A Thesis submitted for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
of the Australian National University.

From Cradle to Playpen:
The Management of Chineseness in
Developmental State Singapore

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Declaration

I, Daphnée Hui Lin, LEE, hereby declare that this Doctor of Philosophy thesis is my original written work, and no part of it infringes on the intellectual property rights of other sources, reproduced in part, or as a whole. Where applicable, borrowed sources are relevantly cited, or when reproduced, emplaced in quotations, with references enclosed at the end of each chapter.

Daphnée Hui Lin, Lee
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Australian National University
Nov 2010
Abstract

The way Chineseness is managed by the state in ethnic Chinese majority nations is examined as a late-industrializing initiative. Using Singapore as the case study, identifications with Chineseness were studied for the key themes within late-industrializing discourse constructions. Chinese Singaporean respondents were asked for their interpretation of Chineseness in relation to their Western expatriate and Chinese mainlander colleagues. In some cases, Orientalist constructions emerged. This inquiry found the moderating factors of Orientalist discourse replications to be the respondent’s childhood socioeconomic background and linguistic primacy. The findings lent insights to the persistence of Orientalist constructions amongst individuals in late-industrializing societies. Insights as to how late-industrializing discourses constructions are moderated by factors distinctive from first-mover ones were sought. These insights enrich the theoretical framework of nation branding studies, a recent offshoot of nation studies with a marketing slant. Sociological considerations on the reproduction of late-industrializing predispositions were integrated through the concept of Marcotted Development.

Marcotted Development is advanced as the thesis’ conceptual framework. It explains the mediation of the late-industrializing landscape by two distinctive features. Firstly, ethnic management initiatives communicate the urgency of accelerated economic development amongst late-industrializing societies. Secondly, it emphasizes the presence of dual hegemony (i.e. Western dominance and Chinese ascendency) within the late-industrializing political economy.
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<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AEA</td>
<td>Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APEC</td>
<td>Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASME</td>
<td>Association of Small and Medium Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAC</td>
<td>Born-again Chineseness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Culture Circumvention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCI</td>
<td>Cross-Cultural Indices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMIO</td>
<td>Chinese, Malay, Indian, Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONDYN</td>
<td>Confucian Dynamism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVS</td>
<td>Chinese Value Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDB</td>
<td>Economic Development Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FDI</td>
<td>Foreign Direct Investments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTA</td>
<td>Free Trade Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIC</td>
<td>Government Investment Corporation of Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLC</td>
<td>Government Linked Corporations</td>
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<tr>
<td>GNP</td>
<td>Gross National Product</td>
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<tr>
<td>HDB</td>
<td>Housing Development Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>IC</td>
<td>Integrated Chineseness</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Info-Communications Technologies</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDV</td>
<td>Individualism Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAS</td>
<td>Masculinity Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>MNC</td>
<td>Multinational Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAFTA</td>
<td>North American Free Trade Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>NTUC</td>
<td>National Trade Union Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAP</td>
<td>People’s Action Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>PDI</td>
<td>Power Distance Index</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLE</td>
<td>Private Local Enterprise</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRC</td>
<td>People’s Republic of China</td>
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<td>SBF</td>
<td>Singapore Business Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Situational Chineseness</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIC</td>
<td>State Owned Investment Company (China)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SME</td>
<td>Small Medium Enterprise</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOE</td>
<td>State Owned Enterprise (China)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAI</td>
<td>Uncertainty Avoidance Index</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMNO</td>
<td>United Malays National Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>United States of America</td>
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<td>VSM</td>
<td>Value Survey Method</td>
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INTRODUCTION

Within my childhood memories of the early 1980s, some images during the evening news left a deep impression on me. They were of a fashion show held in China. I was amazed to see Chinese models on the catwalk. In Singapore, White models had dominated the fashion scene then, and perhaps they still do. But what kept me enraptured was the news commentary. The commentator talked about China opening its doors to the world. It was reported that China was expected to become the next global power. From the reactions of the adults around me, I knew this news had a tremendous impact.

In the following years, television advertisements trumpeting the slogan “多讲华语，少讲方言” (Mandarin: Speak Mandarin, Not Dialects) heralded the Speak Mandarin campaigns. Most of my Chinese classmates came from English- or Chinese dialect-speaking families. Learning Mandarin was a chore. But we were supposed to be good at it as it is our “mother tongue”. My English-speaking classmates were dismissive of learning Mandarin. Some were even proud to have failed their Chinese tests. Their dialect-speaking peers struggled along. Some of their parents struggled with the lingua franca conversion to English, while their grandparents, with Mandarin, as English was too tough for them. Anglicization or Mandarinization, both options were good by the 1980s. There was another group of Chinese classmates, a minority. They were refined and spoke crisp Mandarin. So did their parents.

How about non-Chinese classmates? Malay classmates became scarcer as I grew older. I had plenty of Malay friends when I was young. We knew our racial differences and joked about them. But then, they were not “racist jokes”. Now, interracial relations have turned formal. Noting our differences was not offensive in the past. Even though we were different, we were equal.

There were two groups that I was less familiar with in the 1980s. I occasionally saw the Ang Mo, the Hokkien colloquial term commonly used in Singapore to denote “White people”. But they were rarely sighted in the local
heartlands. The other group was almost invisible. The only memory I had was an old man who sang praises of Chairman Mao when he returned from China. My mother told me he was a “Communist” in his younger days. I questioned no further due to the foreboding tone in which the statement was delivered. It seemed he must have done something nasty in the past despite his gentle disposition.

The gaps in my childhood memories reflect the prohibitions in ethnic management throughout Singapore history. It dawned upon me that those private observations in my childhood were not really my private thoughts. They are products of the state because my race-ethnic identity is the outcome of ethnic management initiatives. Ethnic management is the statist attempt to organize a population into administrative units based on the principle of race. Also, these thoughts were likely shared by many within the nation who had my experience with ethnic management. Through the negative imageries of “Chinese chauvinism”, “Western decadence” and “Malay indolence”, prohibitions were communicated through the childhood experience of being Chinese Singaporean. The foreboding tones of the adults, which I recalled from the past, resonated with that of the state’s in the communication of negative imagery. Negative imagery refers to the derogatory cultural stereotypes in the public statements of state figures or state-controlled agencies, with the intent of steering the population away from the targets of objection.

**Research Problem**

The capitalist-industrial political economy is characterized by the uneven development between first-mover and late-industrializing economies. As capitalist-industrialization emerged from the Euro-American region, the “West” is often associated with the first-movers of this movement. The “East”, conversely, joined the movement only one or two centuries after. This resulted

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1 (Brown 1994:1)
in the polarization of the global political economy into the East-West
dichotomy.

With many late-industrializing nations rapidly gaining material
affluence, the attempts to mediate, or even transcend this polarization ensued.
But the first-mover advantage depends on the ability to ride on the first wave
of capitalist-industrialization. Affluent late-industrializing nations at best
attained only semi-peripheral statuses. With late-industrializing China vying
for global hegemony, the East-West dichotomy, paradoxically, appears to
have become even more irreconcilable\(^2\). The chasm between “East” and
“West” persisted in spite of economic affluence. Its enactment is dependent
upon economic credentials, yet its continuity becomes independent of it.

I posit that primordial identifications are constructed notions
symbolizing one’s standing within an order of socioeconomic relationships.
Its expression communicates the socioeconomic resources one possesses,
euphemized as prescribed primordial identities. Prescribed primordialism then
becomes ingrained within manifest behavioral predispositions. These
predispositions are enduring because primordial identifications and past
socioeconomic credentials are mutually reinforcing. Although primordial
identifications are constructed, they are based on the concrete structural
hierarchies prevalent at the time of its construction. Likewise, the continuity
of this hierarchical order is reinforced through primordial identifications.

Chineseness represents one of such expressions of primordialism. It
refers to how an individual comes to identify with a collective through one’s
identification with “being Chinese”. Primordial identifications arise out of the
contact with cultural others. In particular, Wang affirms from a historical
perspective that Chineseness is a Western imperial notion\(^3\). This thesis
reinterprets Wang’s views on Chineseness from a sociological vantage point.

Within the capitalist-industrial political economy, Chineseness is
commonly associated with late-industrialization. I seek to understand the

\(^2\) (Huntington 1996; Khanna 2008; Radtke 2007)
\(^3\) (2009:204)
responses by late-industrializing nations toward the hegemonic impositions of
the first-movers; in particular, the use of Chineseness as a symbolic tool to
frame the responses. The study of Chineseness is chosen because China is
increasingly cited as the late-industrializing nation that offers an alternative to
Western development⁴. It symbolizes the potential for greatness despite its
status as a late-industrializing nation. Conversely, from the perspective of the
globally hegemonic West, Chineseness is symbolic of a rising challenge to
their dominance. Yet, this identification is also associated with bountiful
market opportunities for Western multinational corporations. Therefore, the
expression of primordial associations/dissociations with Chineseness is the
articulation of the function an individual (and/or a nation-state) intends to play
within the global political economy. This individual (and/or nation-state)
would, either voluntarily or involuntarily, be associated with the quality of
Chineseness, either by ascription or invention.

Although Chineseness is currently most commonly associated with
China, the interest in Chineseness was focused elsewhere prior to China’s
ascendancy. Studies on Chineseness had initially focused on its diasporic
communities more so than on China⁵. The notion of “Greater China” gained
momentum only with its later economic liberalization ⁶. Given the
circumstances, I seek to explore how Chineseness is managed in diasporic
communities with the advent of Chinese ascendancy; in particular, the efforts
to reconnect with China through primordial notions of Chineseness. At the
same time, expressions of Chineseness are also seen as indicative of Western
economic imperatives. As the first-movers in the global economy, the West
continues to define how race, region and culture are to be perceived.

With this inquiry, I seek insights to how late-industrializing societies
reconcile the dual hegemonic demands of Chinese ascendancy and Western
capitalist-industrial dominance. In particular, I am interested in finding out

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⁴ (Yan 2007)
⁵ (Chan 2000a; Chan 2000b; Chan 2003; Chan 2005; Chan and Chiang 1994; Chan and Ng
2001; Jomo 2003; Menkhoff 1993; Yeung 2002; Yeung 2006; Yeung 2007)
2001:926; Tu 1994:13)
how Chineseness is managed for Singapore’s developmental imperatives. Singapore has been chosen as a case study based on two considerations. Firstly, Singapore’s ethnic management strategy towards Chineseness is linked to Chinese economic ascendency. The choice of Singapore as a case study allows for the examination of how a Chinese-majority nation adapted its race-ethnic associations in response to China’s ascendancy. When China descended into the Communist backwaters, Chineseness was a liability to be downplayed. As China is once again ascendant, Chineseness becomes an asset to be deployed. After decades of Chinese Communist isolation, old affinities need to be renewed. But not all responded to the calls of “Greater China” positively. Especially for Hong Kong (now China’s special administrative region) and Taiwan, this rhetoric is a political threat. The further dispersed, already “Westernized” Chinese communities too had to struggle with the meaning of Chineseness after decades of its estrangement. Singapore is the exception that responded positively and swiftly to the “Greater China” rhetoric. It is the only nation that maintained an ethnic Chinese majority, despite its geographical location outside of East Asia. Furthermore, amongst the Chinese-majority nations, Singapore stands out as one of the most active candidates aspiring to be the mediator of the East-West dichotomy. The management of Chineseness is a reflection of Singapore’s attempt to strategically manage impressions to qualify as the best candidate.

Within the Singapore context, the management of Chineseness targets the ethnic Chinese population within the nation and has been instituted through language policies from 1965. The impact of Anglicization-Mandarinization campaigns on Chinese Singaporeans forms the area of research interest for this thesis. The Anglicization and Mandarinization initiatives were the most explicit demonstrations of the nation-state’s aspirations as the East-West mediator. They express the attempt to reconcile both dual hegemonic demands through its ethnic management policies. With

7 (Chun 1996)
8 (Ang 1998)
INTRODUCTION

this background in mind, Singapore is the ideal choice for the study of the factors influencing the responses of late-industrializing nations to China’s ascendancy, given the presence of Western hegemonic influence within the region.

I also intend to explore the theoretical implications of the study of primordial identifications in late-industrializing societies. Existing theoretical frameworks are strongly rooted within the observations of first-mover societies. With this thesis, I seek to identify the disjuncture in the application of dominant sociological frameworks on late-industrializing societies. As societies gain increasing complexity in their sociological make-up, scholarly constructs that adapt to the different structural conditions are needed. Some theoretical constructs are seamless in their application at the abstract level. But adaptations are required for application to empirical data. For instance, late-industrializing structural conditions differ from those from which dominant sociological constructs are derived. Therefore, the wholesale application of these concepts to late-industrializing societies may be inadequate. Through this exploration of Chineseness as a late-industrializing construct, the theoretical implications of this disjuncture are explored. To facilitate the exploration of my thesis, I advance the concept of Marcotted Development to explain this late-industrializing disjuncture.

Before elaborating on this concept, I would like to highlight the structural conditions in late-industrializing societies of interest to my thesis. Late-industrializing societies are driven by the urgency of accelerated economic development, having joined the race only one or two centuries after the first-movers. Further, their political economies are characterized by the presence of dual hegemony. That is, dominance is primarily asserted from two sources. One exercises its influence from outside of the late-industrializing region; the other works from within as the regionally ascendant. Under these distinctive conditions, how can existing sociological constructs be adapted with relevance to these societies? I will attempt to explain the theoretical

9 (Alatas 2006)
implications of Marcotted Development through the empirical findings of this research inquiry.

Given the demands of late-industrialization, I anticipate the reconciliation to be sought through one of the following: (1) by yielding to Western dominance through the construction of discourses refuting one’s primordial affiliations with regional hegemonic influence; (2) by resisting Western dominance through constructing discourses of primordial unifications against this imposition; (3) by employing both the above-mentioned discourses to pander to dual hegemonic demands as the situation deems fit. In addition, the choice amongst these alternatives is informed by past experiences of this dual hegemonic imposition.

Marcotted developmentalism has enduring and multilevel effects. That is, it manifests at both national to individual levels. Its manifestation at individual level is attested by my fieldwork on Chinese Singaporean employees’ approach to cross-cultural economic activity, three decades after the Speak Mandarin campaigns. As developmental imperatives change, the nation is to grow out of its reliance on the state, from cradle to playpen. But the individual’s ability to do so is dependent on the distinctive childhood experiences that one has gone through. Through the concurrent exploration of state-level and individual-level constructions of cross-cultural encounters, I aim to answer some questions as to the cultural effects of late-industrialization. What are the key childhood experiences that moderate individual behavior? What predispositions hinder the growth potential of late-industrializing societies? How can the observations of individuals be extended to the study of late-industrializing nations in general? I posit that past experiences of ethnic management mediate the individual’s approach to cross-cultural economic activity. Yet, this mediation is in turn moderated by one’s socioeconomic standing at the time. Two indicators are selected for the measurement of past individual socioeconomic standing. Childhood socioeconomic background is the most direct indicator of past economic standing. Additionally, as ethnic management is most strongly communicated through language policies,
childhood linguistic primacy is chosen as the second indicator. The moderating socioeconomic factors identified in this study of Chinese Singaporean respondents will be extended to explain the predisposed responses by late-industrializing nations towards marcotted developmentalism.

**Conceptual Framework and Research Questions**

This thesis aims to document and analyze the developmental imperatives leading to the management of Chineseness in Singapore. It examines how these imperatives shape national and individual predispositions, some of which as unintended consequences. The instance of interest to this thesis is the manifestations of Orientalist discourse reproductions. Based on the review and compilation of existing sociological analyses and literatures on late-industrialization, I advance the theory of marcotted developmentalism as the conceptual framework of this thesis.

The East-West dichotomy is most strongly supported by Orientalist discourses on the irreconcilability of “East” and “West”. Orientalist discourses refer to the proliferation of responses to the imposition of Orientalism. The notion of Orientalism first emerged from Edward Said’s work on the exoticization of Non-Western racial, regional and cultural attributes by the West. Dominant Orientalist impositions represent specifications of “Oriental” values, traits and actions as targets of Western subjugation. In this, the right to dominate is justified by the superiority of the “West”. Conversely, being dominated is justified by the inferiority of the “East”. Orientalist discourses justify economic action in ways that dramatizes the East-West cultural divide. Hegemonic impositions invite responses of concurrence or resistance. Syed Farid Alatas compiles responses to Dominant Orientalist discourses that represent offshoots of, rather than discourses independent of the Orientalist paradigm (e.g. Auto Orientalism). This thesis

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10 (1978)  
11 (Samir Amin, cited in Alatas 2006:45)  
12 (Alatas 2006:43-45)  
13 (Alatas 2006)
expands on Alatas’ compilation with the concept of Occidentalism, which will be further elaborated upon in the ensuing chapters. Beyond the “it’s culture” explanations, East-West differences probably exist. But these differences are bounded by the inequalities within the global political economy, which moderate predispositions towards economic life.

Much has been discussed about Orientalism and its related constructs by postcolonial scholars. But insufficient attention is paid to the economic basis from which positions on Orientalist discourses were chosen. I seek to expand on the discussion through the examination of Orientalist discourse constructions in late-industrialization landscapes. Orientalist discourse constructs are based on primordial markers of race, region and culture. Yet, they communicate the economic relationships entrenched within the historical development of the global capitalist-industrial economy. The study of how primordial markers are economically meaningful is vital, as these constructions remain a dominant source through which economic life is made meaningful. By understanding socioeconomic influences on the construction of Chineseness, an explanation of individual and collective predispositions to Orientalist discourse constructions is sought.

The economic bases for the emergence of Chinese race-ethnic identifications have been propounded by various authors. But the relationship of Chineseness with late-industrialization is rarely raised. This thesis examines modern notions of Chineseness that have emerged as a result of late-industrialization. Late-industrialization dependency is reflected in the continued proliferation of discourses representing offshoots of, rather than departures from Western hegemonic discourse. This resounded with the “mental captivity” to Eurocentric discourses, raised by Syed Hussein Alatas. From the examination of cultural discourse constructions in the modern economic context, the Orientalist undertones of the constructions are

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14 (Fei 1992; Wang 1994a; Wang 1994b)
16 (Alatas 2006:11)
identified. These identifications are then integrated with the analysis of how economic relationships moderate Orientalist discourse construction.

In the review of literatures on Orientalism and late-industrialization, I found the predominant focus of these literatures operating at the institutional level. While the impact of state intervention is an integral part of my research interest, this focus does not address my empirical data in entirety. A parallel framework is required to address how Orientalist discourse constructions operate at the individual level. In this, I find a Bourdieuan analysis of social reproduction useful. In particular, the concepts of habitus and cultural capital are critical for the understanding of how Orientalist discourse constructions operate at the individual level. Orientalist discourse constructions represent the physical manifestations of the ideology’s continued hegemony. But individual’s awareness of the ideology’s impact does not appear to alter its persistence. A Bourdieuan analysis points out the limits in individual willingness and ability toward overcoming the ideological captivity of Orientalism.

The habitus outlines how decisions on the “best approach” to a desired outcome are shaped by habit-triggered predispositions\(^\text{17}\). These predispositions are derived from an individual’s past experiences, rooted within historical socioeconomic circumstances. For instance, late-industrializing state leaders may be predisposed to Orientalist discourse replications, even with the awareness of their own “mental captivity” in Orientalism. They thus appear “unwilling” to overcome late-industrializing ideological captivity.

Predispositions are further constrained by the cultural capital of late-industrializing nations. Cultural capital represents the accumulated resources that strengthen one’s assertion as the authoritative voice of specific fields of discourse constructions\(^\text{18}\). First-mover industrialists define the field within


\(^{18}\) (Bourdieu 1977a:1; Bourdieu 1980:230; Bourdieu 1991:14; Bourdieu and Passeron 1990:99)
which dominance is imposed. Consequently, late-industrializing nations lack
the relevant cultural capital to gain an edge over the negotiation of dominance.

In view of how Orientalist public speeches of individual state leaders
are shaped by social reproduction, I integrate the theoretical frameworks of
postcolonial studies with Pierre Bourdieu’s for the further analysis of late-
industrializing nation studies. Orientalist discourse constructions in my data
will be analyzed through Bourdieu’s framework of social reproduction. In
most instances, this strategy worked for the understanding of the function of
Chineseness within the late-industrializing landscape. Yet, the wholesale
application of Bourdieu’s social reproduction framework is ill-fitting. Being
an analysis devised for the understanding of first-mover French society, it is
understandable that Bourdieu does not take into account conditions exclusive
to late-industrializing ones. As such, I address the disjuncture through the
concept of marcotted developmentalism. Two conditions, raised under the
concept of marcotted developmentalism, extend on the understanding of late-
industrialization. Firstly, capitalist-industrial consciousness is “imported”
from the first-movers’ organic experience. Without the need to develop the
capitalist-industrial consciousness from scratch, the attainment of material
affluence is thus accelerated. This appears an advantage in gaining material
affluence at an accelerated pace, but it also serves to keep late-industrializing
nations in the subordinate legions within the global political economy.
Lacking in the organic experience of capitalist-industrialization, late-
industrializing nations are strapped to a relationship of dependency on the
hegemonic first-movers. Exemplary regional capitalist-industrial role models
existed in the late-industrializing region (e.g. Japan), but lacked the
hegemonic influence capable of alternative leadership from the first-movers.
That is, this was the situation before China’s ascendancy. With the formation
of dual hegemony within the late-industrializing political economy, gaps
emerged in existing theories on late-industrialization. Currently, dominance is
“double-imposed” in late-industrializing societies. Developmental states now
need to contend with both the hegemonic impositions of the regionally
ascendant and globally hegemonic. As ex-regional hegemons (e.g. China) vie for influence within the global political economy, late-industrializing nations are torn between affiliations. One commands submission as first-movers who are still leading the capitalist-industrial race. The other commands primordial loyalty.

As mentioned earlier, I am also interested in how the dynamics of marcotted developmentalism manifests at the individual level. Since late-industrializing economies are characteristically state-led, an individual needs to submit to the demands of the state. As a result, individuals living within late-industrializing societies need to reckon with subjugation attempts both by the state and the global political economy. State mediation of the late-industrialization may be projected upon individuals through ethnic management policies. Given the considerations, this thesis looks at how individual predispositions are affected by the rapid attainment of material affluence, and whether individuals display the same replications of Orientalism present in state public addresses.

With this inquiry, I seek to offer a sociological explanation to the emerging field of nation branding studies. Nation studies is an established sub-field within the disciplines of cultural anthropology, geography, history, international relations, philosophy, political sciences, social psychology and sociology. The marketing approach in nation branding studies is recent in comparison. As nations become increasingly market-driven, a marketing approach in the survey of nations is needed. But nations, unlike products, are deeply rooted in their historical circumstances. They are products already launched into the market way before their campaigns are devised. Therefore, marketing campaigns can only mediate brand associations at best, as brand associations cannot be invented from a blank slate. Moreover, its brand managers (the state) are raised within the historical circumstances that shape the nation. They are also guided by consultancies from first-mover nations.

\[19\] (Dinnie 2008:21)
(primarily the UK or US), who may in some instances possess conflicting market interests. Nation branding campaigns are thus inextricably moderated by historical ambivalences within the global political economy. Brand theorists have by far sought to downplay the historical ambivalences of national political economies. I propose the examination of how these ambivalences unfold in late-industrializing public addresses in the form of Orientalist discourse constructions.

In summary, the following research questions and assumptions are advanced in this thesis. Firstly, through the examination of how Chineseness is managed, its impact is examined for replications of Orientalist discourse constructions amongst individuals:

RQ1: What is the impact of the management of Chineseness amongst Chinese Singaporeans in developmental state Singapore?

H1: Some Chinese Singaporeans will replicate state disseminations of Orientalist discourse rhetoric in their approach to cross-cultural economic activity. These replications hinder the growth potential of late-industrializing societies.

The instances where this occurs amongst the respondents are analyzed for the cause(s) of replications through Bourdieu’s framework:

RQ2: What are the factors moderating individual Orientalist discourse replications?

H2: Orientalist discourse replications are moderated by the individual’s childhood socioeconomic background (economic capital) and linguistic primacy (cultural capital). These factors form enduring behavioral predispositions in the individual’s approach to cross-cultural economic activity.

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20 (Szondi 2008:202-203; Youde 2009:132)
21 (Aronczyk 2007:121; Van Ham 2001)
Finally, a general explanation of nation branding replications of Orientalist discourses is forwarded from the theoretical implications of this inquiry:

RQ3: How does a Bourdieuan understanding of Orientalist discourse constructions contribute to the theoretical and practical advancement of nation branding studies? How can this thesis contribute to the theoretical advancement of nation branding studies?

H3: A critical evaluation integrates and extends the two epistemological foundations. This thesis proposes the recognition of, firstly, the late-industrializing disjuncture (marcotted developmentalism), and, secondly, the long-term impact of nation branding endeavors. Recommendations to Singapore brand campaigns illustrate the theoretical and practical implications of this thesis.

**Operationalization of the Research Problem**

Singapore makes for an excellent case study to examine the predispositions to Orientalist discourse construction. Firstly, Singapore plays a significant role within the late-industrializing political economy. It provides an example of how a non-hegemonic late-industrializing nation-state rose above its historical circumstances to contend with the hegemonic impositions of first-movers. As Khanna exclaimed, “from the Middle East to Southeast Asia, the hero of the second world – including its democracies – is Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore (founding father of independent Singapore).”\(^{22}\) Secondly, its ideal location makes it a regional hub attracting Western MNCs. Yeung extols Singapore as “an ideal springboard to the Asia Pacific region for these TNCs (or MNCs)”\(^{23}\). There is much exposure of its population to the global political economy due to the MNCs setting up operations in the country. Thirdly, Singapore is not just engaged with the global hegemons in the West. It also seeks out the patronage of the regional hegemon and upcoming global

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\(^{22}\) (2008)  
\(^{23}\) (1998:404)
contender, China. Its nationals are hence wooed by an array of cultural affiliations made available by state discourses.

A single case study forms the basis of this inquiry. The ECI, a Western MNC whose regional headquarters is based in Singapore, provides the sample of Chinese Singaporean respondents. The respondents’ personal constructions of Chineseness were correlated with their childhood socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds to understand the types of collective positions involved in these constructions. Responses replicating Orientalist discourse constructions were correlated with the two indicators. This allows the examination of Orientalist discourse replications in the light of the collective affiliations influencing individual predispositions. To illustrate, an observed scenario in this research inquiry is presented here. State policies disseminate rhetoric advancing Orientalist notions on the irreconcilability of the East-West dichotomy. Some individuals thus felt they had to choose between identification with either the incumbent global hegemons (“West”), or the insurgent one (China). In some cases, the respondents were predisposed to choose the latter. It was then found that these respondents predominantly share common childhood socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds. The individual, through his/her associations with specific collective identifications, develops predispositions that characterize this collective within a structurally situated society. This relationship between individual predisposition and collective influence is explained through the concepts expounded by Pierre Bourdieu. An individual’s habitus, or predispositions, is the set of “bodily tensions” inherited from the collective that shares with this individual a common socioeconomic and linguistic position (economic and cultural capital). In this, individual actions are predisposed by group identifications that reflect collective positions and ideologies. The findings shed insight that marcotted developmentalism is a late-industrializing issue to be tackled at both national and individual levels. More specifically, the way nations and nationals are predisposed to tackle marcotted developmentalism is moderated

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24 (2000:144)
by specific socioeconomic circumstances prior to the embracement of capitalist-industrialization. Through the analysis, gaps to the application of existing theoretical frameworks were identified. Their implications will be raised for the further development of marcotted developmentalism as a late-industrializing nation branding construct in Chapter 8.

**Structure of this Thesis**

Chapter 1 provides the historical backdrop to the management of Chineseness in developmental state Singapore. It examines how ethnic management approaches came to characterize the Singapore political economy. Pre-independent Singapore’s responses to hegemonic impositions had been reactive in nature. In contrast, proactive ethnic management characterizes the developmental state’s attempt to position Singapore strategically within the global political economy. Critics of the Singapore ethnic management tend to dramatize the omnipotence of the developmental state. But ethnic management is as much about subduing a population as it is about being subdued by the hegemony of the global political economy. The 1960s Anglicization initiative aligned the lingua franca of the nation with the state elites’. But it also signified the imperative of simulating a Western economic environment while marketing Singapore as a low-cost manufacturing option. The 1980s Mandarinization initiative attempted to engineer a Confucianized population deferential towards authority. But it also showed the importance of priming the population for China’s rising influence. Within this historical background, the chapter presents marcotted developmentalism as the conceptual framework of this thesis. An analysis of ethnic management strategies reveals that its persistence is rooted within late-industrializing exigencies. Ethnic management persists *despite* the knowledge of the contradictions it incurs. Its subscription is rooted in economic factors and its success is the outcome of embracing necessary evils.

Chapter 2 reviews and compiles the origins to this thesis’ intellectual interest. The chapter first tackles the basic definitions and premises required
for a sociological interpretation of nation branding studies. This is followed by an outline and critique of nation branding studies, so as to identify the possible areas of contribution to this field by this thesis. Insights on how the gaps in nation branding studies can be addressed sociologically are presented. In this portion of the discussion, the key concepts (in particular, Orientalist discourse constructions, habitus, cultural capital and marcotted developmentalism) are further elaborated. The review of Primordialist literatures specifies the key ideological leitmotifs of Orientalist discourse constructions. It consolidates the reasons for its appeal and its persistence. The critique of Situationalist literatures underlies the recognition of the efforts to transcend Primordialist demarcations. But attempts at transcending Primordialist ideology have had limited success when fundamental divisions within the global political economy persist. Constructivist literatures propose the realistic understanding of this “mental captivity” through socioeconomic predispositions. This thesis subscribes to the Constructivist position that the proliferation of Dominant Orientalist impositions can only be managed, not eradicated. A Bourdieuan approach forms the Constructivist framework to this thesis’ inquiry. It examines how past socioeconomic circumstances form behavioral habit-triggers (habitus) and resources (cultural capital) that reproduces collective predispositions. The relevance of this approach is assessed, with further elaborations on marcotted developmentalism to refine the conceptual framework of this thesis.

Chapter 3 specifies the methodology through which the theoretical constructs outlined in Chapter 2 can be further explored. For instance, economic and cultural capitals were operationalized into tangible indicators for data collection and comparison. Justifications for case study selection and the research procedures used during fieldwork were also elaborated. Although the methodological approach of this inquiry was qualitative, the methods were not limited to qualitative ones. Where appropriate, quantitative data collection methods were also employed. A sample of how data analysis was conducted in this inquiry is also provided.
Chapter 4 offers an overview of the findings for the ensuing data analysis chapters. Prior to this, an elaboration was raised on the reinventions of Chineseness in response to global political-economic transformations. The ambiguity of cultural constructs impact users. This is evident when Chineseness was translated into tangible identifications within this study. By examining how cross-cultural economic activity is variably conducted by the respondents, key moderators to this race-ethnic construction are identified. These moderators form the concrete indicators through which Orientalist discourse constructions are analyzed in Chapters 5-7. In this chapter, demographical data is stratified and discourse constructions are organized into response categories for data comparison.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 constitute the core analytical chapters. They detail how past socioeconomic circumstances moderate current economic engagement behavior. These chapters explore: the prevalent beliefs about the behavioral manifestations of Orientalist reproductions, the nature of the institutional arrangements that underpin these constructions and, the individual socioeconomic and linguistic profiles in association with the respective constructions. The overall purpose of the analytical chapters is to examine the relevance of existing theoretical frameworks in understanding late-industrializing social phenomena. Chapter 5 examines how individuals of less favorable past socioeconomic circumstances may feel an elevation in circumstances from the engagement with the capitalist political economy. This shapes predispositions to Auto Orientalist constructions, where Dominant Orientalist impositions are accepted and internalized. Chapter 6 looks at how specific individuals of favorable past socioeconomic circumstances may feel eclipsed by Western expatriate presence. This shapes predispositions to Negative Occidentalist postures, where Dominant Orientalist impositions are resisted. The subversion of these impositions, for instance, may be exercised through transnational links to Chinese primordialism. The significance of socioeconomic credentials in shaping predispositions provides insights to Auto Orientalist and Negative Occidentalist discourse constructions. Thus far,
the discussion focuses on how childhood socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds moderate respondent Orientalist discourse constructions. Beyond the constructions of the East-West dichotomy, do these factors have a moderating effect on other cultural perceptions? In Chapter 7, respondents were queried on their perceptions of the Malays, an ethnic minority population in Singapore often associated with marginal socioeconomic statuses. It was found that childhood socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds moderate not only Orientalist discourse constructions, but also the employment of other stereotypes. The assessment of cultural outsiders involves the use of long-standing perceptions of generalized socioeconomic standing. That is, the assessor employed what is believed to be the general socioeconomic standing of one’s cultural collective as a point of comparison with that believed to be the general socioeconomic standing of the cultural other. These perceptions were found to be enduring attitudes acquired during the respondent’s childhood. The results are moderated by childhood socioeconomic background, rather than current material standing. Amongst collectives perceived by the individual as cultural outsiders, those seen as occupying a socioeconomic position further from one’s own are better accepted. This is because feelings of competitiveness are less likely to emerge. The relatively more “benevolent” colonialist discourse of the hapless “lazy native” in need of protection is borrowed to facilitate these assessments. Conversely, when respondents perceive a narrower gap in socioeconomic standing, competitive postures are more likely to emerge. In these cases, colonial stereotypes of the hapless “lazy native” tend to be eclipsed by the belief that Malay socioeconomic marginality is the result of their willful isolation from mainstream society.

Chapter 8 sums up the theoretical and practical implications of the research findings. It reviews the objectives established in the Introduction and points out the potential areas of future research. The application of marcotted developmentalism to explain nation branding is outlined here, and concludes this thesis.
Limitations

The boundaries of this study need to be established. The conceptual limits are first addressed. The next considerations pertain to the selection of the case study. Some pragmatic considerations on data collection are then raised.

Although state public discourses were found to predominantly employ specific Orientalist discourse constructs, not all nationals replicate these constructions. That being said, respondents displaying Orientalist discourse preferences may also engage these constructs most, but not necessarily all the time. A group of respondents, for instance, may be found to predominantly engage Auto Orientalist slants in their responses. This finding, however, does not preclude the employment of other Orientalist discourse constructions or responses free of Orientalist influences. Likewise, other groups who predominantly do not engage Orientalist constructions are not necessarily free of its influences in their responses. The findings are organized into typologies reflecting conceptual ideal types. Therefore, this thesis may not reflect realities from the findings as perfectly as a purely descriptive discussion would have done.

As this thesis studies responses to Dominant Orientalist impositions, it thus appears that “Westerners” are exclusively responsible for the emergence of Primordialist notions. This thesis recognizes the existence of Primordialist impositions that originated from “Non-Western” sources. But as the focus does not require the addressing of the other Primordialist impositions, they have been excluded from this discussion.

The choice of a French multinational corporation as representative of Western MNCs may be problematic. Without doubt, US MNCs may be more representative of Dominant Orientalist positions. The US is more frequently the target of Negative Occidentalist attacks and Auto Orientalist concessions. But employing a French MNC as the case study also has its benefits. One of
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the constructs being examined in this thesis is respondent childhood linguistic background and its influence on individual predispositions. In this, the influence of a language is attributed to its symbolic power (i.e. whether it is symbolically aligned with dominant social groups), rather than the grammatical structure of a language per se. The effect of language as symbolic power may not have been as apparent had a US MNC been used. The dominant linguistic primacy of Singapore, English, coincides with that of the United States. Given this similarity, it is more challenging to distinguish whether it is the grammatical structure of English, or the symbolic power of the language that shapes respondent predispositions. In contrast, the use of a French MNC strengthens the argument of this thesis. As French expatriates predominantly display French-primacy, the symbolic advantage of dominant linguistic primacies is more apparent when Singaporean respondents are compared with French expatriates. Moreover, respondents were found to not just use French expatriates as the reference point to “Western colleagues”. US colleagues were also included in the assessment without prompts by the interviewer. This ensures that the inquiry is not just observing responses toward French dominance, but overall “Western” dominance as one entity.

The moderation of Orientalist discourse construction by childhood socioeconomic circumstances is ideally studied through longitudinal samples. But a longitudinal approach is beyond the scope of a Ph.D. thesis. Information on childhood socioeconomic data, in this inquiry, employs the next best alternative of data collection in retrospect. That is, respondents were asked to recall demographical information from their childhood as adults. Longitudinal studies make for a potential extension of this study when more research resources are available. Other practical limitations and their resolutions are outlined in Chapters 3 and 4.
Conclusion

The introduction to this thesis opened with my personal childhood experience of watching a Chinese fashion show that signals the ethnic management initiatives to come. This childhood memory of a seemingly insignificant event remained vivid as an outcome of its subsequent impact on Singapore society. Its recall is facilitated because of the onslaught of language policies that followed rapidly, assiduously and effectively. New ideological visions are reinforced by prescriptions on behavior. Language policies are the practical reflections of Orientalist discourses, inextricably linked to the developmental imperatives of the global political economy. They link the individual to a collective, to a nation, to a region, to the global political economy. But despite the permutations of proliferations, the East-West dichotomy remains intact in its discourse constructions. The embracement of the capitalist political economy has not launched late-industrializing nations into first-mover status. Rather, they remain in the orbits of peripheral and semi-peripheral statuses. This thesis further develops the intellectual discussions prevalent in sociological inquiry on Orientalist discourse constructions through a late-industrializing perspective.
Historical Background to the Management of Chineseness in Developmental State Singapore: origins, continuity, contradictions and consequences of ethnic management

In a special feature of The Straits Times\(^1\) commemorating Singapore’s independence from British rule (Merdeka), three themes prevailed. Firstly, racial chauvinism was observed amongst the Chinese\(^2\). Chineseness was deemed an association to be downplayed if Singapore wishes to advance economically. Secondly, the struggle against colonial subjugation was mentioned\(^3\). This expresses the ambivalence of dependency on Western patronage and the struggles against their hegemonic control. Thirdly, racial chauvinism amongst the Malays was also recorded.\(^4\) In addition, the community was observed to be struggling socioeconomically. This sentiment reflects the ambivalence of Singapore towards its previous failures to unite with the Malayan Federation. The re-enacted historical caricatures “guide” the reader to recognize the state’s contribution. The state prevented the Chinese from sinking into anti-development Communist limbo. They defended the nation from Western subjugation. Their zeal in uplifting Malay socioeconomic woes did not wane despite suffering rejections by the Malay community. The offerings of negative imageries were sanitized and presented through official media channels, warning of “explosive” elements with degenerative potential.

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\(^1\) Singapore’s highest circulation newspaper and mouth-piece of the state (Seow 1998).

\(^2\) “And there was strong chauvinistic conduct, which was later tempered down.” (Li 2009)

\(^3\) “The son of Mr. Chan Kok Chee, a founding member of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, he bristles at the memory of how he and his mother were once shooed off a public bus for having the temerity to want to sit at its front half – reserved for the British.” (Li and Au Yong 2009)

\(^4\) “(Othman Wok:) ‘No Malays would volunteer to help in my campaign. My wife and relatives helped me put up the election posters. But all the posters were torn down. Some were smeared with human excreta. When I went house to house with pamphlets, they looked at me and said. ‘This is a Malay kampong, and tore them up in my face.’… The PAP was viewed by the Malays as a Chinese party … He (Othman Wok) wanted his people to become educated and make good in their own merit, as opposed to receiving handouts or being given special privileges. It was not a popular view.” (Hussain 2009)
Summarily, the three themes in the commemorative feature communicated the following negative imageries: “Chinese chauvinism”, “Western decadence” and “Malay indolence”.

The history of Singapore is short, but contentious. As a site where its racial, regional and cultural composition defied common expectations, the controversy of Singapore’s history is expected. An understanding of the state imperative to manage Chineseness requires an integrated account of this historical controversy. This chapter compiles the historical context of ethnic management in Singapore from a variety of perspectives. The first account provides the circumstances to the developmentalist nature of Singapore’s governance. An account of how statist-developmentalism is deployed in the Singapore political economy forms the second premise of this chapter. The third outlines the language policies that mirror the economic imperatives of the developmental state. The chapter rounds up the discussion with an analysis of ethnic management in Singapore. The analysis locates the root causes of ethnic management in Singapore within the late-industrializing political economy. The appeal of ethnic management, the factors contributing to its success in the region, and the legitimizing factors are assessed within the conceptual framework of Marcotted Development.

**Pre-Independence Singapore**

Singapore’s pre-independence history tells of a peripheral political economy characterized by accommodations to the influence of hegemonic empires. Being a site of strategic significance, Singapore was remarkably passive in its responses to hegemonic impositions. This section outlines the precursor to the proactive management of the nation-state. It traces the circumstances of Singapore’s previously ephemeral existence, in spite of its geographical significance within the Asia Pacific.

Isoart remarks, “In Southeast Asia, perhaps more than anywhere else, the geographical environment determines human history.”

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5 (1978:1)
almost the midpoint between China and India, the upcoming economic giants of the century. Closer to home, Malaysia, whose federation once had Singapore as a proposed member, is now its northern neighbor. Further north of Malaysia is Thailand. Its neighbors comprise Burma in the northwest, Vietnam in the northeast, and Cambodia in between the two territories. The Philippines flanks further east in the region, with Brunei to its southwest. Up north from the region lies China, the regional and global economic powerhouse. Extending from the northeast of Singapore, right across the South and East China Seas, are Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan and Korea. From all other directions, Singapore is surrounded by the Indonesian archipelago.

Singapore was also said to be the pivot-point of the British colonial empire, which included Australia and New Zealand. Inclusive of Australia and New Zealand, Singapore is located right at the heart of the Asia Pacific.

The small city-state is regionally significant for a number of reasons. Politically, it is the only independent nation with an ethnic Chinese majority whose sovereignty is recognized by China. Economically, its location at the heart of the Asia Pacific makes it the strategic gateway to regional markets. Socially, being located at this geographical confluence mandates that Singapore embraces multiculturalism right upon its independence.

Singapore had been a site of contention due to its natural geo-strategic position in the region. Its presence was acknowledged in Chinese and Vietnamese records as Long Ya Men (Dragon Tooth Gate) in 1330. According to Javanese records, Singapore was Temasek. It fortified the fortunes of the Sri Vijaya (7-13th Century), Majapahit (8-10th Century), and the Siamese (present Thailand) empires during their reign. Around the year 1390, Paramesvara, Prince of Palembang, took over the island while escaping Majapahit persecution. During his reign, he christened it Singapura. Intense commercial activity was reported in 1490. By the 15th Century, Singapura had become renowned as the strategic trading post of the region. Its prosperity was

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6 (Reid 2006:20)
7 (Regnier 1987:2-8)
8 (Turnbull 1977:2)
boosted by Arab and Chinese traders, of which the latter was supported by China’s naval fleet. The island served as the link to the regional trade routes of China, the East Indies, India, and the Arab regions. British colonial presence (1819-1963) amplified its presence in the world economy. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 sealed its strategic importance in world trade.

In 1819, Thomas Stamford Raffles established Singapore as Britain’s colony. Prior to this, the Johor sultanate had control over the island. The British saw the opportunity of obtaining the control of Singapore amidst succession disputes in the Johor sultanate. Sultan Hussein, whom Raffles assisted to the throne in 1819, granted British control of Singapore in reciprocation to British intervention. In 1824, on behalf of the British Crown, the East India Company purchased the island from the Johor Sultanate. Singapore then formed a part of the Straits Settlements under British sovereignty. In comparison to colonization expeditions in the region, British takeover of Singapore was painless, if not welcomed.

In World War II, Singapore was surrendered by the British to the Japanese. The Japanese referred to the island as *Syonan To* (1941-1945). Colonel Masanobu Tsuji, who planned the invasion, shares the symbolism of this surrender:

“Singapore was Britain’s pivotal point in the domination of Asia. It was the eastern gate of defence of India and the northern gate for the defence of Australia. It was the axis of the steamship route from Europe to the Orient, north to Hong Kong and through to Shanghai, and to the treasures of the Dutch East Indies to the south and the east. Through these two arteries alone, during a period of many years,

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9 (Regnier 1987:6)
10 (Regnier 1987:2-8)
11 In 1819, Raffles wrote in his correspondence to the Governor-General of Calcutta: “What Malta is to the West, Singapore may become in the East.” (cited in Regnier 1987:16)
12 (Turnbull 1977:xiii)
13 In contrast to the colonization of the Indonesian archipelago by the Dutch (Rutherford 2003), Indo-China by the French (Deroche 2004) and the Philippines by the Spanish (Rafael 1988).
Britain controlled the Pacific Ocean with Singapore at the very heart of the area.” 14

Singapore’s existence as a member of the world economy, however, remained ephemeral. It had not the necessary safeguards to ensure its stability. The island’s numerous name changes reflected its fortunes, which waxed and waned with opportunistic foreign patronage15. The Japanese occupation paved the way to Singapore’s independence. As Syonan To, the brutality of the Japanese occupation awakened nationalistic sentiments. After the Japanese defeat in 1945, the British were ready to resume control. But the masses could no longer trust British patronage. Communist militancy ensured nationalistic sentiments were taken seriously by the British16. The Communists’ fierce defense against the Japanese invasion made them war heroes. In contrast, the British were quick to pull out at the first threat of defeat17.

Amidst the waves of nationalism against colonial subjugation, preparations for the eventual independence of British colonies came underway in 1954. The British supported the formation of the Malayan Federation, comprising the Malay states (inclusive of Sarawak and Sabah), Singapore, and North Borneo. But not all participants saw eye-to-eye over this arrangement. In Singapore, the People’s Action Party (PAP), which emerged as the dominant party in 1959, comprised two factions of uneasy bedfellows. On the one hand, the Chinese-educated left-wing was led by Lim Chin Siong. On the other hand, the English-educated right-wing was led by Lee Kuan Yew. While the left-wing required the facade of “respectability”, the right-wing needed mass appeal. Then, to the pro-merger right-wing, the left-wing was “Chinese chauvinist” for its staunch rejection of a merger where Malays dominate18. The coalition of convenience dissolved in 1961, with the left-wing forming

14 (1988:216)
15 (Regnier 1987:2-8)
16 (Turnbull 1977:53)
17 "The British looked like men who had just finished their work by contract at a suitable salary, and were now taking a rest free from anxiety of the battlefield.” (Tsuji 1988:213)
18 (Trocki 2006:142; Turnbull 1977:285; Vasil 1995:Ch4)
the Barisan Sosialis. Lee then took the pretext of rising labor militancy to launch the 1963 Operation Cold Store. In one fell swoop, Lee’s toughest opponents were eliminated, including Lim Chin Siong and his support base of Nanyang University students\(^{19}\). The swift move bore testament to the resolve of Lee in quashing “Chinese chauvinism”. The undemocratic fashion in which the Barisan Sosialis was eliminated was executed without a protest by the British, Singapore’s independence chaperon. It was not in London’s interest to uphold democratic ideals in defense of what they suspected to be a façade of Communist insurgency\(^{20}\).

With the Barisan Sosialis considerably weakened, the PAP called for a snap election. Against the Barisan Sosialis and United Malays National Organization (Singapore), the PAP enjoyed a landslide victory in 1963.

The second target was the Chinese tycoons. Holding the key to the Chinese networks, these prominent figures served as arbitrators between the British and the Chinese community. The Chinese businessmen also mediated the fragmented inter-ethnic relationships between the Chinese-dialect clan associations in Singapore. Unlike the Mandarin-speaking “Communist dissidents”, dialect-speaking businessmen possessed wealth and influence, and enjoyed good relationships with the British. This insulated them from direct state persecution, despite their sympathies for China’s communist cause. Moreover, PAP disgruntlement with the businessmen more characterized the “Oxbridge disdain for the immigrant big-shots who spoke little English and less Mandarin”\(^{21}\). Dialect-speakers were viewed with

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\(^{19}\)The Nanyang University (Nantah) was founded by Chinese businessman and philanthropist Tan Lark Sye (1897-1975) in 1953. The Mandarin instruction university soon found itself embroiled in the tussle of the PAP split. Along with the 1963 ouster of the Barisan Sosialis, 10 university alumni were persecuted. This led to the disenfranchisement of the university’s standing, leading to its eventual closure in 1980. The institution resurfaced as the English instruction Nanyang Technological Institute in 1982, and eventually attained university status as Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in 1992. Other organizations targeted for being misled by the communists in defense of Chinese education were the Singapore Chinese Middle School Students Union and Chinese School Old Boys’ Association.

\(^{20}\)(Hamilton 1983:67)

\(^{21}\)(Kuhn 1997)
disdain, but did not threaten the PAP’s dominance as did the Mandarin-speaking literati.

In preparation for the merger, promises of special recognition of the Malays were doled out. However, Singapore did not see the wish for merger come into fruition. The 1963 victory boosted the confidence of the PAP, who then decided to run for elections in Kuala Lumpur. To the ire of the incumbent UMNO Alliance (United Malays National Organization) , the PAP campaigned for a “Malaysian Malaysia”. This was in direct opposition to UMNO’s “Malay Malaysia”. PAP presence in the 1964 Malayan Federation elections led to a series of political bickering. That aside, the inclusion of Singapore provided the tipping point to the racial composition of the Malayan Federation. The Chinese in the Federation would outnumber Malays, making it a tougher case for the defense of Malay privilege. The eruption of the series of racial riots from 1964–1969 raised the opportunity for Singapore’s ouster from the Federation.

Singapore’s reliance on foreign patronage cost the island its stability. The continued presence of foreign settlements in Singapore is dependent on whether the island is able to offer tangible benefits in return. When its settlers abandon the locale for greener pastures, the island merely ceases to exist until it resurfaces once again as a land of opportunities. Now that Singapore is

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22 “Ten years ago I (Lee Kuan Yew) would repeat in each language all I have been saying spread over four languages (English, Mandarin, Hokkien, Malay)… What is the profit of being able to read the Chinese character in two pronunciations - one in Mandarin, one in Hokkien? Worse, I have to think each time of different idioms and phrases.” (Lee 1979)

23 The businessmen also had less luck in the elections as PAP’s political opponents (Yap et al. 2009:67-68). Dialect-speaking business tycoon Tan Lark Sye was perhaps the exception, dealt with in the most stringent manner by the PAP. He provided generous funding to the formation of Nanyang University and PAP adversary Barisan Sosialis (Kuhn 1997:203; Wong 2005). Tan was believed to steer electoral vote of the Chinese community in favor of the Barisan Sosialis: “the Barisan Sosialis won 32.9% of total votes, even though the PAP had disadvantaged them through a variety of tricks” (Wong 2005:206). His citizenship was revoked in 1963 (Wong 2005:206).

24 The UMNO Alliance was formed along the multicultural lines of the 3 major racial groups in Malaya: the Malays were strongly represented in the party; the Chinese under the Malayan Chinese Association (MCA) wing; the Indians under the Malayan Indian Congress (MIC).

25 (Wade 2009:19)

26 “We know the Communists. But we do not know the PAP. They may be for you one day. But this is no guarantee that they will not stab you in the back the next.” (Tan Siew Sin, UMNO MCA, cited in Ratnam and Milne 1967:25).
slotted in the global system of nation-states, its continued economic viability is essential for national survival. Development then becomes a national project. Post-independent Singapore has come to be characterized by proactive ethnic management initiatives, dedicated to the development of the economy. The developmental state now takes charge of the nation as a national enterprise.

Post-Independence: Proactive Ethnic Management and its Prohibitions

At many points in history, political analysts predicted Singapore’s demise. But the island defied the odds. Singapore became hailed as one of the “Four Little Dragons” (Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan) of the “East Asian economic miracle.” This could not have been achieved within a matter of three decades in the absence of statist interventions. The nation then came to terms with living under draconian self-surveillance due to state ethnic management. This siege mentality cannot purely be attributed to myth-making by the state elite. As a postcolonial country and late-industrializing economy, Singapore needed a strong state that would tolerate no tussle and dissension. Faced with the legions of postcolonial nations pushed into the global political economy, a proactive approach is needed to gain a competitive edge. But the rational organization of a nation does not fully sustain its existence. Modernity, as Berger maintains, does not purely stand on physical infrastructures. It requires the engineering of the popular mindset. Apart from the administrative infrastructures, the British left behind another vital legacy. Colonial Orientalism formed the bases of ethnic management.

Ethnic management is a legacy of Singapore’s colonial days. Residential quarters were mapped along racial lines, leading to the formation of racial enclaves. Taxation was collected through ethnic compradors. The

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27 “I think the trade of Singapore has reached its maximum; and that the town has attained to its highest point of importance and prosperity.” (Davidson 1846:69)
28 (World Bank 1993)
29 (1979)
responsibility of education was also left to communal self-help, leading to the emergence of schools drawn along racial lines. Therefore, colonial racial stereotypes of “Malay laziness, Indian docility, and Chinese enterprise” became the implicit leitmotifs of modern ethnic management. As evident in the following paragraphs, the stereotypical notions were based on selectively compiled caricatures of the past.

