still respected Chinese traditional culture, but started to despise contemporary Chinese as uncivilized and unmodernized. At the same time, the Chinese residents' adaptation to Southeast Asia impressed Japanese scholars. For example, Ide Kiwata cited some western scholars' views that "Easterners generally stay in their own

³² *Kakyo* in Japanese and *huaqiao* in Chinese (華僑).

countries, which can be seen as the real difference between Easterners and Westerners, with the sole exception of the people of Southeast China.”³³

Within the conceptual framework of pan-Asianism, the Japanese can be seen to have a particular perception of the Chinese in Southeast Asia in this period, when a great number of books and surveys focusing on Southeast Asian Chinese were completed. The two main institutes doing surveys on "kakyo" were the Southern Manchuria Railroad Company, and the office of the Governor of Taiwan.³⁴ From their surveys and other publications, we can explore Japanese perceptions of the Chinese in Southeast Asia. They saw the Southeast Asian Chinese as middlemen collaborating with Western colonialists. They kept an eye open for anti-Japanese movements among Chinese communities in the region. Detailed reports were made on which groups of Chinese had joined the anti-Japanese movement, and which newspapers expressed anti-Japanese attitudes. All of this, in the context of war between Japan and the Republic of China, indicated they would see the Chinese in Southeast Asia as the enemy at the beginning of the occupation.

The Japanese disseminated these ideas to the native populations to encourage their collaboration with Japanese military administrative authorities, but not to the Chinese residents. Their policy towards the local Chinese was ambivalent. The Japanese initially saw the Chinese as enemies, but subsequently appeared to think the Southeast Asian Chinese could be a "brother race" and contribute to an "Asian family". Chinese

³³ Ide, Kiwata, *Nan'yo to kakyo*, [The South Seas and the Chinese] (Tokyo: Sanseido, 1941), p. 1. 井出季和太 <南洋と華僑>。(東京：三省堂, 1941).。

³⁴ Mantetsu Toa Keizai Chosakyoku (滿鐵東亞經濟調查局) and Taiwan Sotokufu (臺灣總督府).

were treated as foreign residents in the Southeast Asian lands, but were informed that they could have the same rights as other Asians if they collaborated with the military administrative authorities.

The Japanese military administration tried to make a distinction between the Chinese in China and the Chinese in Southeast Asia in the later period of occupation. They tried to use more the category "*huaqiao*" or "*kakyo*" for local Chinese, including *totok* and *peranakan*.³⁵ At the beginning, the Japanese saw the Chinese as foreigners, so registered them in the category of *gaikyo*.³⁶ But their ideas about the local Chinese changed as the occupation of Southeast Asia progressed. Japanese publications about Southeast Asian Chinese in 1944 showed that they were still looking for the right policy. By the final year of occupation, they seemed to consider that *huaqiao* or *kakyo* were an essential part of the Southeast Asian territories. Go Shukei's book reflected this idea. He tried to explore the essential character of the *kakyo*, and argued that policy had to change from seeing them as competitors to seeing them as playing an indispensable role in constructing the Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere.³⁷

³⁵ sina (支那), sinajin (支那人).

³⁶ gaikyo (外僑).

³⁷ Go, Shukei, *Kakyo honshitsuron*. [The Nature of the Overseas Chinese]. 吳主惠, <華僑本質論>。(東京：千倉書房, 1944). ◦ He was actually a Taiwanese who lived in Tokyo at that period of time. But his views can be seen as one of the Japanese views in this context.

The Japanese legacy in the structure and agenda of Southeast Asian politics

Several reports on the situation of the occupied territories were printed by the Japanese Military Administration after Japan gained control of most of Southeast Asia. Takahashi Kazuyo discussed the general situation of Malaya under Japanese rule. He was still not certain of the best policy toward ethnic Chinese.³⁸ The problem was that Japan was at war with China, and the Nanyang Chinese could not reasonably be worked into the political narrative in which the noble savages of Indonesia and Malaya were to be liberated by their more culturally developed Asian brothers from the British and Dutch imperialists. Iizawa Shoji admitted that the *Huaqiao* were only a small problem for Japanese authority, and Japan faced more important problems.³⁹ From the legal theory point of view, there was a problem of dual nationality among the Chinese in Southeast Asia. In general, the Japanese considered that the issue of nationality for Chinese was different from the nationality issue for Westerners, and that all the Chinese should be included under Chinese nationality. However, Occupation policy tended with time to distinguish between Chinese in China and Chinese in Southeast Asia. Chinese representatives eventually served on the Committee for the Investigation of Indonesian Independence established by the Japanese. The not entirely consistent steps taken by the Japanese either to suppress the Chinese or to neutralise them by assimilation under the legitimating standard of anticolonialism established a framework of political

³⁸ Takahashi, Kazuyo, *Senryochi marei o kataru*. [About occupied Malaya] (1942). 高橋和世, <占領地マレーを語る>。(東京: 愛国新聞社, 1942)。

³⁹ Iizawa, Shoji, *Nanpo kyoeiken*. [The Co-prosperity Sphere in the South] (1940), p. 173. 飯沢章治, <南方共栄圏>。(東京: 高山書局, 1940), 173。

institutions and a brief but important history of political experience that gave shape to the post-war negotiations for a political form in both the new nations.

In the final year of the Japanese occupation, the Preparation Committee for Indonesian Independence decided to accept Chinese people as part of the nation. The Committee was under Japanese advice and the members were Japanese-appointed. This move followed the Japanese policy of self-dependence, or *genchi shugi*. The Japanese suggested that nationalist leaders should integrate the “immigrant ethnic groups” such as Chinese and Arabs. Four Chinese representatives were appointed to the Committee. Following Japanese advice, those Chinese representatives fully supported the struggle for the new nation and requested that ethnic Chinese should automatically become citizens of the new nation.⁴⁰

This move, to admit Chinese as part of the new nation, came somewhat too soon for both *pribumi* and ethnic Chinese. In 1946, the nationality law allowed Chinese to obtain Indonesian citizenship by ‘passive’ means, simply on the basis of residing in the country. In 1948, China’s government asked Indonesia to change this to require Chinese in Indonesia to make a decision about Indonesian citizenship by ‘positive’ means, on the grounds that this was more democratic. On the *pribumi* side, the Indonesian government was requested not to grant equal economic rights to ethnic Chinese of Indonesian citizenship, because they were no different in mentality and

⁴⁰ Benedict R. Anderson, *Some Aspects of Indonesian Politics Under the Japanese Occupation: 1944-1945*. (Ithaca: Cornell University, 1961), p. 18. The four representatives were Oei Tjong Hauw, Oey Tiang Tjoei, Liem Koen Hian and Tan Eng Hoa. They served on the Committee for the Investigation of Indonesian Independence during the Japanese occupation.

behaviour from Chinese who remained Chinese nationals. These later moves indicated that the decision, promoted by the Japanese, to accept Chinese as part of the future nation in 1945 was a surprise action without full consensus among *pribumi* or among Chinese communities.

The impact of Japanese policy on nationalist sentiment in Malaya might not be as obvious as in Indonesia. But the politics of Chinese participation in Malaya were similarly changed, directly or indirectly, by the Japanese occupation. Prior to the Second World War, British Malaya was not a single unit. In a political sense it was a “mosaic” of governments with different systems: the Straits Settlements, the Federated Malay States and the Unfederated Malay States, which manifested various forms of integration of existing Malay kingdoms with British authority. In terms of participating in local politics, only Straits Chinese in the Straits Settlements had this privilege. The Federated Malay States and Unfederated Malay States consistently rejected any proposal for peninsular union and civil rights for Chinese migrants. Prior to the Pacific War, the majority of Chinese migrants in Malaya were not seen as part of the nation by the Malay elites. At the same time, most Chinese people were concerned only with China’s affairs. Very little political interaction between ethnic Chinese and *pribumi* took place in the Malay Peninsula in the period before the Japanese occupation.

The Japanese occupation was the first regime to integrate government into one united administration for the whole of Malaya, with its headquarters in Singapore.⁴¹ This

⁴¹ Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star Over Malaya: Resistance and Social Conflict During and After The Japanese Occupation, 1941-1946*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1983), p. 53.

made a significant impact on Malay communities.⁴² Although as William Roff has pointed out, the origins of Malay nationalism can be traced back as early as the beginning of this century,⁴³ the idea of Malaya as a single political entity and the object of political loyalty was still not very strong among Malays at the grass-roots level before the Japanese occupation.⁴⁴ This early Malay nationalist movement, which kept struggling to define a proper boundary for the Malayan territory even in the 1940s, was basically a Muslim movement from which ethnic Chinese were excluded.⁴⁵ Malay leaders did not accept that ethnic Chinese could become a part of a Malay nation, whether they defined the nation as either a small kingdom or as a bigger political entity.

During their occupation of Malaya, the Japanese did not promise Malaya would be an independent entity, but urged the Malay radical nationalists to join the Indonesian nationalist movement based on the concept of Melayu Raya or Indonesia Raya (Greater

⁴² Firdaus bin Haji-Abdullah, *The Origins and Early Development of the Radical Malay Opposition Movement in Malaysian Politics*, Ph. D. thesis Columbia University (1981), p. 132. '...such examples of contradictions can be prolonged with many others. The main implication is that in a relatively short span of three and a half years (February 1941 - August 1945), the Malays underwent a series of shocking experiences and were forced to face a series of delicate situations, all of which had profound impact on their world view and self-perception.'

⁴³ William R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967).

⁴⁴ Ariffin Bin S. M. Omar, *Bangsa Melayu: Concepts of Democracy and Community Among the Malays 1945-1950*, (Canberra: Australian National University, 1989).

⁴⁵ William R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), p. 56. The expression of the sense of 'oneness' between the Indonesians and the Malays can be traced back at least to the year 1906, when the celebrated Islamic reformist journal, *Al-Islam*, published in Singapore, addressed its readers in the then British Malaya and Dutch East Indies in term of 'our religion' and 'our community'. This concept continued to be expressed up to the 1940s.

Malaya and Greater Indonesia).⁴⁶ With Japanese blessings, the Malay leader Ibrahim Yaacob formed a new political organization known as KRIS with the purpose of preparing to unite with Indonesia. This organization was led by Malays only, with no delegates from the Chinese or other ethnic groups. The project was unsuccessful. As it was not established until the final year of Japanese occupation, KRIS came too late to change traditional Malay loyalties to their kingdoms. After the Japanese administration collapsed, the Malay nationalist movement leader Ibrahim Yaacob left Singapore for Jakarta rather than stay and fight for Malaya.

The Japanese policy in terms of ethnic participation in public life in Malaya was somewhat confusing. The Chinese in Malaya were encouraged to join the low and middle levels of government administration, but were not directed to join the Malay nationalist movement or to develop any nationalist sentiment, in contrast to the Japanese policy toward Malay and Indian people in the same country. But political awareness was more widespread in Malaya after the Japanese occupation, not only among Malays but also among Chinese and other ethnic groups.

The politics of Chinese participation were introduced into Malaya immediately after the occupation through British plans for a Malayan Union. This project was very important in shifting Malay attitudes from their original position of excluding ethnic Chinese to one of inclusion. Unlike the Japanese policy, which had not required ethnic Chinese to

⁴⁶ Firdaus bin Haji-Abdullah, *The Origins and Early Development of the Radical Malay Opposition Movement in Malaysian Politics*, Ph. D. thesis Columbia University (1981), p.7. The radical nationalism was mainly from the Islamic educated teachers and writers and vernacular Malay educated teachers and

participate directly in the Malay nationalist movement, the Malayan Union plan, which was officially announced in October 1945 and was founded in April 1946, granted ethnic Chinese Malayan citizenship with certain conditions for China-born Chinese. The plan was in operation only for a short time; it was abolished in 1948. Despite its abandonment, the plan for a Union had a significant impact. It was the first plan to grant political rights to the majority of Chinese residents in Malaya, and it gave prominence to the issue of Chinese citizenship in Malayan politics. It had been developed during 1942-1945 in order to counter the legitimacy of Japanese rule in Malaya, and if not for the Japanese administration's policy of exclusion, the Union plan may never have taken the stand on citizenship that it did.⁴⁷ A. J. Stockwell has commented thus on the matter: "Although the origins of the Malayan Union lay in long-simmering vexation over the administrative hotchpotch of British territories, the Japanese occupation introduced considerations which had not existed to sway previous planners. War created its own demands."⁴⁸

journalists. 'The radical nationalists,...during the Japanese occupation they received favourable treatment from the Japanese Military Authority.'

⁴⁷ A. J. Stockwell, *British Policy and Malay Politics During the Malayan Union Experiment, 1942-1948*. (Kuala Lumpur: Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1979), pp. 17-38.

⁴⁸ A. J. Stockwell, *British Policy and Malay Politics During the Malayan Union Experiment, 1942-1948*. (Kuala Lumpur: Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1979), p. 17.

The impact of the Japanese occupation on Chinese communities

The period of Japanese occupation was disastrous for many ethnic Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia. This can be seen from several accounts.⁴⁹ But few studies have discussed in detail the impact of the Japanese occupation on the inner structure of the Chinese communities. There were two major directions of change among Chinese communities in Malaya and Indonesia under the occupation which led to further changes in the post-war period. The first was a shift of leadership, and the second was internal integration among the Chinese. Without understanding these changes, we cannot understand the changes in political and cultural identity of the post-war era.

During the Japanese occupation, the treatment given former leaders of Chinese communities in Malaya and Indonesia was different. Policies in both colonies were based on detailed information from Japanese pre-war surveys in Southeast Asia. Leadership in each Chinese community in Southeast Asia was a major focus of these surveys. The details recorded about the Chinese leaders included names, addresses, positions held in associations, business details, property value, and even their political attitude. For instance, in a record based on a survey in Medan, the owner of a pro-KMT Chinese newspaper, Su Yuan Chang, was noted to be pro-Japanese. The former chairman of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, On Kin Hoat, was noted to be

⁴⁹ Chin Kee Onn, *Malaya Upside Down*. (Singapore: Federal Publications, 1946), Li Tie Min ed., *Dazhan yu nanqiao* [World War II and the Nanyang Chinese] (Singapore: Xin nan yang Chubanshe, 1947). 李鐵民編，〈〈大戰與南僑〉〉，(新加坡: 新南洋出版社, 1947)。

sympathetic to the Japanese.⁵⁰ Before the Japanese moved south, they had full information on the leadership of the Chinese community in every city in Southeast Asia.

In Indonesia, leadership among Chinese communities underwent a significant change between the pre-war and post-war eras. In every major city, prominent Chinese leaders were imprisoned by the Japanese when the occupation began. Five hundred Chinese leaders were incarcerated during the occupation period. Those former leaders who were not put in prison were forced to cooperate with the Japanese.⁵¹ Many young *peranakan* were appointed by the Japanese as leaders of Chinese organizations or representatives of Chinese communities to fill the vacuum of Chinese leadership. Those *peranakan* figures, who had been active only among *peranakan* Chinese communities, were then promoted to be leaders of the whole Chinese community, including *peranakan* and *totok*.⁵² The shift in Chinese leadership in Indonesia was dramatic because it would have been impossible for those young *peranakan* leaders to achieve such status without Japanese intervention.

For example, Yap Tjwan Bing became the chairman of the Bandung Chinese Association.⁵³ Liem Koen Hian, Oei Tjong Hauw and Oei Tiang Tjoei were appointed

⁵⁰ Investigation Section, Hwa Nan Bank, *Ran'in shokai no kakyo*. [Chinese Merchants in the Netherlands Indies During the 1930s] (Taipei: Huanan Bank, 1941), p. 169. 華南銀行調査課, <蘭印僑界の華僑>。(臺北:華南銀行, 1941), 169.。

⁵¹ Cui Hong, *Lunxian shiqi zai zhaowa*. [Java under Japanese Occupation], Xingqiliu Zhoukan, (Singapore, 1952), 138, 140. 翠虹, <淪陷時期在爪哇>。新加坡, <<星期六周刊>>, 138, 140.。

⁵² Jawa Shinbunsha, *Shin Jawa*. Jawa Shinbunsha., [New Java]. Jawa Shinbunsha., (October 1944 - August 1945). 1. ジャワ新聞社 <新ジャワ>。(ジャワ新聞社, 1942).

⁵³ Yap Tjwan Bing, *Meretas Jalan Kemerdekaan: Otobiografi Seorang Pejuang Kemerdekaan*. (Jakarta: Percetakan PT Gramedia, 1988).

by the Japanese as representatives of the Chinese community. These *peranakan* leaders were counted as part of a pre-war pro-Indonesian group in Leo Suryadinata's study of pre-war *peranakan* Chinese politics in Java.⁵⁴ They were moved to top-ranking positions among the Chinese in the Japanese military administration, and therefore these pro-Indonesian *peranakan* Chinese became the new leaders of the entire Chinese community.

In Malaya, most former leaders who did not flee the country were forced to cooperate with the Japanese military administration. This made them unpopular among the younger generation in Chinese communities after the war. MPAJA became the most powerful political organization and its leaders were highly regarded by the Chinese community for their armed resistance against the Japanese.⁵⁵ The young leaders of right-wing armed resistance, like Zhuang Hui Quan, also became active and outspoken in the Chinese communities. Without this wartime experience, those young figures would never have gained leadership, which was dominated by gentry-type businessmen in the pre-war years.

From their detailed records, it was easy for the Japanese to identify former Chinese leaders in order to give them special treatment. In Singapore, many formerly prominent Chinese leaders survived the massacre of "anti-Japanese elements" in the first month of the Japanese occupation. Those leaders were required to form a united Chinese association to help the Japanese administration. Former Chinese leaders survived in

⁵⁴ Leo Suryadinata, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Java, 1917-1942*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1981).

⁵⁵ Hara in Kratoska ed. (1995), p. 45.

Indonesia too, but remained in prison for the entire Japanese occupation. The Japanese promoted people they trusted. After Japan brought Singapore and the Malay Peninsula under control, the military authorities established one Chinese Association and abolished all others. All former leaders among Chinese communities were asked to join this organization. The urban middle class remained quiet and obedient to the Japanese military authorities during the occupation.

As Hara Fujio pointed out, many wartime Chinese leaders remained as prominent community leaders during the post-war years. Most of the leaders of pro-Japanese organisations resumed their activities soon after the war in such mainstream organizations as the assembly halls and chambers of commerce. MPAJA took its revenge only on lower-level collaborators and other people who betrayed them rather than on these leaders.⁵⁶ However, they no longer played such a prominent leadership role as before. New groups of young Chinese had emerged because of their experience during the Japanese occupation. The leaders of MPAJA and other anti-Japanese guerrillas soon became influential after Japan surrendered. This shift in Chinese leadership in Malaya later led to further changes in Chinese identity.

Another obvious change within the Chinese communities in Malaya and Indonesia was internal integration. This came about partly because of the Japanese policy of allowing only one organization for ethnic Chinese in one place. This integration included integration between *totok* and *peranakan* Chinese, and integration between Chinese from different regional origins in China.

⁵⁶ Hara in Kratoska ed. (1995), p. 51.

Since ethnic Chinese had been migrating to Malaya and Indonesia for centuries, and the early migrants were mostly single males, they quite often married indigenous females. Their children were called *peranakan*. The meaning of this term in Malay/Indonesian was “people of mixed blood”. Later, the population of *peranakan* became large enough to form a distinct ethnic group. Native-*peranakan* intermarriage declined as the *peranakan* community provided its own wives. The early Chinese settlers easily absorbed local culture and customs, and they soon mingled with the local population. Formal distinctions between early Chinese migrants and the indigenous people were relatively few.⁵⁷ In the pre-war era, local-born Chinese obtained status of local ‘subjects’ in the Dutch Indies. However, before the war local-born Chinese *peranakan* possessed a distinct identity, since they had their own organizations and newspapers in the Malay language, as shown by Leo Suryadinata.⁵⁸ Chinese *peranakan* could still be identified as ‘Chinese’ by their patrilineal surnames during the Japanese occupation.⁵⁹

Totok and *peranakan* might disdain each other for their cultural practices. New Chinese immigrants who tried to ensure that their children were brought up within Chinese culture might look down on the bastardized *peranakan* culture, which was a mixture of Dutch, Chinese and Indonesian *pribumi* elements, tending to generate diverse political

⁵⁷ H. Usman Effendy, *AMOI: Aku Menjadi Orang Indonesia*. (Amoy: I become an Indonesian) (Jakarta: Yayasan Ridho Permata Rejeki, 1992).

⁵⁸ Leo Suryadinata, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Java, 1917-1942*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1981), Leo Suryadinata, ‘A Brief Historical Survey of the Peranakan Chinese Press in Java, 1900-1942’, *Journal of Southeast Asian Research*, 3 (1967), p. 160.

⁵⁹ Chao Hua, *Yindunxiya Huaqiao Cangsang* [The Tragicomic Story of the Indonesian Chinese] (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1990). 晁華, <印度尼西亞華僑滄桑>。(香港: 商務印書館, 1990), p.27.

loyalties. The Chung Hwa Hui, which was founded by Dutch-educated *peranakan* professionals and businessmen in 1928, advocated the acceptance of Dutch nationality and participation in local politics. Partai Tionghoa Indonesia (P. T. I.) was favourable to Indonesian nationalism and encouraged the 'Indies Chinese' to identify themselves with Indonesians, while they still favoured Dutch as a medium of education. The most influential pro-China group among the *peranakan* was the so-called Sin Pao group, members of which supported China politically, but were not willing to maintain the *totok* culture or identity of their parents or of previous generations.⁶⁰

The Japanese military administration ignored the difference between *totok* and *peranakan*. They took the view "once Chinese always Chinese", and placed Chinese people born in China and locally born people of Chinese descent in the same administrative category, the *kakyo*. They criticized *peranakan* Chinese for not being able to read or write the Chinese language, and required the *peranakan* to send their children to Chinese schools. This was in effect a re-sinicization of the *peranakan*.⁶¹ When the Japanese military administration required all Chinese, both *totok* and *peranakan*, to register as *kakyo*, many *peranakan* could not give their names in Mandarin. The Japanese administrators would then ask them to write their names down. But many *peranakan* could not write Chinese characters. The Japanese administrators then would kick or hit them several times, saying "You are Chinese, how

⁶⁰ Leo Suryadinata, *Political Thinking of the Indonesian Chinese*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1979), p. 15.

⁶¹ Leo Suryadinata, *Pribumi Indonesians, the Chinese Minority and China*. (Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann, 1978), pp. 85-87.

can you not speak Chinese?" or "You are Chinese, how can you not write Chinese?"⁶² Many *peranakan* were affected by this humiliation and afterwards tried to learn the Chinese language. Many even sent their children to Chinese schools after the end of the war. This happened not only in Singapore but also in places in Malaya and Indonesia.⁶³

Under Japanese influence, the fates of Chinese *peranakan* (or *baba*) and new immigrants became more closely tied together. The distance between them, which had been created by the European colonial system, became meaningless under the Japanese anti-Western policy. The two groups necessarily had more opportunity to meet together and learn from each other during and after the Japanese occupation. They began to consider that in outsiders' eyes they would always be put into the same category.

After the Japanese occupation, more *peranakan* Chinese sent their children to Chinese schools. The relationship between local-born and China-born Chinese communities became more integrated. A report in 1948 estimated that 85 per cent of all Chinese children in elementary schools in Dutch-controlled areas of Indonesia were in Chinese-language schools.⁶⁴ A survey done in 1930 found that only 36.4 per cent of Chinese migrants in Indonesia were first generation.⁶⁵ This meant that many *peranakan* children whose parents spoke only Dutch and/or Indonesian were being "re-sinicised" by an

⁶² Qiu Xinmen, *Zhaonan shidai shihua*. [The History of the Shonan Era] (Singapore: Qingnian Press, 1993). 邱新民, <昭南時代史話>。(新加坡: 青年書局, 1993)。

⁶³ Wang Xiunan (Wang Shiow Nan), *Dongnanya jiaoyushi dagang*. [The History of Education in Southeast Asia](Singapore: Southeast Asia Educational Research Centre, 1988) pp. 89-90. 王秀南, <東南亞教育史大綱>。(新加坡: 東南亞教育研究中心, 1988), 89-90。

⁶⁴ Mary F. Somers, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Indonesia*. (Ithaca: Southeast Asian Program, Cornell University, 1964), p. 19.

education emphasizing Chinese language, culture, and politics.⁶⁶ This trend of the 1950s for Chinese *peranakan* to become more Chinese can be considered to have started during the Japanese occupation.⁶⁷

Among the different parties which were organized by *peranakan* after the war, such as Persatuan Tionghoa (P. T.) formed in 1948, Partai Demokrat Tionghoa Indonesia (P. D. T. I.) formed in 1950, and Baperki (Indonesian Citizenship Consultative Body) formed in 1954, some favoured maintaining a separate Chinese identity within the Indonesian nation, while some wished to drop the term "Chinese" in order to merge into Indonesian society. But in either case their constituency included all Chinese in Indonesia, both *totok* and *peranakan*.⁶⁸

During the occupation, the Japanese military authorities permitted only one organization for Chinese in each place. That was the Kakyo Sōkai, the General Association of Overseas Chinese.⁶⁹ The Japanese required all Chinese to register with this organization. The essential goods for everyday life were distributed by the Kakyo

⁶⁵ Charles Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis*. (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 2, Table 2.

⁶⁶ Mary F. Somers, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Indonesia*. (Ithaca: Southeast Asian Program, Cornell University. 1964), pp. 19-23.

⁶⁷ Wu Wen Hua, "Shilun yindunixiya huaren shehui di bianqian." [Discussion of the changes in Indonesian Chinese Society] *Zhanhou haiwai huaren bianhua guoji xueshu taolunhui*[International Conference on Change among the post-War Overseas Chinese] (Canton, 1989), p. 171. 吳文華，〈試論印度尼西亞華人社會的變化〉。〈戰後海外華人變化國際學術討論會〉。（廣州，1989）。。

⁶⁸ Leo Suryadinata, *Political Thinking of the Indonesian Chinese*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1979), pp. 14-17.

⁶⁹ Kakyo Sokai (華僑總會).

Sōkai. Since Japanese military administrators forced Chinese from different regional origins to work together, those Chinese became more integrated than before.⁷⁰

Also, Nanyang Chinese could no longer travel freely between China and Southeast Asia. This was different from the Japanese policy in Hong Kong, which encouraged the Hong Kong Chinese to return to their home villages in China. It was the first time that the link between China and Southeast Asia had been broken since regular shipping routes were established between China and this region in the 19th century. The Nanyang Chinese lost contact with their homeland between 1942 and 1945. When Japanese troops occupied Guangdong and Fujian provinces in 1938, the mail service between Nanyang and South China was cut. When they occupied Southeast Asia, all Chinese newspapers were banned except the one controlled by the Japanese military administration.

Japanese expansion, therefore, affected Chinese identity by disruption of the "primordial ties" with China that existed among the Nanyang Chinese. On one hand it consolidated the sub-ethnic groups, which used to be divided by regional origins, by enforced collective organization, and on the other it cut their links to China. As a result, the Chinese people were forced to regard themselves as a unified community, with common interests and experiences. This had a profound impact on their attitudes to the post-war period and their perceptions of their own identity.

⁷⁰ Go, Shukei, *Kakyo honshitsuron*. [The Nature of the Overseas Chinese] (Tokyo, 1944), p. 15. 吳主惠, <華僑本質論>。(東京：千倉書房, 1944), 15.。

The relationship between Chinese and *pribumi*

The Japanese occupation influenced the relationship between ethnic Chinese and *pribumi* by the introduction of new elements to the political agenda, and creation of new political institutions through which they were pursued. It accelerated the nationalist movements in Southeast Asia, as many studies have pointed out, and impelled subsequent power holders to consider whether ethnic Chinese could be accepted as part of the new nation, and how to integrate them if they were accepted. The following discussion will focus on how representatives of ethnic Chinese were assigned by the Japanese to join the Indonesian nationalist struggle, and how the politics of Chinese participation would become important in post-war Malaya.

Particular attention will be paid to the impact of Japanese pan-Asianist propaganda on Chinese-*pribumi* relations. The Japanese military administration was the first government to put moral pressure on Chinese residents regarding their relationship with the indigenous population. The European colonial authorities had never done so. In post-war Chinese writings dealing with local culture or defending the attitudes of the Chinese population, we can observe the effect of this kind of moral pressure. Some Chinese writers criticised the Chinese for being keen to end European colonialism, but at the same time not respecting or supporting indigenous political movements. Such views emerged in Chinese writings under Japanese rule. In this way, the Japanese concepts of native nationalism inspired the Chinese, by a process of ideological competition.

Japanese pan-Asianist propaganda was ethnocentrically Japanese, as shown in the 'Triple A champion' publicity used in Java in the first year of the Japanese occupation. However, the direction of pan-Asian propaganda turned towards demonstrating Japanese support for Indonesian nationalism. After Japan formally announced it would conduct preparations for Indonesian independence, there were numerous public meetings in which Chinese, *pribumi* and other ethnic groups took part together, so the Chinese had to learn to voice their support in public. Some Chinese leaders showed stronger sentiments toward Indonesian nationalism than did the Japanese. During the Indonesian Revolution, which followed the Japanese surrender, *pribumi* nationalists continued to request Chinese support for their struggle.

In Malaya, the same kind of competition between political ideologies took place between Japanese and Chinese. Since the Japanese offered a pro-Malay ideology during the occupation, the Chinese guerillas who remained in Malay-dominated jungle areas needed to advance an alternative claim to political legitimacy. The Chinese-dominated MPAJA, the Malayan Peoples' Anti-Japanese Army, used *tiga bintang*, three stars, representing the three major races (Indians, Chinese and Malays) fighting for Malaya, to counter Japanese propaganda for Asian liberation. Even the Malayan Communist Party, which led MPAJA's armed resistance, secretly advanced the strategic slogan "establish the Malayan Democratic Republic" after 1936.⁷¹ This concept did not appear in local Chinese newspapers, since it was far from being accepted among Chinese communities in Malaya before the Japanese occupation. By using anti-

⁷¹ Cheah Boon Kheng, *Red Star Over Malaya: Resistance and Social Conflict During and After The Japanese Occupation, 1941-1946*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1983), pp. 56-100.

Japanese sentiment, the MCP attracted numbers of Chinese youth to join its guerrilla campaign and turn towards the locally oriented political struggle.

Before the Pacific War, local nationalism was not an issue in the Nanyang Chinese newspapers. Under the occupation, it became a topic for debate. For example, an article on the theme of Asian values in *Kung Jung Pao*, the Chinese newspaper in Java under the Japanese occupation, said that family values could become the philosophical core of the Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere.⁷² The author claimed “Asian peoples, like brothers, live together in a family.” But he went on to criticize the Chinese, since the Chinese lived in Indonesia as if living in a brother's house, but when their brothers were in trouble, meaning colonisation by the Dutch, the Chinese did nothing to help them.

As we have seen, this propaganda spread messages of antipathy towards European colonialism and provoked ideological competition among different sectors of the Chinese community. Since Japanese pan-Asianism offered a pro-*pribumi* and pro-independence ideology, Chinese leaders could not afford to maintain their indifference toward the *pribumi* issue. This situation shaped the central issues in the dispute between ethnic Chinese and *pribumi* leaders in the post-war era.

In Indonesia, the nationalist movement did not invite participation by Chinese residents before the Japanese occupation. In other words, Chinese residents, assimilated or unassimilated, were not seen as part of the Indonesian nation by most Indonesian

⁷² “The Asian Family.” *Kung Jung Pao*, 3 April, 1943.

nationalists. On the eve of the Japanese occupation of Indonesia, the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) made most Chinese in Indonesia devote their attention to China's affairs. Although a group of *peranakan* Chinese were keen to join the Indonesian nationalist movement, as Leo Suryadinata has pointed out,⁷³ their efforts did not convince the mainstream on either the Chinese side or the *pribumi* side of the need for Chinese involvement. There was a lack of interaction between the Chinese nationalist movement, in the form of the National Salvation Movement, and the *pribumi* nationalist movement in Indonesia before the Japanese occupation.

The most significant crossing of ethnic boundaries in the modern Indonesian nationalist movement was the announcement of the Youth Oath in 1928, from which the name "Indonesia" was adopted as part of an effort to achieve consent among the different ethnic groups to the boundaries of the new nation. It proposed unification of the various ethnic groups in the archipelago to form one independent Indonesian nation. After pledging this solemn political oath, ethnic consciousness grew into a political awareness of new nationhood. The nationalist leaders encouraged the melding of all ethnic groups into one entity—people of mainly common descent, language, and history who inhabited the territory of the Dutch East Indies. These nationalists did not consider that

⁷³ Leo Suryadinata, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Java, 1917-1942* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1981), pp. 78-90. He defined three political streams in the peranakan community in Indonesia: pro-China, pro-Dutch and pro-Indonesia. The pro-Indonesian group formed a political party, Partai Tionghoa Indonesia (PTI), led by Lim Koen Hian and Ong Liang Kok in 1932. This group wanted the 'Indies Chinese' to remain Chinese but be politically assimilated into indigenous Indonesian society. The author admitted that PTI was a fairly small party in numbers, and their influence was mainly limited to East Java, particularly in Surabaya. The importance of this group was in their ideas rather than in their power or their mass base.

distinct Chinese ethnic communities would be part of their proposed Indonesian nation.⁷⁴

Ethnic relations between Chinese and *pribumi* in Indonesia underwent a series of significant changes due to Japanese policies toward ethnic Chinese during the Japanese occupation. As outlined above, in the beginning of the Japanese occupation, ethnic Chinese were treated differently from *pribumi* by order of the Japanese Military Administration. Later, ethnic Chinese were encouraged to join the construction of “the Greater East-Asian Co-prosperity Sphere” in which ethnic boundaries would not be an important issue among “Asian Races”. In the final year of the Japanese occupation, ethnic Chinese were encouraged by the authorities to join the nationalist movement.

However, the Japanese impact on indigenous populations affected Chinese-indigenous relations more than Japanese policy toward the local Chinese did. The local Chinese were presented in Japanese propaganda as part of Western colonialism. At the beginning of the occupation period, the Japanese tried to provoke anti-Chinese sentiment among the indigenous population.⁷⁵ The Chinese were described as usurers and exploiters of natives. This kind of anti-Chinese sentiment was still expressed among indigenous populations in Malaya and Indonesia after the Japanese surrendered.

⁷⁴ Go Gien Tjwan, ‘Indonesian Nation Building With Reference to The Chinese Problem’ , in *The Postwar Transformation of Overseas Chinese: Collected Papers of an International Symposium*. (1992), p. 333.

⁷⁵ Akashi, Yoji (1970), ‘Japanese Policy Towards the Malayan Chinese 1941-1945’ . *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*. 1(22): 61-89.

Apart from the changes in the political agenda discussed above, the new patterns of daily contact created between Chinese and *pribumi* represent another important impact of the Japanese occupation on this relationship. These new patterns fall into two types: increased routine social and community contact, and ethnic violence. Most reports of this have looked at the events following the Indonesian Declaration of Independence in August, 1945. Among them, the riot in Tangerang in 1946 is repeatedly mentioned as the worst outbreak of anti-Chinese ethnic violence in the period of the Indonesian Revolution.⁷⁶ Some reports even see this event as the beginning of the pattern of anti-Chinese riots.⁷⁷ Actually, similar anti-Chinese riots occurred during the Japanese landings on Java and Sumatra in 1942, and they are the earliest examples of the same kind.⁷⁸

All riots of the 'contagious' pattern happened in unstable periods of shifting political power. Ethnic Chinese were seen to be in a disadvantageous position by the new power holders in each period. When Japanese soldiers landed on Java and Sumatra in March 1942, mass riots against ethnic Chinese began. The riots were widespread in Sumatra and Java where law and order simply broke down. Chinese shops and factories were looted by *pribumi*. In some cases lootings were initiated by evacuating Dutch soldiers. In other cases, the doors of warehouses and factories were opened by Japanese

⁷⁶ Tsung-Rong Edwin Yang, "A Short History of Anti-Chinese Riots in Indonesia, 1941-1998" *Perspectives on the Chinese Indonesians*. Michael R. Godley and Grayson J. Lloyd ed. Pp. 41-54. (Sydney: Crawford House Publishing, 2001).

⁷⁷ For example, Yu Shukun ed., *Nanyang Nianjian*. [South Seas Year Book] (Singapore: Sin Chew Jit Po, 1951), 郁樹鋸, <南洋年鑑>。(新加坡：星洲日報, 1951).

soldiers.⁷⁹ Chinese property became the target of widespread looting. The Japanese army enforced order only when they controlled the whole island of Java. The total loss is estimated at 100 million East Indies dollars minimum, while the total casualty list is unknown.

The following story is related in Tan Kah Kee's memoirs. In Batavia (now Jakarta), hundreds of *pribumi* came to rob a *peranakan* family of seven. Because the landlord had two guns, looters surrounded the family home but dared not get too close. A *pribumi* servant stood aside and offered to help. The landlord passed his guns to this servant, who then turned them on the landlord. The landlord said in surprise "You have worked for me for more than twenty-two years. Why do you want to betray me?" The servant answered "Today is a good opportunity for me." He killed the landlord. Five members of the family were killed and all their goods were stolen.⁸⁰

The Chinese community leaders pointed out that Japanese soldiers encouraged Indonesian *pribumi* to loot Chinese shops. They insisted that the violence toward Chinese was unprecedented, that there had been no sign of anti-Chinese sentiment among *pribumi* in Java before the Japanese arrived.⁸¹ Ba Ren discussed the situation

⁷⁸ Tsung-Rong Edwin Yang, "History of Violence, Ethnic Relationship and Political Change: Power Shifting and Anti-Chinese Riot in Indonesian Modern History" *Journal of the South Seas Society*, 54: 5-21. Singapore, 1999.

⁷⁹ Chao Hua, *Yindunxiya Huaqiao Cangsang*. [The Tragicomic Story of the Indonesian Chinese] (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1990). 晁華, <印度尼西亞華僑滄桑>。(香港: 商務印書館, 1990), p. 34.

⁸⁰ Tan Kah Kee (Chen Jia Gen), *Nanqiao huiyiru*. [Memoirs of an Overseas Chinese in the South] (Singapore: Nanyang Yishuashe, 1946), p. 425. 陳嘉庚, <南僑回憶錄>。(新加坡: 南洋印刷 used, 1946), 425. °

⁸¹ *Kung Yung Pao*, 1, April 1942.

with some Indonesian youths in 1942, and they confirmed that the Japanese did encourage them to rob Chinese shops when they (the Japanese) first landed on the island.⁸² William H. Frederick confirms that some looting of Chinese property was encouraged directly by the Japanese.⁸³ This might have been inspired by rumours that the local Chinese were hostile to the new rulers.⁸⁴

As noted earlier, the Japanese altered their policy after they gained control of the situation, and soon set rules with severe punishments for disturbing the peace. The Chinese residents welcomed the end of chaos, for they could not live in such conditions. There were other aspects to the riots apart from Japanese participation. As a Japanese survey suggested, a religious factor was involved in the ethnic hostility. After the riots in which poor *pribumi* robbed Chinese shops and burned Chinese houses, a Japanese scholar examined the reason why the rioters did not attack the Arab people in Java. Both ethnic Chinese and ethnic Arabs maintained similar attitudes of cultural superiority toward *pribumi*. In economic terms, both ethnic Chinese and ethnic Arabs could be considered exploiters of *pribumi*. But there were no riots against the Arabs at that time. The conclusion to this survey suggested that religion played an important role. Arabs were seen as Muslim brothers by *pribumi*.⁸⁵ Some cases even indicate that

⁸² Ba Ren, *Inni sanji*. [Some Prose Notes on Indonesia]. (Hunan: Hunan Renmin Publishing Co., 1984), p. 77. 巴人, <印尼散記>。(湖南: 湖南人民出版社, 1984), 77。

⁸³ William H. Frederick, *Indonesian Urban Society in Transition: Surabaya, 1926-1946*, Ph. D. thesis, University of Hawaii (1978), p. 351.