The point inviting the most contention is probably the Chinese-majority profile of Singapore, surrounded by predominantly non-Chinese dominated neighbors. The influx of ethnic Chinese to the region is indisputably credited to British colonization. But the significance of ethnic Chinese presence prior to British colonization remains controversial. The official history of Singapore selected British accounts that framed Singapore as a sleepy Malay fishing village. British observations in 1819 were accurate. But post-independent history appear to ignore evidence that a substantial Chinese population existed as early as the 14th Century. By 1827, the Chinese had formed 65 per cent of the total population of Singapore. Chinese business elites dominated commerce alongside European traders. Other Chinese immigrants entered the country as craftsmen or coolies. The Chinese were originally a hotchpotch of linguistic groups. The singularity of the Chinese identity was based on spatial references to China, reinforced by the presence of “one uniform character employed in writing”. In the past, marriage between Chinese ethnics, for instance, between Hokkien and Hainanese, would have been considered inter-ethnic unions. But as one

30 (Turnbull 1977:Ch3)
31 (Brown 1993:217)
32 (Tan 2003:751)
33 (Heng 2009)
34 (Reid 2006:20; Rockhill 1913:100; Saw 2007:11)
35 (Turnbull 1977:5)
36 (Purushotum 1998:9-16)
37 (Clammer 1998:37). Moreover, Chinese ethnics tended to differ in terms of their political orientations and socioeconomic status in the past. The Hokkiens, Teochews and Straits Chinese dominated the commercial arena, maintained sociable relations with the European business community, and cooperated closely with the British in managing the Chinese community. The Cantonese and Hakkas entered Singapore mainly as indentured labor, or skilled craftsmen. Majority of the Hainanese worked here as servants or civil servants to the
“race”, the Chinese are the 70 per cent majority, the “industrious and disciplined” of Singapore 38.

The Malays are described as indigenous peoples, which included the waves of migrants from neighboring locales 39. The indigenous claim to dominance is however, diluted by them making up only about 15 per cent of the total population. The dearth of prominent business figures representing the community further decreased Malay economic credentials 40. Traditionally fishermen, they are stereotyped as gracious but lazy, and economically backward 41. The Malays are frequently pitted against the Chinese, with the latter placed in a much more favorable light. Despite state elite ambivalence towards the community, historical accounts contradicting Malay indigenous status have somehow escaped the normally astute state surveillance. This is apparent with regard to the question of “who was here first”. Although the earliest records of Chinese and Malay presence were both in the 14th Century 42, official history maintained Malay indigenous status without revision. The conflation of the Orang Laut (arguably the “truly” indigenous to Malaya) with the Malays is also contentious. Turnbull’s account of the British’s first Singapore “statistics” differentiated between the Orang Laut and the Malays:

38“(The Chinese) is the product of a civilization that has gone through floods, pestilence, famine, breeding a people of very intense culture, with a belief in high performance in sustained effort, in thrift and industry.” (Lee Kuan Yew, cited in Barr 1999:153)

39While the Malays may be a more homogenous entity compared to the other categories, a variety of ethnic identities that were not identified with Malay (Javanese, Minangkabau, Bugis, Boyanese) were subsumed under this category. The Orang Laut, the original inhabitants, were also merged in the same racial category with the Malays. (Clammer 1998:52)

40(Barr and Low 2005; Ismail and Shaw 2006)

41“(The Malays), more fortunately endowed by nature, with sunshine and bananas and coconuts, and therefore not with the need to strive so hard.” (Lee Kuan Yew, cited in Barr 1999:153) See also: (Alatas 1977; Betts 1977; Hassim 1976; Ismail and Shaw 2006; Ministry of Information and the Arts Statistics 2000; Othman 1995; Rahayati 1984; Vasil 1995; Yusof 1986)

42(Reid 2006:20; Wade 2009:31)
“… some 500 Orang Kallang, 200 Orang Seletar, 150 Orang Gelam (Orang Laut) … twenty to thirty Malays in the Temenggong’s entourage and a similar number of Chinese.”43

The Indians form less than 10 per cent of the total population. Indian stereotypes are however, more favorable than the Malays. Indians first arrived under the British crown as skilled professionals, military men, or convict-labor. They are portrayed as eloquent, fiercely loyal, and industrious44. The Indian is caricatured as hailing from the southern Tamil regions and extremely traditional45.

The Others, as suggested by the name itself, are paid the least attention by the state. A person is labeled “Others” when deemed inassimilable into the priority options of “Chinese”, “Malay” or “Indian”. How state bureaucrats determine this “inassimilable” criterion remains a mystery to the public. Arabs, Armenians, Europeans and Jews who remained after 1965 were mainly relegated to “Others”46. But children of interethnic marriages were subsumed under the race of the father, according to the patriarchal approach47. In particular, the Peranakans, descendents of mixed Chinese and Malay origins, were mostly assigned to “Chinese”, based on paternal racial lineage. This becomes explicable with due consideration to the British references of the Peranakans as Straits Chinese. In the recent statistics presented on Singapore’s

43 (Turnbull 1977:5)
44 (Turnbull 1977:Ch2)
45 Again, “Indian” comprises a variety of ethnic groups who had “originated” from India. The Sri Lankans, Punjabis, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, Sikhs, Gujaratis and Nepalis, commonly equated with Tamil (which is rightfully an ethnic group on its own), were subsumed under the “Indian” category. (Clammer 1998:36) Some individuals (e.g. Punjabis), were allocated to the “Others” category. The reason for these exceptions was not specified. Lee Kuan Yew, in continuation with his comments on the Chinese and the Malays, had this to say about the Indians: “Similarly, the Indians were also migrants seeking a better life. At the time of leaving their country, many had the intention to return, to receive the accolade from their own village elders for having made good. But for various reasons, they lived on in the leisurely climate of Malaysia because life was good here.” (Josey 1980:257)
46 (Clammer 1998:52)
47 (Purushotum 1998:81)
Historical Background to the Management of Chineseness in Developmental State Singapore: origins, continuity, contradictions and consequences of ethnic management – Chapter 1

Economic Development Board website\(^{48}\), the “Others” moniker was dropped. Changes in the way the national population was presented suggested shifts in developmental imperatives. The “new” racial composition is now “Chinese, Malays, Indians and foreign residents (sic.).”\(^{49}\).

Multicultural Singapore was founded in 1965. Yet, racial discourse pervades political debates, state administration, economic activities and everyday life. Racial discourse, most often than not, revolves around the racial quadrant: Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Others (CMIO). Purushotum articulates how race is classified under the CMIO:

“The Chinese are represented in yellow-ochre skin tones, with just a touch of pink that gives them a pleasant rosiness… the woman will be clothed in a cheongsam … The Malays are warmly browned, dressed up in baju kurong … The Indians are given a richer, darker brown – closer to milk chocolate; the woman invariably in a sari and a bindhi between her eyebrows… ‘Others’ are one or two shades pinker than the Chinese, and in what would be described, in everyday language, as common Western dress.” \(^{50}\)

The CMIO is portrayed as a multicultural utopia of communal groups, subsumed under one national identity\(^{51}\). Ethnic identity emerges from the interaction, comparison, and differentiation with perceived antithetical others.\(^{52}\) These ethnic boundaries can nevertheless be crossed under certain conditions (e.g. intermarriage, religious conversion). The application of the CMIO, however, confines the power of determining ethnic identity to the state apparatus. Ethnic boundaries in CMIO are based on colonial references of racial origins. They did not emerge out of organic ethnic solidarities\(^{53}\). Moreover, CMIO heightened people’s consciousness of racial differences. Interracial relationships are cordial, but lukewarm. Most interracial

\(^{49}\) (Lewitschnik 2009:7)
\(^{50}\) (Purushotum 1998:1)
\(^{51}\) (Brown 1993; Chew 1987; Chua 1995; Clammer 1998; Cohen 1985; Hill 1995)
\(^{52}\) (Wang 2009)
\(^{53}\) (Clammer 1998:Ch9)
relationships do not extend into the personal domain\textsuperscript{54}. Yet, the importance of racial identification is reinforced in its inclusion in the Singapore citizen identification card. Blood type identification has been quietly removed from current batches of identification cards at the time this thesis was written. One’s race, however, remains crucial information.

Ethnic management is an ideology justified by pressing historical circumstances. The exigency of Singapore’s engagement with capitalist-industrialization justified the management of “Chinese chauvinism”. When Singapore was a part of the Malayan Federation, Malays possessed cultural dominance. That Singapore comprised an ethnic Chinese majority was therefore a factor to be downplayed. But with its ouster from the Federation, the PAP was caught in a bind towards earlier disparagements of “Chinese chauvinism”. In order to regain the trust of the ethnic Chinese majority, someone had to pay the price. The state’s objections against “Malay indolence” represented compensatory gestures towards the earlier vituperative against “Chinese chauvinism”. Malays made the ideal targets of the state’s new prohibitions for sharing the same racial profile with the UMNO. In addition, the ascendency of the “little dragons” pre-empted what the “slumbering dragon”, China, might become when awakened. Prescient of the events in tow, Singapore had to make friends by first creating enemies. It became one of the regional firsts to extol Asian (Confucian) Values through the denigration of “Western decadence”\textsuperscript{55}. The open expression of Singapore’s vulnerability, “aggravated by the fickleness of foreign traders”\textsuperscript{56}, became legitimized. These imperatives had to be simplified into a lingo easily understood by the population. They had to appeal to emotions, so that action is instantaneous and habit-triggered, rather than logical and ponderous. Through negative imageries invoking “what would otherwise be”, individuals were spurred into action. Economic development and ethnic management therefore shared a symbiotic relationship. Ethnicity was used to spearhead

\textsuperscript{54} (Ooi 2006) \textsuperscript{55} (Huang 2000:1-5; Yao 1994) \textsuperscript{56} (Regnier 1987:9)
economic development, and economic growth legitimized ethnic management when developmental milestones were achieved. The ensuing section outlines how social engineering efforts became interwoven with the developmental initiatives of the nation.

The Function of Ethnic Management in the Singapore Political Economy

The primordial affiliations communicated by Singapore’s ethnic management policies are inextricable from its political economy as a late-industrializing nation. The state had sought the aggressive Anglicization of the nation to attract foreign investments from Western multinational corporations (MNC). This summarizes Phases 1 and 2 of Singapore’s developmental imperatives, outlined in the ensuing sections. But this move also constrained the nation’s further growth potential. Being accustomed to repudiating primordial identifications, where was the confidence to wean off first-mover patronage to be found? Phases 3 and 4 outline revisions in ethnic management initiatives for a re-alignment with primordial affiliations.

Ethnic management is justified through fulfilling the objectives set by the developmental state. According to Low:

“A developmental state is defined as one which promotes long-term entrepreneurial perspectives among the industrial elites comprising key business groups and resists growth-compromising demands from specialist interest groups.”

The legitimacy of a racially-based developmental state is reinforced through its transformative capacity, delivered through concrete economic results. Especially in late-industrializing economies, the deployment of “state-business relations is not forged through industrial policies but through ethnic division of labor”.

The PAP displayed remarkable leadership in manufacturing a technocratic workforce out of the population. But in the urgency of solving

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57 (2001:413)
58 (Low 2001:414; Weiss 1988:4)
59 (Low 2001:414)
subsistence needs, the social vitality that once existed was eliminated, along with the filth of opium, gaming, secret societies and unemployment. With the recent development focus on creativity and entrepreneurship, the dearth of social vitality poses a major challenge\(^{60}\).

The deployment of ethnicity in the political economy of Singapore will be traced along four main epochs. The reliance on Western MNCs for export-oriented manufacturing characterized the first economic phase of Singapore. The second phase saw Singapore as the regional hub connecting commercial interests of the Western MNCs to the regional markets. Regionalization efforts by Government-Linked Corporations (GLC) marked the third phase. In the fourth, the grooming of Private Local Enterprises (PLE) moved in tandem with the importance of attracting international capital.

**Phase 1: Singapore as a Low-Cost Manufacturing Option**

The 1960s-1970s were fraught with issues of survival and marked the zenith of support for state intervention. Early independence Singapore comprised mainly unskilled or semi-skilled laborers. A substantial Chinese entrepreneurial class existed, but the “Chinese ‘chauvinism’ of a number of prominent business leaders” was viewed with suspicion by the state \(^{61}\). Moreover, unlike Hong Kong, domestic capital in Singapore was insufficient for economic self-reliance\(^{62}\).

Booted from the Malayan Federation, Singapore lost the Malayan common market\(^{63}\). The small city-state also had no exploitable natural resources. The viable option was to campaign for Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) from Western MNCs. Unlike most newly-independent postcolonial nations, Singapore was unfettered by protracted ethnic strives. Moreover, nationalistic fervor did not interfere with the nation’s receptivity to international capital. While regional peers embarked upon protectionist import

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\(^{60}\) (Ooi 2008)

\(^{61}\) (Low 2001:418)

\(^{62}\) (Hamilton 1983:41-63)

\(^{63}\) (Tremewan 1994:31)
substitution strategies, Singapore continued the outward-looking approach as the regional entrépot. Offering low-cost labor for the production line, “Made-in-Singapore” exports were produced by Western MNCs for consumers back in their home regions. Singapore eventually advanced into the hi-tech industry in what was dubbed the “second industrial revolution”. Then, Singapore also became the regional center for banking and financial services.

The influx of foreign capital accounted for Singapore’s economic success. As a Newly Industrialized Economy (NIE), Singapore was hailed as one of the Four Little Dragons (Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore), which, despite late-industrialization, managed to attain high growth rates. The taming of political and labor militancy had proven worthwhile. It created a stable business environment, a key factor for the influx of foreign capital.

Then, Singapore was perceived as a low-cost option for manufacturing facilities. Therefore, a “total business environment” equated to the best simulation of a Western business environment that the region could offer. This meant creating a disciplined workforce that embraced Western languages, cultures and outlooks. A comprehensive program aimed at making English the lingua franca was imperative. The pro-Western, anti-primordialism reforms had the most direct impact on the westernization of the Singapore population.

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64 (Rodan 1989:Ch4)
65 (Mirza 1986:58-75; Rodan 1985; Tremewan 1994:35)
66 (Mirza 1986:Ch4)
67 (Rodan 1985:Ch4)
68 (Hamilton 1983; Vogel 1991)
69 The following factors were cited as the key considerations for Singapore as the choice location of MNC subsidiaries in Asia. These were compiled from the interviews with representatives of the top management in the regional subsidiaries: political stability, excellent infrastructure, skilled and disciplined labor, established and cost-efficient supplier network, low operating costs, state-of-the-art infrastructure, and greater proximity to the regional markets (Rodan 1985:Ch3).
70 (Mirza 1986:42; Wee 2000:136)
71 (Rodan 1985:46)
72 (Tremewan 1994:Ch5:77)
Chew hailed the PAP as “a terrific moneymaking machine”\(^73\). In just five years, FDI in the manufacturing sector alone climbed from 157 million (Singapore dollars) in 1965, to 995 million in 1970. From 1970 to 1982, FDI increased by almost 10-fold (see Table 1.1).

**Table 1.1: Foreign Direct Investment in Singapore (Manufacturing), 1970-1982 (\$ million)**

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>995</td>
<td>1,575</td>
<td>2,283</td>
<td>2,659</td>
<td>3,054</td>
<td>3,380</td>
<td>3,739</td>
<td>4,145</td>
<td>5,242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>6,349</td>
<td>7,520</td>
<td>8,639</td>
<td>9,653</td>
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But like the previous colonial patronage, Singapore’s reliance on MNCs subjected the country to high levels of instability. The move to create a more equitable balance of power initiated new developmental initiatives. Although these initiatives remained complementary to the reliance on foreign capital, the focus of ethnic management required adjustment.

**Phase 2: Singapore as the Gateway to Asia**

As Singapore fine-tuned its economic strategies, business interests of MNCs were also adjusting. Commercial interest of Western MNCs expanded beyond home regions, creating the need for regional subsidiaries localized in the new markets\(^74\). Regionalization required local human resources as facilitators of cross-cultural business negotiations\(^75\). The typical MNC regional subsidiary comprised an expatriate top management, with the remaining bulk made up of local employees\(^76\). Top management decisions lay in the hands of the expatriate managers. With regionalization, local employees played more decisive managerial roles. This structural shift in business organizations initiated the second developmental phase in Singapore.

\(^73\) (Chew Seen Kong, cited in Kluver and Low 2006:2)
\(^74\) (Cohen 2007:85)
\(^75\) (Hendon et al. 1996:236)
\(^76\) (Li et al. 2002:118)
From 1978, economic liberalization in China presented market opportunities for Singapore. As the “first mover” economy in the region, Singapore possessed the advantage as the regional commercial hub. “Perplexed by the confusing business networks, political and cultural environment in the region,” many Western MNCs found in their Chinese Singaporean employees a reliable link to China. The working formula had been the commissioning of Chinese Singaporean employees to “cut through red tape, to connect with the right people, to get deals done, and to take a small piece of the action.” Becton Dickinson, a MNC that used Singapore as the launch-pad for their China operations, had expressed, “having Singapore managers who speak Chinese is our best means for crossing the culture gap.” Singapore’s ethnic Chinese population, previously downplayed, became one of the key resources being publicized as a draw for FDI. The English-Mandarin bilingual matrix became crucial for securing employment opportunity. The “Confucianization” of the nation may have achieved limited success. But resinification for commercial advantage had nevertheless attained its target. Singapore did become one of the strategic gateways to Western commercial interests in Asia. This formula continues as the mainstay of the economic growth. As shown in Figure 1.1, in a matter of two decades (1974-1994), FDI in the manufacturing sector multiplied 26-fold from just over 150 million (Singapore dollars) to 4.3 billion. Yeung attributed the influx of FDI to Singapore’s reputation as “an ideal springboard to the Asia Pacific region for these TNCs (or MNCs) wishing to venture into the region.” With economic deliverables, justifications for ethnic management were further reinforced.

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77 (Narine 2006:201-203)  
78 (Kluver and Low 2006:4; Tan 2003:768)  
79 (Tan 2000:50)  
80 (Haley 2000:280)  
81 (Kraar 1996:282)  
82 (Tremewan 1994:140-141)  
83 (Peebles and Wilson 2002:36; Suryadinata 2004:176)  
84 (Ooi 2008:292)  
85 (Yeung 1998:402)  
86 (Yeung 1998:404)
Phase 3: Government Linked Corporations - Balancing the Reliance on International Capital

The MNC’s allegiance is tied to the corporate headquarters in their home countries; not to the regional host nations. The absence of a substantial local entrepreneurial class subjected the Singapore economy to the “vulnerability of sudden (foreign) investor pull-out”\(^{87}\). This is most apparently seen during economic downturns.

Political economy observers had reported signs of economic slowdown in Singapore since the early 1980s\(^{88}\). Then, Singapore experienced its first recession in 1985 since its economic ascendancy over the two decades. In the first post-independence decade, Singapore alone had accounted for half of the FDI in Asia. By 1983, Singapore’s had shrunk to only 31.8 per cent (see Table 1.2). The 1985 recession was more of a temporary stopover, as opposed to a permanent demise to Singapore’s regional economic standing. This economic slowdown however, did signal the necessity to reformulate new

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\(^{87}\) (Rhodes and Higgott 2000:13)
\(^{88}\) (Rodan 1985:33)
directions for its economy. State initiatives were introduced to lessen the over-reliance on international capital\(^89\).

**Table 1.2: Singapore’s Share of World Foreign Direct Investments, 1975-1983**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Flow of World FDI (US billion)</th>
<th>FDI in Singapore as a proportion of FDI in Asia (%)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>44.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>31.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Calculated from data in the International Monetary Fund, Balance of Payments Yearbook, 1982 and 1984, cited from (Mirza 1986:6)*

The state faced the dilemma of accommodating the need to encourage local entrepreneurship, while still retaining control. The solution came in the form of the state-owned Government-Linked Corporations (GLC). The GLC stands for “a subsidiary or associate, by virtue of share ownership, of Temasek Holdings (the government holding company) or a statutory board\(^90\). This state-controlled group of companies engages in commercial activity under the flagshp of Temasek Holdings. The GLCs took over previously nationalized industries for instance, in aviation, shipping, building and construction, and telecommunications\(^91\). The corporate boards of GLCs are populated with exp-politicians or the family relations of existing politicians, ex-senior civil servants and military officers\(^92\). State elites undertake the responsibility of growing these businesses on the assumption that private local entities lack expertise:

> “The only reason the government moved in was that no entrepreneur had the guts and the gumption and the capital to go in on his own. So we went in and got it going, using government officials who had the drive and the flair. And we were prepared to go into more high-risk areas where Singaporean entrepreneurs are unable to carry that risk, either for lack of daring or for lack of capital.”\(^93\)

\(^89\) (Mirza 1986:203-204; Peebles and Wilson 2002:Ch7; Yeung 1998:403-404)
\(^90\) (Singapore Department of Statistics 2001:3)
\(^91\) (Heracleous 2001:69; Yeung 1999:263)
\(^92\) (Kluver and Low 2006:210)
\(^93\) (Lee Kuan Yew, cited in Alten 1995:200)
The GLCs denote “state capitalism” with a new twist. Despite the strong presence of the public sector in the corporate offices, these organizations are strictly market-driven. The Singapore economy will no longer depend solely on foreign capital, but will also generate income from its global investments. With the shift in developmental imperatives, its social imperatives also had to adjust accordingly. China became Singapore’s key investment target. Though Singapore had attempted to venture beyond the regional context, Singapore FDI enjoyed higher levels of success within Asia. China was especially receptive to Singapore FDI, inclusive of FDI rechanneled from other regions to China through Singapore. China, as it remains, is the top investment target for Singapore FDI today. To gain rapport by singing the same tune, Lee Kuan Yew joined the “Western decadence” chorus as Deng Xiaoping took the lead.

As regional economic interest expands into India and the Middle East, the institution of CMIO increased in importance. The attempt to establish the GLCs’ presence in India and the Pacific is in progress, but appears less positive than endeavors in China. It seems however, premature to attribute the success of the China-Singapore connection to cultural primordialism. Unlike China, Australia and India did not suffer isolationist policies exercised in the last decades by superpowers like America. Chinese isolation likely contributed to the ready acceptance of Singaporean investments, more so than cultural primordialism. The failure of the China Eastern-Singapore Airlines (CEN-SIA) merger is illustrative of Singapore’s over-optimism towards the

94 (Pangarkar 1998:116; Ramirez and Tan 2004:70; Tsui-Auch and Yong-Joo 2003:116)
95 (Yeung 1999:263-264; Zutshi and Gibbons 1998)
96 (Singapore Department of Statistics 2008:10)
97 (Huang 2000:1)
98 India: (Chan 2006; Tan 2003:769; Tan 2004; Teo 2005; Velloor 2007a; Velloor 2007b)
Middle East: (Kluver and Low 2006; Ng 2007)
99 China: (Khin 2007; The Business Times 2007; The Straits Times 2007). Australia: (de Silva 1992; Michael Page International 2005; Shari 1999). See also the failed attempt at joint venture between Singapore Airlines and Qantas to form budget airline Jetstar, and on Australian and New Zealand protectionism in (Kluver and Low 2006); Singtel acquisition of Optus shares, Singapore Airlines failed to acquire Air New Zealand and SIA failure to revive Ansett acquisition in (Trocki 2006).
Chinese primordial connection. The earlier confidence over the potential of the merger in 2007 was overtaken by disappointment in 2008\textsuperscript{100}. As China gains more allies with its ascendency, competition for the favor of the Chinese market is expected to be stiff.

In 2006, Singapore FDI in manufacturing alone amounted to 51 billion (Singapore dollars). The bulk of the investments was channeled to China, Malaysia and Indonesia (in descending order). While GLCs do not account for the biggest share of Singapore FDI, they tail in a close second to foreign investment abroad via inward FDI to Singapore\textsuperscript{101} (see Table 1.3). With the business focus rapidly expanding for the GLCs, the next phase of economic development targets the Private Local Enterprises (PLE).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1.3: Investment in Singapore and Abroad (Manufacturing and All Sectors) 2001-2008 ($ million)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreign Direct Investment in Singapore</strong></td>
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<td>All Sectors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manufacturing only</td>
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<td><strong>Singapore's Direct Investment Abroad</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>All Sectors</td>
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<td>Manufacturing only</td>
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Source: Department of Statistics, Singapore in Figures 2008

**Phase 4: Private Local Enterprises - in Search of Entrepreneurial Gusto**

Up to the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, Singapore was at the zenith of economic affluence. Although the economy weathered the 97 Crisis well\textsuperscript{102}, the event precipitated the move to groom local private sector entrepreneurs:

\textsuperscript{100} (Chong 2007; Chong 2008; Chua 2007; Kaur 2007a; Kaur 2007b; Kaur 2008a; Kaur 2008b; Sreenivasan 2008; Tan 2003:771-772): Tan also observed the difficulties in implementing Singapore investment projects in China despite the claims of transnational Chinese affiliations. For instance, the Suzhou Industrial Park and Wuxi-Singapore Industrial Park projects appear to have fallen short of the expectations of Singapore’s investment ambitions in China. Chinese Singaporean businessmen also lack competitiveness in China in comparison to their peers from Hong Kong and Taiwan.

\textsuperscript{101} (Yeung 1998:398;402)

\textsuperscript{102} (Hamilton 2000:211; Low 2001:411)
“MNCs and borrowed technology have helped us (to) rapidly leap from a poor trading village to an NIE, and in time to come a developed economy … Foreign MNCs will continue to play a dominant part in our development. But to break through the next level of development, we have to increasingly develop our home-grown talent and our own MNCs.”

PLEs were not priority as economic development relied on foreign MNCs. Subsequent beneficiaries of state initiatives in grooming local enterprise were largely restricted to the GLCs. The move to groom private-sector local entrepreneurs after decades of neglect finally ensued. The issue of maintaining dominance is crucial to the developmental state if the economic baton is shared with the PLEs. With the traditional Chinese business community reined in, local entrepreneurship can be safely subsumed under the patronage of GLCs. Presenting the GLCs as business forerunners, they function as patrons to the new local upstarts. Formal business support networks, Spring (business consultancy unit in EDB for SMEs), Singapore Business Federation (SBF) and Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (ASME) were established as a part of this state-sponsored endeavor. The greatest show of state indispensability is the political elites’ ability in negotiating Free Trade Agreements. The United States-Singapore FTA in 2001, was a tangible indication of the state’s ability to deliver the goods.

The grooming of private local entrepreneurship is still at its nascent stages. This initiative bodes well to some critics, while others are more apprehensive. It is difficult to conceive of enterprising individuals for a population so accustomed to state instruction. Success in private entrepreneurship is likely found in initiatives tagged under the flagship of the state and its GLCs. Singapore-style private entrepreneurship more resembles

103 (Goh Chok Tong, cited in Peebles and Wilson 2002:174)
104 (Gomez and Hsiao 2001:11; Tan 2003:757)
105 (Tan 2003:757; Yeung 1998:405)
106 (Kluver and Low 2006:403)
107 (Koh and Chang 2004; Rajan et al. 2001)
the use of private capital and non-public servants who work under intensive state guidance. State-led investments tap on the economies of scale otherwise unavailable to late-industrializing upstarts.

For a late-industrializing economy, Singapore needs to rally the population to comply with its developmental imperatives. In order to do so, policies also extend into the social realm. The ensuing section examines the social policies that parallel economic developmentalism.

**Economic Excellence: the Basis for Ethnic Management**

How had Singapore’s political economy translated into ethnic management policies that mirrored the developmental state’s imperatives? This section provides the parallel social engineering initiatives.

National solidarity, or what Anderson terms an “imagined community”\(^\text{108}\), was forged through engineering an indeterminate mass into one population. Yet, to optimally mobilize the population, it has to be administered through hierarchies and sectors. As Chun affirms, “Culture is not just a neutral marker of one’s identity; in the hands of the state, it is the very mechanism by which meaning is given to the nature of the polity and legitimacy is given to the apparatuses and routines of rule”\(^\text{109}\). The notion of the “Singapore brand” emerged from the combination of national distinctiveness with developmental imperatives. This buzzword denotes a reliable business link that accommodates a diversity of business interests. Above the offerings of a range of reliable products and services, the accommodation also encompasses the openness to cultural diversity. It makes explicit the understanding that cultural differences often obstruct business interest. “Reliability” thus includes an unambiguous specification of the brand’s various cultural accommodations through its ethnic management policies. This principle of unity in diversity underlies the three leitmotifs of ethnic management. From 1965, a non-ethnically aligned national identity was

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\(^{108}\) (1991)  
\(^{109}\) (1996:66)
forged by employing English language as a neutral medium of communication. From 1979, the “re-racialization” of the ethnic Chinese population through aggressive sinification campaigns ensued. The deployment of the CMIO quadrant accompanied the two initiatives.

**First Deployment: English Language as the Neutral Medium of Communication**

Election campaigns in 1959 had originally promised Malay privilege and the employment of Malay as the *lingua franca*:

“… in the future society we hope to bring about, the barriers between groups will have disappeared. People will no longer live in groups isolated from each other. There will be free communication through a common language – Malay.”

With the ouster of Singapore from the Malayan Federation, this commitment was considered void by 1966. Malay remained the national language, but performing symbolic functions, heard occasionally in the national anthem and military parade commands. The furor over singer Taufik Batisah’s fumbling over the national anthem in 2009 indicated public perceptions of Malay as the language of the Malays: “A Malay Singaporean sang the national anthem wrongly!” English, on the other hand, became Singapore’s *lingua franca*.

On the fabric of the nation, if Malay was decorative, Chinese languages were the stains. Anti-Chinese sentiments were rife. During the colonial era, the Chinese were seen as colonial collaborators milking the wealth of the region. The Thai monarch, Rama VI, referred to the Chinese as “Jews of the Orient”. The threat of Singapore becoming the “Third China” looms large amidst Cold War tensions. The need to de-emphasize

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110 (Clammer 1998:7)
112 (Wee 2000:133)
113 “Tsh2005”, posted on Sep 27 2009, SGForums, accessed on Nov 22 2009. Similar commentaries posted in official news channels, the ST forum, ChannelNewsAsia forum and YoungNTUC forum, were removed when accessed on Nov 22 2009.
114 (Regnier 1987:194)
115 (Fitzgerald 1969)
Chineseness in Singapore was expressed by PM Lee, “First, Singapore has about one million Chinese… Second, Singapore has too many ‘leftists’ who are supported by the one million Chinese in Singapore.”¹¹⁶ Echoing this concern, English was declared the “official and/or compulsory language” for post-independent Singapore¹¹⁷.

The first deployment of ethnic management in Singapore emerged prudently along the principle of non-alignment. By non-alignment, this thesis refers to the use of a “foreign” language as the lingua franca of Singapore. This move makes explicit state dissociations with “local” ethnic affiliations, despite its predominantly ethnic Chinese composition. English was “accorded full ethnonational value”¹¹⁸, and some believed the “English educated… possessed qualities associated with loyalty to Singapore.”¹¹⁹ The Anglicization of the population is symbolic of PAP dominance, Benjamin affirms:

“… those who wish to achieve power will strive to establish just one mode of orientation as the overarching one for the people they wish to dominate … attempting to shape the patterns of action and interpersonal communication that maintain the different modes of orientation in the dominated individual’s consciousness.”¹²⁰

Singapore’s successful Anglicization was also symbolic of its commitment to capitalist-industrial engagements. The deployment of English as the medium of communication enjoyed tremendous success. In 1957, about half the population in Singapore had been conversant in Malay¹²¹, but this was hardly the case by the 1980s¹²². In 1959, Singapore’s English proficiency swelled to 99 per cent¹²³. The Anglicization success led to the eclipse of other ethnic

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¹¹⁶ (cited in Van der Kroef 1967:43)
¹¹⁷ (De Souza, cited in Afrendas and Kuo 1980:206)
¹¹⁸ (Fishman et al. 1968:45)
¹¹⁹ (Llamzon 1977:37)
¹²⁰ (1988:10)
¹²¹ (Kuo 1980:39-62)
¹²² (Chiew 1980:238)
¹²³ (Soon 1998:7, 21; Tremewan 1994:112)
languages and cultures. Policy revisions had to stem “Western decadence” with the rising Westernization of the population. However, the perception of the English language as superior to other native languages persisted. It was found that “amongst the younger generation (of Chinese), while less dialect was spoken, more in that group used English compared to Mandarin.”

Some argue that the perception of English language superiority is a manifestation of Singapore’s colonial hangover. I propose an alternative take. As English remains the language of the globally hegemonic, it will remain the language of choice. The population’s embracement of ethnic management initiatives is rooted in their effective estimation of global market demands.

Second Deployment – Speak Mandarin Campaigns

The use of English language as a neutral communication platform enjoyed great success. As PM Lee declared, “once (the different communal groups) could not even laugh at the same jokes”. In 1979, the sudden attempt at the “resinification” of Chinese Singaporeans caused a stir on whether Singapore had sidetracked from its original principle of non-alignment with any “local” racial group. The choice of Mandarin as the medium of resinification is significant. “Resinification” efforts sought to rejuvenate Chinese heritage roots. But Mandarin was not the mother tongue of most Chinese Singaporeans. Most were dialect-speaking, hailing from the Southern provinces. The popularization of Mandarin, a Beijing dialect variety, emerged only after the revolutionary period in China. Short of the Chinese-educated literati, earlier branded as “Chinese chauvinists”, Mandarin was as

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124 (Tan 2003:754)
126 See (Ayyub 1998:Ch9; Gopinathan et al. 1998:Ch1; Kor 2009; Saravanan 1998)
127 (Gopinathan et al. 1998:73)
128 (Cai 2010)
129 (Kor 2009)
130 (cited in Tikoo 1996:444)
131 (Clammer 1998:176)
foreign language as English was pre-Anglicization. Although it was claimed that “resinification” was to relocate Singapore’s “Chinese roots”, its economic motivations of ingratiating itself with China is clear.

The vision of “a common cultural base, Chinese in origin” was then advertised to correct the fault-lines. Schools, where state visions are made realities, followed the reformed language policies to a tee. The compulsory adoption of Mandarin as the “mother tongue” in second language classes at school was controversial, but effective. The “mother-tongue”, however, neither referred to the language spoken by one’s mother, nor the medium spoken at home. It is limited to the language prescribed to one’s race, and one’s racial identification is limited to the race prescribed in the citizen’s identity card.

Special Assisted Plan (SAP) schools target students with good academic performance. There, students learn both English and Mandarin as first languages. French, German or Japanese electives are offered as second languages, coinciding with the ethnonational profiles of the MNCs who establish their offices in Singapore. The bias for Mandarin proficiency was blatant. Racial minorities were allowed to opt out of studying their “mother tongue” in favor of another language. For instance, an “Indian” may opt out of studying Tamil in favor of Malay or Mandarin. No allowance was made for those racially categorized under “Chinese”. A “Chinese” cannot opt out of Mandarin, including children of interracial marriages, who are to follow the father’s racial allotment.

The resinification education program comprised two components: bilingual language proficiency (English-Mandarin) and cultural proficiency. Where one’s future is secured through education credentials, getting a fail grade in one’s “mother tongue” could result in obstacles to one’s career options. One of the entry requirements to the much sought-after state

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132 (Vasil 1995:83)
133 (Tremewan 1994:140; Wee 2000:137)
134 (Clammer 1998:36,43,157; Oon 2010; Tremewan 1994:141)
Historical Background to the Management of Chineseness in Developmental State Singapore: origins, continuity, contradictions and consequences of ethnic management – Chapter 1

universities was a pass grade in one’s “mother tongue”\(^{135}\). Language proficiency alone does not equip the population with the cultural tools to bridge the Chinese market. The “cultural ballast” to Chinese solidarity was introduced through the compulsory Religious Knowledge curriculum\(^{136}\). Within it, a “Confucian Ethics” elective became a component of “Religious Knowledge”\(^{137}\).

Amidst the frenzy of “mother tongue” and “Confucian Ethics”, Singapore managed to become associated with East Asian economic affluence. Clammer dubbed the invention of a “lost” culture “Plastic Confucianism”\(^{138}\). Debates on the instrumental role of Confucianism to the “East Asia Miracle” was tag-lined an effort to “out Weber Weber himself”\(^{139}\). The “business traders and uneducated laborers” origins of Chinese Singaporeans meant even one’s ancestors would find scholarly Confucianism esoteric. Getting modern Singaporeans accustomed to “Confucian Ethics” is no easier than getting them acculturated to high-browed ethics of any other culture. As Chan observed, “the resinification-desinification process seems calculated and selective”, an attempt to produce real consequences out of manufactured realities\(^{140}\). The outcome, however, is the homogenization of Chinese consciousness.

The PAP forged a reputation as a corruption-free government. During this time, the government was fashioned as a class of Confucian gentry who were above the corrupting influences of money politics. As Confucianism is also equated to Chineseness, the observation of strict moral conduct was also expected of the Chinese Singaporean. Constant references to the “moral East” and “decadent West” led to a series of legislations that banned Singaporean

\(^{135}\) This mandatory requirement was eventually abolished (Chua 2009:242).
\(^{136}\) (Trocki 2006:142-153)
\(^{137}\) (Tu 2010; Wee 2000:134). The Religious Knowledge module was eventually phased out from the education curriculum in 1989 due to strong resistances against the imposition of religious elements in secular education. (Clammer 1998; Tremewan 1994)The emergence of political dissent under the guise of “New Age” religious organizations also contributed to this move.
\(^{138}\) (1998:Ch9)
\(^{139}\) (Clammer 1998:185)
\(^{140}\) (Chan 2000:4)
Historical Background to the Management of Chineseness in Developmental State Singapore: origins, continuity, contradictions and consequences of ethnic management – Chapter 1

men from keeping long hair\textsuperscript{141}. Long hair was associated with the Western hippie culture that Lee Kuan Yew so detested\textsuperscript{142}. Media content with “indecent western influences” was subjected to stringent censorship\textsuperscript{143}. The resinification campaign went to the extent of encouraging Chinese birth rates and dabbling with debates on eugenics. Female graduates were told to take on the responsibility of reproducing the nation, as intelligent mothers produce intelligent offspring. These statements were criticized for the strong undertones of encouraging Chinese birth rates, as the Chinese overrepresented the graduate population\textsuperscript{144}. The encouragement of birth control, addressed to the Malays, occurred at the same time. When female graduates failed to produce babies at the desired rate, immigration rules were relaxed to “import” Chinese from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong\textsuperscript{145}. The state assurance that Singapore remains “Chinese-dominant” at all cost reflects the economic value of East Asian associations.

Leaving nothing to chance, the state also actively participated in the Asian Values debate that rippled across the region. Asian Values stood for: the rejection of “Western decadence”, the rejuvenation of traditional moral values in Asia and the cultivation of the communitarian spirit of “society above self”\textsuperscript{146}. Moral intentions aside, such legislative controls possessed great influence in molding social perception.

For a population “well on the way to being ‘westernized’”\textsuperscript{147}, the state demonstrated tremendous ability in negotiating an “about face”\textsuperscript{148} of its population. With shallow roots to primordial attachments, responses by the

\textsuperscript{141} (Clammer 1985:25)
\textsuperscript{142} (1978)
\textsuperscript{143}One of the stringently censored is gay media content. At the UN Human Rights Conference held in Vienna in 1993, when criticized on Singapore’s treatment of homosexuality, Wong Kan Seng, then holding the portfolio of Singapore’s Foreign Affairs Minister responded that “Homosexual rights are a western issue, and therefore not relevant to this conference” (Clammer 1998:229). Wong’s response sheds insight on the motivation of stringent gay media censorship.
\textsuperscript{144} (Tremewan 1994:Ch5)
\textsuperscript{145} (Barr 2000:154; Chua 2009:244; Rahim 1998:72)
\textsuperscript{146} (Jayasuriya 1998:77)
\textsuperscript{147} (Brown 1997:264)
\textsuperscript{148} (Broinowski 2001)
population are hence characterized by a business-like accommodation to market demands. The willingness to juggle multiple affiliations, insofar as there is no conflict of commercial interest, reflects this. It is thus common to hear some Singaporeans taking pride in their friendly relations with the “West”, while others in the ability to stand against Western pressures to conform\textsuperscript{149}. These assertions culminate into an organized “muddledom” from wanting a piece of action in all realms of the global market. The desire is best illustrated in the CMIO racial quadrant.

**Third Deployment – CMIO**

While multiculturalism is the founding charter of the nation, its premises were subjected to inconsistent implementations. The ethnic landscape of Singapore is at times presented as a “cultural mosaic” of diversities\textsuperscript{150}, and at times packed into four neat compartments of Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Others. The CMIO was sidetracked when English supposedly dispelled racial divisions. It also faded into the background during the Confucian fever. But its presence is undoubtedly etched within “the cosmetic and devitalized use of ethnic symbols”\textsuperscript{151}: in citizen’s identity cards, on Racial Harmony Day\textsuperscript{152}, in tourism brochures\textsuperscript{153}, in national holidays\textsuperscript{154}, in expatriate guides\textsuperscript{155}, during national day celebrations (cultural dancers will be dressed in CMIO costumes), on murals of the HDB public residential estates…

The CMIO pervades national consciousness. This is perceptible from the public complaints raised along racial lines. Frustration towards growing

\textsuperscript{149} (Ooi 2008)
\textsuperscript{150} (Clammer 1998:751)
\textsuperscript{151} (Clammer 1998:10)
\textsuperscript{152} Annual school celebrations where students were asked to dress in ethnic garb and pictures of the “four races” are commonly displayed.
\textsuperscript{153} http://www.cp-pc.ca/english/singapore-images (accessed on Feb 25, 2007): “Women dress in traditional costume for events such as weddings or going to the temple. Chinese wear a cheong sam, Indians wear a sari, and the Malays wear a sarong kebaya.”
\textsuperscript{154} Ibid.: Chinese: Chinese New Year, Vesak Day; Malays: Hari Raya Puasa, Hari Raya Haji; Indians: Deepavali; Others: Christmas Day
\textsuperscript{155} http://www.expatsingapore.com (accessed on Feb 25, 2007): “Most (77.3 per cent) are Chinese. The Malays make up 14.1 per cent, the Indians 7.3 per cent and others 1.3 per cent.”
PAP elitism was directed at the resini fication efforts, as opposed to rising income disparity. Perceived favoritism towards the Chinese majority became more salient than the favor accorded to the minority few in the privileged classes. The encouragement to improve English proficiency amongst Malays for better integration with work requirements was taken with much offense. If the Chinese were encouraged to speak their “native” language Mandarin, why were the Malays encouraged to speak a “foreign” language like English? Never mind if Mandarin was as “foreign” to the Chinese as English was to the Malays. To a nation so conditioned by race, the charge of state racism is expressed more easily than state elitism. Speak Mandarin campaigns were questioned: why are there no Speak Malay/Tamil campaigns? Never mind if many retained native fluency in Malay and Tamil without the need for campaigns\textsuperscript{156}. The institutionalization of the CMIO meant pragmatism has to be at times compromised to avoid the violation of racial sensitivities\textsuperscript{157}. Equal attention had to be paid to all (CMI) races. State-sponsored self-help organizations had to go along racial lines: one for the Chinese (CDAC-Chinese Development Assistance Council), one for the Malays (MENDAKI–Council for the Education of Muslim Children) and one for the Indians (SINDA–Singapore Indian Development Assistance). Military mobilization announcements are made in four languages, and “contents in all four official languages are available in the press, radio, television, and movies.”\textsuperscript{158}. In public forums, the customary sightings of commentators that question the absence of CMIO are periodically featured:

“I just realized that DBS ATM machines have instructions in English, Malay and Chinese but not Tamil.”\textsuperscript{159}

“On second thought, besides catering to the hearing-impaired, I think that it is really a win-win scenario if all non-English programs could

\textsuperscript{156} (Vasil 1995:Ch5)
\textsuperscript{157} (Brown 1997:267)
\textsuperscript{158} (Kuo and Jermudd 1994:34)
\textsuperscript{159} (Manickam 2006: public forum)
be subtitled in English and all English programmes subtitled into the other three official languages based on the population ratio, for example, 70 per cent Chinese, 20 per cent Malay and 10 per cent Indian.”

“I refer to the letter, 'Why MRT sign not in Malay?' (ST, Dec 29), by Mr S. Kulaveerasingham… These signs provide Chinese and Tamil translations only as the Malay alphabet is based on the Latin or Roman alphabet, which is the same as the English language. As the station names are actual location names common to both English and Malay applications, they are not translated into Malay.”

Now, should we dress the green and red men in the traffic lights in four costumes? Recently, sensitivities appear to be mounting towards “Others”, now renamed “foreign residents”. With the liberal foreign immigration policies, the concern towards “foreigners with a flagrant disregard for local sensibilities” is growing. This is expressed in the “depth of feelings aroused in Singapore” towards the Silviu Ionescu scandal.

The deployment of the CMIO quadrant echoes Malaysia’s institutionalized racism, which Lee Kuan Yew had once disparaged:

“They say that first they have three little unities, i.e. ‘Malays unite’, ‘Chinese unite’, ‘Indians unite’ and then the three unities unite into one big unity. They have been doing this in Malaya for the last decade and successfully maintained the privilege and power position of a few privileged Malay traditionalists sharing the spoils of office with a few wealthy Chinese and a few fortunate Indians who were chosen to represent the Chinese and the Indians respectively… a dangerous and unstable arrangement, fraught with constant strife, because the three

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160 (Lim 2007: public forum)
161 (Kharudin 2008: public forum)
162 (Lewitschnik 2009:7)
163 Romanian Charge D’Affaires Silviu Ionescu was charged with drink-driving in Singapore, which killed one and injured two. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement to the Romanian Embassy, that “Romania should not underestimate the depth of feelings aroused in Singapore over the case” (MFA, cited in Teh 2010).
different communal bases are kept separate and distinct, having
different attitudes and being fed with different and often conflicting
communal sentiments." 164

The eventual replication of the “three little unities” in Singapore is a
concession to the pragmatic need for “business diversification”. When
Singapore was still in its nascent stage of independence, the global political
economy was dominated by Western multinational enterprises. The
subordination of racial differences for a pro-English/Western environment
was the fitting option. Asian nations were either competitors or too small-
scale to provide viable economic opportunities. By the 1980s, the economic
modernization of China marked a turning point to global trends. Singapore,
arguably Chinese dominant in terms of numbers, reciprocated China’s call for
primordial solidarity. The Confucian fever cooled off eventually, but interest
in the Chinese market maintains. With other regional markets emerging, the
shift from pure “resinification” to the CMIO then made economic sense. The
sudden interest of the local media in the “modern Indians of Singapore”
mirrored economic opportunities in India 165. The declaration that Lee Kuan
Yew foresaw the giant potential of the India’s economy since 50 years back
sought to dispel past Indian diplomats’ perception that Lee is “anti-Indian”166.
Immigration rules also seem to have relaxed for skilled professionals from
India recently. This move is paralleled by features on Dubai167. At the turn of
2007, The Straits Times heralded the next economic interest for Singapore: the
Middle East168. The racial deployments traced a steady buildup of economic
interests correlating with the CMIO. Since the separation of Singapore from
the Malayan Federation, the state maintained silence over the issue of
boosting Malay proficiency. In the recent years, the emphasis of gaining
Malay proficiency amongst non-Malays re-emerged:

164 (cited in Van der Kroef 1967:117)
165 (Nirmala 2003; Ratnam et al. 2003)
166 (Datta-Ray 2010; Hussain 2010)
167 (Koh 2003)
168 (The Straits Times 2006; The Straits Times 2007a; The Straits Times 2007c; The Straits
Times 2007d; The Straits Times 2007e)
“So for the Malays, we want them to keep their Malay language alive. Then when we do business with Malaysia, with Indonesia...it is easy. And we want some of our non-Malay officers also to understand Malay. For the Indians, they have to keep the languages alive... Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi. And even our Arabs. We're trying to get our Arabs to revive their Arabic so they can connect with the Gulf states and we can do business with them.”

The above is a rare excerpt on Malay entrepreneurship. The significance of these “silences” will be examined in detail in Chapter 7.

Foucault’s concept of the “repressive hypothesis” is useful for the description of ethnic management. Race is rendered explosive, relegated to ignominy, then reintroduced in sanitized forms, hinting still of its explosive nature. Individuals are required to check their riotous racial nature, or risk losing the valued economic returns that accompany racial repression. A constant surveillance on race is exacted, self-imposed by the individual à la Foucault’s *panopticon* in *Discipline and Punish*. However, I would hesitate in fully subscribing to Foucault’s assumptions of the state’s omnipotence. While ethnic management initiatives are calculated moves, they do not act entirely free of constraints. State interventionism is often inspired by the need to be responsive to global market demands. Their actions are hence tied to market pressures. How state leaders respond to market demands, in turn, are shaped by a nation’s historical circumstances, which condition and constrain predispositions. Moreover, ethnic management, for better or worse, does not always produce the desired effects of state intentions. Rather, individual consumption of ethnic management imagery reproduces a negotiated order, or what Chun terms “refracted” ethnicities. In the next section, I will examine

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169 (Lee Kuan Yew, cited in Chia 2007)
170 (1974:15)
171 The panopticon is a building for the housing and surveillance of prison inmates. The cells are positioned around a central surveillance tower. The windows to this tower are covered with venetian blinds, such that inmates will never be sure when they are being watched. Inmates hence self-police their own actions, arising from the consciousness of being constantly watched. (Foucault 1979:200)
172 (1996:68)
the above departures from Foucault through the concept of Marcotted Development.

**Marcotted Development: A Critical Assessment of Ethnic Management in Singapore**

I argue that the proliferation of ethnic management initiatives is located within the phenomenon of late-industrializing Marcotted Development. Marcotted Development refers to the reconciliation of dual hegemonic demands by individuals, collectives and nation-states via the habitual replication of dominant cultural ideologies within a late-industrialization setting of accelerated economic development. The feature of late-industrialization of interest to this thesis is the cultivation of an economic order through the importation of first-mover capitalist-industrial consciousness. The occurrence of capitalist-industrialization in late-industrializing economies is the result of direct importations, rather than an organically developed process. Its implementers believe the desired traits of an economic model can be selectively imported without its organic cultivation from scratch. First-mover nations had to bear the “pioneering costs” of developing the capitalist-industrial consciousness organically. This means capitalist-industrialization is a gradual process of fine-tuning through the exploration of previously uncharted grounds. Late-industrializing nations, as late entrants, “import” this success formula established by the first-movers. The urgency of catching up with the first-movers also meant the process was state-led. In the process of performing economic life within the context of accelerated development, individuals, collectives and nation-states of late-industrialization are often confronted with two contesting hegemonic demands. The first expects compliance as the definitive force of the capitalist-industrial order; the second does so on primordial grounds. With regard to the locale within which Singapore is situated, this duality is primordially

173 (Hill and Jones 2009:227)
174 (Hill and Jones 2009:227)
175 (Smart 1997:167; Sung 2006:11)
expressed as the East-West dichotomy. In this thesis, I will examine how Marcotted Development occurs with replications of Orientalism. Despite attempts to accord recognition to dual hegemony, the juggling act remains entrenched within dominant ideological notions. Due to the lack of an organic consciousness to arbitrate dual hegemony effectively, late-industrializing actors unwittingly rely on dominant Orientalist discourses in its multiple permutations. Here, the premises of Marcotted Development in relation to ethnic management will be established.

This thesis adapts Brown’s definition of ethnic management as the commencement point for the analysis of Singapore’s ethnic management initiatives. Ethnic management is the statist attempt to render a population into coherent administrative units on the organizing principle of race.\(^\text{176}\) Intervention is justified through delivering outcomes that are believed to ultimately benefit the population. This thesis explores the factors contributing to: (1) ethnic management’s attraction; (2) its successful implementation; (3) its legitimacy.

Brown highlights that Southeast Asia, in particular, experiences a high proliferation of statist-inspired ethnic management\(^\text{177}\). Postcolonial Southeast Asia had to manage the issue of racial diversity due to colonial mass importation of labor immigrants. Laborers resided within the colonies racially segregated from each other and from the indigenous residents. Grouped into one population under independent self-government, racial differences became the breeding ground for conflict. With this background in mind, ethnic management, especially in Southeast Asia, became not only a necessity, but a bargaining chip for those able to harness its mobilizing power.