⁸⁴ *Kung Yung Pao*, 17 March 1942.

⁸⁵ Osamu Shudan Shireibu, *Zen Jawa Kaikyo Jokyo Chosasho*. (Survey of the Situation of Islam in Java) (1943), p. 355.

Arabs encouraged *pribumi* to rob Chinese shops because of the economic competition between Arabs and Chinese.

The Japanese occupation in Malaya also engendered hostility to *pribumi* among some Chinese. It can be counted as the origin of the Sino-Malay conflict right after the war, which has been explored by Cheah Boon Kheng in his work, *Red Star Over Malaya*.⁸⁶ Once the Japanese had conquered the Malay Peninsula, Malays were in the top positions in most levels of government. During the Japanese occupation, most Malay people did not see the Japanese as their enemy. Both Japanese policy and the Malay response were unacceptable to the Chinese, who did see Japan as the enemy, and this added to the tension between Chinese and *pribumi* in the post-war period.⁸⁷

The other kind of contact between Chinese and *pribumi* during the Japanese occupation was routine social contact, to a degree unprecedented in the European colonial era. The Chinese had more opportunity for contact with Malay and Indonesian *pribumi* during the Japanese occupation, and some were inspired by this experience and became enthusiastic about Malay or Indonesian affairs.⁸⁸ The reason Chinese people had more opportunity to be in contact with indigenous populations was because of their migration to rural areas. During the occupation, many moved into villages or Malay *kampung* and dressed as Malays, because the Japanese were more cautious in their treatment of the

⁸⁶ Cheah (1983).

⁸⁷ Cai Shijun ed., *Xinma huaren kangri shiliao*. [Historical Material on the Anti-Japanese Activities of the Singapore and Malaysian Chinese] (Singapore: Wenshi chubang congshi, 1987). 蔡史君, <星馬華人抗日史料>。(新加坡: 文史哲出版公司, 1987)。

⁸⁸ Cui Hong, *Lunxian shiqi zai zhaowa*. [Java under Japanese Occupation], Xingqiliu Zhoukan, (Singapore, 1952), 138, 140. 翠虹, <淪陷時期在爪哇>。新加坡, <<星期六周刊>>, 138, 140。

Malays. If the Chinese had continued to live together in urban areas, they may not have had as much contact with indigenous Malay culture.

Such unprecedented contact between urban Chinese intellectuals and rural Malay residents inspired some intellectuals to change their attitudes toward Malays, which ran counter to the tendency among some urban Chinese to regard the Malays as collaborators. For example, Hu Yu Zhi spent his time during the Japanese occupation writing a modern Indonesian grammar book in Chinese, which he claimed to be the first one of its kind, under the pen name Sa Ping. He said that he became enthusiastic about learning the Indonesian language when in hiding from the Japanese in Pematang Siantar, Sumatra. He stated that previously very few Chinese had wanted to learn the Malay language, because overseas Chinese held the indigenous populations in disdain. In particular, educated Chinese did not acknowledge that the indigenous populations had "culture". Chinese merchants learnt some Malay words, but only for business. When Hu and his friends, mainly writers and editors from Singapore, came to seek asylum in Sumatra and had more contact with *pribumi*, they realized that this kind of attitude was inappropriate and bad for the relationship between Chinese and *pribumi*. They became interested in studying Indonesian, and attempted to make friends among the indigenous population, believing this to be the only way to learn the language, because there were no Chinese materials available. Hu even took an Indonesian name, Sabin, after his pen name Sa Ping. After the Japanese surrender, he continued to use

this pen name in Singapore and encouraged Chinese to learn *pribumi* language and culture.⁸⁹

Chinese guerrillas who fought against the Japanese in the jungle had to make an effort to understand the Malay language and customs, because Malays were the majority in rural areas. The propaganda groups of MPAJA wrote several plays in which Malays and Indians took roles, because Malays and Indians were the main audience when plays were performed in *kampong*.⁹⁰ The prominent playwright and director, Du Bian, explained in his memoirs that he got the impression, while he wrote and edited those plays during the Japanese occupation, that the term *huaqiao* (overseas Chinese) should be changed to *huazu* (ethnic Chinese) because these plays were performed by and for Malayan people. He considered that his inspiration came from his experience of living in Malay *kampong* rather than from any theory or doctrine.⁹¹ After the war, Du Bian went back to Singapore and continued to write plays with strong Malay and Indian images.

Social encounters happened not only in informal daily situations but also in the workplace, particularly among Chinese and Malays employed in local administration.

⁸⁹ Sha Ping, *Yindunixiyayu yufa yanjiu*. [Penjelidikan Tentang Djalan Bahasa Indonesia oleh Sabin; Indonesian Grammatical Studies] (Beijing: Renmin Publishing Co, 1951), p. 3. 沙平, <印度尼西亞語語法研究>。(北京: 人民出版社, 1951), 3. °

⁹⁰ Chen Liang ed., *Dubian yu mahua xinma juyun*. [Du Bian and the Theatrical Movement in Malaya] (Hong Kong: Jincheng Gongsi, 1994), p. 26. 陳亮 編, <<杜邊與馬華(新馬)劇運>> (香港: 金城公司, 1994), 26. °

⁹¹ Chen Liang ed., *Dubian yu mahua xinma juyun*. [Du Bian and the Theatrical Movement in Malaya] (Hong Kong: Jincheng Gongsi, 1994), p. 11. 陳亮 編, <<杜邊與馬華(新馬)劇運>> (香港: 金城公司, 1994), 11. °

Under European colonial rule, Chinese and pribumi did not have much opportunity to work together in official capacities. The Japanese changed their policy from “divide and rule” to “work together” after mid-1943. Eddy Hermawan reported that the mixed language formerly adopted by ethnic Chinese, Baba Malay or Bahasa Melayu Thonghua, was dropped in favour of standard Bahasa, because there were many formal meetings with pribumi where only standard Bahasa was appropriate.⁹² Xiao Yu Can (Siauw Giok Tjhan) confirms in his memoirs that ethnic Chinese stopped using Bahasa Melayu Thonghua and turned to standard Bahasa Indonesia from that time on.⁹³

To sum up, these experiences during the Japanese occupation drew ethnic Chinese and *pribumi* together. In Indonesia, ethnic Chinese were invited to join the nationalist struggle. In Malaya, armed resistance against the Japanese directly involved the younger generation of Chinese in Malayan affairs. In the political domain, ethnic Chinese played a substantial role in local administration under Japanese rule. More intensive contact between Chinese and *pribumi* during the Japanese occupation generated a new relationships. Conflicts between Chinese and *pribumi* caused further troubles in the post-war period, which drew Chinese attention towards local politics. Changes in community leadership and internal integration among the Chinese made Chinese residents face the post-war situation as a more coherent ethnic group.

⁹² Eddy Hermawan, *Gunseiki Bandoun no kakyo gakko; Indoneshia sono bunkashakai to nihon*. [The Chinese school in Budung under the Japanese military administration. Indonesia, its Social Culture and Japan] (Tokyo: Waseda University, 1979).

⁹³ Siauw Giok Tjhan (Xiao Yu Can), Huang Shu Hai trans., *Shutu tonggui*. [Different Roads to the Same Destination] (Hong Kong: Di Ping Xian, 1981), p. 47. 蕭玉燦，<<殊途同歸>>，黃書海譯，（香港：地平線出版社，1981），47。

Chapter 5

The Indonesian Experience of Chinese Writers in the 1940s

The post-war years were a crucial period for the Southeast Asian Chinese in reshaping their identity. They engaged in intense debate through the Chinese media about issues of identity and allegiance, particularly between 1945 and 1949. It was a very hectic time for Chinese in the region to search for a new identity,¹ because most external factors had not yet been settled; the Chinese civil war and the Indonesian revolution were still in progress, and Malaya had not yet found its way to independence. It was an environment in which Chinese were forced to reflect deeply on their way of life in Nanyang and their role in the local community. Many years later, we still can feel the influence of this process of searching for a new identity. In Chapters 5 and 6 I will trace the change of identity through debate in the Chinese print media in the post-war period.

The discussion will begin with a group of Chinese writers who worked for Chinese newspapers in Singapore before the outbreak of the Pacific War and went into hiding in Indonesia during the Japanese occupation. This group of writers, which I have called the 'Fengxia Group', developed a new approach to Chinese identity for Nanyang Chinese during the Japanese occupation while living in concealment in Indonesia for more than three years. Some went back to Singapore, but continued to write about their Indonesian experiences, or use the Indonesian example to encourage Chinese in Malaya

¹ Gu Hong Ting, *Dongnanya huaqiao di rentong wenti*. [The Problem of Identity of the Southeast Asian Chinese] (Taipei: Lian Jing Chuban Gongsi, 1994), p. 3. 古鴻廷, <東南亞華僑的認同問題> (台北: 聯經出版公司, 1994), 3. °

to join local society. Some were inspired by Indonesian nationalism and stayed on in Indonesia to fight for the new nation. They broadcast their opinions through the Chinese print media in Malaya and Indonesia after the war. As noted in previous chapters, this Fengxia group included the writers Yu Ta Fu, Hu Yu Zhi and Wang Ren Shu (Ba Ren).² It was the most influential bloc in the Chinese print media in Southeast Asia at this time. Most other groups of journalists and writers with a local-oriented approach to identity had some degree of direct or indirect relationship with this group. Unfortunately, the post-war situation in Southeast Asia led most of them eventually to leave the region.³ Their stories tend to be overlooked, as their cross-border experiences do not fit the framework of national histories. It is essential to reinterpret their story in order to know the whole process of identity change for the Nanyang Chinese.

The Role of Chinese Writers

The significance of the Indonesian experience of these 'Chinese writers' in the history of the Nanyang Chinese has yet to be fully investigated. This term, 'Chinese writers', specifically refers to those established writers who came to Nanyang for the anti-Japanese campaign during the Sino-Japanese War. The term 'Chinese writers' has a twofold meaning, in that they not only wrote for Chinese-language newspapers in

² Although Yu Ta Fu had been killed in August 1945 before *Feng Xia* started to be published in December 1945, he was seen as one of the members of this group in this study since he was the key figure associated with the Chinese writers in Sumatra before the magazine was published.

³ Whether they were forced to leave by the situation or leave on their own will is still a debatable issue nowadays. But their efforts did make some significant influence among young generation of ethnic Chinese. This will be shown later in this chapter and next chapter.

Nanyang, but they also came to Southeast Asia as writers already established in China. They worked for Chinese newspapers in Singapore, then at the centre of the Nanyang Chinese press.⁴ At that time, the Sino-Japanese War stimulated the Southeast Asian Chinese towards strong patriotic sentiment towards 'the fatherland', China. The 'Chinese writers' are recognized as the main contributors to this.⁵ Living in the countryside or small towns in Indonesia for a few years, these writers were able to immerse themselves in the local community and began to rethink the role of the Southeast Asian Chinese. We should remember that these writers had interactions with local-born Chinese on their experience of generating local-oriented identity. After the war, they brought their locally oriented conception of identity to the Chinese media in Malaya and Indonesia. Even though they do not represent the whole picture of the search for a new identity among the Southeast Asian Chinese, they were the central figures in the debate on identity issues in both Malaya and Indonesia in the post-war era. Their role in the creation of a new identity for the Nanyang Chinese needs to be reconsidered.

It was not the usual case for this group of Chinese writers to have experience of both Singapore and Indonesia in the 1940s. The Chinese writers in Nanyang have attracted the interest of scholars in Chinese literature. In a survey of Chinese writers in Singapore, a short list of the most important and influential Chinese writers is provided

⁴ This is common usage of the term in the academic circle in Singapore. Lin Wanqing, *Zhongguo zuojia zai Xinjiapo ji qi yingxiang*. [The Chinese Writers in Singapore and their influence] (Singapore: Wanli Shuju, 1978). 林萬菁, <中國作家在新加坡及其影響>。(新加坡: 萬里書局, 1978)。

⁵ Fang Xiu, *Mahua wenxueshi lunji*. (Singapore: Wenxie Suwu, 1986) [Essays on the History of Malayan Chinese Literature], p. 25. 方修, <馬華文學史論集>。(新加坡: 文學書屋, 1986), 25。

by Lin Wanqing.⁶ According to that survey, ten writers who went to Singapore in the years preceding and following the Sino-Japanese war were the Chinese writers most influential on Singaporean social thought and culture in this period. As the research to date concentrates on their writing activities in Singapore, their Indonesian experience is usually omitted, but actually eight of these ten people fled to Indonesia during the Japanese occupation of Singapore and stayed there for the entire occupation.⁷

The Indonesian experiences of three writers among them will be explored in the following discussion. They are Yu Ta Fu (Zhao Lian), Hu Yu Zhi (Sabin) and Wang Ren Shu (Ba Ren), who were the most influential writers on the list. Yu Ta Fu was involved in the confrontation between Japanese soldiers and anti-Japanese forces and consequently died at the hands of the former. Hu Yu Zhi was inspired by the spirit of the Indonesian revolution and tried to organize Chinese youth to learn more of Indonesian affairs and prepare for the coming revolution. Wang Ren Shu had extensive contact with Indonesian *pribumi* and vigorously supported Indonesian nationalism, to the point of encouraging Chinese youths to fight with the independence forces.⁸

⁶ The author defines Chinese writers as writers who had become established writers in China before they arrived in Singapore. See Lin Wanqing, *Zhongguo zuojia zai Xinjiapo ji qi yingxiang*. [The Chinese Writers in Singapore and their influence] (Singapore: Wanli Shuju, 1978). 林萬菁, <中國作家在新加坡及其影響>。(新加坡: 萬里書局, 1978)。

⁷ They were Hu Yu Zhi (Sabin) 胡愈之 (沙平), Yu Ta Fu (Zhao Lian) 郁達夫 (趙謙), Wang Ren Shu (Bahren) 王任叔 (巴人), Shao Zong Han (邵宗漢), Zhang Chu Kun (張楚琨), Wang Ji Yuan (王紀元), Shen Zi Jiu (沈茲九), Wang Jin Ding (汪金丁), Gao Yun Lan (高雲覽), and Yang Sao (楊騷), known as Lau Ya (老丫)。

⁸ Hu Yu Zhi and Wang Ren Shu had been secret Chinese Communist Party members before they went to Southeast Asia. Their purpose to come to Malaya was not limited to mobilize overseas Chinese to anti-Japanese movement. They might have intension to increase the influence of the CCP. But both did not

These are cases peculiar to a transitional era, a critical period that saw not only the formation of Indonesian and Malay *pribumi* nationalism but also the quest for a new identity on the part of Chinese residents in Southeast Asian territories. The three Chinese writers arriving in these Southeast Asian territories found themselves facing the same situation as the local Chinese. Thus their personal experiences were, in a sense, reflective of that special decade.

The Indonesian Experience

Yu Ta Fu

The story of Yu Ta Fu in Southeast Asia, especially his life in Sumatra, has continued to draw the attention of Chinese language readers for the more than fifty years since he died so dramatically in Sumatra on 29 August 1945, two weeks after the Japanese surrendered. Articles about his life in Sumatra have continually appeared in Chinese publications in places as diverse as Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and mainland China. In 1995 a Japanese scholar, Suzuki Masao, published a book based on long term study of the last three and a half years of Yu Ta Fu's life in Sumatra. The production of a film based on this book was then announced.

open their membership of CCP before they went back to China. The ideas of them which are discussed here are on open publications. So their relationship with CCP will not be discussed in this study.

Yu Ta Fu's six-year stay in Southeast Asia can be divided into two stages: Singapore and Sumatra. In Singapore he worked for a leading Chinese newspaper, *Sin Chew Jit Pao*, as chief editor of the literary supplement from January 1939 to January 1942. His experience in Singapore shows how the Sino-Japanese war changed this Chinese intellectual's perceptions. In Sumatra he disguised his previous identity as a writer, posing as a businessman named Zhao Lian. His particular experiences in Sumatra illustrate the general situation of overseas Chinese, or *hua qiao*, in the period of the Japanese occupation.

When Yu arrived in Singapore and became editor of the literary supplement of *Sin Chew Jit Pao*⁹, it was common for Chinese intellectuals to come directly from China to Nanyang to take up senior positions or become heads of Chinese newspapers and Chinese schools. The two other writers whom I will discuss later follow this pattern, too: Hu Yu Zhi came to Singapore in 1939 to become chief editor of *Nan Yang Sang Pao*, and Wang Ren Shu was employed as a lecturer at the Nanyang Normal College in 1941.¹⁰ The 1930s were a time when intellectual exchanges were still comparatively easy between Nanyang and China.¹¹

⁹ Some people have suggested that Yu Ta Fu was the first major Chinese writer to be invited to work in Nanyang because of the war in China. See Xu Jun Lian 'Yu Ta Fu xiansheng zai xingzhou zayi.' [Memories of Yu Ta Fu in Singapore], Chen Zi Shan, Wang Zi Li (eds), *Huiyi Yu Ta Fu*. [Remembering Yu Ta Fu] (Hunan: Hunan wenyi chubanshe, 1986), p. 479. 徐君濂, <<郁達夫先生在星洲雜憶>>。陳子善、王自立編。〈回憶郁達夫〉。(湖南: 湖南文藝出版社, 1986), 479。

¹⁰ Other Chinese writers followed the same route to Singapore. Yang Sao (楊驪) came to Singapore as the editor of *Min Chao*, a journal owned by Tan Kah Kee, in 1941. Zhang Chu Kun (張楚琨) arrived in Singapore in 1937 to become editor of the literature section of *Nan Yang Shang Pao*. Gao Yun Lan (高雲覽) came to Johore Baru to teach in a high school in 1937. Shen Zi Jiu (沈茲九) arrived to become Hu Yu Zhi's assistant at *Nan Yang Shang Pao* in 1941. Wang Jin Ding (汪金丁) came from Shanghai to

The two major daily newspapers of Singapore, *Sin Chew Jit Pao* and *Nan Yang Shang Pao*, were sold in all major cities throughout Southeast Asia and were the main source of information for Chinese intellectual circles in Nanyang. The influence of Singaporean newspapers spread to all places in the region.

When the Pacific War erupted, the Chinese in Singapore, especially intellectuals, were filled with indignation. An organization called 'Huaqiao Intellectual Anti-Japanese Corps in Singapore' (HIAJCS) was formed and Yu took the position of chairman.¹² Members of this organization were drawn from, inter alia, the mass media, education, publishing, academia and art circles. Hu Yu Zhi was elected vice-chairman. Wang Ren Shu became director of the propaganda section. The purpose of this working group was twofold: first, to provide preparatory training in armed resistance for cadres; second, to organize mass propaganda among the overseas Chinese in support of the anti-Japanese war. Thus Yu Ta Fu, a writer who wrote about his own life, became a fighter.¹³ On receiving the news of the Japanese invasion, HIAJCS immediately condemned Japan's actions and began a campaign to organize resistance among Chinese intellectuals in Singapore. As a result, many local Chinese organizations joined in anti-Japanese

Singapore to teach in 1938. Wang Ji Yuan (王紀元) came with Hu Yu Zhi to Singapore in 1941 and became an editor at *Nan Yang Shang Pao*.

¹¹ The movement of Chinese intellectuals was not exclusively from China to Nanyang. For instance, Lin Ben King, a Straits Chinese, became the head of Xiamen University in Amoy in 1935.

¹² The Chinese title is Xingzhou huaqiao wenhua jie zhanshi gongzuotuan (星洲華僑文化界戰時工作團).

¹³ Zhang Chu Kun, 'Yi liu wang zhong di Yu Ta Fu.' [Remembering Yu Ta Fu in exile], *Huiyi Yu Ta Fu*. [Remembering Yu Ta Fu] (Hunan: Hunan wenyi chubanshe, 1986), pp. 589-592. 張楚琨, <<憶流亡中的郁達夫>>。陳子善、王自立編。<回憶郁達夫>。(湖南: 湖南文藝出版社, 1986), 592-595。

activities. Following this, the 'General Anti-Japanese Mobilization Committee of Singaporean Huaqiao', was formed to mobilise for armed resistance.

Tan Kah Kee recommended that Chinese intellectuals active in the anti-Japanese movement flee Singapore, when it became obvious that the island would soon fall to the invaders. Tan's assistant then arranged a boat for the whole group, and Yu Ta Fu and 27 others fled to Sumatra on 4th February, 1942, shortly before Japanese soldiers entered Singapore. This was the start of their Indonesian experience. Yu stayed in Sumatra throughout the Pacific War. For Yu, the war signified the end of his writing career in Nanyang.

After Yu Ta Fu arrived in Sumatra, he concealed his identity because he believed the Japanese authorities were seeking to arrest him. To avoid suspicion, Yu took on the identity of a businessman named Zhao Lian,¹⁴ who came from Putian,¹⁵ a small port in Fukian province in South China. Knowing that most people from Putian spoke Mandarin Chinese, Yu felt that this would account for his inability to speak either Cantonese or Hokkien and fend off enquiries about his accent.

Extraordinarily, Yu ended up as an interpreter for the Kenpeitai, the Japanese military police. The story of the discovery that he could speak Japanese is as follows: as Yu was planning to find a residence in Sumatra, he had brought with him a friend's letter recommending him to a landlord in Payakumbuh, a small town in central Sumatra. On the journey from Bukit Tinggi to Payakumbuh, the bus in which Yu and several

¹⁴ Zhao Lian (趙廉).

Indonesians were travelling was stopped by a truck loaded with Japanese soldiers. None of the Indonesian passengers could speak Japanese, and neither could the Japanese soldiers speak Bahasa Indonesia. So some Indonesians, thinking that the Japanese soldiers wanted to commandeer the bus, started to get off and head for Payakumbuh on foot. Yu Ta Fu understood that the Japanese soldiers were simply asking directions, so he answered their questions. The satisfied Japanese soldiers saluted Yu and left. After Yu reached Payakumbuh, rumours spread among the local population about the arrival of a Japanese spy who was pretending to be a Chinese businessman. Some people even confirmed that they witnessed the Japanese soldiers saluting him.¹⁶

Yu was not at first welcomed among the local Chinese in Payakumbuh. He guessed that it was probably because he spoke no Cantonese or Hokkien that they did not regard him as one of their kind. The situation changed after he saved the life of the son of a local Chinese community leader by timely interpreting. The local Chinese appreciated having someone who could help them communicate with the Japanese authorities. The Kenpeitai soon heard of his linguistic skills, which included Japanese, Chinese, Malay and Dutch, and drafted Yu as an interpreter.

The situation of the Chinese communities under the Japanese Occupation in Sumatra seemed different from that of similar communities in Malaya. According to a Japanese

¹⁵ Putian (普田).

¹⁶ Jin Ding, 'Yu Ta Fu zai Nanyang di jing li.' [Yu Ta Fu's Experiences in Nanyang], *Huiyi Yu Ta Fu*. [Remembering Yu Ta Fu] (Hunan: Hunan wenyi chubanshe, 1986), pp. 592-595. 金丁, <<郁達夫在南洋的經歷>>。陳子善、王自立編。〈回憶郁達夫〉。(湖南: 湖南文藝出版社, 1986), 592-595。

survey of the Dutch Indies before the war, the Chinese in Sumatra did not show the same enthusiasm towards the Salvation Movement for China and the economic boycott against Japan.¹⁷ Another survey on leadership indicated that the owner of the biggest Chinese newspaper in Sumatra was 'pro-Japanese'. The founding chairman of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, On Kin Hoat, was described as having 'good feelings towards Japanese'.¹⁸ There was no significant resistance in Sumatra. When the Japanese army arrived in Padang and Bukit Tinggi, the Dutch soldiers immediately surrendered.¹⁹ Even though the same units responsible for the massacre of Chinese in Malaya were also deployed in Sumatra, there was no violence against the Chinese there. The Japanese Kenpeitai permitted the local Chinese residents to continue to run their businesses.

The Kenpeitai needed Yu not because he was a Chinese who could speak Japanese but because he was a *local* Chinese who could speak Japanese. At that time, many Nanyang Chinese interpreters were from Taiwan, as people there usually spoke Hokkien or Hakka and had received their education in Japanese. The Kenpeitai found Zhao Lian the ideal person, as he appeared to be a local Chinese who spoke Malay and Dutch as well as Japanese. One may wonder about Yu's command of Bahasa Malayu.

¹⁷ Toa Keizai Chosakyoku, *Ranryo indo ni okeru kakyo*. [Overseas Chinese in the Netherlands East Indies], (Tokyo: Toa Keizai Chosakyoku, 1939). 東亜經濟調查局, <蘭領印度に於ける華僑>。東亜經濟調查局華僑叢書。(東京: 東亜經濟調查局, 1939)。

¹⁸ Hwa Nan Bank, Investigation Section. *Ran'in shokai nokakyo*. [Chinese Merchants in the Dutch Indies during the 1930s.] (Taipei: Hwa Nan Bank, Investigation Section, 1941). 華南銀行調查課 <蘭印商界の華僑>。(臺北: 華南銀行, 1941)。

¹⁹ Fusayama, Takao, *Sumatora no yoake---aia kaihoson hiwa*. [Dawn in Sumatra: a secret story of the Asian Liberation War.] (Tokyo: Kodansha, 1981). 總山孝雄, <スマトラの夜明け---アジア解放戦秘話>。(講談社, 1981)。

Yu's own poems record that he actually started to learn Bahasa Indonesia in the first few months after his arrival in Sumatra.

In reply to Wang Ren Shu's question about how he learned the Indonesian language, Yu sighed, 'Good Heavens, I learned it through the miseries of the Malay people!' He admitted that he had difficulty in understanding even everyday conversation in Malay when he first started to work for the Kenpeitai. He had to pretend to know the Malay language, and interpreted by guessing for a time. Each time he hesitated to translate the speech of Malay suspects, the Kenpeitai would beat them up, because they believed the suspects were either reluctant to tell the truth or were deliberately not using the proper words. So Yu tried his best to pick up the Malay language as soon as possible in order to avoid Japanese maltreatment of locals. Yu also learned Dutch after he settled in Payakumbuh. He even fell in love with a Dutch woman. As he had learned German previously, he picked up Dutch very quickly. He collected books in Dutch as well as in Japanese and Indonesian, and enjoyed reading in his spare time.²⁰

After Yu began working for the Kenpeitai, other Chinese writers came one by one to Payakumbuh to seek his protection. Yu pretended to be the owner of a factory, and Hu Yu Zhi, Wang Ren Shu, Shao Zong Han, Zhang Chu Kun, Shen Zi Jiu, and Wang Jin Ding, "Chinese writers" who had followed him into exile from Singapore, became workers or cooks in his employment at his factory. This was where the Chinese writers organized a secret reading group, which will be discussed in detail later. However, Yu Ta Fu did not join this group.

His interpreting was mainly between Japanese and Indonesian. According to Jing Ding, a Minangkabau theatrical group once sought permission from the Japanese authorities to stage a historical drama which contained revolutionary sentiments. They contacted Yu Ta Fu to ask his help. Because the Kenpeitai did not understand the script, Yu reviewed it favourably and praised it. As a result, the drama was granted a permit for performances across Sumatra.²¹ Zhang Chu Kun reported another event, in which Yu Ta Fu did a favour for the Indonesian Communist Party. The Kenpeitai had learned of the existence of a PKI cell in Sumatra. When they were searching for evidence, Yu took the list of supporters and translated it to give the impression that the named people were moneylenders. Yu's efforts actually saved the whole Sumatran section of this secret political party from arrest and probable torture.²²

The most mysterious part of Yu Ta Fu's story is the question of who killed him, and for what reason. Many people have written articles putting forward different theories to explain his death. Before Suzuki Masao eventually found the documents which established who gave the order to kill Yu Ta Fu, no one had firm evidence. The killer could have been Indonesian, Chinese or Japanese. Each explanation had its own good reasons.

²⁰ Bao Si Jing, 'Yu Ta Fu xian sheng yu shu' [Yu Ta Fu and Books], *Nan Qiao Ribao*, 29 August 1947. 包思井, <<郁達夫先生與書>>。〈南僑日報〉, 29 August 1947.。

²¹ Jin Ding, 'Yu Ta Fu zai Nanyang di jing li.' [Yu Ta Fu's Experience in Nanyang], *Huiyi Yu Ta Fu*. [Remembering Yu Ta Fu] (Hunan: Hunan wenyi chubanshe, 1986), p. 580. 金丁, <<郁達夫在南洋的經歷>>。陳子善、王自立編。〈回憶郁達夫〉。(湖南: 湖南文藝出版社, 1986), 580.。

The first possibility was that Indonesians killed Yu Ta Fu. Suzuki Masao made this assumption at the beginning of his research.²³ Two Indonesian soldiers had summoned Yu Ta Fu from his house on the night he went missing. There were many witnesses to this. People suggested that the Indonesian *heiho* probably were aware that Yu Ta Fu worked for the Japanese, so they killed him.²⁴ The second possibility was that Yu Ta Fu was killed by Japanese soldiers. Hu Yu Zhi argued that the Japanese killed him because the Kenpeitai had found out he was a famous Chinese writer.²⁵ The third possibility was that Yu was killed by local Chinese, since there were many cases in which Chinese who worked for the Japanese military authorities were subsequently killed by other Chinese.²⁶

Hu Yu Zhi's guess was right, but for another reason. A Japanese scholar, Suzuki Masao, found out the real cause of Yu's death. One of the commanders of the Kenpeitai in Bukit Tinggi ordered his cadres to kill Yu secretly, worried that he might

²³ Zhang Chu Kun, 'Yi liu wang zhong di Yu Ta Fu.' [Remembering Yu Ta Fu in exile], *Huiyi Yu Ta Fu*. [Remembering Yu Ta Fu] (Hunan: Hunan wenyi chubanshe, 1986), p. 614. 張楚琨, <<憶流亡中的郁達夫>>。陳子善、王自立編。<回憶郁達夫>。(湖南: 湖南文藝出版社, 1986), 614。

²⁴ Suzuki Masao, *Sumatora no Yu Ta Fu: taiheiyo senso to chugoku satsuka*. [Yu Ta Fu in Sumatra: The Pacific War and Chinese Writers.] (Tokyo: Toho Shoten, 1995), p. 216. 鈴木正夫, <<スマトラの郁達夫: 太平洋戦争と中国作家>>。(東京: 東方書店, 1995), 216。

²⁵ Heiho (兵補), 'Auxiliary Soldiers' in Japanese.

²⁶ Hu Yu Zhi, *Yu Ta Fu di liuwang he shizong*. [The Exile and Disappearance of Yu Ta Fu] (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Chiyuan Publishing Co., 1946) 胡愈之, <郁達夫的流亡和失蹤>。(香港: 香港咫園出版社, 1946)。

²⁶ Hu Jian Zhong, 'Yu Ta Fu yu Wang Ying Hsia di beiju.' [The Tragedy of Yu Ta Fu and Wang Ying Hsia] *Chuanji wenxue*, 1988 (4). 胡建中, <<郁達夫與王映霞的悲劇>>。<傳記文學>, 1988 (4)。

be treated as a war criminal if this action became known.²⁷ Yu was killed not because he was the writer Yu Ta Fu, but because he was the middleman Zhao Lian.

Yu Ta Fu's story illustrates the role of Southeast Asian Chinese as middlemen at a time of dramatic political change. When Yu Ta Fu took on the identity of Zhao Lian, his position changed from that of a famous Chinese intellectual to that of a local Chinese resident. The Japanese authorities believed that he had some local knowledge. Whether he wished it or not, he was put in the position of middleman to negotiate between Japanese authorities and the local community. Eventually, he became entangled in the struggle for power and then died for it.

From his story we can draw some conclusions about the different situations of Sumatra and Singapore. Because there was no significant bloodshed when the Japanese came to Sumatra, as there had been in Malaya, the local Chinese community did not feel shamed to serve the Japanese authorities. For them, it simply meant a change of power-holders but not the power system. And the Japanese soldiers did not intrude greatly into the lives of the Chinese residents there. When Yu Ta Fu crossed the border from Singapore to Sumatra, the atmosphere among the Chinese community which surrounded him was quite different from that in Singapore.

Also Wen Zi Chuan, 'Yu Ta Fu bie chuan' [Biography of Yu Ta Fu] *Xun feng*, 1964: 143. 溫梓川, <<郁達夫別傳>>。<薰風>, 1964: 143.。

²⁷ Suzuki Masao, *Sumatora no Yu Ta Fu: taiheiyo senso to chugoku sakka*. [Yu Ta Fu in Sumatra: The Pacific War and Chinese Writers] (Tokyo: Toho Shoten, 1995), p. 16. 鈴木正夫, <スマトラの郁達夫: 太平洋戦争と中国作家>。(東京: 東方書店, 1995), 16.。

The role of Hu Yu Zhi in the history of the Nanyang Chinese has been more controversial. Most people agree that he played a very important role in Malaya in the 1940s. Lin Wanqing suggests that he was the most influential Chinese intellectual among the Nanyang Chinese in the 1940s.²⁸ Some people have suggested that he exerted a positive influence on the process of localization of Chinese residents. For instance, Liu Bin indicated that Hu Yu Zhi proclaimed ideas of democracy in Chinese circles and fostered the liberalization movement in Malaya.²⁹ Some think his influence was the reverse. For example, Cui Gui Qiang pointed out that Hu represented the China-oriented group rather than the Malaya-oriented group in post-war politics.³⁰ There is no doubt that his writing was crucial to the debate on the issue of whether a China-oriented or local-oriented attitude should be adopted by Chinese residents in Malaya.

²⁸ Lin Wanqing, *Zhongguo zuojia zai Xinjiapo ji qi yingxian*. [The Chinese Writers in Singapore and their influence]. (Singapore: Wanli Shuju, 1978). 林萬菁, <中國作家在新加坡及其影響>。(新加坡: 萬里書局, 1978)。

²⁹ Liu Bin, 'Hu Yu Chi to nanyo kakyō --sanju no mimoto wo motta jinbutsu no kiseki', *Tōnan ajia kakyō to chugoku ---chugoku kizoku ishiki kara kajin ishiki he*. [Hu Yu Zhi and the Nanyang Overseas Chinese] (Tokyo: The Institute of Developing Economies, 1993), p. 148. 劉冰, <<胡愈之と南洋華僑---三重の身元をもった人物の軌跡>>。<東南アジア華僑と中國--- 中國歸屬意識から華人意識へ>。(東京: 亞細亞經濟研究所, 1993), 148。

³⁰ Cui Gui Qiang, *Xinma huaren guojia rentong de zhuanxiang*. [The shifting direction of national identity in Singapore and Malaya] (Singapore: Nanyang Xuehui, 1989). 崔貴強, <新馬華人國家認同的轉向, 1945-1959>。(新加坡: 南洋學會, 1989)。

When Hu Yu Zhi first took refuge in Sumatra, he lived in Payakumbuh with others of the formerly Singapore-based 'Chinese writers'. At that time, the writers pretended to work at Yu Ta Fu's wine factory. Hu Yu Zhi organized a secret reading group, and many other Chinese writers joined it, including Wang Ren Shu, Shao Zong Han, Zhang Chu Kun, Shen Zi Jiu, Yang Shao and Wang Jin Ding. It was Hu Yu Zhi who initiated the idea to support the Indonesian revolution and to master Bahasa Indonesia to prepare for the coming Indonesian revolution.

It was very likely that, prior to their gaining a good grasp of Indonesian, much of their reading material was in Japanese. Among them, Yang Shao, Wang Ren Shu, Shen Zi Jiu and Jin Ding had studied in Japan. Subsequently Hu Yu Zhi became the first of them to learn to read Bahasa Indonesia. He then started to discuss information gained from newspapers in Bahasa Indonesia with the others. Perhaps it was because Hu had been an enthusiast about Esperanto in the 1920s that he could pick up a new language in a short period. The reading group started to translate news from Indonesian newspapers into Chinese. Hu described their life in Sumatra as a good opportunity to develop contacts with both the local Chinese and *pribumi* communities during the Japanese occupation.³¹ During his stay in Sumatra, Hu Yu Zhi completed one novel and two books on the study of Bahasa Indonesia.³²

³¹ Sha Ping, *Yindunixiyayu yufa yanjiu*. [Penjelidikan Tentang Djalan Bahasa Indonesia oleh Sabin; Indonesian Grammatical Studies] (Beijing: Renmin Publishing Co, 1951). 沙平, <印度尼西亞語語法研究>。(北京: 人民出版社, 1951)。

³² Zhang Chu Kun, *Huyuzhi zai nanyang di qinian*. [Hu Yu Zhi's seven years in Nanyang] *Hu Yu Zhi yinxiang ji* [Impressions of Hu Yu Zhi] (Beijing: Zhongguo Youyi Publishing Co) p. 171. 張楚琨, <<胡愈之在南洋的七年>>。<胡愈之印象記>。(北京: 中國友誼出版社, 1989), 171。

Ba Ren

Ba Ren's relationship with Indonesia was even more dramatic than those of Yu and Hu. He arrived in Singapore in October 1941, two months before the Pacific War erupted. Before his arrival he had not had any substantial contact with this region. In fact his original plan had been to go to the United States rather than Southeast Asia. Around March 1941, he was asked to leave Shanghai for the USA by Zhou En Lai in order to launch a newspaper there. His attempts to gain a visa for the United States ended in failure in May 1941, and he began sending articles from Hong Kong to the *Nan Yang Shang Pao* in Singapore. Later he was invited to Singapore by Hu Yu Zhi. In October of the same year, he arrived in Singapore to take up a position as lecturer at the Nanyang Huaqiao Normal College, and started to explore this new culture and environment.³³

In these few months in Singapore, Ba Ren engaged actively in debate in the Singaporean press. When the Pacific War began two months after his arrival, he joined the 'Huaqiao Intellectual Anti-Japanese Corps in Singapore' (HIAJCS), and took the position of director of propaganda. Then he joined Yu Ta Fu in fleeing to Sumatra in February 1942, which was his first visit to Indonesia. He soon developed strong and enduring ties with Indonesia. After hiding in Sumatra for more than three years during the Japanese occupation, he became an enthusiastic commentator on Indonesian affairs. His articles about Indonesia appeared in Medan, Jakarta, Singapore, Hong Kong and

³³ Concerning Ba Ren's early work and life before his arrival in Singapore, see Quanguo Ba Ren Xueshu Taolunhui ed. *Ba Ren yanjiu*. [Studies of Ba Ren] (Shanghai: Shanghai Shudian, 1992). 全國巴人學術討論會編, <巴人研究>。(上海: 上海書店, 1992)。

Shanghai from 1945 to 1950. After Indonesia achieved independence, he became the first Chinese ambassador to Indonesia since 1950. He wrote several books including an introductory text on contemporary Indonesian affairs, as well as a four-volume history of Indonesia. In his writings, he always expressed strong and intimate sympathies toward the Indonesian people. Before he died in 1969, he even expressed the wish in his will; 'Divide my ashes into two parts, and bury one in my birth place, the other at sea . . . I am still concerned about the people in Indonesia.' Such emotional attachment toward Indonesia was indeed rare in Chinese writers.

Available evidence suggests he was the only Chinese writer to leave a detailed record of his life in Indonesian territory under Japanese occupation. He wrote at least six articles totalling more than 400 pages between 1947 and 1948, which provide a rich source of information about his life, thoughts and impressions during his Indonesian experience. Those articles can be used for tracing how he built up his feeling for the country over time.

After he arrived in Sumatra, Ba Ren did not immediately join the group of Chinese intellectuals from Singapore at Payakumbuh. Instead, he went to live in a village with his partner, Xiao Liu, in Selat Panjang, an outer island between Singapore and Sumatra.³⁴ He invited another poet, Lau Ya, to be their companion.³⁵ He wrote 'because we could not speak Hokkien or Cantonese, but only spoke Mandarin [or Putonghua, 'common language'], we were called "common people" among the

³⁴ The original name of Xiao Liu (小劉) was Zeng De Rong (曾德容) or Liu Yan (劉岩). The Chinese name for Selat Panjang is Shi Li Ban Rang (石叻班讓).

³⁵ The original name of Lau Ya (老丫) was Yang Sao (楊驪). He was a well-known poet in China.

Nanyang Chinese.’ He said ‘In Nanyang, “common people” were a new thing. Local Chinese might have thought it dangerous to allow “common people” to live among them under Japanese control.’ This was because the Japanese might suspect them of being actively pro-China, if not actually being spies. Thus, he asked Lau Ya, a Fukienese, to accompany them. At this time Ba Ren still had difficulty communicating with local people, even ethnic Chinese.

Later they moved in with a Hakka family in another village. Ba Ren thought it might be easier for him to communicate with the host of this family, Renshen. Up to this time, he had not considered staying long on this remote island, and sought ways of returning to China. He eventually left the island five months later, after receiving a letter from Hu Yu Zhi inviting him to West Sumatra. These few months staying with a Chinese peasant family in a foreign territory gave Ba Ren a good opportunity to observe the daily life of ethnic Chinese and their relations with indigenous people in Sumatra. He referred to the indigenous people as ‘Malays’, as was common among Sumatran Chinese, even though this group included Javanese and other ethnic groups.

Ba Ren described this Chinese peasant family and their neighborhood in detail. He began to understand more about the hardships of Chinese peasants who had migrated to Sumatra. At the same time he was very impressed with the fact that the ethnic Chinese were everywhere in this foreign land. He said ‘our people (*minzu*) can grow in any territory.’ He asked, ‘Why are our people found with strong roots in places within the territories of other people?’ He paid attention to intermarriage between Chinese and Malays and observed the characteristics of the Malay wives in his neighbourhood. He

pointed out that their behaviour in matters involving ownership and reciprocity was quite different from that of Chinese women.

Another thing which concerned him was the feeling toward the fatherland, China, among these Chinese peasant immigrants. He was always interested in China's affairs and liked to discuss them with the ethnic Chinese whom he could trust. He was quite surprised that ethnic Chinese peasants were so apathetic toward China's affairs. They were concerned mainly about their own livelihood. One day he asked his neighbor A-Ru, 'Don't you wish to see the fatherland (*zuguo*, literally 'ancestors' land') become stronger?' A-Ru answered 'What's the benefit for my life if China (Tangshan, literally 'Tang Dynasty Mountain') becomes stronger?'³⁶ As a writer who had come to Singapore to promote resistance to Japanese invasion, Ba Ren realized that local Chinese saw their fate as tied to that of their local region in Southeast Asia, not to China. At the same time, he was surprised to find that the local Chinese were eager to help him. Each time he said 'thank you' to a Hakka farmer, the answer was 'not at all, we are all Chinese'. Ba Ren and his colleagues did what they could to help these families. His partner Xiao Liu found that most children in the neighborhood did not attend school. She organized a small class for the children and wrote some material for use as textbooks. The first sentences she wrote were 'We are Chinese people (Zhongguo Ren). Our ancestors came from China (Zhongguo)'.

Ba Ren's first experience among ethnic Chinese communities in Sumatra was of living with a peasant family, quite different from the experience of most other Chinese writers,

³⁶ Both *Zuguo* (祖國) and *Tangshan* (唐山) indicate China.

who usually stayed in urban areas during their time in Southeast Asia. Their impression was that ethnic Chinese in the region were either businessmen or tradespeople. The atmosphere in Sumatran Chinese circles was also quite different from that in Malaya. The ethnic Chinese in Sumatra were far removed from Chinese affairs, and most were preoccupied with making a living in their present locality. Their roots had grown deeply into the territory.

In August 1942, Ba Ren began to feel that he and his colleagues should do something positive instead of waiting to leave for China. At that time, the Japanese military administration had been established in Sumatra for five months and law and order had been restored. Ba Ren had been staying in Renshen's house for four months. He contacted Hu Yu Zhi, who was staying in Payakumbuh with Yu Ta Fu. Hu suggested that it was impossible to return to China under the present situation and that Ba Ren should consider making long-term arrangements for living in Southeast Asia. Hu suggested two important things: to try to survive economically, and to learn Bahasa Indonesia in order to prepare for the coming Indonesian revolution.

It is probable that this advice prompted Ba Ren's decision to study Indonesian affairs. He began to discuss the future of ethnic Chinese and Indonesia with some ethnic Chinese who had received Chinese education. At the end of 1942, he was already convinced that the ethnic Chinese who lived in Indonesia should help with the liberation of Indonesia. His conviction appeared to be the result of Japan's policies in Indonesia. He was impressed by the fact that the Japanese could control the place so well with the

help of Indonesians. But he found that many local Chinese youths who had received Chinese education gave little thought to helping Indonesian liberation.³⁷

At the beginning of 1943, Ba Ren moved from Selat Panjang to Payakumbuh in order to meet Yu Ta Fu and Hu Yu Zhi. By that time, he felt sympathetic towards the Malay people and in his writing started to address the natives of Sumatra as 'Indonesians' instead of 'Malays'.³⁸ His identification with Indonesia and the independence aspirations of its people became increasingly pronounced in his writings. When he saw palm trees, he wrote 'I always feel that palm trees in Indonesia are very lovely. They are simple, delicate and straight. They symbolize the characteristics of the Indonesian people—straightness, candidness and open-heartedness.' His writing was full of passion on behalf of the unspoilt Indonesian people, even when he did not yet have the ability to communicate with Indonesians directly.

He stayed in Pekanbaru for a couple of weeks during his journey to Payakumbuh, and met a young Indonesian businessman who was visiting the same family. With the help of an interpreter, he talked extensively to this young man about Indonesian politics and perceptions of local ethnic Chinese. The man's responses to his questions disturbed Ba Ren so much that he was unable to sleep that night for anxiety about the fate of the

³⁷ Once Ba Ren said to A-Gou, an ethnic Chinese youth in his neighbourhood, that if the Japanese associated with the Malay people, it would be disastrous for the ethnic Chinese. A-Gou, who had received primary education in a local Chinese school, said that either the Japanese or the Dutch would need the help of the Chinese if they wanted to stay in Southeast Asia and achieve their purposes. Ba Ren felt disappointed by this opinion. See Ba Ren (Bah Ren), *Ini sanjū*. [Some Prose Notes on Indonesia]. (Hunan: Hunan Renmin Publishing Co., 1984) p. 45. 巴人, <印尼散記>。(湖南: 湖南人民出版社, 1984), 45.。

Indonesian people as well as the Nanyang Chinese. He went over the question, 'What separates peoples?' He concluded that the Chinese and Indonesian peoples shared the same fate, as they were both victims of capitalist colonialism.

After meeting his old friends Hu Yu Zhi and Yu Ta Fu in Payakumbuh, he joined the discussion group of Chinese writers and he also learned basic Bahasa Indonesia for daily conversation. This group tried to train themselves to read Indonesian newspapers and to understand the culture and society of Indonesia. They sought out different kinds of material about Indonesia to read, mainly in Indonesian and Japanese. Ba Ren shared the same ideas as other Chinese writers, but he wanted to do more to help the Indonesian cause. Later the group decided to depart for different places for safety. Ba Ren returned to Medan in January 1943. There he began to organize Chinese youth to oppose the Japanese. He founded an underground organization called 'Sumatra Huaqiao Anti-Fascist Union',³⁹ which later changed its name to 'Sumatra People's Anti-Fascist Union'(SPAFU), in order to mobilize the Indonesian people's support against the Japanese.⁴⁰

The strategy of SPAFU included: (1) The learning of Bahasa, and studying of Indonesia's history, society, culture, and economy as part of its preparations for independence, which should come soon. (2) Consolidating the Chinese community to

³⁸ Ba Ren, *Inni sanji*. [Some Prose Notes on Indonesia]. (Hunan: Hunan Renmin Publishing Co., 1984) p. 50. 巴人, <印尼散記>。(湖南: 湖南人民出版社, 1984), 50.。

³⁹ The Chinese title is Sumendala huaqiao fan faxisi tongmeng (蘇門答臘華僑反法西斯同盟).

⁴⁰ Wang Ren Shu (Ba Ren) *Yindunixiya jindaishi*. [Modern Indonesian History] (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Publishing Co, 1995), pp. 901-902. 王任叔, <印度尼西亞近代史>。周南京整理。(北京: 北京大學出版社, 1995), 901-902.。

engage in a non-cooperation movement. (3) Publishing an underground newspaper, *Qian Jin Bao* (The Advance Post),⁴¹ as part of efforts to spread news and organize people, especially those from the working class, in the local language orally through the secret members of the organization. (4) Establishing contact with the underground organization of the Indonesian Communist Party and cooperating with them to resist the Japanese fascists.

Ba Ren was aware that the anti-Japanese movement was weak, and that the gap between the interests and aspirations of the Chinese and *pribumi* Indonesians was considerable. He thought that the best way to improve relations between the two was to join the local 'anti-fascist movement' (read as 'anti-Japanese colonialism' in this context).⁴² This was why Ba Ren and his group, SPAFU, were keen to contact the Indonesian Communist Party, which maintained an anti-Japanese policy under the occupation. But SPAFU was unable to locate the PKI and decided to open relations with the Communist Party of Malaya (MCP). Eventually they made direct contact with the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA) led by the Malayan Communist Party. In early 1943, SPAFU sent a representative to Malaya to raise funds and get propaganda training.⁴³ Throughout the Japanese occupation, SPAFU was unable to contact the 'revolutionary elements' in Indonesia. In fact Tan Malaka, who is said to be a prominent leader of the Indonesian Communist Party, had been a colleague of Ba Ren at the Nanyang Chinese

⁴¹ Qian Jin Bao (前進報).

⁴² Ba Ren, *Inni sanji*. [Notes on Indonesia]. (Hunan: Hunan Renmin Publishing Co., 1984) p. 70. 巴人, <印尼散記>。(湖南: 湖南人民出版社, 1984), 70.。

⁴³ Wang Ren Shu (Ba Ren) *Yindunxiya jindaishi*. [Modern Indonesian History] (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Publishing Co., 1995) p. 902. 王任叔, <印度尼西亞近代史>。周南京整理。(北京: 北京大學出版社, 1995), 902.。

Normal College in Singapore before the Japanese occupation.⁴⁴ Towards the end of the war, Ba Ren succeeded in establishing links with the Indonesian Socialist Party, which was less radical than the PKI.

In September 1943, the Kenpeitai learned of SPAFU and began arresting its members. SPAFU's leadership then disbanded the organization and much of its membership fled to other areas in the archipelago.⁴⁵ Ba Ren went to Pematang Siantar, an inland city halfway between Medan and Lake Toba, and hid in a small village. He believed he had been betrayed by Chinese intellectuals. He wrote a poem upon learning of the death of a friend who had fought together with him against the Japanese. Later, he discovered that his dead friend hadn't died for the Resistance but had in fact become a Japanese spy. So, disappointed by the Chinese in Indonesia, he kept his distance from them to reduce the risk of being caught by the Japanese.

During 1944, Ba Ren immersed himself in local life. At this time, his neighbours were mainly Indonesians. He described his feelings thus:

⁴⁴ *Tan Malaka, From Jail to Jail*. Translated and introduced by Helen Jarvis. (Athens: Ohio University, 1991), pp:110-111. Tan Malaka taught at the Nanyang Chinese Normal School (南洋師範學院), for two years from 1939 to 1941. Later he fled to Sumatra by boat with some colleagues and students after the Japanese occupied Singapore. Ba Ren also used his connection with Tan to hide out in Sumatra. But apparently they did not meet during the Japanese occupation, since Tan moved to Java in 1943. Ba Ren only later realized Tan Malaka was his former colleague, 'Tan Hoo Seng' (陳和森), who had posed as a Philippines Chinese while at the Nanyang Chinese Normal School. See Wang Ren Shu (Ba Ren), *Yindunixiya jindaishi*. [Modern Indonesian History] (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Publishing Co., 1995) p. 889. 王任叔, <印度尼西亞近代史>。周南京整理。(北京: 北京大學出版社, 1995), 889.。

⁴⁵ Wang Ren Shu (Ba Ren), *Yindunixiya jindaishi*. [Modern Indonesian History] (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Publishing Co., 1995) p. 907. 王任叔, <印度尼西亞近代史>。周南京整理。(北京: 北京大學出版社, 1995), 907.。

I myself seem to have forgotten my nationality. I, a stranger who have come from an unknown country, dropped into this village where Chinese and Javanese live together in peace. I can touch their hearts, each of them . . . On the other hand, I don't really understand those diligent Chinese farmers and quick-thinking Chinese merchants and clever Chinese intellectuals. Whenever I tried to be close with them, I always felt a gap between us. Why? Is it because I don't want my previous identity to be discovered? Or is it because that there are always some linkages, which cannot be disassociated, between them and the Japanese, the enemy who wants to chase me?.⁴⁶

In the last year of the Japanese occupation, he spent most of his time in a remote village in the mountainous area of Pematang Siantar and concentrated on reading and writing about Indonesia.

In Pematang Siantar, he became interested in local history in Sumatra. He asked the old people in his neighborhood about local legends, and came to realise how the Chinese had contributed to the development of Pematang Siantar. He further considered the relationship between the Chinese and Indonesian peoples.⁴⁷ His first work about Indonesia was written at this time. It was a long epic titled "The Melody of Indonesia", full of passion for the land and the people of Indonesia.⁴⁸ In this work, hope for

⁴⁶ Ba Ren (Bah Ren), *Inni san.ji*. [Notes on Indonesia] (Hunan: Hunan Renmin Publishing Co., 1984), p. 233. 巴人, <印尼散記>。(湖南: 湖南人民出版社, 1984), 233.。

⁴⁷ His Javanese friend asked about the titles of Chinese community leaders, kapitain and major, which were given by the Dutch authorities, and thought that the Chinese acted as the scouts of the Dutch. He was aware that the tension between Chinese and Indonesians should be analysed in terms of relations between colonizers and colonized. See Ba Ren, *Inni san.ji*. [Notes on Indonesia]. (Hunan: Hunan Renmin Publishing Co., 1984), p. 216. 巴人, <印尼散記>。(湖南: 湖南人民出版社, 1984), 216.。

⁴⁸ Ba Ren, 'Yindunixiya zhi ge.' [The Melody of Indonesia] *Nanya yu dongnanya ziliao*, 5. 巴人, <<印度尼西亞之歌>>。周南京整理。<南亞與東南亞資料>, 1984: 5.。

liberation of the Indonesian people was palpable. One expert on the works of Ba Ren commented that 'The Melody of Indonesia' was the very first, and until the time of writing (1986) the only celebration of Indonesia written by a Chinese intellectual.⁴⁹

Aftermath of the Indonesian Experience

The account above shows how the Chinese writers who hid in Sumatra during the Japanese occupation were inspired by the Indonesian revolution. After the surrender of the Japanese on 15 August 1945, these writers started to consider how to contribute to Nanyang by sharing their experiences and spreading the spirit of Indonesian nationalism. Shao Zong Han joined Ba Ren in Medan to edit a pro-democracy newspaper, *Democracy Daily*.⁵⁰ Wang Ji Yuan went to Java to hide from the Japanese, and afterwards decided to remain in Java as editor of a pro-Indonesian newspaper in Jakarta, *Shenghuo Bao* (Life Daily).⁵¹ Later Yang Shao went to Jakarta to join *Shenghuo bao*. Gao Yun Lan, Zhang Chu Kun, Shen Zi Jiu and Jin Ding followed Hu Yu Zhi back to Singapore to work for the magazine *Feng Xia* and the Daily newspaper *Nan Chiau Jit Pao*,⁵² which were known among the local people as radical, provocative, 'nationalist' publications.⁵³ The experiences of these writers are discussed in Shen

⁴⁹ Zhou Nan Jing, 'Ba Ren yu yindunixiya yanjiu,' [Ba Ren and Indonesian studies] *Nanya dongnanya luncong*, 1986. 周南京, <巴人與印度尼西亞研究>。季羨林主編, 南亞東南亞論叢, 1986。

⁵⁰ The Chinese title is *Minzhu Ribao* (民主日報).

⁵¹ The Chinese characters are Wang Ji Yuan (王紀元) and Shenghuo Bao (生活報, Life Daily).

⁵² The Chinese characters are Yang Shao (楊騷), Gao Yun Lan (高雲覽), Zhang Chu Kun (張楚琨), Shen Zi Jiu (沈茲九) and Jin Ding (金丁).

⁵³ Concerning the travels of this group, see Shen Zi Jiu, *Liuwang zai chidaoxian shang*. [Exile on the Equator] (Beijing: San Lian Shudian, 1985). 沈茲九, <流亡在赤道線上>。(北京: 三聯書店, 1985)。

Zijiu's book *Liuwang zai chidaoxian shang* (Exile on the Equator). There were other Chinese writers, not so well known, who do not appear on this list, such as Wu Si Liu and Zhang Qi Cheng.⁵⁴

Feng Xia means '(Land) Under the Monsoon'.⁵⁵ In the editorial opening the first issue of *Feng Xia*, Hu stated that the magazine served three purposes: (1) to promote peace and democracy in China, (2) to assist the Southeast Asian people to earn independence and freedom, and (3) to raise the status of the Nanyang Chinese. From this statement, we can see that the idea of Nanyang identity still existed, but it had been blended with *pribumi*-influenced nationalism. Shen Zi Jiu explained this spirit in the same issue: 'We want to speak for the people who live in this region, the lands under the monsoon, to express their ideas and realize their aspirations.' They strongly supported the goal of Indonesian independence, and encouraged Nanyang Chinese to join this movement.⁵⁶

Because of their common experience in Indonesia, most of these writers joined *Feng Xia*, including those who had worked for other newspapers before the Japanese occupation. The magazine was influential at that time because of the number of prominent and respected writers who contributed to its columns.⁵⁷ Through the letters

⁵⁴ Wu Si Liu (吳斯柳), Zhang Qi Cheng (張企程).

⁵⁵ The Chinese title of this magazine is *Feng Xia* (風下).

⁵⁶ Shen Zi Jiu, Kaichangban. [Opening Issue]. *Feng Xia*, 1: (3 Dec. 1945). Cited from Shen Zi Jiu, *Liu wang zai chidaoxian shang* [Exile on the Equator]. (Beijing: San Lian Shudian, 1985). 沈茲九, <<開場白>>, <風下>, 1, 3 Dec. 1945。轉引自沈茲九, <流亡在赤道線上>。(北京: 三聯書店, 1985)。

⁵⁷ *Feng Xia* was often seen as the organ publications of the Malayan branch of the China Democratic League (CDL) whose Chinese headquarters was pro- Chinese Communist Party. So this magazine was seen as one of the publications that advocated pro-CCP propaganda. See Cui Gui Qiang, *Xinma huaren guojia rentong de zhuanxiang* [The shifting direction of national identity in Singapore and Malaya] (Singapore:

from readers, we know that it was distributed across Southeast Asia, and especially Indonesia. It was a magazine for readers able to read Chinese throughout Southeast Asia.

Feng Xia gave prominence to Indonesian affairs, and particularly the Indonesian Revolution. Because most editors in *Feng Xia* had lived in Indonesia, they used its pages to urge people to learn Bahasa Indonesia and support the Indonesian Revolution. In *Feng Xia*, Hu encouraged Malayan youth to concern themselves with Malayan local affairs in the same spirit as the Indonesian nationalists.

This effort to encourage Nanyang Chinese to learn Bahasa Indonesia had a long-term effect. Bao Si Jing published his *Indonesian-Chinese Dictionary of Phrases* in 1949. He confirmed that he embarked on the job of editing an Indonesian-Chinese dictionary because of his personal experience with the *Feng Xia* group from the autumn of 1943, when they were in Sumatra under the Japanese occupation.⁵⁸ The popular movement to learn Malay during the 1950s was also inspired by this group.⁵⁹ Because of this, Malay/Indonesian language studies became the first subject other than Chinese language studies in the College of Humanities at Nanyang University in 1955.

Nanyang Xuehui, 1989). 崔貴強, <新馬華人國家認同的轉向, 1945-1959>。(新加坡: 南洋學會, 1989). But the magazine actually paid little attention to CCP. It would be better to see this magazine as an intellectual magazine which contained some left-wing thought.

⁵⁸ Bao Si Jing, *Yindunxiya hua cidian*. [Indonesian-Chinese Dictionary of Phrases] (Singapore: Zhongnan Publishing Co., 1949). 包思井, <印度尼西亞話辭典>。(新加坡: 中南出版社, 1949)。

⁵⁹ Interview with Liao Yu-Fong, 13 March, 1997. Liao Yu-Fong (廖裕芳) was a retired professor in Indonesian language studies at the National University of Singapore. He graduated from Nanyang University in the 1950s and went to the University of Indonesia in Jakarta to study modern Indonesian literature.

The *Feng Xia* group, who still preferred to use the term *huaqiao* to describe Nanyang Chinese, advocated that Nanyang *huaqiao* should join the local nationalist movement. Zhou Rong encouraged Nanyang Chinese to use various indirect means to join the local nationalist movement if they could not join directly. One of the best ways to support the movement, he said, was through writing and he appealed to Chinese to contribute articles on nationalist issues.⁶⁰ A powerful way for a magazine to do this was to report current events with a strongly pro-independence editorial line. Ba Ren, for example, denounced the Dutch blockade of Indonesia as imperialism. He also lauded those Chinese people who undertook the risky business of smuggling goods into Republican Indonesia, describing this as ‘business for revolution’.⁶¹

Fang Hua proclaimed that the democratic imperative for Nanyang Chinese was to support the local nationalist movement, because Nanyang Chinese lived with indigenous people and had the closest relationship with them.⁶² At the same time, Hu Yu Zhi was still concerned with China’s affairs. For him, there was no contradiction between being China-oriented and Malaya-oriented. He sought the same thing for both—democracy. In his writing, he always used the idea of ‘progress’ to describe his opinions. For him, the idea of ‘progress’ was identical to democracy. Later, he was

⁶⁰ Zhou Rong, “Tan mahua wenyi.” [About Mahua Literature] *Feng Xia*, 10 Jan. 1948 (108). 周容, <<談馬華文藝>>, <風下>, 10 Jan. 1948, (108). °

⁶¹ Ba Ren, ‘Shui ke yu gong tou.’ [Crewman and Foreman]. *Feng Xia*, 24 April 1948, (123). 巴人<<水客與工頭>> ° <風下>, 24 April 1948, (123). °

⁶² Fang Hua, ‘Mahua qingyun di xin fangxiang.’ [The New Direction of the Malayan Chinese Youth Movement] *Feng Xia*, 17 April 1948, (122). 方華, <<馬華青運的新方向>> ° <風下>, 17 April 1948, (122). °

seen as China-oriented because of his close interest in Chinese affairs. In a debate on the nature of Mahua (Malaysian Chinese) literature, he was seen as a representative of Chiao-Min, or sojourner's literature.⁶³ We will discuss this debate in Chapter 6. His Indonesian experience made him encourage more people in Malaya to take a local-oriented attitude. Hu himself exhibited both a locally oriented and a China-oriented identity. Eventually he decided to go back to China, where he became the Deputy Minister of Culture of the Chinese Communist Party government in 1956.

Among the Chinese writers discussed above, Ba Ren remained deeply involved with the local nationalist movement. After the Japanese surrendered in August 1945, he decided to stay in Sumatra but he shifted from underground to open activities. He edited a magazine, *Progress Weekly* (*Qianjin zhoubao*) and a daily newspaper, *Democracy Daily* (*Minzhu ribao*).⁶⁴ The former was in Chinese and the latter was published in two editions, one in Chinese and another in Indonesian. Shao Zong Han edited the Chinese version, while Ba Ren edited the Indonesian version with the help of Zhang Qiong Yu,⁶⁵ who translated Ba Ren's articles into Indonesian.⁶⁶ At the same time, Ba Ren founded the Sumatra Democratic Union, based on the membership of the former Sumatran Huaqiao Anti-Fascist Union. His activities in Sumatra in the post-war period were based on his belief that the local Chinese should help the Indonesian Revolution in

⁶³ Huang Aoyun, *Zhongguo zuojia yu Nanyang*. [Chinese writers and the South Seas] (Hong Kong: Kehua Press, 1988). 黃傲雲, <中國作家與南洋>。(香港: 科華圖書出版公司, 1988)。

⁶⁴ The Chinese titles for these publications are *Qianjin Zhoubao* (前進週報, Progress Weekly) and *Minzhu Ribao* (民主日報, Democracy Daily).

⁶⁵ Zhang Qiong Yu (張瓊郁).

order to promote friendship between the Chinese and Indonesian peoples. He built a relationship with Tan Malaka's 'Indonesian Socialist Party', and even attended the meetings of the party in Siantar.⁶⁷ He also published extensively on Tan Malaka's thought and activities, and wrote several articles to introduce the circumstances of the Indonesian Revolution to Chinese readers.⁶⁸ His articles were published in Singapore, Hong Kong and Shanghai, as well as in Indonesia.

Ba Ren was captured by the Dutch police in July 1947, following their growing concern at his role in strengthening pro-Revolutionary sentiment in the Chinese community. Many of his friends in Singapore tried to rescue him by mobilising international pressure on the Dutch government.⁶⁹ He was eventually expelled to Hong Kong in 1948, though this did not halt his efforts to campaign for Indonesian independence. He continued to publish many articles about Indonesian history, literature, culture and

⁶⁶ Unfortunately, these materials, if not destroyed, are hard to find. See Zhou Nan Jing, 'Ba Ren yu yindunixiya yanjiu.' [Ba Ren and Indonesian Studies] Nan ya dong nan ya lun cong. 周南京, <巴人與印度尼西亞研究>。季羨林主編, 南亞東南亞論叢, 1986.。

⁶⁷ It is not very clear whether the name of 'Indonesian Socialist Party' was the formal name of the organisation or the way to be described by Ba Ren. Ba Ren, 'Yinni di qingyun,' [The Youth Movement in Indonesia] *Feng Xia*, 1947: 71. 巴人, <<印尼的青運>>。<風下>, 1947: 71.。

⁶⁸ In his writing, Ba Ren detailed Tan Malaka's activities, such as his publication about Trotskyism for students, when Tan taught at the Nanyang Chinese Normal College. This information might have come from his students, since both of them relied on their former students to survive in Sumatra.

⁶⁹ Ming Lun, 'Zao he lan ju bu di Ba Ren.' [Ba Ren captured by the Dutch] *Feng Xia*, 1947: 89. 明倫, <<遭荷蘭拘捕的巴人>>。<風下>, 1947: 89.。

society,⁷⁰ and wrote several short autobiographical stories about his experience in Indonesia.⁷¹

Table 3 Some Articles and Books published by Ba Ren in 1947-1949.

Ba Ren, <i>Lun yinni di fandi douzheng</i>. [Anti-Imperialism in Indonesia] (Shanghai: Shenghuo Shudian, 1947). 巴人，〈論印尼的反帝鬥爭〉。(上海：生活書店，1947)。
Ba Ren, 'Zhengdang yu jieji guanxi.' [Political Parties and Class Relations] <i>Feng Xia</i>, 1948: 116, Singapore. 巴人，〈〈政黨與階級關係〉〉。〈風下〉，1948: 116, 新加坡。
Ba Ren, <i>Yuandong minzu geming wenti</i>. [The Nationalist Revolution in Asia] (Shanghai: Nanhai Publishing Co.). 巴人，〈遠東民族革命問題〉。(上海：南海出版社，1948)，8。
Ba Ren, 'Yinni xinwenxue gaishu.' [The New Literature in Indonesia] <i>Xiandai huaqiao</i>, 1948: 1(10), Hong Kong. 巴人，〈〈印尼新文學概述〉〉。〈現代華僑〉，1948：1(10), 香港。
Ba Ren, 'Chundao zhi guo yinni.' (Shanghai: xin zhongguo shuju.) 巴人，〈群島之國---印尼〉。(上海：新中國書局，1949)。
Ba Ren, 'Yinni di beiju.' [The Indonesian Tragedy] <i>Ziyu Congkan</i>, 1948: 11, Hong Kong. 巴人，〈〈印尼的悲劇〉〉。〈自由叢刊〉，1948:11, 香港。
Ba Ren, 'Ji tongzhi Li Fu.' [Notes for a comrade named Li Fu] <i>Feng Xia</i>, 1947: 72. 巴人，〈〈記同志李福〉〉。〈風下〉，(1947)，72。
Ba Ren, 'Linrenmen.' [My neighbors] <i>Feng Xia</i>, 1974: 97. 巴人，〈〈鄰人們〉〉。〈風下〉，(1947)，97。

⁷⁰ It is impossible to give a complete list of Bahren's writings about Indonesia in this period, since many have been lost. The following are some articles and books published in 1947-1949.

⁷¹ Ba Ren (Bah Ren) *Wu zu miao*. [The Temple of Five Gods] (Guangzhou: Huacheng Chubanshe, 1986). 巴人，〈五祖廟〉。(廣州：花城出版社，1986)。

Ba Ren, 'Shuiké yú gōngtóu.' [Crewman and Foreman] *Feng Xia*, 1948: 123.

巴人，<<水客與工頭>>。<風下>，(1948)，123。

Ba Ren, 'Lüelun huaqiao minzhu yundong.' [The Democracy Movement of the Overseas Chinese] *Nanqiao Ribao*, 12 Jan. 1948.

巴人，<<略論華僑民主運動>>。<南僑日報>，12 January 1948。

Ba Ren's feeling toward the Indonesian cause could be described as 'altruistic nationalism'; nationalism for others, leading him to persuade Nanyang Chinese to help the Indonesian Revolution. His consideration was based on the long-term interest of local Chinese residents who had their roots in Indonesian territories. He did not emphasize racial brotherhood or the sharing of some common cultural roots but acknowledged the cultural divide between Chinese and Indonesians. Unlike the pro-Indonesia *peranakan* nationalists, he did not advocate the integration or assimilation of Chinese into Indonesian society. Unfortunately, his wish to improve the relationship between Chinese and Indonesians did not come true. He became the first Chinese ambassador to Indonesia from August 1950, but only occupied the position for one year and four months.

Chapter 6

Searching for a New Approach to Identity, 1945-1949

Many people have treated only external factors as the reasons for ethnic Chinese change of identity from Chinese to Southeast Asian. Lee Khoon Choy, a former Singaporean politician, for example, revealed his views in his memoirs on the shifting identity of Nanyang Chinese after World War II. He visited Hong Sisi in Beijing in the 1980s, and they exchanged their views on the post-war situation in Malaya.¹ Hong Sisi was editor of the *Modern Daily* in Pinang from 1946 to 1948, and was later exiled to China by the British authorities. Lee Khoon Choy complained that 'Tan Kah Kee made a big mistake in 1948 (for the Nanyang Chinese). He did not identify himself with Malaya. He did not look after the interests of the Chinese in Malaya.' Lee was referring to the fact that Tan Kah Kee, the formal leader of the Nanyang Chinese, had left Singapore and resettled in China in 1948, and thus set a bad example for the Nanyang Chinese. Hong agreed, and said 'a Singaporean delegation came to China in 1956, and Zhou Enlai told them they should change their loyalty from China to Singapore. From then on Chinese residents in Nanyang started to change their national identity.' Lee Khoon Choy recorded this conversation in his memoir without any objection to what Hong had said.²

¹ Hong Sisi (洪絲絲).

² Lee Khoon Choy (Li Jung Cai), *Zhuixun ziji di guojia: yige nanyang huaren di xinlu licheng*. [The search for my own country; the mental journey of a Nanyang Chinese]. (Taipei: Yuanliu Publishing Co, 1994), p. 60. 李炯才, <追尋自己的國家：一個南洋華人的心路歷程>。(台北：遠流出版社, 1994), 60. The main theme of this memoir is how Lee progressed from regarding himself as a Nanyang Chinese to regarding himself as a Singaporean citizen through a process of localization. He also admitted that the majority of Chinese-educated Chinese were still allegiant to China at that time.

In this way, both Hong and Lee gave credit to Zhou Enlai for convincing Nanyang Chinese to identify as citizens of Southeast Asian nations.

The Bandung Asian-African Conference in 1955 has often been seen as the watershed of identity shift for the Southeast Asian Chinese, and Zhou Enlai is seen as the key figure contributing to this shift. At this conference, Zhou Enlai, on behalf of China's government, announced that the new policy toward overseas Chinese was to abolish dual nationality and to encourage overseas Chinese to become citizens of their country of residence. Indonesian nationalists view this move as the triumph of the Indonesian diplomatic effort to solve 'the Chinese problem' in the new nations.³

I would like to argue that the policy announced at the Bandung Conference was not the reason for, but rather the result of, the efforts of the Southeast Asian Chinese to resolve the issue of their identity. The debate among ethnic Chinese just after the Pacific War indicates that this new direction in national identification had already emerged in this period, even though differing opinions remained. It is fair to say that the Chinese community went through a process of searching for a new identity to meet the changing situations in both Malaya and Indonesia after the end of the Pacific war. To better understand these new approaches to identity, we should closely examine the discourse among Chinese communities in the 1945-1949 period. This was a time in which external political factors did not indicate clearly what the immediate future would be. Malaya did not have a clear agenda to pursue its independence. Indonesia had declared independence but was fighting the Netherlands' bid to restore colonial rule. The

Chinese Communist Party had not yet won the Civil War in China. In this time of uncertainty, the ethnic Chinese of Southeast Asia sensed the need to reconsider their identity. In this chapter we will examine these debates of the immediate post-war period.

The debates in Malaya and Indonesia are discussed separately, although they are relevant to each other and interconnected. The debates often crossed today's national boundaries, due to the nature of Chinese social networking at that time. They were concerned with many different issues, but the search for identity will be considered here. For example, the debate on the nature of Chinese literature in Malaya cannot be seen as a purely literary issue. The strong will to promote 'Malayan Chinese literature' sprang from the issue of identity. Another problem was who was to be considered representative of the opinion of ethnic Chinese. Opinions within Chinese communities were always divided, no matter how, where or when. Living as they did beyond the control of the Chinese government, it would have been unlikely for any Chinese community to found a single organisation to represent Chinese community opinion. It is always difficult to identify representative opinion. The debate was mainly generated by local born Chinese, who had lived there for generations. They might be used to the local situation before the war but then became enthusiastic on issues of identity.

³ Lie Tek Tjeng, 'Indonesia's Citizens of Chinese Descent: Terminology,' *Citra Indonesia*, 2: 8 (August 1996), p. 11. Also the interview with Lie Tek Tjeng.(1996).

The Malayan Chinese debate on the New Nation

In Malaya, the debate on identity within the Chinese community was widely publicized in the local Chinese media just after the end of the Pacific War. This was not an ordinary period for the Chinese press in Malaya. It has been described as the 'golden age' of Chinese newspapers there. At the close of the Pacific war, people who had worked for Chinese newspapers before the war tried their best to re-launch their newspapers as soon as possible. Two weeks after the Japanese surrendered, the first Chinese newspaper recommenced publication. Two former leading Chinese newspapers, *Nanyang Shang Pao* and *Sinchew Daily*, appeared on the same day, 8 September 1945, three weeks after the Japanese surrendered.⁴ At that time, necessary goods were still in short supply, and these newspapers began with one page only. A few days later other papers started to be issued. Not only were previously existing newspapers reissued, but many new Chinese newspapers were established in this period. Similar things happened in other areas of Southeast Asia at this time.

Why was this period so important? It has been described as an interval of 'power vacuum'.⁵ Malayan Chinese were eager to concern themselves with politics. Li Run Hu described the situation thus: 'War changed Malaya. Malaya was not a backwater

⁴ Chinese Newspapers Division, *Our 70 Years: A History of Leading Chinese Newspapers in Singapore, 1923-1993*. (Singapore: Singapore Press Holdings, 1993), p. 28. 華文報集團, <我們的七十年>。(新加坡: 華文報集團), 28.。

⁵ Tonnesson, Stein. 'Filling the power vacuum: 1945 in French Indochina, the Netherlands East Indies and British Malaya.' in Antlov, H. and Tonnesson, S., eds. *Imperial policy and Southeast Asian nationalism, 1930-1957*. (Richmond, UK: Curzon Press, 1995), pp. 110-143.

any more. It became a boundless surging ocean. Everyone shouted out for liberation of the people, equal political rights and resurrection of the economy'.⁶ The Chinese in Malaya, who had been seen as apolitical, suddenly turned into a community very much concerned with politics.

The reason why Chinese identity suddenly became problematic was the experience of war, particularly its impact on attitudes to colonialism. A former reporter for Chinese newspapers in Malaya remembers the situation in this period, 'Reporting political news in the immediate post-war period, I realized that loyalty to Malaya was of great importance in the historical development of events in Malaya'.⁷ On 8 January 1946, the *Nanyang Shang Pao* urged Chinese readers to take Malayan citizenship and to join the local political domain rather than to concern themselves only with China's affairs.⁸ The author distinguished between the Chinese in China, as *Zhongguoren*, and the Chinese in Nanyang (the South Seas), as *Nanyang huazu*. This is the beginning, in public discourse, of conscious and deliberate separation of Chinese in Malaya from Chinese in China. The English translation of both terms is the same, 'Chinese', but the former is defined in Chinese by membership of *Zhongguo*, the Chinese nation.

⁶ Li Run Hu, 'Zhanhou malaiya di bianhua yu dangqian weiji' [The Changes in Post-War Malaya and the Current Crisis] *Feng Xia*, 66, 1947. 李潤湖, <<戰後馬來亞的變化與當前危機>>。<風下>, 66, 1947.。

⁷ In spite of this, the author indicated in a following statement that most educated Chinese were still loyal to China in this period of time. See Li Jion Cai, *Zhuixun ziji di guojia: yige nanyang huaren de xinlu licheng*, [The search for my own country; the mental journey of a Nanyang Chinese]. (Taipei: Yuanliu Publishing Co, 1994), p. 12. 李炯才, <追尋自己的國家：一個南洋華人的心路歷程>。(台北：遠流出版社, 1994), 12.