However, the ready embracement of ethnic management does not guarantee its success. Brown attributes Singapore’s successful engagement with ethnic management to two factors. The state is autonomous from patronage by the local business community and hence less likely to succumb

\(^{176}\) (1994:1-2)  
\(^{177}\) (1994)
to their pressures. More importantly, the state is backed by a strong bureaucratic apparatus that ensures its objectives are met. This combination of factors distinguishes Singapore from its Southeast Asian peers. Burma is an autonomous state with a weak bureaucratic apparatus. State autonomy in mandating ethnic assimilation is unaccompanied by an administration that ensures the exhaustiveness of this mandate. In contrast, Malaysia possesses strong bureaucratic apparatus but limited state autonomy from the pressure of partisan interests. The state is obliged to fulfill racial commitments (e.g. maintain the privilege of the indigenous majority) even when it contradicts developmental imperatives. Indonesia is constrained by its rent-seeking state and weak bureaucratic apparatus. The presence of administrative loopholes in Indonesia creates means for rent-seeking opportunists to manipulate the bureaucratic apparatus. State corruption scandals with ethnic Chinese tycoons precipitated the outbreak of violence against Indonesian-Chinese, which a weak state apparatus was challenged to contain.\(^\text{178}\) In contrast, the Singapore state inherited a bureaucratic apparatus left behind by the British. It also brought to full potential other administrative wings mooted by the previous Labor Front Government; for instance, the Central Provident Fund (CPF) and Housing Development Board (HDB).\(^\text{179}\) Under the PAP, these administrative apparatuses developed into the bureaucratic strong-arm of the state. The development of the nation-state was therefore atrophic. The state expanded at a much more rapid pace than its checks and balances. The final factor is the most relevant to this thesis. Despite this atrophy, the pillage of national resources for personal gains, as did most authoritarian regimes, was not associated with Singapore politicians. Rather, a corporatist approach characterizes the dominant one-party regime. The state acted as the “impartial defender of the garrison” to manage racial diversity\(^\text{180}\). For the sake of economic growth, ethnic management impedes, “sometimes disruptively and

\(^\text{178}\) (Brown 1994:2-6)
\(^\text{179}\) (Thum 2009)
\(^\text{180}\) (Brown 1994:265)
unintentionally”, but with good intentions. Organized racial communities were deployed as human resources to promote development. Therefore, Brown is close to exact in his assessment that ethnic management in Singapore is neither reactionist nor coercive, but interventionist. The state anticipates global trends and re-orientates the nation prior to the full-blown impact; the nation cooperates.

According to Brown, ethnic management is not exclusively exercised by authoritarian regimes. The differences in ethnic management between authoritarian and liberal states, Brown asserts, is the basis upon which interventions are justified. However, he believes ethnic management initiatives do have higher chances of success under authoritarian regimes than in liberal democracies. In the latter, civil societies provide contesting worldviews to state-propagated ones. In the absence of a viable civil society, state autonomy in ethnic management is magnified. With a developed bureaucratic apparatus handed over by the colonial administration to authoritarian regimes, the growth of an already under-developed postcolonial civil society is impeded.

Further, Brown believes that ethnic management is limited in the long run by its lack of authenticity. He assumed that its legitimacy in soliciting compliance from the population will be short-lived as a result: “the more the state is seen to actively engineer the national identity, the less traditionally authentic it appears and therefore the less its unifying and legitimating power.” He predicts the initiatives’ eventual demise, citing the example of “middle class groups well on the way to being ‘westernized’ (in Singapore)”.

Clammer, too, paints a grim response from the populace, who

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181 (Brown 1994:1)  
182 (Brown 1994:46). This thesis concurs with Brown except for his belief that ethnic management in Singapore was not characterized by coercion. The coercive state behavior in the 1963 Operation Cold Store against the Barisan Sosialis was evident, even though corporatist intents were the primary motivations.  
183 (1997:255-258)  
184 (1994:1)  
185 (1997:263)  
186 (1997:264)
greeted the interventionist state with apathetic silence. He observed the withdrawal of the population into private pursuits with new age religions and religious fundamentalisms\textsuperscript{187}.

I contend with Brown’s critique on the legitimating factors of ethnic management and its limited legitimacy. Indeed, the conditions in Southeast Asia are more conducive for ethnic management’s deployment. But the conditions cannot be strictly attributed to the factors of post-colonialism and authoritarianism. Authoritarian regimes in Africa, for instance, are not renowned for extensive ethnic management, despite sharing colonial pasts with Southeast Asia. One possible explanation to the African difference may be weak bureaucratic capabilities. But the lack of bureaucratic muscle too did not prevent the emergence of ethnic management in Southeast Asian Burma\textsuperscript{188}. I find the ease of harnessing racial mobilizations in Southeast Asia a more viable explanation. As interracial antagonisms are relatively mild in Southeast Asia, the politicization of race has lower risks of backfiring. The case for this use is lowered in regions of protracted ethnic strife; for instance, Africa, India and the Middle East\textsuperscript{189}.

In conclusion, while authoritarianism thrives better with weak civil opposition, this does not imply that authoritarianism is then the cause of weak civil opposition. Strong civil agitations in Indonesia, for instance, refute this assertion. Ethnic management, authoritarianism and weak civil assertions are legitimized by other conditions. I will first attempt to present an alternative view to the proliferation of ethnic management initiatives, using Singapore as an instance. Having done that, I continue with an account of ethnic management inclinations through the concept of Marcotted Development.

\textsuperscript{187} Examples of religious fundamentalism were most notably the Islamic and Christian religious fundamentalism groups, who are commonly portrayed as radical religious organizations that colludes with external organizations (Jema’ah Islamiya, Marxist plotters) aiming to disrupt Singapore security. New age religions were more or less tolerated (e.g. charismatic churches), or co-opted by the government (e.g. Singapore Soka Association) (Clammer 1998:79) See also (Clammer 1998:Ch7).

\textsuperscript{188} (Brown 1994:2-6)

\textsuperscript{189} On conflict management in Africa, see (Deng et al. 1996; Ibrahim 1995; Stavenhagen 1996; Wolpe 1990)
If ethnic management initiatives are buttressed by authoritarian demands, the legitimacy it commands would be transitory. The failure to create a Confucian society out of Singapore lends insight to the factors for the population’s compliance with ethnic management. State persuasion that Confucianism is instrumental to capitalist enterprise was simply unconvincing. In contrast, initiatives pushing for the revival of Mandarinization and Pan-Chinese affinities were met with much enthusiasm by the population. Chua explains this ready compliance as the manifestation of an “ideological consensus” towards the corporatist intents of the developmental state.\(^{190}\) The revival of Chineseness in Singapore unlocks primordial affiliations that lend a competitive edge to economic connections with China. With a view to the future, antiquated cultural notions become instrumental to attaining pragmatic objectives. Ethnic symbols carry social meanings that vary according to contextual time and space. But the symbolism bears real consequences when individuals respond to them as indicative of their self-identity.

Contrary to the postulations of Brown and Clammer, the ill reception towards ethnic management appears to be just teething problems. Tan confirms that the tentative steps taken in the 1980s to “reawaken” Chinese primordialism blossomed into “a more confident assertion of Chineseness in everyday life” by the 1990s.\(^{191}\) This “reawakening” is especially intense in the establishment of Chinese business connections.\(^{192}\) Brown’s postulation presupposes the importance of cultural authenticity to the individual. The value of cultural authenticity as a precondition for legitimacy is perhaps overrated. Authenticity has no place in a late-industrializing nation fired by the desire to close developmental gaps. When regional economies justify the “return” to primordial attachments, “heritage” sentiments can be speedily “reawakened”. With time, “official” heritage identities could convince the

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\(^{190}\) (1995)  
\(^{191}\) (2003:754)  
\(^{192}\) (Chan 2000a; Chan 2000b; Chan 2003; Chan 2005; Chan and Chiang 1994; Chan and Ng 2001; Jomo 2003; Menkhoff 1993; Yeung 2002; Yeung 2006; Yeung 2007)
individual that one has “lost touch” with one’s “roots”. This triggers tremendous guilt and the renewed zeal to “relocate” one’s “lost heritage”. However, ethnic management’s success is only partially attributable to the state’s omnipotence in myth-making. It also reflects the population’s consensus towards the hegemonic demands of the global political economy. The successful implementation of ethnic management depends on the ability to offer a worldview that strikes a chord with the population. The employment of racial primordialism in Singapore is therefore not a retrograde step against modernity, as Chan and Evers suggest. Neither is it a senseless remnant of the old colonial world. Its deployment may appear to defy critical sensibilities. But its foundations are in fact modern and rational.

The proliferation of statist ethnic management in Southeast Asia can be explained through the concept of Marcotted Development. The region is one of the latest to regain independence. Yet, material affluence in late-industrializing nations is attainable within an accelerated time-frame. This inspired the argument that “a process that took two hundred years in the West is being accomplished in two generations in East Asia.” The legitimacy of statist developmental regimes is strong in late-industrializing nations because economic growth is vital. In particular, in regions less affected by protracted ethnic strife, the population is even more amenable to ethnic management. If the division of a population into the CMIO gives better access to the Chinese, Southeast Asian, Indian and other regional markets, then the population is more likely to concede with Orientalist notions of classifiable racial differences.

However, Marcotted Development is a necessity that brings economic success at a cost. Developmental states stifle the emergence of an independent capitalist-industrial bourgeoisie. As mentioned earlier, the influence of the Chinese business community had to be subordinated to statist developmental

193 (1972)
194 Marcotting is an induced horticultural method of cultivating a sapling directly from the mother plant, as opposed to seed cultivation. In this way, “premium specimens” are preserved and replicated to counter the arbitrariness of natural selection.
195 (Addams and Vernon 2007:335)
imperatives. Orientalist notions become a part of the arsenal that the state deploys as the wielder of developmental expertise. For instance, the “Anglicized” state may employ racist discourse prevalent in first-mover societies to denounce business leaders as “Chinese chauvinists”. In this way, senseless remnants of the colonial legacy become modern bureaucratic apparatuses. In late-industrializing societies, they symbolize first-mover superiority. Yet, the state is not the sole influence within the late-industrializing framework. By using first-mover cultural symbols to subordinate local contestations for influence, the state is in turn subordinated by these symbols within the wider capitalist-industrial network. State leaders had to acknowledge the hegemonic impositions by first-mover political economies through racial distinctions. If “Anglicized” state elites are supposedly superior to “Chinese chauvinist” business leaders, then “true blue Westerners” must be infinitely superior. The reliance on investments from first-mover enterprises further aggravates this disjunction. This results in societies that contend with not just an intrusive state, but also the presence of dominant Western business elites. Therefore, Marcotted Development also refers to the dual hegemonic presence within the late-industrializing landscape. Dominance is two-pronged in late-industrializing societies. The dominant not only refers to the local/regional hegemons. It also refers to the representatives of the Western MNCs that dominate the regional political economy. The dominant comes from locales outside the late-industrializing region, but are nevertheless “resident powers” of this locale. Armitage makes explicit what US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates meant by the United States as a “resident power”: “The United Sates is a resident nation in Asia. We have all the rights and obligations of every other resident nation in Asia.” However, there exists another dominant stakeholder of resident geographical proximity. If China is yet to be on par with the first-mover hegemons, its hegemonic potential, despite late-industrialization, is globally

196 (Gates 2009)
197 (2010)
noteworthy. Media puns on “US Losing Power as China Steams Ahead” (for the clean energy market) play with the much-expected contestations for global hegemony[^198]. Critics Tu[^199] and Wang[^200] are likewise concerned over the danger of Chinese ascendency developing into narrow-minded chauvinism.

Within this political economy characterized by Marcotted Development, ethnic management is a means through which dual hegemonic demands are euphemized.

The legitimacy of ethnic management, as accorded by the nation, is the manifestation of economic circumstances. Statist models predominate in late-industrializing regions because they best address their economic exigencies. Racial primordialism qualifies state administration on a basis that few can contest. Faced with the urgency of closing the gap with capitalist-industrial first movers, late-industrializing nations import first-mover industrialization expertise. Along with it, Orientalist discourses are methodically internalized without grasping their true symbolism. In exploring the link between Asian Values and authoritarian governance, Jayasuriya cites historical similarities amongst Germany, Meiji Japan, and postcolonial nations in Southeast Asia[^201].

As late-industrializing nations, these countries shared the common characteristics of authoritarian governance and depoliticized civil societies. The urgency of rapid industrialization meant losing no time to the wheeling-dealing of political opposition and civil societies. Khondker reiterates: “countries pursuing or seeking to pursue rapid economic development have very little choice but to opt for a strong, centralized government which the Singapore government is”[^202]. Yet, accelerated development is not the only exigency to be dealt with in late-industrializing Asia. An authoritarian government that does not grant voice to its population for the development of an organic identity can only deal with dual hegemony through the cultural means of first-mover societies, marcotted along with the FDI. The articulation

[^198]: Usher (2010)
[^199]: 2010
[^200]: 2008
[^201]: 1998:86
[^202]: 1991:97
of where one stands within the East-West dichotomy is thus often expressed with Orientalist discourse replications.

The concept of Marcotted Development forms the main thrust of the theoretical advancement of this thesis. In order to further develop its theoretical premises, an inquiry into late-industrializing ethnic management initiatives is needed. The ensuing chapter reviews literatures to locate the field within which this concept can be advanced for its ethnic management analysis.

Conclusion

Singapore history was provided from three vantage points to fully account for the emergence of ethnic management. Through the review of Singapore’s history from pre-independence, political-economic and language policy perspectives, the backdrop for the examination of ethnic management was set. Prohibitions on “Chinese chauvinism”, “Malay indolence” and “Western decadence” became the recurring themes of state efforts at engineering Chineseness in developmental state Singapore.

Pre-independent historical experiences point to the vulnerability of passive responses to foreign incursions. The world does not respect the wishes of those who desire to retreat into isolation. Peremptory attempts at managing a nation’s role within the global political economy is the outcome of embracing necessary evils.

Singapore’s developmental imperatives reveal a preoccupation with race. They express the refusal to be “color-blind” in a racially-indexed world. They assert the necessity to make a pragmatic and overt choice of racial affiliations through promoting one and condemning the other. Although ethnic management targets the social dimension, the motivations venture beyond the social into the economic realm.

By shaping population habits through language policies, economic imperatives were ingrained in the primordial identifications of individuals.
The deployments of engineering/de-engineering/re-engineering efforts were framed as racial, but based on the economic exigencies of the time.

The final section shared insights on why the proliferation of ethnic management initiatives is concentrated in specific regions. The concept of Marcotted Development was used to explain this proliferation in terms of late-industrialization. This thesis takes the position that late-industrializing nations have less negotiating space for the organic development of social realities. On this basis, developmental imperatives obligate the embracement of ethnic management.
Chapter 2

Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

As illustrated in the previous chapter, the proliferation of ethnic management initiatives in late-industrializing nations is bolstered by Marcotted Development. Its deployment is motivated by dual hegemony within the sphere of late-industrialization. State leaders seek to develop positive national associations to gain a competitive global positioning. This endeavor is termed nation branding. Nation branding and ethnic management are interrelated concepts, but address the needs of nation-states from different vantage points. On the international frontier, nation branding efforts advertize to the world a nation’s aspired image. It presents the national voice as a collective through state agencies and representatives. On the domestic frontier, ethnic management initiatives calibrate a population to deliver what is being advertized about the nation. Ethnic management policies shape an individual’s mindset and predisposition according to the desired national image and its outcome is manifested by the individuals subjected to its influence. To advance the discussion, a review of the literatures relating to the key premises of this thesis is needed.

This chapter lays out the conceptual framework of Marcotted Development. Through the review of existing literatures, I locate Marcotted Development within the field from which its theoretical premises can be further developed. Specifically, the chapter examines how Marcotted Development relates to existing theoretical frameworks on nation branding, late-industrialization, Orientalism and social reproduction.

The distinction between nation and state is first established. This distinction is required to provide the background from which the need for ethnic management arises. Literatures on ethnic management focus on the
domestic consumption of race-ethnic imageries. While they offer insights on how ethnic management facilitates population control, the understanding is incomplete unless the international dimensions of these imperatives are considered in tandem. As nation branding examines the effectiveness of state discourses on external audiences (e.g. foreign investors), its premises are reviewed next. This thesis found the potential explanation of nation branding rhetoric through the application of Marcotted Development. Prior to the consolidation of my conceptual framework, I will identify how Marcotted Development extends beyond existing theories on late-industrialization. An investigation of this set of literatures provides the propositions to my theoretical contribution. The investigation first shows how Primordialist ideology influences racial notions and is instrumental to the development of ethnic management. This is followed by the examination of the critiques on Primordialism offered by the Situationalist and Constructivist schools. An analysis of why the Constructivist perspective best suits this thesis is then conducted. A discussion of the conceptual framework of Marcotted Development concludes the chapter. This section is presented to show that Marcotted Development is a requisite consideration to the implementation of ethnic management in late-industrializing nations. Propositions on the application of this concept to nation branding studies are forwarded in this section.
“Nation-State” is an Oxymoron

The hyphenation of the “nation-state” is an oxymoron as state control often results in some disgruntlement from the populace. Appadurai analogizes that the “nation and state are at each other’s throats, and the hyphen that links them is no less an icon of conjuncture than an index of disjuncture”\(^1\). Concurring with Appadurai, this thesis seeks to establish the distinction between “the nation” and “the state”.

Carter defines the nation as a collective with common cultural identification.\(^2\) Manifestations of common nationality include emotive attachments to a geographical territory identified as homeland, or solidarities forged through common cultural elements of race, language or religion. Anderson’s rendition of the nation as an imagined community supplements Carter’s on the origins of these emotive attachments.\(^3\) A nation is the outcome of the imagination of a “deep, horizontal comradeship” amongst an otherwise indeterminate mass of individuals. As a result of this national will, the reality of social inequality is selectively downplayed. Brown elaborates on the origins of national will:

“… national identity is constructed on the basis of institutional or ideological frameworks which offer simple and indeed simplistic formulas of identity, and diagnoses of contemporary problems, to otherwise confused or insecure individuals.”\(^4\)

The unification of an indeterminate mass is found in the common experience of insecurities in face of an impending threat. This real or perceived source of threat creates “confused or insecure individuals” who seek to release the burden of uncertainty.\(^5\) The state, as an organized entity, offers “simplistic formulas of identity and diagnoses of contemporary problems” to the nation. In return, nationals subjected to the jurisdiction of the state are required to

\(^1\) (cited in Cherniavsky 2006:24)
\(^2\) (2000:19)
\(^3\) (1991:5-7)
\(^4\) (2000:20)
\(^5\) (Brown 2000:20)
observe state prescriptions. Wallerstein cements the source of national construction to the state: “a ‘nation’ is supposed to be a sociopolitical category, linked somehow to the actual or potential boundaries of the state”\(^6\). If a nation is in reality composed of an indeterminate mass, then its coordination is linked to the state as an organizing entity. National will and state objectives may differ. But the entities coincide due to national reliance on the state to render national will into concrete reality.

The state is a specialized entity of individuals bestowed with the legitimacy to manage the national collective. In nation-states characterized by democratic elections, state legitimacy is determined by the electoral majority within a bounded geographical territory. The state could formally refer to “a legally constituted institution, which provides its residents with protection from internal insecurity and external aggression”\(^7\). Based on this legalistic definition, the state performs the neutral function of replicating national will. But the state is occupied by incumbents who are situated within the social stratum, and are therefore far from neutral. The state, in the context of this thesis, more adequately refers to the “governmental and administrative institutions of a society, and to the ideological claim as to the sovereignty of these institutions”\(^8\). Indeed, racial discourse represents the transmission of hegemonic ideological worldviews. However, this definition is incomplete without specifying the impact of racial discourse on individual behavioral predispositions. This thesis completes Brown’s definition with Foucault’s rendition of the state:

“(The state is the arbitrator of) an education ‘program’ that would follow the child in his schooling and which would involve from year to year, month to month, exercises of increasing complexity”\(^9\)

\(^6\) (1991b:77)  
\(^7\) (Oomen 1997:19)  
\(^8\) (Brown 1994:1)  
\(^9\) (1979:161)
“The nation” and “the state”, other than being “at each other’s throats”, also share a symbiotic relationship. The state, as the political vanguard of the nation, is delegated the power to speak as a national collective. Yet, the political vanguard looms larger than the nation. Bourdieu affirms this “oracle effect”. The statesperson speaks with the impersonal “we” that connotes the will of the nation, although the views may at times contradict national sentiments. This “symbolic takeover by force” generates ambivalence within the nation towards state dominance. “We” in political discourse is in fact a verbalized overture to segments of the population. In this, state elites profess like-mindedness with national compatriots. But in reality, the state expresses only partisan interests in the nation. Discordant views are framed by the state as distorted influences from external “negative elements”. If uncorrected, these sentiments will cause the disruption of the national fraternity. In this, the state seeks a divide and rule strategy by “empowering” some through the disparagement of others.


One of the most popularly employed instruments for state execution of “national will” is race. Intrinsically, “race” is biological. It refers to “a generic category, which has a visible physical form”. Conceptually, the construct is linked to historical, political and socioeconomic elements that render it a social category. In the discussion of ethnic management, we inevitably have to make comparisons to the earlier notion of “race”. The term “race” has proven to be inadequate in the discursive analysis of the social science discipline. The crucial fault lies within the borrowing of a folk term in scientific discourse. Folk biases were imported into racial discourse, claiming

10 (1991:239)
11 (Bourdieu 1991:239)
12 (Wallerstein 1991b:77)
to be scientific, but were far from being objective in reality\textsuperscript{13}. Race was defined as the result of species variation that results in the emergence of subspecies\textsuperscript{14}. Early attempts at racial classification argued that superficial differences of skin, hair, and eye color are qualifying traits of different subspecies\textsuperscript{15}. Such “racial” differences are more adequately termed “clines”, which refer to differences as a matter of degree, rather than classifiable differences, such as blood group\textsuperscript{16}. Racial discourse, along with its stereotypical biases, created its greatest negative impact during the age of western imperialism. The compulsion to locate markers of biological inferiority amongst colonized populations produced rampant biases cloaked as scientifically quantifiable objective truths.

“Ethnicity” was thus coined as the neutral remedy to the follies of Western racial imperialism. Derived from Greek “ethnos” to mean “the study of people”, ethnicity was intended as an open-ended heuristic device. It refers to culturally constituted, as opposed to biological determined collectives\textsuperscript{17}. In operation, race and ethnic constructs became fuzzy overlaps.

Though the existence of truly biological racial differences is scientifically refuted, racist assumptions remain\textsuperscript{18}. Racial discourse continues to pervade state administration with bizarre propositions dressed in scientific sobriety. Balibar further establishes the conflation of nationalism and racism as the consequence of state ethnic management:

“Such a thesis confirms, without doubt, that racism has nothing to do with the existence of objective biological ‘races’. It shows that racism is a historical – or cultural – product, while avoiding the equivocal position of ‘culturalist’ (Primordialist) explanations, which, from another angle, also tend to make racism into a sort of invariant human nature… it performs a critical function in relation to the euphemistic

\textsuperscript{13} (Brubaker 2004)
\textsuperscript{14} (Howells 1971:16)
\textsuperscript{15} (Mayre 1963:391)
\textsuperscript{16} (Livingstone 1962:279)
\textsuperscript{17} (Smith 2004:17-18)
\textsuperscript{18} (Carter 2000:12)
strategies of other historians who are very careful to place racism outside the field of nationalism as such, as if it were possible to define the latter without including the racist movements in it, and therefore without going back to the social relations which give rise to such movements…” 19

Carter concurs that race as a symbolic classification does not make it any less real than its earlier biological predecessor20. Further, the introduction of “ethnicity” only serves to compound racial constructs into race-ethnic ones. Wallerstein highlights the similar feature of immutability of an ethnic group, which “is supposed to be a cultural category, of which there are said to be certain continuing behaviors that are passed on from generation to generation”21. Ethnicity adopts the hereditary racial element, along with its quality of immutability. Carter further reinforces the existence of this conflation, expounding:

“… an ethnie (sic.) is a cultural collectivity that is outside its ancestral territory (actual or imagined)… When they adopt a territory into which they have immigrated as their homeland, they become a nation. However, to become nationals in the territory into which a group migrates is not simply a matter of that groups’ choice, but also its acceptance (voluntary or coerced out of circumstances) by the earlier inhabitants.”22

In the above, he infuses the contemporary notion of ethnicity’s link to nationhood with the increasing international mobility of ethnonationalists. Despite their dissociation from territorial attachments, ethnic identities, as with racial identities, appear tagged onto individual genealogy.

Contemporary nation-states profess multiculturalism as the founding principle, which contradicts the racial state. Multiculturalism refers to the embracement of cultural diversity based on the principle that the observed

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19 (1991b:37-38)
20 (2000:12)
22 (2000:27)
differences are nevertheless of equal value\textsuperscript{23}. Since all races are supposedly equal, individuals should possess equal opportunities to succeed based on their own merits. But multiculturalism ignores the reality that racial identities are administered by the state as markers of hierarchical differences\textsuperscript{24}. Physiological and/or ethno-cultural differences then form the ethnic management principles for the racial division of labor:

“The ‘culture’ of an ethnic group is precisely the set of rules into which parents belonging to that ethnic group are pressured to socialize their children… Thus, what is illegitimate for the state to do comes in by the rear window as ‘voluntary’ group behavior defending a social ‘identity’.”\textsuperscript{25}

The “ethnicization of occupational categories”\textsuperscript{26} therefore stands for the “metamorphosis of the nation-state’s material contradictions into ideal contradictions”\textsuperscript{27}. Ethnic management then becomes an administrative necessity, obligating the use of “cultural” markers to justify inequalities within the capitalist political economy. Goldberg provides a comprehensive rendition on the power of the racial state:

“… the state is inherently contradictory and internally fractured, consisting not only of bureaucracies, legislatures and courts, but also of norms and principles, individuals and institutions… it must include also those private and semi-private institutions and social agencies contracted by the state that mediate as they represent and reproduce state commitments or interests… Modern states are racial in their modernity, and modern in their racial quality… The modern state, it might be said, founds itself not just on exclusions, those absences that render invisible, but on the internalization of exclusions.”\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{23} (San Juan 2002:6)
\textsuperscript{24} (Goldberg 2002:4)
\textsuperscript{25} (Wallerstein 1991b:84)
\textsuperscript{26} (Wallerstein 1991b:83)
\textsuperscript{27} (Balibar 1991b:54)
\textsuperscript{28} (2002:7-9)
Ethnic management ensures the continuity of state dominance. However, discussions on state control are often restricted to the domestic domain. Little is mentioned about how these collectives speak as one integrated voice as a nation within the global network. Nation branding studies offer the extension of this discussion on a global scale. Specifically, how ethnic management is an outcome of late-industrializing racial states’ interaction with dominant global racial discourse.


The role of the state involves more than managing the domestic expectations of the nation. It also involves boosting national image to improve public diplomacy and attract prized foreign investments. With this move, the nation-state inevitably needs to arrange domestic division of labor in close approximation to the global one. Nation branding literatures provide illustrations of how this move is executed.

Nation branding refers to “the unique, multidimensional blend of elements that provide the nation with culturally grounded differentiation and relevance for all of its target audiences”\(^29\). The nation is seen as a product sold to target audiences (potential investors) for financial returns. Nation branding studies examine the commercial value of actively managing national identity to fulfill economic objectives\(^30\). Nation brand managers (the state) need to correctly estimate foreign investor preferences so as to effectively communicate its positive brand associations. By ensuring the intended message is effectively communicated in a brand campaign, a nation aims to capture the global market. Brand managers also need to ensure that the population delivers what is advertised about the nation to these investors.

Selling nations, especially through racial, regional or cultural affinities,

\(^{29}\) (Dinnie 2008:15)
\(^{30}\) (Dinnie 2008:139)
requires brand image consistency\(^{31}\). Singapore, for instance, has consistently sold itself as the mediator of the East-West dichotomy. On the one hand, Singapore is typecast as “very close to the Western world” \(^{32}\). The Anglicization of Singaporeans ensured that individuals identified with this national collective conform to the typecast. On the other hand, Singapore asserts preference for the retention of Chineseness: “the Chinese model has challenged the Western view of economic development” \(^{33}\). The concurrent Mandarinization of Singaporeans molds the majority of the individuals into an ethnic group whose roots to Chineseness are reinforced. From the analysis of Singapore’s brand campaigns, Ooi concludes that brand consistency is a reflection of campaign success\(^{34}\).

Nation branding analysts predominantly adopt a marketing communication framework in their study of nation branding campaigns. Its supporters believe that national efforts are better invested elsewhere than over historical antagonisms \(^{35}\). Therefore, the historical animosities that plagued international public relations take a lower priority in the examination of branding campaign content. However, nations comprise individuals of volition and are thus much more challenging to manipulate. As nation branding critics have come to realize, “countries cannot be marketed like Coke” \(^{36}\). Brand campaign effectiveness is assessed without considering the predispositions that shape how “ambassadors” of a nation (i.e. state leaders, nationals) have chosen to portray a country, as guided by the historical experiences that define a country as a nation-state and individuals as a national collective. By complementing the analysis of nation branding predispositions with a nation’s past ethnic management experience, this thesis links the study of individual primordial identifications with nation branding predispositions.

\(^{31}\) (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy 2000)
\(^{32}\) (Baey Yam Keng, Director of Creative Industries Singapore, cited in Ooi 2008:292)
\(^{33}\) (Lee Kuan Yew, cited in Ooi 2008:298)
\(^{34}\) (2008:298)
\(^{35}\) (Aronczyk 2007:121; Van Ham 2001)
\(^{36}\) (Tan 2010)
Conversely, nation branding frameworks offers additional insights that the study of ethnic management initiatives has limited scope in addressing. The study of ethnic management initiatives offers the domestic insights to the late-industrializing impact on the individual. Nation branding provides the scope for the examination of the individual’s ethnonational identification at a global level. As nation branding campaigns are most typically linked to statist-developmental initiatives, they are commonly associated with late-industrializing nation-states\textsuperscript{37}. Research shows that that the discussions frequently involve how late-industrializing nations position themselves in relation to first-mover ones\textsuperscript{38}. Zhang’s discussion, for instance, traced China’s political rhetoric on the West (1949-present)\textsuperscript{39}. He argues that Chinese political rhetoric is inspired by the contest for hegemony between late-industrializing China and first-mover Western nations. Ooi, similarly, frames Singapore’s branding strategies as an attempt to locate itself within the East-West dichotomy\textsuperscript{40}. Given its late-industrialization focus, nation branding is a promising field for the discussion of this thesis’ theoretical implications.

Some premises of nation branding theories are open to reinterpretation. Firstly, nation branding theories assume that brand authenticity is important to potential investors. Challenges to campaign success, including physical locale and political culture, are increasingly considered in the more recent nation branding research\textsuperscript{41}. Yet, as outlined in Chapter 1, Singapore’s reinvention of primordial associations shows that authenticity is secondary insofar as economic commitments are delivered. The examination of Primordialist legitimizations of ethnic management is therefore essential to this literature review. The investigation of Primordialist discourse constructions reveals that

\textsuperscript{37} (Dinnie 2008:169-171)
\textsuperscript{38} Nation branding literatures were reviewed to examine how late-industrializing nations position themselves in relation to the global political economy. Preferences in the type of Orientalist paradigms employed -Auto Orientalist and Occidentalist- were compiled to examine how choices were influenced by the past socioeconomic credentials of late-industrializing nations. For more details on how nation branding strategies in Asia replicate Auto Orientalist and Occidentalist constructions, see Appendix 2.1.
\textsuperscript{39} (2008)
\textsuperscript{40} (2008)
\textsuperscript{41} (Cooper and Momani 2009:113-115; Ooi 2008;289; Park 2009:80; Youde 2009:139)
authenticity is perhaps secondary to the other underlying assumptions influencing nation brand rhetoric.

Secondly, nation branding theories assume “soft power”, or the persuasion factor, can work without the accompaniment of economic power. Dinnie argues that “soft power” approaches give greater leverage to small, late-industrializing nations than do large, developed ones. Hungary, for instance, won praise for its innovative brand campaigns without the usual reliance on Western image consultancies. But the case also revealed limitations to the marketing approach. Despite innovative brand campaigns, Hungary can hardly count as a case of success. Positive marketing associations dissipated in the first instance of political instability. China, a case of rapid ascension from economic backwaters provides the insight to success in nation branding. In the nascent stages of Chinese presence in the global political economy, China’s rhetoric on Western encroachment was dismissed. With its economic star on the rise, China possessed stronger grounds for a global buy-in. Chinese rhetoric then became a “charm offensive”. This occurrence corresponded with the nation’s progression in economic development. The questioning of the over-optimism, that “nations can be what they want to be”, is presented in the review of Situationalist arguments in support of racial transcendence. The ability to reinvent national associations is much stronger for big and/or rich nations.

Perhaps a better predictor of successful brand campaigns is the economic standing of the nation. Bourdieu’s analogy aptly illustrates the point:
“… anybody can shout in the public square, ‘I decree a general mobilization,’ and as it cannot be an act because the requisite authority is lacking, such an utterance is no more than words; it reduces itself to futile clamor, childishness, or lunacy.”

42 (Nye 2003)
43 (2008:171)
44 (Szondi 2008:202-204)
45 (Zhang 2008:307-310)
46 (Kurlantzick 2007)
47 (1991:74)
Bourdieu advocates that the value of cultural capital “is governed by the structure of the market”\(^{48}\). That is, the value of nation brand campaigns is dependent on its negotiating power, backed by socioeconomic credentials. The examination of the Constructivist position reveals the factors that facilitate or constrain nation brand reinventions.

Using nation branding studies as the basis, three possible approaches to this inquiry were identified. The ensuing section reviews Primordialist ideological persuasions. This is followed by Situationalist and Constructivist critiques of Primordialist assumptions.

**Primordialist Ideological Persuasions**

Primordialist-inspired literatures, due to state sponsorship, are the most prolific. Brown defines the Primordialist approach in the following:

“Primordialist approaches depict the nation as based upon a natural, organic community, which defines the identity of its members, who feel an innate and emotionally powerful attachment to it. Natural nations have natural rights to self-determination.”\(^{49}\)

Racial Primordialism proposes the acceptance, as opposed to the questioning or the transcendence of racial stereotypes. The reasons for the appeal of Primordialist assumptions, despite its potential to misguide, will be examined.

As Primordialist literatures are published in prolific numbers, they are organized into three distinctive but interrelated Orientalist discourse paradigms. Orientalist discourse constructions reproduce the East-West dichotomy in a way that puts the hegemonic West in an advantaged position\(^{50}\).

The Dominant Orientalist paradigm seeks to analyze the global political economy from a Eurocentric viewpoint. This approach tends to essentialize the exoticism of the subjects of study, “‘confirming’ that they

\(^{48}\) (1977b:649)  
\(^{49}\) (2000:6)  
\(^{50}\) (Alatas 2006:42-46)
(Non-Western societies) were the opposite of what Europe represented”\(^{51}\). Cultures were arranged into an East-West dichotomy of mutually exclusive stereotypes, positing the superiority of Western thoughts and acts, and conversely, the inferiority of Eastern ones\(^{52}\). Journals on intercultural and cross-cultural communication were reviewed to compile articles that replicate the Dominant Orientalist paradigm. From the journal review, a stock of literatures stands out in its creation of polarized and stratified relationships within the East-West dichotomy. These relationships are characterized by the polarization of the “Colored”, “Eastern” and “Collectivist” on the one hand, and the “White”, “Western” and “Individualist” on the other. Through the construction of connotations in the descriptions, the “Eastern” identity is inferred to be dysfunctional. Inferences of being socially ill-adept flags these individuals as being incapable of fulfilling work initiatives beyond what is expected of an automaton. The review of contemporary proliferation of Orientalist literatures is attached in Appendix 2.2.

Orientalist discourse constructions in late-industrializing Asia are predominantly characterized by responses to Dominant Orientalist impositions. The political rhetoric expressed is predominantly Auto Orientalist and Occidentalist.

Auto Orientalist discourses refer to the “internalization of Orientalist ideas developed in the West” by the subjects of Dominant Orientalist impositions \(^{53}\). Auto Orientalist constructions express agreement with Dominant Orientalist notions on the incompatibility of Western-based thoughts on similar bases of cultural essentialisms. Dominant Orientalist judgments are accepted and made an integral part of the Auto Orientalist self-identity.

Occidentalist, according to Chen, refers to the exoticization and embrace of the West\(^{54}\). Based on my empirical findings, there is an

\(^{51}\) (Alatas 2006:32)  
\(^{52}\) (Alatas 2006:42-46)  
\(^{53}\) (Alatas 2006:32)  
\(^{54}\) (Chen, 2002)
additional dimension in Occidentalism that Chen’s work had not addressed. Occidentalism may be employed in close resemblance to its related construct, Orientalism in Reverse. Orientalism in Reverse, or Nativism, refers to the reversal of Eurocentrism. These discourse constructions negate essentialized Eurocentric worldview with Non-Eurocentric ones. The manner in which Occidentalism surfaced, in the case of my data, is similar to Orientalism in Reverse in this aspect. But the approach in how the negation is achieved differs. The West is exoticized and rendered with unsavory caricatures, but “Western values” are not rejected in entirety. That is, Occidental thought may continue to be embraced amongst those who seek to deploy the Occidentalist paradigm. The objection targets the “bad behavior of (many?) Westerners”, rather than the rejection of “Western worldviews”.

By examining popular Primordialist literatures as Orientalist discourses, an understanding of how national brand rhetoric may differ between and within regions is derived. It reveals the function of national rhetoric within the web of global power relationships. Seen in this light, nation branding is an “elegant” means of communicating one’s function within the global political economy. That is, whether one is offering potential investments, or soliciting investors from the global market. The employment of this framework is compatible with the nation branding position, as both approaches examine social phenomena on a global scale. In contrast, other frameworks may be more limited in their scope when the analysis of power relationships is capped at national comparisons.

I first examine Orientalist discourses that ride on the emotional appeal of primordialism. Framed in terms of “blood, civilization and roots”, Primordialist discourses arouse the unification of a population in defense of its honor and integrity. Emotional arousal drives individual insecurity towards “self-preservation” of ensuring one’s primordial dominance. A population

56 Respondent accounts. (Martin): “Each race must protect its own existence, whether it’s individual or collective survival.”; (Norman): “It’s in everybody’s blood. Automatically, if a Chinese gets hammered, you will definitely try to help. It’s a nature of humans.”
that is insecure becomes confused and pliant to the “guidance” of the state. A variety of regional affiliations were taken on by different Primordialist authors. Depending on the author’s preferred affiliation, the extolling of a pet region is usually accompanied by negative imageries of others. Politicians and policymakers then compile the set of primordial relations that legitimize their imperatives.

Huntington’s *Clash of the Civilizations* is representative of Dominant Orientalist discourses employing the emotional appeal of Primordialism. The Asian Values debates represent Occidentalist retort to Dominant Orientalist impositions. Alternatively, Primordialist literatures can also be dressed in “corporate pin stripes.” By this, Kessler refers to the catchy political statements and nifty policy formulas with commercialized undertones. Hofstede’s extensive works on the Value Survey Method represent the corporatized example of Dominant Orientalist discourses. Spinoffs from Vogel’s *Japan as Number One* represent Auto Orientalist discourses and are raised through Lie’s review of these constructions. The discussion of Primordialist discourses in too much detail is pragmatically unfeasible. In order to maintain the thrust of this chapter, the remaining vignettes of these constructions are attached in the Appendix 2.

**Primordialism: Blood, Civilization and Roots**

In Huntington’s *Clash of the Civilizations*, transnational alliances ensure the dominance of nation-states and are reinforced through primordial ties: “culture counts and cultural identity is what is most meaningful to most people”\(^5\). Asian primordialism, Huntington suggests, is on the rise.\(^6\) A Confucian-Islamic allegiance will soon ensure the decline of Western dominance. The seduction of a Confucian-Islamic allegiance thesis

\(^5\) (1998:24)
\(^6\) (1996:20)
\(^5\) (1996:188,239-240)
dramatized Chinese arms sale to Iran but downplayed American arms sales to Saudi Arabia.\textsuperscript{60} Citing Dominant Orientalist discourse to support his “Middle Kingdom” argument, the analogy that “There are no two suns in the sky, there cannot be two emperors on earth”, was interpreted as an exclusively Chinese phenomenon because the adage referred to “(Chinese) emperors”.\textsuperscript{61} The insecurity of Western nation-states is stoked with provocative captions re-invoking Kepel’s \textit{La Revanche de Dieu}.\textsuperscript{62} If Western imperialism was committed in the name of civilization, it will be similarly reciprocated, Huntington believes. If Western societies do not unite to prevent the eclipse of their dominance, then \textit{La Revanche} by Eastern societies is near. This message drives the necessity for the defense of first-mover interest.\textsuperscript{63} The continuity of core hegemonic dominance can only be ensured, according to Huntington, by subduing the ascendency of late-industrializing insurgents.

Nations that wish to rally a coalition in subduing threats to their economic interests frame national rhetoric in similar tones. George W. Bush (USA), for instance, rallies for support in the Gulf War (II) as a “crusade” against the axis of evil (Iran, Iraq, North Korea).\textsuperscript{64} The thick allusions of battling Oriental evils attempts to ignite old primordial insecurities.

Critics who read the Huntington thesis would likely be deeply concerned by its impact on the global political economy. One of the responses is to refute Huntington’s Dominant Orientalist discourse with Occidentalist ones. Mahbubani’s response to the Huntington thesis is crucial in view of his influence on Singapore’s foreign diplomatic relations. Having served more than three decades in the Singapore Foreign Services and once stationed in the United States, Mahbubani is now dean to the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy. \textit{The Dangers of Decadence: what the rest can teach the West}, responded with a reversal of Huntington’s. A number of events, ranging from American arms sales to Saudi Arabia, to Western journalists stoking student

\textsuperscript{60} (Huntington 1996:188)
\textsuperscript{61} (Roderick MacFarquhar, cited in Huntington 1996:234)
\textsuperscript{62} (Huntington 1996:95-101; Kepel 1991)
\textsuperscript{63} (Huntington 1996:316)
\textsuperscript{64} (Jewitt and Lawrence 2003:2)
belligerence in the 1989 Tiananmen incident, were cited\textsuperscript{65}. Mahbubani’s effort in unmasking Western hypocrisy however, is dampened by his retort of “Western degeneracy”\textsuperscript{66}. The debate polarized into one of civilizational confrontation. “Asian” commentators are pressured to either support Mahbubani’s thesis, or risk being castigated for turning their backs on their “roots”. “Western” commentators may likewise steer away from being “Asian sympathizers”, or may be put on the defensive as a result. In \textit{The United States: “Go East, Young Man.”}, the truism, “Power is a great aphrodisiac”, addresses the tyranny of an unregulated Western media.\textsuperscript{67} The enactment of cultural dualisms, however, overlooks the fact that \textit{all} societies, East or West, are vulnerable to the ramifications of unchecked power.

Deng Xiaoping (China), Lee Kuan Yew (Singapore) and Mahathir Mohamad (Malaysia) are some of the strongest political proponents of Occidentalist rhetoric through Asian Values promulgations\textsuperscript{68}. In sum, Asian Values rhetoric does not reject the notion of “Western modernity” wholesale. It selectively filters the appropriation of “some Western values”, while “tossing out the pits”. The unification of late-industrializing nations through Asian primordialism provides stronger emotional bonds than would one characterized by economic cooperation.

\textsuperscript{65} (Mahbubani 1993:12-13)
\textsuperscript{66} (Mahbubani 1993:14): “Budgetary discipline is disappearing… violent crime has risen by 560 percent, single-mother births by 419 percent, divorce rates by 300 percent and the percentage of children living in single-parent homes by 300 percent. This is massive social decay.”; (Mahbubani 1994): “The Justice Department (1985-1991) reported that 1 million children between the ages of 12 and 19 were raped, robbed and assaulted, usually by their peers. Woody Allen seems to believe that no moral considerations are relevant when he has an affair with his adopted daughter.”
\textsuperscript{67} (Mahbubani 1994:13)
\textsuperscript{68} (Huang 2000:1)
Primordialism: “Corporate Pin-Stripes”

One body of works with the most extensive global coverage on culture’s consequences was spawned by Hofstede. The Value Survey Method (VSM) was implemented throughout the international offices of his case study, IBM. With this implementation, cultural stereotypes become cemented within concrete findings. Extensive data collection through objective measurements forms the basis for cross-cultural comparison. Hofstede devised four measurements, known as Cross-Cultural Indices (CCI). Each measurement produced regionally significant scores that account for differential economic performances across more than 50 countries worldwide. He infers from the findings that national profiles possessing high scores in Individualism (Individualism-Collectivism Index – IDV), low scores in Power Distance (Power Distance Index – PDI), high scores in Masculinity (Masculinity Index – MAS) and low scores in Uncertainty Avoidance (Uncertainty Avoidance Index – UAI), possess an economic competitive advantage. The dualistic distribution of nations coincided with the disjuncture between first-mover and late-industrializing economies. As first-movers have an advantaged head-start in capitalist-industrialization, it would make sense that economic performance would be stronger in these regions. However, this difference in economic performance was inferred as manifestations of cultural superiority.

Although VSM data is based on objective measurements, the interpretations of the findings are not. Where the data fails to account for Hofstede’s Orientalist propositions, they are explained away as cultural peculiarities. For instance, the economic ascendency of East Asian regions (characterized by low IDV, high PDI, mixed MAS, mixed UAI) contradicts Hofstede’s inferences. Hofstede then devises an independent concept, which

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69 (Huo and Randall 1991)
70 (Hofstede 2001)
he terms Confucian Dynamism (CONDYN), to account for this anomaly. He postulates that “differences in cultural values, rather than in material and structural conditions, are ultimate determinants of human organization and behavior, and thus of economic growth.” Combined with the findings from the Chinese Culture Connection on value-orientation in China, Hofstede claims the future-orientation of Confucian Dynamism likely accounts for the East Asian exception. The dimension of Uncertainty Avoidance is also used to substantiate this conclusion. According to him, the high tolerance towards uncertainty in “Chinese nations” (excluding Japan and South Korea, which had high scores in UAI) likely buttressed their rapid transformation ability despite late-industrialization.

Hofstede’s VSM inspired many, but also invited considerable criticisms. A review of these criticisms is required in order to understand the shortcomings of Primordialist assumptions. But to maintain the focus of this review, only an example that closely matches the relevance of this discussion is raised. According to Hofstede, Confucian “Chinese nations” have low UA scores, unlike Confucian Japan and South Korea, due to “Chinese rule”. In this, he assumes that “Chinese nations” (China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan) are equally exposed to the vague notion that he terms “under Chinese rule”. The notion of being “under Chinese rule” is conceptually ambiguous. It begs the question of whether he was referring to nations under the territorial jurisdiction of the PRC (which excludes Singapore and Taiwan) or nations that are demographically ethnic Chinese dominant. The last assumption appears to be it. But being demographically ethnic Chinese dominant also does not equate with being “under Chinese rule”. Historically, Hong Kong

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71 (1998:385)
72 (Franke et al. 1991:165)
73 (The Chinese Culture Connection 1987)
74 (1998:385)
76 See Appendix 2.1 for Hofstede-inspired cross-cultural research employing Orientalist allusions.
77 For more criticisms on the VSM, see (Buttery and Leung 1998; Huo and Randall 1991; McSweeney 2002; Smith 2002).
78 (1998:385)
and Singapore were more accurately described as “under British rule”. Their low UA scores are likely aligned with the low scores of Southeast Asian nations, which also underwent Western colonialism.\(^79\) Taiwan, in contrast, had high UA scores more aligned with Japan’s, having undergone Japanese colonization in the past. The conflict between Hofstede’s analysis and what his data \textit{actually} suggest exposes the fallacy of being “under Chinese rule”.

What then, are the drivers of the VSM’s popularity? The VSM does produce extensive data on regionally patterned value-orientations. Management consultants working on tight deadlines can “express-deliver” analyses on MNC international subsidiaries with direct reference to Hofstede’s data. His data is, after all, collected from the internationally renowned IBM. More importantly, the simplicity of Hofstede’s Primordialist logic is attractive to the time constrained MNCs’ top managements. When speed is a crucial factor for business competitiveness, mulling over complex business models is a luxury. The appeal of Hofstede’s analysis lay in the reinforcement of long-standing Oriental stereotypes. Emotive biases do not disappear the moment one dons a corporate suit. The familiar “emotive logic”, when dressed to match the “corporate pin-stripes” of its audience, is highly persuasive.

Not all Orientalist stereotypes are negative. However, Orientalist positive stereotypes still maintain East-West dualisms. Exotic cultural models inspire new management theories, especially when Western regions experience economic slowdowns. Vogel inspires a wave of Confucian dynamism analyses with his work \textit{Japan as Number One}\(^80\). For instance, Bellah propounds on how the Tokugawa dynasty laid the foundations for modern Meiji Japan based on Confucian philosophies\(^81\). The success of “pin-striped garbed” cultural solutions spurred Vogel’s eventual collaboration with

\(^79\) Hong Kong and Singapore had low UA scores, while Taiwan had high scores (Hofstede 2001:152). Singapore in particular, had the lowest UA scores in the sample of more than 50 nations worldwide.

\(^80\) (1979)

\(^81\) (1985)
Lodge. Flattered by the generous praise, these nations seek introspections of their own uniqueness by echoing Dominant Orientalist notions. In the process, the irreconcilability of the East-West dichotomy is reinforced. Lie compiles this Auto Orientalist phenomenon in Japanese works. As with Occidentalist constructions, these offshoots represent responses to Dominant Orientalist notions that “Western worldviews” are inversed to “Eastern” ones. Although emerging from Non-Western communities, these assumptions are nevertheless Eurocentric in nature. Far from independent positions, they are extensions of the Orientalist paradigm.

Given the contributions of postcolonial scholars in highlighting the negative effects of the Orientalist paradigm, what accounts for the paradigm’s continued proliferation? Supporters of this ideology are convinced that cultural primordialism is the reason for the replication of value-orientations and behavior. This thesis contends with the over-simplified Primordialist beliefs. An analysis of a nation’s standing within the global political economy provides a stronger explanation.

**A Constructivist Explanation of Orientalist Discourse Constructions**

Alatas points out Orientalist justifications of value-superiority and economic prowess are rationalized *ex post*. That is, the claims of value-superiority are retrospectively made only *after* a region has already attained economic success. The proliferation of Primordialist discourses, it seems, rests upon economic factors rather than value-orientations per se. Orientalist discourse is legitimized by the fact that economic dominance remains in the Western regions. Auto Orientalist discourse signals concurrences with

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82 (1987)
83 (Lie 1996:9)
84 (1996)
85 (Alatas, 2000:117)

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Western hegemony and the quest for the betterment of one’s standing through its patronage. Occidentalist discourse bases its arguments upon the “East Asian economic miracle”. These constructions are euphemized expressions of “hegemonic intents”\(^{86}\). They denote domination without the blatant admission that raw economic power is the basis for persuasion. The persuasiveness of Primordialist discourses rests upon the strength of the economies, rather than the strength of the argument. As hegemonic intents (or responses to it) lead to relationships of inequality, the subscription to a set of primordial affiliations obligates the negation of another.

Hodge’s work on the distinction between dualism and equality accounts for the proliferation of negative stereotypes in Primordialist discourses\(^{87}\). Racial equality posits that races are different, but equal. Although Primordialist literatures profess value-neutrality towards racial differences, the analysis of these differences is most often than not communicated through dualistic inferences.\(^{88}\) Judgments of dualistic moralities between good and evil, superiority and inferiority manifest in its implementation. The communication of primordial distinctions may have intended for the ideal of analyzing cross-cultural landscapes as “different, but equal”. But when ideals are translated into practice, analyses are inevitably situated within the Occidental-Oriental divide surfaces.

Cultural dualism is a vicious circle, with “two straw men” engaged in civilizational battles\(^{89}\). The non-existence of quintessential value-orientations, however, does not warrant the dismissal of Orientalist discourses. Orientalist constructions are not just misunderstandings. Its bases are economic, even though its expressions are cultural. To incite mass action at the rate required to be competitive within the global economy, emotionally-triggered responses against “demonized cultures” come cheap and fast. However, in the replication of Orientalist discourses, responses to Dominant Orientalist

\(^{86}\) (Hussein 2002:263)
\(^{87}\) (1990)
\(^{88}\) (Hodge 1990:94-95)
\(^{89}\) (Emmerson 1995:100)
impositions tend to be “on the losing end”. Nations may reinvent primordial affiliations at will. But the legitimacy of these reinventions is ultimately determined by nations and nationals commanding the dominant economic credentials. Orientalism is the expression of first-mover hegemony. Late-industrializing nations seeking the subversion of this paradigm inevitably find themselves replicating non-hegemonic responses.

Why, then, is the replication of the Orientalist paradigm still popular amongst late-industrializing nations? Adopting the Constructivist approach, explanations are sought by this thesis on: (1) the nation branding predispositions of the late-industrializing region; (2) how Orientalist notions emerged within these nation branding initiatives; (3) why individuals, given the same exposure to these initiatives, are predisposed to respond in different ways. The key premises of the first two objectives will be discussed here, while the third will be elaborated upon as the chapter advances into a more in-depth discussion on the Constructivist perspective.

One of the reasons for the replication of Orientalist discourse constructions amongst late-industrializing nations can be found in Kwok’s observation of Asia. Kwok is exact in pointing out that “leapfrogging” late-industrializing nations cannot afford the luxury of time. Hence, late-industrializing nations could use brand campaigns to conjure positive associations at a rapid pace. But effective brand campaigns cannot be purely a “preference for style over substance”. They also need to solicit the cooperation of the national population to deliver the promised quality standards. However, contrary to the beliefs of some nation branding supporters, a consultative state approach is not the sole means of eliciting cooperation from populations. A faster and cheaper alternative is to stoke national insecurities. Orientalist branding rhetoric is a user-friendly device driving speedy policy implementation. Racial primordialism, in the form of

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90 (1998:5-6)
91 (Van Ham 2001)
92 (Dinnie 2008:112)
93 (Aldersey-Williams 1998)
Orientalist discourses, has emotional appeal. Emotions elicit quick responses, which translate into speedy business solutions for time-poor late-industrializing nations. Citing the earlier instance of Mahbubhani’s condemnation of Western hypocrisies, imageries of overbearing Western nations exploiting the misfortunes of Non-Western nations form a powerful rhetoric that elicits strong emotions through Occidentalism. Further, the employment of Orientalist discourse constructions makes explicit the brand state’s political slant within the dual hegemonic framework. To remain in business, the brand state needs to deliver positive brand associations deemed attractive to its investors. Brubaker terms this process as reification:

“Reification is a social process, not simply an intellectual bad habit…
To criticize ethnopolitical entrepreneurs for reifying ethnic groups would be a kind of category mistake. Reifying groups is precisely what ethnopolitical entrepreneurs are in the business of doing. When they are successful, the political fiction of the unified group can be momentarily yet powerfully realized in practice.”

Correspondingly, individuals are shaped by their fit with the imperatives of the brand/ethnic managers. An individual’s response towards ethnic management is moderated by where he/she stands within the ethnic division of labor. In other words, individual predispositions are moderated by one’s socioeconomic, racial or linguistic background at the time ethnic management initiatives were rolled out.

I concur with Brubaker that Primordialist reification is necessary for state politicians to remain in business. The business of politicians is to enact clear boundaries of dualisms without being entangled within its web. Nevertheless, the politicians who do this best must surely be the ones who have spun the web from scratch. On this basis, the next section of this discussion addresses the limitations of the Situationalist perspective, but acknowledges its efforts in transcending Primordialist determinism.

94 (2004:10)
The Situationalist Perspective

The Situationalist perspective of race-ethnic transcendence is captured in this definition:

“Situationalism explains ethnic and national identities, not as natural instinctual ties to organic communities, but rather as resources employed by groups of individuals for the pursuit of their common interests. As the type of threats and opportunities with which people are faced change, so do their options and their responses.”

Situationalist accounts provide rich alternatives to the singular voice of the racial state. They ignite beliefs that racial differences can be transcended if one so wishes. This transcendence lies in reinventing ethnic identifications according to the situation at hand. In this context, “ethnic identity” should be more aptly termed “ethnic identification”. “Identity” connotes static social positions. Ingroup homogeneity and solidarity are expected even though group membership is externally imposed. Although ethnic identifications appear to represent some version of self-identity, Brubaker contends that they more resemble strong ethnic identifications. Ethnic identity, to Brubaker, exists as an ideal type that makes for a good analytical construct. He echoes Heidegger’s belief that “one may even question whether ‘having’ the whole entity is attainable at all”. This account of identity transcendentanism forms the assumption of the brand state: nations can be whatever they want to be. However, without structural adjustments to accommodate these beliefs, racial situationalism may result in identity fragmentation. Situationalist discourses on cultural hybridity provide the instance to the limitations of transcending racial primordialism. Huddart’s criticism of Bhabha’s cultural hybridity offers the insight:

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95 (Brown 2000:13)  
96 (Ladson-Billings and Donnor 2005)  
97 (Brubaker 2004:28-63)  
98 (1962:276)  
99 (Bloul 1999)
“Bhabha’s theory of hybridity is associated with mimicry (subverting originally imperialistic notions to suit individual interest) and sly civility (surface acquiescence), but is also importantly a denial that there were cultures already there that became hybrid… As in the case of stereotype, Bhabha believes that hybridity calls into question traditional analysis of colonialism, which tends to merely reverse the terms of colonial knowledge”\(^{100}\)

Far from a reckonable force of resistance, hybridity discourse reflects the fragmentation of identity by the forces of globalization: “It is not something simply to be celebrated, in a magical multiculturalist re-invention of tired national traditions… the notion of a glorious multicultural hybridity is always slightly undermined, and always, therefore a little anxious.”\(^{101}\). Hybridity discourse creates more questions than answers towards the resolution of social inequality:

“…if all cultures are hybrid all along, then the problem is not hybridity but boundaries; how is it that boundaries are historically and socially significant? How come that while boundaries continuously change in the currents and tides of history, boundary fetishism remains, even among social scientists? If hybridity is real but boundaries are prominent, how can hybridity be a self-identification: in a world of boundaries, what room and legitimacy is there for boundary-crossing identities, politically, culturally?”\(^{102}\)

Bloul is precise in her description of the Situationalist movement as “extreme analytical optimism”\(^{103}\). It remains doubtful how “narrow individual identifications” can effectively challenge Primordialist hegemony\(^{104}\). Bloul proposes a more realistic understanding of racial identifications:

\(^{100}\) (2004:124;140)  
\(^{101}\) (Huddart 2004:113;115)  
\(^{102}\) (Pierterse, 2009:109)  
\(^{103}\) (1999:15)  
\(^{104}\) (Bloul 1999:15)
“Race is undoubtedly a structural factor in racist societies, but it also promotes specific politics of identification and identity narratives, and frames and limits actors’ strategies of identification.”

The ability to assert one’s will to reshape racial identifications is not accessible to all. The Singapore brand state can convert earlier notions of “Chinese chauvinism” to “Chinese renaissance”. But their abilities are limited in converting “Westernized Singapore” into “Western Singapore”. Reinvention potentials exist and in fact have existed all along. However, to “say no” to racial Primordialism with political effect, one must be in the position to do so. Goldberg summarizes how unauthorized individual efforts at “saying no” are equivalent to doing so “in the megalomania of one’s own mind”:

“The misguided panelist arrogated herself the capability of transcending her whiteness by becoming black in the megalomania of her own mind: ‘I married a Sotho, that makes me (tantamount to)(sic.) a black South African.”

Summarily, the Situationalist perspective posits that ethnic identity is open to reinvention. In this attempt of privileging the individual will, the perspective overlooks differences in the capacity to reinvent ethnic identification. As Foucault contends:

“… these practices are nevertheless not something that the individual invents by himself. They are patterns that he finds in his culture which are proposed, suggested and imposed on him by his culture, his society and his social group.” (1988:11)

Foucault’s statement outlines the Constructivist departure from the two earlier perspectives.

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105 (1999:18-19)  
106 (Bloul 1999:15-16)  
107 (2002:225)
The Constructivist Perspective

The Constructivist perspective, which forms the key premise of this thesis, is defined as the following:

“Constructivist approaches suggest that national identity is constructed on the basis of institutional or ideological frameworks which offer simple and indeed simplistic formulas of identity, and diagnoses of contemporary problems, to otherwise confused or insecure individuals.”

Identities, according to the Constructivist perspective, are shaped by institutional and ideological frameworks. Here, Constructivist discussions on Chineseness are used to illustrate how the perspective approaches the study of identity constructions.

Chineseness from the Constructivist Perspective

Why do cultural characteristics persist? Why was it easier for ethnic Peranakan and Queen’s scholar Lim Boon Keng to rediscover his “Chinese roots”\(^\text{109}\), but a challenge for Mandarin-speaking, ex-PAP left-wing Fong Swee Suan to renounce his\(^\text{110}\)? Why was Lim inspired to “become Chinese again” in the absence of state encouragement? Why did the scourge of “Chinese chauvinism” not deter Fong from standing by his primordial affiliations? Is cultural primacy the immutable bind to heritage roots, or, are structural factors involved? Wang Gungwu’s discussion on the persistence of Chineseness offers insights from the Constructivist perspective\(^\text{111}\). Based on the socioeconomic circumstances that the individual was located in, the motivations for expressing racial primordialism differ. On the one hand,

\(^{108}\) Brown 2000:20  
\(^{109}\) Lee 2004  
\(^{110}\) Li 2009  
\(^{111}\) (1994a)
favorable socioeconomic circumstances predispose one to adopt primordial identifications out of pragmatic business considerations. The Peranakans prioritized the Chineseness of their bicultural heritage to qualify as Chinese compradors in the Western imperial colonies. On the other hand, unfavorable socioeconomic circumstances increase one’s exposure to racial discrimination, predisposing one to retreat into familiar race-ethnic attachments. This was the case of the American Chinese corvee laborers who restricted their daily activities within the Chinatowns.

The Constructivist stand is taken by a number of scholars of Chineseness. They seek an understanding of Chinese identifications through the examination of socioeconomic backgrounds. On a similar note with Wang Gungwu, Wang Ling-chi’s typologies of Chinese diaspora race-ethnic identifications in America were traced to socioeconomic circumstances (e.g. corvee labor, intellectuals, international students)\textsuperscript{112}. Fei’s examination of Chinese cultural practices in \textit{From the Soil} considerably differed from his translators’ introduction of his work\textsuperscript{113}. His translators, Hamilton and Wang, assumed a Primordialist interpretation of \textit{From the Soil}. But Fei’s approach is distinctively Constructivist:

“In periods of social transition, habits limit one’s ability to adapt to change. In such times, it is obstinate and backward-looking to use past experiences as a measure of present actions.”\textsuperscript{114}

Fei had intended the discussion of Chinese cultural practices as linked to an agrarian economy. These cultural practices will be increasingly subjected to change as China modernizes. But Hamilton and Wang had taken it to be a discussion of primordially distinctive Chinese cultural practices. This thesis concurs with Nathan’s observation of the disparity between Fei’s work and his translator’s interpretation:

“Fei himself does not claim the patterns he describes are unique to China, Hamilton and Wang argue further that ‘there is sufficient

\textsuperscript{112} (1994b)
\textsuperscript{113} (1992)
\textsuperscript{114} (1992:119)
evidence to indicate that the network patterns described by Fei are distinctively Chinese’…”

As from the above-mentioned, a significant number of scholars have already contributed to the study of Chineseness from the Constructivist perspective. That is, Chineseness is seen as an identity of which individuals have come to rely upon in response to structural constraints, whether voluntarily (business opportunities) or involuntarily (racial discrimination). In this, an individual locates him/herself within a larger collective of support networks, which offers tangible (profits) and/or intangible (psychological strength) returns. This affiliation is made, given the range of structural constraints prescribing the range of possible identifications available to the individual. This thesis finds its contribution in furthering Constructivist frameworks beyond the above-mentioned studies of Chineseness. Wang Gungwu’s study of the Peranakans in colonial Southeast Asia, for instance, is set in the pre-industrialization era. The boundaries of Chineseness was more fluid then, in contrast to now, when racial identities are stamped on citizen identity cards. Likewise, Fei’s study was set against an agrarian-pastoral order, in contrast to my focus on the capitalist-industrial political economy. Specifically, I will examine the construction of Chineseness within the late-industrializing context. Having identified the premises from the Constructivist perspective that are of interest to this thesis, the ensuing paragraphs outline the relevant underlying assumptions of this approach.

According to the Constructivist perspective, individuals possess differential access to the power of defining racial boundaries. This ability is traced to factors external to racial ones. Judgments on the authenticity of racial constructions are dependent upon the power to prioritize one conjecture over another, despite resistance. For instance, racial identities are prescribed by the state, thus restricting alternative and/or contesting modes of self-

115 (1993:934)
identifications from emerging\textsuperscript{116}. In some cases, these prescribed identities are instrumental to mobilizing the population for modern developmental initiatives: “Race then is not a premodern condition but a quintessentially modern one masquerading in the guise of the given and the ancient bloodlines and genetic pools.”\textsuperscript{117}

But why does the modern society require the distortion of subjugation through premodern racial notions? Two literatures account for this requisition as an attempt to downplay socioeconomic inequality. Balibar proposes that with the decline of the legitimacy of imperialism, racial ideology became the new legitimizing order.\textsuperscript{118} In place of aristocratic birthrights, racial birthrights stabilize dominance with another set of hereditary traits. Wallerstein presents a contemporary version of class euphemisms within the capitalist-industrial setting.\textsuperscript{119} In this thesis, I extend the discussion to the field of late-industrialization. Race denotes the divisions between first-movers and late-industrializing economies. It euphemizes the reality that dominance is dependent on the ability to ride the first wave of capitalist-industrialization. That is, most late-industrializing nations can only attain semi-peripheral statuses at best. This euphemism is needed because the sustainability of the capitalist-industrial order requires the participation of late-industrializing economies. The declaration of this inequality thus needs to be realized without discouraging late-industrializing nations from the continued participation within the capitalist-industrial order. Racial discourse then comes to be adopted globally as an expression of this socioeconomic inequality. The failure to match first-world status is explained through cultural factors, rather than opportunities lost as a result of late-industrialization. Ethnic management is the state approximation of global market demands, so as to mold its population to fulfill these requirements:

\textsuperscript{116} (2002:36-37)  
\textsuperscript{117} (Goldberg 2002:108)  
\textsuperscript{118} (1991a:207-211)  
\textsuperscript{119} (1991a:115-124)
“The art of government … is essentially concerned with answering the question of how to introduce economy, that is to say, the correct manner of managing individuals, goods and wealth within the family (kinship myths of the nation) and of making the family fortunes prosper – how to introduce this meticulous attention of the father (the patriarchal state) towards his family into the management of the state.”

The above summarizes the basic premise of the Constructivist approach. Inequality in socioeconomic credentials needs to be communicated, but can only be alluded to through abstract constructs. The Orientalist paradigm is the carrier of the first-mover euphemism that can be internalized, right down to the individual level. When structural socioeconomic constraints are coupled with Orientalist notions, individual identities are shaped not just ideologically, but also ingrained as enduring behavioral predispositions. Pierre Bourdieu provides a superb rendition of how this process of social reproduction is exacted.

Bourdieu and Social Reproduction

Racial primordialism appeals to the emotions, but its basis is pragmatic. An appeal to emotions may seem an easy instrument for the mobilization of the population. But powerful emotions tend to become enduring predispositions. Once internalized, they are a challenge to undo. When predispositions are tagged to racial markers, they come to be perceived as primordial expressions of identities. In order to explore how individual manifestations of the above can be accounted for at the collective level, I employ Bourdieu’s concept of social reproduction.

The dominant are inclined to ensure the reproduction of the existing social order to provide for their continued hegemony. This move will be met with resistance, unless its intentions are unrecognizable to those beyond the

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120 (Foucault 1994:14)
circle of dominance. The communication of hegemony hence needs to acquire forms that can be transmitted without being recognized as such\textsuperscript{121}. In this way, elite selection continues to hail from dominant collectives, even if the process is open to meritocratic contestations\textsuperscript{122}. Elite values and predispositions are ingrained into the members of dominant social groups since childhood, such that its manifestations are expressed through habit-triggered predispositions. Bourdieu terms this acquired “sense of being” the habitus\textsuperscript{123}. The habitus functions as “code-like transmissions”, such that if not instilled since young, attempts to mimic its expression will appear trying. These “code-like transmissions” are termed cultural capital by Bourdieu\textsuperscript{124}. The ensuing paragraphs elaborate on the two concepts.

As mentioned earlier, hegemonic collectives implement measures to ensure the continuity of their dominance. How one responds to this implementation depends on one’s position within this social order. These responses form predispositions that reflect one’s socioeconomic background. The dominant ensures its social reproduction through code-like behavior, integrated into its elite selection processes. The habitus refers to enduring habit-triggers shaped by past social events. Habitus predispositions function as “standard operating procedures” replicating specific responses toward circumstances that invoke familiar past experiences. The subjective experience of social events is moderated by childhood economic circumstances, which Bourdieu terms economic capital\textsuperscript{125}. One’s childhood socioeconomic circumstances may have little to do with present material achievements. Nevertheless, they represent habit-triggers accumulated from childhood socialization, which persist into one’s adulthood.

When key institutions are controlled by the hegemonic groups, upward mobility within these institutions is qualified by whether one possesses the

\textsuperscript{121} (Garnham and Williams 1980:212)
\textsuperscript{122} (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990:99)
\textsuperscript{124} (Bourdieu 1977a:1; Bourdieu 1980:230; Bourdieu 1991:14; Bourdieu and Passeron 1990:99)
\textsuperscript{125} (1991:32-66)
relevant cultural capital to decode the selection process. The possession of the relevant cultural capital is, therefore, the “symbolic power” of economic capital \(^{126}\). It is the expression of economic power without its blatant deployment. Once cultural capital is acquired, descendents of dominant collectives communicate their privilege as if it was programmed into their very being. In contrast, pretentious tell-tale signs can be observed through the effort invested in emulating privilege. These predispositions, Bourdieu establishes, are not just individually unique experiences \(^{127}\). Rather, distinctive sets of habitus mark the difference between collective segments who possess cultural capital and those who do not. An individual acts as a “socially informed body”, shaped by the socioeconomic predispositions of the collective \(^{128}\). He/she shares a similar habitus with collectives of common economic and cultural capital \(^{129}\). Therefore, individuals lacking in the requisite cultural capital of the dominant are less predisposed towards success in meeting the requirements of elite selection.

Social reproduction is best illustrated in Bourdieu’s works through the French education system \(^{130}\). The education institution privileges a language as the medium of teaching instruction. This medium is selected from the linguistic primacy of dominant social groups. That is, linguistic expressions of the dominant class are used as yardsticks to good scholarly expression at school. Dominant social groups, therefore, possess an advantage in both language acquisition and school performance. The education institution inculcates learning attitudes that encourage compliance (e.g. hard work, rote-learning), but rewards those able to break from the mold \(^{131}\). Students who acquire language proficiency through the school, rather than through one’s linguistic primacy, were thus deemed hardworking, but “too compliant” \(^{132}\). To break the mold, one needs to be equipped with the knowledge of how to

\(^{126}\) (Bourdieu 1979)
\(^{127}\) (Bourdieu 2000:144)
\(^{128}\) (Bourdieu 1977c:124)
\(^{129}\) (Bourdieu 1977b:658-659)
\(^{130}\) (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1974)
\(^{131}\) (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1974:346-353)
\(^{132}\) (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1974:349)
depart from the scholastic tradition without appearing “too trying” (i.e. “insolence”, “pretentiousness”)\textsuperscript{133}. It requires the knowledge of applying a spirited, lively debate with unselfconscious confidence. The self-assurance is the result of one’s linguistic primacy to the language spoken by the dominant class\textsuperscript{134}. In this way, the education institution functions to reproduce power relations in society\textsuperscript{135}. The power of this cultural capital is symbolic, because stripped of the socioeconomic dimension, language intrinsically possesses no influence\textsuperscript{136}. Therefore, what is linguistically appropriate is determined by the “structure of the market”\textsuperscript{137}. Symbolic power is effective only when “spoken appropriately” and does not necessarily follow with mere technical proficiency\textsuperscript{138}. Bourdieu uses the instance of teachers from humble family backgrounds as the example. Despite the possession of cultural capital, advancement prospects of these individuals continue to be limited by childhood socioeconomic status\textsuperscript{139}. Bourdieu terms the formation of different value orientations and behaviors amongst the dominant and subordinate classes “modes of acquisition”. For instance:

“… a language habitus (is) characterized by a particular degree of tension which is a function of the gap between recognition and practical mastery, between the recognized norm and the capacity to produce… Insecurity and the corresponding high level of self-surveillance and censorship are most acute in the upper strata of the working class and the lower middle class. For whereas the working classes are forced to choose between negatively sanctioned \textit{outspokenness} (sic.) and silence, and the ruling class, whose linguistic habitus is the \textit{realization of the norm} (sic.), can manifest the ease given by self-assurance… petty-bourgeois speakers are condemned to an anxious striving for correctness

\textsuperscript{133} (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1974:349)
\textsuperscript{134} (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1974:340-346)
\textsuperscript{135} (Bourdieu 1976)
\textsuperscript{136} (Bourdieu 1991:109)
\textsuperscript{137} (Bourdieu 1977b:654)
\textsuperscript{138} (Bourdieu 1977b:646)
\textsuperscript{139} (Bourdieu 1980)
which may lead them to outdo bourgeois speakers in their tendency to use the most correct and most recondite forms."\textsuperscript{140}

Blatant subjugations through the exercise of economic power incite similarly blatant retaliations aimed at divesting the wielders of this power. However, when subjugation is exacted through symbolic power, retaliation is aimed at negating those symbols, but not the actual source of power. When structural inequalities are couched within euphemisms, only likeminded individuals are able to decipher its exact imperatives. The further an individual is from this like-mindedness, the more likely its euphemisms will be misunderstood.

\textbf{Critique of Bourdieu’s Conceptual Framework}

Bourdieu’s concepts possess explanatory strength to the individual experience of social reproduction and is vital to the advancement of this thesis. However, his focus is on addressing inequalities within a society. While nation branding studies need to integrate considerations on social inequality, their global focus makes the direct application of Bourdieu’s analysis a challenge. Moreover, his insights were gathered based on observations of French society, which is structurally distinctive to my case study of late-industrializing Singapore. The economic conditions that created French society differ too dramatically from that of late-industrializing nations. Therefore, the task of the ensuing chapters of this thesis is to apply Bourdieu’s social reproduction analysis on individuals exposed to Marcotted Development, provide critiques on how his analysis can be adapted to make it more relevant to late-industrializing societies, and extend this analytical framework to address the global focus of nation branding studies. To advance

\textsuperscript{140}(Bourdieu 1977b:658-659)
in this direction, this thesis employs the concept of Marcotted Development as the conceptual framework.

**Marcotted Development as Conceptual Framework**

In Chapter 1, the basic premises of Marcotted Development was outlined in relation to ethnic management. With the review of existing theoretical frameworks, how can the concept of Marcotted Development be further advanced? More importantly, how can this concept contribute to the advancement of these theoretical frameworks? This thesis concludes the chapter by laying out Marcotted Development as its conceptual framework. Constructivist frameworks possess explanatory rigor to the emergence of racial discourses. But the research focus tends to be limited to the interplay of power relationships within a nation. This is especially problematic when the frameworks are predominantly derived from societies extrinsic to the late-industrializing landscape. Constructivist frameworks explain Primordialist constructions as rooted within socioeconomic circumstances. Therefore, the acknowledgement of the chasm in the socioeconomic conditions between first-mover and late-industrializing nations is obligatory. The introduction of Marcotted Development adapts the Constructivist approach to the late-industrializing landscape.

Much has been written on the political economy of late-industrialization. The concept of Marcotted Development extends the idea of the first-mover/late-industrializing divide conceived by Gerschenkron\(^\text{141}\) and the works of political economy writers inspired by him. Marcotted Development integrates current shifts in political economy, given late-industrializing China’s ascent as a world hegemonic power. While much existing discussions recognize the achievements of East Asian economies, they were set within the expectation that these economies will be led under the

\(^{141}\) (*Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*, 1962)
leadership of Japan. The events sparked by the US Sub Prime Crisis (2007) triggered a dramatic shift that precipitated a hegemonic change-of-hands in the region. Given these circumstances, I am interested in an examination of late-industrialization, with an exclusive focus on East Asia. I intend for Marcotted Development to address dimensions acknowledged by late-industrialization theories, but given insufficient attention in the actual discussions.

In the literature review, I find that Gerschenkron’s work offers a well-established framework of the late-industrialization distinction. I am enlightened on how testing circumstances drive the formation of late-industrializing strategies and the developmental state. Of particular interest to this thesis is Gerschenkron’s elaboration on how late-industrialization has spillover effects into the social realm, which in turn resets the “ideological climate” of industrialization. The strategies of institutional adaptations to late-industrialization are detailed by Amsden. As East Asia has become the leading region of late-industrialization by the time of this publication, it is accorded a more detailed discussion than in Gerschenkron’s. Nevertheless, Amsden’s discussion is limited to knowledge based assets that were of immediate relevance to capitalist-industrialization (i.e. managerial / technological implicit knowledge). Likewise, Lo’s techno-economic paradigm maintained the same focus of the knowledge dimensions, though with a stronger concentration on East Asia. Walton observes Gerschenkron’s emphasis on “noneconomic consequences”, or the balancing of a materialist analysis with the considerations of the ideal. On this slant, he puts forth the analytical distinctions between “social differentiation” (classical liberalism; Durkheimian) and “uneven development” (statist developmentalism; critical Marxist and Weberian).

142 (ibid:23)
143 (2001)
144 (1995)
145 (Gerschenkron, 1962:18)
146 (1987)
From the above review, I find there remains the scope for the rejuvenation of late-industrialization theories through my concept of Marcotted Development. I aim to conduct an inquiry that updates the late-industrializing analysis with a contemporary sociological slant. I would like to bring the conceptual framework beyond the top-down approach of classical sociologists with the exploration of Marcotted Development through a multilevel analysis. That is, beyond the examination of ethnic management’s objectives, data will also be gathered on the individual’s interpretation of these policies, which creates unintended consequences to the state’s developmental aspirations. My inquiry departs from the classical sociological frameworks employed by existing late-industrializing theories, commencing from the contemporary assumptions of Bourdieu. Specifically, I intend to explore the embodiment of power within individuals (hence resulting in power being diffused throughout the population, rather than concentrated in the hands of those who exercise them directly), as moderated by social reproduction. Beyond Bourdieu, my key objective of introducing Marcotted Development is to account for dual hegemony, the distinctive political situation and ideological dilemma currently faced by East Asian states (in Amsden’s words, “the Rest”, in contrast to “the Remainder”). Apart from the dimension of accelerated development, I aim to bring attention to the efforts of late-industrializing countries at reconciling the current situation of dual hegemony.

Marcotted Development integrates the two key features of late-industrializing nation-states: accelerated economic development and dual hegemony. The first premise focuses on how late-industrializing societies import hegemonic discourses from first-mover societies when embarking upon capitalist-industrialization. This importation is executed at an accelerated pace. The urgency is inspired by the time lapse of joining the race only centuries after the first waves of the movement. Pre-industrial predispositions thus persist because hegemonic discourses were marcotted, rather than gradually and organically derived from living in that reality.
Consequently, there is a higher incidence of enduring past predispositions (habitus) manifesting at the individual level in late-industrializing societies. These manifestations persist despite dramatic changes in current economic conditions. The second premise addresses how late-industrializing nations reconcile hegemonic impositions from first-mover ones, coupled with regional hegemonic demands. Nations need to accumulate the requisite cultural capital in anticipation of dual hegemony. With dual hegemonic presence, the cultural capital a nation possesses may fulfill only one set of hegemonic requirements. This, most often than not, may cause tensions, as the relationship between the dual hegemons are mostly competitive in nature. Consequently, there is a higher incidence of controversy in late-industrializing national rhetoric.

Summarily, the construction of late-industrializing national rhetoric often boils down to expressing “whose side are you on?” New affiliations thus appear to be attempts to “switch sides” and demand great efforts invested in re-engineering national predispositions. This becomes apparent in the proliferation of Orientalist discourse constructions. Within the global political economy, hegemony is owned by the first-movers in capitalist-industrialization, concentrated in the West. As illustrated in the discussion of racial primordialism, Western hegemony is reinforced through the Orientalist paradigm. Dominant Orientalist paradigms were organically developed to reproduce first-mover dominance in the capitalist-industrial order. They are symbolic expressions of political economic hegemony. In the rush to accelerate development, late-industrializing states take the short-cut by marcotting Dominant Orientalist notions as Primordialist legitimizations of ethnic management. When internalized, these marcotted notions renders late-industrializing nations ill-adept at managing dual hegemony. Faced with new circumstances, late-industrializing nations continue to adapt replications of the Orientalist paradigm. That is, Auto Orientalist and/or Occidentalist postures will tend to be chosen. This reinforces their positions as subordinate legions within the capitalist-industrial order.
The replication of Auto Orientalist and/or Occidentalist responses to Dominant Orientalist impositions produces a number of consequences. Firstly, late-industrializing nations are able to rapidly industrialize and engage the capitalist-industrial political economy at an accelerated pace. Secondly, they advertize the role the nation intends to play within the dual hegemonic framework. Most importantly, the social reproduction of dominance in the global political economy is ensured. First-mover nations and nationals internalize code-like Dominant Orientalist predispositions of being “Western”, “individualistic” and “White”\(^{147}\), and are inclined to evaluate these traits as criteria of superiority in the process of elite selection. Conversely, late-industrializing nations and nationals internalize Auto Orientalist/Occidentalist predispositions of being “Eastern”, “collectivistic” and “colored”\(^{148}\). The Orientalist paradigm communicates the unspoken order of elite selection in the global political economy by euphemizing the core-periphery divide as the East-West dichotomy.

Ironically, Orientalist discourse replications emerged not just in state rhetoric of “small late-industrializing countries” like Singapore. The same is also observed in the ascendant hegemon, China. However, the nuances in the way Orientalist themes were replicated differ. Extracts from “Nation Branding in Asia” a special feature of *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*\(^{149}\) provide the insight. The nations reviewed comprised late-industrializing nations from East (China and Korea), South (India), Southeast (Singapore) and West Asia (or Middle East: Iran, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates). The only first-mover featured was the United States. The inclusion of the article on the US signals its hegemonic presence within the region. It indicates that Asia needs to be aware of US assessments of their brand campaigns. In a review of the articles featured, I found the presence of Orientalist themes in the speeches of the state leaders. In their endeavors to market the nation, the unwitting construction of responses to “Western powers” emerged. This set of articles

\(^{147}\) See Appendix 2.2.
\(^{148}\) Ibid.
\(^{149}\) See Appendix 2.1 for detailed analysis.
on nation branding endeavors in late-industrializing Asia provided the background and resources for the integration of how Orientalist themes emerge in the face of dual hegemony.

Within this framework, the examination of national historical circumstances, including its antagonisms, is obligatory. Nation branding predispositions are influenced by historical circumstances shaping state leaders’ perception of national standing in relation to other territories. Late-industrializing nations that adopted capitalist-industrialization out of necessity, relative to those that embraced it as an alternative route to success, may manifest different approaches to the construction of state rhetoric. With regard to Singapore as the case study, the historical background has been provided in Chapter 1. This provides the insight to the formation of state rhetoric, as the ensuing paragraphs illustrate.

In the assessment of nation branding effectiveness, the analytical framework needs to recognize the enduring effects of these campaigns. The habitus is thus an essential consideration. Bourdieu explains social reproduction at the level of an individual’s identification within class divisions. How can this be extended to account for a nation’s identification with global divisions? The hegemonic status of a nation, prior to its participation in capitalist-industrialization, forms the basis from which it is predisposed to engage in the movement. For instance, nations who were vassals to the regionally hegemonic may be more amenable to recognize Western hegemony through the replication of Auto Orientalist rhetoric. This reflects their subordinate statuses prior to their engagement in the capitalist-industrial order. The predisposition then becomes internalized and persists even after material affluence is attained with capitalist-industrialization. At the same time, late-industrializing nations lack the cultural capital accumulated through the organic experience of capitalist-industrialization. When Orientalist notions of the East-West dichotomy are used to frame national rhetoric, “subordinate” characteristics tend to emerge. For instance, “Eastern” nations who were ex-vassals in a previous political economic order may commonly share
predispositions to Auto Orientalist rhetoric, reflecting their shared concurrence with Dominant Orientalist impositions by the “West”\textsuperscript{150}. Due to the lack of cultural capital, affluent late-industrializing nations are commonly deemed as outstanding within their own league, but still falling short of expectations as core members of the global political economy. Hofstede’s discussion of ascendant “Chinese nations”, mentioned earlier, illustrates such an assessment. More importantly, his assessment goes predominantly unchallenged because the hegemonic statuses of these “Eastern” nations reinforce his proposition.

National political rhetoric is internalized both ideologically and habitually. While nation branding is an economical means to changing public opinion, it takes much more to undo its effects. A campaign may be relevant when it was implemented, but circumstances change over time. This is especially true for late-industrializing nations that have enjoyed accelerated growth rates early. An Auto Orientalist approach may have worked when only the first-movers hold global hegemony. This is no longer the case as China joins in the capitalist-industrial race late, but managed to overtake its smaller contemporaries at a miraculous pace. For the small late-industrializing nations, echoing Occidentalist rhetoric of China approach may work in courting China’s affections, but does not endear the first-mover. The habitual enactment of Orientalist themes obligates the choosing of either sides within the East-West dichotomy. This becomes the dilemma for late-industrializing nations caught within the dual hegemonic landscape.

Before remedies to habit-triggers can be devised, the historical drivers of these predispositions need to be identified. Developmental state leaders, according to their predisposed habitus, make public speeches based on subliminated notions of a nation’s pre-industrial standing, and how this standing has changed with the advent of capitalist-industrialization. Therefore, the extent of exposure to accelerated economic development is a key consideration. The more rapidly success in accelerated development is

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid.
attained, the less time a nation has to develop the relevant cultural capital matching this rapid attainment of material affluence. As a late-industrializing nation, Singapore does not possess an organically developed capitalist-industrial, mono-hegemonic society. Rather, its political economy is characterized by accelerated economic development, having attained economic affluence within a short three decades. Relative to its predecessors leading in the race by centuries, Singapore society is highly exposed to Marcotted Development. The Singapore history reflects this exposure. Despite the various economic successes within its political economy, “exigency”, “insecurity”, “siege” and “urgency” characterize its historical memories. This shows that Singapore’s “economic miracle” enriched its coffers (economic capital), but did little in changing its habitus.

The national political economy reflects the preconditions that define the resources available to devise an effective brand campaign. A campaign may be effective where it was implemented, but cross-regional implementations vary with the possession of the relevant cultural capital. Implementation programs are often derived from consultancies offering examples of successful first-mover branding strategies. This importation exposes nations to the hegemonic impositions of first-mover worldviews. Without the requisite cultural capital, nations may continue to respond to dual hegemony with Orientalist reconstructions. Auto Orientalist constructions, for instance, may have effectively positioned late-industrializing nations as staunch political allies of first-mover nations. But it also hinders investor perceptions towards the nation’s ability to stand as equal partners within a joint collaboration. As a result, first-mover partners may continue to see replicators of Auto Orientalism in the light of being “earnest, but inadequate”. Conversely, a show of independence may be attempted by employing Occidentalist rhetoric. Rather than recociling dual hegemonic demands, this attempt unravels earlier efforts at winning first-mover confidence. Yet, the

151 This estimation is based on the difference between Singapore’s year of independence (1965), up to the time it was hailed as one of the “four little dragons of East Asia” by the World Bank (World Bank 1993).
Orientalist paradigm cannot be totally circumvented if nations wish to engage the global political economy. As mentioned earlier, the emergence of Orientalist discourse offshoots in the late-industrializing region is attributable to the need to dress public statements with themes familiar to first-mover investors. One of these choices is inevitably the Orientalist East-West dichotomy. Late-industrializing nations may first need to develop the relevant cultural capital to adequately manage these strategies.

The way a nation chooses to replicate facets of the Orientalist paradigm reflects its (non-)hegemony within the political economy. Some nations may seek first-mover patronage to curb the influence of regional hegemons. In the analysis of nation branding literatures, South Korea, for instance, was found to predominantly employ Auto Orientalist political rhetoric. This predisposition was also found amongst nations that were ex-vassals prior to the advent of capitalist-industrialization. Pre-industrial Korea was a vassal to ex-regional hegemom China. It was historically subjected to both patronage and encroachment by its ex-overlord. With the advent of capitalist-industrialization, vassals were drawn to the embracement of an alternative patronage. The emergence of dual hegemony within the regional political economy offered the potential of release from Chinese encroachment. But this association obligated the renunciation of regional primordial attachments. It also involved the acknowledgement of Western dominance, which South Korea enacts with Auto Orientalist image constructions. Therefore, the persistence of South Korean Auto Orientalist rhetoric can be explained by the disjuncture between its past-present regional standing. South Korea may have surpassed China in its economic performance for a long time since its embracement of capitalist-industrialization. But due to its accelerated developmental initiatives, the old predispositions of humbler origins persist. Patronage by the dominant is thus preferred over the elimination of dominant opponents. South Korea’s success is assessed by US opinion leaders on the

\[152\] (Denny and Swartout 1984:148; Frank et al. 2008:287; Nahm 2002:650)
\[153\] (Lee et al. 2008:278-279)
\[154\] (Lee et al. 2008:273-279)
basis of its status as “a longtime political ally” that has attained “democracy in a Western sense”\textsuperscript{155}. Within this approach, South Korea also needs to be sensitive to its (dis)associations with unsavory regional nations (China, North Korea, Vietnam were mentioned)\textsuperscript{156}.

Regional hegemons that found their dominance eclipsed with the hegemony of capitalist-industrialization may respond otherwise. From the analysis of nation branding literatures, it was found that China’s political rhetoric predominantly employed Occidentalist constructions. China historically commanded regional hegemony before the advent of the capitalist-industrial order\textsuperscript{157}. The experience with Western hegemony was therefore characterized by ex-vassals drawn away from its influence to the embrace of capitalist-industrialization. In most cases, ex-subjugates came to outdo ex-regional hegemons economically before China’s re-emergence in the global political economy\textsuperscript{158}. Pre-industrial China was therefore characterized by strong Occidentalist political rhetoric\textsuperscript{159}. This slant persisted due to habit-triggers in Orientalist discourse constructions despite later Chinese ascendency\textsuperscript{160}. As a regional hegemon eclipsed by dual hegemony, Chinese political rhetoric is thus distinctive from that of other previously non-hegemonic late-industrializing nations. China, despite being a late-industrializing nation, expects to relate “on equal footing” with first-mover nations\textsuperscript{161}. It demonstrates little hesitation towards alternative paths to “Western welfare states” when it perceives the encroachment of its national interests\textsuperscript{162}. When threatened, a provocative stance is not an out-of-bounds option\textsuperscript{163}.

\textsuperscript{155} (Lee et al. 2008:273-279)
\textsuperscript{156} (Lee et al. 2008:278-279)
\textsuperscript{157} (Frank 1980:287; Huntington 1996:168; So 2000:1)
\textsuperscript{158} (World Bank 1993)
\textsuperscript{159} (Zhang 2008:307-308)
\textsuperscript{160} (Song et al. 1996; Yan 2007)
\textsuperscript{161} (Zhang 2008:313)
\textsuperscript{162} (Yan 2007)
\textsuperscript{163} (Zhang 2008:308)
What, then, is the outcome of Singapore’s state brand rhetoric within this dual hegemonic framework? Pre-industrial Singapore did not possess strong cultural capital in either the global or the regional hegemonic spheres of influence. Chinese naval presence in Singapore during the 14th century marked China’s dominance in the territory164. Singapore then became a British colony from 1819. Moreover, being geographically located in Southeast Asia, distance makes allowances for autonomy from intensive encroachments by global (the West) and regional (China) hegemons. Consequently, Singapore is spared from the historical antagonisms that afflicted territories in close proximity to hegemonic influence. The “Near East”, or the Middle East, for instance, suffered the greatest impact of the historical Occidental-Oriental conflicts165. As a result, Singapore expresses the ready reception of dual hegemonic demands. Therefore, a curious mix of both Auto Orientalist and Occidentalist discourses emerged in Singapore state rhetoric166. Whenever pressured, Singapore yields by echoing the desired discourse constructions.

Only some nations can be what they want to be. This desire is harder for those subjected to the captivity of Marcotted Development. However, this thesis believes that brand states are still essential for the competitiveness of late-industrializing nations. While brand states cannot manipulate associations at will, they can make the best out of the constraints. This involves, firstly, the recognition of the constraints of Marcotted Development; secondly, making the best decisions given this awareness; thirdly, avoiding the Catch-22 of introducing enduring predispositions that serves short term imperatives, but sabotage long-term objectives.

This chapter concludes that state rhetoric in late-industrializing Singapore is guided by its exposure to Marcotted Development. Chapter 3 illustrates how this conceptual framework is to be addressed methodologically.

164 (Regnier 1987:6)
165 (PASSIA 1997:93)
166 (Ooi 2008)
Conclusion

The chapter commenced with a critical approach to the contentious hyphenation of the “nation-state”. Despite the ambivalence between the nation and the state, the two entities share a symbiotic relationship that necessitates this hyphenation. The complicity of the nation is sought by the state through the construction of like-mindedness in racial primordialism. The brand state also markets the nation to potential investors in the global economy through similar constructions. In order to understand the construction of the racial state, a literature review from a number of perspectives was required.

The Primordialist ideology is based on the re-enactment of Orientalist paradigms. The simplified caricatures and emotional appeal of Orientalist paradigms make Primordialist discourses popular resources for racial states. The discussion of Primordialist expressions will recur in the ensuing chapters, in the form of state discourse and respondent excerpts. But the purpose of reiterating these expressions is not to promote Primordialist notions. Rather, its reiteration is required for the location of the source of this proliferation. An understanding of the conditions leading to its proliferation and the accompanying Orientalist discourse constructions is needed.

A review of the Situationalist and Constructivist perspectives concluded the latter is more appropriate as this thesis’ conceptual slant. The Situationalist perspective reverses Primordialist assumptions, but does not offer viable solutions. Evidences of the mutability of racial primordialism do not account for the persistence of Primordialist replications.

A Constructivist approach best facilitates my research objectives. An individual’s predispositions are believed to be moderated by one’s childhood socioeconomic credentials. This, in turn, affects the way ethnic management mediates one’s approach to cross-cultural economic activity. This approach best facilitates the understanding of the relationship between socioeconomic credentials and Orientalist discourse replications. Much has been discussed about Orientalism and its related constructs. But insufficient attention is paid
to the socioeconomic basis from which positions on Orientalist discourses were chosen.

This inquiry is set against the backdrop of the capitalist-industrial global political economy. In particular, it is interested in how Orientalist discourse constructions shape late-industrialization nation branding rhetoric. The economic bases for the emergence of Primordialist discourses have been addressed by the Constructivist perspective. But the scope for examining Orientalist discourse replications in late-industrialization remains unaddressed. A review of theories of late-industrialization revealed that there remains scope for the further development of the concept of Marcotted Development. The concept was outlined in further detail in this chapter. My research inquiry seeks to explore how Orientalist discourses are reconstructed in late-industrializing societies, as shaped by the effects of Marcotted Development.
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Research Methodology

Having laid down the conceptual framework of Marcotted Development, the methodological strategy is discussed in this chapter. A qualitative approach is adopted in this research inquiry. Policy effectiveness is usually measured through quantitative indicators. For instance, the success of Anglicization in Singapore was attested by the increase in enrolment rates in English-medium schools, vis-à-vis the decline in non-English medium ones. However, specific dimensions that this inquiry seeks will not be adequately addressed through quantitative methodology. Applying the instance of Anglicization again to illustrate: enrolment rates could not capture the subjective thoughts of Mandarin-speaking families when they sent their children to English-medium schools. Was the decision motivated by the avoidance of “Chinese chauvinism” associations or the “modern” appeal of the English language? How was this experience for the child who had to adjust to a linguistically unfamiliar environment? A qualitative approach is better suited to capture the subjective meanings that shape the individual. That being said, quantitative methods complement qualitative ones in this inquiry. The quantitative indicators are first specified prior to the exploration of qualitative constructs.

This chapter discusses a range of methodological questions, from the operationalization of the conceptual framework, justifications for the case study, sampling, to the methods used in fieldwork. Ethical questions involved in the field are raised before outlining the analytical approach to the research inquiry.
Operationalizing Marcotted Development and Definitions of Key Constructs

This thesis examines state employment of ethnic management against a late-industrialization backdrop. The management of Chineseness in developmental state Singapore is chosen as the commencement point. The conceptual framework of this thesis is set to examine the moderation of Marcotted Development on interpretations of Chineseness; in particular, how its effects may manifest in individual approach towards cross-cultural economic activity. In order to do so, tangible indicators are needed for the measurement of these effects. Marcotted Development is rooted within historical circumstances. It implies that the past circumstances of the individual are likely significant to this analysis. In addition, it is the outcome of accelerated economic development and dual hegemony. Accelerated development refers to the rapid wealth accumulation by late-industrializing economies through the importation of first-mover expertise and investments. It highlights the dramatic change in national economic circumstances within an accelerated time frame as a result of this process. Dual hegemony refers to the presence of extra-regional hegemonic influence (global hegemons), over and above that of the intra-regional ones (regional hegemons). This presence is symbolized by the necessity of acquiring “cultural like-mindedness” with the dual hegemons within the late-industrializing framework. The features of Marcotted Development are adapted into individual level units of analyses through the tangible indicators of childhood socioeconomic background and linguistic primacy. Childhood circumstances are influential indications of an individual’s past experiences. Childhood socioeconomic background refers to the financial resources available to an individual prior to one’s engagement in the capitalist-industrial workforce. Linguistic primacy indicates the language prioritized by one’s parent’s as the medium for transmitting family values during an individual’s childhood.
Childhood Socioeconomic Background

Childhood socioeconomic background refers to the financial situation of an individual in his/her childhood (up to the age of 12). It has a moderating effect on the individual’s life-chances in adulthood. Childhood socioeconomic background is devised to measure the individual level effects of accelerated economic development. Their association lies in the examination of current material affluence relative to past ones. A set of respondents of compatible financial statuses is to be selected. The different approaches to economic engagement will be compared with the respondents’ childhood socioeconomic backgrounds. Through this comparison, the inquiry seeks to address how past socioeconomic circumstances create enduring predispositions that persist regardless of current ones. Holding current socioeconomic achievements constant, differences in childhood socioeconomic backgrounds produce specific responses to dominant Orientalist impositions in the ECI inquiry. This comparison mirrors the proposition on accelerated economic development. Late-industrializing nations may have achieved material affluence over a matter of decades (as compared to centuries). However, this achievement, under the conditions of Marcotted Development, is limited by predispositions formed within economic circumstances prior to its embarkation of capitalist-industrialization.

Linguistic Primacy

Ethnic management initiatives in Singapore are often instituted through language policies. The education system is a crucial institution influencing the individual during the formative years of one's childhood. Incidentally, it is also the channel through which language policies are transmitted to the young. During the time the respondents were in their childhood, language policies were the most actively and rigorously deployed in Singapore. However, language policies do not produce cookie-cutter results out of all individuals. The instillation of ethnic management initiatives occurs

1 (Kaplan et al. 2001; Mello 2009)
only after one’s early childhood socialization at home. In addition to family economic backgrounds, linguistic primacies are also vital, given the significance of language policies in Singapore. Linguistic primacy refers to the language the individual uses to communicate with one’s parents. It was found that the language acquired from one’s parents is usually different from those used in other informal situations. The language may no longer function as the individual’s primary medium of communication, but its impact in shaping value-orientation and behavior could be enduring. Linguistic primacy measures a language medium’s symbolic power within the dual hegemonic framework. Respondents of different linguistic primacies are compared for their approaches to cross-cultural economic activity. Through this comparison, the inquiry examines the replications of dual hegemonic impositions. The necessity of juggling priorities produces anxiety. However, anxiety levels may vary according to the symbolic power represented by one’s linguistic primacy. In order to ascertain the variable anxiety levels influencing the choice of discourse constructions, a measurement of anxiety is needed.

**Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety (AEA)**

As Marcotted Development is commonly dealt with through statist-developmental initiatives, would individuals feel anxious towards unguided work scenarios? Amidst the demands of a rapid work pace and juggling dual hegemonic impositions, what are the moderating factors that cushion anxiety? Hofstede’s Primordialist assumptions possess considerable explanatory loopholes. My objections target the analytical approach, rather than the reliability and validity of the data collected. Therefore, I hope to attempt an alternative analysis of the dimension of Uncertainty Avoidance. Being a crucial factor of consideration within the highly ambiguous knowledge economy (which the corporate representatives are expected to operate in), a discussion of Uncertainty Avoidance is valuable to my study. In order to prevent the conflation with Hofstede’s Primordialist position, the UAI is adapted to form an independent scale of measurements, termed Ambiguity
Embracement Anxiety (AEA). Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety refers to the extent an individual experiences anxiety with ambiguity, thereby affecting the extent he/she is amenable to embracing ambiguity as an integral part of economic life. Although its premises are similar to the UAI, the analytical approach of the AEA differed from Hofstede’s. Respondent AEA scores were not examined for its causal function to cross-cultural economic activity. Rather, they function as indicators to the moderation of Marcotted Development anxiety by childhood family circumstances. For instance, respondents who felt that their race-ethnic identity was disfavored or not favored also circumvented the cultural dimension at work. In addition, they tended to score much higher in AEA. Respondent childhood family circumstances were then correlated with these observations to be examined for their relationship with past ethnic management initiatives. These comparisons accounted for the mediation of Marcotted Development on respondent discourse construction. The AEA scores, as illustrated in this example, indicate high anxiety scores as a result of childhood family circumstances. In contrast, the UAI is used to explain anxiety as a consequence of one’s culture.

Data analysis employing the AEA follows this sequence. Responses in the in-depth interviews were first organized through the NVivo. Insights on the general approaches to cross-cultural economic activity were compiled. These responses were then coded and compared with the AEA scores (i.e. levels of anxiety towards embracing work ambiguity). This analysis was further compared against respondent childhood linguistic and economic backgrounds through the SPSS. Correlations between the approach to cross-cultural economic activity, AEA, and demographical profiles were then accounted for based on its alignment with past ethnic management imperatives.

**Orientalist Discourse Constructions**

Thus far, the constructs devised are best operationalized through quantitative methods. However, a quantitative approach is inappropriate as the
overall methodology of this inquiry. Quantitative methodology offers reliable measurements through tangible indicators. But qualitative methodology is more effective for the examination of in-depth subjective interpretations. In particular, the comparison of respondent primordial identifications and Orientalist discourse constructions is exploratory and thus cannot be quantitatively measured. This exploration forms the key premise to the research inquiry. Therefore, while both quantitative and qualitative methods are employed, the methodological slant of this inquiry is qualitative.

Before respondent interpretations of cross-cultural economic activity can be shown to possibly engage in Orientalist discourse constructions, the definitions of these constructs are required. As the definitions of Auto Orientalist and Occidentalist discourses have been elaborated in the previous chapter, this section focuses on the elaboration of cross-cultural economic activity. The consideration of whether the investigation is more aptly termed “intercultural” or “cross-cultural” is essential. After all, the inquiry is dealing with “the interaction of people in different cultures” (intercultural communication), more so than the comparison between cultures\(^2\). However, it was later decided that “cross-cultural economic activity” more adequately refers to the construct. As this inquiry is examining respondent discourse constructions as “individuals of Y cultures” (i.e. Chinese Singaporeans) towards “people of X cultures” (e.g. “Westerners”), the construct more aptly refers to “cross-cultural economic activity”. Although the constructions are derived from experiences in intercultural communication, they are distinctively cross-cultural in nature. Cross-cultural economic activity refers to the manner in which an individual elects to balance intercultural relationships involved in a commercial negotiation. An inductive approach is adopted in the analysis of this correlation. The in-depth analysis of this correlation will be discussed in the ensuing Chapters 5-7.

\(^2\) (Levine et al. 2009:208)
Marcotted Development

Marcotted Development refers to the reconciliation of dual hegemonic demands by individuals, collectives and nation-states via the habitual replication of dominant cultural ideologies within a late-industrialization setting of accelerated economic development.

Accelerated Economic Development

Accelerated economic development refers to the rapid wealth accumulation by late-industrializing economies through the importation of first-mover expertise and investments. It highlights the dramatic change in national economic circumstances within an accelerated time frame as a result of this process.

Childhood Socioeconomic Background

Childhood socioeconomic background refers to the financial situation of an individual in his/her childhood (up to the age of 12). It has a moderating effect on the individual's life-chances in adulthood. It shapes predispositions of individual responses to future economic engagement.

Dual Hegemony

Dual hegemony refers to the presence of extra-regional hegemonic influence (global hagemons), over and above that of the intra-regional ones (regional hagemons). This presence is symbolized by the necessity of acquiring "cultural like-mindedness" with the dual hagemons within the late-industrializing framework.

Linguistic Primacy

Linguistic primacy refers to the language the individual uses to communicate with one's parents. It is usually a distinctive language medium from those the individual used in other informal situations. The language acquired from one's parents may differ from those used in other informal situations. The language may no longer function as the individual's primary medium of communication, but its impact in shaping value-orientation and behavior is enduring.

Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety (AEA)

Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety (AEA) refers to the extent an individual experiences anxiety with ambiguity, thereby affecting the extent he/she is amenable to embracing ambiguity as an integral part of economic life.

Cross-cultural Economic Activity

Cross-cultural economic activity refers to the manner in which an individual elects to balance intercultural relationships involved within a commercial negotiation.

Auto Orientalist Discourse

Auto Orientalist discourses refer to the "internalization of Orientalist ideas developed in the West" by the subjects of Dominant Orientalist impositions (Alatas 2006:32). Auto Orientalist constructions expresses agreement with Dominant Orientalist notions on the incompatibility of Western-based thoughts on similar bases of cultural essentialisms. Dominant Orientalist judgments are accepted and made an integral part of the Auto Orientalist self-identity.