⁸ 'Nanyang huazu de zhengshi weiji.' [The Political Crisis of the Nanyang Chinese], *Nanyang Shang Pao*, 8 January 1946. <<南洋華族的政治危險>>。<南洋商報>, 8 January 1946.。

Another author pushed the issue further. Qu Zhefu, a Malayan youth, argued that Nanyang Chinese should call themselves *Nanyang huazu* instead of *huaqiao*. He thought the political consciousness of Chinese in Malaya had been changed by the events of the Pacific War, that they now considered the colonial system in Malaya inappropriate, and that Malayan Chinese should participate in local politics. The traditional term *huaqiao*, which defined Chinese people outside China as sojourners, could not serve in the new situation of the post-war era.⁹

This new political trend emerged suddenly in the Chinese media in 1946. Liu Lang argued that *huaqiao* should participate in politics in Malaya, because they were part of the people of Malaya.¹⁰ Chen Zhong Da also raised the question directly when discussing political awareness among the Nanyang Chinese and the political situation in Malaya. The time to choose to be Chinese or to be Malayan would come soon. The Chinese in Malaya should try to obtain citizenship of Malaya, as this was best for their collective interest. They would need to prepare to make this choice.¹¹

Luo Sao thought that the issue of citizenship was not for the government of the Republic of China to decide. He said that if the qualifications for citizenship were reasonable, Chinese in Malaya would be able to gain Malayan citizenship by formal

⁹ Qu Zhefu, 'Nanyang huazu yu zhengzhi' [The Nanyang Chinese and Politics] *Feng Xia*, 6, 1946. 屈哲夫 <<南洋華族與政治>>。 <風下>, 6, 1946.

¹⁰ Liu Lang, 'Huaqiao dui zuguo de taidu wenti.' , [The Attitude of Overseas Chinese Toward the Fatherland]. *Feng Xia*, 74. 流浪 <<華僑對祖國的態度問題>>。 <風下>, 74, 1947. °

¹¹ Chen Zhong Da, 'Zuo zhongguoren haishi malaiyaren.' [To be Chinese or Malayan] *Feng Xia*, 95, 1947. 陳仲達 <<做中國人還是做馬來亞人>>。 <風下>, 95, 1947. °

legal process. This would be the most important step. People who wanted to call Malaya home could try to earn their citizenship. The Malayan citizenship issue should not be confounded with the situation in China.¹²

To earn civil rights for Chinese became the common political goal of the Chinese media in post-war Malaya. Chen Zhong Da argued that citizenship was a kind of right, and Chinese residents should earn their rights, in order to be treated as equal to other people. Citizenship had been introduced to Malaya two months after the end of the Pacific War, after the issue was raised in the British Parliament.¹³ At that time, Malayan Chinese were strongly anti-colonial, and supported the democratic movement. In his article 'The New Direction of the Malayan Chinese Youth Movement', Fang Hua suggested that the Malayan Chinese youth movement should support the independence struggle in the Orient, that this was a democratic movement in which overseas Chinese should participate, because the distribution of Chinese gave them close relationships with other Oriental races. At the same time, he suggested Malayan Chinese youth should support the anti-colonial struggle in China. He believed both movements were going in the same direction.¹⁴ This kind of double identification with China and the host country was common in this period. Shen Zi Jiu also advocated that the Chinese democracy movement in Malaya should associate with the democracy movements in both China

¹² Luo Sao, 'Lun huaqiao yu malaiya zhengzhi di guanxi' [The Overseas Chinese and Malayan Politics] *Minsheng Bao*, 1947. 羅騷 <<論華僑與馬來亞政制的關係>>, <民聲報>, 1947.

¹³ Chen Zhong Da, 'Zuo zhongguoren haishi malaiyaren.' [To be Chinese or Malayan] *Feng Xia*, 95, 1947. 陳仲達 <<做中國人還是做馬來亞人>>。 <風下>, 95, 1947.。

¹⁴ Fang Hua, 'Mahua qingyun di xinfangxiang.' [The New Direction of the Malayan Youth Movement] *Feng Xia*, 122, 1948. 方華, <<馬華青運的新方向>>。 <風下>, 122 1948.。

and Malaya.¹⁵ To associate with the movement in China was uncontroversial, because some of these were people who had come from China only a few years ago. The interesting change was that they also encouraged participation in the struggle to obtain 'democracy' for Malaya.

The desire of Chinese residents to participate in this local struggle was obvious in post-war Malaya. Shen Zi Jiu suggested that everyone could participate in local politics. She observed that there were two kinds of citizenship status among Chinese residents: people who had or would have 'Malayan citizenship', and people who had Chinese citizenship. Both should participate in local politics in different ways.¹⁶ At this time, very few Chinese had Malayan citizenship. Shen's remarks were intended to encourage participation. Many people did participate in various ways, but not in the domain of politics emphasized by Shen Zi Jiu.

Among these new formulations of identity, that of Hu Yu Zhi was the most fully developed. Hu was one of the central figures of the debate, and wrote a series of essays on the subject. In one essay, Hu argued that the relationship to an ancestral homeland is something that changes with time, and is not fixed forever.¹⁷ He further indicated that a 'fatherland' is more than the place where one's ancestors lived: it can only be called

¹⁵ Shen Zi Jiu, 'Minzhu yundong zai malaiya.' [The Democracy Movement in Malaya] *Feng Xia*, 95-96, 1947. 沈茲九, <<民主運動在馬來亞>>。<風下>, 95-96, 1947。

¹⁶ Shen Zi Jiu 'Buyao zai haipa zhengzhi.' [Don't be Frightened of Politics any more], *Feng Xia*, 78, 1947. 沈茲九, <<不要再害怕政治>>。<風下>, 78, 1947。

¹⁷ Hu Yu Zhi 'Zu guo.(1)' [Fatherland (1)] *Feng Xia*, 91, 1947. 胡愈之, <<祖國(上)>>。<風下>, 91, 1947。

'fatherland' by those who are linked to it politically, economically and culturally.¹⁸ Hu's redefinition of 'fatherland' gave the new Nanyang Chinese concept of 'identity' a theoretical basis sufficient to make a break with tradition.

Later, Hu went a step further, and explicitly placed the *huaqiao* homeland in the concrete context of Nanyang/Malaya.¹⁹ He pointed out that in the past, nobody doubted that the *huaqiao* homeland was China, but now things were different: there were independence struggles throughout Southeast Asia, and it was necessary for Chinese in Nanyang to take Nanyang as their permanent homeland and achieve political equality with the other peoples of the region, to create the basis for the 'world family' envisaged by the United Nations. He considered that the great majority of Nanyang Chinese, who had been born in Southeast Asia, should accept their country of residence as their homeland. According to a survey done by the *Nan Qiao Daily*, 95.6 per cent of those surveyed wanted to take part in local politics, but were unwilling to cease recognizing China as their real homeland. Hu thought they should put aside their primal allegiance to China.

Finally, on the subject of nationality, Hu criticized the citizenship law of China as being unreasonable and backward, and in need of reform. As it stood, China-born Chinese who had settled permanently in Southeast Asia were regarded as Chinese citizens, even if they had formally taken out citizenship of another country. Dual nationality was

¹⁸ Hu Yu Zhi 'Zu guo.(2)' [Fatherland (2)] *Feng Xia*, 92, 1947. 胡愈之, <<祖國(下)>>。<風下>, 92, 1947.。

¹⁹ Hu Yu Zhi 'Huaqiao di zuguo' [Fatherland of the overseas Chinese] *Feng Xia*, 93, 1947. 胡愈之, <<華僑的祖國>>。<風下>, 93, 1947.。

accepted. The Chinese government had attempted in 1924 to have people of Chinese parentage born in Southeast Asia register with the then Bureau for Overseas Chinese Affairs, but this initiative met with a very feeble response and was dropped. Hu thought the mental habit of putting bloodline before location should be dropped. Though some overseas Chinese had already chosen Nanyang as their permanent place of residence, Hu thought they should take the ultimate step of recognizing it as their homeland.²⁰ This identification of 'permanent place of residence' with 'homeland', which changed the meaning of the term 'homeland', was the point on which Hu Yu Zhi placed the highest importance.

These ideas, once circulated, brought an immediate and ardent response. One young man asked the question. 'If we Chinese become Malayan citizens, do we still belong to the Chinese race?' Hu Yu Zhi answered that Malaya would give rise to a new race called Malayu, which would combine the Chinese, Malay, Indian and other races.²¹

In 1948, Hu went on to discuss the relationship between nation and state.²² 'A people (*min zu*) is not a race (*zhong zu*).²³ There can be several different races in one nation, but only one people.' His aim was to argue that overseas Chinese could make Malaya their homeland. 'Overseas Chinese should ally themselves with the other races in

²⁰ Hu Yu Zhi 'Zuguo yu Jiaxiang' '[Fatherland and Hometown] *Feng Xia*, 94, 1947. 胡愈之, <<祖國與家鄉>>。<風下>, 94, 1947.。</p>
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<p>²¹ Si Ya, 'Guanyu minzu yu zhongzu.' [About Nations and Races] <i>Feng Xia</i>, 97, 1947. 西亞, <<關於民族與種族>>。<風下>, 97, 1947.。</p>
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<div>
<p>²² Hu Yu Zhi 'Guanyu min zu yu guo jia.' [About Nations and States] <i>Feng Xia</i>, 117, 1948. 胡愈之, <<關於民族與國家>>。<風下>, 117, 1948.。</p>
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<p>²³ min zu (民族), zhong zu (種族).</p>
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<p>196</p>
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Malaya to found a single nation, that is Malaya, in the way the American people have done. There are two sorts of nation in term of consisting of people. Multi-racial nations exist, such as Switzerland and the Soviet Union. For Indonesia to call on the different races to unite to form the Indonesian people, in the context of the popular liberation movement, is reasonable and progressive. The interracial distinctions created by the Dutch, who divided in order to rule, are a source of discord. The White Paper and the People's Charter of British Malaya were created on the philosophical basis of a 'mono-racial polity'.²⁴ Because the area concerned was smaller, and the different races lived together, it was difficult for the British effectively to establish separate racial autonomy. Therefore there are consistency problems with the British colonialists' public position on the 'three great races' of Malaya. It would be better for national unity to call on the Malay, Chinese, Indian, Ceylonese, Arab and mixed blood populations to come together to found the Malayan people.

Debating the Nature of Mahua Literature

A new debate on Malayan Chinese literature, known as 'Mahua literature', commenced just as these new ideas about Nanyang Chinese identity were being made public. Though the debate appeared to be a literary discussion about whether or not there were special, distinctive features to Malayan Chinese literature, in fact it was a debate about identity. The central issue was whether Mahua literature (Malayan Chinese literature) should develop a regional particularity, and be Malaya-oriented rather than China-

²⁴ It meant for Malay people only.

oriented. The debate clearly showed that the younger generation wanted to build their own identity through literature.

This debate is, at present, generally understood as a phenomenon in literary history. Fang Xiu, a historian of Mahua literature who studied the debate over the long term, indicated that it had been going on in Malaya since before the war. Pre-war Mahua literature was influenced by the New Literature Movement in China, which was anti-imperialist and anti-traditional in spirit. Fang considered the post-war debates to have taken up and carried on the main themes of New Literature.²⁵

This was quite right: these issues had been raised before the war. Li Qiu is recognized as the first person to raise them, taking up the topic on 20 April 1941 in a Chinese newspaper.²⁶ According to Zhu Li Wen, Li Qiu was the pen name of Wee Mon-Cheng²⁷ Investigation of the content of the discussion demonstrates its connection with the identity issue. The political situation compelled Chinese migrants to rethink the implications of their residence in Nanyang. If they were going to fight for this territory, this territory should mean more than a place of residence for them.

²⁵ Fang Xiu, *Mahua xinwenxue ji qi lishi lunkuo*. [The new Mahua Literature and Its Historical Outline] (Singapore: Wan Li Publishing Co, 1972), pp. 11-19. 方修, <馬華新文學及其歷史輪廓>。(新加坡: 萬里文化企業, 1972), 11-19.。

²⁶ Li Qiu, 'Lun mahua minzu shuxing di wenti.' [On the Character of the Mahua People] *Nanyang Shang Pao*, 20, April, 1941. 李秋, <<論馬華民族屬性的問題>>。<南洋商報>, 20 April, 1941.。

²⁷ Zhu Li Wen, *Cong gulangyu dao xi njiao—Huang Wang Qing zhuan*. [A Life's Journey from Gulangyu to Singapore -- Biography of Wee Mon-Cheng (Huang Wang Qing).] (Xiamen Daxue Chubanshe, 1995) 朱立文, <從鼓浪嶼到新加坡—黃望青傳>。(廈門: 大學出版社, 1995)。

Major topics discussed included: How should one participate in local democracy? Is literature an effective means of participating in local politics, by the introduction and exploration of basically political ideas? What kinds of literature would help to improve the situation? Did literature need reform in this new era? What new kinds of Malay literature would emerge? What kind of Malayan literature would help to create a better future for Malaya? Would this kind of literature be unique to Malaya? Many people thought the Chinese could help by participating in local politics. This was the most obvious way for Malayan Chinese to contribute to building the nation. Another way to participate was in literature. Chou Yung advocated that the Chinese should try, in writing, to reflect current reality in Malaya, in particular the struggle for democracy.²⁸

Many of those who expressed their views were young Chinese who had worked for underground publications or theatre troupes in Malaya during the Japanese occupation. Among them, Du Bian was one of the main figures in underground literature during the war. He wrote an article arguing that Mahua literature should develop its own culturally distinct characteristics, which would be different from those of Chinese literature. He thought that the underground literature of the occupation had advocated fighting for Malaya, and that this distinguished Malayan Chinese literature from other kinds of Chinese literature, and gave it its own nature.²⁹ This article initiated the debate on the nature of Malayan Chinese literature and became a widely known seminal article which was always cited in the subsequent debate.

²⁸ Zhou Rong, "Tan mahua wenyi." [On Mahua Literature] *Feng Xia*, 108, 1948. 周容, <<談馬華文藝>>。 <風下>, 108, 1948.。

Historians who work on the history of Mahua literature have confirmed that underground literature of the Japanese occupation was an important element in the development of Mahua literature, which conveys a strong sense of local identity. Many underground publications circulated among Chinese during the Japanese occupation had promoted patriotic sentiment toward Malaya.³⁰ Young people who had engaged in anti-Japanese propaganda in Malaya founded the Seagull Theatre Company after the war. As playwrights and actors, they toured all districts of Malaya, bringing their wartime experience to the post-war Malayan political situation.³¹

The debate was joined by two groups: writers who argued for the special character of Mahua literature and writers who did not favour the idea of developing a recognizable genre of Mahua literature. The former will be called Mahua writers. The latter will be called Chinese writers, as most writers of the *Feng Xia* group took this position. If we analyse the background of these two groups of writers, they were the same in that they were all newcomers to Malaya. Du Bian, for instance, was born in 1914 in Gulangyu,

²⁹ Du Bian 'Kangri weima wenyi yu mahua wenyi dutexing.' [Anti-Japanese War Literature and the Nature of Mahua Literature] *Nan Qiao Ribao*, 1947. 杜邊, <<抗日衛馬文藝與馬華文藝獨特性>>。南僑日報, (Singapore, 1947)。

³⁰ Fang Xiu, *Mahua wenxue shibu*. [The Supplemented History of Malayan Chinese Literature] (Singapore: Chun Yi Trading Co., 1996), pp. 3-23. 方修, <馬華文學史補>。(新加坡: 春藝圖書貿易公司, 1996), 3-23。Fang indicates there were three kinds of literature under the Japanese occupation: Pro-Japan propaganda, entertainment and underground anti-Japanese literature. Because very little of it remains, particularly of the underground press, it is difficult to get the whole picture of these publications today. We have retained only some names of underground publications, for example, *Ziyou bao* (自由報, 'Freedom'), and *Jiefang bao* (解放報, 'Liberation')。

³¹ Chen Liang and Wen Gang 'Xinjiapo haiou jutuan.' [The Seagull Theatrical Company in Singapore] *Qiaoshi xuebao*, 1988 (1). 陳亮 溫剛 <<新加坡海鷗劇團>>。<僑史學報>, 1988 (1)。

near Xiamen in Fujian province. He took early to creative writing and published his works under a variety of pen names before arriving in Singapore in 1936, where he founded the Nandao Travelling Theatre Company.³² His background appears no different from that of an entirely 'Chinese' writer. Perhaps the only difference is that the so-called Chinese writers were already well known as writers before going to Southeast Asia, and the Mahua writers only became writers after migrating to Malaya. Another difference was that the Chinese writers went to Indonesia during the Pacific War, and most Mahua writers stayed in Malaya and fought for Malaya. They divided into two camps based on the issue of whether or not they had exerted themselves in the defence of Malaya. The experience of fighting for Malaya led Mahua writers to treat Malaya as a meaningful category of identity.

In their writings of the anti-Japanese resistance period, Mahua writers already expressed awareness that the position of the overseas Chinese needed to be redefined. The ideal concept of the Chinese race as one of the three races of Malaya gradually took shape in their anti-Japanese resistance work. Du Bian mentioned that the major reason for this idea of three races was that these troupes performed in Malay *kampong*, before mixed audiences including Malays and Indians. Because the dramatic content had to be addressed to different ethnic audiences, the traditional role of 'Overseas Chinese' was plainly unsuited to the new situation.³³ After the Japanese surrendered, Du Bian

³² Chen Liang, ed., *Du Bian yu mahua xinma juyun*. [Du Bian and the New Malayan Theatrical Movement] (Hong Kong: Jin Cheng Company), p. 10. 陳亮 編 <杜邊與馬華(新馬)劇運>。(香港：金城公司, 1994), 10. °

³³ Chen Liang, ed., *Du Bian yu mahua xinma juyun*. [Du Bian and the New Malayan Theatrical Movement] (Hong Kong: Jin Cheng Company), p. 26. 陳亮 編 <杜邊與馬華(新馬)劇運>。(香港：金城公司, 1994), 26. °

continued to recall group images of Chinese, Indians and Malays in the *kampong* theatre audience. Eventually he settled on this view of the proper place of Malayan Chinese for future literary development, which came out of 'the social reality of the overseas Chinese' and was concerned with the here and now.³⁴

In a 1947 public conference, the literary figures attending, including writers from China who had been in Malaya or Singapore under the Japanese occupation and directly experienced Japanese rule, and young writers born locally, all tended to the idea that the Chinese in Malaya had already become one of the constituent peoples of Malaya.³⁵ Du Bian's idea contributed to this trend. He thought that the origin of Mahua literature lay in the transition from 'anti-Japanese resistance for national (Chinese) salvation' to 'anti-Japanese resistance to protect Malaya'. Although this wartime literature gave a supporting role only to Malays and Indians, this supporting role was the beginning of its specifically Mahua character.

As the writer who raised this issue, Du Bian admitted later that his original idea was to suggest that the Chinese in Malaya should be considered as a distinct race, as 'Malaya Huazu', or simply Mahua. They were Chinese Malayan rather than Chinese only. So they should produce their own literature, 'Malaya Huazu literature'. But he calculated that this suggestion would be too provocative and would not be well received for some

³⁴ Chen Liang ed. *Du Bian yu mahua xinma juyun*. [Du Bian and the New Malayan Theatrical Movement] (Hong Kong: Jin Cheng Company), p.36. 陳亮編《杜邊與馬華(新馬)劇運》。(香港：金城公司, 1994), 36. °

³⁵ Pu Luo, 'Zengjing xianshen xinma xiju gongzuo di ren.' [Those who contributed themselves to the New Theatrical Movement in Malaya] *Chi dao feng*, 1988/7, p. 36. 普洛, <<曾經獻身新馬戲劇工作的人>>。赤道風, July, 1988, 36. °

time yet, so he confined the issue to whether Mahua literature possessed its special character.³⁶

If Du Bian's admission was a matter of fact, then 'Mahua Literature' was first proposed as a literature based on Malaya deliberately in order to illustrate a new national identity. Mahua writers then stressed the difference between themselves and those who were still more concerned with the situation in China. 'The special character of Mahua literature is to base itself on the point of view of the Malayan people. The duty of Mahua literary work is to make the independence of the people of Malaya the most important task. Duty towards China, though it still must be recognized, must take second place'.³⁷ Some Mahua writers progressed to criticizing writers who were concerned with China. The focus of debate diverged from the original focus on what made Mahua literature what it was.

Hu Yu Zhi was seen as the leader of those in Malaya who were most concerned with China. He expressed his concern through newspapers and magazines, particularly during the civil war between the Chinese Communist Party and the Nationalist Party. He was attacked for his involvement in China's affairs, directly or indirectly. Thus one

³⁶ Chen Liang, ed., *Du Bian yu mahua xinma juyun*. [Du Bian and the New Theatrical Movement in Malaya] (Hong Kong: Jin Cheng Company), p. 38. 陳亮編《杜邊與馬華(新馬)劇運》。(香港：金城公司, 1994), 38. °

³⁷ Ling Zuo, 'Mahua wenyi di dutexing ji qita.' [The Attributes of Mahua Literature and Other Issues]. *Xingzhou Ribao*, Chenxing, p. 32. 凌佐, <<馬華文藝的獨特性及其他>>。《星洲日報》, 晨星, 32, 1948. °

of the most prominent advocates of local identity found himself criticized as an expatriate writer (*qiaomin* writer in Chinese),³⁸ insufficiently concerned with Malaya.

Some of Hu's friends tried to temper the debate. Xia Yan thought 'Differences of opinion on ethnic politics and culture are the hardest of all problems to solve'. Xia thought there was no need to divide up spheres of greater and lesser importance, that democracy in Malaya and reconstruction in China could be pursued at the same time.³⁹ Ba Ren preferred to express his opinions more indirectly. Reporting on recent developments in Malay literature in 1948, he suggested that Chinese writers should do the same, to reflect the new thinking of people involved in political struggle and class struggle.⁴⁰

Hu Yu Zhi could not pass over the criticism directed towards him in silence, and wrote an essay to address it under his pen name, Sha Ping. He wrote that joining this debate was similar to entering a cow's horn: there was no way out and it would be a dead end.⁴¹ He implied that this debate was nonsense. A few months later, Hu left Singapore for Hong Kong. In the essays he sent back to Singapore, he did not explain why he had gone to Hong Kong. He explained only that the old China was expiring, and the new China was not yet established. He expressed once again his faith in a new prospect for

³⁸ Qiaomin (僑民), Qiaomin writers (僑民作家).

³⁹ Xia Yan, 'Mahua wenyi shilun.' [An essay on Mahua Literature]. *Nan Qiao Ribao*, 13 April 1948. 夏衍 <<馬華文藝試論>>。〈南僑日報〉, 13 April 1948. °

⁴⁰ Ba Ren, 'Zheng dang yu jieji guanxi.' [Political Parties and Class Relations]. *Feng Xia*, 116, 1948. 巴人, <<政黨與階級關係>>。〈風下〉, 116, 1948.

⁴¹ Sha Ping, 'Pengyou, ni zuanjin niujiaojian li qule.' [Friend, You Enter a Dead End Lane]. *Feng Xia*, 108, 1948. 沙平 <<朋友,你鑽進牛角尖裡去了>>。〈風下〉, 108, 1948. °

China.⁴² His concern for affairs in Southeast Asia had clearly been put to one side, and was not mentioned again.

It should not be forgotten that some months previously he was recognized by Malayan readers as the Chinese writer most sympathetic to Malayan national identity. He was the one who had published a series of essays promoting Malayan identity in the most popular journals. Even as he came under attack by a younger generation, he considered himself progressive. However, the younger generation of Mahua writers regarded Hu as a representative of the old order. Perhaps he simply left Malaya because he could not stand this reversal.

This debate came to an abrupt end with the Malayan Emergency. Hu Yu Zhi had left Singapore by this time. The Seagull Theatre Co. was shut down by the British authorities, and many members of the troupe were forced into exile. Tan Kah Kee decided to leave Malaya and return to his home district in China. The *Nan Qiao Daily* that Tan had founded, and the *Feng Xia* magazine, of which Hu had been general editor, stayed in publication for a short time and then were closed down by the British government for their critical views. There were no means by which the debate could continue. However, its influence had been great and was still felt in later years, by which time it was recognized as the turning point in the development of Nanyang identity. Since then Malaya, instead of Nanyang, gradually became the object of identity among Chinese in Malaya. Malayan identity became a new political current for Chinese in Malaya.

⁴² Hu Yu Zhi, 'Wo laile Xianggang,' [I have arrived in Hong Kong.] *Feng Xia*, 127, 1948. 胡愈之 <<我

Chinese debate on the Indonesian Revolution

The debate among the Chinese in Indonesia in this period is also significant for what it indicates of Indonesian Chinese perceptions of identity. The anti-colonial revolution in Indonesia began as soon as the Pacific war was over, and concluded when the Dutch government agreed to hand over power to the Republic of Indonesia in 1949. The Indonesian Revolution was a difficult period for the Indonesian Chinese. Before they could catch their breath after the three and a half years of Japanese occupation, they were in a state of war. Although there is certainly controversy over the role played by the Chinese in the Indonesian revolution, no period since the war has been more significant for the development of the ethnic relationship between Chinese and *pribumi*.

Academic research on the role of ethnic Chinese in Indonesia during the Revolution divides into two trends. Many academic studies in the English-speaking world have assumed that the Chinese did not side with the Indonesian Republic, and that this caused problems in ethnic relations between Chinese and *pribumi*. For example, G. William Skinner suggested that 'The resentment among the natives intensified after the war because many Chinese sided with the Dutch in the revolutionary struggle.'⁴³

來了香港>>。〈風下〉,127, 1948。

⁴³ Skinner, George William, 'The Chinese Minority.' In Ruth McVey, ed. *Indonesia*. (New Haven: HRAP Press. 1963), pp.113-114.

Another description of the Chinese attitude to the Indonesian Revolution comes from Jacques Amyot: 'There was a wide range of attitudes among the Chinese during the Japanese war and during the years of struggle for independence against the Dutch that followed. Some were pro-Dutch, and some were pro-Republic. Most, however tried to keep aloof, considerations of livelihood and personal safety being more important than politics. In this spirit, they cheered the Dutch occupiers on their return and found it expedient to conform to Dutch directives when living in Dutch-occupied territories. The same kinds of Chinese residing in Republican areas submitted to local rule for the same reason. Republican leaders resented this opportunism and the Chinese were often the object of molestation and even violence.'⁴⁴

But scholars able to use Chinese material have arrived at a very different picture. Chen Da Sheng has confirmed that ethnic Chinese did contribute to the Indonesian independence struggle in various ways.⁴⁵ Siauw Giok Tjhan (Xiao Yucan in Mandarin), who took part in the revolutionary movement himself, wrote: 'The history of this century demonstrates that, when Indonesia's struggle for national independence was reaching its point of crisis, the Indonesian Chinese did not look on with their arms in their sleeves. On the contrary, they supported the struggle'.⁴⁶ Chinese scholars born in Indonesia, summing up this material, consider that Chinese supported the Indonesian

⁴⁴ Jacques Amyot, *The Chinese and the National Integration in Southeast Asia*. (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University, Institute of Asian Studies, 1972), p. 56.

⁴⁵ Chen Da Sheng, *Yinni wenhua lunwenji* [Studies of Indonesian Culture] (Singapore: Educational Publishing Co., 1977), pp. 120-126. 陳達生, <印尼文化論文集>。(新加坡: 教育出版社, 1977), 120-126. °

revolution in the following ways. 1. Propaganda and public relations. 2. Contributions of money and goods for the war of independence. 3. Services performed for fighters at the front line. 4. Joining the fighting themselves. 5. Resistance to Dutch efforts to hold a national congress with intent to divide the movement. 6. Joining the Indonesian government and contributing to national reconstruction.⁴⁷

The material available demonstrates that the Indonesian revolution gained strong support from Nanyang Chinese, including both Chinese in Indonesia and those in neighbouring countries. The boundary between Indonesia and Malaya was not meaningful at this time, as the idea of these new nations as nations was in the process of forming, and 'Nanyang' was still a meaningful name to many Chinese for the space in which they lived.

The Chinese material contains information on the individual contributions of Indonesian Chinese to the revolution. Unfortunately, in contemporary Indonesia, this material is not easy to track down. Chinese printed material has been banned in Indonesia since 1966. It became dangerous to be in possession of printed matter in Chinese, and much of this material was destroyed. The main media for expression of the new trends in opinion on national identity emerging at that time were Chinese newspapers, particularly the Singapore media, which were available in both Indonesia and Malaya.

⁴⁶ Siauw Giok Tjhan (Xiao Yu Can), *Shutu tonggui*. [Different Roads to the Same Destination] Huang Shu Hai trans. (Hong Kong: Di Ping Xian, 1981), p. 37. 蕭玉燦, <殊途同歸>。黃書海譯。香港：地平線出版社, 1981), 37.。

⁴⁷ Li Xue Min and Huang Kun Zhang, *Yinni huaqiaoshi*. [The History of the Chinese in Indonesia.] (Canton: Guangdong Educational Publishing Co, 1987), pp. 436-446. 李學民、黃昆章, <印尼華僑史> (廣州：廣東高等教育出版社, 1987), 436-446.。

There were the *Nan Chiau Jit Pao* (*Nan Qiao Daily*), the *Feng Xia Journal*, the *Sin Po* (*Xin Bao*) of Indonesia, the *Sheng Huo Pao* (*Shenghuo Bao*) and the *Democratic Daily* (*Minzhu Ribao*).

The problem for the Indonesian Chinese was that during the 1940s and 1950s it was difficult for them to express their views. Many Chinese newspapers in the Dutch-controlled area were censored by the Dutch authorities.⁴⁸ If the Dutch discovered evidence of opinion hostile to Dutch colonial rule, the editor could be expelled from the territory.⁴⁹ Some articles not acceptable for publication in Dutch Indonesia were sent to Singapore for publication. Many cases show that Chinese writers in Medan and Batavia sent their articles to Singapore to be published, particularly in *Feng Xia* or the *Nan Qiao Daily*. Those publications were then imported or smuggled back to Indonesia. In some cases, articles were even sent to Hong Kong to be published. Another way to avoid Dutch censorship was to summarise news reports from Singapore.⁵⁰ Through the Chinese media, people could exchange their views across the strait between Malaya and Indonesia. *Feng Xia* and the *Nan Qiao Daily* published correspondence from Dutch Indonesia, such as Hu Yu Zhi's opinions on the national identity of the Southeast Asian

⁴⁸ Wang Ji Yuan, 'Gaobie Yinni youren' [Farewell To Indonesian Friends], *Minzhu Daily*, 6 June, 1951. 王紀元, <<告別印尼友人>>。〈民主日報〉, 6 June, 1951.。

⁴⁹ Mo Wu, 'Helanren di rendao.' [The 'Humanitarianism' of the Dutch], *Feng Xia*, 93, 1947. 莫誤 <<荷蘭人的人道>>。〈風下〉, 93, 1947.。

⁵⁰ For example, there was a report that Chinese schools were banned in Siam. This news came from Singapore. See 'Xianluo paihua yiju' [The Rise of Anti-Chinese Sentiment in Siam], *Sin Po*, 8 June 1948. <<暹羅排華益劇>>。〈新報〉, 8 June 1948.。

Chinese. Hu referred mainly to Indonesia, and the responses to Hu came from Indonesia.⁵¹ In this way the debate crossed national boundaries beyond Indonesia.

It is hard to agree on what standard to use in assessing how much a minority nationality supports a nationalist movement. If, as in Malaya, Indonesian Chinese newspapers before the war expressed a lukewarm attitude to the nationalist movement, it was not necessarily because they did not support national liberation for the people of Southeast Asia, but because of the stringency of Dutch censorship. After the Pacific War, though, Chinese in Indonesia supported the Indonesian revolution. It could be said that Chinese in all parts of Southeast Asia took a sympathetic attitude to the Indonesian revolution, and sought out means to support it, to the extent of calling on the Chinese community itself to engage in revolution.

The Chinese and the Indonesian Revolution before 1945

To clarify the position of the Chinese toward the Indonesian national liberation movement, we need to begin by examining this relationship from the origins of Indonesian nationalism. There are many examples of Chinese support and participation in the early, pre-war stages of the movement. In the revolutionary activity of the 1920s, Chinese sympathisers fought side by side with Indonesians. During the fighting against the Dutch in Java and Sumatra in 1926-1927, several Chinese were taken prisoner or

⁵¹ Zeng Shi Shou, 'Wo hai suan shi Zhongguoren ma?' [Am I still a Chinese?] *Feng Xia*, 93, 1947. 曾石壽, <<我還算是中國人嗎?>>。<風下>, 93, 1947。

exiled.⁵² Lie Eng Hok was among the better known of them. He took part in armed uprisings in West Java and Sumatra against the Dutch, as a pioneer of independence.⁵³ In the 1930s as well there are many stories of Chinese supporting or participating in the movement. For example, Liem Ching Gie⁵⁴ organized the Nahdatul Muaalimin for Islam and nationalism in Sulawesi in 1936.⁵⁵ It can be said that the history of the Indonesian revolution does not lack for Chinese participation. However, it was only a small number of individuals who took an active part.

In Indonesia, in contrast to Malaya, the issue of fighting for the new nation arose among the Chinese before the end of the Pacific War. Four Chinese were appointed by the Japanese to be members of the Investigative Committee for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence (BPKI) held in May 1945. At a July 1945 meeting of the Investigative Committee, Liem Koen Hian,⁵⁶ the former leader of the Indonesian Chinese Party (Partai Tionghoa Indonesia, PTI),⁵⁷ suggested that the future Republic of

⁵² Go Gien-Tjwan (吳銀泉), 'The Role of the Overseas Chinese in the Southeast Asian Revolutions and Their Adjustment to the New States.' In Michael Leifer ed., *Nationalism, Revolution and Evolution in South-East Asia*. (University of Hull. Centre for South-East Asian Studies. Hull monographs on South-East Asia, no.2, 1970), p. 64.

⁵³ Chalid Salim, 'Lima Belas Tahun Digul—Kamp Konsentrasi di Neuw Guines' 1927. cited from 'Li Yingfu—Yinni dili xianqu' [Lie Eng Hok, a Pioneer for the Indonesian Revolution], *Yinni yu Dongxie*, [Indonesia and ASEAN], 46 (August 1995). <<李英福—印尼獨立先驅>>, <印尼與東協>, 46 (August 1995), 。

⁵⁴ Liem Ching Gie (林清義).

⁵⁵ 'Yinni huayi dili xianqu Lin Qingyi yingxiong di gushi.' [The Story of a Chinese Hero of the Indonesian Revolution, Liem Ching Gie], *Yinni yu Dongxie*, [Indonesia and ASEAN], 46 (August 1995). <<印尼華裔獨立先驅林清義英雄的故事>>, <印尼與東協>, 46 (August 1995). 。

⁵⁶ Liem Koen Hian (林群賢).

⁵⁷ PTI was a pro-Indonesian party, based in Surabaya. Its founder was Liem Koen Hian. See Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *Hoa Kiau di Indonesia*. [Ethnic Chinese in Indonesia] (Jakarta: Bintang Press, 1960), p. 94.

Indonesia should declare all Chinese in Indonesia to be Indonesian citizens.⁵⁸ As a result of this Japanese political initiative, Liem's ideas provided a blueprint for the representation of Chinese communities.⁵⁹ Another significant shift during this period was in Liem's opinion on the *totok-peranakan* relationship. In contrast to the position taken by his party before the war, which insisted on the separation of *totoks* and *peranakans*, he asked in 1945 for all Chinese in Indonesia to be given Indonesian citizenship.

Other Chinese members of BPKI held the same pro-Indonesian nationalist views. Oei Tiang Tjoei, director of the pro-Japanese newspaper, *Hong Po*, and president of 'Huaqiao Zhonghui' (the Chinese Association) in Jakarta, said that Indonesians, Chinese and Japanese were all Asians, therefore they should work for the realization of 'Greater East Asia'.⁶⁰ Oei Tjong Hauw, the leader of the Chung Hwa Hui, said that the future Indonesian Republic should give citizenship to all Chinese who lived in Indonesia.⁶¹ The Chinese BPKI representatives basically all agreed that local Chinese could and should become Indonesian subjects. They regarded the Chinese community as a whole, without distinguishing between *totok* and *peranakan*. The Indonesian nationalists basically accepted that local Chinese could become Indonesian subjects, as

⁵⁸ Yamin, Muhammad, *Naskah-persiapan Undang-undang Dasar 1945*. [Documents for the 1945 Constitution] (Jakarta: Djilid Pertama, 1971). pp. 218-223.

⁵⁹ This kind of statement has never been considered to represent the mainstream view of the Chinese community in Indonesia, since his party was small and this opinion was not shared by Chinese language newspapers or Chinese *peranakan* newspapers in Indonesia.

⁶⁰ Leo Suryadinata, *Pribumi Indonesians, the Chinese Minority and China*. (Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann, 1978). p. 59.

⁶¹ Leo Suryadinata, *Pribumi Indonesians, the Chinese Minority and China*. (Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann, 1978). p. 60.

well as other Asians.⁶² From then on, there were always Chinese representatives in the congresses of the Dutch-controlled Indonesian Federal Government, as well as those of the Republican Government of the revolutionary era.

Under the Japanese occupation, the Chinese began to feel that they should establish relations with the local nationalists. During the occupation, apart from Chinese leaders cooperating with the Japanese authorities in the committee of preparation for Indonesian independence as mentioned, the Chinese paid special attention to the possibility of an Indonesian independence. Chinese underground leaders tried to make links with Indonesian leaders. Ba Ren knew the left-wing Indonesian revolutionary, Tan Malaka, who passed as a Philippines Chinese called Tan Hoo Seng,⁶³ and took a teaching job in Singapore under that alias.⁶⁴ Ba Ren sent people to try to contact him. But after half a year, they were still not able to do so, or to contact his party, the PKI. Ba Ren and his comrades decided to contact the Malayan Communist Party and the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army. In early 1943, they sent comrades to Malaya and made some contacts. Later they used these contacts in fund raising and propaganda.⁶⁵ There were ideological grounds for urging the Chinese people to help the Indonesian revolution. A

⁶² Before the war, no Indonesian party seriously considered regarding Chinese as people of Indonesia. After the establishment of the Investigative Committee for the Preparation of Indonesian Independence (BPKI) by Japanese advisors, the Chinese elements of the future Indonesian nation were basically accepted.

⁶³ Tan Hoo Seng (陳和森).