Occidentalist Discourse

Occidentalist discourse negates essentialized Eurocentric worldviews by replacing them with non-Eurocentric ones, but without rejecting them in entirety. Occidental thought may continue to be embraced amongst those seeking to deploy the Occidentalist paradigm.
Research Assumptions

Having established the key terms and concepts to be used in this thesis, I will now elaborate on the relationship(s) between these entities, and the possible typological profiles that may emerge out of the interaction of the entities. I anticipate the following effects of Marcotted Development will be found in the examination of ECI data. Firstly, within the sample, the biggest beneficiaries of late-industrializing accelerated development are expected to be those coming from the least affluent childhood socioeconomic backgrounds. While upward mobility is the most challenging for this social group in general, corporate representatives coming from least affluent backgrounds present the exceptional who managed to get out of poor childhood circumstances to attain jobs that offer affluent financial standing. Hence, I expect this group of corporate representatives to be the most appreciative of state initiatives, as they enjoy the highest net improvement in economic circumstances as a result of development. Government investments in equipping the work force with the required engineering knowledge (through the education system) leads to the most significant improvement from past socioeconomic standing for this group. As a result:

Respondents of least affluent childhood socioeconomic backgrounds will be the most sensitive to state initiatives, including those pertaining to ethnic management.

However, as Bourdieu observes, the accumulation of economic capital does not correspondingly result in the acquisition of cultural capital. Despite the dramatic improvement from childhood socioeconomic circumstances, the least affluent corporate representatives may continue to feel an enduring sense of disadvantage when comparing themselves against their peers. The following is anticipated to manifest in the findings with regard to childhood socioeconomic background:

Respondents of more affluent childhood socioeconomic backgrounds have higher expectations of favor in their future work endeavors.

Conversely,
Respondents of less affluent childhood socioeconomic backgrounds have lower expectations of favor, or expect disfavor in their future work endeavors. The confirmation of the above indicates that the attainment of material affluence through accelerated economic development does not alter the predispositions formed prior to this endeavor.

In mono hegemonic societies, the possession of the dominant linguistic primacy is conducive for the replication of dominant predispositions. When one’s linguistic primacy is more aligned with the language policies of the time, one is hence predisposed to self-assurance. The situation is more complex for dual hegemonic societies. Ethnic management initiatives may attempt to fulfill dual hegemonic demands and in the process, communicate mixed signals to its population. For instance, language policies may previously ostracize the Mandarin-primacy as “Chinese chauvinists”. Although this practice may have ceased with the rise of dual hegemony, the ramifications of previous language policies may persist amongst the Mandarin-primacy population, but with different manifestations. Some may be drawn to the earlier policies and hence suppress their original linguistic primacies, acceding to the dominant linguistic order. Others may be drawn to the later policies and thus be encouraged to assert their influence in the emergent linguistic order. The definitive difference amongst the segments of the Mandarin-primacy population is childhood socioeconomic background. So, in addition to the earlier assumptions presented, the following extensions are added:

The least affluent Mandarin-primacy respondents are drawn to the earlier policies and hence suppress their original linguistic primacies. This group is inclined towards concessionary Auto Orientalist discourses.

Conversely,

The more affluent Mandarin-primacy respondents are drawn to the later policies and thus be encouraged to assert their influence in the
emergent linguistic order. This group is inclined towards confrontational Occidentalist discourses.

In addition, the English and Dialect groups will likely experience a more consistent state of linguistic vitality, despite the advent of dual hegemony:

The English-primacy will continue to enjoy favor, as English remains the language of the dominant.

And,

The Dialect-primacy will experience the anxiety of being neither the target of favor nor disfavor.

Given the above propositions, I expect the English-primacy to be the most self-assured. This is followed by the affluent Mandarin-primacy attempting to reassert their influence within the dual hegemonic framework. The Dialect-primacy will likely feel more anxious than the first two groups. Nevertheless, the “benign neglect” of being neither the target of favor nor disfavor implies that this group will likely feel less anxious than the least affluent Mandarin-primacy. The propositions on respondent self-assurance are significant in their consequences on Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety:

Respondents who are more self-assured in their approach to cross-cultural economic activity have lower AEA scores.

Conversely,

Respondents who are less self-assured in their approach to cross-cultural economic activity have higher AEA scores.

Summarily, the above operationalization of the key terms and concepts can be graphically represented in Figure 3.2. The figure outlines the relationships between the key terms and concepts, and the typological details expected to emerge from this inquiry. It is hoped that the formation of the four typologies could assist in functioning as the heuristic tools through which my research questions can be more effectively communicated and addressed. The substantiation of the four typologies with concrete findings will take place in Chapter 4.
This section established how the conceptual framework of Marcotted Development is to be operationalized. The ensuing addresses how the sample was selected from the population.
The Selection Process

This section considers the sources from which data is to be collected, and the types of data to be collected from each source. The target population of this study, based on the research focus, is specified as Chinese Singaporeans, or ethnic Chinese holding Singaporean citizenship or permanent residency. As past ethnic management initiatives are examined, the sample must comprise respondents who have gone through the Singapore education system in his/her early schooling years. To address his/her economic function within the developmental state, the respondent needs to be a working adult (i.e. aged 21 and above and fully employed). The management of Chineseness reflects the brand state’s aspiration to mediate cross-cultural economic activity. The sample should thus comprise Chinese Singaporean working adults whose job nature obligates the arbitration of different ethnonationalities as an integral part of their profession. In this way, the respondent’s impression of the occurrence/non-occurrence of intercultural interaction based on one’s work experience can be gathered. As the primary unit of analysis, bulk of the data collection targets this sample of respondents.

A Western multinational corporation, pseudonym Eurotech Consortium International (ECI), was selected as a single case study for in-depth inquiry. The following factors were considered in the selection of the case study. Firstly, the case study had to be a commercial organization as it best addresses the concerns of an economically-driven developmental state. Secondly, the organization had to be chosen from an industry that is economically viable. Thirdly, the organization should ideally possess the key race-ethnic components that this inquiry seeks to examine. Finally, the hierarchy of race-ethnic relationships that characterizes this organization should reflect the wider reality within the global political economy.

The ECI is the subsidiary of a French multinational corporation, regionally headquartered in Singapore. Within this regional headquarters, the non-management ranks were mainly occupied by ethnic Chinese Singaporeans.

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3 (Stake 2005)
The regional headquarters also comprise the China subsidiary whose employees were all Chinese nationals. The ECI is a part of a multinational conglomerate whose business interest spans the continents of Europe, North America, the Middle East and the Asia Pacific. In 2005, the total revenue of the company was USD 13 billion, with bulk of its revenue originating from United Kingdom & China. The employees hired under the conglomerate totals up to 60,000 in 50 countries worldwide. Within the Asia Pacific, ECI is one of the three regional subdivisions performing commercial functions for respective industries. When fieldwork commenced in 2005, the ECI was undergoing rapid expansion in the region.

For the Asia Pacific region, ECI’s commercial interest is currently glued to the booming industry in China – concentrated primarily in Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Hainan. Singapore, on the other hand, has been a familiar player in this industry. The industry is identified by the Economic Development Board Singapore as one of the strategic breadwinners for the country. Commercial interest in China translated into the requisition for ethnic Chinese corporate representatives, assumed to possess better rapport with the clientele:

“Yes, it’s important to have Chinese corporate representatives to take care of the Chinese customers. We cannot do significant business from our side without localizing.” –Vice-President, ECI

The commercial market in China was therefore of utmost importance for this group of Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives. This provided opportunity for the examination of how the corporate representatives construct racial discourses in defense of their competitive advantage against their peers hired for the same job function.

The significance of ethnic management’s impact is examined through the negative imageries of “Chinese chauvinism”, “Western decadence” and “Malay indolence”. “Chinese chauvinism” encompassed pressures from the state to dislodge heritage attachments to China during the Cold War. The data

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collected in this inquiry provided the insights to how past ethnic management initiatives shaped individual approach to cross-cultural economic activity. The corporate representatives were first queried on their personal competitive advantage over their Mainland Chinese peers in the China subsidiary. Then, “Western decadence” was examined in terms of the corporate representatives’ assessment of their personal advantage relative to their Western peers. In this, the impact of Anglicization, where Western cultures were prioritized over native ones, and its subsequent reversal, was examined. Perhaps what is meant to be said is most jarringly expressed by silence. The reticence towards Malay enterprise in state public discourse is paralleled by the absence of Malay corporate representatives in ECI. While the ECI employed Malay employees, none of the corporate representatives were Malay. Despite the absence Malay corporate representatives, the racial composition of ECI corporate representatives was an accurate reflection of cross-cultural work arrangements that this inquiry seeks to examine. The corporate representatives were queried on the absence of Malay peers to explore if perceptions that a racial stratification of employment exists in the ECI. They were also asked to name both positive and negative stereotypes of the Chinese, Malays and Indians in the in-depth interviews. In this interview schedule, respondents were not constrained from adding their personal opinions.

ECI made for a relevant case study particularly in terms of the hierarchy of race-ethnic relationships. As a Western-owned MNC, the organization was helmed by a Western expatriate dominated management. Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives were hired as mediators with the customers in China. This arrangement allowed for the examination of Singapore’s aspirations to play the mediator between China and the West. Some local managers were tasked to oversee the initial recruitment of Chinese subsidiary employees, a reflection of Singapore at the crossroads of China’s

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5 In 2007, The Straits Times featured a number of articles on the prospects of tapping into the Middle East market (The Straits Times 2007g; The Straits Times 2007f; The Straits Times 2007e; The Straits Times 2007c; The Straits Times 2007h; The Straits Times 2007i). The common Muslim affiliation of the Malays was downplayed in favor of the minority Arabs in Singapore for the establishment of primordial links with the new commercial interest (The Straits Times 2007d).
ascendency. While Singapore is currently leading, the expectation that China will eventually overtake the small city-state was anticipated:

“The level of intellectual maturity, if I may qualify that, is much higher in Singapore than in China. China is just liberalizing and is exploring what they can and cannot do… Those who wish to take the opportunity to change and have the drive to lead can do it in China. Here, it’s more flat. China has been flat for very long, very stable. Now, you have people going in all directions.” –Vice President, ECI-

Nevertheless, with due anticipation of the eventual take-off of diverse regional markets, Singapore remained the choice location as the regional hub:

“First of all the location: Singapore is located at the center of the Asia Pacific. Logistically, distribution of goods and travel is much more convenient from Singapore. Secondly, it’s the political stability: the way they control the society and attract many companies here.” –Vice President, ECI-

Singapore became the choice location in view of the emergent market in India. But this commercial project is more tentative in its take-off in comparison to China:

“India is the perfect democracy; nothing is moving. Democracy is not something which gives better results for the economy; it’s necessary for other purposes.”

–Vice President, ECI-

Malay employees played support roles in the commercial schema of the ECI.

The corporate representative’s approach to cross-cultural economic activity may have proven to work from his/her perspective, but the organization may not agree with the approach. How an organization chooses to construe expectations may vary between local and foreign companies, Western and Non-Western MNCs, amongst Western MNCs of different ethnonationalities, and even amongst MNCs sharing similar ethnonationalities. To ascertain the exact performance appraisal, data was collected through participant observation and an in-depth interview with the ECI’s top
management representative. The interview with the Vice-President of ECI differed from those conducted with the other respondents. The questions were phrased to elicit statements on company objectives, though his subjective experiences may still emerge within his response.

The Selection of Respondents

Having established the ECI as a viable case study, a sample of respondents had to be selected. The core sample participating in the in-depth interviews comprised individuals able to address the research problem adequately. With this in mind, Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives have been selected. Corporate representatives refer to employees who function as the “faces” of the organization. This group of employees is most directly engaged in the commercial negotiations with the ECI clientele. The decision of limiting the core sample to exclusively corporate representatives was influenced by a number of considerations. Firstly, the corporate representatives’ nature of work constantly places them at the confluence of the East-West dichotomy. This facilitates the examination of potential Orientalist discourse constructions that may emerge from the sample. Secondly, the exposure to working with Western expatriate managers and peers, customers and colleagues in China, and intensive business travel is considerably higher amongst corporate representatives than non-corporate representatives. This observation was reinforced by the greater openness amongst corporate representatives towards participation in the in-depth interviews. Non-corporate representatives were happy to assist in the general survey questionnaire. But the personal belief that they will not be able to provide useful in-depth accounts is prevalent. This belief was less an issue of participation anxiety as compared to a concern with relevance. The parameters of the research were deemed personally less relevant to the non-corporate representatives in comparison to the corporate representatives. Corporate representatives are on the average found to score significantly lower in Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety (AEA) than the general sample. Yet, their
responses in the in-depth interviews do not appear immune to the impact of
ethic management. This occurrence, despite familiar work contact with
ethnonational others, makes studying these personalities, who supposedly are
at the frontier of cosmopolitanism, even more meaningful. Secondly, focusing
on the corporate representatives granted a more in-depth probe into issues
than a bigger sample would allow. In the in-depth interviews, 3-6 hours were
spent on the average on each corporate representative. Thirdly, age was as a
crucial factor. The average age of corporate representatives is older than other
employees. The number of years required to gain reasonable exposure in their
post is higher than the other positions. All corporate representatives sampled
were aged 30 and above at the time of fieldwork. This means the group is
entirely born before 1980 and had schooling experience prior to the
Mandarinization initiatives. Having some exposure to a schooling
environment where “native languages” (non-English) were not prioritized is
crucial. A key question that guided this inquiry was whether one felt
marginalized, or not favored prior to the Mandarinization initiatives.
Individuals born at a later time frame do not possess the comparative
experience to address this question adequately. Including non-corporate
representatives into the core sample would have confounded the analysis with
age issues, as non-corporate representatives are considerably younger. Finally,
occupational differences between the corporate representatives and non-
corporate representatives may have further confounded the analysis. In the
light of these considerations, a non-probability sample of corporate
representatives was recruited.

Excluding those on expatriate contracts, all local-hire corporate
representatives were invited to participate in this study. The request yielded 30
participants (75% response rates). The AEA scores of corporate
representatives were compared with a matching number of non-corporate
representatives. To ensure the scores were not unique to ECI, a control group
of 130 respondents were recruited by snowball sampling. This control group

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6 (Honigmann 2005)
counterchecked if ECI scores varied significantly from the “typical Chinese Singaporean working adult”. In all, a total of 190 respondents were sampled. 30 were corporate representatives (CR); the remaining 160 were non-corporate representatives (NCR) and control group (CG) respondents. On the average, CR respondents are predominantly male (93.3%), graduates (80%) and were within the older age range of 30-49 (96.7%). The NCR respondents were evenly distributed in terms of gender (53.3% female; 46.7% male), predominantly diploma holders (60%) and within similar average age range as the CRs (93.3%). The CG respondents are predominantly female (69.8%), graduates (49.6%) and were within the younger age range of 20-39 (76%). Details to these demographical profiles are attached in Appendix 3.1.

Methods Employed

This inquiry employed a modified Grounded Theory approach to fieldwork. Strauss and Corbin define the Grounded Theory as “a general methodology for theory development that is grounded in systematically gathered and analyzed data.”⁷ However, this inquiry is more aligned with Charmaz’s interpretation of the Grounded Theory. Charmaz prioritizes the approach as a method of systematic inquiry, as opposed to a paradigm for generating substantive theory⁸. Fieldwork in this inquiry was guided by the Grounded Theory approach of alternating between data collection and analysis. But its paradigm that data can “speak for itself” was not subscribed to. As a result, the thesis will not be presented in the form of thick descriptions of findings. Rather, the earlier mentioned conceptual framework will be employed to ground the data. Data will be presented according to the themes of Orientalist discourse constructions that emerged from the findings.

The fieldwork process is depicted in Figure 3.3. The sequencing of qualitative-quantitative data collection methods was designed based on the

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⁷ (2005:22)
⁸ (2005)
Critical Theory approach⁹, which advocates a pragmatic data collection that focuses on the research outcome. By combining data collection methods, a balance is sought between researcher control and respondent free-play. In addition, the Grounded Theory approach of alternating data collection and analysis was also adopted. Orientalist themes were identified in the analysis of racial discourse in Singapore. These themes, as subjectively subjective interpreted by the respondents, were explored through participant observation, survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews. An analysis of the data collected up to this point was thus conducted to identify the potential demographical factors moderating individual interpretations. Gaps to demographical data were resolved through further data collection. The correlations between respondent interpretations and demographical factors were then confirmed through a follow-up questionnaire. The compiled results from fieldwork were then analyzed against past ethnic management initiatives.

Figure 3.3: Graphic Representation of Fieldwork Progress

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⁹ (Guba and Lincoln 2005:199)
Discourse Analysis

In order to understand the impact of ethnic management, its leitmotifs must first be identified. Public statements of the state elites prime the range of policy implementations to come. The support for policy implementations is sought by shaping public opinion through these public addresses. Therefore, a textual analysis of archived public speeches was conducted to identify the central themes in ethnic management. A critical discourse analysis approach was adopted to examine “the ways in which texts of different kinds reproduce power and inequalities in society”\(^\text{10}\).

The critical themes emerging from the public discourses on race emerged most strongly in the communication of prohibitions. The most dominant negative imageries, as mentioned in the earlier chapters, are related to the themes of “Chinese chauvinism”, “Western decadence” and “Malay indolence”. Public speeches of state elites made from 1965 to 2007, available through the online archives, were analyzed. The speeches examined comprised all of the Prime Minister’s National Day Rallies in English, Mandarin (English translation) and Malay (English translation)\(^\text{11}\). An online search of the Singapore government virtual network, www.gov.sg (accessed in Sep, 2007), for government speeches in 2006-2007 with keyword “hits” of “Chinese”, “Malay” and “Indian” was also conducted.

In addition to government speeches, media representations and the selective publication of public opinions by the media were also compiled. Some statements may be deemed not “politically correct” when expressed by the state elites. These statements however, are acceptably voiced by the media, through which state elites realize “the profit of saying and the profit of denying what is said by the way of saying it”\(^\text{12}\). \textit{The Straits Times}, the newspaper with the highest circulation in Singapore, was selected for the analysis of media discussions. Articles written by journalists and public forum contributors on racial issues in Singapore, published in \textit{The Straits Times}

\(^{10}\) (Peräkylä 2005:871)  
\(^{12}\) (Bourdieu 1991:143)
(2006-2007), were examined for the representations of state-perpetrated negative imagery.

From the discourse analysis, dominant themes in negative imagery and the subjects alluded to in these caricatures were compiled. These were interwoven into the design of data collection methods. The methods were applied to the sample to examine how these imageries were subjectively interpreted by the respondents. For a list of the themes that had emerged from the discourse analysis, refer to Appendix 3.2.

Discourse analysis is a useful tool in compiling the ethnic management imperatives that gave rise to negative imagery. But it did not provide an illustration of how these imageries were variably interpreted by individuals. The ensuing sections outline the methods employed in the field.

**Participant Observation**

Participant observation was useful in exploring the unspoken assumptions in the field. The researcher was involved as a “complete participant”\(^{13}\). At the point of participant observation, the researcher role was unknown, even to the researcher herself. Observations were done with the researcher as a full-fledged member of the organization. During this phase, the researcher analyzed ECI corporate communications on human resources, HR recruitment and promotion preferences, and company diversity management and international mobility practices. At the time of the observation, the ECI moved into its own building compounds. As a result, the management had the autonomy of determining the physical layout of the office. The office layout was analyzed for the distribution of power based on the allotment of office space. The employee’s opinions on office space allotment were also recorded. For instance, the corridor where the management is located was racially overrepresented by Western expatriates. Jokes were rife amongst local employees on “not wanting to step on the hallowed ground” of that corridor. One local employee allotted a space in that corridor said:

\(^{13}\) (Gold 2005)
“I am moved here for RACIAL (sic.) harmony, a statistic as Singaporean against Europeans.”

The researcher also took note of interactions between superiors and subordinates in the office, between local and Western expatriate colleagues, and amongst colleagues belonging to different lunch cliques. Over the 1.5 years as a complete participant, a sense of what characterized inter-collegial relationships, the key concerns of employees and the management, and the corporate relationships between the ECI, its subsidiary and its international corporate headquarters were also gathered, either through the grapevine or the researcher’s personal observation. The participant observation phase also revealed crucial information on the “biographical data” of the respondents. Hunches on likely reasons for AEA score differences, for instance, were developed based on the researcher’s personal knowledge of the respondents. Observations on the preferred language media used in informal conversations, accents, dress and mannerisms, and the date of recruitment were recorded. These observations eventually provided the hunch that linguistic primacy accounted for the variations in AEA scores. Most importantly, the rapport of the researcher with both employees and the management was established by this uncalculated “foot-in-the-door”. The trustworthiness of the researcher, qualified through past collegial relationships, was crucial for the deeply-engaged cooperation of the respondents. Some questions required the respondents to be extremely candid. Respondents were expected to voice their honest opinions about the ECI. Respondents were asked, for instance, if ECI corporate representatives under local-hire had good promotion prospects. In addition, race is a “highly sensitive” subject in Singapore. For instance, respondent sensitivity towards sharing negative racial sentiments was reflected in the usage of the disclaimer “I don’t know”, when asked to share their opinions on “other races”. Apart from job security and contextual

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14 (Honigmann 2005)
15 (Chua 2009:245)
16 (Carlos): “Do the Malays like to go to school that much? Do the Indians like to go to school that much? I don’t know.”; “We haven’t really gotten into each others skin and I
sensitivities, methodological sensitivities were also considered. Respondents were comfortable sharing their opinions in one-to-one interview arrangements. But the researcher’s suggestion on focus group discussions with their own lunch cliques was deemed unsuitable by the respondents.

As a fellow Chinese Singaporean, the researcher was initially concerned over compromising the criterion of objectivity. However, with regard to the sensitivity of the research problem to the respondents, trust based on common ethnonationality is crucial. Krysan and Cooper’s findings demonstrate that participant response to questions on race is moderated by the racial profile of the interviewer. Opinions on “racial others” were more candid when the interviewer was assumed to share common racial identity with the respondent. Responses were more “politically correct” when the interviewer was assumed to share a dissimilar racial profile from that of the respondent. Therefore, the profile of the researcher (e.g. Chinese Singaporean local-hire) should ideally be closely-matched in this inquiry.

Most importantly, the participant observation method observes respondents operating in their “natural states”. For instance, during this immersion phase, the researcher was sensitized to the silent ambivalence that pervaded the organization local-expatriate relationships. A clear division of the East-West dichotomy was observed. Frustrations were occasionally

17 (Brewer 2005)  
18 (2003)
expressed during lunchtime venting or through the office grapevine. References to “Chinese chauvinism” and “Malay indolence” were made in much more jovial tones by employees under local-hire. Occasional cracks were made about the “anxious” Chinese-educated or “skiving” Malay colleagues. These remarks suggested that though tensions existed, they were viewed as less threatening in comparison to the local-expatriate divide. But how can these researcher observations be grounded through confirmation by the respondents? The ensuing sections on survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews further the discussion.

**General Survey Questionnaire**

A general survey questionnaire was used to measure work value-orientation and behavior. The questionnaire was introduced to a total of 190 participants. This survey compares the selected case study to the general population of Chinese Singaporeans. Objective measurements ensured the minimization of subjective interpretation of data by the researcher, which is not required at this stage.

Hofstede’s Cross-Cultural Indices (CCI) served as an exploration dipstick on possible differences between the core sample and other respondents. This questionnaire was later used to examine if work value-orientation and behavior is better accounted for by cultural primordialism (Hofstede’s proposition) or socioeconomic factors. As a result, the analytical differences between Hofstede and this thesis necessitate the construction of separate terminology. At this stage however, Hofstede’s original terminology is still retained as the results are merely to be compared for the score differences between samples. Moreover, out of the three indices from the CCI, only the Uncertainty Avoidance Index was explored in greater detail. A terminology change of all three indices was deemed unnecessary, as researcher subjective interpretation is minimal at this point. Terminologies were changed only when respondent UA scores had emerged as significantly different between samples. When the analysis requires higher levels of
researcher interpretation, the term “Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety” (AEA) will replace “Uncertainty Avoidance Index”.

The general survey questionnaire was designed based on three dimensions of Hofstede’s CCI: the Power Distance Index (PDI), Individualism Index (IDV) and Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI). Power Distance is the extent of perceived social distance between the individual and figures of authority. Individualism is the extent an individual is oriented towards the self, as opposed to the collective. Uncertainty Avoidance is the extent of aversion an individual demonstrates towards situations of ambiguity. The questionnaire and score codes are attached in Appendix 3.3. This inquiry was not intended to replicate Hofstede’s findings. Hence, questions provided in *Culture’s Consequences* were used only as references to the design of this questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised 40 questions, of which 36 measured respondent value-orientation and behavior, and 4 were demographical questions. Out of the 36 questions, 12 questions were assigned to each dimension in the CCI. Smith highlights that Hofstede measured “what most other people around them do or say”, rather than the values of the individual. Factoring in Smith’s criticism, this questionnaire differentiated between personal and cultural values. The same question, but with a different focus (personal versus cultural), was replicated in sequence. Each question was highlighted in bold that one asked for a response “according to my personal values”, the other “according to my culture”. This served as a constant reminder to the respondent that “personal values” and “cultural values” are possibly different. The alternative of stating the difference conspicuously in the questionnaire instructions had been considered. But from the test-run, it was found that respondents tended to ignore the instructions and jumped directly into tackling the questions. Therefore, half of the 36 questions are replications, but asking for the “cultural”, as opposed to the

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19 (Hofstede 2001:Ch3)  
20 (Hofstede 2001:Ch5)  
21 (Hofstede 2001:Ch4)  
22 (2002:121)
“personal” dimension. The questions were also designed to factor differences in attitudes and behavior. For instance, Q13: “According to my **personal values**, I prefer a leader who ... a) is able to stand firm in times of crisis…” measures attitudes; Q35: “When a problem is encountered, I … d) act on the problem so my boss doesn’t need to waste time on it.” measures anticipated action. The questions also differentiated between what is expected of someone in a leadership position, and what is expected of oneself. Using the same questions as illustrations, Q13 explores what is personally desired of a leader; Q35 explores what is personally expected of oneself.

The Uncertainty Avoidance scores of non-corporate representatives (NCR) and the control group (CG) were not significantly different in this survey. Therefore, the NCR and CG are taken to be equivalent and henceforth referred to as NCR as a whole, unless otherwise stated. The scores of ECI NCRs and CG NCRs were averaged in order to create a point of comparison between corporate representatives (CR) and NCRs. The CR’s average scores were only slightly lower in terms of Collectivism (-1.63) and Power Distance (-1.37). Uncertainty Avoidance scores however, were significantly lower for the CRs (-3.26). From the results, I gather that in general, ECI corporate representatives are predominantly more predisposed towards embracing ambiguity than their non-corporate representative peers in Singapore. The scores are summarized in Table 3.1.

Since UA scores produced the most significant difference, this inquiry focused exclusively on the UAI in further analyses. As the analytical approaches between Hofstede and this thesis differ, the UAI will henceforth be referred to as the Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety (AEA). To recapitulate, AEA refers to the extent an individual experiences anxiety with ambiguity. It affects the extent one is amenable to embracing ambiguity as an integral part of economic life. The AEA’s key premises are similar to Hofstede’s UAI, but they differ in terms of analytical approaches. AEA adopts a socioeconomic approach to data analysis, while the UAI is characterized by Primordialist explanations.
Table 3.1: CCI score differences between corporate representatives (CR) and non-corporate representatives (NCR)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Non-Corporate Representatives (NCR)</th>
<th>Corporate Representatives (CR)</th>
<th>Difference in average PDI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Power Distance Index (PDI)</strong></td>
<td>14.94</td>
<td>13.57</td>
<td>-1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individualism Index (IDV) – scores in Collectivism</strong></td>
<td>17.06</td>
<td>15.43</td>
<td>-1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)</strong></td>
<td>16.84</td>
<td>13.57</td>
<td>-3.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Could demographical differences in education attainment, gender and/or age have accounted for the variations in AEA scores? The differences in the average education attainment between CRs (80% graduates) and NCRs in ECI (60% diploma holders) may have accounted for the differences. However, the graduate-majority CG (49.6% graduates) provided the balance to the gap between the CRs and NCRs. The different education attainment profiles between the NCR and CG respondents nevertheless produced similar AEA scores. This suggests that education attainment was not a significant contributor to the variation of AEA scores. Another significant difference between group profiles is that the CG comprised mostly females (69.8%) while the CR group is male-dominated (93.3%). This may have created possible differences in value-orientation and behavior. But the ECI NCRs provided the counter-examples to this possibility. ECI NCRs, despite having a lower proportion of females sampled, still had scores that closely matched the CG. Thus, gender differences did not appear to be a significant contributor to the differences in value-orientation and behavior between samples. In terms of age, CG respondents were mostly in the younger age range of 20-39 (76%), while ECI CRs and NCRs fell into the older age range of 30-49 (96.7% and 93.3% respectively). But despite the significant age differences, the average AEA scores of CG and ECI NCR respondents were not significantly different. This indicated that age differences did not account for significant differences.
in value-orientation and behavior between samples. It was concluded that average score differences between the corporate representatives and other respondents had to be attributable to other demographical factors. These factors also accounted for the variations in average AEA scores within the CR sample. The significance of AEA score differences will be detailed in the next chapter. With the impressions gathered from the analysis of AEA scores, further data collection through in-depth interviews proceeded with only the corporate representatives.

**In-depth Interviews**

The in-depth interviews explored respondent approaches to cross-cultural economic activity. Through these explorations, the implicit race-ethnic identifications expressed by the respondents were derived. The semi-structured in-depth interviews comprised 17 open-ended questions. 11 questions queried the respondents as Chinese Singaporeans, formulated based on the themes that had emerged from discourse analysis. 6 questions queried the respondents’ key concerns as ECI employees on local-hire, which had emerged based on participant observation. A copy of the interview guide is attached in Appendix 3.4. The interview guide was meant as an open heuristic device to guide the respondents to the research problem. Hence, not all questions were used and respondents may not be queried through the same question order. The interviews commenced with the least sensitive items in the interview guide. For instance: “Is it important for culture to be authentic?” As the interview progressed, respondents were queried on the more sensitive issues: “Do you think you have good promotion prospects in the ECI?” The use of voice recording gadgets considerably relieved the burden of note-taking ad verbatim. The interviewer was thus able to actively listen and make mental notes, modifying the scope of the interview according to the responses.

Data collection, transcription and analysis occurred simultaneously. Respondents were sorted by AEA scores and interviewed according to ascending score sequence (lowest scores first), subjected to respondent
availability. Transcribed interviews were uploaded into NVivo for data analysis. The codes that emerged from this analysis formed the bases for identifying the key approaches to cross-cultural economic activity. The meanings derived from the subjective experience of cross-cultural economic activity were analyzed from five facets. Respondent race-ethnic identifications were first analyzed for what being Chinese Singaporean meant within the context of cross-cultural economic activity. Secondly, they were examined for the self-constructions in relation to the cultural entities that one was required to arbitrate in one’s daily work encounters. Thirdly, they were analyzed within the web of power relationships in the global economy. Finally, the Orientalist discourse constructions that emerged were noted. Appendix 3.4a presents the compilation of codes that had emerged from the inductive analysis of the in-depth interviews. Four key approaches to what Chineseness meant to the respondents had emerged from the data analysis: Situational Chineseness (SC), Born-Again Chineseness (BAC), Integrated Chineseness (IC) and Culture Circumvention (CC) (see Appendix 3.4a). A follow-up questionnaire condensing the four approaches to cross-cultural economic activity was then designed to confirm these findings.

**Follow-Up Questionnaire**

The follow-up questionnaire was designed to countercheck the integrity of the in-depth interview analysis. The first section of 11 questions comprised edited statements from the in-depth interviews. 4 questions addressed local-expatriate relations and the rest on how relationship with peers and clientele in China were perceived. Each question was accompanied by four statements, presented in the form of multiple-choice questions. These statements summarized the key attributes of the four key approaches to cross-cultural economic activity. Here, respondents were asked to rank which statements best approximated their personal opinions. Ranking was thought to be a better measurement, as the statements may possess overlapping attributes.

23 (Carbaugh 2007:175-176)
For instance, both BAC and IC respondents believed the commercial landscape in China was characterized by the distrust of Westerners (see Appendix 3.4a). As a result, the responses were not analyzed as statistical data, but interpreted qualitatively. The next section comprised 6 demographical questions. The follow-up questionnaire is attached in Appendix 3.5.

Perfect examples that totally tally with the group attributes are pragmatically impossible to locate. In fact, the follow-up questionnaire revealed more variations between group and individual attributes than in the in-depth interviews. Moderation by extraneous factors is expected as individuals are shaped by a range of demographical factors not limited to childhood linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds. As individuals are not raised in isolated environments, perfect experimental conditions cannot be constructed. However, despite the increased variations, the follow-up questionnaire actually refined group attributes more than it refuted them. Further details on what is entailed in these variations will be discussed in the next chapters.

Ethical Considerations

Becker cautions that a “hierarchy of credibility” exists within organizations. That is, the opinions of some members are considered “more representative”. Most often than not, top management personnel gets to define information credibility. Due to the focus of this thesis, the sample is inevitably skewed towards the subordinate ranks in the ECI. This, Becker attests, could lead to accusations of bias. However, the over-representation of voices in the subordinate ranks was maintained in this inquiry, as this provided invaluable ground feedback. Nevertheless, with due recognition give to the fact that respondent biases could occur in both top management and subordinate ranks, top managers were also included to provide a balanced picture. As power differentials exist between ranks, the study was mindful not to include too many expatriate managers into this inquiry. The top person in the office,
ECI’s Vice-President, was thus the only expatriate manager invited to participate in this study.

Unacceptable biases were avoided. For instance, although the purpose of the in-depth interview was to explore ethnic management negative imagery, both good and bad racial stereotypes were solicited from the respondents. Open-ended questions were also used when querying promotion prospects (e.g. “Do you think ECI has good promotion prospects?”), although participant observations gave the impression that many respondents were unhappy over the different promotion tracks between expatriate and local-hires. Attempts were also made to question the local employees’ response (e.g. “But recently, there were more local employees promoted to top management?”).

The organization’s goodwill in granting access to the study of ECI, and for the participation of the Vice-President, is much appreciated. But this appreciation cannot be reciprocated by compromising respondent confidentiality, although publishable results may be freely shared. Suggestions by the research participants on revealing respondent identities for promotion and appraisal purposes were politely declined.

Becker also highlights that negative findings may pose ethical dilemmas. Although the research was conducted with the best intentions, respondents may find some caricatures and terminologies offensive. Care is taken to ensure the confidentiality of identities, both of the organization and employees through the use of pseudonyms. The industry and other information that could lead to the compromise of the case study are also kept confidential. Masculine pseudonyms were given to all corporate representatives regardless of their actual gender identity. As an overwhelming majority of the corporate representatives are male, allotting gender-appropriate pseudonyms risks exposing the identity of female respondents. Broad references were used, whenever possible (e.g. childhood linguistic and socioeconomic background), rather than specific characteristics traceable to individuals. In some cases, respondent identity may still be decipherable; the
Vice-President of ECI for one. The inquiry steered clear of engaging the Vice-President in exercises that may reveal too much private information about him (e.g. AEA scores, childhood socioeconomic background).

As mentioned earlier, the researcher’s identity was not made known in the participant observation phase. This however, was unintentional. The decision to undertake this research had not arisen when the researcher was an employee to the ECI. The researcher’s identity was made known to all respondents the moment ECI was intended as a case study. The researcher’s right to publish was also specified in the participant consent form. The contents of the form was read and explained to the respondent before his/her signature was obtained.

Data Analysis

This section outlines how the data was analyzed to arrive at the findings. Much of the analytical approaches to this inquiry have been outlined in the earlier sections. This section addresses the remaining considerations that were not outlined earlier, as they involve the in-depth analysis of the core sample.

The Significance of Linguistic Primacy

Demographical data on childhood linguistic background was only collected after the in-depth interviews. The initial demographical data collected from the general survey questionnaire comprised only respondent age, education attainment and gender. In the comparison of these demographical data and AEA scores, only age appeared somewhat related to the scores. Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety appeared to increase with the respondent’s age. At the first glance, aged 40s CRs appeared to score higher in AEA than their aged 30s peers. It seemed logical to assume that older individuals are more anxious over embracing ambiguity than younger ones. A close examination of the data disproved this generalization. This is because

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26 Sample of participant consent form attached in Appendix 7.
some aged 30s CRs had higher AEA scores than their aged 40s peers. Therefore, the explanation of AEA scores could not be simply reduced to age factors. The examination of in-depth interview and follow-up questionnaire responses revealed insights to how AEA scores could be accounted for.

The best insights were extracted from questions on what, in the respondent’s opinion, were his/her competitive advantage as a Chinese Singaporean CR, in comparison to his/her Western expatriate and Chinese Mainland peers. The questions examined the stand taken by the respondents from an ethnonational viewpoint. This allowed the examination of how ethnonational relationships were perceived, and the extent they were influenced by state initiatives. From the response patterns that emerged from the sample, the researcher found correlating patterns in the distribution of linguistic primacies. Here, Mandarin-primacy Joseph’s responses in the in-depth interview are used as an illustration. Joseph’s responses were first analyzed for the race-ethnic identification he constructed to qualify his competitive advantage as a Chinese Singaporean:

“we (Joseph on the schooling of his generation) did 三国演义, 文言文, 白华文 (Mandarin: Romance of the Three Kingdoms: stories on the Warring States period infused with strong Confucian undertones; Wenyan: literary Chinese; Baihua: vernacular Chinese) … I am not a local Chinese, but I maintain the same Chinese culture as them.” – Joseph

Joseph constructed an account of competitive advantage in cross-cultural economic activity based on cultural primordialism with his Chinese clients. Gathering his schooling experience to qualify his statements, he emphasized the Confucian ideals taught in school. In this, his later schooling experience during the advent of Mandarinization revival was prioritized over the earlier schooling years during the peak of Anglicization. Born 1970s, Joseph was schooled briefly in a system that exclusively prioritized Anglicization before changes initiated in the Mandarinization 1980s. From this profession of personal race-ethnic identification, Joseph aligned his alignment with ethnic
management imperatives from the 1980s. His competitive advantage was constructed based on the primordial advantage. Joseph expressed closer relationship with his Chinese clients than his Western peers. In comparison to his peers in China, his advantage was in being more “Chinese-minded” than them despite being Chinese Singaporean. But in this, Joseph did not seek to compete with his Chinese peers. They were not seem in a negative light, unlike his Western peers, who were perceived as antithetical to his primordial kindredship with the Mainland Chinese:

“The mentality that they have when I went into China about 10 over years ago is still there: the foreigner (Westerner) disadvantage is that you are 老外 (Mandarin: foreigner; commonly used to refer to “Westerners”). You (Westerner) only know how to drink beer, and you don’t like our food but we don’t like your sausages either. Most importantly, they (Chinese) don’t trust them. The feeling is you (Westerner) came here to make money and after 2-3 years, you go. Whatever they (Westerners) promised to deliver, they (Chinese) are always very skeptical even if they (Westerners) are based in China because the Western world is bound by contracts and penalizations. But Eastern culture, in China, they (Chinese) want to have that feel of trust that ‘you won’t mess me up’.” – Joseph

In Joseph’s interpretation of cross-cultural economic activity, he expressed his personal race-ethnic alignment and his interpretation of Orientalist discourse constructions. His “like-mindedness” with Chinese clientele is reinforced by echoing state Occidentalist discourses in China and Singapore, united in opposition against “Western decadence”.

But not all CRs constructed their approach to cross-cultural economic activity through the same mode of race-ethnic identification as Joseph. The preferred constructions, moreover, appeared to be distributed according to AEA scores. Taking Joseph as an example again, as with most of his born 1970s peers, Joseph had relatively low AEA scores in comparison to his aged 40s, born 1960s peers. If Joseph’s interpretation appeared somewhat aligned
with ethnic management initiatives, then, the influence of a different era of ethnic management imperatives should likely also occur amongst his born-1960s peers. The 1960s was the time when “Chinese chauvinism” negative imagery was at its peak. Could that have some impact in the way CRs negotiated economic activity, as it did for Joseph? The analysis found that negative imagery shaped individual approach to cross-cultural economic activity, but this impact is moderated by childhood linguistic and socioeconomic factors. For instance, Shane, aged 40s, born 1960s, circumvented primordial identifications when negotiating cross-cultural economic activity. This observation suggests that “Chinese chauvinism” negative imagery likely created avoidant effects on him. But Mack, aged 30s, born 1970s, also expressed similar approaches as Shane. Kelvin, aged 40s, born 1960s, on the other hand, like Joseph, believed that primordial identifications are crucial in the negotiation of cross-cultural economic activity. It was found that Shane and Mack shared common perceptions of ethnic management imperatives: their personal race-ethnic identification was perceived to be disfavored prior to the 1980s Mandarinization campaigns. The two, despite belonging to different generation cohorts, had high AEA scores. This analysis is graphically captured in Figure 3.4.

What were the similarities between Shane and Mack, in comparison to Joseph and Kelvin? Running through the AEA scores of all respondents, I developed a hunch that linguistic primacy likely played a part. I then found that respondent linguistic primacy approximated the AEA scores. To illustrate, in contrast with Joseph’s non-English primacy, Carlos’ approach to cross-cultural economic activity differed from Joseph’s, despite sharing the same age range:

“For me, when I go through the door, and I am in for the kill to close the deal, then all my senses are heightened, it’s how I connect with the customer that matters, and I will do all I can to connect with the customer.” –Carlos-
As primordial attachments did not matter as strongly to Carlos in comparison to Joseph, opportunism is prioritized over primordialism. Carlos’ English-primacy was an advantage for the requirements of the Anglicized school curriculum of his time. This shaped his self-assurance that uncertainty brought about by change is non-threatening and therefore easily overcome by adjusting one’s position at will.

Figure 3.4: Graphic Representation of a Vignette of the Analysis

But childhood linguistic primacy and language policies are insufficient in fully accounting for the way individuals approach cross-cultural economic activity. Mack, for instance, despite sharing the non-English primacy as Joseph, differed in his approach to cross-cultural economic activity. Adjustments to an Anglicized education institution were required of both respondents. But Joseph’s lower AEA scores revealed greater self-assurance of his ability in responding to uncertainty effectively. Based on childhood socioeconomic background data, Joseph came from significantly more affluent circumstances than did most corporate representatives. Mack, on the other hand, shared predispositions that aligned with respondents of the least affluent childhood socioeconomic backgrounds. Childhood socioeconomic marginality overrides other demographical factors in shaping the perception
that one possessed disadvantaged race-ethnic identities. The adjustment to an Anglicized education institution (uncertainty brought about by change) was therefore perceived to be more threatening. As for the better off socioeconomically, linguistic primacies played a crucial moderating factor in shaping predispositions. Both Joseph and Carlos came from the “most affluent” childhood socioeconomic backgrounds. But Carlos possesses the advantaged English-primacy that Joseph lacks. Their approaches to cross-cultural economic activity dramatically differed as a result. The interaction of childhood socioeconomic circumstances and predispositions in adulthood is depicted in Figure 3.5. The list of questions on the variety of languages spoken by the respondent in informal settings is attached in Appendix 3.6a.

As illustrated, the data on childhood socioeconomic background is integral to this analysis. The collection of this data is also the most challenging. The next section outlines the issues involved in childhood socioeconomic background data collection and analysis.

**Figure 3.5: Graphic Representation of a Vignette of the Analysis**

Born 1960s | Born 1970s
---|---
Low AEA | Colin: English-primacy

Mid AEA

Joseph: Mandarin-primacy

High AEA

Mack: Dialect-primacy

Shane: Mandarin-primacy

“Western decadence” + "most affluent" childhood socioeconomic background

“Chinese chauvinism” + culture circumvention at work + “Least affluent childhood socioeconomic backgrounds"
Childhood Socioeconomic Background Data Collection and Analysis

This thesis refrains from using the term “class” to describe the socioeconomic background of the respondents. There are a number of problems in qualifying the childhood socioeconomic background of the respondents in terms of class. Dwelling on a class analysis exposes the discussion to its contentions in Singapore, which distracts from the focus of the thesis. Some literatures assert that class orientation is inclusive of political orientations\(^27\). Others argue that a class analysis in Singapore rightfully refers to life-chance stratification rather than political stratification\(^28\). This is further complicated by declarations from state elites that Singapore is a “middle class society”\(^29\). While the necessity of debating these controversies is unquestionable, it is beyond the scope of this inquiry. This thesis is therefore mindful of not using class references in the analysis of childhood socioeconomic backgrounds.

More important were the technical constraints involved in the collection and analysis of childhood socioeconomic data. Literatures on household income from 1960s to 1970s did not share common units of measurements. For instance, Chen uses monthly household income, while Mak uses annual household income\(^30\). Chen distinguishes between lower and working classes, while Mak does not\(^31\).

Household income earned by one’s parents in the 1960s-1970s is the most objective indicator of childhood socioeconomic background. However, as decades have passed since the time the respondents were in their childhood, these figures were a challenge to recall in retrospect. Respondents were asked for their family household income up to the time when they were 12 years of age. Most respondents were unable to recall even the rough figures. Some, however, managed to provide estimates, which were extremely useful. The

\(^{27}\) (Mak 1993:304)
\(^{28}\) (Tan 2004)
\(^{29}\) (Tan 2004:3)
\(^{30}\) (Chen 1973:Table I-16; Mak 1993:317-318)
\(^{31}\) Ibid.
information was used in counterchecking the coding of childhood socioeconomic circumstances based on home-ownership\textsuperscript{32}. In the absence of sufficient data on household income, information on housing type offered a good alternative.

Housing type is found to be a vital indicator in gauging socioeconomic life-chances in Singapore \textsuperscript{33}. The availability of guidelines on social stratification through housing determinants of 1960s-1980s provided the guidelines to using housing indicators for the comparison of socioeconomic backgrounds\textsuperscript{34}. Chen’s work on identifying social class according to the type of home-ownership is based on data gathered in the 1970s\textsuperscript{35}. Chiew and Ko’s is based on data gathered in the 1980s\textsuperscript{36}. These statistics closely approximated the time-frame when the respondents were in their childhood.

The assertions that private home-ownership was an indication of socioeconomic prestige was expressed in the two works. Chen observes that private home-owners in the 1970s were mainly upper and upper-middle class household income earners. Chiew and Ko’s data reveal that private dwellings had the highest ratio of employers to employees. Respondents who lived with their parents in owned private-housing during their childhood were hence assigned to the “most affluent” category.

Both works also offered insights on how non-conventional housing types, like shop-houses and attap/zinc roofed housing, were to be ranked against the more conventional private and government housing. The authors concur that shop-houses are the intermediary between private and government housing. Chen identifies this group as mainly upper-middle or middle class. As the intermediary group, supplementary information assisted in the assignment of the respondents into either the “most affluent” or the “reasonably affluent” groups. Considering the difficulty of gathering

\textsuperscript{32} For statistical references on household income and class status from 1960s-1980s, refer to (Chen 1973; Chiew and Ko 1991; Mak 1993).
\textsuperscript{33} (Mak 1993:319-322)
\textsuperscript{34} (Chen 1973:Table I-26; Chiew and Ko 1991:Table 5.4; Mak 1993:319-322)
\textsuperscript{35} (1973:Table I-26)
\textsuperscript{36} (1991:Table 5.4)
socioeconomic data in retrospect, several life-style indicators that were easier to recall were also gathered. Supplementary information - primary mode of transport, destination and duration of vacations taken during the time - came in useful at this point. Shop-house dwellers were assigned either “most affluent” or “reasonably affluent” childhood socioeconomic backgrounds on these bases.

Chen does not provide a breakdown of the different classes of government housing types. He identifies government home-ownership as a whole to be predominantly lower-middle class. Mak points out that distinctions should be made between the different government apartment ownerships as significant income gaps exist amongst them. Chiew and Ko’s present a detailed analytical breakdown according to the 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1-room apartments residents. This information is crucial for differentiating between the “reasonably affluent” and the “least affluent”. Significant gaps existed in the employer-employee ratio between government rental apartment dwellers and government home-owners. The line between the “reasonably affluent” and “least affluent”, in terms of government apartment residency, is thus drawn between “home owners” (3-room and above) and “renters” (2-room and below).

Divergences emerged between the two works over the stratification of attap/zinc roofed houses against government housing. In Chiew and Ko’s, the employer-employee ratio of attap/zinc roofed housing dwellers is higher than government apartment dwellers, with the exception of 5-room government apartments. Chen’s data shows attap/zinc roofed home-owners as concentrated in the lower class, while majority of the government housing dwellers were lower-middle class. Chen’s classification of the attap/zinc roofed housing was adopted in this analysis. His classification of socioeconomic affluence is based on the more reliable indicator of household income. Chiew and Ko’s employer-employee stratification does not preclude the existence of high-salaried employees and small capital business-owners.

37 (1993:332)
Besides, Chen’s 1970s data was more time-relevant to this analysis than Chiew and Ko’s in the 1980s.

This thesis also questioned the necessity of “upgrading” some 5-room government apartment owners to the “most affluent”. As mentioned earlier, the socioeconomic statuses of these dwellers were much better-off than other government housing-type dwellers. But this move is not justifiable, as the socioeconomic gap between 5-room and private home-owners was even wider than that with the other government apartment housings. Dwellers of 5-room government apartments during childhood were thus allocated into the “reasonably affluent” group.

Occupation prestige was not included in this inquiry’s analysis. As mentioned earlier, Chiew and Ko’s stratification of employment status is not without its limitations. To prevent confounding the analysis, information on parent’s occupation during the respondents’ childhood was not gathered. In Chen’s data, for instance, although “professional, technical and related workers” ranked higher in terms of occupational prestige than “administrative, executive and managerial workers” (1966), income levels were in reverse order. Also, although professionals were ranked more prestigiously than businessmen (1972), the “businessmen” category is too varied (Chen does not specify capital and business size) to ascertain if occupational prestige correlated with income level.

With the data gathered on childhood socioeconomic backgrounds, respondents were organized into “most affluent” (mostly BAC and SC CRs), “reasonably affluent” (mostly SC and IC CRs) and “least affluent” (mostly CC CRs). The level of affluence in childhood socioeconomic circumstances correlated with the respondent approach to cross-cultural economic activity in the following (in descending order): (1) BAC, (2) SC, (3) IC and (4) CC

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38 (Chiew and Ko 1991:Table 5.4)
39 (1991:Table 5.4)
40 (1973:Table II-1)
41 (1973:Table II-2)
respectively. The list of questions on childhood socioeconomic background is attached in Appendix 3.6b.

The Four Key Approaches to Cross-Cultural Economic Activity

The organization of the CRs in terms of their approach to cross-cultural economic activity assisted field data analysis. This section rounds up the methodology chapter with the analytical framework of the four key approaches to cross-cultural economic activity.

The respondents were first arranged according to their AEA scores. Then, respondent approach to cross-cultural economic activity was analyzed through the race-ethnic identifications expressed in in-depth interviews and follow-up questionnaires. Thirdly, the childhood socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds were correlated with the approach to cross-cultural economic activity. Respondents were organized into four groups based on the correlations of their approach to cross-cultural economic activity, childhood demographical profiles and AEA scores. Out of the 30 corporate representatives, 5 did not possess a close fit to these correlations. The profiles of these respondents were re-examined, so as to assign them to the groups that most approximate their profiles. The four groups were then examined for correlations with past negative imagery used in the ethnic management initiatives.

The four key approaches to cross-cultural economic activity were identified as the following: Situational Chineseness (SC), Born-again Chineseness (BAC), Integrated Chineseness (IC) and Culture Circumvention (CC). The degree of anxiety an individual experiences towards ambiguity in cross-cultural economic encounters was reflected by their AEA (Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety) scores. This anxiety is indicative of one’s personal experiences with past ethnic management initiatives. Individual predisposition, mediated by the education system, is further moderated by family linguistic and socioeconomic status during one’s childhood. 42 Here, insights from

42 (Bourdieu 1977:658-659)
Bourdieu’s discussions in *The Economics of Linguistic Exchange* were used to review the findings from the field data. For instance, which group paralleled his description of working class individuals, who, having found themselves in an unfavorable position, were predisposed to circumvent the race-ethnic dimension? The high level of self-surveillance that he identified as most acute amongst the lower-middle class and upper-working class stratums: was there a group in this study that mirrored this position? Was there a group in this study that echoed his rendition of the “provincial bourgeoisie”, the upper-middle class, who took to challenging the dominant class? Was there a group in this study that was the primary beneficiary of state initiatives, whose linguistic primacy reinforced self-assurance as a general predisposition? The ensuing chapters put these questions into perspective.

**Conclusion**

The qualitative methodology adopted in this study was outlined in this chapter. The justification for a qualitative approach was provided as the chapter operationalized the premises of the conceptual framework. The chapter ensued to specify the preference for purposive sampling methods and the adoption of a single case study. Decisions on the use of qualitative fieldwork methods - discourse analysis, participant observation and in-depth interviews - were also made based on similar methodological grounds. Ethical boundaries to this inquiry were also considered.

Quantitative methods were used in the instances where in-depth probes into the subjective interpretations of the respondent were not required. For instance, the compilation of AEA scores required numbers for the scope in comparison, more so than qualitative insights. In these cases, data collection methods that generate concrete results were prioritized.

The Grounded Theory approach was adopted, but only partially. That is, its approach was employed for data collection and analysis, but not as a

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43 Wang employed a similar mode of analysis in the identification of Chineseness prototypes, but from a historical vantage point. See (Wang 2009:211-212).
paradigm for generating theoretical constructs. Theoretical constructs were adapted from existing works (e.g. from analyzing Orientalist discourse paradigms), rather than constructed from scratch based on thick descriptions of the data.

In the literature review chapter, the theoretical premises of Marcotted Development were outlined. This chapter operationalized the notion by examining the impact of ethnic management negative imageries, communicated through the education system. By examining respondent approaches to cross-cultural economic activity, this thesis seeks to explore how individual race-ethnic identifications re-enact state replications of Orientalist discourse paradigms. The construction of individual race-ethnic identifications is believed to be mediated by the Primordialist grounds from which ethnic management initiatives were introduced. But the interpretation of these initiatives may be moderated by predispositions shaped from one’s past circumstances. This chapter outlined how theoretical constructs are linked to concrete measures in the study. Childhood socioeconomic background measures the moderation of economic standing predispositions. Linguistic primacy measures the moderation of cultural predispositions. The ensuing chapters outline the analysis of field data.
The Problem of Defining Chineseness and Respondent Approaches to Cross-Cultural Economic Activity

The individual’s interpretation of Chineseness is aligned with collectives that share common childhood socioeconomic backgrounds and linguistic primacies. This chapter outlines some patterns of interpreting Chineseness that emerged from the findings. But before this is done, what exactly is Chineseness?

The interpretation of Chineseness has been a subject of controversy. The first part of the chapter delineates the past language policies in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, symbolic of the contentions over how Chineseness is defined. I argue that the problem of defining Chineseness lies in its relationship with late-industrialization. Therefore, its cultural manifestations are entrenched within Marcotted Development.

I will then proceed to present the subjective interpretations of Chineseness by my respondents. Although my respondents represent only a minute fraction of Chinese Singaporeans, the ethnic identifications compiled are as fragmented as those observed at a macro scale amongst “Chinese nations”. At least four distinctive manifestations of Chineseness surfaced amongst my respondents. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the possible influences of Marcotted Development in some of these manifestations.

The Chineseness of “Chinese nations”

Singapore is not unique in its attempt to harness Chineseness as a mobilization tool. The pervasiveness of Chinese identity and its multiple manifestations bear testament to the proliferation of its usage. The first part of the chapter traces how “Chinese majority” nations (China and Hong Kong
Special Administrative Region, Taiwan, Singapore) arrived at the way Chineseness came to be defined as a part of their national identity.

The multiple manifestations of Chineseness are a reflection of the constant political strife faced by “Chinese nations”. They symbolize the requirement for reinventing primordial attachments due to hegemonic contestations. In stark contrast, the “western” identity of Euro-America possesses greater consistency¹. The ability to organize consistent identities is indicative of the region’s political stability. “Chinese nations”, in contrast, tells of a different situation. The discussion commences with China, as political fluctuations there largely accounts for the ethnic management policies in other Chinese-majority nations². Hong Kong, who shared a common destiny with Singapore as ex-British colonies, follows suit. Taiwan, who had close links with Singapore up to the time of the “China fever”, will be discussed next. The discussion of Singapore then ensues. The section rounds up with a rendition of how political economic overtures were communicated through the Chineseness rhetoric. The “Chineseness” of “Chinese nations” symbolizes an intertwined destiny of late-industrialization, but different ways of managing this experience.

China

In the later Qing period, the myth of Chinese supremacy was dispelled by the British during the Opium Wars (1834-43, 1856-60)³. The Opium Wars marked only the beginning of the series of humbling concessions made to Western empires.⁴ Shrouded in the “Middle Kingdom” mentality, Chineseness was taken as the mark of a superior civilization. Conversely, non-Chineseness was taken as a sign of barbaric inferiority. Ensuing events confirmed the clouded Chinese judgment of British inferiority.

¹ See Chapter 2 and Appendix 2.2.
² (Chun 1996a)
³ (Hsu 2000:Ch8)
⁴ (Hsu 2000:Ch7)
The negation of Chinese superiority prompted new interpretations of Chineseness. Revolutionary modernization was propounded by pro-democracy Kuomintang (KMT) to rid Chineseness of its traditional shackles. Frustrated by the halting modernization attempts by the Qing government, KMT founder Sun Yat Sen sought to overturn the Qing regime. Young revolutionists, who believed that modern Chinese identity should no longer be hampered by obsolete traditions, shorn off their pigtail. The pigtail, men’s hairstyle worn in a plaited queue, was a symbol of Chineseness under the Qing. This came to symbolize Chinese cultural decay and Manchurian subjugation during the revolutionary period. This rejuvenation of Chinese identity led to the 1911 Revolution, marking the end of imperial rule in China. While the dominance of the Qing dynasty had drawn to a close, the plague of corruption in China continued. Modernization in China was again incapacitated. This time, corrupted KMT militia, with Yuan Shikai being the most notorious, aspired to a new imperial era under his rule.

The tussle between the KMT and imperial traditionalists degenerated into a game of musical chairs for dominance. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) took control of China at the end of Japanese invasion in 1949. With this, the KMT were excommunicated to Taiwan. Extreme measures to purge Chineseness of its convoluted customs commenced. The resolve to eliminate the ills of the olden era was reinforced by revolutionary language policies. Chinese script simplification and language unification were particularly symbolic. The principle of “less is more” was the antithesis to the old observation of elaborate customs and rites. “Superfluous” strokes in the Chinese script were axed. The imperial administration’s accommodation of provincial languages was replaced with the centralization of state control.

5 (Hsu 2000:Ch20)  
6 (Harrison 1999:33)  
7 (Hsu 2000:Ch20)  
8 (Wang 2009:203)  
9 (Hsu 2000:Ch20)  
10 (Hsu 2000:Ch26)  
11 (Altehenger-Smith 1990:116)
through Mandarin (PRC). The CCP resolve culminated into the Cultural Revolution (1966)\textsuperscript{12}. This move sought both the paring down of convoluted traditions and the renunciation of capitalist bourgeois excesses.

Decades of isolation from the international community ended when Deng Xiaoping announced the economic liberalization of China in 1979. The renewed engagement with the global political economy re-ignited transnational notions of Chineseness. China’s call for the support of its diasporas once again threatened the integrity of nation-states.\textsuperscript{13} The question of where their ethnic Chinese populations’ national loyalties lay once again surfaced. Critics of “Greater China” rhetoric saw it as a battle-cry to unite “Non Western” nations against Western dominance\textsuperscript{14}. However, responses by Chinese-majority nations toward the re-assertion of Chinese hegemony appeared to be dancing to a much more complex tune. The responses ranged from indignation amongst the China provinces (e.g. Guangzhou, Hong Kong SAR), vacillation between accommodation and agitation by the geographically proximate but estranged (e.g. Taiwan), to ardent embracement by the far-flung (e.g. Singapore).

Earlier, the dire situation in China was outlined. The socioeconomic climate in China today is a stark contrast to its recent past of the Cultural Revolution. With this change in climate, responses to language policies have adopted a different form, but not necessarily in the way desired by the central government. In Guangzhou, the provincial Cantonese seek to prevent their mother tongue’s attrition in the province, “angered by the central government’s attempt to cut down on its use in television programming” there\textsuperscript{15}. The use of a provincial dialect to demonstrate dissatisfaction against central government control is symbolic of the confidence that provincial languages are now perceived as worthy of challenging the dominance of Mandarin. The tussles between the provinces and the central government are

\textsuperscript{12} (Wang 2009:203)
\textsuperscript{13} (Peh 2010; Thunø 2001)
\textsuperscript{14} (Huntington 1996; Khanna 2008)
\textsuperscript{15} (Ching 2010a)
symbolic of the disjuncture between commercial prowess and the dominance of the Chinese Communist regime. Where capitalist industrial wealth accumulation is concentrated in China’s coastal regions, these centers of commerce contest with central government influence. The glorification of the 海派 (Mandarin: Shanghainism) in Shanghai also represents the move to contrast glitzy cosmopolitanism with Beijing’s straight-jacket image\(^\text{16}\).

During the pre-capitalist industrial era, China was the hegemonic center of influence in the region. Its hegemony, however, was overturned at the advent of capitalist-industrialization in the region. Amongst the legions of late-industrializing economies, China receded into Communist backwaters. The ex-regional hegemon lagged much behind in the industrialization race, relative to its ex-vassals. With the surge in accelerated economic development, China toppled Japan’s place as the number two world economy in 2010\(^\text{17}\) and lost no time reclaiming its old hegemonic influence\(^\text{18}\). This places China in direct confrontation with the United States, the proclaimed “resident power” in the region\(^\text{19}\). Given the dual hegemonic presence within the late-industrializing landscape, it is expected that China’s aspiration to manage the definition of Chineseness is to face considerable resistance by Chinese-majority nations. With the choice of alternative hegemonic centers, China’s hegemonic influence is no longer as absolute as it had been pre-capitalist industrialization.

\(^{16}\) (Pan 2009:219)  
\(^{17}\) (The Straits Times 2010a)  
\(^{18}\) Territorial disputes with Japan swiftly followed news on China’s new global economic status when Chinese fishermen and boat were seized by Japan in the disputed waters (Hirokawa 2010)  
\(^{19}\) (Armitage 2010; Gates 2009)
Hong Kong

Ceded to the British after China’s defeat in the Opium Wars, Hong Kong was steered away from the tensions that consumed China and Taiwan\(^\text{20}\). The British approach to the local ethnic landscape in Hong Kong was non-interventionist. Little effort was made to encourage the largely Chinese population to identify with the British crown\(^\text{21}\). Alongside the British colonial administration was a Cantonese-speaking Chinese majority.

The British played a contributive role in propelling Hong Kong to economic prominence, but did little socially with its non-interventionist stance. The absence of a strong national identity resulted in the preoccupation with a popular culture centered around capitalist consumerism\(^\text{22}\). The Hong Kong identity was forged through a consumerist culture generated by the local film industry of kungfu, absurdist comedies and the glitzy life of Hong Kong tycoons\(^\text{23}\).

The extreme measures of the Chinese Cultural Revolution led to counter-reactive responses from Chinese-majority nation-states. These nations were anxious to rid themselves of the negative associations with China. Hong Kong was no exception. Like Taiwan, Hong Kong retained the traditional Chinese script, coupled with Cantonese as the medium of teaching instruction in schools\(^\text{24}\). The Hong Kong absurdist comedies paralleled this with dramatized caricatures of Chinese mainlanders ill-adjusted to cosmopolitan Hong Kong\(^\text{25}\). But British announcement in 1984 that Hong Kong was to be returned to China by 1997 once again placed the Hong Kong identity into a flux. Choice was neither permitted to Hong Kong as a colony nor as a Special Administrative Region.

Hong Kong’s return to China had brought the Special Administrative Region closer to Cantonese Guangzhou. But its residents are none the fonder

\(^{20}\) (Chun 1996b:120)  
\(^{21}\) (Chun 1996a:57)  
\(^{22}\) (Chun 1996a:58)  
\(^{23}\) (Chun 1996b:121)  
\(^{24}\) (Matthews 2000:130)  
\(^{25}\) (Matthews 2000:148)
toward the Chinese central government in Beijing. When Guangzhou activists demonstrate against Mandarinization attempts by the central government, Hong Kong activists, likewise, joined in the demonstrations. Cantonese-primacy Hong Kong activists view similar attempts at Mandarinization in the Special Administrative Region as “a threat to their mother tongue.”26 The undertone of demanding that the Chinese Communist Party upholds its pledge to 一国两制 (Mandarin: one country, two systems) is echoed in this resistance movement. It seeks the retention of the right to democratic space in Hong Kong27, and also the protection of the Special Administrative Region’s status as an advanced center of political, commercial and cultural influence. The argument for the retention of Cantonese proficiency was based on the language being more sophisticated and authentic than Mandarin.28 The “Cantonese” communities were historically renowned for their political dissensions during the Qing rule. In modern times, they take pride in being a key center of cultural influence that boasts of popular Chinese role models like Jackie Chan.

**Taiwan**

Taiwanese nationalism was expressed through the defense of Chinese traditionalism under KMT guardianship. Following the ex-communication of the KMT to Taiwan, Chiang Kai Shek initiated a Chinese cultural renaissance.29 This move was professed to purge Taiwan of Japanese influences imported by military aggression during the Second World War. It was however apparent that the key target of Chinese cultural renaissance was the Greater China rhetoric. While China sought to destroy traditional elements of “decadent” olden empires, Taiwan celebrated them as representations of the Chinese civilization. China’s revolutionary language policies was paralleled by Taiwan’s preservation of Chinese language and script in its pristine

26 (Ching 2010a)
27 (Ching 2010c)
28 (Ching 2010a)
29 (Chun 1996a:56)
condition\textsuperscript{30}. From 1977, Chiang Ching Kuo took over presidency and furthered the policy with a modernizing slant\textsuperscript{31}. The cultural maneuvers by the father-son legacy represented the commitment to the capitalist-industrial order. Taiwan was eventually rewarded for its industrialization efforts with the “Four Little Dragons” moniker\textsuperscript{32}.

The KMT dominated Taiwanese political scene, but for a brief interlude when Chen Shui Bian (Democratic Progressive Party) helmed Taiwanese presidency (2000-2008). The blatant ways of Chen lacked the KMT finesse to avoid incurring China’s wrath, although, his Taiwan independence agenda did not radically differ from the KMT’s\textsuperscript{33}. However, the vital difference between Chen’s DPP and KMT may be ultimately a matter of timing. Chen, caught amidst the trajectory of rising Chinese hegemony, have less luck in flouting “One China” imperatives. His doggedness for Taiwan’s independence eventually cost the nation its leading place amongst the “Four Little Dragons”\textsuperscript{34}. China’s rising star out-dazzles its neighboring constellations; unless, they are similarly aligned as a part of China’s.

Taiwan’s national confidence was put to test after Chen Shui Bian’s lackluster leadership. KMT’s reinstatement of leadership under Ma Yingjiu is now portrayed as pro-Chinese. Correspondingly, the previously defended “high-brow” Mandarin is now marketed as a common platform of communication with China.\textsuperscript{35} Yet, the distinctiveness of Taiwanese Mandarin continues to be dramatized by Taiwanese who seek to differentiate themselves from Chinese Mainlanders. To date, there remains no clear indication of which orientation will prevail as the cornerstone of Taiwanese identity. Meantime, the pressure for Mandarinization continues to be contested on the

\textsuperscript{30} Chun 1996a:55
\textsuperscript{31} Chun 1996a:56
\textsuperscript{32} World Bank 1993
\textsuperscript{33} (Le Vent de la Chine 2007a; Le Vent de la Chine 2007b)
\textsuperscript{34} accessed from http://news.cctv.com/20070313/106242.shtml in Apr 2010
\textsuperscript{35} Ching 2010b
grounds of preventing the attrition of Taiwanese mother tongues (Hokkien, Hakka and Austronesian dialects)\(^{36}\).

**Singapore**

Singapore shared much similarity with Hong Kong in terms of its status as an ex-British colony. But it became an independent nation in 1965. Had Singapore been subsumed under the Malayan Federation, a solely consumerist-oriented identity comparable to Hong Kong’s could have emerged. But this was not its destiny. Therefore, despite the similarities between Hong Kong and Singapore, the latter’s approach to nationalism more resembled China’s and Taiwan’s.

Early independence Singapore had sought with equal fervor of Taiwan’s to reject Chinese associations. It had even gone a further step of Anglicizing its ethnic Chinese population. But its rebranding efforts to reconnect with Chinese heritage roots were also conducted with the same conviction. With China’s ascendancy, the motivation for emphasizing Singapore’s Chineseness found a new lease of life. But on Chinese ethnicity alone, the country had no advantage in comparison to Hong Kong and Taiwan. Decades of Anglicization estranged the Chinese community from its “roots”. Clammer observes:

“For the majority of Chinese Singaporeans, their ‘Chineseness’ is problematic. Not to have been born in China, or even to have been there, sometimes not to be able to speak, and very often not to be able to read or write Chinese with any fluency, but yet to be constantly reminded that one is nevertheless Chinese, is a curious but common situation.”\(^{37}\)

Apparently, effort matters more than authenticity. The construction of Chineseness in Singapore won the approbation of Chinese customers from the

\(^{36}\) (Ching 2010b)
\(^{37}\) (1998:20)
Mainland. The positive impression of Singaporean businessmen and corporate representatives is best captured in Chan’s:

“(Singaporeans are) ‘desired’ by China for their managerial and technical skills, their professionalism, and their ‘reliability in delivering on commitments’ ... (in comparison), the Chinese stereotype Hongkongers and Taiwanese as aggressive and crafty, and Singaporeans as trustworthy and reliable”38

Also significant is the said US preference of Chinese Singaporeans: “In addition, the US rated the Singapore Chinese over Hong Kong Chinese and Taiwanese.”39. Like Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan too did not share authentic affinities with China. Apart from common racial identity, these territories commonly sought the dissociation from China during the height of communist fervor.

Next to the strident objections against state language policies in other countries, objections towards the eclipse of dialects by Mandarin were only murmured in Singapore. Historically, leaders of the dialect communities (Chinese business tycoons) were staunch political sympathizers with China (see Chapter 1). To the present day, the attention on defending dialect mother tongues was diverted by the state’s Anglicization initiatives. Faced with a more imposing threat, Mandarin unwittingly became the mother tongue to be defended against attrition. The huge uproar against state recommendations of further simplifying the Mandarin curriculum at schools suggests so.40 State leaders had to retract the recommendations with apologies to pacify the normally obliging Chinese Singaporean community. It seems the use of reverse psychology had worked most effectively in the institution of Chineseness according to state initiatives. The Singaporean resistance against interventionist language policies had ironically served to strengthen ethnic management imperatives.

38 (2005:167)
39 (Hing et al. 2009:775)
40 (Oon 2010)
“Chinese Nations” and Marcotted Development

As China’s ascendency is fast-becoming a reality, a proliferation of literatures on Chineseness have emerged. Three works, in particular, appeared to be engaging in a dialogue on the negotiation of Chineseness. Published at about the same time, the works were entitled: *China Can Say No*[^41], *Fuck Chineseness*[^42] and *Can One Say No to Chineseness?*[^43]. *China Can Say No* called for the rejection of Western encroachment and the unity of Chinese solidarity. It voiced the position of a regional hegemon poised to contest for global hegemony. Chun’s *Fuck Chineseness* and Ang’s *Can One Say No to Chineseness?* are inversions to *China Can Say No* (to Western hegemony). The former sought the dissociation of Chineseness, from “the very idea of China (as) an unambiguous or unquestionable entity”[^44]. In the latter, similar sentiments were voiced from the perspective of a Chinese living as an ethnic minority in Australia[^45]. As if in response to the call for unification, the two sought to refute this “myth of consanguinity”[^46]. Ang asserts, “it may be politically mandatory to refuse the primordial interpellation of belonging to the largest race of the world, the ‘family’ of ‘the Chinese people’.,”[^47]. In contrast to the many aspirants “pleading for membership in the West”[^48], Chineseness appears to invite repudiation. This perhaps points to the fact that there is nothing essentially primordial about Chineseness. Chineseness may indeed be constructed to forward the hegemonic ambitions of some. Nevertheless, its negation is equally a move to repudiate hegemonic alignments.

The current issues for or against Mandarin (PRC) is linked to the mounting pressures by China towards Chinese majority nations. The recent headcount by China of the “Chinese” includes not just its nationals, but also of

[^41]: (Song et al. 1996)
[^42]: (Chun 1996b)
[^43]: (Ang 1998)
[^44]: (Chun 1996b:111)
[^45]: (Ang 1998)
[^46]: (Rey Chow, cited in Ang 1998:239)
[^47]: (1998:242)
[^48]: (Huntington 1996:178)
Chinese diasporas worldwide. Therefore, the tussles over Chinese linguistic media could appear to be signs of mounting ethnic pride amongst the Chinese, a prelude to the escalation of the “clash of the civilizations” (Huntington 1996). China was framed by the US media as a regional bully, “threatening” Singapore in a showdown with the United States during the ASEAN Regional Forum. The city-state had attempted to smooth the ruffling of feathers between the hegemonic giants. In this intermission, the Chinese minister was quoted as having said that: “China is a big country and other countries are small countries, and that’s just a fact”, with several participants witnessing him “staring directly at Singapore’s Foreign Minister George Yeo”. Indeed the tensions are mounting within the global political economy. This is believed to lead to further polarization in the East-West dichotomy, where smaller nations (e.g. Singapore) will eventually conform to China’s hegemonic might. However, such tensions are inevitable if global hegemony is to be shared by multiple centers of influence, rather than being dominated by one. The downside to China’s aspiration is the expectation that 同根 (Mandarin: “nations sharing the same roots”) do not sabotage its hegemonic ambitions. This assertion of hegemonic ambitions is symbolized through the imposition of a pan-Chinese ethnic pride, emanating from China as the center of influence. Would this, then, be a regressive move that causes the East Asian region to be fractured from an Anglicized political economy? This thesis thinks otherwise.

Alternatively, the coming to terms with Chineseness could be viewed as an attempt to facilitate the establishment of a new world order, where a diversity of interests will be represented. The expression of Chinese ethnic pride occurs against the backdrop of a previously severe lack of cultural esteem, due to the historical events that were outlined earlier. Current resisting against China’s influence by the “provincial Chinese” is exercised through the

49 (Wang 2010)
50 (Wang 2010)
51 (The Straits Times 2010b)
52 (Khanna 2008)
defense of dialects against attrition by the Central government’s pro-Mandarin policies. This is a stark contrast to the past decades, where “saying no” meant “embracing westernization”. The expressions of Chinese ethnic pride, whether through Mandarin or provincial dialects, should not be taken as zero-sum contestations against the West. Being proud of one’s Chineseness does not logically extend to the cessation of the desire to embrace western language proficiencies and worldviews. Perhaps, it is time to see the rising assertiveness in Chinese ethnic pride as the hope for a global political economy that is more embracing towards diversity. Fears of fracturing the harmonious world community are unfounded, as a “unified global system” does not exist in reality. As other centers of influence gain ascendency, more hegemonic contenders are to be expected. The “clash of the civilizations” may unwittingly occur due to the mismanagement of hegemonic aspirations. The refusal to share global hegemonic influence is an instance of mismanagement that will rally the unification of the “Non-Western world”.

China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore are similarly late-industrializing nations. But their experiences with Marcotted Development are influenced by factors distinctive from China’s. China’s accelerated economic development is driven by the sheer power of being a large country. Hegemonic impositions by China within the dual hegemonic framework mark the re-assertion of dominance after a century of humiliation. Taiwan’s accelerated economic development was inspired by Meiji Japanese example. The hybridization of Chinese cultural renaissance with a modern slant placed it as the forerunner amongst the “Four Little Dragons”. However, its geographical proximity to the Chinese hegemon is a threat to Taiwan’s desire for independence. Taiwan is caught within the dual hegemonic contest. Hong Kong was ironically “blessed” by not being given a choice in its political destiny. There was little rumination involved in its accelerated economic development, bolstered by the pure desire for conspicuous consumption. For Singapore, distance makes primordial ties more endearing. Its drive for

53 (Chen 2002)
accelerated development was a race to prove that its ouster from the Malayan Federation was a mistake. Primordial ties with China add to its advantage. Although the conditions for the ready acceptance of dual hegemony differ from Hong Kong’s, their economic motivations are similar.

Summarily, the different coping measures toward Marcotted Development reflect the political economies of these “Chinese nations”. Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore were leading in the late-industrializing race. Their historical position as vassals created little inhibitions towards embracing an alternative (Western) hegemonic order. China, as an ex-regional hegemon, has greater issues with conceding to a dual hegemonic framework, despite its eventual adoption of the capitalist-industrial route. Nevertheless, its sheer power in overtaking the “Little Dragons” in accelerated development reflects its historically hegemonic position.

This thesis introduced Chineseness as “how an individual comes to identify with a collective through one’s identification with ‘being Chinese’.” Here, this definition is placed in sync with an elaboration of what “being Chinese” pertains. “Being Chinese” is to come to terms with the effects of Marcotted Development. It denotes the reputation for accelerated economic success, despite late-industrialization. It is also bounded by the association with the insurgent contender within the dual hegemonic framework. “Being Chinese” means being obligated to make known “whose side are you on?” (i.e. China, or “elsewhere”). This is done by lauding or repudiating Chineseness, as defined by dominant centers of influence. The ensuing sections examine how ECI respondents, “being Chinese”, specify their positions on Chineseness.
Cross-Cultural Economic Activity in the ECI

Cross-cultural economic activity refers to the manner in which a corporate representative elects to arbitrate cultural relationships at work. In this case study, the corporate representatives are Chinese Singaporean employees hired by the ECI, a Western MNC. They were employed primarily as the faces of the company to service the clientele in China. The predominant cultural entities within a commercial negotiation, in this case, are one’s Western expatriate peers, one’s Chinese clientele and one’s personal race-ethnic identification. Most corporate representatives were aware of the expectation that they are supposed to arbitrate these cross-cultural relationships. But how these relationships were to be arbitrated was not clearly defined at the ECI. A corporate representative’s approach towards cross-cultural economic activity was therefore dependent upon subjective perceptions of what encompasses the “best practice”. Implicit within the subjective perceptions expressed are one’s personal race-ethnic identifications within a multicultural setting. These expressions appear moderated by one’s childhood family circumstances. They also appear to correspond with the leitmotifs of how Chineseness was managed in developmental state Singapore.

Ethnic management imperatives were communicated by state agencies through language policies. These social engineering efforts mobilize the population as a part of the national resources for development. But individuals do not always respond in ways that the state efforts had wanted, or anticipated. While standard language policies may be introduced, the impact is far from standardized.

The education system functions with this meritocratic assumption: education is available to all, and higher-education is available to whoever qualifies. However, variations in individual childhood experiences exist, thus neutralizing education’s function as a leveling field. Childhood socialization, the time when enduring predispositions were formed, occur straddled between two institutions: the family and the school.
Equipped with disparate family socioeconomic and symbolic resources, the individual experience with the education system varies. This is further complicated by the presence of negative imagery in state ethnic management initiatives. An individual rewarded for possessing a good head-start at school gains self-assurance. Conversely, an individual castigated for the lack of “talent” during one’s early schooling experience is discouraged from taking further initiative. In the latter case, adjustments were required by the individual if one wished to advance within the education institution. An individual may thus be put on the defensive and seek to negate education imperatives. Alternatively, he/she may avoid conflict by investing extra effort in complying with the education requirements. In the latter case, while compliance is successfully solicited, the discouragement of individual initiative through prohibitions promotes also apathy and avoidance.

Subjective experiences during childhood thus form enduring predispositions serving as the “habitus” to one’s future engagements. These experiences shape the individual’s future predispositions in adulthood. As such, the individual approach towards cross-cultural economic activity is variable in its linkages to ethnic management initiatives. Yet, it is traceable to common elements based on childhood linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

Schooled under an Anglicized education curriculum that was convinced of the inferiority of native attachments (1960-1979), how will the Chinese Singaporean individual respond to the renewed interest in Chineseness from the 1980s? How does one respond to earlier denigrations of “Chinese chauvinism” transforming into positive representations of pride in one’s Chinese heritage? Conversely, how does one make sense of the earlier encouragement of Westernization, which becomes “Western decadence” when embraced in excess? The interpretation of negative imagery is explained in terms of where the individual stands within the socioeconomic stratum.

54 (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1974:349; Unger 1996:810)
The correlation of ethnic management imperatives and individuals’ race-ethnic identifications are summarized in Table 4.1. In the articulation of the “best approach”(es) to tackling cultural differences at work, respondents reveal their personal identification towards Chineseness. In this table, the respondents’ demographical profiles were also correlated with the four approaches to ascertain if those who shared similar approaches also shared common demographical profiles.

The Moderation of Cross-Cultural Economic Activity

Correlations were found between cross-cultural economic activity and two moderating factors: childhood socioeconomic background and linguistic primacy. This section summarizes the key premises of these correlations. Details of the moderation of respondent cross-cultural economic activity by these demographical factors are available in Appendix 4.

Ambiguity Embrace Anxiety (AEA)

When one’s corporate worth is measured by something as ambiguous as “Chineseness”, anxiety emerges in deploying it as a commercial tool. Chineseness, moreover, is assumed to exist somewhere in China, with a set of composite traits that result in “Chinese-mindedness”. The estimation of this composite requisition is therefore subjected to high levels of ambiguity. To understand what Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives are supposed to do with their “Chineseness” within ECI, the discussion needs to first locate its requisitions:

“Yes, it’s important to have Chinese corporate representatives to take care of the Chinese customers. We cannot do significant business from our side without localizing. Either you hire the Chinese (from China), or ensure that the people you send from Singapore are Chinese and very Chinese-minded. Then, it goes back to the point that you need to

56 Further details to these key positions expressed during the in-depth interviews are summarized in Chapter 3, Appendix 3.4a.
retain your cultural roots and ensure that there is not too big a gap between China and Singapore. This gives an edge to Singapore in opening the doors of China, which many other countries cannot do.” – Vice-President, ECI-

The requisition of a “good” corporate representative, from the above, rests upon localizing a Western multinational corporation to its non-Western markets. An ethnic Chinese corporate representative should possess “Chinese-mindedness” in order to understand the Chinese client. This implies a prototypical Chinese mind is supposedly shared amongst the “true Chinese”. Only those possessing this mentality will be able to understand and empathize with another like-minded “true Chinese” fellow. But what exactly does “Chinese-mindedness” mean?:

“It’s not only one knowing how to speak Mandarin, but also other Chinese languages. Having a strong sense of their cultural roots, having family connections back in China, and be perceived as part of the Chinese diaspora: not totally Chinese, but still close cousins. These connections may not be strong enough in some cases. That’s why in some cases, it may be better to employ a true Chinese from China, rather than a Chinese from Singapore in the business.” –Vice President, ECI-

When the “true Chinese” is caricatured as some form of a unified “Mainland Chinese” persona, being a “true Chinese” can be a tall order to fulfill even for the “Chinese Mainlander”. A corporate representative’s comment illustrates the problem of essentializing the Chinese identity:

“Are we talking about Beijing, Guangzhou, Hainan or Xiamen in China? If it’s the South you are talking about, I think we have a bigger advantage than the Northerners in Beijing. After all, it’s easier to find the Cantonese (Guangzhou), Hainanese (Hainan), and Hokkiens (Fujian) here than in the north where ECI hire happens. Of course, the company can hire one from each province in China, but they shouldn’t forget that there are still the other customers in India and Southeast
Asia. We have to be realistic and the best is still to have a place that’s right at the heart of all this nonsense, which is here (Singapore).” – Yoges-

In raising the problematic definition of Chineseness, the ambiguity a corporate representative faces in the negotiation of cross-cultural economic activity is highlighted. What will the corporate representatives do when the use of Chinese affinity to lubricate business relations with China is expected, but steeped in high levels of ambiguity? The extent of anxiety an individual experiences towards ambiguous work scenarios is quantified through the measurement of Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety (AEA). Tangible measurements of respondent AEA at work complement the qualitative examination of respondent approaches to cross-cultural economic activity. AEA scores were organized into:

- Low AEA score
- Mid AEA score
- High AEA score

Corporate representatives (CR) on the average scored lower than non-CRs. Therefore, if a CR scored higher than the non-CRs’ average score (16.81), then his/her score is considered High. If the CR’s score was lower than the lowest score obtained by non-CRs (13), then this CR’s score is considered Low. Mid-range scorers scored in-between the two cut-off points (13<X<16.81). AEA scores measure the level of self-assurance in handling ambiguous work scenarios that are not limited to cross-cultural ones.

**Moderation by Childhood Socioeconomic Background**

The respondents’ childhood socioeconomic profiles were organized into the categories of:

- “most affluent”
- “reasonably affluent”
- “least affluent”
Expanding from the delineations established in Chapter 3, the “most affluent” refers to respondents who resided in family-owned private property in their childhood. “Least affluent” refers to respondents who stayed in attap/zinc roofed or rented public housing. Respondents of “reasonably affluent” childhood socioeconomic backgrounds fell in-between the two demarcations.

Some respondents had turned down the request to provide data on their childhood socioeconomic backgrounds. For the want of privacy to one’s financial information, the incidence of missing data in this query was significantly higher than the other questions. Moreover, the difficulty in recalling childhood socioeconomic circumstances in retrospect further discouraged the attempt to respond. In the Tables presented in Appendix 4, an “X” denotes missing data in the field for the respective respondents. An examination of whether missing data provided non-verbal cues about the respondents did not reveal significant insights. All response groups (approach to cross-cultural economic activity, AEA scores and linguistic primacy) had respondents with missing data in this query, with the exception of the BAC group (approach to cross-cultural economic activity). Despite the missing data, the request for childhood socioeconomic information did obtain a good response rate of 76.67 per cent. Therefore, a good gauge of childhood socioeconomic circumstances could still be obtained from the furnished responses.

**Moderation by Linguistic Primacy**

Three linguistic primacies were identified:

- **English-primacy**
- **Mandarin-primacy**
- **Dialect-primacy**

English-primacy denotes the symbolic advantage in the possession of “cultural like-mindedness” with the dominant of the dual hegemonic framework. Although the late-industrializing region is contested by dual hegemons, Western hegemonic impositions remain the leading influence. In
The Problem of Defining Chineseness and Respondent Approaches to Cross-Cultural Economic Activity – Chapter 4

comparison, Chinese hegemonic impositions were more immediately felt within the late-industrializing region due to its relative proximity. Mandarin-primacy denotes “cultural like-mindedness” with the insurgent (Chinese hegemon) of the dual hegemonic framework. Dialect-primacy denotes a non-alignment of “cultural like-mindedness” within the dual hegemonic framework. Amongst the three, English-primacy is found to be more distinctive than differences between Mandarin- and Dialect-primacies. Therefore, comparisons in linguistic primacies are sometimes constructed as differences between English- and Non-English primacies.

Approaches to Cross-Cultural Economic Activity in the ECI

Table 4.1 summarizes the four key approaches of cross-cultural economic activity undertaken by the corporate representatives in this case study. The predominant respondent profiles to each approach are presented.

**Situational Chineseness (SC)**

The first approach, Situational Chineseness (SC), is characterized by a disengaged position towards primordial affiliations:

“For me, when I go through the door, and I am in for the kill to close the deal, then all my senses are heightened, it’s how I connect with the customer that matters, and I will do all I can to connect with the customer.” –Carlos-

The race-ethnic identifications expressed in the SC approach was one of skepticism towards primordial affinities:

“We have lost a lot of that very cultural stuff that we used to do.”

–Ron-

In this expression, SC respondents believed they were immune to the manipulative intent of “culture talk”. Cultural affinities are constructed and people do not “naturally” share intrinsic cultural solidarity:

“I don’t give a shit [laughs]. I believe, if you look up my ancestral
history, although I am Chinese, there were intermarriages between different dialect groups, and I am sure there were also intermarriages between races. I think there is some Indonesian in me. Do I care? No I don’t. My wife is Peranakan. So my son is god knows what, mixed? But I am sure he will grow up as what I bring him up to be, and with his life experiences, I hope he doesn’t go down that road where he will say all this ‘Chinese’ stuff and the other bullshit.” –Carlos-

Table 4.1: Respondent Approaches to Cross-Cultural Economic Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Childhood socioeconomic background:</th>
<th>II: Born-again Chineseness (BAC)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic primacy:</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average AEA:</td>
<td>Low (10.67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach:</td>
<td>Commercial objectives take precedence over cultural affiliations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards primordial relationships:</td>
<td>Neutrality</td>
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<tr>
<th>Childhood socioeconomic background:</th>
<th>I: Situational Chineseness (SC)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic primacy:</td>
<td>Reasonably affluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average AEA:</td>
<td>Low (10.67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach:</td>
<td>Commercial objectives take precedence over cultural affiliations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards primordial relationships:</td>
<td>Neutrality</td>
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<tr>
<th>Childhood socioeconomic background:</th>
<th>III: Integrated Chineseness (SC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic primacy:</td>
<td>Chinese dialects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average AEA:</td>
<td>High (18.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach:</td>
<td>I am a professional who does not let my personal race-ethnic affiliation interfere with work affairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards primordial relationships:</td>
<td>Diffused</td>
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<tr>
<th>Childhood socioeconomic background:</th>
<th>IV: Culture Circumventions (CC)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Linguistic primacy:</td>
<td>Mandarin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average AEA:</td>
<td>High (18.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach:</td>
<td>I am a professional who does not let my personal race-ethnic affiliation interfere with work affairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards primordial relationships:</td>
<td>Diffused</td>
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<tr>
<th>Childhood socioeconomic background:</th>
<th>Most affluent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic primacy:</td>
<td>Mandarin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average AEA:</td>
<td>Mid-Low (15.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach:</td>
<td>I am a part of the region and therefore, my commitment to the region is my selling point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude towards primordial relationships:</td>
<td>Positive towards Chinese primordialism. Negative in relation to Western peers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When SC respondents engaged in “culture talk”, if required, it was perceived by them to satisfy the clients’ needs rather than their own:

“Key advantage will be that I’m an Asian, so it’s PERCEIVED that I am more in tune with the culture. It is PERCEIVED that they (other Asians) can get along better with me. Chinese people are kind of racist [laughs]… They won’t like it (the idea of an ethnic Indian being dispatched to service them). It has happened that Serge went in and they don’t like it. He was born in a part of India that was French. But because of his color and everything he is perceived as Indian (by the Chinese clientele). He thinks himself as French and don’t get mistaken, he’s got a French passport.” –Carlos-

SC CRs related to the Chinese clientele as they would to any other clientele. The engagement in “culture talk” was to the SC CRs a matter of situational Chineseness, as with their situational Englishness. Cheering for both the Western MNC and the Chinese market was not seen as betraying one’s “heritage roots”:

“I don’t really see it as competition between me and the expatriates, but how we can work best together. Singaporeans have the advantage as people of a country in Asia that has the longest standing cooperation with the West. So when Western investors want to move into the Asian markets, the first place that they will choose to launch their investments will be Singapore … But so far, the rise of China has been a good thing for Singapore. I see how the region is growing in importance, and this will not happen if not for China, and India of course.” –Yoges-

With this cultural disengagement, little ambivalence was demonstrated towards their Western peers, or Chinese clients and peers. Accounts were shared in a disengaged tone:

“There is a saying that in China, most of the Chinese local managers have three bank account statements. The first statement is for the company, another is for the auditors, and the last one is their own
statement. That actually reflects the way they work. For us, we will never cross our line, because all these work is carried out by ESP (agent).” –Henry-

Most SC CRs believed that differences between the “rich” and “poor” are greater than between the “East” and “West”:

“It’s true that people are more defined by their different ethnic base, but they’re also defined by everyday culture, by the experiences and that is a function of your salary. At the end of the day, where you go on a holiday; what you wear; what you consume; everything; is dictated by what… I don’t know, I don’t want to use the word ‘class’… by what income strata you’re in, and I think that’s a very strong bonding factor.” –Peter-

A further examination of demographical data revealed the following insights to the SC approach. Subscribers of the SC approach predominantly shared an English-primacy. The respondents, with the exception of Ron, were born to parents who communicated to them in English. Being Chinese, to them, hence did not necessarily imply that one’s “mother tongue” must be a “Chinese language”. Within the sample, only SC respondents, Ron inclusive, received tertiary education in Western countries. When asked for their take on “What do you think is your culture?”, the SC skepticism could be summarized in this statement: “Culture is what I make of it.” Culture, to SC respondents, was identified with very diverse sources. For instance, corporate culture:

“I mean I know how to adapt to one culture, and then sometimes I lapse into the other. I think sometimes that’s just less cultural and more personal. I think it’s sad to say to some degree, there is resistance to adapting to the French way of work. I think there’s a very strong local identity in our office, and I think obviously it’s going to make it harder to import a new culture from France. We’re making progress, and I think as we develop and grow to critical mass, we’re putting in more processes, we’re putting in place more formalized and less
selective processes that will harmonize the corporate culture in a while.” –Peter-

inter-organizational politics:

“France and America are the major international players in the industry, and the two entities are not really in line. They have different thinking and we (Singapore) try to meet both of these cultures. You can say it’s cultural, and you can also say it’s political.” –Henry-

and/or an instrument employed by the dominant to subjugate the masses:

“Culture is a resource. It is a resource linked to a certain group of people. But only some get to say what is and is not culture. So in a way it belongs to and is owned by a few in that group, or maybe these few people are not even linked to that culture at all. Depending on the area that you are talking about, the ‘some people’ may be the top management, your bosses, when it comes to work; in a family, it will be the head of the household; in a country, it can be the government; in the whole world, it will mean whichever country that is the most powerful. So you can see it’s usually the top people who get to say ‘what is culture’.” –Yoges-

English-primacy respondents in this sample were relatively advantaged in their childhood socioeconomic circumstances. None in the sample came from “least affluent” childhood socioeconomic backgrounds. It would appear, up to this point, the SC orientation is the outcome of “Westernization”. The viewpoints expressed were somewhat individualistic and dismissive of “tradition” in a stereotypically “Western” way. In self-reports, however, SC CRs believed themselves to be no more “Westernized” than the other groups (see Table 4.2). The SC CRs’ Individualism (Collectivism) (IDV) scores also demonstrated the respondents are not significantly more individualistic than the other groupings. The majority of SC CRs, as with the CRs in the other groupings, fell into the mid-range scores for individualism. The moderation of linguistic primacy is therefore a reflection of the childhood socioeconomic position the SC respondents occupied. The intrinsic impact of English-
primacy is much less significant. That is, language proficiency alone did not shape the SC CR consciousness. Rather, it was the symbolic power of the English language that did so. The SC approach corresponded with what Bourdieu terms the “ease given by self-assurance” of the dominant class57. Making the “right cultural affiliation” to facilitate cross-cultural economic activity remains ambiguous, but that is not a problem to the SC respondents:

“When we talk about certain issues, and we ask them why they do certain things in a certain way, they will say, ‘Because this is the Korean way’ or ‘Because this is the Japanese way’. Singapore does not have the long history and therefore, we will not say, ‘Because this is Singapore’.” –Henry-

But this does not imply that SC respondents come from the dominant class. Rather, their predispositions are shaped by the basic requirement of childhood socioeconomic affluence, boosted by the identification with English-primacy. It can be inferred that ethnic management boosts self-assurance if one’s English-primacy is supported by favorable childhood socioeconomic circumstances.

SC CR AEA scores were the lowest in the sample, with none scoring above the Low range. The findings confirmed my research assumptions outlined in Chapter 3. Low AEA scores are likely the outcome of the self-assurance that situations will weigh favorably for them on most occasions:

“I see myself as more evolved, as I have stayed in the UK for a number of the years for my education… The main advantage that I have is not being Singaporean or Chinese. It has got to do with my personal values, my integrity. When I go to see a customer, they are not stupid. They want to suss me out on what kind of a person I am before they are interested in the products I am selling. That’s the Asian way. And they will soon realize in short order, and I will share widely as well, what my values, what I stand for, just so that they can see me

57 (Bourdieu 1977b:658)
as a person, my motivations as a person. And so, my advantage is my personal values.” -Carlos-

Table 4.2: Respondent Identification within the East-West Dichotomy: Often, a divide is drawn between the East (Asians) and the West (Westerners), even within a multinational corporation. My take is that: (a) I am more Westernized than most Asians in the region; (b) I am Westernized as much as I am Asian; (c) Though the West is stronger than Asia in many respects, I am undeniably still true to my Asian roots.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Westernized</th>
<th>Equally Western and Asian</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHINESE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>CC 30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>CC 40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30</td>
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</table>

With the possession of an advantaged linguistic primacy, a major barrier to “scholastic excellence” was eliminated. Within the Anglicized schooling environment, English-primacy children needed less effort in adapting to a “linguistically alien” teaching curriculum. What was “linguistically alien”, a challenge to be overcome by non-English primacy students, was an advantaged head-start for English-primacy ones. The 1980s Mandarin revivalism also had not discounted the importance of being English proficient. This further reinforced the confidence of SC respondents towards the embracement of ambiguity. As for the “Western decadence” negative imagery, which raged during the 1980s, the SC individuals maintained their composure despite their English-primacy association:

“Maybe it’s the way my father brought me up. He has never been a very traditional Chinese man. He’s in love with Chinese culture, but just like he’s in love with any other culture. And he has never put any Asian or Western tags on the culture that he appreciates. But most

58 (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1974)
people don’t think this way and it’s not just Singapore. And people do that: if you are not this, you must be the opposite. So what is the opposite of Asian? Western. But that doesn’t bother me.” – Yoges-

Socioeconomic affluence insulated the SC respondents from the impact of negative imagery during its implementation. Moreover, it remains doubtful whether the “Westernized” Chinese Singaporean is the target audience that this negative imagery sought to address. The identification of the intended target audience will be discussed in the next section.

**Born-Again Chineseness (BAC)**

Respondents of better-off childhood socioeconomic circumstances on the average have much lower AEA scores than the “least affluent”:

- “Most Affluent”: 14.67
- “Reasonably Affluent”: 14.64
- “Least Affluent”: 18.33

But AEA scores were not the lowest amongst respondents from “most affluent” backgrounds. The average AEA scores of the “most affluent” and “reasonably affluent” were close. Amongst “better off” respondents, linguistic primacy appears to be a stronger moderating factor than childhood socioeconomic circumstances. English-primacy respondents, regardless of childhood socioeconomic backgrounds, have lower AEA scores than non-English primacy respondents. When “most affluent” respondents were compared, “most affluent” English-primacy respondents had much lower AEA scores than non-English primacy respondents:

- “Most Affluent”, English-primacy: 11
- “Most Affluent”, Non-English primacy: 16.5

The results were similar between “reasonably affluent” English-primacy and non-English primacy respondents:

- “Reasonably Affluent”, English-primacy: 10
- “Reasonably Affluent”, Non-English primacy: 16.38
Further, the approach to cross-cultural economic activity for respondents of different linguistic primacies also varied.

Subscribers to the BAC approach predominantly possessed Mandarin-primacy profiles. Moreover, their approach to cross-cultural economic activity appeared to be the inverse of the English-primacy SC ones. BAC CRs were the most amenable to declaring their regional commitment, and consequentially taking an opposing stand against “Westerners”:

“Because they (Chinese nationals) believe that the ang mo (Hokkien: meaning Caucasians) are out to trick them, which we do see the case… The US side (ECI American representatives), they really think they are the world. They are centered around the US that they forget what is going around the world. So it’s quite… yeah.” –William-

The embracement of heritage attachments in one’s public and private domains characterized the forging of cultural like-mindedness with the Chinese clientele:

“This is my home-base. I don’t think like the way they (Westerners) think: ‘(enacts Western vantage point) I sign a contract. I collect my bonus. After that, thank you and bye. I am moving to US or Europe. I don’t care’. It’s not in my nature to do that. The reason behind this integrity is because I know I am here to stay.” –Joseph-

What came as a surprise was, when asked for the source of cultural inspiration, BAC identifications were not exclusively Chinese. Cultural inspirations could be drawn from being a part of multicultural Singapore:

“We have different religions that co-exist peacefully, and I am very proud of it. I always point out that this is something unique to Singapore. Malaysia is preaching that they are truly Asia and trying to emphasize on their harmonious multiracial community of CMIO as well and yet, all the racial riots are happening there. (Here in Singapore,) the foreigners are amazed to see how the temples can co-exist next to a church which may be next to a mosque… When I was
young, I went to temples, I went to churches and I went to mosques.” – Joseph-
or even from cultures whose members were severely criticized by the BAC respondents; namely, “Western cultures”:

“I guess I will be drawing from an amalgamation between the American management views and the Chinese traditional values. I don’t think there’s one specific cultural value. I personally think the American way of handling work culture has many pros. I am actually amalgamating between what I feel, the pros of American work culture and traditional Chinese culture. So it will be a mish-mash of somewhere in between.” – Alvin-

The criticisms against their Western peers were directed at the “bad behavior of (many?) Westerners”, rather than culture per se:

“The good ones, some of them, are very open-minded, very international. The bad ones are mono-cultural, they stick to their group and they only trust their own people.” – Joseph-

The impact of “Western decadence” negative imagery appears to have left its mark on this group. Public discourse was likely not devised to offend the Western powers and investors. Rather, they represented attempts to establish China-Singapore bilateral relationships by echoing some similar objections against “the West”. In the domestic sphere, this move also served to placate the non-English primacy segment. Lee Hsien Loong’s Prime Minister’s National Day Rally 2009 outlines how this performance was enacted. The English version expresses his appreciation for Western multinational corporations:

“We are also attracting MNCs to Singapore, still… They are keen to do more in Singapore, in Asia, which they see as a key growth engine
for the world and they see Singapore as a base for them to do their Asia business…”\(^59\)

The Mandarin speech expresses his appreciation for Chinese Singaporean small-medium enterprises, not mentioned in the English speech:

“The government will fully support the SMEs, including helping them enter overseas markets. There are many business opportunities in Asia. As long as you understand the market and have good networks, you don’t have to worry about not having business.”\(^60\)

Criticisms directed at “Western decadence” was meant for the Mandarin-speaking audience and thus inserted in the Mandarin speech. “Western excesses” targets not the enterprises, but the failings that Western elites would also hesitate to embrace:

“In America, nearly two-thirds of people, adults, are either obese or overweight.”\(^61\)

References to American obesity was absent in Lee’s English and Malay speeches. Incidentally, it was the BAC respondents who felt it within their prerogative and capacity to champion against “Western encroachment”. This position, however, was not so readily embraced by other non-English-primacy respondents. The next section further elaborates on how negative imagery variably unfolds for other respondents.

Being mostly born to “most affluent” families, the BAC group echoed the “petty-bourgeois speakers… condemned to an anxious striving for correctness which may lead them to outdo bourgeois speakers in their tendency to use the most correct and most recondite forms.”\(^62\). Endowed with affluent childhood socioeconomic circumstances, yet not enjoying the expected influence, BAC respondents instead found their positions eclipsed by Western expatriate peers. With the buoyancy of the Chinese market came the opportunity for re-defining corporate hierarchies. Hence, the argument that a

\(^59\) (Lee 2009b)  
\(^60\) (Lee 2009a)  
\(^61\) (Lee 2009a)  
\(^62\) (Bourdieu 1977b:659)
good corporate representative is “primordially rooted” within the region became the BAC approach. Respondents from this group were skeptical about the level of commitment their Western peers had for the region. The fierce identification with Chineseness was thus described as “Born-Again Chineseness” in this thesis. The deployment of cultural affinity as a barrier against those seen to eclipse their position formed the BAC predisposition. On the average, BAC respondents scored slightly higher in AEA than the SC’s. This reflects the lower self-assurance experienced by the BAC group, relative to the English-primacy SC. The financial foundation that gave the BAC CRs the advantage of self-assurance in comparison to other Non-English primacy peers could not override the gap created by linguistic primacy. Especially for CRs who had less luck with the Chinese clientele, self-assurance could suffer a significant attack. Enthusiasm towards “Born-Again Chineseness” does not guarantee the successful establishment of good rapport with the Chinese clientele. The greater the success in forging this affinity, the lower the anxiety felt towards embracing ambiguity at work. In contrast, respondents with the BAC antagonism, yet lacking strong connections with the Chinese clientele, may experience High AEA. The lack of a strong backer meant lesser clout and lowered self-assurance.