⁶⁴ Wang Ren Shu (Ba Ren), *Yindunixiya jindaishi*. [Modern Indonesian History] (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Publishing Co., 1995) p. 889. 王任叔, <印度尼西亞近代史>。(北京：北京大學出版社, 1995), 889. °

⁶⁵ Wang Ren Shu (Ba Ren), *Yindunixiya jindaishi*. [Modern Indonesian History] (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Publishing Co., 1995), p. 902. 王任叔, <印度尼西亞近代史>。(北京：北京大學出版社, 1995), 902. °

belief spreading among the Chinese was that Asian peoples should help each other.⁶⁶ This was why Chen Da Shen described the relationship in this way: 'During the Japanese occupation, ethnic Chinese supported the Indonesian nationalist movement both in public and in secret.'⁶⁷

The Chinese and the Indonesian Revolution after 1945

For these reasons, as soon as the war was over and the Indonesian revolution commenced, a number of Chinese began to assist the revolution. There are many accounts of Chinese people helping the Indonesian Revolution in Chinese material. On the eve of the declaration of Indonesian independence, a group of young Indonesians kidnapped the revolutionary leaders, Sukarno and Hatta, to force them to take action. A Chinese resident, Djiauw Kie Sieng,⁶⁸ lent his home for Sukarno's and Hatta's detention.⁶⁹ Because of this, it has been argued that ethnic Chinese did help the Indonesian Revolution from the very beginning.⁷⁰ The Indonesian declaration of independence was broadcast to the outside world through Chinese channels, radios and newspapers. Benny Tang has summarized the Chinese role in the Indonesian

⁶⁶ Ba Ren, *Yuandong minzu geming wenti*. [The Nationalist Revolution in Asia] (Shanghai: Nanhai Publishing Co, 1948), p. 8. 巴人, <遠東民族革命問題>。(上海: 南海出版社, 1948), 8.。

⁶⁷ Chen Da Sheng, *Yinni wenhua lunwenji*. [Studies of Indonesian Culture] (Singapore: Educational Publishing Co, 1977), p.120. 陳達生, <印尼文化論文集>。(新加坡: 教育出版社, 1977), 120.。

⁶⁸ Djiauw Kie Sieng (饒啓祥).

⁶⁹ Wang Ren Shu (Ba Ren), *Yindunixiya jindaishi*. [Modern Indonesian History] (Beijing: Beijing Daxue Publishing Co., 1995), p. 927. 王任叔, <印度尼西亞近代史>。周南京整理。(北京: 北京大學出版社, 1995), 927.。

⁷⁰ Duli xuanyan gongbu qianxi [The Eve of the Declaration of Independence]. *Yinni yu Dongxie*, [Indonesia and ASEAN], 46 (August 1995). <<獨立宣言公佈前夕>>。<印尼與東協>, 46 (August 1995).

Revolution as follows: 'On the eve of independence and in the immediate post-revolutionary period, apart from a small number of overseas-trained doctors who had contacts abroad, the Indonesian people were all but cut off from other countries. Because the Chinese were in regular contact with Chinese in other countries, they were able to perform, disinterestedly, the tasks of foreign liaison, propaganda, and supplies of munitions and other necessities during the birth of the Indonesian republic.'⁷¹

The post-war Chinese newspapers clearly supported the Indonesian independence struggle. Wang Jiyuan, who was the best known journalist from China in Batavia, the Dutch capital, stated: 'I have been a committed supporter of Indonesian independence since the declaration of 17th August, 1945.'⁷² He immediately went about establishing a new newspaper, in which to express sympathy with the new Indonesia. Throughout the Indonesian Revolution, the Chinese press supported the Indonesian side. Li Xue Min and Huang Kun Zhang commented: 'The Chinese strongly supported the Indonesian Revolution by publishing pro-Indonesian propaganda in the Chinese press.'⁷³

There were several reasons why the Chinese expressed pro-Indonesian sentiments immediately on the declaration of independence. In terms of political thought, they

⁷¹ Deng Tongli, 'Yingjie guanghui di wushi nian: wei qingzhu Yinni guoqing tan huaren chujing' . [Celebration for the Fiftieth Anniversary of Indonesia---Thinking about the Situation of Ethnic Chinese in Indonesia] *Yinni yu Dongxie*, [Indonesia and ASEAN], 46 (August 1995), p. 7. 鄧通力, <<迎接光輝的五十年---爲慶祝印尼國慶談華人處境>>, <印尼與東協>, 46 (August 1995), 7. °

⁷² Wang Ji Yuan, 'Gaobie Yinni youren' [Farewell to Indonesian Friends], *Minzhu Daily*, 6 June, 1951. 王紀元, <<告別印尼友人>>。 <民主日報>, 6 June, 1951. °

⁷³ Li Xue Min and Huang Kun Zhang, *Yinni huaqiaoshi*. [The History of the Chinese in Indonesia.] (Canton: Guangdong Educational Publishing Co, 1987), pp. 436-446. 李學民、黃昆章, <印尼華僑史>。 (廣州: 廣東高等教育出版社, 1987), 436-446. °

were anti-colonialist. Wang Jiyuan wrote: 'Indonesia has received the full benefit of the cruel tyranny of colonialism for the last three hundred years. China, over the last century, has also suffered from imperialism. China and Indonesia have suffered the same fate, and face the same adversary. To achieve the thorough liberation of both the Chinese and the Indonesian people, all the shackles of imperialism, whether military, political, economic or cultural, must be completely stripped away'.⁷⁴ Political ideals aside, the foreign policy of China at that time favoured Indonesian independence. Many Chinese newspapers reported that China was the only country to establish diplomatic representation in the contemporary capital of the Indonesian Republic, Yogyakarta.⁷⁵ Chinese newspapers expressed pride in China's having sent the first representative of a foreign government, Mr. Jiang Jia Dong, to visit Yogyakarta.⁷⁶ He gave a speech which Sukarno and all his ministers attended. He said he represented China's government in expressing the best wishes for Indonesia's struggle. He predicted that the people of Asia would eventually win true freedom, and that the second half of the twentieth century would be a new era.⁷⁷

The presence of representatives of the Chinese government encouraged Indonesian Chinese to lend their support to the Indonesian revolution. But when the revolutionary government started to offer Indonesian citizenship to Indonesian Chinese, the Chinese

⁷⁴ Wang Ji Yuan, 'Gaobie Yinni youren' [Farewell to Indonesian Friends], *Minzhu Daily*, 6 June, 1951. 王紀元, <<告別印尼友人>>。〈民主日報〉, 6 June, 1951.。

⁷⁵ Xu Guqing, 'San Chao qiaolao tan Yinni' [An Old Chinese Talks About the Three Dynasties in Indonesia], *Zhongguo yu Yinni*. [China and Indonesia], 2, 1981, p.38. 徐琚清, <<三朝僑老談印尼>>, <中國與印尼>, 2, 1981, 38.。

⁷⁶ Jiang Jia Dong (蔣家棟).

consul objected. He considered that this policy involved relations between Indonesia and China, and should be approved by the Chinese government before any action was taken. The Chinese consulate published a stream of notices in the local Chinese press arguing that citizenship was a matter of international law, that the matter would have to be discussed between the Indonesian and Chinese governments and a treaty signed. So Chinese organisations in Indonesia began to consider that they should not strive to unite with Indonesia, but should preserve neutrality.

Not every Chinese newspaper supported the policy of neutrality, but it was difficult at the time for Chinese organisations to support Indonesia openly. For this reason, most Chinese who took part in the Indonesian revolution did so as individuals. Though their number was perhaps not small, it is difficult to trace them today, and may be unnecessary. A few examples are described below for illustrative purposes.

Oei Yong Tjioe, who is described as a nationalist, took part in the armed struggle at the beginning of the revolution alongside Sukarno, Hatta and the Republicans.⁷⁸ In East Java, Chen Jinhe, Yu Liangcheng and Wu Sandao joined the revolutionary ranks and were publicly honoured for their services to Indonesia.⁷⁹ Han Linguang of Makasar

⁷⁷ Hong yuan yuan, *Hong yuan yuan zi chuan*. [Autobiography of Hong Yuan Yuan.] (Beijing: Zhongguo Huaqiao, 1989), pp. 153. 洪淵源, <洪淵源自傳>。梁英明譯。(北京：中國華僑, 1989), 153。

⁷⁸ Siswono Yudo Husodo, *Warga Baru: Kasus Cina di Indonesia*. (Jakarta: Lembaga Penerbitan Yayasan Padamu Negeri, 1985), pp. 91-92.

⁷⁹ Zhou Yi, 'Paihua niliu nanduan xiongdi qing.' (The anti-Chinese outbreak will not affect brotherly relations), *Renmin Ribao*, 7 March 1960. 周毅, <<排華逆流難斷兄弟情>>, <人民日報>, 7 March 1960。Chen Jinhe (陳金和), Yu Liangcheng (余良成), Wu Sandao (吳三道).

recruited local Chinese youth for the revolutionary army.⁸⁰ In West Kalimantan, Peng Niangbao joined the revolution and was much commended among the people of the district.⁸¹ Ceng Ruixing and Xiao Yumei of Maowu, Wen Jingduo of Suoluo, Yang Fulin of West Java and others also participated.⁸² The sources indicate there were overseas Chinese participants in the International Volunteer Army, who fought for the Republic in Sumatra. Wang Yongli, who subsequently was appointed Treasurer of the Indonesian Republic, joined the guerrillas at the start of the revolution.⁸³ Siauw Giok Tjhan, who also was later appointed to a ministry of the Republican government, founded the Chinese Youth Corps, which joined the Republican revolution directly and took part in the Battle of Surabaya that followed the declaration of independence.⁸⁴

These are all people whose participation in the revolution is well-documented. The number of undocumented Indonesian Chinese revolutionaries is probably much greater. When Sukarno visited China in 1956, he met Huang Jie,⁸⁵ who had supported Indonesia in the revolution, in Canton and said 'I wish to give thanks once again for the help we

⁸⁰ Han Nan Zhou, 'Yaoyuan di huainian.' (Distant memories), *Zhong Cheng Bao*, 11 August 1965. 韓南周, <<遙遠的懷念>>。<忠誠報>, 11 August 1965。Han Linguang (韓林光).

⁸¹ Wu Yi Ming, 'Mengjiaying Yin Zhong renmin kang He shiji pianduan' [Anti-Dutch Actions of the Chinese and Indonesian people in Makarsar] *Shenghuo Bao* [Life Daily], 29 July, 1959. 吳一鳴, <<孟加映印中人民抗荷事跡片斷>>, <生活報>, 29 July, 1959。Peng Niangbao (彭娘保).

⁸² Ceng Ruixing (曾瑞星), Xiao Yumei (蕭玉美), Wen Jingduo (溫敬多), Yang Fulin (楊福林).

⁸³ Wang Yongli (王永利).

⁸⁴ Siauw Giok Tjhan (Xiao Yu Can), *Shutu tonggui*. [Different Roads to the Same Destination] Huang Shu Hai trans. (Hong Kong: Di Ping Xian, 1981), pp. 96-97. 蕭玉燦, <殊途同歸>。黃書海譯。香港：地平線出版社, 1981), 96-97。。

⁸⁵ Huang Jie (黃潔).

received at the most difficult time from your countrymen'.⁸⁶ A Chinese historian born in Indonesia stated that 'It has been clearly proved that during the anti-Dutch colonial movement and the August revolution, a number of Chinese sided with the revolution or took part in armed struggle themselves, to the extent of giving their own lives'.⁸⁷

A greater number of Chinese, though, took no direct part in the revolution but used non-aligned organisations to help the cause of the Indonesian Republican Army. For instance, in Malang the Chinese Li Rongkun and Wu Xuceng organised a Red Cross brigade to work at the front.⁸⁸ More common forms of indirect support for the Indonesian revolution were contributions of money, and smuggling of weapons. According to one account, in 1946 a Chinese businessman, Tan Gen Hok, was in charge of a Chinese smuggling operation running weapons to Indonesia, with the assistance of Malays and Indians. Malays sympathised with the revolution as much as Chinese did.⁸⁹ The research of Twang Peck Yang on arms smuggling for the Indonesian revolution has thrown much light on this.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Jiang He, 'Huaqiao yu Yinni renmin di youyi shi xianxie ningcheng di' [The friendship between the Chinese and Indonesian people is forged in blood], *Qiao Wu Bao*, 12, 1959, p. 29. 江河, <<華僑與印尼人民的友誼是鮮血凝成的>>。〈僑務報〉, 12, 1959, 29.。

⁸⁷ Liang Yingming, 'Xishou hezuo gongchuang weilai [Cooperating to Create the Future], *Yinni yu Dongxie* [Indonesia and ASEAN], 46 (August 1995), p. 45. 梁英明, <<攜手合作共創未來>>。〈印尼與東協〉, 46 (August 1995), 45.。

⁸⁸ Li Rongkun (李榮坤), Wu Xuceng (吳序增).

⁸⁹ Tan Gen Hok (陳根福).

⁹⁰ Twang Peck Yang, *The Chinese Business Elite in Indonesia and the Transition to Independence 1940-1950* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1998).

An outstanding example of Chinese involvement in the arms trade is John Lie, who joined the Indonesian navy and broke through the Dutch naval blockade to deliver arms from Singapore to the Indonesian Republican Army.⁹¹ John Lie's action in breaking through the Dutch blockade was critical to the survival of the relatively weak Indonesian Republican forces.⁹² Most of the Chinese who fought for the Indonesian revolution have been forgotten. Given that a war hero such as John Lie, who was promoted to Vice Admiral, is no longer mentioned, it is not surprising to find that others are forgotten also.⁹³ Economic support for the revolution by Indonesian Chinese was even more widespread.⁹⁴ Oey Tjeng Hien, later known as Abdulkarim Oey, who funded Sukarno directly, is a good example.⁹⁵

⁹¹ 'Mao sixing zhi weixian gongying junhuo, huiyi lishi baodao huayi xiaozhong Yinni' [Providing weapons at risk to life; the historical contribution of the Chinese to Indonesia] *Yinni yu dongxie* [Indonesia and ASEAN], 46 (August 1995). <<冒死刑之危險供應軍火，回憶歷史報導華裔效忠印尼>>。〈印尼與東協〉，46 (August 1995)。

⁹² 'John Lie Pejuang Penyelundup dengan 'The Outlaw'', *Harian Indonesian*, 2 Juli 1995.

⁹³ Masahah Dan Peran Tionghoa Indonesia, 'Yinni huashang gongmin di wenti he jiaose' [The Problems and Roles of Chinese Businessmen as Indonesian Citizens] *Yinni yu Dongxie* [Indonesia and ASEAN], 46 (August 1995). <<印尼華裔公民的問題和角色>>。〈印尼與東協〉，46 (August 1995)。

⁹⁴ Deng Tongli, 'Yingjie guanghui di wushi nian: wei qingzhu Yinni guoqing tan huaren chujing'. [Celebration for the Fiftieth Anniversary of Indonesia---Thinking about the Situation of Ethnic Chinese in Indonesia] *Yinni yu Dongxie*, [Indonesia and ASEAN], 46 (August 1995), p. 7. 鄧通力, <<迎接光輝的五十年---為慶祝印尼國慶談華人處境>>, 〈印尼與東協〉, 46 (August 1995), 7。

⁹⁵ Masahah Dan Peran Tionghoa Indonesia, 'Yinni huashang gongmin di wenti he jiaose' [The Problems and Roles of Chinese Businessmen as Indonesian Citizens] *Yinni yu Dongxie* [Indonesia and ASEAN], 46 (August 1995). <<印尼華裔公民的問題和角色>>。〈印尼與東協〉，46 (August 1995)。

Anti-Chinese Riots

The main disputes the Chinese had with the Indonesian Republic were on the issues of anti-Chinese riots and self-defence patrols among the Chinese community. This is the reason for the contrast in the content of political debate between Chinese in Malaya and Chinese in Indonesia. From the point of view of the Indonesian Chinese, they had supported the revolutionary forces from the beginning, but the anti-Chinese riots cast a shadow over their sympathy. The first large-scale anti-Chinese disturbance was the Tangerang riot in 1946, which was the most notorious incident in subsequent memory. Discussion of the Indonesian revolution in the Chinese media could not shake off the effect of the riots, and they deserve closer examination.

The violence occurred during the struggle for independence. Not surprisingly, the most significant events took place in the parts of Java and Sumatra which were being actively contested by Dutch and Indonesian forces. Although this was a time of considerable uncertainty, the consequences were quite well documented by investigators from both armies and independently substantiated by diplomats representing the Republic of China in Batavia and Medan. The following information is from the Nanyang Year Book of Singapore which contained the Chung Hua Tsung Hui Memorandum on the riots.⁹⁶

Table 1 Casualties and Loss of Property among Chinese during the Indonesian Revolution

10 Nov. 1945	Surabaya	58 dead, 13 injured, 1 missing, 43 houses destroyed
23 March 1946	Bandung	54 dead, 50 injured, 36 missing, 5020 houses burned
11 June 1946	Tangerang	656 dead, 496 injured, 403 missing, 3409 houses burned
18 Sept. 1946	Bagansiapiapi	239 dead, 52 injured
1 Jan. 1947	Palembang	256 dead, 114 injured, 594 missing, 3060 houses destroyed
20 July 1947	1 st police action	
	East Java	164 dead, 50 injured, 165 missing, 1849 arrested
	West Java	83 dead, 18 injured, 52 missing, 7233 arrested
	Middle Java	406 dead, 8 injured, 180 missing, 6559 arrested
	Sumatra	196 dead, 92 injured, 78 missing, 89 arrested
19 Dec. 1947	2 nd police action	
	Jambi	7 dead, 5 injured, 2 missing, 389 houses destroyed
	Java	757 dead, 89 injured, 9221 arrested
	Sumatra	26 dead, 18 injured, 52 arrested

In total, some 3,000 Chinese were killed. In the Tangerang Incident, which brought international condemnation, over 600 were killed, including 130 women. Other riots occurred at Bagansiapiapi in September 1946 and in Palembang in January 1947. The Peristiwa Surabaya riot of November 1945 took place after hostilities had broken out between Indonesian and English troops and the loyalty of ethnic Chinese toward the returning Dutch had become suspect. But it needs to be noted that 6,315 Indonesians died in the resulting violence, compared to fewer than 60 Chinese. It is difficult to say what is signified politically by their deaths in this context. Moreover, it also needs to be

* Yu Shukun ed., *Nanyang Nianjian*. [South Seas Year Book] (Singapore: Sin Chew Jit Po, 1951), 郁樹銀, <南洋年鑑>。(新加坡：星洲日報, 1951).

noted that the riots in Bandung seem to have been directed largely at property. Although all these events can be related to the independence struggle, they do not seem to have been part of a deliberate policy by any organisation. Rather, they were carried out spontaneously by *pribumi* in areas where Dutch authority was weak or absent and, later, in the case of the various police actions, when there were few republican elements around. Perhaps it was the intention of the perpetrators to cause maximum disruption. But given the context of the times, the force of anti-colonial sentiments, and the international complications, it is difficult to say to what extent the violence or property destruction was specifically anti-Chinese. Although Chinese-language sources naturally emphasize the racial character of the riots, it must be acknowledged that *pribumi* undoubtedly suffered more, per capita, in the revolution.

The challenge presented by the anti-Chinese riots is how to understand the reasons behind them. Mo Wu, who lived in Jakarta at the time, thought the Bandung riots were related to the Japanese occupation. When the Japanese advanced on Bandung, they used Taiwanese troops in the front line. Later, when they landed on the mainland of Java, the Japanese troops first clandestinely urged impoverished and unsophisticated Indonesians to rob the Chinese, and then suppressed the rioters by armed force, which appeased the Chinese about Japanese intentions but sowed the seeds of mistrust between Chinese and Indonesians. Later, the Dutch followed a similar strategy. No such outbreaks of violence took place in territory under the control of the Indonesian

Republican forces. They took place only near the boundaries of Dutch territory, which suggests the Dutch bore at least half of the responsibility.⁹⁷

Concerning the Palembang incident, Tian Ren thought the origin lay in militant nationalism, which made everyone either a friend of the revolution or an enemy. Moreover, Indonesians were severely disappointed by the ill-advised strategy of the Chinese government. The Republican government had been promoting 'East Asia for the East Asian peoples' at every opportunity, and China was Indonesia's East Asian 'big brother', but this big brother was passively supporting the Dutch, and following the lead of Britain and the USA in all foreign policy statements, while the Chinese in Indonesia still recognized the Dutch as masters. All of this caused anger among Indonesians.⁹⁸ However, Mo Wu had a different opinion. He thought that the looting at Palembang was not directed primarily against the Chinese. Arabs and Indonesians were also robbed. It was as much class conflict as ethnic conflict.⁹⁹ Other analyses of the riots have pointed out that the large-scale ones took place at times of transfer of power, and were related to particular issues of the time and place. Anti-colonialism was the most widely current political concept, and some Indonesian revolutionaries were not clear about whether or not the Chinese were part of the structure of colonialism.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Mo Wu, 'Helanren, Zhongguoren, Yinniren.' [The Dutch, Chinese and Indonesians] *Feng Xia*, 90, 1947. 莫誤 <<荷蘭人,中國人,印尼人>>。<風下>, 90, 1947.。

⁹⁸ Tian Ren 'Chongjian Jugang.' [Re-visiting Palembang]. *Feng Xia*, 62, 1947. 田仁, <<重見巨港>>。<風下>, 62, 1947.。

⁹⁹ Mo Wu, 'Helanren, Zhongguoren, Yinniren.' [The Dutch, Chinese and Indonesians] *Feng Xia*, 90, 1947. 莫誤 <<荷蘭人,中國人,印尼人>>。<風下>, 90, 1947.。

¹⁰⁰ Yang Tsung-Rong 'Yinni zhengquan zhuan yi yu fanhua baodong' [Transfer of Power and Anti-Chinese Riots in Modern Indonesian History] Institute of Chinese Overseas Studies, *Symposium on*

Self-defence Patrols

Another issue which often caused misunderstanding is that of the self-defence patrols, known as 'Poh An Tui' among ethnic Chinese, in the transition between Dutch rule and the Indonesian Republic.¹⁰¹ The establishment of the self-defence patrols has been seen as anti-Revolution or pro-Dutch in subsequent historical writings. 'The Chinese were authorized by the Dutch to form the Poh An Tui, a self-defence organisation which was also armed by the Dutch. This was also used as a pretext to accuse the Chinese of being pro-Dutch and anti-revolution.'¹⁰²

Armed struggle was a new thing for Chinese in Indonesia. Under the Japanese occupation, anti-Japanese armed forces were small-scale and few in number.¹⁰³ But in the last few months of the Pacific War, the Japanese military administration encouraged the Chinese in Jakarta to form patrols. The patrols were maintained to protect Chinese property after the end of Japanese occupation. The Chinese tried to organize self-defence patrols in the Dutch-controlled areas during the Indonesian Revolution. These patrols were provided with guns and bullets by the Dutch government. Although some Chinese joined the Indonesian Republican Army to fight for independence in the area

Overseas Chinese, 46: 104-112. 楊聰榮 <<印尼政權轉移與反華暴動>>, <華僑問題論文集>, 台北: 中國僑政學會, 46(1998): 104-112. *

¹⁰¹ baoandui (保安隊).

¹⁰² Jacques Amyot, *The Chinese and the National Integration in Southeast Asia*. (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University, Institute of Asian Studies, 1972), p. 56.

controlled by the Indonesian Republic,¹⁰⁴ the record of anti-Independence activities by the Chinese patrols led to suspicion of the political loyalty of the Chinese community later.¹⁰⁵

Mo Wu has found that when the Bandung riots began, the Dutch levied troops, and on the pretext of defending the Chinese, conscripted Chinese in Bandung and Batavia. These Chinese were Dutch-educated and inclined to take revenge for the violence against their relatives and friends by the *pribumi*, so they cooperated readily. The intensity and scale of the riots increased, particularly after the second police action, and the desire for vengeance among the *peranakan* Chinese also grew.¹⁰⁶ What was more, the Chinese community leader Thio Thiam Tjong was advising the Dutch,¹⁰⁷ which added to the impression that the Chinese supported the Dutch. As this state of affairs continued, it became inevitable that it would cause the Chinese to suffer losses in the struggle for Indonesian independence. The Chinese community was aware of the danger. *Totok* Chinese, at least, were unenthusiastic about the defensive measures. For this reason the Chinese Association of Batavia made a public announcement denying

¹⁰³ A small group of secret agents supported by the Chinese KMT government tried to fight the Japanese, but soon were arrested. Xu Jingxian, *Yinni Shinian*. [Ten Years in Indonesia (Lahimja Indonesia), 1941-1950] (Jakarta: Sunday Post, 1951), pp. 62-64. 徐競先, <印尼十年>。(雅加達：星期日報, 1951), 62-64. °

¹⁰⁴ Chao Hua, *Yindunxiya Huaqiao Cangsang*. [The changing fortunes of the Indonesian Chinese] (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1990), pp. 34-35. 晁華, <印度尼西亞華僑滄桑>。(香港：商務印書館, 1990), 34-35. °

¹⁰⁵ Mary F. Somers Heidhues, *Southeast Asia's Chinese Minorities*. (Hawthorn: Longman, Studies in Contemporary Southeast Asia, 1974), p. 109.

¹⁰⁶ Mo Wu, 'Jiujiu Yinni.' [Help Indonesia] *Feng Xia*, 86, 1947. 莫誤, <<救救印尼>>。<風下>, 86, 1947. °

¹⁰⁷ Thio Thiam Tjong (張添聰, Zhang Tian Cong in Mandarin).

Chinese participation in the Dutch armed forces, thereby drawing a line between themselves and *peranakan* Chinese.¹⁰⁸

It did not take long for a fairly clear Chinese point of view on Dutch policy to appear in the Chinese press. Mo Wu considered that the Dutch were deliberately using economic measures to gain the good opinion of the Chinese, in the apportioning of government expenditure and the processing of foreign exchange, while simultaneously urging *peranakan* Chinese to join the Dutch army.¹⁰⁹ Mo placed particular importance on the news from Tegal that the Chinese there had held a banquet for the Dutch army, and Chinese were driving jeeps for the Dutch officers. He considered that this had been orchestrated by the Dutch for political effect.¹¹⁰

In these circumstances, the issue of whether or not the Chinese government should take action to create and arm Chinese self-defence patrols arose, and proved very hard to decide. Lin Zhiwen asked 'What have the self-defence patrols defended?' He considered that since they were established by authority of the Chinese consulate and armed by the Dutch, and naturally aroused the anger of the Indonesians, they were not a good thing for the long-term future of Chinese-Indonesian relations. Also, if the towns of Indonesia became battlegrounds there would be no business to conduct, and the

¹⁰⁸ Mo Wu, 'Helanren, Zhongguoren, Yinniren.' [The Dutch, Chinese and Indonesians] *Feng Xia*, 90, 1947. 莫誤 <<荷蘭人, 中國人, 印尼人>>。風下, 90, 1947.。

¹⁰⁹ Mo Wu, 'Pianju xia de Yinni.' [The Confidence Game in Indonesia] *Feng Xia*, 89, 1947. 莫誤, <<騙局下的印尼>>。<風下>, 89, 1947.。

¹¹⁰ Ming Lun, 'He lan ren zai ning xiao le.' [The Dutch are laughing.], *Feng Xia*, 89, 1947. 明倫, <<荷蘭人在嚶笑了>>。<風下>, 89, 1947.。

livelihood of the Chinese would be affected.¹¹¹ Mo Wu pointed out quite clearly that this was due to the Dutch policy of *yi hua zhi wu*, meaning ‘using the Chinese to fight with Malay (Indonesian in this context)’.¹¹² Wherever the Dutch army went, they commanded the local Chinese to organize a self-defence patrol, so that the Dutch forces could be used at the front line. This was presented as allowing the Chinese to defend themselves, but it effectively made the Chinese self-defence patrols allies of the Dutch army, to which the Dutch were willing to give arms.¹¹³ At the same time, the Dutch took care to hand over Chinese property confiscated from Indonesian revolutionaries to the Chinese self-defence patrols, with the aim of increasing hostility on both sides.¹¹⁴ This was the opinion of most *totok* Chinese, and the leaders of the locally born Chinese were also aware of this aspect of the situation. Cai Xiyin went as far as organizing the Chinese force that had fought at the battle of Surabaya to oppose the self-defence patrols established by the Dutch.^{115 116}

The establishment of the self-defence patrols had been hard to avoid, as the Dutch police and army could not guarantee the safety of Chinese people or their property. Whenever there was news of a raid on merchants by the Indonesian army, they were

¹¹¹ Lin Zhi Wen, ‘Qiangpao jiao xiang xia di Mianlan.’ [Medan in the Firing Line.] *Feng Xia*, 65, 1947. 林之文, <<槍砲交響下的棉蘭>>。<風下>, 65, 1947.。

¹¹² *yi hua zhi wu* (以華制巫).

¹¹³ Mo Wu, ‘Helanren, Zhongguoren, Yinniren.’ [The Dutch, Chinese and Indonesians] *Feng Xia*, 90, 1947. 莫誤 <<荷蘭人, 中國人, 印尼人>>。<風下>, 90, 1947.。

¹¹⁴ Mo Wu, ‘Kan mingtian di Yinni.’ [Looking at the Indonesia of Tomorrow] *Feng Xia*, 91, 1947. 莫誤, <<看明天的印尼>>。<風下>, 91, 1947.。

¹¹⁵ Li Xue Min and Huang Kun Zhang, *Yinni huaqiaoshi*. [The History of the Chinese in Indonesia.] (Canton: Guangdong Educational Publishing Co., 1987), p. 443. 李學民、黃昆章, <印尼華僑史>。(廣州: 廣東高等教育出版社, 1987), 443.。

always Chinese merchants.¹¹⁷ It was also reported that there was disagreement within the Republican army, and that the government was losing control of the situation. When Dutch-Indonesian negotiations commenced formally at Yogyakarta and a mass anti-Chinese disturbance immediately followed, it made a bad impression.¹¹⁸ There were reports of a great number of minor robberies and burning of houses which were not prevented by the police, or at which the police arrived only when the looters had gone. When it was reported in other parts of Indonesia that the Chinese in Sumatra and Java had self-defence patrols and were going about their business in safety, with relatively few attacks by rioters, the Chinese elsewhere also wished to organize, so Chinese self-defence patrols appeared all over Indonesia.¹¹⁹

The self-defence patrols were set up with the support of the Chinese consulate, and the organisational assistance of local branches of the Chinese Association. Following an initial contribution from the Chinese Association, the patrols were established by means of mutual assistance. For instance, the economy of east Java had been disrupted by war, so the Chinese in Surabaya contributed to setting up the patrols.¹²⁰ The attitude of the consulate was clear. China was in a state of civil war, and unable to give practical

¹¹⁶ Cai Xiyin (蔡錫胤).

¹¹⁷ 'Fuyuan jundui sirao Suoluo huaqiao shoudang qichong' [Returning Soldiers Harass Chinese in Solo], *Sin Po*, 21 April, 1948. <<復員軍隊騷擾梭羅華僑首當其衝>>。〈新報〉, 21 April, 1948. °

¹¹⁸ 'Rire yiwai shijian' , [Incidents in Jogjakarta] *Sin Po*, 13 April, 1948. <<日惹意外事件>>。〈新報〉, 13 April, 1948. °

¹¹⁹ 'Maowu zhian rihuai. Tongqiao huyu dangju zhuyi' [Law and Order in Bogor Deteriorates, Chinese Appeal to the Authorities], *Sin Po*, 7 April 1948. <<茂勿治安日壞,同僑呼籲當局注意>>。〈新報〉, 7 April 1948. °

¹²⁰ 'Dongzhao gediqu wo baoandui zhuangkuang' [The Situation of the Baoan Dui in East Java], *Sin Po*, <<東爪各地區我保安隊狀況>>。〈新報〉, 3 March, 1948. °

assistance to the Chinese in distant Indonesia. However, the staff of the consulate were all KMT appointees, and held to the KMT's way of thinking on the overseas Chinese, considering it their duty to protect them. Setting up self-defence patrols across Indonesia appeared to be the only thing to do, and because at this time China and the Netherlands were allies, the simplest way to do this was by gaining the support of the Dutch.

Like the militia established in various parts of Indonesia by the revolutionaries, the self-defence patrols varied in character from place to place. In some places the patrolmen lived in hardship, sleeping on floors. In other places women joined the patrols and took charge of support work. In others, the patrols were taken over by Chinese criminal gangs, who used them to rob Chinese businesses.¹²¹ Security in the localities improved after the self-defence patrols were set up, so they appeared to be a good idea. The chairman of the General Executive Committee of the self-defence patrols of Java, Lin Jianxi, said that wherever there were Chinese living in Java, there was a self-defence patrol.¹²²

However, what some Chinese had expressed concern about in their debates eventually became a real issue. Years later, Indonesians would still remember that the Chinese had organised self-defence patrols, and fought against the revolutionary army. There are of course problems with this view of history. First, at that time the Chinese in Indonesia

¹²¹ 'Fuyuan jundui sirao Suoluo huaqiao shoudang qichong' [Returning Soldiers Harass Chinese in Solo], *Sin Po*, 21 April, 1948. <<復員軍隊肆擾梭羅華僑首當其衝>>。〈新報〉, 21 April, 1948. °

¹²² 'Dongzhao gediqu wo baoandui zhuangkuang' [The Situation of the Baoan Dui in East Java], *Sin Po*, <<東爪各地區我保安隊狀況>>。〈新報〉, 3 March, 1948. ° Lin Jianxi (林建禧).

were still represented politically by the Chinese consulate, and the self-defence patrols had been organized by the consulate. They were at the time considered Chinese but not Indonesian citizens.¹²³ Second, the riots were a matter of public safety. It did the Indonesian revolutionaries no credit to be unable to prevent the troops under their command from making enemies of Chinese civilians and robbing them under the title of revolution. Third, because of the attention to the topic in the Chinese press, self-defence patrols in all areas paid particular attention to establishing good relations with the Republican army. They stressed that their task was only to keep the peace, and they wished to make no enemies. At the time, the neutrality of the Chinese self-defence patrols was recognized and commended by the Republican government.¹²⁴

Identity Issues

In terms of Chinese opinion on the politics of identity at that time, the newspapers and journals that considered themselves progressive were the ones advocating identification with Indonesia. These included the *Feng Xia* journal in Singapore, the *Minzhu Ribao* in Medan, and the *Sin Po* and *Shenghuo Bao* in Jakarta. Hu Yu Zhi represents this tendency:

Most Chinese in Indonesia have already set down roots here, and so should become one of the constituent nationalities of Indonesia, and fight for the liberation and independence of Indonesia.

¹²³ Huaqiaozhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Yinni Huaqiaozhi*. [The History of the Chinese in Indonesia] (Taipei: Qiaowu Weiyuanhui, 1977), p. 97. 華僑志編纂委員會，〈印尼華僑志〉。(台北：華僑委員會，1977)，97。

¹²⁴ Chen Yi Ling, *Yinni xianzhuang yu huaqiao*. [The Current Situation in Indonesia and the Overseas Chinese] (Taipei: Central Publishing Co, 1954), p. 65. 陳以令，〈印尼現狀與華僑〉。(台北：中央文物供應社，1954)，65。

There are Chinese ministers in the Indonesian government, and Chinese Central Committee members in the Socialist Party. As for those overseas Chinese who have not set down roots here, they are of course still part of the Chinese nation, and should concern themselves with achieving thorough liberation, democracy and freedom for China.¹²⁵

Wang Jiyuan in Jakarta agreed: 'I have lived in this country for so long, it has become my second homeland after China. I love my ancestral land, and I also love Indonesia'.

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In comparison with Malaya, the Chinese press in Indonesia devoted relatively little space to discussing the definition of an 'overseas Chinese'. There was more stress on the right to choose one's identity. This might have been because there were not so many large inclusive organisations among the Indonesian Chinese; the situation was more complicated. The ideology expressed in the Chinese and Indonesian versions of *Sin Po* was almost the same but the terminologies were different. The word 'fatherland' in the Chinese edition of *Sin Po* meant China, while it meant Indonesia in the Indonesian edition.

In this way, 'identity' was spoken of among Indonesian Chinese as a choice made by individual will. This was a result of the Republic of Indonesia's announcing that all people of Chinese descent born in Indonesia would automatically become Indonesian citizens, which brought the notion of choice to the forefront of debate and made it the

¹²⁵ Hu Yu Zhi, 'Zhengque di minzuguan.' [The correct concept of the Nation.] *Feng Xia*, 81, 1947. 胡愈之, <<正確的民族觀>>。<風下>, 81, 1947。*

¹²⁶ Wang Ji Yuan, 'Gaobie Yinni youren' [Farewell to Indonesian Friends], *Minzhu Daily*, 6 June, 1951. 王紀元, <<告別印尼友人>>。<民主日報>, 6 June, 1951。*

main substance of negotiations with the government.¹²⁷ This was very different from the situation in Malaya where the focus of debate there was on how to gain the right to Malayan citizenship.

The Chinese newspapers at the time accepted the view of the Chinese consulate that the matter of citizenship had not yet been decided. So although the Indonesian government announced, as soon as the Republic of Indonesia was established, that all Chinese born in Indonesia were entitled to Indonesian citizenship, this was not considered by the Chinese to be an effective act of government.¹²⁸ The serving Chinese consul stressed over and over again that transfer of citizenship of this kind took effect by citizenship law of the Indonesian Republic only with the formal agreement of all countries involved, and this issue would have to wait until the formalisation of the Federation before being decided.¹²⁹ However, by the time the citizenship law of Indonesia was formally in effect, the Indonesian government had abandoned this policy, moving from

¹²⁷ Mary F. Somers-Heidhues, "Citizenship and Identity: Ethnic Chinese and the Indonesian Revolution." Jennifer Cushman & Wang Gungwu, eds., *Changing Identities of the Southeast Asian Chinese since World War II*. (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1988).

¹²⁸ The application of the Nationality Act was postponed several times after it was announced in 1945. The first postponement was to 10 April 1947 and the second to 10 April 1948. Then it was postponed again to 17 August 1948. Then the Indonesian government changed the process of gaining citizenship from passive to active acquisition. See 'Gonghe zhengfu guojifa. Zai zhanqi dao bayue shixing' [The Nationality Act of the Republican Government postponed to August], *Sin Po*, 10 April, 1948. <<共和政府國籍法 再展期到八月施行>>。<新報>, 10 April, 1948.。

¹²⁹ 'Niu lingshi hui Rire. Gei neidi qiao bao yike dingxinwan' [Chinese Consul Niu returns to Jojakarta, to the relief of Chinese residents in the interior], *Sin Po*, 6 July 1948. <<鈕領事回日惹 給內地僑胞一顆定心丸>>。<新報>, 6 July 1948.。

passive acquisition of Indonesian nationality by Indonesian Chinese to active acquisition.¹³⁰ This meant they had to apply for citizenship themselves.

Some scholars consider the number of Indonesian Chinese who applied for Indonesian citizenship to be a measure of the extent to which they identified as Indonesians. However, there are problems with this approach. At that time, the Chinese were regarded as opportunists who had cooperated first with the Dutch and then with the Japanese, and now wanted to claim the rights of Indonesian citizens.¹³¹ Because of this, one condition of Indonesian citizenship was that the children of Indonesian citizens should not attend Chinese schools, which for the *totok* Chinese at least, deprived them of the right to an education in their own language. This made them unenthusiastic about Indonesian citizenship. Chinese community leaders argued for citizenship to be determined by individual choice. At the same time some of them argued that if Indonesian Chinese took Indonesian citizenship they would be able to take part in politics, to the general benefit of the Chinese community.¹³²

Totok Chinese in Indonesia can be considered as immigrants who determined their sense of belonging themselves, by moving to the country of their choice. After the end

¹³⁰ 'Yecheng shizhengfu kaishi banli shenqing guoji zhengmingshu gongzuo' [The Jakarta city government begins to process applications for certificates of nationality], *Xingqi ribao*, 7 September, 1952. <<椰城市政府開始辦理申請國籍證明書工作>>。<星期日報>, 7 September, 1952.。

¹³¹ 'Ashaate guoshen qici. Ba jingji fazhan zuzhi di zeren tuidao huaren shenshang' [Asaat goes overboard; blames Ethnic Chinese for Economic Stagnation], *Xingqi ribao*, 25 March, 1956. <<阿沙阿特過甚其辭 把經濟發展阻滯的責任推到華人身上>>。<星期日報>, 25 March, 1956.。

¹³² 'Niulingshi hui Rire. Gei neidi qiao bao yike dingxinwan' [Chinese Consul Niu returns to Jojakarta, to the relief of Chinese residents in the interior], *Sin Po*, 6 July 1948. <<鈕領事回日惹 給內地僑胞一顆定心丸>>。<新報>, 6 July 1948.。

of World War II, *totok* Chinese in Indonesia could think again about where they wanted to live. Many of them who had come to Indonesia in the 1920s and 1930s had returned to China during the Pacific War and never returned to Indonesia. Those who stayed in Indonesia, or came back from China after the Pacific War, especially those with families, had deliberately chosen to be in Indonesia. It can be said of them that their home towns were in Indonesia.¹³³ Some Chinese who wanted to return to Indonesia after the war did not wait to go through the process of application in China. They went first to Singapore by boat, and applied from there for permission to return to Dutch Indonesia.¹³⁴ This indicates that they saw Indonesia as home.

Sources dealing with Southeast Asian Chinese in China indicate that having once left China, they were regarded as different. The *Jakarta Xin Bao*, reporting on how Southeast Asian Chinese returning to Xiamen were received by the people there, stated that they were called *fan ke*,¹³⁵ meaning ‘barbarians’, or ‘bearers of barbarian culture’.¹³⁶ And when the local political situation became dangerous, the overseas Chinese were the first to be sacrificed.¹³⁷ The property of overseas Chinese that had been taken over during the Japanese occupation was retained by the Chinese

¹³³ ‘Fuyuan huaqiao di kunan’ [Sufferings of Returning Huaqiao], *Sin Po*, 26 March 1948. <<復員華僑的苦難>>。〈新報〉, 26 March 1948. °

¹³⁴ ‘Guiqiao qiansong. He Yin zhengfu tongyi’ [The Government of the Dutch Indies Agrees to Accept Returning Huaqiao], *Sin Po*, 24 March, 1948. <<歸僑遣送 荷印政府同意>>。〈新報〉, 24 March, 1948. °

¹³⁵ *fan ke* (番客).

¹³⁶ ‘Xiamenren kan qiaobao’ , [How the people of Xiamen See Overseas Chinese] *Sin Po*, 27 July, 1948. <<廈門人看僑胞>>。〈新報〉, 27 July, 1948. °

government after liberation. It was in circumstances like this that Chinese with family members in both countries made their choice.

In fact the material available does not permit any strong estimate to be made of how many families returned to China and how many stayed in Indonesia. But the news reports and readers' correspondence in the Chinese press at the time indicate that a lot of them were settling in Indonesia.¹³⁸ The boats arriving in Batavia from Hong Kong carried more passengers than goods, and most of the passengers were applying to reside in Dutch Indonesia.¹³⁹ Later, Chinese in Indonesia sought documentation on behalf of their relatives so that they could stay in Indonesia. These were the main political topics of concern to Indonesian Chinese at the time.¹⁴⁰

Another subject of acute interest was the position of the Chinese in Indonesian society, in particular their economic position. Because Chinese merchants before the war acted as commercial middlemen between the Dutch elite and the Indonesian consumers, their business activities were encouraged by the authorities, but after the war, licences were

¹³⁷ 'Baoshang huaqiao chanye, Chen Bingding huyu zhengfu huqiao' [Chen Bing Ding Appeals to the Government to protect the Property of Chinese], *Sin Po*, 18 March 1948. <<保障華僑產業 陳丙丁呼籲政府護僑>>。〈新報〉, 18 March 1948.。

¹³⁸ Many people asked how to apply for their relatives to come to Indonesia. See 'Shenqing shouxu' [The Process of Application], *Sin Po*, 28 July, 1948. <<申請手續>>。〈新報〉, 28 July, 1948.。

¹³⁹ Lin Zai Cheng, 'Zai Zhisha Danni lun shang' [On board the Zhisha Danni], *Sin Po*, 20 March 1948. 林載誠。〈在芝沙丹尼輪上>>。〈新報〉, 20 March 1948.。

¹⁴⁰ 'Juliuzi ruo yi yishi zhe, ke congshu shenqing bufu' [Apply again quickly if original Resident Visa lost], *Minzhu Daily*, 20, March, 1951. <<居留字若已遺失者, 可從速申請補發>>。〈民主日報〉, 20, March, 1951.。

needed for the conduct of a wide variety of business.¹⁴¹ When Chinese went to the Ministry of Commerce to apply, they were sometimes told plainly by the Dutch officials that only Indonesians could apply for such a licence, not Chinese.¹⁴²

Under these circumstances, creating Chinese representative organisations that would gain greater rights for all Chinese was something that *totok* and *peranakan* agreed on. Because there was the hope that Chinese would be able to join the new government, since both federated and Republican governments contained Chinese representatives, the election of Chinese representatives became a motive for political organisation among the Chinese.¹⁴³ In some places, representatives were chosen by the political parties, but because some islands were without political parties, the Chinese communities there held local elections to select their representatives. The election schedule drawn up by Thio Thiam Tjong became the foundation on which the Chinese Association was founded.¹⁴⁴ Most members of the Chinese Association were *peranakan*, but the Association urged that no distinction be made between *totok* and *peranakan* Chinese. Its members opposed colonialism and were prepared to take Indonesian citizenship, but considered that Chinese who did not want to become

¹⁴¹ 'Gezhong yingye xu shenqing xin zhunzi' [All Kinds of Businesses to Need New Licenses], *Sin Po*, 6 July, 1948. <<各種營業須申請新准字>>。〈新報〉, 6 July, 1948. °

¹⁴² 'Huashang di xinsuan' [Hardships of Chinese Businessmen], *Sin Po*, 29 July, 1948. <<華商的辛酸>>。〈新報〉, 29 July, 1948. °

¹⁴³ 'Qiaojie zu zhengdang. Zuzhifa yi nijiu' [Regulations Are Ready For Chinese to Organize Political Parties], *Sin Po*, 14 May, 1948. <<僑界組政黨 組織法已擬就>>。〈新報〉, 14 May, 1948. °

¹⁴⁴ 'Canjia Wanlong Lianbang Dahui. Huaqiao daibiao jiangyou shixi' [Ten Seats for Chinese Representatives at the Bandung Federation Conference], *Sin Po*, 17 May 1948. <<參加萬隆聯邦大會 華僑代表將有十席>>。〈新報〉, 17 May 1948. °

Indonesian citizens should have this right to abstain.¹⁴⁵ The creation of Chinese representative organisations which would defend the status of the Chinese as a minority nationality in a new country was also supported by the Chinese Students' Union of Indonesia.¹⁴⁶ These events were part of the process by which the Chinese of Indonesia arrived at their national identity.

Understanding Indonesia

The most notable achievement of the Chinese press, in its reporting of the Indonesian revolution, was to increase understanding among Chinese of all aspects of Indonesia, so that the press became a moral force encouraging diverse kinds of Chinese support for the revolution. Since anti-Chinese riots continued to happen, for activists to maintain a base of support for the revolution among Indonesian Chinese was not easy. Among these activist Chinese, Ba Ren was one of the most enthusiastic in bringing the issue of the Indonesian revolution to other areas of the Chinese community. He reported the situation in Indonesia very closely and published his reports in all major centres of Chinese publication. He published an article on the relationship between Indonesian new literature and the revolution in Hong Kong.¹⁴⁷ He published an article on

¹⁴⁵ 'Zuzhi Zhonghua Xiehui' [Organizing the Chinese Association], *Sin Po*, 20 May 1948. <<組織中華協會>>。<新報>, 20 May 1948.。

¹⁴⁶ 'Huaqiao shaoshu minzu wenti Quan Yinni daxuesheng jiangyu jiantao' [University Students throughout Indonesia Will Review the Chinese Minority Problem], *Sin Po*, 6 July, 1948. <<華僑少數民族問題 全印尼大學生將予檢討>>。<新報>, 6 July, 1948.。

¹⁴⁷ Ba Ren, 'Yinni xin wenxue gaishu.' [New Literature in Indonesia]. *Xiandai huaqiao*, 1(10), 1948. 巴人, <<印尼新文學概述>>。<現代華僑>, 1(10), 1948.。

participation by Chinese in the Indonesian revolution and launched the democratic movement among the Chinese community in Singapore.¹⁴⁸ He also published a book on the Indonesian anti-imperialist struggle in Shanghai.¹⁴⁹

Ba Ren's strategy in persuading his readers to support the Indonesian revolution is worth analysing further. For example, in his article 'The Youth Movement in Indonesia', Ba Ren described the activities of Tan Malaka and his links with China.¹⁵⁰ Ba Ren used to teach at the Nanyang Chinese Normal School in Singapore before the Pacific War, where Tan Malaka was his colleague. In this article, Ba Ren explained the role of Tan Malaka in the Indonesian revolution. He also mentioned that he attended a meeting of 'the Socialist Party', which Tan Malaka belonged to, in Pematang Siantar. The purpose of his article is clear. He shows the importance of the youth movement in the Indonesian revolution and the role of Tan Malaka. If he had talked about this only, it would have been just a report on a particular topic. However, he went on to talk about the linkage of the Chinese and Indonesian revolutions through Tan Malaka. He knew the Chinese readers' way of thinking. If there were links with China, then the issue would merit special attention. Ba Ren did not stop there. He reported his own participation in an Indonesian socialist party meeting. He was showing the way toward revolution in Indonesia for Chinese people. The message for Chinese readers was that they should try to do something for the Indonesian people.

¹⁴⁸ Ba Ren, 'Luelun huaqiao minzhu yundong' [The Democracy Movement of the Overseas Chinese] *Nan Qiao Ribao*, 12 Jan. 1948. 巴人, <<略論華僑民主運動>>。〈南僑日報〉, 12 Jan. 1948.。

¹⁴⁹ Ba Ren, *Lun Yinni di fandou zheng*. [Anti-Imperialism in Indonesia] (Shanghai: Life Publishing Co, 1947). 巴人, <論印尼的反帝鬥爭>。(上海: 生活書店, 1947)。

¹⁵⁰ Ba Ren, 'Yinni di qing yun.' [The Youth Movement in Indonesia] *Feng Xia*, 71, 1947. 巴人, <<印尼的青運>>。〈風下〉, 71, 1947.。

Ba Ren also commented on the main points of Sukarno's policy. Sukarno was asking other Asian peoples to help Indonesia, but his economic reforms focused only on commerce and finance, rather than on the lives of workers and peasants. So Sukarno's target was Chinese capitalism rather than imperialism. Ba Ren then commented that Tan Malaka's policy was too internationalist and too idealist, not gradual enough to be achieved. Sukarno's policy was simple nationalism for a capitalist society, and Tan Malaka's was internationalism for a socialist society.¹⁵¹

The Chinese had different motives for their actions, and it was often easy for them to be misunderstood. Smuggling is a good example. Because Chinese had worked in local transport for centuries, when the Indonesian Republican Army was blockaded by the Dutch and Allied forces, the channels operated by Chinese became the only way to get supplies. Ba Ren reported in his article 'Crewman and Foreman' that many Chinese set up businesses in Singapore in order to provide supplies to Indonesia. They took risks to break the imperialist blockade to help the Indonesian revolution and earn 'revolutionary money'.¹⁵²

Ba Ren's writings on Indonesia are the most wide-ranging and complete among those of his Chinese contemporaries. He edited the *Qianjin* (Progress) *Weekly* and the *Minzhu* (Democratic) *Daily* with his colleagues of the Sumatran Chinese Democratic Alliance,

¹⁵¹ Wang Ren Shu (Ba Ren), *Yinni shehui fazhan gaiguan*. [An overview of Indonesian social development] (Shanghai: Life Publishing Co, 1947). 王任叔, <印尼社會發展概觀>。(上海: 生活書店, 1947).

¹⁵² Ba Ren, 'Shuikye yu gongtou.' [Crewman and Foreman] *Feng Xia*, 123, 1948. 巴人, <<水客與工頭>>。<風下>, 123, 1948.。

which agitated forcefully for the Chinese to support the Indonesian revolution.¹⁵³ His essays appeared not only in Chinese publications in Sumatra, Indonesia, but also in Singapore, Hong Kong and Shanghai, broadcasting the spirit of the Indonesian revolution wherever there were large numbers of Chinese readers. This was the source of his great influence. Eventually the Dutch authorities realized how influential his works were, arrested him, then expelled him from Indonesia.¹⁵⁴ However, he did not stop writing once outside Indonesia, and his essays continued to be widely published.

The Significance of the Debates

It is worth examining these debates about the future of Malaya and Indonesia for Chinese identity in this critical period of change in the region. The change in Nanyang Chinese identity cannot be considered as the product of external factors only. The opinions of Nanyang Chinese themselves should be taken into account for a better understanding of identity issues. Victor Purcell's classic book on the Chinese in Southeast Asia is not concerned with how Nanyang Chinese thought about their identity in the new nations. It is mainly concerned with the policies toward ethnic Chinese of those in power, such as the British Colonial Government, the Chinese Nationalist Party, the Chinese Communist Party, the Japanese Military Administration or the new independent governments.¹⁵⁵ Purcell hints that these policies were the major factors

¹⁵³ Qianjin (Progress) Weekly (前進周刊), Minzhu (Democratic) Daily (民主日報).

¹⁵⁴ Ming Lun, 'Zao helan jubu di Ba Ren.' [Ba Ren's arrest by the Dutch.] *Feng Xia*, 89, 1947. 明倫, <<遭荷蘭拘捕的巴人>>。<風下>, 89, 1947.。

¹⁵⁵ Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*. (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1965).

determining Nanyang Chinese national identification. Wang Gungwu attempted in his 1988 essay to categorize the factors that influenced identity change among ethnic Chinese into four sets of norms: cultural, political, physical and economic.¹⁵⁶ Neither of them considers identification as the product of the conscious will of ethnic Chinese themselves, based on their experiences on Southeast Asian soil.

The Chinese viewpoint has been obscured by the dominant trend of national history in the post-war practice of Southeast Asian Studies. We need to remain aware that different ethnic groups in one country may have different historical memories. This is why it is important to understand different interpretations coming from different ethnic groups in order to understand the nature of dispute between these groups. In a few places like Malaya (Malaysia today) and Indonesia, historical memory differs greatly between ethnic groups, particularly between ethnic Chinese and the indigenous majority.

The most important phenomenon in the Malayan Chinese debate in this period is the appearance of new terms for Chinese residents in Malaya. Malayan Chinese started to think that the term *huaqiao* (Chinese sojourner) was not appropriate any more as a self-description for themselves. They created several new terms for themselves; for instance, *huaren*, *huayi*, *huashe* or *huazhu*. All those terms were devised by the local Chinese to avoid using older terms that expressed a strong linkage to Chinese nationality. These terms then spread to other Chinese communities around the world. Today these terms are the ones used internationally in Chinese to describe the situation

¹⁵⁶ Jennifer Cushman & Wang Gungwu, eds., *Changing Identities of the Southeast Asian Chinese since World*

of Chinese of the diaspora. Those who are ethnic Chinese and want to avoid any association with Chinese citizenship find these terms convenient. They arose from the idea of separating ethnicity from nationality for Chinese of the diaspora. The historical experience of the Malayan Chinese, described above, was the source of this idea.

Another significant result of the debate was the establishment of the ethno-political category 'Mahua', which means Malayan Chinese. Though the term appeared in newspapers in the 1930s, it only came into common use with the post-war identity debate. Reportage on many issues concerning culture, arts, social movements and national salvation used the 'Mahua' concept. People used it to define categories such as Mahua culture, Mahua women or Mahua youth.

For the Indonesian Chinese, the most important outcome of their debate on their identity was the cultivation of sympathy with Indonesian nationalism. According to He Sheng, Indonesian Chinese began to regard the independence of colonies as a worthy political cause during the Japanese occupation, and before the war was over, many considered that independence would come as soon as the Japanese were defeated.¹⁵⁷ So post-war debate on the Indonesian revolution attracted a broad public response. Southeast Asian Chinese who had been indifferent to politics before the war developed a new set of values after the war, and considered it their duty to give their full support to the

War II. (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1988), pp. 1-21.

¹⁵⁷ He Sheng, 'Dongnanya zhimindidi douzheng.' [The Struggle in the Southeast Asian Colonies] *Feng Xia*, 81, 1947. 赫生, <<東南亞殖民地的鬥爭>>。<風下>, 81, 1947。

nationalist movement.¹⁵⁸ As a consequence, over a thousand Chinese volunteers from Malaya and Indonesia went to Vietnam to join the fight for national liberation there in 1947.¹⁵⁹ This degree of active political engagement could not have been imagined before the war.

Much discussion of the political debate in the newspapers at that time has focused on the contest between the left and right. According to the thinking of the time, the left wing was pro-Communist, and the right wing was pro-KMT. But examination of the views on national identification among Southeast Asian Chinese expressed by both sides shows that the differences were minor. Officials of the KMT party and government considered that because there were so many Chinese in Indonesia, they should be recognized not merely as sojourners but as a constituent element of the new nation.¹⁶⁰ Both left and right supported the principle of free choice of citizenship. Eventually this principle was also adopted by the Indonesian government, and became the foundation of the Sino-Indonesian agreement on citizenship reached at the Bandung Conference.

The debate also gave rise to a greater understanding of *pribumi* among the Chinese, and increased cultural contact. Chen Xujing considers that in the past, Southeast Asian

¹⁵⁸ He Sheng, 'Zhongguo yu Dongnanya.' [China and Southeast Asia] *Feng Xia*, 82, 1947. 赫生, <<中國與東南亞>>。<風下>, 82, 1947.。

¹⁵⁹ Jing Jing, 'Yuanzhu Yuenan duli shi yinggai de.' [It is necessary to support Vietnamese Independance] *Feng Xia*, 62, 1947. 晶晶, <<援助越南獨立是應該的>>。<風下>, 62, 1947.。

¹⁶⁰ Chen Yi Ling, *Yinni xianzhuang yu huaqiao*. [The Current Situation in Indonesia and the Overseas Chinese] (Taipei: Central Publishing Co, 1954), p. 88. 陳以令, <印尼現狀與華僑>。(台北：中央文物供應社, 1954), 88.。

Chinese paid very little attention to the work of cultural transmission and exchange. Education meant education for the children of overseas Chinese. Very few Chinese troubled to study the language and culture of the locals, so their knowledge of the Southeast Asian peoples was very scanty.¹⁶¹ During the debate, great amounts of material dealing with the Indonesian people was published in the Chinese press, and this had a great effect on Chinese attitudes to *pribumi*. Some essays were published urging Chinese readers to learn Indonesian.¹⁶² Advertisements for Indonesian-Chinese dictionaries and teach-yourself books appeared regularly in Chinese newspapers right after the war, both in Republic-controlled areas and Dutch-controlled areas.

One of the contributions made toward Indonesia by ethnic Chinese was writings in the language of Melayu Tionghoa. This language was widespread among Chinese *peranakan*. Its structure was the same as Bahasa Malay, but the vocabulary included many Hokkien terms. Reportage in Melayu Tionghoa appeared in newspapers and magazines which were published by Chinese but also circulated among *pribumi*.¹⁶³ When Bahasa Indonesia was established as the standard language after the war, Chinese began gradually to adopt Bahasa Indonesia as a means of communication.

Let us come back to the question raised in the beginning of this chapter. Chen Xujing considers that those in charge of Chinese foreign policy before 1948 consistently

¹⁶¹ Chen Xu Jing, 'Zhongguo yu Nanyang', [China and Nanyang] *Sin Po*, 4 June 1948. 陳序經。〈中國與南洋〉。〈新報〉, 4 June 1948.。

¹⁶² Lin Zhi Wen, 'Tan Yinniyu.' [About the Indonesian Language] *Feng Xia*, 60, 1947. 林之文, 〈談印尼語〉。〈風下〉, 60, 1947.。

¹⁶³ Chen Da Sheng, *Yinni wenhua lunwenji*. [Studies of Indonesian Culture] (Singapore: Educational Publishing Co, 1977), p. 8. 陳達生, 〈印尼文化論文集〉。(新加坡: 教育出版社, 1977), 8.。

misunderstood the situation in Southeast Asia, because there was no single specialist organisation to deal with it.¹⁶⁴ Subsequently, many people who had played important parts in the process of searching for a new identity for Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia went back to China. They were in a position to influence the policy toward 'overseas Chinese' of the new Chinese government.¹⁶⁵ Tan Kah Kee, Hu Yu Zhi and Ba Ren had all taken part in the debates on identity, in fact were central to the debates, and expressed opinions regarded as progressive at the time. They thought the Nanyang Chinese should support the Indonesian revolution and they encouraged the next generation to identify with the nation of their birth. They joined the debates in Malaya and Indonesia in complete sincerity, and although they finally either returned to Mainland China of their own accord or were expelled by the colonial authorities, their contributions to the debates remained influential in Nanyang. Their writings form the heritage of the Nanyang Chinese. At the time, their opinions were seen as radical, but the subsequent trend of events among the Nanyang Chinese went in the direction in

¹⁶⁴ Chen Xu Jing, 'Lun Zhongguo yu Nanyang di waijiao' . [On Diplomatic Relations Between China and Nanyang] *Sin Po*, 6 July, 1948. 陳序經。〈論中國與南洋的外交〉。〈新報〉, 6 July, 1948. °

¹⁶⁵ Tan Kah Kee became the chief representative for overseas Chinese in the National People's Congress of the PRC in 1949. See Lin Shao Chuan, *Chen Jiageng yu nanqiao jigong*. [Tan Kah Khee and The Nanyang Mechanics in China] (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 1994), p. 13. 林少川, 〈陳嘉庚與南僑機工〉。(北京: 中國華僑出版社, 1994), 13. ° Hu Yu Zhi was the first director of the General Publications Bureau of the Central Propaganda Department (中央宣傳部出版總署) in the central government of the PRC in 1950, and wrote the Working Outline for Overseas Affairs for the central government. See Fei Xiao Tong and Xia Yan ed, *Hu Yuzhi yinxiang ji*. [Memories of Hu Yu Zhi] (Beijing: Zhongguo Youyi Chubanshe, 1989), pp. 140, 176. 費孝通, 夏衍 編, 〈胡愈之印象記〉。(北京: 中國友誼出版社, 1989), 140, 176. ° Ba Ren became the first ambassador of the PRC to Indonesia in 1950. See Quanguo Ba Ren Xueshu Taolunhui ed., *Ba Ren yanjiu*. [The Study of Ba Ren] (Shanghai: Shanghai Shudian, 1992), p.8. 全國巴人學術討論會編, 〈巴人研究〉。(上海: 上海書店, 1992), 8. °

which they had pointed. Those who went back to China had full understanding of the new approach to Chinese identity in Nanyang.

Zhou Enlai's speech on the new overseas Chinese policy of China's government at the Bandung conference in 1955 cannot be seen as the harvest of Indonesian diplomatic effort only. Without the debate on the new Chinese identity in Malaya and Indonesia, there would have been no ground on which to change long-existing perceptions of Chinese identity. Many of the important figures by then involved in the making of overseas Chinese policy had gone through the debates in Malaya and Indonesia, directly or indirectly. The decision-makers in China's government were therefore fully informed about the new approach toward identity issues among Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia. China's change of policy toward the Nanyang Chinese should be seen as the result of efforts by the Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia to find a new identity.

Chapter 7

Negotiating Identity in the New Nations, 1950-1955

From the previous chapter, we have seen that there were new ways of thinking about identity among the Chinese in both Indonesia and Malaya in the 1940s. However, those ways of thinking were expressed in the sphere of ideas only. Those ideas were easily heard because of the debate on the issue of identity in newspapers and magazines. But ideas would remain ideas if no organisation took any action to make them real. In this chapter, two organisations, one in Malaya and one in Indonesia, are selected to examine the process of socialisation of these new ideas of identity for ethnic Chinese. These two organisations are Baperki (in Indonesia) and the UCSTA (in Malaya), which can be seen as the main mechanisms in the process of socialisation of the new identity concepts within the Chinese communities in the 1950s. The 1950s was the period in which many communities of ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia took actions to make changes on issues of identity. We only look at two organisations in this chapter. We cannot say that these represent the mainstream of ethnic Chinese because there were many other Chinese organisations which had their own views on identity issues at the same time. The new ideas of identity which we mentioned previously were not the only solution for ethnic Chinese. It should be pointed out that as Chinese communities were often divided on their political views, it would be difficult to claim whose views were representative. It is not parallelism but two different cases in two different countries. These two cases became diverse because of their involvement in domestic politics. These two organisations, at least, received considerable public support and played important roles in the promotion of new ways of identity for ethnic Chinese at the

grassroots level. These two cases are good examples of how ethnic Chinese organized themselves and demonstrated a new concept of identity in the 1950s.

The discussion of these two organisations in this study will be limited to the period from 1950 to 1955, the beginning stages of forming these organisations. Both organisations have longer histories, and judgements on the role which they played would be different if their later histories were considered.¹ Both organisations were founded in the period from 1950 to 1955, the year in which China announced its new policy towards the overseas Chinese at the Bandung Conference. The actions and forms of organisation adopted by the Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia to solve the problem of identity clearly predate the changes in the Chinese government's policy towards overseas Chinese. In this period, dramatic political changes in both China and Southeast Asia had a major impact on Chinese perceptions of identity. The Chinese Communist Party had defeated its rivals and gained power in China in 1949. The Netherlands finally relinquished its colonial claim to Indonesia in 1949 and acknowledged the new state's independence. The government in Malaya launched the Emergency in order to crush Communist guerrillas in 1948 and also formulated a Federation of Malaya which was structured to favour Malays in 1948. Against this background, the Chinese communities had to decide in a relatively short period of time how to respond to this new situation and in which direction to move. We should remember that the majority of ethnic Chinese in both countries were still Chinese nationals in this period. In 1950, neither the British

¹ About the role of UCSTA in the history of Chinese education in Malaya/Malaysia, see Tan Liok Ee, *The Politics of Chinese Education in Malaya, 1945-1961*. (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1997). About Baperki's position in Indonesian politics in the 1960s, see Charles A. Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983).

authorities in Malaya nor the Indonesian authorities had agreed to give citizenship to China-born Chinese. Both authorities were reluctant even to allow local-born Chinese to gain citizenship automatically.² So the move to form these two associations was made before the policies of the authorities had an influence.

In this chapter, I will reinterpret the history of the 'Chinese problem' in both Malaya and Indonesia by looking at the views of these two associations on the issues of citizenship and separate Chinese education systems. The two Chinese associations played a very important role in these areas. In Malaya, UCSTA was founded as an educational society, and then became the principal organisation to help Chinese residents to gain local citizenship in the 1950s. In Indonesia, Baperki was founded as an association to protect the rights of ethnic Chinese who were Indonesian citizens. It eventually became an institute devoted to the cause of education for the Chinese in Indonesia. Both drew support from the Chinese communities regardless of class, ideology, or cultural background. Through these organisations, new notions of identity were disseminated and popularised within the Chinese community. The history of the two associations is worth a thorough investigation and needs to be reinterpreted in a new framework. Here I mainly discuss the views of these organisations on the new concept of identity among Southeast Asian Chinese. I also consider how their views were associated with the Chinese education issue and the previous history of the identity issue among the Nanyang Chinese.

² Donald Earl Willmott, *The National Status Of The Chinese In Indonesia, 1900-1958*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1961).

BAPERKI: From Citizenship to Education

Baperki is an abbreviation for 'Badan Permusjawaratan Kewarganegaraan Indonesia', which literally means 'the Consultative Body for Indonesian Citizenship'. This organisation was founded in 1954 in order to deal with all the issues connected with citizenship of the Republic of Indonesia at a time when Indonesia had just secured its independence. Baperki has been described as being founded with the purpose of 'promoting understanding of Indonesian citizenship' and 'opposing discrimination'.³ It was the largest association in Indonesia which represented the interests of ethnic Chinese, and was also seen as the representative association for ethnic Chinese in the era of President Sukarno in Indonesia.⁴

Baperki was usually seen as an association for *peranakan* Chinese, because holding Indonesian citizenship was a condition for joining Baperki.⁵ Baperki is chosen for discussion here because its aim was to represent the Chinese community as a whole, including both *totok* and *peranakan* Chinese, even though it limited its membership to Indonesian citizens. Even though the majority of China-born Chinese could not become members of Baperki, it nonetheless helped this section of the community to gain citizenship. Baperki advocated that ethnic Chinese should maintain cultural

³ Go Gien Tjwan; foreword to *Siauw Giok Tjhan Remembers: A Peranakan-Chinese and the Quest for Indonesian Nationhood*. Bob Hering, ed. (Queensland: James Cook University, 1982), p. 17.

⁴ This can be seen in the speech of President Sukarno to the national congress of Baperki on 14 March 1963. 'Baperki Supaya Menjadi Sumbangan Besar Terhadap Revolusi Indonesia' In *Kerangan Lama: Koleksi Pidato Pidato Bung Karno*. (Jakarta: Prapti, 1976).

⁵ For example, Eric Suryawinata, *History of BPK Penabur*. (Jakarta: BPK Penabur KPS Jakarta, 1996), p. 73.

Chineseness and thus comes within the focus of this study. Baperki actually challenged the perpetuation of the *totok* / *peranakan* dichotomy and championed a unified, all-encompassing Chinese cultural viewpoint, which we will discuss later in this chapter.

Baperki had what it called an 'integrationist' cultural policy, in contrast to an 'assimilationist' stance in the Indonesian context.⁶ The debate between 'integrationist' and 'assimilationist' will not be discussed in this study because the debate took place mainly in the 1960s, which is beyond the period this study is discussing.⁷ At least the idea of assimilation did not get any support in Chinese newspapers at this period of time, that is, the first half of the 1950s. Baperki's integrationist outlook won more support from the community than any other single association in the 1950s.

The Creation of Baperki

Baperki rapidly gained a large Chinese membership and can be seen as the first association ever to gain support from Chinese of all backgrounds in the archipelago. After the banning of Baperki following the abortive coup d'état of 30 September 1965,⁸ ethnic Chinese were prevented throughout the 32 years of Suharto rule from establishing a nation-wide organisation to represent their interests. Arguably, Baperki

⁶ Junus H. Jahja, *Garis Rasial, Garis Usang: Liku-liku Pembauran*. (Jakarta: Badan Komunikasi Penghayatan Kesatuan Bangsa, BAKOM-PKB Pusat, 1983), 12.

⁷ For the details of this debate, see Charles A. Coppel, "Peranakan Politics 1963-1965", *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 43-51; and Mary Somers, "The Assimilation Controversy to Mid-1963", *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Indonesia*. Ph. D. thesis, Cornell University, 1965, pp. 251-261.

⁸ Charles A. Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis*. (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 49.

can be seen as the only organisation ever to transcend the traditional divisions within the Chinese community in Indonesia and represent the interests of all Sino-Indonesians. Although its history was short—from 1953 to 1965—it played an important role not only for the Chinese community but also in modern Indonesian history. Baperki is deserving of close study, but the history of Baperki has not yet been fully researched. Many studies on Indonesian modern history which were made under the strong influence of assimilation policy during the Suharto regime avoided mentioning Baperki and its role.⁹ The importance of Baperki's struggle only began to be mentioned again in recent years after the end of the Suharto regime.¹⁰

The history of the formation of Baperki shows the difficulty which ethnic Chinese faced in the period of intensive political changes. The origins of Baperki were in the Chung Hua Hie Hue (CHHH),¹¹ a pan-Chinese association in Java created and led by Thio Thiam Tjong during the 1940s.¹² He believed that Chinese *peranakan* were Dutch subjects, and should be protected by the Dutch authorities, so he founded this organisation for the purpose of pursuing civil rights for Chinese from the Dutch colonial government after the end of the Second World War. In this way, CHHH gained credit from the Dutch authorities, from which the majority of Chinese had always kept a distance in the Dutch Indies. It was invited by the Dutch colonial government to send

⁹ For example, Baperki is not mentioned in books which deal with the issue of national integration in Indonesia, such as Christine Drake, *National Integration in Indonesia: Patterns and Policies*. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989). And there is no entry for Baperki in a comprehensive dictionary of Indonesian history, *Indoneshia no jiten*. [Dictionary on Indonesia] (Kyoto: Dohoshu, 1991) <東南アジアを知るシリーズ：インドネシアの事典>。(京都：同朋舎出版，1991)。

¹⁰ 'Fighting Racism and Xenophobia', The Jakarta Post, 8 February 2001.

¹¹ Chung Hua Hie Hue (中華協會)。

representatives to attend political meetings. Because CHHH was recognised by the Dutch authorities, the republican government based in Yogyakarta also invited CHHH representatives to a meeting which called for 'mutual understanding'.¹³ Obviously, it was seen as the representative body for Chinese *peranakan* at this time. CHHH also had representatives at the round table meeting for Indonesian independence.¹⁴

After the Netherlands relinquished its claim to Indonesia in 1949, the situation changed. At this time, many members of CHHH thought they needed an organisation to assist them to become citizens of the Republic of Indonesia.¹⁵ The CHHH was reorganized as the Chinese Democracy Party, a political party acting in the interests of ethnic Chinese in the 1950s.¹⁶ But this political party did not progress well in its first three years. In 1953, leaders of the Chinese Democracy Party suggested forming a new organisation. The CDP then became the foundation of Baperki, which was designed to be a political consultative organisation, but not a political party.

¹³ Thio Thiam Tjong (張添聰), or Zhang Tian Cong in Mandarin.

¹⁴ Ang Yan Guan (Hong Yuan Yuan), *Hong Yuan Yuan zizuang*. [The Autobiography of Ang Yan Guan]. (Beijing: Zhongguo Huaqiao, 1989), p. 252. 洪淵源, <洪淵源自傳> (北京: 中國華僑, 1989), 252.

¹⁵ Siauw Giok Tjhan (Xiao Yu Can), *Shutu tonggui*. [Different Roads to the Same Destination] Huang Shu Hai trans. (Hong Kong: Di Ping Xian, 1981), pp. 61-62. 蕭玉燦, <殊途同歸>。黃書海譯。(香港: 地平線出版社, 1981), 61-62.。

¹⁶ Ang Yan Guan (Hong Yuan Yuan), *Hong Yuan Yuan zizhuan*. [The Autobiography of Ang Yan Guan]. (Beijing: Zhongguo Huaqiao, 1989), p. 253. 洪淵源, <洪淵源自傳> (北京: 中國華僑, 1989), 253.

¹⁷ Chinese Democracy Party (中華民主黨)。

The leadership of Baperki was distributed amongst people from different political groupings.¹⁷ Leo Suryadinata divided Chinese *peranakan* into three groups before the Second World War: the pro-China group, the pro-Dutch group and the pro-Indonesian group.¹⁸ The leadership of Baperki was a combination of these three groups. Siauw Giok Tjhan, the founding chairman of the organisation, was a leading figure of the so-called pro-Indonesian group.¹⁹ He had worked for the Revolutionary Republic of Indonesia during the years of armed struggle against the Dutch. Its vice-chairman, Ang Yan Guan, was the chief editor of *Sin Po*,²⁰ which Suryadinata classed as a pro-China group. Ang was the leading figure in this group; he controlled the policy direction of the *Sin Po* group for a long time and he always helped Chinese communities to form links with the Chinese government, under both the KMT and the CCP. Some leaders, like those who had been members of the CHH (Chung Hwa Hui), were seen as pro-Dutch activists.²¹ Among them, Thio Thiam Tjong was one of the most prominent figures. Thio was advisor to the government of the Dutch Indies during the Indonesian revolution. Baperki was the only group which could unite leaders from different political groups at that time.

¹⁷ Many sources focus only on the leadership of Siauw Giok Tjhan. For example, Bob Hering, ed. *Siauw Giok Tjhan Remembers: A Peranakan Chinese and the Quest for Indonesian Nationhood*. (Queensland: James Cook University, 1982).

¹⁸ Leo Suryadinata, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Java, 1917-1942*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1981). According to this study, the three major political streams were the pro-China *Sin Po* group, the pro-Netherlands Chung Hwa Hui, and the pro-Indonesia Partai Tionghoa Indonesia.

¹⁹ Siauw Giok Tjhan (蕭玉燦), or Xiao Yu Can in Mandarin.

²⁰ Ang Yan Guan (洪淵源), or Hong Yuan Yuan in Mandarin.

²¹ Chung Hwa Hui (中華會).

If we read through the biographies of these leaders, we can find some links between them and the groups of people who developed new ideas of identity. For example, Siauw Giok Tjhan mentioned in his memoir that he was inspired by Tan Kah Kee directly in the struggle for rights of ethnic Chinese when Tan hid in Malang during the Pacific War.²² Ang Yan Guan was the main translator and interpreter for Ba Ren when Ba Ren was the Chinese ambassador to Indonesia in the early 1950s. It should therefore have been easy for them to access the ideas of new identity which had been previously generated.

The name 'Baperki' reflects two expectations of its founders: it was to be neither a political party nor a Chinese-only association.²³ The wish to avoid politicisation or exclusive Chineseness was not fulfilled. Its members became the members of the Parliament and the Constituent Assembly, so that this association not only possessed a political function for the Chinese people in Indonesia from the time of its establishment, but also was seen as an association which consisted of ethnic Chinese and represented the interests of ethnic Chinese, because the majority of its members were ethnic Chinese.²⁴ The expectations of the founders would not have been easy to fulfil. The dilemma which Baperki faced symbolized the dilemma faced by the Chinese minority during this period. On the one hand they wished to identify with the new country of

²² Siauw Giok Tjhan, *Lima Zaman Perwujudan Integrasi Wajar* (Jakarta: Yayasan Teratai, 1981), 48.

²³ Siauw Giok Tjhan (Xiao Yu Can), *Shutu tonggui*. [Different Roads to the Same Destination] Huang Shu Hai trans. (Hong Kong: Di Ping Xian, 1981), pp. 110-120. 蕭玉燦, <殊途同歸>。黃書海譯。(香港: 地平線出版社, 1981), 110-120。

²⁴ Ang Yan Guan (Hong Yuan Yuan), *Hong Yuan Yuan zizhuan*. [The Autobiography of Ang Yan Guan]. (Beijing: Zhongguo Huaqiao, 1989), p. 256. 洪淵源, <洪淵源自傳> (北京: 中國華僑, 1989), 256。

Indonesia, believing that the Chinese should be a part of this new country, and so organised themselves in order to attain and preserve their rights. On the other hand, because they considered themselves a part of the new nation, they hoped to consider issues from the standpoint of the entire nation, and not from the standpoint of the Chinese only.²⁵

Baperki gained strong support from the grassroots level of the Chinese community. The ethnic Chinese in Indonesia had never been a homogeneous group. Some Chinese settlers had come to the territory earlier than the Dutch. At the same time, there were many Chinese newcomers arrived in Indonesia even at the time of the world economic depression in the 1930s. Some Chinese newcomers arrived in Indonesia even after Indonesian independence, mostly in the 1950s.²⁶ Chinese residents were of different regional and professional backgrounds as well. But the support for Baperki came from people of all backgrounds. In contrast to the accusations of radical *pribumi* nationalists, the Indonesian Chinese were not foreign nationals who rejected Indonesian citizenship. The purpose of founding Baperki was to achieve fair conditions for the granting of citizenship to Chinese people in Indonesia.