**Integrated Chineseness (IC)**

The Dialect-primacy IC subscribers, unlike English- and Mandarin-primacy respondents, are not aligned linguistically to the dual hegemonic framework. But being born in the 1960s, being Dialect-primacy also did not spark the controversy that Mandarin-primacy incurred. The childhood socioeconomic backgrounds of IC respondents were also average, being neither significantly more nor less affluent than the other groups. Changes in ethnic management imperatives thus only meant a new proficiency acquisition was required. Characteristic of the middle-stratum, the IC respondents’ desire to balance all affiliations was observed:
“Basically, to me, cultural values will affect the way a person looks at the problem and makes a decision. So, this is going to affect the person’s way of working within an organization, especially in a multinational corporation like ours (ECI), where you have people coming in from the host country. The people coming in from the host country may not necessarily be French, but they have a French way of doing things, whereas for us who are recruited from Singapore, there’s a Singaporean way of doing things. So, the local employee may not be attuned to the way the French do things, as our managers are trained, mainly through management schools, by the American education institutions … The cultural part is mainly how the management knowledge that we possess are being executed. Basically I am Chinese, so my way of approaching a problem at work will be more influenced by the Confucian school of thought… I may desire doing things in a certain way, but subconsciously I will still fall back to that protection to consider how it affects other people.” –Martin-

The IC position expressed higher levels of anxiety towards ambiguity in comparison to the linguistically and socioeconomically advantaged. It reflects Bourdieu’s observation of the “insecurity and the corresponding high level of self-surveillance and censorship (that is)... most acute in the upper strata of the working class and the lower middle class.”63. The feeling of being “not too bad, but still not there” drove this group to garner all resources, including cultural ones, to “keep up with the Joneses”:

“I find people in China, Japan and Korea have pretty strong views about their own culture from the Asian context. Moving on to the European side, the French are like this as well. They have a very strong view about what their culture is about, and they seem to know a lot, or at least they form their own views (about their cultural identity); whereas in Singapore, we don’t really have that kind of exposure. If I haven’t been traveling, I think I will still be locked in that kind of easy

63 (1977b:658)
situation. When I travel, that’s when I become more aware that I am lacking in the knowledge (of my cultural roots) compared to other people from other cultures.” – Phillip-

The position of being “a part, yet apart” was maintained. IC respondents positioned themselves as familiar regional players who knew when to take an independent stand. Being neutral arbiters of the East-West dichotomy was imperative:

“I think they (China CRs) are more afraid to speak their mind, they tend to go with the management, not go against. They prefer to flow with the management, even though they know the customer will not agree. Our approach is different. For example, if there is a big customer complaint, they will ask the Number 1 (Vice-President, ECI) to go and see the customer when it is a boiling issue; when it is boiling HOT. For me, it will be very different. If you send Number 1 there, the customer will make a very BIG demand. The boss has the ability to make commitments. The customers will push him to commit; they will bang the tables and say, ‘You are the boss, you have the right to make this decision, I am making these demands, yes, or no?’ As the Number 1 in this organization, when customers say this to him, he cannot say, ‘No, I am going back to check.’ It will put him in a fix. To them (China CRs), the approach is, ‘I send my big boss down to show how important you are, and to show that the problem will be solved.’ This is their approach. For me, although I am Asian, I will take it differently. I will not send the Number 1 down. The person who is responsible for the account has to go and talk. Take the customer’s feedback and go back to the management to see what can be done. This is a contingency plan of buying time; you cannot solve the problem on the spot. Someone has gone down to attend to the problem instead of putting the Number 1 in the line of fire… it’s not that they (China CRs) have no confidence to face them (clientele in China). It’s their
relationship with the customer (being caught in the whole network of relationships).” –Kelvin-

IC primordial identifications characterized the awareness of sharing similarities with ethnonational others, with the maintenance of distinctions:

“As a Singaporean Chinese, I could do it. After that, I am still good with them, and the customers are still very nice with me and they have respect for me. But for a local Chinese (China CR) – I can understand - they try to be nice because they are there (being caught in the whole network of relationships).” –Kelvin-

Good commercial relationship with the Chinese clientele was not about being “exactly the same”. IC respondents believed similarities in Chineseness facilitated cultural empathy, but could also compromise the impartiality of an arbiter. Culture was believed to simultaneously facilitate and constrain one’s advantage in negotiating commercial relationships:

“I find that it (deployment of cultural affinities in cross-cultural economic negotiations) is an advantage most of the time. But it is good to be aware that the advantage can also turn into a disadvantage, then it’s time to take a step backward and examine whether you are falling into a situation where you are even more disadvantaged.” –Phillip-

Although Western expatriates were perceived by this group as corporate equals, IC respondents would hesitate to embrace “Westernization” without reserve:

“The word ‘Westernized’ should not be applied. We are in-between. Singaporeans choose to be ‘Westernized’ at the correct time and ‘Oriental’ at the correct time.” –Kelvin-

The distinction was maintained so that they would not become “substandard Westerners”, but Chinese Singaporean CRs in their own right:

“The only thing that Singaporeans impress them (clients in China) more than the local Chinese is the fact that we are able to chatter non-stop in English about anything and everything with the Westerners. That appears very impressive to them, as they think anything
associated with the Whites must be good. In the offices in China, it is common to see pictures of White models dressed in business suits posing as customers of these Chinese businesses. It is perceived that a Chinese company’s prestige factor is whether they are doing business with the West. But as I was saying, this advantage will eventually go away, and by then, we really have no advantage at all. The only thing is that Singaporeans are obedient. They know that once something is requested, the Singaporeans will go by the book and get the thing done for you without any hiccups as it is all done by the book.” –Bernard-
The intense effort to cover all grounds was reflected in the significantly higher AEA scores. Being constantly anxious appeared to be the driving force for IC CRs.

**Culture Circumvention (CC)**

In terms of AEA scores, the CC group stood on the opposite spectrum against the SC group. CC subscribers on the whole had High AEA scores and SC subscribers, Low scores. But the CC approach to cross-cultural economic activity, relative to the other groups, appeared most similar to the SC’s. At one glance, CC CRs appear to be voicing the same sentiments that “culture does not matter”. Further investigations reveal that the desire to “keep things professional” was inspired by other sentiments. SC respondents took a disengaged approach that primordialism can be exploited to lubricate commercial relationships, even if they do not personally attached to it. In contrast, CC respondents saw themselves as bound to primordial obligations, which were seen as disruptive to economic life. Therefore, to CC respondents, if the work environment is to be a level playing field, it should be preserved as culturally-neutral ground:

“If you are all the same, then you can work in harmony. There is no racial and cultural difference, and this is the environment that you will like to be in. If you start talking about race and color, then it will be very difficult to work in the environment…” –Norman-
Yet, CC respondent’s take on culture was opposed to the SC respondent’s. Culture was perceived by CC subscribers as an inherited identity and therefore less open to re-interpretation:

“As Chinese, we put a lot of emphasis on 忠孝廉耻 (Mandarin: loyalty, filial piety; integrity; humility; integrity) and this is our basic guideline… In fact (Singapore) government policy has very strong 魯家思想 (Mandarin: Confucianism) behind (their rationale of governance)... I think China can do that (do honest business guided by Confucianism) as well. It is strange because this should be deeply rooted in the Chinese value system. But why are they not doing that? Because they are all overcome by greed (something must have gone wrong for China to not abide by Confucian ethics as they are Chinese).” –Shane-

In addition, cultural attachments were strong to most CC respondents in the private sphere, unlike the culturally-disengaged SC group:

“For example, my kids, my girl, if she’s going to live in America through her whole life, her thinking will be different. It’s better for her to have her foundation in Asia. She has to know where she’s from, her roots.” –Norman-

Summarily, the SC typified the belief that heritage affinities did not matter. In contrast, the CC typified the belief that primordial affinities matter, and thus should be prevented from interfering with work affairs:

“Personally I feel that at work, I tend to follow more of the corporate guidelines rather than my personal beliefs. For example, if the corporate guideline is about customer satisfaction, or profitability, or commercial success, I am sure I will put that ahead of my personal values. The personal belief and value system doesn’t come with me during work.” –Shane-

Some wistfulness over what could have been if one’s primordial identifications came with superior economic associations was expressed:
“If it’s a local boss who is Chinese, then it’s better for people like us as
Chinese. There will be some downside for a different boss.” –Norman-
CC subscribers comprised predominantly “least affluent” respondents (see
Table 4.3). They are distinguished by the belief that their linguistic primacy
was disfavored or not favored prior to the 1980s Mandarinization campaigns
(i.e. during the Anglicization campaign):

Table 4.3: Crosstabulation of Respondent Approach to Cross-Cultural Economic Activity and Childhood Socioeconomic Background

CHINESE * ECONOMIC Crosstabulation

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<th>ECONOMIC</th>
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<td>least</td>
<td>reasonable</td>
<td>most</td>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>BAC</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>CC 30</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
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A significant correlation between the CC approach and Mandarin-primacy
was also observed. Although not all CC respondents were Mandarin-primacy,
the born-1960s Mandarin-primacy respondents were on the whole subscribers
of the CC approach. This does not however, imply that born-1960s, Mandarin-
primacy individuals are entirely disadvantaged socioeconomically. In fact, the
common association of this profile with prominence was expressed by a
respondent, Martin: “persons of such high caliber will be academics or
prominent Chinese businessmen, and not working in a commercial company”.
Coming from “least affluent” childhood socioeconomic backgrounds, the
born-1960s Mandarin-primacy respondents here, however, did not share the
prominence of “academics or prominent businessmen”. Therefore, the
Mandarin-primacy disadvantage may be more intensely felt by CC
respondents at the height of “Chinese chauvinism”. This was attested by the respondents’ confirmation of “discrimination, or the lack of favor”. The CC condition reiterates the additional barriers that children of marginal socioeconomic circumstances need to overcome to advance within the education system. But Bourdieu’s observation of “working class turgidity of grand emotions through banter, rudeness and ribaldry” did not manifest amongst the CC respondents. Such manifestations were unlikely, as they excelled in schools to qualify for the current job positions. However, the predisposition to silence characterized the insistent circumvention of the racial dimension in economic life. The High AEA scores of all CC subscribers were also noteworthy. If strong primordial attachments are expected to recede when one dons the corporate suit, then active surveillance against primordial inclinations is required. Consequentially, the anxiety towards ambiguous work situations is increased. Ambiguous situations require stronger enforcements of self-surveillance and are thus, if possible, minimized.

**Implications of the Moderation of Cross-Cultural Economic Activity by Childhood Family Circumstances**

From the sample of corporate representatives in ECI, this thesis found the following correlations between the approach to cross-cultural economic activity and respondent demographical profiles.

The findings confirm my proposition that past circumstances impact upon individual predispositions more than current ones. This is because past experiences may have formed enduring predispositions (habitus) that override the influence of current conditions. In addition, past experiences form the accumulated resources (cultural capital) that influence how an individual deals with current situations.

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64 (Bourdieu and de Saint Martin 1974)
65 (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990:116)
Following the research assumptions established in Chapter 3, I found childhood socioeconomic background amongst “least affluent” respondents to be of significant influence upon their approach to cross-cultural economic activity. Those who believed their linguistic primacy was not favored or disfavored came overwhelmingly from the “least affluent”. Further, “least affluent” childhood socioeconomic background respondents appeared more affected by past financial circumstances than linguistic primacy. Corporate representatives of ECI, on the average, had significantly lower AEA scores in comparison to non-corporate representatives (CR: 13.57; NCR: 16.84). But for the “least affluent”, average AEA scores were much higher than that of the NCRs (“least affluent”: 18.33). The “least affluent” were almost entirely CC subscribers. High AEA scorers expressed high levels of anxiety when embracing ambiguity at work. Most “least affluent” corporate representatives were not just High AEA scorers. They also preferred to circumvent the cultural dimension to minimize ambiguous work situations. This contradicted what the ECI expects of corporate representatives. For more details, Table 4.5 in Appendix 4 provides a breakdown on the correlation of “least affluent” childhood socioeconomic background (Socioeconomic) with the Culture Circumvention (CC) approach to cross-cultural economic activity (XCEA).

Amongst the socioeconomically better-off in childhood, linguistic primacy provided the differentiating factor. The possession of the favored English-primacy, for instance, provided the additional boost of confidence on top of socioeconomic advantage. Confirming research assumptions on English-primacy, SC respondents’ confidence was derived from an intrinsically-motivated self-assurance. In comparison, the results of Mandarin-primacy respondents were more inconclusive. While it was found that some Mandarin-primacy respondents have lower AEA scores than Dialect-primacy respondents, this was not the general case. There seems to be a fluctuating self-assurance amongst affluent Mandarin-primacy respondents due to the tensions of dual hegemonic demands. Although Mandarin-primacy BAC CRs were predominantly from the “most affluent” category, the average AEA
score of this group was significantly higher than amongst the “most affluent” group as a whole. This became apparent when the “most affluent” were distinguished between English and Non-English primacies. Their linguistic primacy was dual hegemony-aligned, but with the ascendent force (China) rather than the dominant one (the West). When non-English-primacy respondents expressed confidence, it was based on the successful establishment of rapport with external cultural entitie(s). In the BAC case, confidence was based on the rapport with Chinese clients. This observation was reinforced by BAC AEA scores. BAC respondents who attested to good rapport with Chinese clients had lower scores (Mid-Low) scores than Dialect-primacy respondents (Mid-High), while other BAC respondents fell into the High score range. Further details of respondent linguistic primacies and AEA scores are presented in Tables 4.6 and 4.7 in Appendix 4.

Ironically, IC respondents, whose linguistic primacies were not aligned with linguistic associations of dual hegemony appeared most optimistic about their career advancement prospects:

Table 4.4: Respondent Optimism towards Promotion Prospects in Comparison to Western Expatriates: In comparison to the Western expatriates, I possess: (a) better chances in China than the expatriate-dominated Singapore office; (b) equal chances in both offices; (c) neither an advantage in China or the Singapore office.

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<tr>
<th>CHINESE</th>
<th>OPTIMISM</th>
<th>CN subsidiary</th>
<th>neither</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>situation</td>
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<td>born again</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
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This observation contradicts Bourdieu’s assertion that cultural capital is consequential to social reproduction. The findings also contradict Bourdieu’s belief that economic capital translates into cultural capital and vice

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66 (Bourdieu 1977a; Bourdieu 1980:230; Bourdieu and Passeron 1990:99)
versa (further testified by the “most affluent” BAC examples)\textsuperscript{67}. This thesis does not seek to refute the association between cultural capital and social reproduction. Nevertheless, the observations do suggest that late-industrializing Singapore society is different from Bourdieu’s observation of first-mover French society. ECI respondents were caught within the tensions of dual hegemonic impositions. English-primacy respondents were more self-assured and this was reflected in their low AEA scores. But they also saw their advancement prospects as limited by their status as Chinese Singaporeans (i.e. not Western expatriates). Affluent Mandarin-primacy respondents’ self-assurance fluctuated according to whether they were well-received by Chinese clients. The reliance on the insurgent force within the dual hegemony made them more anxious than English-primacy respondents. But when client approbation had been won, their self-assurance was stronger than those whose linguistic primacies were not aligned to the dual hegemony. Dialect-primacy respondents were the illustrations of anxious individuals whose linguistic primacies were aligned with neither of the dual hegemons. But their corporate worth as Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives was also significantly boosted as a result. Their strength lay in their motivation to juggle all hegemonic demands, an outcome of the anxiety over the lack of cultural capital. Incidentally, this group was also identified by the ECI Vice-President as the group with the highest potential to climb the ECI corporate ladder.

From the findings, I found the AEA a reliable measurement of the respondents’ confidence toward the arbitration of cross-cultural economic activity. Although AEA measurements do not directly address intercultural scenarios, their results do correspond to respondent anxiety towards cross-cultural arbitration at work. In some cases, AEA score patterns initially appeared to be in conflict with the moderating effect of demographical factors. But it was eventually found that they in fact highlighted the need to further explore the reason(s) for the anomalies.

\textsuperscript{67}(Bourdieu 1976:14)
The above findings reveal a number of theoretical implications on Marcotted Development. Firstly, the study of Marcotted Development’s moderating impact should focus on pre-industrial (past) socioeconomic circumstances. If childhood family circumstances have a significant moderating impact on cross-cultural economic activity, national identity may be similarly moderated by structural-historical circumstances. Secondly, current national financial statuses may dramatically differ from the (pre-industrial) ones that signal Marcotted Development’s impact. Likewise, this was observed from the persistent sense of disadvantage felt by CC respondents, as shaped by the marginal financial circumstances in their childhood. This sentiment persists regardless of current financial circumstances. Thirdly, the accumulation of the requisite cultural capital amongst late-industrializing nations is complicated by dual hegemonic presence. This was manifested amongst the respondents’ different coping strategies toward cross-cultural economic activity. English-primacy respondents felt self-assured in their ability to adapt as the situation demands (SC). But they were not necessarily optimistic about their career advancement, being after all “Non-Westerners”. Previously affluent Mandarin-primacy respondents prioritized one affiliation (Eastern) over the other (Western) (BAC). Dialect-primacy respondents did not feel an alignment in terms of linguistic primacy and hence juggled affiliations (IC). Those who were socioeconomically disadvantaged in their childhood felt persistently disadvantaged in their adulthood, regardless of linguistic primacy. This sense of disadvantage affects their confidence in managing cross-cultural work scenarios, resulting in the circumvention of culture at work (CC). The next chapters examine these theoretical implications in the detailed analyses of Orientalist discourse constructions by some groups of respondents.
The Problem of Defining Chineseness and Respondent Approaches to Cross-Cultural Economic Activity – Chapter 4

General Predispositions and Exceptions

The predispositions to cross-cultural economic activity reported in this chapter are generalized observations. They function as analytical constructs to the theoretical development of Marcotte d Development. Hence, they are not perfect representations of all individuals sharing similar linguistic and socioeconomic profiles within the Chinese Singaporean population. In addition, childhood linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds are examined without the inclusion of all demographical factors in the analysis. The analysis represents general predispositions, holding other moderating factors constant. With regard to childhood socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds, the analysis also could not capture more complex variations of these factors. For instance, what if the father communicated to the child in English, while the mother had done so in Mandarin? What if, up to the age of 12 (the cut-off age for childhood demographical data), the child had enjoyed “most affluent” socioeconomic circumstances, but at the age of 13, downward mobility into “least affluent” circumstances was experienced? Would downward mobility change predispositions, or would enduring predispositions have formed by the time? Other factors, gender, for instance, although shown to produce much less significant effects, may still create distinctive differences. Religious membership was also not taken into account. Also, one may be officially “Chinese”, but is in fact of mixed racial heritage. This scenario is highly probable in Singapore, where in most instances, only the father’s race is recorded. Would Chineseness still matter?

The more intricate factors were not taken into consideration to prevent confounding the analysis with too many variables. To present data meaningfully, a balance is needed between capturing reality as it is, and capturing reality that provides the scope for comparison. This thesis selected socioeconomic and linguistic factors based on their explanatory relevance to the late-industrializing landscape. This landscape is, after all, inflected by concerns with accelerated economic development and dual hegemony. While the exercise did not identify all the moderating factors or address the
uniqueness of all individual cases, it is hoped that the research question is addressed to the best that the constraints of a Ph.D. thesis could allow.

This analysis should not be used as an instrument for recruitment selection, performance appraisal and/or promotion criteria. As other factors interact with linguistic and socioeconomic factors, the two factors cannot be taken as the sole determinants of value-orientation and behavior. The analysis also does not suggest that some approaches are better for the arbitration of cross-cultural economic activity. For instance, high levels of AEA amongst CC respondents do not imply that they were necessarily less adept as corporate representatives. The anxiety that one experienced towards ambiguity could have driven the individual to work harder at building alternative skills sets. Moreover, the circumvention of the race-ethnic dimension at work may have co-existed with other valued traits:

“Professionalism is something that we can contribute as an individual… I think the best thing is for us to work hard to maintain our good reputation in the industry... Because the industry is very small and everybody knows everybody, so it’s important you keep a good name.” –Shane-

A reading of Appendix 4, especially the section on “Exceptions”, is vital for the understanding that exceptions in overcoming demographical constraints do occur.

The model can be used to ensure a good mix of the different profiles within a team of corporate representatives. Different approaches to cross-cultural economic activity may appeal to different customer bases. Perceptions of “valued traits” of a corporate representative vary, within country and between countries, especially in a fragmented region like the Asia Pacific.

From this analysis, exceptions to the general predispositions also emerged. From the sample, “least affluent” respondents overwhelmingly felt their race-ethnic identity was disfavored, or not favored before the 1980s Mandarinization. But better childhood socioeconomic circumstances did not guarantee the insulation from feeling disadvantaged by one’s race-ethnic
identity. Lance, having experienced downward socioeconomic mobility in early childhood, shared this perception, despite coming from “reasonably affluent” circumstances. Conversely, disadvantaged childhood socioeconomic circumstances need not imply one would necessarily have felt disadvantaged by one’s race-ethnic identity. Damian came from “least affluent” childhood socioeconomic background and had High AEA scores. But he had not sought the circumvention of the race-ethnic dimension in his approach to cross-cultural economic activity.

The impact of early childhood socialization is recognized as vital in this thesis. However, later-life experiences can modify predispositions formed during childhood. For instance, receiving tertiary education in a Western country can alter predispositions. This is especially true during a time in Singapore when sending a child overseas to receive tertiary education was still considered rare. Ron’s (SC respondent, Dialect-primacy, “reasonably affluent”) account provides the example:

“I think for me at least, it co-existed very comfortably. I can go to a very Chinese setting and I feel very comfortable, and I can go to a Western environment and feel comfortable.” –Ron-

The anxiety experienced towards ambiguity in cross-cultural encounters may be much higher towards one cultural entity, but not another. For George and Jeremy, taking an antagonistic approach towards their Western peers was in line with their expectations. Therefore, despite their high AEA scores, the BAC approach of antagonistic postures towards “the West” was still appealing. The experience of high levels of anxiety was likely related to the “Chinese link”. As mentioned earlier, the greater one’s success in gaining the support(s) sought, the lower the level of Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety. The desire to build the Chinese culture connection, when faced with ambiguous outcomes of success, could have produced the higher levels of AEA for George and Jeremy. Appendix 4 lists the demographical profiles and these exceptions in detail.
Conclusion

The conception of Chineseness is characterized by multiple modes of identifications, each asserting its credibility over contesting ones. China, for instance, would argue that Chineseness is most authentic when hailing from the center where this civilization was conceived. Its ascendancy as the rising global superpower further reinforced this assertion. But China’s economic star had not always been ascendant. During the historical lapse that commenced from the Opium War, the assertion lacked the authoritativeness it currently possesses. In the past, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore vied over how Chineseness is defined. The legitimacy to define Chineseness, it seems, rests upon economic might. The Four Little Dragons (excluding South Korea) commanded the attention based on their surge in accelerated development. That is, until the slumbering dragon China awakens to re-establish its past economic glory. The expression of Chineseness communicates “whose side are you on?” through its repudiations and affiliations.

Likewise, the commercial interest in the Chinese market revived individual interest in using Chinese affiliations to lubricate commercial relationships. Like the interactions between nation-states, the interactions of human networks are also shaped by structural circumstances. Individuals see the transformations of the economic landscape and adjust one’s position accordingly. But the responses are contingently shaped by different childhood circumstances.

The various childhood circumstances were organized into discrete categories for their comparison with the approaches to cross-cultural economic activity. Correlations between respondent approach to cross-cultural economic activity and its moderation by demographical factors were then outlined. The implications of these correlations were summarized and discussed. Individuals from “least affluent” childhood socioeconomic circumstances appeared most vulnerable to internalizing negative ethnic management imageries, especially “Chinese chauvinism” ones. The
socioeconomically better-off Mandarin-primacy individuals appeared the most ready to subscribe to negative imageries on “Western decadence”.

Childhood experiences of ethnic management shape predispositions towards the future embracement of ambiguity at work. The better one’s childhood circumstances align with state initiatives, the more one is predisposed to self-assurance in adulthood. This self-assurance lowers the level of anxiety the respondent experiences in face of work ambiguity. Conversely, less aligned individuals feel less self-assured and hence experience higher anxiety levels in face of work ambiguity. The latter individuals may seek the support of external mediation(s) to increase work efficacy. For instance, one may seek the support of external cultural affinities to boost one’s position at work. Alternatively, the individual may avoid anxiety-inducing work ambiguities. For instance, the cultural dimension is deemed unpredictable and threatening, and thus circumvented. But the choices are not made based on random decisions. Decisions on self-reliance due to self-assurance, anxious external-reliance(s), or self-reliance sans self-assurance, are dependent upon predispositions formed during childhood. The type of predispositions formed, this chapter asserts, are influenced by structurally influenced subjective experiences of state initiatives.

I proposed the allocation of differentially-predisposed individuals to a team for the diverse needs of the Asia Pacific market. But the general predispositions described were far from deterministic. Exceptions that go against the general predispositions described were raised. However, much as exceptions exist, there are many more cases confirming the general predispositions. Amongst respondents sharing the same profile, the majority still share similar approaches to cross-cultural economic activity.

How do the patterns described in this chapter relate to Orientalist discourse constructions? The ensuing chapters expand on the discussion.
“The Complex” As Auto Orientalism: culture circumvention as a consequence of policies against “Chinese chauvinism” – Chapter 5

With the presence of dual hegemony, subordinate ranks may, through the patronage of one, curb the dominance of another. The socioeconomically subordinate, under this condition, are thus less reliant on local/regional hegemonic influence. Individuals hailing from subordinate ranks may experience accelerated upward mobility due to Western MNC patronage. There exists an additional consequence due to accelerated upward mobility. The probability that childhood socioeconomic predispositions are mismatched with current economic circumstances is also considerably higher in late-industrializing societies. Within this leitmotif of Marcotted Development, this thesis examines the cost of deploying Auto Orientalist constructions. The “least affluent” childhood socioeconomic background Culture Circumvention (CC) respondents demonstrate this. CC respondents’ approach to cross-cultural economic activity was one characterized by culture circumvention strategies. The concessionary approach of internalized Auto Orientalism was deemed incompatible with higher managerial authority. The yielding postures echoing Auto Orientalist response was termed “the Complex” by the Vice-President of ECI.

“The Complex” is a spin-off from the Vice-President ECI’s impression of diffidence amongst some Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives. The Vice-President had originally used the term to describe uncertainty-averse employees. It was later found that uncertainty minimization behavior may be linked to culture circumventionist approaches to cross-cultural economic activity. Some Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives believed a level playing field necessitates the exclusion of the cultural dimension. Hence, they elected to circumvent the intervention of their personal primordial affiliations. The perception that cultural differences exist and could work against them
produced the uncertainty minimization strategies. Culture circumvention refers to the conscious avoidance of primordial affiliations at work, with the belief that this dimension can hence be excluded. This is done despite one’s strong embracement of primordial ties after work.

Expanding from the notion of “the Complex”, this chapter illustrates the emergence of Auto Orientalist themes in CC discourse constructions. Next, an analysis of how Auto Orientalist replications were buttressed by childhood socioeconomic background and linguistic primacy ensues. This is then followed by extending the relevance of the findings to the late-industrializing context, given the considerations of Marcotted Development. The theoretical implications of Auto Orientalist discourse constructions are then raised and conclude this chapter.

“The Complex” as Defensive Avoidance

Following the lead on the Vice-President’s description, this thesis found parallels between “the Complex” and the psycho-defensive concept of Defensive Avoidance. Defensive Avoidance arises when competition leads to social comparison. Johnson and Johnson assume that in intergroup interactions, perceived “ability differences” are made salient and become polarized into fixed social characteristics. The party “lacking in ability” ruminates over the inferiority of the social attributes one possesses. This perception of disadvantage produces the avoidance of confrontation with peers that one feels disadvantaged towards. On a similar note, the Vice-President traced the source of “the Complex” to feelings of inferiority amongst some Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives towards the “Westerner”:

“It’s not very nice, but I have very few managers who believe they compare equally to Westerners. They seem to believe that at the end of the day, the Americans and the French know the best. This is precisely

1 (2003:160)
2 (Johnson and Johnson 2003:162)
what I don’t want. When the Western directors use this complex to push their position, the Singaporean director backs off and will view that the Westerners have the right to do so.”

The statement outlined the belief that confrontation avoidance amongst the Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives arose from an inferiority complex when comparing oneself to Western counterparts. If Chineseness was deemed an inferior attribute, then its employment to lubricate relationships with the customer was much less likely. Therefore, Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives were believed to be less likely incited by cultural pride to retaliate in face of confrontational postures by Western expatriates.

As a manifestation of triggered defense mechanisms, avoidance strategies work to minimize the feeling that one’s self-esteem is under siege. For instance, by circumventing one’s race-ethnic identity at work, the exposure of the inadequacy of one’s cultural attributes is minimized. Ironically, avoidance creates further feelings of inadequacy, resulting in the reliance on “the higher authorities” for decision-making responsibilities. This defensiveness may manifest in the increased reliance on “Western superiors” to resolve issues that deviate from the work routine. Here, the Vice-President’s euphemized rendition of this dependency was framed as “trust”:

“Because they trust you and they need to be guided. They will not find their own way, but will wait for you to instruct them how to do it.”

Coping with this internal conflict often results in vacillation between decisions, in Johnson and Johnson’s words, “damned if they do and damned if they don’t.” But decisions ultimately need to be made. Attempts to deflect

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3 (Hentschel et al. 2004:6)
4 (Janis 1985:54; Lebow 2006:83)
5 (Lebow 2006:83)
6 (1987:118)
the anxiety manifests in choosing the most conservative options, which appeared more passive than proactive⁷:

“They are not risk-takers by nature, and the flip-side is that they don’t like uncertainty, and like to remain in the comfort zone. They like to remain here in this island where they are well-protected and organized, where Lee Kuan Yew will be here to take care of them. In school, it’s really learning by heart how to do it; very little of self-discovery. If they are instructed to do it, they will.” – Vice-President, ECI-

If one is uncertainty averse due to one’s inferiority complex, then, the lack of promotion opportunities can only be self-inflicted. The line of logic follows that individuals equipped with the smarter, less mechanistic approaches are better suited for leadership positions. Conversely, those whose insecurity leads them to work like automatons are better suited for support positions.

**Dominant Orientalist Notions**

When social comparison dynamics are applied across cultures, polarized group caricatures emerge. Descriptions of ruminating, dependent and anxious individuals are also familiar themes in the Dominant Orientalist paradigm. Similar comparisons of “rumination” are made by Honeycutt and McCann between Japanese and Americans⁸. Likewise, Merkin’s caricatures of uncertainty averse individuals also put forth the familiar arguments⁹. At face value, it would appear that the difference between Western expatriate bosses and Chinese Singaporean employees was the outcome of the East-West divide. However, this thesis also found the replication of “the Complex” in Muratbekova-Touron’s study of French employees¹⁰:

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⁷ (Janis and Mann 1977:50)
⁸ See (Honeycutt and McCann 2008) in this thesis, Chapter 2, Appendix 2.2, Figure 2.2b.
⁹ See (Merkin 2006) in this thesis, Chapter 2, Appendix 2.2, Figure 2.2b. Merkin’s comparisons were made between Chileans, Japanese and Hong Kongers (references were also made on their similarity with Singaporeans and Thais), against Israelis, Swedish and Americans.
¹⁰ Muratbekova-Touron’s data was compiled from Lemma, a French multinational corporation. The set comprises French employees’ self-perceptions in comparison to their Anglo-Saxon peers. Lemma employees were based in France, as opposed to the expatriated personnel in the ECI. For details, see this thesis, Chapter 2, Appendix 2.3, Figure 2.3.
“The Complex” As Auto Orientalism: culture circumvention as a consequence of policies against “Chinese chauvinism” – Chapter 5

“Somebody who comes from North America gets a cultural shock in France. For example, if you do not understand or do not agree with a decision taken by your boss, you question it. In France, you follow…”

“One enters Lemma as one used to enter a convent: one comes and never leaves Lemma. It was like this in industries also: it was the business from father to son with family attachments … We really worked by consensus before . . . we did not move without consensus”

When the Dominant Orientalist paradigm is employed, a manager’s assessment of subordinates is distorted by the paradigm’s biases. The oversight that subordinates between cultures may share greater similarities than would superiors and subordinates within a culture tend to occur.

**Auto Orientalist Echoes**

The “Defensive Avoidance thesis”, here, is more an Orientalist reading of superior-subordinate relations. However, this does not imply that “the Complex” was a figment of the Vice-President’s imagination. Within field observations, some manifestations of “the Complex” were recorded. But these manifestations are found to be rooted in complex structural factors. A Defensive Avoidance reading is limited in accounting for why only *some* respondents manifested avoidance characteristics, even though all were exposed to Orientalist notions. The manifestations more resembled Auto Orientalist echoes. The definitive difference will be explored as “the Complex” is further elaborated upon in this chapter. But first, culture circumventionist behavior must be proven to be Auto Orientalist replications.

Here, on top of the manifestations outlined in the discussion of Defensive Avoidance, I integrate the indicators of Auto Orientalism outlined

11 (“General Manager, Division 2”, cited in 2008:344)
12 (“Country Manager, Division 1”, cited in 2008:344)
by Alatas\textsuperscript{13} to assist in the deciphering of culture circumventionist behavior. Respondent culture circumventionist behavior qualifies as Auto Orientalist replications for a number of reasons. Firstly, a concurrence with Orientalist notions on the “superiority, uniqueness and desirability”\textsuperscript{14} of “Westerners” was expressed. This belief was put forth by CC respondents as a predominant characteristic of their clientele:

“The culture is such that they look up to the Westerners as the ‘greater being’. It’s very innate in their culture. It’s very hard for them to imagine a Western multinational corporation with a big boss that is Asian.” –Leon-

“Some people prefer the Westerners rather than the locals or Asians. Unless you see the difference in product knowledge, experience and they respect him (local Singaporean employee), then of course he has (the advantage). The Americans, or whites, they are always in an advantage I would say.” –Norman-

“Honestly, for Asians, we always regard Westerners as more superior. In ECI, we sometimes use that to our advantage. For example, if we are going to say no to a customer, I would prefer the answer comes from an \textit{ang mo} (Hokkien: Caucasian) than coming from me. The customer, let’s say a Chinese or Japanese, they tend to be more receptive if the ‘no’ answer is coming from a Westerner. I admit that we do use that kind of strategy on the customer. If it’s an easy yes, then it will come from me. But sometimes during negotiations, they may request for something out of the ordinary. We will have to seek the ‘yes’ answer from the French guy. We want the customer to recognize that this is a very difficult request and acceding to this request will be the final line and please do not ask for anymore. In a

\textsuperscript{13} (2000)
\textsuperscript{14} (Alatas, 2000:114)
negotiation, usually we play ‘good guy, bad guy’ and it’s all rehearsed. We analyze the situation and predict what the customer is going to request for, and someone’s going to say ‘no’ and someone’s going to say ‘yes’.” – Shane-

As a result, action is often entrusted to the “higher authorities”. With longer exposure and seniority, the likelihood of being more proactive in overcoming corporate barriers should be higher amongst aged 40s CRs. IC CRs confirmed this assumption, while CC CRs negated it. Respondents were asked how organizational inequality should be resolved. Shown in Table 5.1, when age considerations are factored, differences in group value-orientation and behavior become apparent. The CC group was divided into aged 30s and 40s cohorts. The responses of aged 40s CC respondents were compared with aged 40s IC respondents. Unlike younger peers reliant on management initiatives, IC CRs stood out in the belief that barriers should be independently overcome (60%). In contrast, aged 40s CC CRs had chosen to leave these decisions to the expatriate top management (with one exception).

Table 5.1: Respondent Initiative in Overcoming Structural Barriers: It is said that local staff do not enjoy equal “weight” with the expatriates even when promoted to director positions: (a) The individual has to overcome these barriers; (b) the management should do something / we have unequal head-starts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PASSIVE</th>
<th>innately unequal / management should do something</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>overcome barriers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHINESE SC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IC</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC 30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC 40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In scenarios that posed some levels of ambiguity, the most conservative approach characterized CC respondents:

"The Complex" As Auto Orientalism: culture circumvention as a consequence of policies against "Chinese chauvinism” – Chapter 5
"I don’t sell things that I am not sure of, I don’t go with programs that
I am not sure of, I don’t do things that I am not sure of, I still want to
check, double-check and make sure. Unlike some of the other people
here, ‘Just sell, never mind (the rest)’. At the back-end, can the
structure support? Can the people deliver? Most importantly, can we
meet the margins? Do we have profit to secure? If you lose money,
who is going to be responsible? Maybe because of that, I am being
penalized because they feel I am not very creative. I am more careful
because I tend to look at the overall profitability at the same time. I am
not a creative salesperson. I have to make sure that we can deliver and
not just sell.” –Leon-

“I tend to follow more of the corporate guidelines rather than my
personal beliefs. For example, if the corporate guideline is about
customer satisfaction, or profitability, or commercial success, I am
sure I will put that ahead of my personal values. I believe in doing
honest business. Taking short-cuts and cutting corners may give you a
short term benefit. If we here to stay, we have to be honest and not do
anything to stain the industry.” -Shane-
Shane, in particular, analogized on the importance of having a good sleep at
night to smoothly-run ethical business:

“If you are the top manager, you will feel confident enough for this
facility in Singapore to be run entirely by the locals and you will not
lose sleep at night … Yes, profit maximization is important, but within
limits. If you have to do it in 25 years, then you do it in 25 years.
(Interviewer: If you think about it in purely commercial sense?)
Whether they sleep well at night I don’t know.”

Secondly, respondents were unwittingly entrapped within the limits
they had enacted. This section illustrates how.

Yet, the Auto Orientalist does not truly believe that an Oriental can
alter one’s innate tendencies to become a full-fledged member of the
Occident. Hence, Auto Orientalist self-conceptions echo dominant notions of “the Oriental”, that these traits are deemed uniquely prevalent amongst “Non-Westerners”15:

“In school, it’s really learning by heart how to do it; very little of self-discovery.” –Vice-President, ECI-

“Americans are more creative because they are taught this during school days and they are brought up in this kind of society. I guess in Asia, we don’t. During the old days, we all learn by heart, study by heart and we are not as creative as these people.” –Norman-

As a result, CC respondents insist that the circumvention of culture at work should be strictly observed (see p.225 excerpts and Table 5.3).

Summarily, “the Complex” refers to the concurrence with Dominant Orientalist notions, resulting in culture circumventionist behaviors amongst individuals. Its manifestations, according to the Vice-President, included firstly, the concurrence with “Western superiority”, and responding with postures of accommodation. Secondly, there was reliance on “Western superiors” to resolve matters beyond their routine job scopes. Thirdly, the aversion towards uncertainty resulted in ambiguity minimization commercial strategies. The Vice-President gave the impression that “the Complex” was prevalent amongst ECI Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives. However, these responses were only found amongst CC respondents in this inquiry. The perception that one’s race-ethnic identity was not favored, or disfavored, came exclusively from the CC group, and was expressed by all of the respondents from the group. This thesis believes the sentiment is related to the culture circumventionist manifestations amongst this group of respondents. The presence of Non-CC respondents in the sample gave the scope for insights to the root source(s) of culture circumvention.

Up to this point, the existence of Auto Orientalist manifestations amongst ECI CRs has been confirmed. But whether these manifestations can

15 (Alatas, 2000:115-117)
be aptly termed “the (inferiority) Complex” remains questionable. ECI Chinese Singaporean CRs with these manifestations constituted the minority (9 of 30 sampled). Moreover, whether these manifestations are liabilities to organizational effectiveness is ambiguous. I withhold my concurrence that the respect for ethical business and top management decisions are liabilities to the organization.

I found the Auto Orientalist manifestations linked to much more complex factors than just an inferiority complex. Nevertheless, it remains an important point of discussion due to the associations with a perceived lack of leadership ability. The ensuing paragraphs seek to address these issues, which are vital to the understanding of Auto Orientalist discourse replications.

Firstly, Auto Orientalist postures were significant, but not uniformly embraced. Moreover, it is highly doubtful if these postures are inspired by the belief in the “superiority, uniqueness and desirability (of Westerners)”. Respondents were quizzed on the importance of Chinese primordial affiliations in commercial activity. The results are tabulated in Table 5.2:

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**Table 5.2: Respondent Perceptions of Primordial Competitive Advantage: The importance of maintaining a Chinese cultural identity when dealing with customers in China is often emphasized as the defining competitive advantage in comparison to the Western counterparts:**

- (a) I will adapt to whichever cultural identity that helps me with a commercial win; Chinese, Western, or whatever;
- (b) I agree. This is our home-ground; the Westerners lack the same commitment to the region as we do;
- (c) Apart from being Chinese, we also need to maintain a Singaporean identity: best of the East and West;
- (d) I disagree. Customers prefer Westerners. But I still maintain a strong sense of my Chinese cultural identity at home.

**CHINESE * COMPADV Crosstabulation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPADV</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>disengaged</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commercial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>home ground, west lacks commitment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a part, yet apart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disengaged, west preferred</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Count**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHINESE</th>
<th>SC</th>
<th>BAC</th>
<th>IC</th>
<th>CC 30</th>
<th>CC 40</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>8</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IC</td>
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<tr>
<td>CC 40</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Of the 30 CRs surveyed, only 3 believed Chinese primordial interventions do not serve economic functions, but maintained a strong sense of primordial identities at home. All 3 belonged to the CC group. The reason given was that customers in Asia preferred their Western counterparts. The 3 who took this position comprised 33.33 per cent of the 9 CC CRs. Therefore, even amongst CC CRs, the belief that Westerners are deemed superior (by customers) was only embraced by the minority. However, it was not just CC respondents who preferred a primordially disengaged position at work. SC respondents adopted a primordially disengaged approach too. (Table 5.3) But on a closer look, SC respondents were motivated by different reasons. CC respondents saw the intervention of cultural differences at the workplace as real, and should thus be excluded to minimize workplace tensions:

“If not life will be very difficult if you bring everything in and restrict yourself: you don’t like this, you don’t like the person and you don’t like the color. It will be very difficult. At the end of the day you achieve nothing.” – Norman-

“I think it will add unnecessary tension to the people. They should keep the racial issue out of the subject.” – Shane-

Table 5.3: Respondent Take on Primordial Interventions at work: Does your race-ethnic identity come into the picture at work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHINESE</th>
<th>RACE</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>CC 40</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SC corporate representatives, on the other hand, viewed cultural explanations as distortions to ongoing workplace tensions:
“Race and everything else will go out through the window when I am with the customer. For me, when I go through the door, and I am in for the kill to close the deal, all my senses are heightened. It’s how I connect with the customer that matters, and I will do all I can to connect with the customer.” – Carlos-

“It’s not really culture. For example the China office would want to control, and of course the local office here also wants to have a certain management role. And sometimes, there is a clash with the US office and our (European) bosses here. You are sandwiched between two entities within the same company, and it’s an issue between bosses and bosses. Culture is too broad a definition and it doesn’t really come into play at that level.” – Henry-

“You’re working for the company, and the company is paying you to push their agenda correct? I think people are getting caught up in between local directors and overseas directors.” – Peter-

From the above responses, Auto Orientalist manifestations were not present within the SC group. The BAC and IC groups were actively engaged in using primordial ties to lubricate commercial relationships and hence also did not display culture circumvention tendencies. Most importantly, although all in the CC group displayed preferences for cultural circumvention, only a fraction of them did it because they believed they could not measure up against their Western peers. An inferiority complex is not the source of Auto Orientalist behavior. In fact, very few respondents doubted their intrinsic ability to do well on the job. 30 per cent or 3 of the sampled respondents believed Asian customers preferred Western corporate representatives (see Table 5.2). But the statement did not show if the respondents agreed with the perception of “Western superiority”. 

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Table 5.4: Respondent Perception of Their Standing Relative to the Western Expatriates: I see the expatriates in my office as: (a) no different/equal to my other colleagues; (b) my competitors, but we compete on unequal terms, (c) superiors (better).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHINESE STANDING Crosstabulation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
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<tr>
<td>no different/equal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>structural inequality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>innate superiority</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>CHINESE SC</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>IC</td>
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<tr>
<td>CC 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC 40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4 reveals the predominant reason why CC respondents circumvent culture at work. Most either saw Western expatriates as equals or no different from themselves, or as unequal competitors. Again, only 3 of the 30 CRs saw their Western expatriate peers as intrinsically superior. However, the 3 respondents were not the same as the earlier ones who believed that “customers prefer Westerners”. Only 1 of the 3 belonged to the CC group. Based on the results tabulated in Table 5.4, it appears doubtful that culture circumvention amongst CC CRs was inspired by inferiority complex. The “customers prefer Westerners” belief amongst CC respondents was not based on the “superiority of Westerners” assumption. The distribution of choices between option A (no different or equal) and B (competitors on unequal terms) provides further insight. An almost equal number of respondents opted for either option A or option B (13 chose option A; 14 chose option B). But representative numbers from the respective groups differed. IC CRs mostly chose option A (80%). They accounted for the majority of the respondents that selected the option (61.54%). SC CRs are split over whether they possessed equal standing with Western counterparts, or are competitors on unequal terms. 77.78 per cent of CC CRs (7 out of 9) saw Western counterparts as competitors on unequal terms. The CC corporate representatives accounted for the majority of the respondents who selected option B (50%). The other group that matched the CC corporate
representatives in this perception were the BAC. 80 per cent of BAC CRs (4 out of 5) selected option B. Therefore, the assumption of Defensive Avoidance is only partially validated even for CC respondents. CC respondents avoided competition with “Westerners” due to the real or perceived situation of an unlevel playing field, not cultural inferiority. However, it does not preclude the motivation of circumventionist strategies due to Western economic superiority.

Therefore, the Vice-President’s assertions were only partially correct. Firstly, only a small segment of Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives manifested Auto Orientalist postures. Secondly, amongst this group of culture circumventionist corporate representatives, only one of them saw Western culture as superior. Rather, the majority avoided cultural identifications at work in face of unequal competition.

Further examination of the in-depth interviews proceeded with due consideration to the significance of Table 5.4’s Option B (“structural inequality”). Subdued reactions toward confrontations by Western peers were found to be not guided predominantly by awe-stricken reticence. Rather, it lay in the perceptions of Western peers as “competitors on unequal terms”, as opposed to “colleagues on equal standing”. Respondents were asked if ECI promotion opportunities equally applied to “locals” and “expatriates”. As the question incited a profusion of responses, only one respondent from each group is featured here:

“The locals are not fighting for themselves to be recognized because they tend to see the restrictions of their status as locals. But you cannot blame just one side of the game. The expatriates are often seen to talk down on the local directors, even though they are supposed to be equals. When there is a position open, the locals don’t know about it until someone is already promoted. But like everything else, there will be those who will still try to break the system and get into the inner circle. They do well there because they see opportunity and not stop lights … But still, my answer is that it is up to the top management to
do something because the terms are not equal between the local and expatriate employees. You cannot promote a local to become a director, then don’t give him the same benefits, power and pay that the expatriates enjoy, and expect him to behave the same as the expatriates. Money-wise, it already shows who has the right to shout.” –Yoges, Situational Chineseness-

“But I must caution you, the way these guys talk are like ‘smoking at mirrors’ because they put you at another level and they still practice their cronyism. It is still the emotional factor rather than objectively-defined merit: whether this person will play ball with me, whether he is in my camp. Then you got to ask the leader this question, ‘Are you growing the organization with the focus of getting the best people or are you just putting somebody there because he is French?’ This is a very relevant question in this organization. The (local) people will say, ‘You promoted me, but I will never be in the equation anyway.’ The expatriate directors are still more involved in decision-making process and the organization is still centered on them rather than the local directors. It’s just slotting in another GM (General Manager), another MG (reverse of GM; mocking at the desolation of local director titles). You are being promoted and all of a sudden there are additional layers of reporting and then they put another few guys on top of him.” –Joseph, Born-Again Chineseness-

“Unless people are telling me lies: if they are telling me the truth, I will tend to stick to my view. Now what is my view? I was told that the promotion did not come with a substantial change in monetary award. That is already an answer. If you are giving me a promotion, it means that I am taking on an additional responsibility or a more complex responsibility. And in every corporate world in an established country, you will find that the action of promotion will be translated
into a monetary reward. I don’t see the influence that comes along with the promotion. This is just for fun, so to speak.” –Phillip, Integrated Chineseness-

“I don’t want this to be taped down! It’s who you know and not what you do! (Criticizes the management but circumvents his criticism with compensatory remarks:) I guess some of the local employees may not be able to see the difference. We always think that we are better off, that’s how a human being will behave. We may think we know everything, we are the greatest, but on the other side of the management role, they might see it differently. So a lot of things I feel they are not upfront and honest. I heard some rumors that there are certain things that the locals did not achieve, but the management was never upfront about telling us. I’m not sure if it’s because of all these that you always feel that, ‘Hey, it’s always who you know and not what you do.’ I guess that’s what a lot of locals feel.” –Norman, Culture Circumvention-

The reticence towards “Western directors (who) use this complex to push their position” (Vice-President, ECI), it seems, reflected the refusal to engage in conflict within an unlevel playing field. Therefore, despite encouragements by the Vice-President to “‘Go do it and fight with those French and Americans!’ [:] they don’t do it, or very few would.” (Vice-President, ECI). The Vice-President believed the reticence amongst the CRs was due to inferiority complex. The respondents saw their reticence as a pragmatic response towards structural inequalities within the ECI.

Some respondents also mentioned how the different dispositions of corporate representatives of different ethnonationalities could be the outcome of recruitment processes. In the regional headquarters (Singapore), Western expatriate managers decided upon the recruitment and promotion of ethnic Chinese corporate representatives:
“They do not want to bite the hand that feeds them. They (Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives) were being promoted by them (Western expatriate managers) to become directors. Will they (Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives) want to contradict them (Western expatriate managers) in a meeting? So they (Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives) just say ‘Yes boss, Yes boss’.” – Carlos-

“Those who are promoted (by the Western expatriate directors) to director’s positions from here (ECI regional headquarters, Singapore), they tend to give up … They give up because they feel that there is a power struggle (between their benefactors and them), and they rather move away from that and not challenge the approach and the policies. They think, ‘Ok, since you are a Westerner (my ex-boss), you decide.’” – Kelvin-

In contrast, recruitment in the China subsidiary, including the top managers there, was conducted by Chinese Singaporean managers in the regional headquarters. The Western expatriate top management, as would the Vice-President, had in mind candidates who are, mentioned in Chapter 4, “Chinese minded”. But Chinese Singaporean managers had in mind a different pool of recruits. In Bernard’s words, “a different stock” (i.e. non “Chinese minded”):

“I was on a business trip in Hamburg and at immigration’s, there was a bunch of China corporate guys (distinguished by their accent) who look like they are also on a business trip in their corporate smarts. But they were also talking loudly and behaving rowdily. The moment they were seated, they started rolling up their smart business pant-legs! … Not our China colleagues. They are a different stock. But sometimes, we do see some customers that act in this manner.” – Bernard-

“You cannot assume just because you see how pleasant our Chinese colleagues are. They are the cream of the cream.” – Martin-
The differences between corporate representatives of the two offices could unwittingly be the outcome of recruitment and promotion criteria.

If feelings of cultural inferiority constituted the minority, even amongst CC CRs, what was the reason for culture circumvention? What appears more probable is the repression of deeply rooted primordial pride to ensure prudence in intercultural working relationships. Respondents were asked to locate their cultural identification along the East-West dichotomy. Loyalty to one’s cultural roots was the most highly expressed amongst CC CRs and least expressed amongst SC CRs. 6 out of 9 (66.67%) CC CRs emphasized the importance of loyalty to Asian roots despite Western economic dominance. In contrast, only 1 out of 6 SC CRs (16.67%) believed so. The BAC (40%) and IC (50%) respondents fell in between the two extremes. The results are compiled in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5: Respondent Primordial Identifications: Often, a divide is drawn between the East (Asians) and the West (Westerners), even within a multinational corporation. My take is that: (a) I am more Westernized than most Asians in the region; (b) I am Westernized as much as I am Asian; (c) Though the West is stronger than Asia in many respects, I am undeniably still true to my Asian roots.

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<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>WESTERN</th>
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<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Westernized</td>
<td>Equally Western and Asian</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHINESE</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>BAC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>IC</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CC 30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td>CC 40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>30</td>
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</table>

The belief that “though the West is stronger than Asia in many respects, I am undeniably still true to my Asian roots” was also expressed during the in-depth interview. The high regard for primordial roots in the CC respondents’ private life was shared:

“For example, my kids, my girl, if she’s going to live in America through her whole life, her thinking will be different. It’s better for her
to have her foundation in Asia. She has to know where she’s from, the roots.” –Norman-

“I am very Chinese actually. I behave and think more in Chinese than in English. So I believe that will be my primary mode of thought. As Chinese, we put a lot of emphasis on 忠孝廉耻 (Mandarin: loyalty, filial piety, integrity, humility) and this is our basic guideline.” –Shane-

If culture circumvention was not inspired by self-perceptions of cultural inferiority, how can this predisposition be Auto Orientalist? Here, I would like to highlight the importance of integrating a Bourdieuan reading into the analysis of Orientalist discourse constructions. The replication of the Auto Orientalist habitus operates unconsciously, such that its replication persists in practice even without the subscription to the belief. Without being convinced of the inferiority of Chineseness, CC respondents nevertheless act accordingly in the concurrence with the unequal structural arrangements. The earlier vignettes of the corporate representatives’ groused with inequality in the office gave the insights. While respondents from other groups blame the system, CC respondents engage in self-blame that “there are certain things that the locals did not achieve”. Although the attempt at critical self-appraisal is admirable, it does little to protect one’s self-assurance.