²⁵ Siauw Giok Tjhan (Xiao Yu Can), *Shutu tonggui*. [Different Roads to the Same Destination] Huang Shu Hai trans. (Hong Kong: Di Ping Xian, 1981), p. 129. 蕭玉燦, <殊途同歸>。黃書海譯。(香港: 地平線出版社, 1981), 129。

²⁶ Yu Shukun ed., *Nanyang Nianjian*. [South Seas Year Book] (Singapore: Sin Chew Jit Po, 1951), 郁樹錕, <南洋年鑑>。(新加坡: 星洲日報, 1951). And Wu Wen Hua, *Shilun yindunxiya huaren shehui di bianqian*. [Discussions on the Changes in Indonesian Chinese Society] *Zhanhou haiwai huaren bianhua guoji xueshu taolunhui*. [Proceedings of the Guangzhou Conference on Change among the post-War Overseas Chinese] (Canton, 1989). 吳文華, <<試論印度尼西亞華人社會的變化>>。〈戰後海外華人變化國際學術討論會〉(廣州, 1989)。

The contribution of Baperki in the following three areas will be analysed: first, its role in developing a cultural ideal for ethnic Chinese in Indonesia; second, its negotiations with the *pribumi* and gaining of citizens' rights; and third, its contribution to breaking down divisions between *totok* and *peranakan* Chinese. These three areas will be discussed as follows:

The Cultural Ideal

Baperki's ideals were clear: on the one hand, it encouraged Chinese residents to gain Indonesian citizenship; on the other, it realised that many Chinese parents hoped their children could receive a Chinese education and wanted to assist in achieving this. Baperki subsequently became concerned with the Chinese education system in Indonesia and was active on the issue of Chinese education.²⁷ The founding of Baperki reflected concern that the government of the newly independent Indonesia did not have a consistent policy toward Chinese residents. Baperki wanted to influence government thinking towards the Chinese.

The Indonesian government prohibited Chinese education for Indonesian citizens from 1954. The policies of the Indonesian government were based on the view that if Chinese people wanted to have Indonesian citizenship, they should surrender their Chinese cultural characteristics and ties and become fully 'Indonesianised'. The

²⁷ Ang Yan Guan (Hong Yuan Yuan), *Hong Yuan Yuan zizuang*, [The Autobiography of Ang Yan Guan]. (Beijing: Zhongguo Huagiao, 1989), p. 257. 洪淵源, <洪淵源自傳> (北京: 中國華僑, 1989), 257.

government ordered that no children of Indonesian citizens were to study in Chinese schools.²⁸ Many Chinese residents would be reluctant to take out Indonesian citizenship if taking out Indonesian citizenship meant losing the opportunity for Chinese education for their children.

Soon after independence, Siauw Giok Tjhan suggested to the government that it should try making Chinese language a secondary school subject. He argued that this would encourage *peranakan* Chinese to send their children to government schools.²⁹ Leo Suryadinata reported that Tjoa Sik Ien and Siauw Giok Tjhan presented a joint paper at the Inter-Indonesian Educational Congress held between 15 and 20 October 1949 in Yogyakarta. They argued that 'the ethnic Chinese placed a high value on education and that the Dutch had been able to draw the ethnic Chinese to their side by providing Chinese children with education. Therefore, if the Republican Government could adopt a similar policy on Chinese education, it would win the Chinese to its side.'³⁰ Siauw Giok Tjhan, as a pro-Indonesian leader among ethnic Chinese and one of the few ethnic Chinese to become a minister in the Indonesian cabinet, presented this view to the Indonesian government five years before Baperki was formed. Baperki actually tried to provide education for ethnic Chinese under Siauw's leadership from the beginning.

²⁸ Siauw Giok Tjhan (Xiao Yu Can), *Shutu tonggui*. [Different Roads to the Same Destination] Huang Shu Hai trans. (Hong Kong: Di Ping Xian, 1981), p. 124. 蕭玉燦, <殊途同歸>。黃書海譯。(香港：地平線出版社, 1981), 124. •

²⁹ Tjoa Sik Ien and Siauw Giok Tjhan, 'Educational Problems for Children of Peranakan Chinese who are Indonesian Citizens', In Adjar dan Dasar, ed. *Abito Marto Hardjono* (Jakarta, 1951). Cited from Leo Suryadinata, ed., *Political Thinking of the Indonesian Chinese, 1900-1995: a Sourcebook*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press 1997), p. 188.

³⁰ Leo Suryadinata, ed., *Political Thinking of the Indonesian Chinese, 1900-1995: a Sourcebook*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press 1997). pp. 184-185.

After Baperki was formed, it organised a special conference in May 1955 to discuss the issues of culture and education in relation to the Chinese in Indonesia. The conference decided to oppose the existence of schools organised exclusively for specific groups. However, it also urged the government to speed up the expansion and improvement of the public school system, to step up efforts to prevent discriminatory practices in the schools, to eliminate prejudicial materials from textbooks and teaching materials, and to offer Chinese and other Asian languages in public schools. Until government schools could meet the education needs of the whole population, aid should be given to private schools to provide Chinese education in order to maintain the policy of excluding Indonesian citizens from 'foreign Chinese schools', which were affiliated to the Chinese or Taiwanese governments.

The government responded to this request by ordering that students who were Indonesian citizens were no longer to enrol in Chinese schools. The Chinese schools were required to separate their existing students into two streams, Indonesian citizens and foreign citizens. The aim was to disassociate citizenship from Chinese education. This added to the difficulties and dilemmas facing Chinese Indonesians.

Baperki reacted by sponsoring a number of schools and even a university. These schools were intended for Chinese, but not exclusively so. Bahasa Indonesia was the primary language of instruction but Chinese was taught as a second language.³¹ Baperki University itself eventually possessed an Indonesian Faculty, comprising staff

who also taught in other universities in Jakarta. The large percentage of ethnic Chinese among the student population and the name of this university made it ethnically distinctive among Indonesian universities.

This illustrates that support for Indonesia, that is, regarding the Chinese as one component of the Indonesian nation, while remaining Chinese in the sphere of culture, was the direction that received the broadest support from diverse elements of the Chinese community. This cultural direction was supported by organisations that represented mainly the *singkeh* Chinese, like the Jakarta Chinese Sojourners' Guild, which after the establishment of the Republic of Indonesia, indicated on behalf of its members that they wished to become citizens of the new country, while maintaining Chinese traditions in the sphere of culture.³²

A similar kind of view was expressed by Chinese artistic organisations, of which an outstanding example was the Indonesian Chinese Art Society. This organisation was founded in 1953, and expressed its standpoint in the use of *Yinhua* (Chinese Indonesian) to refer to its membership in order to show they had clear Indonesian identity.³³ It is one famous example of *singkeh* Chinese, Chinese newcomers, showing their new identity by using *Yinhua* for self-expression. The artworks of the chairman, Li

³¹ Charles A. Coppel, 'Should There be Chinese Schools in Indonesia?' In *Proceedings on Chinese Education in Southeast Asia*, (Taipei: National Cultural Association, 1995).

³² Djakarta Hoa Kiauw Kong Hwee; *Yecheng huaqiao gonghui xinjian huisuo luocheng jiniankan*. (Djakarta: Perkumpulan Tionghoa Seberang Lantau, 1951) 椰嘉達華僑公會, <椰城華僑公會新建會所落成紀念刊>。(Djakarta: Perkumpulan Tionghoa Seberang Lantau, 1951). °

³³ See 'Yinhua Meisu Xiehua Chengli' [The Establishment of the Indonesian Chinese Art Society], *Hsing Chi Jih Pao*, 7 September, 1953. <<印華美術協會成立>>。<新報星期日報>, 1953年9月7日。

Manfeng, used a traditional Chinese landscape painting style to depict the landscape of Indonesia. President Sukarno, on viewing Li's work, expressed his approval. His art was also appreciated within the Chinese community.³⁴ The affirmation of this cultural ideal throughout the Chinese community is further expressed by the painter and businessman Zhou Qingnan, who in his role as cultural consultant published essays in the *Xin Bao* and *Shenghuo Bao*, stressing that realist oil painting should remain in contact with the national style of the people, and that Chinese painting in particular should take local, Indonesian subjects. 'He emphasised that paintings had to coincide with the spirit of the people, and Chinese painters must incorporate more local scenery in their paintings.'³⁵

The leaders of Baperki often expressed their idealist views on the cultural issue for ethnic Chinese. They thought that to identify with Indonesia and to keep cultural characteristics would become the future for Southeast Asian Chinese.³⁶ Siau Giok Tjhan argued that ethnic Chinese should be seen as one of the *suku bangsa*, ethnic groups, equal to Javanese or Balinese in Indonesia.³⁷ He thought it also was consistent

³⁴ Sung Chek Mei, 'The Ingenious Painter, Mr. Lee Man Fong', in *Who's Who in Indonesia*, Hong Kong: South East Asia Research Institute, 1981, pp. 211-214.

³⁵ Sung Chek Mei, 'Mr. Tjoe Ji Nan: The Efficient, Capable and Approachable', in *Who's Who in Indonesia*, Hong Kong: South East Asia Research Institute, 1981, pp. 165-177.

³⁶ Chen Yiling, *Yinni xianshi yu huaqiao*. [The Situation of Indonesia and the Overseas Chinese] (Taipei: Central Publisher, 1954), p. 45. 陳以令, <印尼現勢與華僑> (臺北: 中央文物供應社, 1954), 45.

³⁷ For discussion of the attempts and possibilities for ethnic Chinese to be recognized as "suku bangsa", see Wang Gungwu, 'Are Indonesian Chinese Unique? Some Observations' in J. A. C. Mackie, *The Chinese in Indonesia: Five Essays*. (Melbourne: The Australian Institute of International Affairs, 1976), pp. 199-210.

with the spirit of Indonesian nationalism, which 'unity in diversity' was the emphasis.³⁸ Ang Yan Guan argued that the effort of Baperki to diminish discrimination among ethnic groups was actually to fulfil the aim of *Pancasila*, the ideal principal of the Indonesian Republic. But he also admitted that this attempt was eventually like a dream.³⁹

Rights of Citizenship

Citizenship was one major issue which caused trouble between ethnic Chinese and *pribumi* in Indonesia at this period of time. Baperki was formed to try to solve this issue. The decision on citizenship for ethnic Chinese in Indonesia was always made from the top rather than by consulting opinions from the communities. At the same time, ethnic Chinese in Indonesia comprised very diverse groups. Chinese might consider the citizenship issue based on their own experience, and change their stand on citizenship and nationality when the political situation altered. Many Chinese who were keen to become Indonesian citizens found that they were not treated equally. Some

³⁸ Siauw Giok Tjhan (Xiao Yu Can), *Shutu tonggui*, [Different Roads to the Same Destination] Huang Shu Hai trans. (Hong Kong: Di Ping Xian, 1981), p. 119. 蕭玉燦, <殊途同歸>。黃書海譯。(香港：地平線出版社, 1981), 119。

³⁹ Ang Yan Guan (Hong Yuan Yuan), *Hong Yuan Yuan zizhuan*. [The Autobiography of Ang Yan Guan]. (Beijing: Zhongguo Huaqiao, 1989), p. 256. 洪淵源, <洪淵源自傳> (北京：中國華僑, 1989), 256。

Chinese of Indonesian citizenship experienced a feeling of loss because their children could not attend Chinese schools.⁴⁰

One of the main problems about citizenship was that the Indonesian government repeatedly changed its position on accepting Chinese as citizens.⁴¹ The initial decision to accept ethnic Chinese as Indonesian citizenship was made in special circumstances. 'When the Republic of Indonesia was proclaimed the citizenship problem caused various misunderstandings. These were aggravated by the Dutch propaganda war.'⁴² This was why the position of the Indonesian government changed several times before the Republic took control of the territory. In 1951, the Indonesian government issued a provision that most Chinese could become Indonesian citizens by the passive process of not refusing it, if they possessed documentation; a certificate proving them to have been born in Indonesia. However the Chinese faced difficulties in meeting the requirements set out by the government. Chinese people stated that it was impractical to ask the majority of local-born Chinese to provide the required birth certificates. The Chinese had started to undergo civil registration in 1918 in Java and 1926 in the outer islands, but many records had been destroyed during the war.

⁴⁰ Siau-w Giok Tjhan (Xiao Yu Can), *Shutu tonggui* [Different Roads to the Same Destination] Huang Shu Hai trans. (Hong Kong: Di Ping Xian, 1981), p. 118. 蕭玉燦, <殊途同歸>。黃書海譯。(香港：地平線出版社, 1981), 118.。

⁴¹ For a discussion of these shifts, see Charles A. Coppel, 'The Indonesian Chinese as 'Foreign Orientals' in the Netherland Indies', in Barry Hooker ed. *Law and the Chinese in Southeast Asia*. (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, forthcoming).

⁴² Tjoa Sik Ien and Siau-w Giok Tjhan, 'Educational Problems for Children of Peranakan Chinese who are Indonesian Citizens', In Adjar dan Dasar, ed. *Abito Marto Hardjono* (Jakarta, 1951). Cited from Leo Suryadinata, ed., *Political Thinking of the Indonesian Chinese, 1900-1995: a Sourcebook*. (Singapore: Singapore University Press 1997), pp. 184-185.

This policy made the local-born Chinese feel hesitant about gaining Indonesian citizenship, since it did not guarantee any benefit but lost them the right to receive Chinese education.⁴³ The Indonesian authorities were clearly dissatisfied with the Chinese attitude and felt that the Chinese population lacked commitment to the new nation and did not behave in the way the Indonesian nationalists expected. In June 1952, the Indonesian government issued an order requiring that Chinese students leaving for China exit permanently, and it issued a warning to their parents that the Chinese students would not be allowed to return to Indonesia. Mononutu, an ambassador-elect to Beijing, on the eve of departure in 1953 to take up his posting, asked; 'Was it necessary for Chinese students to go to China for their education when there were sufficient schools for them in Indonesia?'⁴⁴

Mainstream politicians in Indonesia failed to understand the mentality of the Indonesian Chinese. Tjoa Tjie Liang, a journalist for Chinese *peranakan* newspapers, described the situation during that period: 'Most (Indonesian) people still believe that even though Indonesians of Chinese descent may have Indonesian citizenship, they are still 'Chinese'. They are still referred to as foreign adventurers.'⁴⁵ He thought that this kind of belief was found not only among the common people, who were confused about the concept of Indonesian citizenship, but also among educated Indonesians and even civil servants.

⁴³ Interview with Bun Djuk Shang (溫毓聲, Wen Yusen in Mandarin), Jakarta, (Editor of the Chinese section of *Harian Indonesia*).

⁴⁴ Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff, *Minority Problems in Southeast Asia*. (California: Stanford University Press. 1955) p.50.

For instance, Assaat, a prominent Hadrami Arab politician and minister, asserted that Chinese descendants' desire to preserve their cultural heritage was disloyal. Mary Somers has suggested that Assaat's speeches show how racist his ideas were, because he proposed that the discrimination be directed solely against the Chinese and not against citizens of Arab or Dutch descent.⁴⁶ In this atmosphere, the decision-makers in Indonesia always doubted the loyalty of ethnic Chinese. When some government officials expressed strong doubts about this loyalty, there was irritation among Chinese that they always had to prove their commitment to Indonesia. The Bill of 1954 requiring Indonesia-born Chinese to reaffirm their choice of citizenship and provide birth certificates made the local Chinese uneasy, and they decided to take action.

The Indonesian-born Chinese in 1950, 'like the other minorities, were awaiting an assurance from the government that they would receive equal treatment with other Indonesian citizens before making up their minds.'⁴⁷ The closing down of most Dutch schools in the early 1950s drove *peranakan* Chinese in increasing numbers to enrol in Chinese schools. Throughout 1953, representatives of minority groups, especially the Chinese, complained of increasing discrimination against them because of the forcible assimilation measures of the Indonesian government and the *pribumi* people.⁴⁸ This

⁴⁵ Tjoa Tjje Liang, 'A Homogeneous Nation' . *Nusaputra*, 1(1): 8-9, 25 September, 1951.

⁴⁶ Mary F. Somers, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Indonesia*. (Ithaca: Southeast Asian Program, Cornell University. 1964), p. 16.

⁴⁷ Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. 709.

⁴⁸ Ang Yan Guan (Hong Yuan Yuan), *Hong Yuan Yuan zizuang*. [The Autobiography of Ang Yan Guan]. (Beijing: Zhongguo Huaqiao, 1989), p. 256. 洪淵源, <洪淵源自傳> (北京: 中國華僑, 1989), 256.

government policy and the climate of popular opinion affected both Chinese residents of Chinese nationality and Indonesian citizens. It caused more and more young Chinese and their parents to become alienated in the early 1950s.⁴⁹

Responding to this situation, the leaders of Baperki continually expressed their concern about the equal rights of Indonesian citizens. On the one hand, Baperki lobbied the Indonesian government to grant local born Chinese Indonesian citizenship automatically.⁵⁰ On the other hand, leaders of Baperki repeatedly emphasized that personal wishes on citizenship and nationality should be respected for those who did not select Indonesian citizenship.⁵¹

Breaking the Framework of the Peranakan/Totok distinction

Baperki tended to break down the barriers between *totok* and *peranakan*. Even though the social categories of *totok* and *peranakan* had existed and made some real distinction among Chinese for a long time,⁵² leaders of Baperki thought that this led to unhealthy

⁴⁹ Interview with Tjoa Sik Jen, Jakarta, 14 December 1996, (The editor of *Kampus*, who had joined the *Sin Po*).

⁵⁰ Siauw Giok Tjhan (Xiao Yu Can), *Shutu tonggui*. [Different Roads to the Same Destination] Huang Shu Hai trans. (Hong Kong: Di Ping Xian, 1981), p. 133. 蕭玉燦, <殊途同歸>。黃書海譯。(香港：地平線出版社, 1981), 133.。

⁵¹ Siauw Giok Tjhan (Xiao Yu Can), *Shutu tonggui*. [Different Roads to the Same Destination] Huang Shu Hai trans. (Hong Kong: Di Ping Xian, 1981), pp. 128, 151. 蕭玉燦, <殊途同歸>。黃書海譯。(香港：地平線出版社, 1981), 128, 151.。

⁵² About the existence of peranakan and their contribution, see Salmon, Claudine, *Literature in Malay by the Chinese of Indonesia: A Provisional Annotated Bibliography*. (Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences

relationships among ethnic Chinese in the country.⁵³ On the one hand, Baperki's policies gave *peranakan* who wished to preserve their Chineseness the right to do so and to offer their children a Chinese education. On the other hand they enabled *totok* who wished to make Indonesia their home country to do this with peace of mind, by ensuring that their children could become Indonesian citizens with their own distinctive Chinese cultural background.

Baperki's policy was developed in response to the practical situation facing Indonesian Chinese at the time. A report compiled in 1948 estimated that 85 per cent of all Chinese children in elementary schools in Dutch-controlled areas of Indonesia were in Chinese-language schools. This was a much higher percentage than in the pre-war period, and it indicates that many *peranakan* children whose parents spoke only Dutch and/or Indonesian were being 're-sinified' by an education emphasizing Chinese language, culture, and politics.⁵⁴ The figures in Table 1 show that many *peranakan* Chinese sent their children to Chinese schools to learn Chinese rather than to Indonesian schools in the 1950s, before the Indonesian government prohibited them to do so.

de l' Homme, 1981). And Claudine Salmon ed. *Literary Migrations: Traditional Chinese Fiction in Asia (17-20th centuries)*. (Beijing: International Culture Publishing Corporation, 1987).

⁵³ Ang Yan Guan (Hong Yuan Yuan), *Hong Yuan Yuan zizuang*. [The Autobiography of Ang Yan Guan]. (Beijing: Zhongguo Huaqiao, 1989), p. 153. 洪淵源, <洪淵源自傳> (北京: 中國華僑, 1989), 153.

⁵⁴ Mary F. Somers, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Indonesia*. (Ithaca: Southeast Asian Program, Cornell University. 1964) p.19.

Table 1. The numbers of students attending Chinese schools in Indonesia.⁵⁵

Year	Numbers of Chinese Schools	Numbers of Students in Chinese Schools
1923	300	28,000
1941	502	65,000
1948	621	141,600
1957	1669	450,000

The division of *totok* and *peranakan* should be reconsidered in assessing the situation of ethnic Chinese during the 1940s and the 1950s. Previous studies on the issue of ethnic Chinese in Indonesia have focused on *peranakan* Chinese.⁵⁶ The reason for seeing *peranakan* Chinese as the more representative group was the belief that they outnumbered *totok* Chinese. But the problem is that the boundary between *peranakan* Chinese and *totok* Chinese was never fixed nor clear-cut. It can be misleading in trying to gain a broader understanding of the Chinese community to only focus on the *peranakan*. As a result of the Sino-Japanese war and the Japanese occupation, there was a convergence of interests and outlook between the *peranakan* and *totok* Chinese. During the colonial period, the main difference between *peranakan* and *totok* was language ability and political attitudes, but the boundary between them shifted during

⁵⁵ Huaqiaozhi bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Yinni Huaqiaozhi*. [The History of the Chinese in Indonesia] (Taipei: Qiaowu Weiyuanhui, 1977), p. 102. 華僑志編纂委員會，〈印尼華僑志〉。(台北：華僑委員會，1977)，102。

⁵⁶ Mary F. Somers, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Indonesia*. (Ithaca: Southeast Asian Program, Cornell University, 1964). Leo Suryadinata, *The Pre World War II Peranakan Chinese Press of Java: A Preliminary Survey*. (Ohio University, 1971). Leo Suryadinata, *Peranakan's Search for National Identity: Biographical Studies of Seven Indonesian Chinese*. (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1993) John Bosco and Swanthay Kwee, *Chinese Malay Literature of the Peranakan Chinese in Indonesia, 1880-1942*. (Auckland, 1977) Teo, Kok Seong, *A Sociolinguistic Description of the Peranakan Chinese*. (1993).

the turbulent era of the 1940s to 1950s. After WWII, many *peranakan*-type Chinese were willing to learn more Chinese culture and language. This can be described as a process of 'sinicization' or 'resinicization' in the 1940s and the 1950s.⁵⁷ The *peranakan*-centred framework does not well serve the aim of better understanding the situation of ethnic Chinese in Indonesia in the post-war era.

The distinction between *totok* and *peranakan* has long been used to describe inter-group relationships among the Chinese in Indonesia. These two Malay-language terms were originally not limited to describing Chinese people or their descendants. In the Malay language, *totok* means 'full-blood' and *peranakan* means 'mixed blood'. Many social scientists have used these terms to describe the main fault line within the Chinese community in Indonesia, but most of them define these terms by language ability: *totok* can speak Chinese and *peranakan* cannot. In Malaya, people use the term *baba* instead of *peranakan*. The Chinese word for both *baba* and *peranakan*, *qiaosheng*, means 'local-born Chinese', representing the same meaning as *baba* or *peranakan* in Malaya and Indonesia. In this study the terms *totok* and *peranakan* will be applied to both Indonesia and Malaya and are distinguished by place of birth: *totok* means China-born Chinese and *peranakan* means local-born Chinese. In general, *totok* refers to Chinese who were newcomers, still kept their Chinese culture, and were full-blooded, whereas *peranakan* refers to people who were locally born, kept more to local customs and were often of mixed-blood.

⁵⁷ Wu Wen Hua, *Shilun Yindunixiya huaren shehui di bianqian*. [Discussions on the Changes in Indonesian Chinese Society] *Zhanhou haiwai huaren bianhua guoji xueshu taolunhui*. [Proceedings of the Guangzhou Conference on Change among the post-War Overseas Chinese] (Canton, 1989), p. 171. 吳文華，〈試論印度尼西亞華人社會的變化〉。〈戰後海外華人變化國際學術討論會〉（廣州，1989），171。

It would be problematic if we simply used these two terms to describe the Chinese communities without considering the context of real situations. The population structure of the Chinese community was different in Malaya and in Indonesia. In Indonesia, the *peranakan* had developed their own identity, which can be perceived by some distinctive features of their language.⁵⁸ Newcomers from China continued to arrive in Indonesia through the late 1940s. In Malaya, the prominent *baba* did not want to give up their 'Chineseness'. There was a Chinese perception of the division between *totok* and *peranakan* in Malaya and Indonesia during this period. Chao Hua, a Chinese *peranakan* who had received a Chinese education and had retired from public service in Indonesia, published a book about *peranakan* culture and experiences. He wrote: 'For most Chinese people, *Peranakan* means *baba*, and *baba* means locally born Chinese.' In Chinese terms, both are *qiao sheng*, literally locally born. He complained that the definition of *peranakan* or *baba* according to language ability by Western scholars was improper. His ideas reflected the Chinese idea of *peranakan*. Because the structure of the Chinese family was patrilineal, even if *peranakan* children were of mixed blood, the fathers would tend to treat them as Chinese.⁵⁹ But they often could not speak Chinese, because they were raised by their mothers. Even though many Chinese in Java spoke some local languages (Malay, Javanese, Sundanese, Madurese) rather than any Chinese languages or dialects as their day-to-day language in the home, which might create some other kinds of identities, it would not change the situation of being identified as

⁵⁸ Dede Oetomo, *The Chinese Of Pasuruan: Their Language And Identity*. (Canberra, A.C.T., Australia: Dept. of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, 1987).

Chinese because most had a Chinese surname or a full Chinese name at the time of the 1950s. In the Chinese media, they were mostly treated as part of the Chinese community, but as a distinct sub-category.

The *totok-peranakan* dichotomy suggested a mutually exclusive relationship in terms of degree of exposure to Chinese culture. But in concrete terms, most Chinese could be seen to fall somewhere between these two extremes. Many first generation Chinese immigrants took pains to study Indonesian and learn local customs, and many Chinese born and raised in Indonesia, who lacked a Chinese cultural background, made efforts to study Chinese and preserve Chinese culture.⁶⁰ For an organisation constituted to represent the interests of Chinese in Indonesia, the issue was how to treat this distinction; whether to work to preserve it, or work to eliminate it.

UCSTA: From Education To Citizenship

The UCSTA, the United Chinese School Teachers' Association, was an educational organisation founded in 1951 for the purpose of 'promoting the benefit of all teachers in Chinese schools' in Malaya. The leaders of this association felt themselves obliged to lead the movement to maintain the colony's Chinese education system. The role and

⁵⁹ Chao Hua, *Yindunxiya Huaqiao Cangsang*. [The changing fortunes of the Indonesian Chinese] (Hong Kong: Commercial Press, 1990), pp. 34-35. 晁華，〈印度尼西亞華僑滄桑〉。(香港：商務印書館，1990)，34-35。

⁶⁰ Interview with Harta Susanto (蘇進達, Su Jinda in Mandarin), Medan, 20 November 1996, (The chairman and publisher of *Analisa* in Medan, also the son of Su Yuansheng (蘇源昌), who was the owner of Sin Thong Hua Pao (新中華報), the biggest Chinese newspaper in Medan in the 1940s.)

importance of this association soon extended beyond that of a professional organisation. It also played a key role in citizenship issues for Chinese in Malaya during the general election under the framework of the Federation of Malaya in 1955. It became a leading association in the movement to encourage Chinese residents to join the new nation as citizens. The linkage between education and citizenship issues in this context will be the subject of the following discussion.

The Significance of UCSTA

The UCSTA can be seen as one of the most representative of Chinese associations in Malaya in the 1950s. During this time, there were the so-called 'three big organisations' among the Malayan Chinese: UCSTA, the United Chinese School Committees' Association (UCSCA), and the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA). The major issue for all three associations was the preservation of Chinese education.

There is already abundant research on the history of the UCSTA and of Chinese education in Malaya.⁶¹ Here we will discuss only the educational issues with which UCSTA was concerned as they relate to Chinese identity. The efforts of its education initiatives were to help the Chinese community to enter into the process by which Malayan Chinese identified themselves with the new nation, so that UCSTA in fact played a pivotal role in the development of Malayan Chinese identity. Discussion of the historical role played by UCSTA should not confine it to the category of education. To

⁶¹ For example, Tan Liok Ee, *The Politics of Chinese Education in Malaya, 1945-1961*. (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1997).

separate the important topics of the day into the categories of politics and education creates misunderstanding of the role played by UCSTA.

Many studies of the Chinese population in Malaya in this period focus only on MCA, the Malayan Chinese Association.⁶² But the MCA did not have grassroots support. MCA was seen at the time as a gentry organisation, because it consisted of two divergent elements: the elite of the Straits Chinese and the elite of the KMT. Tan Chen Lock was the leading figure of the Straits Chinese. Neither bloc of them were regarded as leaders who had mass support from the Chinese community.⁶³ At that time, there were no other Chinese organizations trying to socialize this new idea of identity in Malaya. In other words, MCA's idea to be loyal to the new nation, which hadn't been established, was later put into practice through socialisation by the UCSTA and its member schools. With the support of UCSTA, MCA became one of the most important Chinese political parties of the time. The condition on which UCSTA supported MCA was Chinese education, which was the focus of the concern for majority of ethnic Chinese.

⁶² MCA was regarded as representative of the Chinese community for the following reasons. First, it was the only legal Chinese political party during this period. Second, it was founded by Tan Chen Lock, who was seen as the leader of the Chinese in Malaya. Third, the Malayan Chinese Association joined the UMNO in an anti-communist movement and won 51 of the 52 seats in parliament in 1955. Concerning the history and the importance of MCA, see Heng Pek Koon, *Chinese Politics in Malaysia: A History of the Malaysian Chinese Association*. (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1988).

⁶³ Interview with Sim Mow Yu (沈慕羽, Shen Mu Yu in Mandarin) on 23 March 1997. He was a foundation member of the Malayan Chinese Association. He subsequently supported the position of UCSTA and resigned his MCA membership. He became chairman of UCSTA in 1965.

There was actually a clear gap between the MCA and the majority of ethnic Chinese in the 1950s. The ethnic Chinese population in Malaya was characterised by the dichotomous and contradictory social roles played by two divergent elements within the Chinese community: the majority of ordinary Chinese and the commercial elites. The commercial elites often distanced themselves from the majority of ordinary Chinese in their attitudes towards the British authorities.⁶⁴ The majority of ordinary Chinese, on the other hand, had a history of associating with and supporting the MPAJA and MCP, which were banned by the British authorities.⁶⁵ The Emergency made MCA the only choice available for the Chinese community in the political domain because leftist parties were banned. Eventually MCA gained support from the Chinese community by the mediation of the leaders of UCSTA, which had made an agreement with MCA leaders to support Chinese education.

The Creation and Leadership of UCSTA

The foundation of UCSTA is always associated with the name of Lim Lian Geok, (or Lin Lian Yu in Mandarin), who was described as ‘The Soul of Ethnic Chinese’ in the

⁶⁴ The commercial elite was the social base of MCA, which was often seen as cooperating with the British authorities in order to protect the advantageous economic position of its constituency.

⁶⁵ The leadership of MPAJA, the Malayan People’s Anti-Japanese Army, an armed resistance group under the Japanese occupation, reorganised as the MCP, Malayan Communist Party, after the Pacific War. The MCP often opposed the British policy of establishing Malay political dominance of the post-war political structure. It then became involved in insurgent operations against the British, and was declared illegal during the ‘Emergency’ in 1948.

Chinese community in Malaysia.⁶⁶ He founded UCSTA in 1951 and was its first chairman. Originally he was a teacher in a state school in Kuala Lumpur, before the Pacific War.⁶⁷ After the war, he became principal of a Chinese high school in Kuala Lumpur and organized a teachers' association for Chinese schools in the Selangor area, in 1949. At the beginning, this association was concerned only with improving conditions for teachers in Chinese schools in the post-war situation. But compelled by the policy direction from 1951 that threatened the Chinese education system, Lim became an activist leading a social movement for the Chinese community in Malaya. The crisis of the Chinese education system gave the Chinese community a clear goal to struggle for. Lim won mass support as a leader by his role as educator. The editors of his biography summarized his role in this way: 'Because Chinese education has survived in Malaysia so far, the contribution of Mr. Lim Lian Geok can never be forgotten'. His legacy remained to inspire followers to keep fighting for the rights of Chinese education for the Chinese population of Malaysia.

In 1951 the British colonial government issued a report recommending the substitution of English and Malay for Chinese and Hindi in education, which would have meant the abolition of Chinese schools, and the Teachers' Association for Chinese Schools of Kuala Lumpur, headed by Lim, rose in opposition. Towards this end the Kuala Lumpur teachers worked to organise the Malaya-wide Chinese teachers' association, UCSTA, which was founded on 25 December, 1951. This organisation then became the core of

⁶⁶ See his biography edited by UCSTA, *The Soul of the Ethnic Chinese, Lim Lian Geok*. (Kuala Lumpur: Linlianyu Foundation, 1994), p. 1.

the movement to promote Chinese education in Malaya. Lim's achievement has been described as follows: "The Chinese education system was almost destroyed through all kinds of unmerciful measures by the British colonial bureaucracy in the 1950s. Fortunately, Lim Lian Geok came out to organise the Jiao Zong (UCSTA) in time to call on all Chinese to fight for Chinese education rights. So the Chinese education system was able to survive in Malaysia."⁶⁸

It should be noted that Lim Lian Geok's concern with Chinese education and his identification with Malaya were directly related. On 25 September 1951, Lim formally became a citizen of the Federation of Malaya, only a few months before he established UCSTA. Late in 1954, Lim and UCSTA broke with the tradition that the Chinese did not concern themselves with politics, and gave an address before the Legislative Assembly of the Malayan Federation. He commented in an essay 'We will step up our work to teach our children to devote themselves to Malaya, and in equality with other races together to establish a paradise of peace'.⁶⁹ This showed clearly his identification

⁶⁷ See the Introduction by Lim Lian Geok to 'The Lin Lian Yu Foundation' . *Huajiaojie teji 1994* (Kuala Lumpur: Lin Lianyu Foundation, 1994), p. 2. 林連玉基金會 <華教節特輯 1994>。(吉隆坡：林連玉基金會，1994)，2。

⁶⁸ Li Guang Hua, 'Zuhun Lin Lian Yu xiansheng' . [Lin Lian Yu, the soul of the ethnic Chinese] in *Huajiaojie teji 1993*. (Kuala Lumpur: Lin Lianyu Foundation, 1993) p. 25. 李光華，<<族魂：林連玉先生>>。 <華教節特輯 1993>。(吉隆坡：林連玉基金會，1993)，25。

⁶⁹ Chen Guo Hua, *Xianquzhe di jiaoyin: haiwai huaren jiaoyu sanbainian*. [The Footprints of Pioneers--Three Hundreds Years of Overseas Chinese Education]. (Canada: Royal Kingsway Inc., 1992), p. 341. 陳國華，<先驅者的腳印——海外華人教育三百年> (Canada: Royal Kingsway Inc., 1992)，341。

with Malaya. At the same period of time, Chinese educated Chinese in Malaya were still described as owing allegiance to China.⁷⁰

The Cultural Idea

Why would an educational association play such an important role in citizenship issues in a new nation? This is directly related to the point of view of culture advocated by UCSTA. Many of the documents which show UCSTA's point of view on culture in the 1950s are written by Lim Lian Geok. Moreover, he was generally spoken of as 'the representative speaker of the Malayan Chinese Community'.⁷¹ For this reason the discussion here of the cultural viewpoint of UCSTA takes the cultural viewpoint of Lim Lian Geok as its focus.

UCSTA expressed a strong sense of identity with Malaya when it was formally established. In the announcement of the foundation of this organisation, this idea was presented straightforwardly: 'Now ethnic Chinese form half of the population of Malaya, maintain good relations with all other races, live in a civilized manner, and see Malaya as their homeland. All show sincerity in their love for Malaya. Malaya will be a new nation. It requires the cooperation of all races and mutual respect toward their

⁷⁰ Lee Khoo Choy (Li Jung Cai), *Zhuixun ziji di guojia: yige nanyang huaren di xinlu licheng*. [The search for my own country; the mental journey of a Nanyang Chinese]. (Taipei: Yuanliu Publishing Co, 1994), p. 62. 李炯才, <追尋自己的國家：一個南洋華人的心路歷程>。(台北：遠流出版社, 1994), 62.

⁷¹ The spokesman of the Malayan Chinese Community (huazu shehui daiyanren, 華族社會代言人)

cultural heritage. We are loyal to Malaya and willing to construct a new Malaya. We did so in the past. We are doing so now and will do the same in the future.⁷²

If they had wanted to maintain their traditional way to deal with local politics, they could have said that they did not want to become involved in domestic affairs as they had just come there to earn their living. They could have still taken care of their own communities in their own way as foreigners. Compared to the previous Chinese traditional way, they did take a big step. In other words, it can be seen as an identity movement towards Malaya. Chinese leaders stood up to assist people to earn Malayan citizenship and encouraged the Chinese community to change its national identification. The interpretation of history was seen as critical to this process. Xu Yunqiao indicated in 1953 that 'if we want to earn citizenship then we need to understand the history of Malaya. . . . Many British would agree that the Chinese know the history of Malaya.'⁷³ Apart from its evident identification with Malaya, another characteristic of Lim's point of view on culture is its stress on the Chinese as one of the three founding races of Malaya, with the insistence that these three races should be treated as equal, and none should be seen as inferior or less worthy than any other.⁷⁴

⁷² Jiao Zong, *Lianbang huaxiao jiaoshi zonghui xuanyan*. [Manifesto of the United Chinese School Teachers' Association] (Kuala Lumpur: Lianbang huaxiao jiaoshi zonghui, 1951) 教總, <<聯邦華校教師總會宣言>>。(聯邦華校教師總會, 1951)。

⁷³ Xu Yunqiao, 'Xu Yunqiao Xu.[Foreword by Xu Yunqiao]' in Yu Shou Hao, *Malaiya gujintan*. [Remarks on the Present and Past in Malaya] (Singapore: Nanyang Shang Bao She, 1953). 許雲樵 <<許雲樵序>>。余壽浩 <馬來亞古今談> (新加坡: 南洋商報社, 1953)。

⁷⁴ Lim Lian Geok (Lin Lian Yu) *Fengyu shibanian*. [Eighteen years of tempests] (Kuala Lumpur: Lin Lian Yu Foundation, 1990), p. 62. 林連玉, <風雨十八年>。(吉隆坡: 林連玉基金委員會, 1990), 62。

The UMNO-MCA Alliance members and UCSTA called a meeting to negotiate a political agreement in 1955, two years before Malayan independence was achieved in 1957. UCSTA asked for Alliance support to maintain Chinese education in Malaya. After gaining this agreement, UCSTA promised to support the Alliance. The Alliance won the election of the same year. This cooperation was regarded by Chinese media as the foundation of Malayan independence in 1957. By 1955, the eve of Malayan independence, the outline of the new Chinese identity was clearly developed. Chinese community leaders continued to fight for 'multicultural civil rights'. Ironically, Lim's Malayan citizenship was withdrawn because he suggested Chinese could be one of the official languages of Malaysia in the 1960s.

Cultural Ideas and Cultural Civil Rights

The two organisations discussed above involve different political systems and social environments, and confronted different adversaries, but in both the Indonesian and Malaysian cases, the Chinese expressed a similar viewpoint on culture. The examples of Baperki and UCSTA indicate that although there was considerable difference in what was defined as 'Chineseness' between the Chinese communities in Indonesia and Malaysia, they were alike in the basic principles of their cultural viewpoints; as citizens of the new nations, the ethnic Chinese possessed the right to maintain the particular characteristics of their own culture. They also considered that loyalty to the state and preservation of cultural tradition were separate. While these two organisations used their considerable mass support bases to agitate for ethnic Chinese to take out Malayan

or Indonesian citizenship, and to demonstrate their loyalty to the new nations, each considered that this should ultimately be a matter for individual choice.

The following discussion will approach the issue of national identity from three different angles in order to explore the different meanings of new opinions among the Indonesian and Malayan Chinese in the 1950s. First, the origins of change; the sense of identity among the Nanyang Chinese transformed from the broad 'Nanyang identity' of the 1930s to identification with the new nations in answer to new identity concepts developing within the local Chinese community, not in response to change in China's policy towards overseas Chinese. Second, the circumstances facing the Chinese as citizens of the new nations; considering that the Chinese were a minority and part of a diaspora, the cultural policy proposals put forward by the Chinese of both countries had gone through careful consideration in order to be appropriate to the circumstances, so much so that their ideas became a major intellectual current among Chinese communities in other parts of the world. Third, the social base of change; from the cultural standpoint that they express, it can be seen that these ways of thinking are closely linked to historical developments, and that they are the product of the broader social and political circumstances of the 1930s through to the 1950s, not just the views of a few leaders

Negotiating Identity in the Local Framework

The two organisations discussed above demonstrate that by the early 1950s, the shift from identification with China to identification with the new nations had become the prevailing direction of identity change in the Chinese community in both countries. For

the strong sense of sympathetic identification with China engendered by the Sino-Japanese War in the late 1930s to change to identification with the new nations in less than two decades was remarkable. The two major Chinese community organisations discussed above played the part of socialising the new identity concepts that had been developed in the late 1940s, of taking them beyond the restricted Chinese intellectual circles where they had originated and broadcasting them throughout the Chinese community.

Observing this process, it is plain that the identity change among the Southeast Asian Chinese was not the result of China changing its overseas Chinese policy. The Asian-African Conference in Bandung in 1955 has often been seen as the watershed of identity change for Southeast Asian Chinese. At this conference, Zhou Enlai, on behalf of the Chinese government, announced a new policy toward overseas Chinese; to abolish dual nationality, and to encourage overseas Chinese to become citizens of their countries of residence.⁷⁵ A good example of the usual understanding of national identity among Southeast Asian Chinese is reflected by the historian Chen Guohua: 'On 22 April, 1955 at Bandung, representatives of the Chinese and Indonesian governments signed a treaty on dual nationality. The Chinese government formally declared the abandonment of the citizenship law based on Chinese descent, and rejection of the principle of dual

⁷⁵ For example, Lie Tek Tjeng wrote 'Indonesia' s one-China policy, recognising Beijing, is the reason why, around the time of the Bandung Conference in 1955, PM Zhou Enlai signed the dual nationality treaty with Indonesia.' See Lie Tek Tjeng, 'Indonesia' s Citizens of Chinese Descent: Terminology' . in *Citra Indonesia*, 2:008, August 1996, p. 11.

nationality. After this, great numbers of overseas Chinese changed their nationality, fundamentally altering the structure of the overseas Chinese community'.⁷⁶

This is a misunderstanding, however, based on the belief that 'What was even more important to the speed of assimilation than the changes within the Chinese communities themselves, was the changing attitude in China towards emigrants.'⁷⁷ In fact, China's policy towards overseas Chinese had never been a very influential factor in the Southeast Asian Chinese community. Politicians put much weight on China's policy because it had importance for indigenous Southeast Asians. But the importance of new concepts arising from within the Chinese community is correspondingly neglected.

By the time of this conference, the Chinese communities had been, on their own initiative, searching for new identities in Malaya and Indonesia since the end of the Pacific war. It has been demonstrated in previous chapters that new ideas on Chinese identity in the new nations had been developed by some groups of people in both Malaya and Indonesia in the 1940s. But up to the end of the 1940s, these new ideas were confined to a few groups of intellectuals. They were broadcast through the mass media, but had not yet reached community level. The new approaches to identity had remained without mass support or real practical effect, due to lack of a mechanisms to transform the new identity concepts into action. In the 1950s new organisations were founded which could act according to the new identity concepts and cause them to take

⁷⁶ Chen Guo Hua, *Xianquzhe di jiaoyin: haiwai huaren jiaoyu sanbainian*. [The Footprints of Pioneers-Three Hundreds Years of Overseas Chinese Education]. (Canada: Royal Kingsway Inc., 1992), p. 403. 陳國華，<<先驅者的腳印----海外華人教育三百年>> (Canada: Royal Kingsway Inc., 1992), 403.

effect for the majority of members of the Chinese community. In this chapter we have studied the two most influential Chinese organisations representing the Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia as they negotiated the balance of national identity and cultural identity in the new nations.

From the analysis of these two major associations, it is clear that the Chinese people were willing to integrate into the new nations. But they wanted to be respected in their maintenance of cultural Chineseness. In Malaya, the Chinese education system was seen as part of the essential cultural heritage of the Chinese community. In order to preserve this system, the leaders of UCSTA believed that they needed to show their loyalty to the new nation. Because Chinese associations urged the Chinese community to become Malayan citizens, citizenship did not become a question concerning the loyalty of the Chinese in Malaysia. In Indonesia, there was no consensus of opinion in the Chinese community on language policy, education and citizenship, so the leaders of Baperki advocated a free choice policy. Because the structure of the Chinese community was more complex than in Malaya, to develop a policy that required the Chinese to act in concert on this issue in a short time was impossible. So Baperki called on the government to protect the right to choose on citizenship and education issues. Baperki later devoted itself to providing Chinese education and won the support of the Chinese community because of its efforts.⁷⁸ The Baperki schools were Indonesian

⁷⁷ Speech by Lois Michison, cited from Victor Purcell, *The Position of the Chinese in Southeast Asia*. (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations.1950), p. 45.

⁷⁸ This came from Ang Yan Guan' s memoir and my interview with Nancy Wijaya. Ang Yan Guan thought this was a major contribution of Baperki, and Nancy Wijaya, a former student of Baperki University and now the Chairman of Oriental Language and Culture Centre in Jakarta, thought that Baperki' s effort

national schools, different from Chinese schools run by pro-KMT or pro-CCP groups, where Chinese was the medium of instruction. Even using Indonesian as the language of instruction and curriculum, the Baperki schools also taught Chinese language for ethnic Chinese who were Indonesian citizens.⁷⁹

In this period, the traditional idea of Chinese identity—that is, once a Chinese, Chinese forever—remained strong among some sections of the Chinese community in Malaya and Indonesia. A process of socialization of these new identity concepts was necessary in this time of transition. This took place during the first half of the 1950s through organisations such as Baperki and UCSTA. These two associations contributed a lot to this process.

The Position of Minorities as Part of a Diaspora

Another angle from which to approach new identity concepts among the Chinese in Indonesia and Malaya is from the double difficulty they faced as a minority group which was at the same time part of a diaspora. As a minority race in the new nations, they were under great pressure to assimilate into the mainstream of society; but as part of a diaspora, no matter to what degree they succeeded in assimilating, they would always retain certain cultural and physical characteristics, and would always be

inspired some Chinese youth who are now major supporters for her Centre (The biggest private centre for Chinese language education in Jakarta at the time I did the interview on 15 January 1997 in Jakarta).

⁷⁹ For the situation of the Baperki schools, see Charles A. Coppel, 'Should There be Chinese Schools in Indonesia?' , in *Proceedings on Chinese Education in Southeast Asia*, (Taipei: National Cultural Association, 1995).

regarded as 'Chinese'. As Donald et al. theoretically conceptualized the situation of a trading minority, diaspora Chinese are subject to three regimes: the regime of the Chinese family, the regime of the capitalist workplace and the regime of the nation-state.⁸⁰ These regimes often contradict each other.

If the possession of citizenship did not guarantee the right to the maintenance of certain Chinese cultural practices, it was likely that the Chinese would always be subject to claims that they were not properly part of mainstream life. The Southeast Asian Chinese were often seen as an exclusive ethnic group who did not intend to identify themselves with their local communities. In fact ethnic Chinese did develop their own way of local identity, but the cultural programs of the new nations became a barrier to inclusion in national society. The new Southeast Asian states tried to adopt the formula of modern nation-states which pursues 'One state one nation'. This formula gave only a narrow space for ethnic Chinese to adjust themselves to the new situation. We will see how the Chinese communities tried to adjust their identity in order to fit into the new framework of the nation.

The question was how the ethnic Chinese should keep a balance between ethnicity and citizenship, considering their status as a minority in a new nation. From the cases of Baperki and UCSTA, influential associations among ethnic Chinese in Indonesia and Malaya, we can see that all of their activities aimed to settle ethnic Chinese in the framework of the new nations. Under the leadership of these two associations, the

⁸⁰ Donald M. Nonini and Aihwa Ong, "Chinese Transnationalism as Alternative Modernity", In Aihwa Ong and Donald M. Nonini eds. *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Political of Modern Chinese Transnationalism*. (New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 3-33.

ethnic Chinese endeavoured, on the one hand to show their loyalty and respect towards the new countries and on the other hand to negotiate the conditions for preserving a certain degree of Chineseness. In the early 1950s, the two countries were in very different situations. Indonesia had gained its independence, while Malaya was still under the rule of the British colonial administration but was on the way to earning its independence. The will to maintain a certain degree of Chineseness was seen as either an unpatriotic attitude towards the new nation or as a potential threat associated with communism from China.

So the main issue in this period was the relationship between cultural identity and citizenship. In Malaya, the Chinese wanted to earn full citizenship from the beginning of the post-war era. This made the Malays feel threatened, economically and politically, because of the position of the Chinese in business and their real or imputed links with China. In Indonesia, the new nation wanted more Chinese to become citizens. Only half of the Chinese population accepted Indonesian citizenship, and this caused anger among *pribumi* politicians. The issue of providing Chinese education for the Chinese in Malaya and Indonesia went to the heart of the issue of Chinese identity. The Chinese in Malaya wished to show their loyalty toward the new nation by earning citizenship in order to pursue equal rights for mother tongue education. In Indonesia, some Chinese worried that they could not receive Chinese language education for their children, so they rejected Indonesian citizenship. Both cases show that the citizenship issue among Chinese in both Indonesia and Malaya would always be strongly associated with the question of how to maintain Chineseness. The situation was very

different from that of most immigrants in new territories.⁸¹ Chinese people had been settled in Southeast Asia for centuries, but they were always seen as foreigners because some of them insisted on maintaining a certain degree of Chineseness. Today it is more common for a group of people to keep their cultural roots in one soil and at the same time to be citizens of another nation.

For any minority race that also belongs to a diaspora, it is not easy to strike a balance between maintaining their own cultural practices and establishing a new identity. It is often a tragedy for any kind of diaspora when the host society and the fatherland have a dispute. The will and opinion of local Chinese diasporic communities have often been neglected. The authorities of the host society tend to doubt the loyalty of the local diasporic communities, no matter how many generations they had been in the host society, or what their feelings were toward the host society. The voices of the local Chinese communities in Southeast Asia were not easily heard by either authorities or experts, when China had a different ideology from the Southeast Asian countries. When the Chinese Communist Party won the civil war and took power in China in 1949, the local Chinese communities were judged by this situation rather than by their own opinions on their identity.

When Victor Purcell read his paper at the Eleventh Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations, Lucknow, India, in October 3-15, 1950, his main concern was in

⁸¹ Wang, Xiunan (Wang Shiow Nan), *Jinji Nanyang huaren mianlin de san da wenti: zhongzu, guoji, jiaoyu*. [Three urgent issues for the Southeast Asian Chinese; ethnicity, nationality and education]. (Singapore: Southeast Asian Annals, 1976) 王秀南, <<今日南洋華人面臨的三大問題——種族、國籍、教育>>。〈東南亞年鑑第一輯〉。(新加坡, 1976)。

'relation to the spread of Communism in Southeast Asia'. He paid special attention to the statements of the Central People's Government of China on overseas Chinese.⁸² In these circumstances, the opinion of the Chinese community was naturally neglected. This was why the Indonesian authorities arrested the Chinese leaders who had led the Chinese community to assist the Indonesian struggle for independence two years ago, and put them in prison on suspicion of their connections with Communist China in 1951.⁸³ This was why the British authorities would not include the Chinese in their consultations on the committee of the Federation of Malaya in 1948. These are examples of the government in power linking the fate of the local Chinese directly to China's international relations.

The Historical Linkage

A further important angle from which to view the development of new identity among the Indonesian and Malayan Chinese in the 1950s is the historical angle. On the surface, the two Chinese organisations founded in the 1950s discussed above were organised in response to particular events of the time, and have no direct relation to previous history. In fact there is a strong link with the past if the cultural viewpoint of these organisations is taken into account.

⁸² Victor Purcell, *The Position of the Chinese in Southeast Asia*. (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations.1950). pp. 73-77.

⁸³ The arrests were an anti-Communist drive by the Sukiman cabinet which was not solely directed against ethnic Chinese. About the context of the arrests, see Herbert Feith, *Indonesian Politics 1949-1957: The Decline of the Representative Government*. (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University, 1961), pp. 188-189.

The examples of Baperki and UCSTA illustrate that this cultural viewpoint was deeply influenced by the events of previous history. In Malaya, the reason UCSTA demonstrated such strong identification with Malaya was related to its perception of the past. The founder of UCSTA often expressed sentiments like this: 'Malaya has achieved independence from colonial rule through the combined efforts of the three races, the Malays, Indians and Chinese. No race is subject to any other. Their positions should be equal, with no distinction between master and slave'.⁸⁴ This point of view is heir to the understanding of history that developed out of the discussions of identification with Malaya within the Chinese community in the late 1940s. This historical understanding relates to the 'Nanyang identity' discussed above, the Sino-Japanese war and the Japanese occupation.

In Malaya, the experience of anti-Japanese armed resistance, which was the first time Chinese people died for Malaya, remains an important legacy of pride within the Chinese community, but without recognition in the subsequent national history of Malaysia. The slogan of MPAJA, the force that conducted the anti-Japanese armed resistance, was 'Kang Ri wei Ma',⁸⁵ meaning 'Resist the Japanese and Protect Malaya'. There were three red stars in the flag of MPAJA, symbolizing the solidarity of the three races: Chinese, Malays and Indians. It was alleged to be the first political proclamation to include the three races in the history of Malaya, even though MPAJA was always a

⁸⁴ Lim Lian Geok (Lin Lian Yu) *Fengyu shibanian*. [Eighteen years of tempests] (Kuala Lumpur: Lin Lian Yu Foundation, 1990), p. 63. 林連玉, <風雨十八年>。(吉隆坡: 林連玉基金委員會, 1990), 63.。

⁸⁵ Kang Ri wei Ma (抗日衛馬).

Chinese-dominated group.⁸⁶ After the end of the Japanese occupation, the idea of the three races working together became a new political ideal within the Nanyang Chinese community.

The same thing is manifest among the Indonesian Chinese. Baperki was deeply influenced by the history of the past twenty years. Siauw Giok Tjhan, for instance, is a representative figure among the Chinese who participated in the Indonesian nationalist movement during the Japanese occupation. In his memoirs, Siauw stresses that before he joined the revolutionary forces, he was inspired by the Malaysian Chinese leader Tan Kah Kee in Malang.⁸⁷ Although discussion of the Chinese in Indonesia has always distinguished between *totok* and *peranakan*, and the distinction can be made up to a point, the majority of Chinese had social dealings with both *totok* and *peranakan*, and could be influenced politically by either.

The establishment of these two Chinese organisations separately but in the same period in Indonesia and in Malaya has particular historical implications. If the Chinese residents of Indonesia and Malaya had not undergone the intense political changes that they experienced, the two Chinese organisations might not have established themselves in the way they did. Many people see both cases as different since Malaysia became a successful example of the preservation of Chinese education in Southeast Asia, while Chinese education in Indonesia was completely eliminated. Although the cultural standpoints of the Chinese communities and the circumstances under which the

⁸⁶ Kennedy Gordon Tregonning, *A History of Modern Malaya*. (Tucson, Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 1960), p. 285.

⁸⁷ Siauw Giok Tjhan, *Lima Zaman Perwujudan Integrasi Wajar*. (Jakarta: Yayasan Teratai, 1981), p. 121.

Malayan and Indonesian Chinese communities attempted to preserve their Chineseness were very different for both cases, these are subsequent developments under the similar principle. If we look at the first half of the 1950s, before the Chinese communities in Indonesia and Malaya had experienced much impact from the policies either of China or of the governments of the new nations, the points of view on identity and culture expressed by Chinese in both countries are similar; that political identity and the preservation of culture can be considered separately, that they willingly identified with the new nations but wanted to preserve a certain degree of Chinese cultural practice, and that the maintenance of these elements of culture should be recognised as a right enjoyed by all citizens.

Conclusion: Being in the Middle

New immigrants changing their concept of their identity, from identification with the original fatherland to becoming part of their new place of residence, is a universal phenomenon. It is a much-discussed topic in countries founded on immigration, such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA.¹ Even in the countries known collectively as Asia, change in national identification is not at all unheard of; apart from the Chinese, there is no lack of examples of this among Arabs and Indians.² The reorientation of national identity of the Nanyang Chinese between the 1930s and the 1950s, which has been demonstrated in this study, was a particular historical phenomenon involving concepts of identity that arose in response to particular major political changes. We should regard this process as historically contingent, not as an instance of a universal and inevitable process.

¹ Ho, Katy Wai Kwan, *Plurality Of Identity And Culture: The Wanderer Motif In Contemporary Chinese And Chinese-American Writings*. (Hong Kong : Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1996). Tian, Guang, Chinese-Canadians, *Canadian-Chinese : Coping And Adapting In North America*. (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1999). Lai, H. Mark, *Cong huaqiao dao huaren*. [From Huaqiao to Huaren]. (Hong Kong: Sanlien Publishing Co., 1992). 麥禮謙, <從華僑到華人: 二十世紀美國華人社會發展史>, (香港: 三聯書店(香港)有限公司, 1992). Arthur Huck, *The Assimilation Of The Chinese In Australia*. (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1970). Ng, Bickleen Fong, *The Chinese In New Zealand: A Study In Assimilation*. (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1959). Manying Ip, *Dragons On The Long White Cloud: The Making Of Chinese New Zealanders*. (North Shore City, New Zealand: Tandem Press, 1996).

² For example, Domindo Abella, 'From Indio to Filipino' In *From Indio to Filipino and Some Historical Works*. (Philippines: Milagros Romualdez-Abella, 1979), p. 1-30. Natalie Mobini-Kesheh, *The Hadrami Awakening : Community and Identity in the Netherlands East Indies, 1900-1942*. (Cornell University, 1999). Rajakrishnan Ramasamy, *Sojourners to Citizens: Sri Lankan Tamils in Malaysia, 1885-1965*. (Kuala Lumpur: Sri Veera Trading, 1988).

I have sought in this dissertation to use Chinese language resources to narrate the process of identity change among Nanyang Chinese in this critical period, in order to present and explore their own voices, which are often neglected, and to reach a better understanding of this new identity concept from the subjective point of view. This new identity concept can be summed up as the product of a *huaren* discourse on Chineseness, which arose out of a number of related debates and actions on specific topics of importance at the time. This *huaren* discourse on Chineseness separated political identity from cultural identity, resulting in a new point of view whereby Chinese could identify politically with the new countries, while culturally maintaining a certain degree of Chineseness. I have described the circumstances of the development of this discourse. The discourse gave rise to the dominant tendency of cultural change throughout all communities of Nanyang Chinese in the post-war era. Even though Chinese communities in Malaya and in Indonesia were differently composed in terms of population, economic status, and migration history, as well as being in different countries, the basic principles for construction of identity were similar in each case.

Another aim of this dissertation has been to clarify the image imposed on Nanyang Chinese during this period. The popular image of ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia in the 1950s, suggested by many studies, was of sojourners who did not see their place of residence as home. In contrast to this image, many Chinese energetically engaged with the new situation in the transitional era in Southeast Asia, and were eager to establish a new identity for Chinese communities within the new nations. They expressed their loyalty to the new nations and encouraged other Chinese to adopt this patriotic sentiment even before the new nations had gained their independence. The pro-

Malayan or Indonesian sentiments expressed by Nanyang Chinese would have been seen as nationalistic if expressed by *pribumi*, or indigenous people of Southeast Asia. But their situation of being a minority and part of a diaspora in a time of dramatic political change meant that their sentiments could not be treated as nationalistic, even though this kind of feeling among the Nanyang Chinese was not in fact different from that shared by other ethnic groups in the new nations.

There were many misunderstandings between ethnic Chinese and indigenous people in the early period of nation-building in Indonesia and Malaya. Among these misunderstandings, the idea of preserving 'Chineseness' was the most frequent cause of problems between Chinese and indigenous people. The trouble was that the motivation of the Chinese was always doubted if they insisted on preserving a certain degree of Chineseness. Usually, Chinese people were asked to give up their cultural practices, as a sign to confirm that they rejected the previous history of ethnic separation under the colonial rulers. In both countries, the Chinese tried to persuade the authorities that people could remain Chinese culturally and at the same time be loyal to the new nation as citizens. This approach, which in principle could be called 'multiculturalism' as we see it in many countries today, failed to convince the *pribumi*-dominated authorities at that time.

This question has persisted unresolved to the present day. What happened in ethnic relations in the past affected subsequent historical developments. The aftermath of the struggle of the Chinese for 'cultural civil rights' remained the central issue in ethnic relations between Chinese and the non-Chinese authorities. In Malaysia, the Chinese education system survived but government policy would restrain its development. The

conflict in so-called 'ethnic politics' was always caused by the issue of preserving Chineseness.³ Even though Chinese cultural institutions and practices have been preserved in Malaysia, forming a culturally homogeneous nation is still considered desirable by the authorities in Malaysia. In Indonesia, successive governments including the Guided Democracy and New Order regimes maintained a policy of opposing the Chineseness of the ethnic Chinese in order to assimilate them. The latter even banned the Chinese language for more than three decades.⁴ This assimilation policy, however, as many analyses of the New Order have shown, did not help to promote mutual understanding or make ethnic relations better between *pribumi* and Chinese. This issue, which can be seen as the legacy of the early history of Indonesian nation-building, remains unresolved.

The problem of identity came into being because of the acceptance in Indonesia and Malaysia of the intellectual blueprint for the modern nation state, according to which a nation is considered to be a culturally or socially homogeneous entity, and in which a nation state is a modern state founded according to this point of view, within which a single form of national identity exists. D. L. Sheth has commented that many multi-ethnic societies in Asia tried to adopt the idea of the modern nation-state in the process

³ Huazi Resource Centre, *Malaixiya zongzu liangjihuazhi genyuan*. [The Roots of Polarization of Racial Relationships in Malaysia] (Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Perhimpunan China Selangor, 1987). 華社資料研究中心編，〈馬來西亞種族兩極化之根源〉。(吉隆坡：馬來西亞雪蘭莪中華大會堂，1987)。

⁴ This is the only instance in world history of use of the Chinese language being banned for a large Chinese community. Tsung-Rong Edwin Yang, 'Cultural Identity and Cultural Capital: The Chinese Language Problem in Indonesia' International Conference on Chinese Language, Taipei, December 1997. 楊聰榮 <<文化認同與文化資本：印度尼西亞華語文問題的新發展>>，第五屆世界華語文教學研討會，台北，December 1997.

of nation-building, and this has been the source of problems involving identity for many Asian ethnic groups in modern history.⁵

This is an old topic: the conflict between the ideas of citizenship and ethnicity. The idea of citizenship in its original Enlightenment form emphasizes equal rights of citizens regardless of their ethnicity, language, religion and other cultural characteristics. But in many countries, the establishment of a homogeneous population culturally distinct from other nations has been understood as the aim of national integration. Citizenship becomes identified with cultural characteristics. In the context of Malay nationalism in Malaya and *pribumi* nationalism in Indonesia, a good citizen means a citizen who can give up the cultural heritage of his or her ancestors in order to accommodate the demands of patriotic loyalty, though he or she will still be considered to belong to a minority with a 'foreign' connection.

Geertz has demonstrated, on the question of integration in the new nations, that the effects of primordial sentiments such as those concerned with differences of race, religion, language or cultural practice, have conflicted to some degree with the establishment of the civil state, which in turn has led to a large scale 'integrative revolution' developing in these new states.⁶ The problem is, the impact on the Chinese as they went through this process of integration has not so far received sufficient attention.

⁵ D. L. Sheth, 'Nation-Building in Multi-ethnic Societies: The Experience of South Asia.' . Alternatives XIV:379-388, 1989.

⁶ Geertz, Clifford, 'The Integrative Revolution----Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States' ,in *Old Societies and New States*. (New York: Free Press, 1963), p. 109.

Under the circumstances existing in these two countries, the *huaren* discourse of Chineseness that arose from within the Chinese community gave rise to the new identity concept, including the element of loyalty to the nation of which they were citizens or hoped to be, and the Chinese community organisations that attracted broad-based support expressed it systematically in public life. The preservation of cultural Chineseness sought by the Nanyang Chinese did not prevent them from becoming citizens of their countries of residence, and though the concept arose in the immediate post-war period, it has retained effect until now.

The struggle to maintain Chineseness used to be seen as retrograde. Many believed that time was on the side of assimilation. It is quite true that cultural practices among immigrants changed very quickly in most cases of modern migration. However, diaspora has never been simply a matter of one-way movement from home to host country. The desire among ethnic Chinese to restore Chinese cultural heritage has recently become more and more visible, in its different aspects, in Indonesia and Malaysia. In Indonesia the lifting of the ban on Chinese print media was associated with cases of violation of human rights in the last years of the New Order. Those violations and the reaction to them made changes in the strong policy of assimilation toward Chinese necessary after President Suharto stepped down. The new government intended to abolish the discriminatory policy which forced Chinese to give up their Chinese cultural characteristics, including Chinese names and the right to celebrate Chinese festivals. The country had taken three or four decades to learn the lesson that to assimilate Chinese was not the right way of dealing with those whose ancestors were foreigners.

Today the idea of multiculturalism, which accepts that people can be good citizens of one country and preserve the cultural heritage associated with another, is established in countries which are founded on migrant populations. In the past, in the age of struggle for or against nationalism and Communism in Southeast Asia, to have a foreign connection meant one's loyalty was easily doubted. Today, linkage to foreign countries can become an advantage in the age of the global economy. As Ong Aihwa suggested with the concept of "flexible citizenship", global capitalist accumulation is involved with the cultural logic of Chinese transnational practices in a form of "fraternal network capitalism". Ethnic Chinese from different countries are becoming tied through production, trade, and financial circles, leading to the rise of new cultural representations of "Chineseness", which is not based on any nation-state, but based on ties of Chinese ethnic origin, language and culture in the global context.⁷

In this study, new approaches to identity have been illustrated by various source materials. This direction in identity was developed by some leaders of the Chinese community and gained mass support from the grassroots level. Through the process of their evolution, such ideas have caused China-oriented patriotism to evolve into local-oriented patriotism. In the previous chapters the process of identity change for Nanyang Chinese has been explored. Here I would like to summarize the process in five stages, as follows.

⁷ Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

The first stage is the development of Nanyang identity, which arose in the 1930s, as argued in Chapter Two. For a long time, the way Chinese migrants in Southeast Asia changed their status and attitude from that of sojourners to that of settlers has been a fascinating issue for scholars in this field. Even though the history of migration of ethnic Chinese to Southeast Asia has been a long one, for most places in Southeast Asia the major increase in the number of Chinese people took place between the late 19th century and the early 20th century. The current situation of the ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia should be understood by tracing their origins in modern history rather than in ancient history. The tradition of the history of 'overseas Chinese' seems quite often to take for granted its beginnings in the early history of marine travel. This 'tradition' was actually constructed into the so-called Nanyang studies of the 1930s, which provided a setting for the historical imagination by which ethnic Chinese could interpret their existence in the Southeast Asian territories. It seems clear that the Nanyang studies by Chinese scholars in the 1930s were inspired by the contemporary Japanese Nan'yō studies. In that sense, the interaction between the Chinese vision and the Japanese vision of Southeast Asia before the war is worth reviewing in relation to the identity shift.

The second stage of this new approach to identity was the strengthening of Chinese patriotism during the Sino-Japanese war, 1937-1941. Even though this patriotism was directed towards China, the ancestral land of Chinese residents in Southeast Asia, it contributed to the identity shift in three ways. First, it encouraged the Chinese to integrate as one community. Second, through the experience of fighting the Japanese, the Nanyang Chinese developed the idea of belonging to their territory in the South, as

the Japanese threat to China and that to Nanyang were linked. Third, they learned political participation from this patriotic movement.

The third stage of this approach was the impact of Japanese pan-Asianism under the Japanese occupation, 1941-1945. The Japanese impact on Chinese identity seems contradictory in some ways. Japanese policy made the Chinese communities more China-oriented, as the Chinese were treated as one group. At the same time, Japanese pan-Asian ideology introduced a new political doctrine, which was more local-oriented. The wartime experience gave Chinese a chance to become involved in local affairs, which was a new situation for them. Racially discriminatory policies under the Japanese led to tension between Chinese and indigenous populations. It is clear that the Japanese occupation made Chinese people turn towards local affairs, and made the identity issue turn from an individual to a collective issue. Through the experience of three years of Japanese occupation, Chinese people learned 'pro-native' ideology from Japanese pan-Asianism. Their desire to become closer to the native people of Indonesia and Malaysia was fostered by the implications of pan-Asian ideology. People learnt this discourse to demonstrate their closeness to the *pribumi*. In this sense, the Japanese contributed to the Chinese shifting their identification from China to Southeast Asia through the viewpoints and opportunities provided during the Japanese occupation.

The fourth stage of this approach was the development of anti-colonialism in the post-war era, 1945-1949. At a time of strong anti-colonialist struggles in many former colonies around the world, Chinese intellectuals worked hard to formulate and broadcast anti-colonialist opinion in the Chinese media, in order to persuade the apolitical Chinese community to support the struggle for independence. The

widespread moral support for anti-colonialism in general made the Chinese community eager to support the anti-colonialist struggle in the territories in which they lived.

The fifth stage of this approach was generation of the idea of cultural civil rights, 1950-1955. The community leaders who encouraged the Chinese to gain local citizenship strongly believed that they had the right to maintain their cultural practices as citizens of the new nations. This strong belief drove them to mobilise resources from the Chinese community and to negotiate for cultural rights with the authorities. The central issue in the negotiations was Chinese education. This multi-cultural approach, however, did not gain support from the authorities, for whom the dominant ideology was *pribumi* nationalism, which tried to pursue 'one people for one nation'.⁸ The conflict between this "multicultural" separation of ethnicity from nationality and *pribumi* nationalism caused troubles in inter-ethnic relations which still remain today.

The identities of ethnic Chinese, as shown in this study, have undergone a process of intensive change from the 1930s to the 1950s. The changes of this period gave rise to the basic conceptual structure of identity of ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia which can be seen today. Understanding of this process enables us better to understand the present cultural stance of the Chinese in Southeast Asia, and their relations with the other ethnic groups of Southeast Asia. Analysis of this process also demonstrates that this process of change was specific to Southeast Asia, and was quite different from the gradual process by which immigrant populations changed the focus of their national

⁸ About the nationalist movements in the formal European colonies, see Anthony D. Smith, *State and Nation in the Third World: The Western State and African Nationalism*. (Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books, 1983).

identification as one generation succeeded another, which has taken place in other immigrant societies.

It is easy to see that the process of identity change was deeply influenced by the particular historical circumstances of the time and place. If it were not for the 'Nanyang identity' that emerged in the 1930s, subsequent generations of Chinese might not have evolved a new tendency to identify with Southeast Asia, and might have remained like other 'floating populations', staying where they were as long as they were welcome, and going their way once they were not. If it were not for the strong, collective consciousness of being Chinese engendered by the Sino-Japanese war, they might have remained like the Chinese in Australia or in other immigrant nations, keeping to distinct sub-ethnic communities, while the issue of national identification remained for the individual to decide. If it were not for the links with the native populations forged out of necessity by Japanese pan-Asianist policy under the occupation, which went as far as Japanese preparations for establishment of a new nation with Chinese participation, the 'Chinese question' might have remained merely a set of legal questions, concerning who would be citizens of the new state and come under its laws, and would never have become an issue of individual virtue or political morality.

If the post-war debate on identity had not taken place in an atmosphere fiercely committed to anti-colonialism, which gave rise to the separation of political and cultural identity, the 'discourse of Chineseness' would not have developed. That is, the Chinese would have awaited the outcome of Southeast Asian political events, stayed if they were permitted to, and gone elsewhere if they were not, and would not have striven to prove their loyalty to the new nations. If the Nanyang Chinese had not reached these views on

'cultural civil rights', they would not have founded representative organisations to negotiate with the authorities of the new states for the right to citizenship while retaining their cultural heritage, and ethnic relations between Chinese and native populations in both Indonesia and Malaysia might present quite a different picture.

Looking back over the whole process of identity change among the Southeast Asian Chinese, we can re-examine the statements advanced in Chapter 1 about the possible meaning and importance of this research. Concerning the *huaren* discourse, we have traced its Southeast Asian origins, the way it emerged out of the cultural baptism gone through under very specific historical conditions by Chinese intellectuals separately in Malaysia and Indonesia. These were the conditions that caused the *huaren* discourse of Chineseness to separate cultural from political identity for Chinese living outside China. This *huaren* discourse of Chineseness is now basic to the consciousness of Chinese of the diaspora in all parts of the world where there is a Chinese population. Today when we speak of Chinese living in other countries, we no longer assume that they are descendants of immigrants who all bear common cultural characteristics, but we can appreciate that the separate development of points of view on culture and identity in separate modern nation states is the contribution of the Southeast Asian Chinese to the issue of identity among Chinese around the world.

I have made it clear in this study that I consider the history of the Southeast Asian Chinese should be interpreted according to the standpoint of autonomous history. This has to be explained on two levels. First, the change in the sense of identity of Southeast Asian Chinese should not be seen as the result of change in the policy of the Chinese government towards overseas Chinese, or the result of international negotiations in

which the Indonesian government convinced the Chinese government to sign a treaty disallowing dual citizenship. On the contrary, cultural concepts arising from within the Chinese community in response to contemporary topics at different times caused the question of identity to shift in its emphasis, and these new identity concepts, including those concerning Chineseness and those concerning the understanding of local society, should be recognised as an autonomous development.

On another level, since the choice of the Nanyang Chinese to regard themselves as part of Southeast Asia was the outcome of a process of autonomous reflection and debate, they should then be regarded as part of Southeast Asia. They should no longer be regarded as representative of China in terms of the relations between China and their countries of residence, or discriminated against on the grounds that they are remnants of colonialism. Since historians of Southeast Asia claim that Southeast Asian history should be understood from the point of view of the people of Southeast Asia,⁹ the history of the Nanyang Chinese should therefore be understood in the same way.

Also, because this study crosses national boundaries, I have referred to the experiences of a number of very significant but often neglected Chinese writers, whose lives illustrate how historical events transcend national boundaries. At present, history in Southeast Asia is usually structured as national history. National history is still an important means towards understanding the history of the nations of Southeast Asia. However, it tends to gloss over minorities and minority points of view, and is even weaker when dealing with transnational phenomena. The particular character of the

Nanyang Chinese is that they have been both a minority and a transnational minority, so they are a topic which national history is especially ill-equipped to deal with. This study has necessarily gone beyond national boundaries in its treatment of its topic. The Chinese writers, in particular, were key figures in the development of new identity concepts among the Nanyang Chinese in this period, and the experiences of these writers themselves transcended national boundaries. To go a step further, the Nanyang Chinese view of local affairs at the time also transcended national boundaries. So it can be said that the experience of the Nanyang Chinese has contributed valuable material to scholars of history, in that it tends to break open the confines of the intellectual framework of national history. Ideally we should go on to develop further alternative frameworks for the study of history, to improve the current situation in which national history dominates in the field of Southeast Asia.

This study has also made changes to the traditional periodisation. It takes the 1930s to the 1950s as its scope, while the traditional method is to periodise history according to political changes. While this was the critical period for identity change among the Nanyang Chinese, it was also the critical transition period for modern Southeast Asian history in general. Selection of this periodisation avoids the failure of the traditional periodisation to adequately deal with this critical phase of transition in 20th century Southeast Asian society. The traditional periodisation uses regime changes as points of division between one period and the next, so that Southeast Asian history is often divided into pre-war and post-war periods. From this it follows that the influence of the Japanese occupation is not gone into in much detail, because it lasted for a short period

⁹ John R. W. Smail, "On the Possibility of an Autonomous History of Modern Southeast Asia" *Journal of*

only, and was overshadowed by the war and the damage it caused. There are few studies that deal specifically with this short period. Therefore its proper importance is not brought out. The only way to gain a clear understanding of the historically pivotal character of the occupation is to adopt the longer view. The Nanyang Chinese themselves are a very good example of the value of non-traditional periodisation, because the specific Japanese view of Southeast Asia, with which this study is concerned, developed some time before the occupation, and its influence in the sphere of political thought went on being felt after the occupation was over. If the period of transition is not seen as a whole, it is hard to talk about the meaning of this episode. So this study has experimented with a different periodisation, encompassing Japan's pre-war views on Southeast Asia and the post-war effects of Japanese occupation policy informed by these views as parts of a whole. I hoped to use the advantages of this different periodisation in discussing the influence of Japan's encounter with Southeast Asia, especially in increasing our understanding of its effects on subsequent relations between Nanyang Chinese and *pribumi*.

Finally, although this has been a study of change, there are some things concerning the centuries-long Chinese experience in Southeast Asia that have not changed. As with all kinds of social change, some elements have changed but some have remained the same. The objects of identification have changed, from China to Nanyang, from regions of China to places of residence in Southeast Asia, from Southern Chinese dialects/languages to national languages and even local languages in the Southeast Asian territories. Many concrete social contexts have changed. But some things have

remained the same over time. One of the important unchanged things is the character of ethnic Chinese as the middlemen from the Middle Kingdom. Ethnic Chinese still play the middle role between power elites and local communities, between local and foreign, between resource and agency. This persistent socio-economic role of the ethnic Chinese retains an echo, as social practice, of the doctrine of the Mean, a traditional Confucian doctrine, implying 'being in the middle'.

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