Auto Orientalist postures win patronage, but attenuate justifications for standing on equal terms. Due to this, they breed self-defeatist pessimism. CC respondents experienced higher levels of pessimism with regard to growth opportunities. Respondents were asked to assess their personal promotion prospects within the ECI regional headquarters (Western expatriate dominated) and the China subsidiary (Chinese nationals dominated) in comparison to their Western counterparts in the follow-up questionnaire. CC CRs comprised 70 per cent of the respondents who believed they possessed no
advantage against their Western counterparts in both offices\textsuperscript{16}. However, I agree with the Vice-President’s belief that accommodating Auto Orientalist postures are inadequate for leadership roles. Indeed, the impression that confidence was lacking is an issue. Nevertheless, this thesis wonders if the blame should be entirely that of the subordinates.

Two accounts of “the Complex” was outlined. The first is based on the top-down approach. The Vice-President’s comments were compared with psychological theories on Defensive Avoidance for specifications on “the Complex”. These comments replicate Dominant Orientalist notions. The second is based on a bottom-up approach. Respondent feedback was analyzed to reveal explanations to the Vice-President’s observations. These accounts echoed Auto Orientalist constructions. When both accounts were compared, the communication gaps leading to misconceptions between the parties were revealed. The misconceptions will persist if both parties continue to replicate Orientalist notions, rather than speak transparently of the issue. Misconceptions or otherwise, culture circumventionist behaviors nevertheless need to be addressed. Defensive Avoidance explanations insufficiently accounts for CC respondents' culture circumvention at work. It also does not account for BAC respondents’ cultural engagement strategies (see Table 5.2), despite sharing common perceptions with CC respondents that Western counterparts are “competitors on unequal terms” (see Table 5.4). Based on the leads from this section, an examination of the structural factors driving “the Complex” is required.

\textbf{“The Complex”: a Phenomenon of Marcotted Development}

The key drivers of Auto Orientalist manifestations amongst CC respondents were rooted in two factors. Firstly, the perception that Non-English primacies (predominantly Mandarin) were disfavored or not favored locally/regionally. Secondly, marginal economic circumstances in childhood shaped predispositions of yielding to structural inequalities, rather than

\textsuperscript{16} See Chapter 4, Table 4.4.
confronting them. In a bid to overcome the real/perceived local/regional disadvantage, CC respondents had advanced up the corporate ladder through the “patronage” of their Western expatriate managers. This was realized through enacting Auto Orientalist postures at work. Through culture circumvention, CC respondents showed their concurrence with the interests of the Western expatriate management by repudiating primordial affiliations. This may have accelerated their financial betterment from less ideal economic circumstances. However, being accustomed to concessionary Auto Orientalist postures inhibited CC respondents from relating on an equal footing relationship with their former “patrons”. This became a glass ceiling to further growth potential when CC CRs were unable to demonstrate managerial assertiveness. Besides, within a dual hegemonic framework, the repudiation of primordial affiliations may not be appreciated. A corporate representative cannot solely work on satisfying the Western management. He/she also needs to do this in the interest of the Chinese clientele. Despite having won the token acceptance of the Western management with Auto Orientalist postures, CC CRs failed to provide for the localized dimension to ECI. A good ECI Chinese Singaporean manager needs to pander to these dual hegemonic demands, while demonstrating the ability to lead. Given the Auto Orientalist predispositions of the CC CRs, they are insufficiently equipped to fulfill the expectations of a higher managerial corporate representative’s role. The ensuing paragraphs analyze how the interplay of childhood socioeconomic background and linguistic primacy limits the fulfillment of these requirements.

Traditional study of language and linguistics assumes that linguistic competence is a process of “object-constructing operations”.17 Mastery in a language opens the access to the instruments of power that a language represents. For instance, an individual that acquires English proficiency gains access to the economic opportunities offered by this competence. As a result, Chinese school graduates find limited avenues of employment opportunities

17 (Bourdieu 1977:645)
equivalent to those enjoyed by their English-educated peers\(^\text{18}\). Families change their Chinese school preference due to pragmatic considerations for their children’s future employment opportunities. The poignancy of this decision is particularly strong for families with strong attachments to primordial identifications. Respondent, Bernard, shared an account about his Chinese language teacher:

“I know an old primary school Chinese language teacher who is stuck as a primary school teacher because he has never passed his English test. He was very disillusioned about it and he started conversing with his children in English, telling them that they should stop speaking Chinese because it is hopeless. Can you imagine a Chinese language teacher saying that?”

The assumption follows this line of logic:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>English Proficient (SC, BAC, IC, CC)</th>
<th>good economic opportunities in Western multinational corporations?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Non-English Proficient = Auto Orientalist constructions?</td>
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In this case study, it was found that attaining English proficiency alone does not guarantee the possession of cultural capital. Mastery in the English language is indeed a pre-requisite for employment in a Western MNC like the ECI. But the assumption oversimplifies the requisites. All the 30 corporate representatives are proficient in English. The ease in mediating cross-cultural economic engagements however, varied.

The ensuing argument from the Primordialist perspective will be that linguistic primacy shapes individual consciousness. Hence, English-primacy compatriots tend to share common worldviews lacking amongst English proficient, but Non-English primacy speakers. The gap between linguistic primacy and language proficiency is expressed by Wagner:

\(^{18}\) (Hill 1995:71; Tremewan 1994:77)
“The local Chinese in early post-independence Singapore were understood to be of two basic types: those who spoke English and those who did not. This distinction, however, *did not simply go away with a smoothing out of language differences* … This culture clash anticipates the confrontation of Chinese-educated and English-educated Singaporeans in the present day plot.”19

Wagner’s description of the “Chinese educated” refers to being Non-English primacy, rather than literally being educated in Chinese schools. Based on this assumption, only SC CRs are free of the scourge of “Chinese chauvinism” associations:

| English Language Primacy (SC) = |
| greater ease in cross-cultural mediation in Western multinational corporation? |
| Non-English Language Primacy (BAC, IC, CC) = Auto Orientalist constructions? |

This assumption is problematic when applied to the case study. Only 9 out of the 30 CRs expressed feelings of being disfavored or not favored prior to the 1980s Mandarinization. The majority of the respondents (16, including one from the SC group) who were born to non-English speaking families did not share similar sentiments.

An alternative hypothesis differentiates Mandarin-primacy from Dialect-primacy profiles. The arguments may be based on either the differences in the Mandarin linguistic structure, or the unique historical experience of being Mandarin-primacy. Ching, for instance, links the Guangzhou/Hong Kong agitation against the central government to the perception that Cantonese is more intricately structured than Mandarin (Ching 2010). Extending from this line of logic, it may be argued that distinctive features in Mandarin and Chinese Dialects exist, which distinguished CC (Mandarin-primacy) and IC (Dialect-primacy) predispositions. Therefore,

19 (2005:176,301)
Dialect-primacy IC CRs did not manifest avoidant traits, despite being born during the peak of “Chinese chauvinism” condemnation:

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<th>Non-Mandarin Primacy (SC, IC) =</th>
<th>greater ease in cross-cultural mediation in Western multinational corporation?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mandarin-Primacy (BAC, CC) = Auto Orientalist constructions?</td>
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This explanation, however, cannot account for why BAC CRs, despite being predominantly Mandarin-primacy, did not manifest Auto Orientalist postures. BAC CRs shared similar linguistic primacies as CC CRs. But their approach towards cross-cultural economic activity differed. In terms of Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety scores, BAC CRs were on the average intermediary to SC and IC, as opposed to CC respondents. Perhaps the predominantly born 1970s BAC respondents did not experience trauma in the same measure as did their born 1960s CC peers’. But the presence of born 1970s CC CRs invalidates this deduction.

My analysis departs from the above propositions. When the devaluation of one’s linguistic primacy occurs, some individuals are more vulnerable to its impact relative to others. Groups in possession of more socioeconomic resources are better-equipped to cushion marginal feelings of being the target of prohibition. The correlation between linguistic primacies and the amenability to embracing ambiguity is the reflection of one’s socioeconomic standing. Linguistic primacies are reflections of economic capital. In Bourdieu’s words, “the social value of linguistic products is only placed on them in their relationship to the market”²⁰. Meaning, cultural capital is the “misrecognized” form of the social hierarchy²¹.

The findings concur with Bourdieu’s observations. Respondent linguistic primacy and childhood socioeconomic circumstances appeared to influence their approach to cross-cultural economic activity. All aged 40s

²⁰ (1977:654)
²¹ (Bourdieu 1991:62)
Mandarin-primacy respondents belonged to the CC group. But more importantly, all CC CRs come from least affluent childhood socioeconomic backgrounds. The BAC group, as with the CC group, also comprised a majority of Mandarin-primacy respondents (4 out of 5). However, in terms of childhood socioeconomic background, the BAC CRs were predominantly the most affluent. This comes to show that there exists a strong correlation between “least affluent” childhood socioeconomic background and perceptions of primordial disadvantage.

Table 5.6: Childhood Socioeconomic Profile of the Corporate Representatives (76.67% response rates)

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<tr>
<th>CHINESE * ECONOMIC Crosstabulation</th>
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<tr>
<td>CHINESE</td>
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<td>BAC</td>
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<td>IC</td>
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<td>CC 30</td>
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<td>CC 40</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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The individual possesses the autonomy to interpret ethnic management directives, but choice is predicated on the socioeconomic conditions that one was born into:

“The power of words is nothing other than the delegated (sic.) power of the spokesperson, and his speech … the use of language, the manner as much as the substance of discourse, depends on the social position of the speaker, which governs the access he can have to the language of the institution, that is, to the official, orthodox and legitimate speech.”

Common to CC respondents, despite the intergenerational divide, is firstly, least affluent childhood socioeconomic circumstances, and secondly, non-English (mostly Mandarin) primacies. The defining difference between the

22 (Bourdieu 1976:107-109)
Mandarin-primacy majority BAC and CC corporate representatives can be reduced to the socioeconomic distinction.

An individual’s socioeconomic status has been discovered to correspond with linguistic ability and performance in school\textsuperscript{23}. As children aged 5-13 are already conscious of their socioeconomic status\textsuperscript{24}, this knowledge, for better or worse, shapes individual life-chances. The resources that parents bequeath during one’s childhood are not limited to economic ones. Bourdieu’s discussion on symbolic power provides the link between childhood experiences and its role in social reproduction\textsuperscript{25}. Symbolic power refers to social reproduction through the predispositions shaped by cultural capital (e.g. language proficiency) and economic capital\textsuperscript{26}. Bourdieu posits that unconscious predispositions are guided by the habitus. Social reproduction is located in time-specific past events and are manifested in misrecognized forms:

“All human action, unlike its reconstruction in science, takes place irreversibly in time… unbeknownst in principle to the actors (for if they knew, they would alter their strategy to take account of this knowledge)(sic.)”\textsuperscript{27}

Extending to this discussion, “the Complex” is shaped during childhood by one’s socioeconomic and linguistic habitus. This persists as enduring predispositions into one’s adulthood. While feelings of marginality are shaped through social experience, its effects extend into future economic engagements.

Childhood linguistic ability at school is not just a matter of technical proficiency. It involves expressing oneself in lingua compatible with the language teacher’s expectations. Linguistic expression is beyond innate talent. It is influenced by early childhood linguistic primacy, derived from the language most often used at home. Respondents were asked a total of eight

\textsuperscript{23} (Ginsbourg 2006; Heckman 2006; Mello 2009)
\textsuperscript{24} (Mello 2009; Taylor 2006)
\textsuperscript{25} (Garnham and Williams 1980:212)
\textsuperscript{26} (Bourdieu 1991:62)
\textsuperscript{27} (critique of Bourdieu in Theory of Practice:1-30, Garnham and Williams 1980:212)
questions on the language used in a variety of informal settings. It appears that the language used to communicate with one’s parents is most significant in shaping predispositions. As the language used to communicate with one’s parents represents one’s linguistic primacy, it shapes one’s early schooling experience. For instance, English-primacy respondents will require less adjustments in an anglicized school curriculum. The chances of eliciting the disapproval of teachers and peers by speaking in class in a non-curriculum language is lower. Derisions targeted at undesirable linguistic expressions, like “讲华语”, “Cina” or “Hokkien peng”28 is unlikely to be applied to this set. As a result, the need to suppress non-English usage to avoid derisions is low in comparison to Non-English primacy children. Drury reinforces the rational of this argument with her observation that young bilingual learners are often “marked down” and viewed as “recalcitrant” by teachers due to the language barrier.29 Insensitivity to the challenges of Non-English primacy children toward English language acquisition creates an unconducive learning environment. Kor, Straits Times journalist, recounts this experience:

“Born into a Chinese-speaking family, I encountered culture shock of sorts when I went to a mission school where most of my classmates spoke English. I managed only C and D grades for English in the first two years. An argument with some classmates in Secondary Two drove me to work hard at my English. I was sworn at in English by one classmate, but all I could muster were some profanities in Hokkien, which elicited sniggers from him.”30

The most blatant manifestations of disapproval produce intense negative emotions. But their effects are less enduring than those subtly delivered in academic grading. An English-primacy child is advantaged in handling an

28 Instances of nicknames given to a reference group of non-English speaking Chinese Singaporeans delivered with derogatory tone: (1) “讲华语” (Mandarin: literally “Mandarin-speaking”); (2) “Cina” (Malay: literally “Chinese”); (3) “Hokkien peng” (Hokkien: referring to uncouth hokkien speaking soldiers).
29 (Drury 2007:35)
30 (2009)
argument in English in comparison to another from a Non-English primacy background:

“Three months into his first year at Nanyang Junior College in 1979, Dr Neo Peng Fu recalls, his batch was suddenly told that their Chinese General Paper class had been scrapped. Taking its place were AO-level and O-level English, two papers they had to pass to graduate - no easy feat, given that they had all been schooled in Chinese until then. 'Some of my classmates had to stay back for an extra year. Others didn't do well enough to go on to university,' the 48-year-old recounts.” (Neo Peng Fu, cited in Toh 2010)

Good academic performance is therefore contingent upon the cultural capital transmitted during early childhood socialization. Feelings of persistent disadvantage due to Non-English primacy may reflect issues beyond the mere attainment of language proficiency. CC respondents experienced the double marginality of Non-English primacy unfavorable childhood socioeconomic circumstances. This increased the likelihood of situations that trigger the persistent feelings of cultural disadvantage. CC respondents represent the fraction of Chinese Singaporeans negatively affected in their predispositions by ethnic management policies:

“For many of the earlier scholars, who had lived through the turbulent times, writing about Chinese schools was, perhaps, too painful, because they had very vivid memories. So, many shunned the topic altogether.” (Toh 2010)

The BAC respondents, on the other hand, were likely insulated from feelings of marginalization due to favorable childhood socioeconomic circumstances.

That being said, the possession of economic capital does not necessarily accompany the possession of cultural capital. In comparison to their SC peers, BAC respondents possess equal, if not more advantaged childhood socioeconomic circumstances. Nevertheless, BAC respondents found it more challenging to establish rapport with the Western expatriate managers in ECI. The outspoken characters of both groups elicited different
responses from the management. This was attested by the Vice-President’s assessment of the 4 typologies, self-reports by the respondents, and peer review\(^{31}\). The Vice-President assessed the SC corporate representative typology as best liked in comparison to the other typologies. Peer review amongst the corporate representatives also confirmed the SC status of favor. Names were solicited from the respondents on the likely personalities within the office incurring the most favor with the management. The names that emerged coincided with the members of the SC group. Candid self-reports of one’s performance within the organization also seemed to reinforce the above observations. This is further confirmed during the participant observations. SC respondents possessed camaraderie with the western expatriate management that is a cut above their local peers. The definitive difference between SC and BAC groups appears traced to linguistic primacies. BAC respondents were Non-English primacy; SC respondents were English-primacy. The fact that ECI is a French MNC whose primacy language is not English facilitated this exploration on cultural capital. Although SC CRs and the French expatriates did not share the same linguistic primacy (SC CRs were English-primacy; French expatriates were French-primacy), they nevertheless shared the common experience of being mostly raised in affluent socioeconomic circumstances. Most importantly, both groups possessed linguistic primacies that represent the dominant languages of their home societies. Being raised in favorable circumstances shaped the common predispositions between French expatriates and SC respondents. SC respondents were more predisposed to the “intimacy and fellow-feeling, congeniality, based on a common culture”\(^{32}\). In contrast, the other groups were “united solely by links of professional interest”.

Nevertheless, the SC group’s relationship with the Western expatriate management could be likened to the Vice-President’s description of Chinese Singaporean CRs’ relationship with Chinese clients: “cousins” (i.e. not

\(^{31}\) Details on the style of economic engagement of the BAC corporate representatives will be discussed in the next chapter.

\(^{32}\) (Bourdieu 1971:171)
siblings). This incomplete affiliation is reflected in the SC perception of limited career advancement prospects within the ECI. Presented earlier in Table 5.4, more SC CRs were confident of attaining leading positions within the China subsidiary than within the Western-dominated regional headquarters in Singapore (4:2).

The dispositional compatibility between the Western management and SC respondents brings to mind the dispositional incompatibility of the CC respondents. Although relatively less affluent in terms of childhood socioeconomic status, the CC corporate representatives were far from culturally impoverished. Rather, the cultural capital they possessed was mismatched with the Vice-President’s. Shane, CC CR, shared his exasperation on being frequently rebutted by the Vice-President on the right commercial strategy to adopt. Despite coming in earnestness with recommendations backed by concrete facts and figures, he felt he was not taken seriously. Shane was bewildered by the playful retorts of the Vice-President, but continued to approach him with the same persuasion style. He seemed unaware that the dogged observation of the rules of propriety discounted his persuasion more than it legitimized. The conscientiousness in delivering “as planned”, which Shane prided himself in, did not elicit the same response from the Vice-President. It was perceived to lack “the value attached to naturalness and lightness, conceived as the antithesis of pedantry, didactism, or effort.” Shane’s efforts were instead interpreted as characteristic of the dogged emulations of the “autodidact”. The lack of cultural capital to frame effective persuasion in “elite language” became a handicap that bewildered as it discouraged. Convinced that he would not be taken seriously, Shane internalized the anticipation of rejection. This anticipation resonated with his schooling experience dominated by English-medium instruction. The expectation that one is likely to be “wrong” forms an “unconscious

33 (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990:130)
34 (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990:210)
anticipation of the sanctions of the school.”35 For individuals restricted by socioeconomic predispositions and tuned to culture circumvention at work, resolving one’s anxiety can be a challenge. One becomes predisposed to misrecognize the source of anxiety, leaving the issue all the more unresolved.

**Late-Industrialization and Auto Orientalist Constructions**

The examination of “the Complex” reveals the socioeconomic circumstances shaping Auto Orientalist constructions. Auto Orientalist predispositions are the outcome of the elevation from less favorable socioeconomic circumstances due to the participation in the capitalist economy. The CC conciliatory posture towards the Western expatriate management represents the predicament of Auto Orientalist constructions predominant amongst late-industrializing nations. The proliferation of Auto Orientalist discourse is not the outcome of perceived cultural poverty. Neither is it the outcome of belonging to a civilization that is out of sync with modern imperatives. “The Complex” is the manifestation of the late-industrializing disjuncture. Within a commercial organization, the dominant group is represented by the top management. Within the global political economy, this group is represented by first-mover economies. In this case study, CC respondents and late-industrializing Singapore share the same reference point in their exposure to dominance. Within the ECI, CC CRs were exposed to the dominance of the Western-dominated management. Within the global economy, Singapore requires the investments from Western MNCs. Through Auto Orientalist lenses, primordial attachments are viewed as incompatible with “Western-style” imperatives. For CC CRs, the protection of deep primordial attachments from its attenuation meant restricting primordial identifications to the private realm. Amongst Singapore state elites, it was the attribution of economic success to “Confucian dynamism”36.

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35 (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990-205)
36 (Franke et al. 1991; Yeo 1997)
That being said, Singapore’s financial circumstances do not appear to be very in sync with the CC “least affluent” socioeconomic circumstances. Singapore is considered a strong performer in the Asian economy and seems an unlikely equivalent of “least affluent” associations. But similarly, “least affluent” CC associations denote *childhood* socioeconomic circumstances. It does not relate to how well these corporate representatives were doing financially in adulthood. Present socioeconomic circumstances are therefore less insightful than past ones in predicting the likelihood of Auto Orientalist constructions. While Singapore used to be subordinated to other Southeast Asian influences, it experienced a tremendous improvement in its regional standing with capitalist industrialization. Likewise, the CC childhood socioeconomic background was less than ideal, but economic circumstances have tremendously improved due to their current employment with a Western multinational corporation.

Through this analysis, I also found it necessary to challenge Garnham and Williams’ interpretation of Bourdieu’s work on social reproduction. They wrote:

> “Crudely upward mobility will give an optimistic view of possible outcomes and downward mobility a pessimistic view each of which will determine a different set of practical orientations towards various fields of social struggle.”

Bourdieu’s work focuses much less on social mobility than on social reproduction. That is, optimism/pessimism is not an outcome of an improvement/deterioration from past socioeconomic circumstances. Rather, it is determined by whether one is able to *maintain* a dominant, advantaged position within the socioeconomic stratum. In *The Economics of Linguistic Exchange*, for instance, Bourdieu outlines the assurance of dominant class reproduction, *not the further upward mobility* of the dominant class. Optimism characterized the social reproduction of the dominant social group.

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37 (Garnham and Williams 1980:213)
38 (1977:658)
represented by the SC “self-assurance”. Hope characterized the social reproduction of the aspiring, represented by the BAC “insurgency”. Insecurity characterized the reproduction of sandwiched-middle, represented by the IC “anxious striving”. Pessimism characterized the social reproduction of the “negatively sanctioned”, represented by the CC “silence”.

From the findings in this chapter, I also identified gaps in applying Bourdieu’s analytical framework on late-industrializing societies. Bourdieu’s social reproduction analysis does not account for the presence of “least affluent” predispositions amongst the economically affluent corporate representatives. His analysis focuses on explaining the continuity of existing class stratifications. It addresses how dominance is reproduced through intergenerational renewals of class memberships. Individuals are equipped with the habitus that allows one to function effectively in one’s inherited socioeconomic position. The findings suggest that the incidence of economically successful individuals manifesting “least affluent” predispositions is higher in late-industrializing regions. Unlike the first-movers in capitalist-industrialization, social reproduction is less predictable in late-industrializing economies. In first-mover economies, the chances of dramatic changes in economic circumstances are more constrained. In growing late-industrializing economies, dramatic changes in economic circumstances within a lifetime are considerably higher. The probability of inheriting childhood predispositions that mismatch with current economic circumstances is thus also considerably higher in late-industrializing societies. The CC predicament is distinctive to the late-industrializing landscape. Bourdieu addresses the persistence of predispositions in social reproduction, but does not address the persistence of predispositions despite upward socioeconomic mobility. Likewise, the framework also does not address the persistence of semi-peripheral global standing of economically successful late-industrializing nations, despite rapid economic progress. A further extension of Bourdieu’s analytical framework is needed for its applicability to late-industrializing economies.
The examination of the disjuncture of past socioeconomic circumstances accounts for Auto Orientalist constructions in late-industrializing nations like Singapore. But Auto Orientalist discourse is not the only product of Singapore ethnic management. The next chapter examines the construction of Occidentalist discourse, and the socioeconomic circumstances linked to these constructions.

Conclusion

A key similarity between first-mover and late-industrializing nations was observed. The least affluent usually bear the brunt of negative social impacts. Rumination, dependency and anxiety are most intensely manifested within the subordinate social stratum.

However, there exist more differences between these societies. These differences formed my analysis of Auto Orientalist constructions. In first-mover societies, “tell-tale signs” of “ribaldry” or “silence” characterizes the working class. In late-industrializing societies, these “tell-tale signs” may even characterize the financially affluent. With accelerated economic development, the incidence of the least affluent breaking social reproduction conventions is considerable higher. The incidence of the financially affluent manifesting “tell-tale signs” due to “least affluent” childhood conditions is thus higher in late-industrializing societies. Conceptual frameworks that derived from first-mover societies are thus limited in explaining this phenomenon of Marcotted Development. Therefore, the existence of conciliatory Auto Orientalist postures amongst financially affluent and predominantly male, highly educated and experienced corporate representatives may seem somewhat contradictory. Manifestations of such predispositions are hence salient and yet insufficiently accounted for by existing first-mover centered concepts. The employment of Primordialist (“it’s unique to them”) or psycho-defensive (Defensive Avoidance) explanations

39 (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990:116)
40 (Bourdieu 1977:658)
thus characterized the Vice-President’s attempt to make sense of “the Complex”.

Auto Orientalist constructions enabled the rapid attainment of affluence in late-industrializing societies, but also constrains future growth potential. Within the first-mover mono-hegemonic framework, once acquiring the dominant habitus, an individual is given the upper hand. What enabled them will maintain their dominance. The Dominant Orientalist paradigm represents one of the instruments for the execution of this symbolic power. Within the late-industrializing dual hegemonic framework, those who have acquired the habitus of the dominant become “cousins”; not “siblings”. The instance was found in SC CRs’ relationship with the Western expatriates in ECI. Their standing within the ECI remained semi-peripheral: close to the core, but still not within the core legions. The situation was worse for the CC CRs, who enacted Auto Orientalist postures in the attempt of aligning with the dominant within the dual hegemony. What enabled them also constrained them. Auto Orientalist constructions require the repudiation of primordial affiliations (which closes one door within the dual hegemony) and conciliatory postures (which justifies the lack of leadership assertiveness). Moreover, these predispositions, once adopted, are enduring.

Given these considerations, some may reject Auto Orientalist postures to embrace a confrontational Occidentalist one. The next chapter examines the consequences.
“The Complex” As Auto Orientalism: culture circumvention as a consequence of policies against “Chinese chauvinism” – Chapter 5
“Western decadence” as Occidentalism: resistance through primordial unification

Where global economic influence was exclusively concentrated in the West, Singapore offered the best simulation of a Western commercial environment in the region. But China announced its impending economic liberalization in 1978. This ignited global attention towards the potential ascendency of the next economic giant from a locale inhabited by late-industrializing nation-states.

In just three decades, China achieved remarkable economic growth. Characteristic of the late-industrialization economic model, statist developmentalism is the cornerstone of the rapid attainment of economic affluence. In addition, China possessed an advantage lacking amongst other late-industrializing nations in Asia. As an ex-regional hegemon, the returns from accelerated development are infinitely larger. China managed to topple Japan from its placement as the number two world economy, hot after the heels of the top-ranking United States. Late-industrializing nation-states were conventionally supportive of Western dominance. China, it was anticipated, will not abide by these conventions. As expected, China’s rise would create tensions with the United States.

Late-industrializing Asia thus became the hotbed for dual hegemonic contestations. The state elites in Singapore then needed to anticipate the next strategy to adopt in response to China. Singapore could join Western efforts to contain China. In this, it maintains the Auto Orientalist belief that a cross-over in the core-periphery divide is out of the question. Alternatively, primordial affiliations with China can be drummed up. In this, the nation positions itself as an indispensable mediator within the dual hegemonic framework. The surge of Occidentalist rhetoric in state public discourse made it clear that

1 (The Straits Times 2010a)
Singapore branding campaigns chose the latter. Within this context, a trickle-down effect of Occidentalist rhetoric on the Singapore population is expected. This chapter explores the consequences of Occidentalist state rhetoric through the ECI findings.

The Occidentalist rhetoric emerged as a strategy of affiliation with China through the call for primordial unification to resist Western hegemonic impositions. A confrontationist stance characterizes the intention to contest hegemonic control, or to support this contestation. This chapter commences with an outline of the origins, premises and motivations for the adoption of Occidentalist state rhetoric in Singapore. The first section details how primordial sentiments appear to prevail over common sense, but serves specific demands within a dual hegemonic framework. In the second section, this analysis ascertains the manifestations of Occidentalist echoes amongst Chinese Singaporeans at work. Not all Chinese Singaporeans find Occidentalist rhetoric appealing. The next section identifies the childhood socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds that predispose the embrace of Occidentalism. It was found that individuals predominantly expressing Occidentalist sentiments tend to hail from affluent childhood socioeconomic circumstances and Mandarin linguistic primacies. The association with these profiles is linked to past ethnic management initiatives, which were in turn influenced by the global tensions during the time. Finally, past regional political economic relations will be examined to explore the tensions that gave rise to Occidentalist discourse constructions. In this, the advancement of the concept of Marcotted Development is sought.

**Arrogance or Necessity?: Occidentalism and Singapore State Rhetoric**

The first traces of Occidentalist rhetoric emerged in 1970s Singapore, at about the time of the Speak Mandarin Campaigns. “Eastern” moralities justified state control of the body (men were not to sport “hippy” long hair)

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2 (Shetty 2009)
lifestyle (hippies were associated with Western moral degeneracy)\(^3\) and sexuality (homosexuality also had negative Western associations)\(^4\). The use of “Western decadence” imagery appeared to negate ongoing efforts to cement Singapore’s regional standing as “gateway to the East”. As Broinowski observes, state rhetoric in Singapore seemed to be negotiating an “about face”, reneging on their previous commitment to westernization\(^5\). The seemingly suicidal attempt however, did minimal damage in terms of commercial interest. Insofar as regional security and foreign investments are concerned, the relationship between the Singapore and the West remained “business as usual”\(^6\). At the same time, relationship with China has since thickened with this change of imperatives. By coupling Auto Orientalist with Occidentalist rhetoric, state elites sought to position Singapore as the mediator of the East-West dichotomy; the “middle path between the superpower (the United States) (sic.) and the rising power (China) (sic.).”\(^7\). They aspired to market Singapore as friendly with the West, but unafraid of standing up against bullying Westerners\(^8\). This position sought to pacify the hegemon(s) within the late-industrializing dual hegemonic framework. The former “friends of the West” position is favored by the globally hegemonic United States\(^9\). The past prohibition against “Chinese chauvinism” is an instance of this position. Lee Kuan Yew’s insistence on speaking in English during his China visit in 1976 was a symbolic gesture to the Western audience that Singapore was not en route to becoming the “Third China”\(^10\). This position is prevalent within the late-industrializing region. The latter position of “standing up against bullying Westerners” is desired by the regionally hegemonic China\(^11\). The ensuing paragraphs investigate the reasons and how the latter was enacted.

\(^3\)(Lee 1974; Lee 1978)
\(^4\)(Clammer 1998:229; Heng 2001:82-88)
\(^5\)(2001)
\(^6\)(Leifer 2000:108; Yao 2007:89)
\(^7\)(Su, 2010)
\(^8\)(Ooi 2008)
\(^9\)(Graham 2008)
\(^10\)(Leifer 2000:113)
\(^11\)(Zhang 1996)
Why were objections against “Western decadence” needed? Occidentalist proliferation in Singapore is guided by the necessity of acknowledging China’s ascendency. The strain from the previous dissemination of “Chinese chauvinism” had to be mended. The rising Westernization of Singaporeans then became a problem to be tackled. Singaporeans are no longer described as “individualistic achievers”, as they were in the early 1970s.

In Singapore’s expression of Chinese primordialism, Western leaders are unlikely to criticize Singapore for the betrayal against the Western civilization. After all, this move does not contradict Orientalist expectations on how Singapore would choose affiliations within the East-West dichotomy. Moreover, Singapore’s Chinese revivalism benefitted Western economic imperatives. Singapore’s Chineseness offers to the West a “mediated East”. To placate their electorates, Western states may adopt antagonistic political stances against China. This needs to be done without sacrificing the economic opportunities China has to offer. An option is to engage in economic exchange through Singapore’s arbitration. US investments, for instance, may enter Singapore as FDI, to be subsequently channeled to China in the form of Singaporean investments. Likewise, China had to adopt an antagonistic political stance against Western encroachment. By accepting Western investments via Singapore FDI, China engages in face-saving formalities while receiving Western economic overtures. Being a “Westernized Chinese cousin”, Singapore appeals to China’s need for a “mediated West”. In being “neither East nor West”, Singapore’s performance of Chineseness seeks to pander to the taste-buds of both audiences.

In contrast, the expression of English-primacy by an ethnic Chinese majority nation-state is viewed as an aberration. China’s initial criticism of the Chinese Singaporean’s lack of primordial fidelity is noteworthy. In response to Lee’s visit in 1976 (mentioned earlier), Zhou Enlai, then China’s premier,

12 (Chua 2009:242)
13 (Lee Kuan Yew, cited in Chua 1995:27)
likened him to “a banana – yellow of skin, white underneath”\textsuperscript{14}. This did not bode well for future economic partnerships with an upcoming superpower likely to take retaliatory offensives. A vignette from \textit{China Can Say No} provides the insight:

> “Four years back, they defied the ‘One China’ policy due to short-term gains, and sold 6 ‘Mirage’ fighter jets to Taiwan. The French perhaps did not expect China to curtly request the closure of their embassy in Guangzhou, and in the subsequent years, the French experienced much difficulty in regaining Chinese trust and foothold in the Chinese market.”\textsuperscript{15}

The need to acknowledge China as the ascendant regional hegemon is crucial. For Singapore as a “Chinese nation”, the acknowledgement of Chinese ascendancy equals the obligation to be explicit about its affiliations. “Chinese nation” Singapore will be ill-perceived by China for embracing the West, even without renouncing primordial affinities with China. The following excerpt from \textit{China Can Say No} provides the insight:

> “He (Wang, author’s friend) has an English friend called Mark, with whom he claims to have shared many years of friendship. On one occasion when I was at Wang’s place for a book, Mark called. Wang, in a state of euphoria, pimply face glistening, screamed, “Oh Mark, Oh Mark…”, then proceeding to chat passionately with an obviously decorated (characteristically Oxford) English… On the way home, I cannot help but shudder: what has happened to our fellowman?”\textsuperscript{16}

Su, in his insight on \textit{Being Chinese and Singaporean}, confirms that “(i)n engaging China, we have to avoid appearing cold and calculating, not how they expect friends and kinsfolk to behave.”\textsuperscript{17}

The necessity to placate Chinese insecurity made the re-alignment of ethnic management imperatives in Singapore the prudent choice. Singapore,
then, worked to become the model-of-exception to “Western-style” development. If the courting of China required the lambasting of the West, then Singapore did just that:

“The little red dot (epithet of Singapore) and Red China are both countries the West loves to hate… The real sin: Singapore and China are examples of countries which are taking a different route to development, and look to be succeeding.”

The ready offer of cooperation contrasted with the isolationist policies and guardedness that characterized international diplomacy towards China.

Singapore public statements had to echo Chinese state propaganda on the blatant disaffection towards the West. But the intentions of the two states differed. Although the tones were similarly Occidentalist, the contents communicated were of different natures. China is primarily belligerent towards Western political and military presence. Here were the types of Occidentalist rhetoric disseminated in Singapore:

“The West sets the style … They make the boys wear high-heels with platforms … the permissive societies of the West…”

“I have not got the Western value system inside; it’s an Eastern value system. I (Lee Kuan Yew) have not come here to have long hair, wear dirty jeans, walk about bare-footed, wear T-shirts with strange slogans printed on them. That’s got nothing to do with what you have done in outer space.”

“If we are not cina (Malay term for ethnic Chinese), what are we? Ang Moh (Hokkien: Chinese slang for Caucasians)”

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18 (Chua 2008)
19 (Huan 1994:435)
20 (Lee 1974)
21 (Lee 1978)
22 (Goh 2001)
“Deng Xiaoping said, "When you open the windows, the flies will fly in"… When Michael Fay was sentenced to caning for vandalism, Bill Clinton as President wrote to our President on his behalf. But we couldn't remit his sentence of caning… And people in Asia noted our stand." 

The Western bogeyman was enacted to resemble Chinese Occidentalist discourse, but framed within boundaries acceptable to Western powers. Unlike the posture against Western political encroachment, Singapore’s objections aimed at social groups that similarly raised controversies in Western societies. “Decadent” criminals and hippies are caricatures that do not negate Western business interest.

Having mediated China-Taiwan antagonisms, Singapore proceeded to ease the “mutual suspicion” that characterizes Sino-Western relationships. Political critiques note Singapore state elites assuming “the role of ‘explaining’ China to the West”. However, with China’s upswing in nationalistic fervor due to its ascendancy, Singapore’s role as the mediator is expected to be tough. Later in 2010, Singapore was chided for attempting to alleviate China’s vituperative toward US interventions in the region.

Allusions were made by China that Singapore should know its place by China.

Thus far, only the obligatory factors to the employment of Occidentalist rhetoric has been raised. There also exist other push-pull factors that increased the attractiveness of a Occidentalist posture. Singapore’s Occidentalist rhetoric is also a curious mixture of primordial attraction and pragmatism, as Dahles puts it, with a “mix of calculation and sentiment”.

The desire to re-ignite primordial roots after a decade of repression is compelling. The lure of a Chinese regional pact cemented by common heritage and state philosophy has strong emotional appeal. Song, in his call

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23 (Lee 2004a)  
24 (Leifer 2000:108-122)  
25 (Ba 2006:168)  
26 (The Straits Times 2010b)  
27 (2007:186)  
28 (Pan 2008; Yao 2009; Zheng 2008)
for unity against American encroachment, alludes to “an integrated Chinese culture and economy to Greater China”. 29 “Greater China” comprises “Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Southeast Asia”. Visiting Chinese intellectuals in Singapore likewise communicate in Mandarin the invitation to mutual collaboration based on Chinese solidarity. In a forum on the US Sub-Prime Crisis, Hu speaks of common destiny between China and Southeast Asia. 30 He calls for stronger unity in the region (against America?). Lü uses the example of the Szechuan Earthquake and the New Orleans Hurricane disasters to contrast disaster rescue efforts. 31 The enactment of distinctiveness between Chinese collectivist empathy and Western individualistic egocentrism frames the East-West divide. Singapore state discourse reciprocated the “Greater China’s” offers of primordially-motivated patronage in kind:

“The Chinese Singaporean should always know that he too is a son of the Yellow Emperor and an inheritor of an ancient civilization which is becoming ascendant again.”32

Pragmatic economic returns were also too tempting to refuse:

“If we are proficient in English and Chinese, if we understand China as well as we understand the West, we will be in a strong position to benefit from China’s growth.”33

With China’s rising economic star, like every other nation seeking a share of its riches, Singapore’s economic motivations are also undeniable.

Western mismanagement of “second world” aspirations also increased the Occidentalist appeal. Despite decades of developmental aspirations within an Anglicized order, Singapore remains semi-peripheral within the Western dominated global political economy. Additionally, caricatures of the late-industrializing world as hotbed for human rights infringements by the Western media incited Singapore’s retort. The growing irritation with Western
(especially American) insecurity in safeguarding its regional interests was mounting. As Lampton describes, “If the only songs Washington sings in Asia is about the war on terror and human rights problems, its music may well having declining appeal.” Introspection on what these interventions meant for late-industrializing economies triggered regional chain-reactions to reverse previous Auto Orientalist postures. This further legitimized talk on China taking a more significant role in global leadership. Chinese ascendency spells the negotiation of a global landscape where superpowers increasingly dispute each other’s agendas. It also renders the need for unthreatening mediators indispensable.

The smallness of Singapore served it well. Its state leaders plied the East-West dichotomy, echoing both Auto Orientalist and Occidentalist positions simultaneously. For a small country like Singapore, Auto Orientalist responses are expected and Occidentalist retorts are less threatening. A small country’s support is welcomed. But if it runs against one camp’s political grain, its lack of might means no credible threat. It may draw admiration for being a contrarian or a stern reprimand at its worst. The role that Singapore seeks to play may be difficult. But the costs in the event of failure are low when compared to the returns in the event of success.

However, as with Auto Orientalist discourses, Occidentalist discourses are not independent of Dominant Orientalist paradigms. Although Occidentalist discourses express the rejection of Dominant Orientalist notions, resistance against dominant impositions are still contingent on the recognition of the East-West dichotomy. Auto Orientalist discourses express the recognition of Western hegemony from the Eastern vantage point, and concedes to Western hegemonic impositions. Occidentalist discourses also express the recognition of Western hegemony from the Eastern vantage point, but seeks the support of “fellow Easterners” in resisting Western hegemonic impositions. Therefore, Occidentalist discourse constructions do not offer

34 (Leifer 2000:105)
35 (2005:322)
36 (Hu 2008; Subramanian 2008)
alternative visions to the hegemonic worldview imposed by the Dominant Orientalist paradigm. Nevertheless, perhaps an Occidentalist slant is the better amongst limited choices if one seeks a chance at hegemonic influence within the late-industrializing political economy. But this does not imply that success, however limited, equally applies to all who deploy it. In the light of this statement, this thesis seeks insights from ECI respondents enacting Occidentalist constructions.

**Economic Manifestations of Ethnic Management**

Within ECI, a variety of identifications with state brand rhetoric is observed. When conflicts of interest occur, a significant number appeared more amenable toward the invocation of Occidentalist discourse. This section examines the conditions creating greater predispositions to Occidentalist constructions.

In Chapter 4, respondent approaches to cross-cultural economic activity were outlined. Two of the four approaches mentioned are raised for discussion here. Born-again Chineseness (BAC) respondents illustrate the employment of Occidentalist interpretations of cross-cultural economic relationships. BAC CRs employed Chinese primordialism to subvert Western expatriate dominance. This group of respondents predominantly possessed Mandarin-primacy and affluent childhood socioeconomic background profiles. They were distinctive from SC CRs’ (primordially neutral) English-primacy profile, though they shared similar childhood socioeconomic circumstances. BAC CRs also differed from CC CR’s (primordially avoidant) “least affluent” profile, though sharing with them predominantly Mandarin-primacy identifications. Integrated Chineseness (IC) respondents, as with BAC CRs, believed that cross-cultural differences play a mediating role at work. However, they appeared less compelled than BAC CRs to “take sides” when using primordial affiliations. They preferred the juggling of multiple affiliations when conflicts of interest occur. IC CRs were also differentiated
from BAC respondents in terms of childhood socioeconomic and linguistic profiles, being predominantly “reasonably affluent” and Dialect-primacy.

Overall, BAC CRs were most vocal about their desire for greater influence within the management ranks in the in-depth interviews. Being predominantly Mandarin-primacy, the group adapted to Anglicization imperatives without feeling state disfavor towards their race-ethnic identities. In contrast, similarly Mandarin-primacy dominant, but “least affluent” CC respondents expressed opposite sentiments. BAC CRs, being mostly born to “most affluent” families, were cushioned from perceptions of marginalization. However, the reproduction of dominance by childhood socioeconomic circumstances is not just indicated by material wealth. It is also legitimized by the relevant cultural resources that distinguish the dominant-elect from others of equivalent material standing. The English-primacy SC respondents solely possessed the dominant cultural capital during the Anglicization initiative. In childhood, BAC self-assurance, forged by affluent circumstances, had not the space for expressions of dominance within an Anglicized school curriculum. In adulthood, material affluence without the relevant cultural credentials created individuals predisposed to resist the imposition of dominance. In face of the dominance of Western expatriates, BAC respondents saw themselves as dominant contenders fighting for different primordial interests. This competitive intent, phrased in primordial terms, emerged as Occidentalist replications. Though familiarity with the Chinese link may have been weakened, the group perceived a common cultural affinity through Mandarin-primacy. The semblance of reviving lost links created an enthusiasm to catch up with the lost time. Upward mobility within ECI was justified by BAC respondents through one’s position as regionally home-grown representatives. The perception of primordial proximity with one’s customers led to the expectation of being treated on equal terms as their Western peers. Frustration emerged when Western expatriates were favored for management roles despite promises of greater local representation, or when tokenistic
promotions occurred. Here, Lee Kuan Yew expresses similar frustrations through his muse, Straits Chinese elite, Lim Boon Keng:

“He realized during his stay in UK that whatever his accomplishments, the British would always treat him as a British subject of Chinese origin, not as their equal. He resolved to connect with his cultural roots.”

BAC CRs’ resolution of their frustrations could be found in Lim’s. If one could stand on equal terms with the Westerners in the office, then one should stand on superior terms through thick rapport with the Chinese clients. BAC respondents went on the offensive against Western peers using justifications of primordial affiliations with the Chinese market.

For respondents who considered themselves well-versed in Chinese culture, their personal comparative advantage was deemed higher than some Mainland Chinese:

“I dealt with the Chinese market; they are fragmented. North China (Beijing, Shanghai) don’t really care about South China (Fujian, Guangzhou), and West China (Lhasa) is another totally different story. Guangzhou doesn’t care if you are from Shanghai or Beijing (there is little sense of affinity as Chinese from China). In fact, they dislike Shanghai and Beijing. Beijing is a totally different breed. It is very heavily regulated. Shanghai is more open and Guangzhou is the very Cantonese type. Even with local familiarity, you may be a Beijing or Shanghai guy, you can’t deal with Guangzhou; I can guarantee you. In fact, I am quite surprised myself. Maybe I belong to the older batch where we did 三国演义, 文言文, 白华文 (Mandarin: Romance of the Three Kingdoms: vernacular stories on the Warring States period infused with strong Confucian undertones; Wenyan: literary Chinese; Baihua: vernacular Chinese). Even they don’t do that.” –Joseph-

However, BAC competition was not aimed against Mainland Chinese peers. Rather, it targeted their Western peers:

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37 (2004b)
“The mentality that they have when I went into China about 10 over years ago is still there: the foreigner (Westerner) disadvantage is that you are 老外 (Mandarin: foreigner; commonly used to denote “Westerner”). You (Westerner) only know how to drink beer, and you don’t like our food but we don’t like your sausages either (i.e. haughty, ethnocentric). Most importantly, they don’t trust them. The feeling is you (Westerner) came here to make money and after 2-3 years, you go. Whatever they (Westerners) promised to deliver, they (Chinese) are always very skeptical even if they (Westerners) are based in China because the Western world is bound by contracts and penalizations. But Eastern culture, in China, they (Chinese) want to have that feel of trust that ‘you won’t mess me up’.” –Joseph-

“Because they (Mainland Chinese) believe that the ang mo (Hokkien: red hair, meaning Caucasians) are out to trick them, which we do see is the case.”
-William-

BAC respondents echoed Dahles’ belief that Chinese Singaporeans enjoy an advantage over Westerners:

“… after all, being descendents of Chinese migrants, they not only look Chinese, but can be expected to speak Mandarin or at least one of the many Chinese dialects, maintain connections with their ancestral village and be familiar with or at least sensitive to Chinese ways of doing business”38

Strong defense of China reiterated those taken in public discourse, reinforcing this commitment to the region:

“I was with several companies in the industry. Some of these big (Western) companies in the industry are not the most ethical in the world. Yes, there are stringent employee conduct and ethics codes, but if they stick to that, they will never close the deals in Indonesia and

38 (Dahles 2007:175)
China… In every culture, there are certain ways of doing business. But when they are investing in another country, they will voice out very strongly about ethics… and I find it ridiculous because they are using their own yardstick to say, ‘This is the right way to do things.’… ultimately, they have to see for themselves what is happening within their own yards, if not they would not have won all these orders [Alvin named examples of specific orders].”

-Alvin-

“I don’t think the American CEOs are any better than the Chinamen over here.” -Joseph-

These primordial alignments coalesced as a general strategy to economic engagement. In Chapter 5, Table 5.2 compiled the CRs’ perceptions of their positions within the East-West dichotomy. (see Chapter 5, Table 5.2) BAC respondents saw themselves as regionally committed. This trait was deemed by them to be lacking amongst Western corporate representatives. When asked for their definitive advantage in comparison to Western peers, all BAC respondents declared: “This is our home-ground; the Westerners lack the same commitment to the region as we do”.

Unlike local peers preferring accommodating postures, BAC respondents adopted confrontational postures toward their Western peers. Having enjoyed more affluent childhood economic circumstances, the group is less concerned over toeing-in-line with the establishment. BAC respondents often constructed representations opposed to the one that reflected the established ECI hierarchy. For instance, BAC respondents may speak without restraint on how Western expatriates “mess up”. Their own ability to close deals with the Chinese accompanied as qualifiers of their opinions:

“Just recently, I went through so much trouble to get a deal closed and I was calling the China office to reassure them that I have already told the expatriates not to mess up. I told them (expatriates), ‘You mess
this one up, you will never make it in China; 100% guarantee.” – Joseph-

The primordial affinity with the Chinese market - substantiated or otherwise - was fully utilized to contest the dominant within the ECI. This seemingly uneconomic strategy was adopted simply because - in real or perceived terms - they could afford to.

The demonstration of cultural fidelity is ingrained in the BAC predisposition and verbalized with conviction whenever cross-cultural scenarios re-enact the Anglicization-Mandarinization rift. Climbing the corporate ladder will prove a challenge if strong rapport with Chinese clients is not attained. Playing the Chinese card by turning one’s back on Western corporate peers to demonstrate cultural fidelity is a risky venture. It discounts the reputation of Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives as the intercultural mediator of the East-West dichotomy. To negate the dominance of their Western peers, BAC respondents conceded with playing second fiddle to Mainland Chinese peers. BAC CRs appeared prescient to this constraint:

“Let’s say if I take an American colleague who knows how to speak Mandarin, then I should have the relative advantage... Generally, the Chinese customers do relate better to me. But if I have a local Chinese colleague with me, the local Chinese will have the edge over me.” - Alvin-

BAC CRs run the risk of becoming the “second-fiddle” to both the Chinese and Western corporate representatives. The mediator role may become distorted from being “the best of the East and West” to “neither sufficiently Eastern not Western”. Instead of bringing “Chinese” and “Western” entities onto a common platform of negotiation, one entity becomes sidelined. The usefulness of Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives, in this case, may become double-discounted. Chinese clients may be flattered by BAC corporate representatives’ unconditional support, but remain none-the-closer to ECI as a “Western” entity. The Western management may be bewildered by these “double-dealing” employees, wondering if they made a mistake
hiring Chinese Singaporean middlepersons. The ECI Vice-President was asked during the in-depth interview which profile would possess the best rapport with the Chinese market. He earlier expressed the preference for those who are vocal about disagreements and eager to establish customer rapport based on primordial affinities. But, he remained doubtful that the BAC group had the potential for fulfilling the above requirements. With grimaces of exasperation, his selection of the BAC corporate representatives as the “best-fit” seemed “forced”. The Vice-President also struggled to identify likely BAC candidates, contrasting with the ease in identifying possible candidates of the other profiles.

The use of cultural instruments to subvert the existing hierarchical order needs to be acquired legitimately. BAC respondents, predisposed by childhood circumstances, perceived themselves to be sharing a common cultural capital as Chinese primordialists. But being Chinese Singaporeans, they are deemed by the Vice-President as insufficiently equipped to use Chinese primordialism as a bargaining chip. Bourdieu’s analogy sums up the situation:

“… anybody can shout in the public square, ‘I decree a general mobilization,’ and as it cannot be an act because the requisite authority is lacking, such an utterance is no more than words; it reduces itself to futile clamor, childishness, or lunacy.”

Authority accompanies a promotion only insofar as the organization recognizes the expression of this power as legitimate.

The BAC situation reflects Singapore’s dissemination of Occidentalist rhetoric. Occidentalist political rhetoric was disseminated to demonstrate regional assertiveness and primordial affiliations. But these assertions appear inappropriate for the small city-state. China voices similar Occidentalist slants. But for China, this position does not seem ill-fitting. Singapore may lack the relevant authority in expressing Occidentalist rhetoric. Therefore, instead of demonstrating assertiveness, it appears to be echoing Chinese

39 (Bourdieu 1991:74)
Occidentalism rather than reinforcing its regional leadership ability. Singapore’s echoes of Occidentalist rhetoric elicit greater admiration for China’s ability to draw supporters away from Western hegemony. Likewise, by privileging one set of affiliations over another within the dual hegemonic framework, BAC respondents demonstrated their commitment to the region, but did not communicate leadership abilities. The expression of Born-again Chineseness risks being mistaken as “troublemaking”. They may be misconceived as the regular “turgidity of grand emotions through banter, rudeness and ribaldry” of rowdy underlings\textsuperscript{40}. Summarily, power relationships are more complex within dual hegemonic frameworks. The BAC assertion of Occidentalist constructions can be likened to Singapore’s. Occidentalist constructions by the small state will be less perceived as an assertion of independence.

The Integrated Chineseness (IC) group appeared aware of the constraints of the dual hegemonic framework. They believed regional mediators should use primordial affinities, but did not wish to be stirred into its controversies. The childhood socioeconomic backgrounds of IC respondents reveal insights to their experience with ethnic management. Dialect-primacy IC respondents experienced neither the privilege of the English-primacy, nor the stigma of the Mandarin-primacy during their early childhood. Their childhood socioeconomic backgrounds were also neither significantly more nor less affluent than their peers. The indistinctiveness of their childhood socioeconomic profiles likely inspired compensatory measures of committing to a diverse portfolio of affiliations. When Anglicization was the sole imperative, the group adapted to the English proficiency requirement. When Mandarin proficiency also became required, the Dialect-primacy group adapted to yet another. Jack of all trades, master of congeniality, their approach appeared the outcome of embracing all initiatives. This behavior characterizes Chua’s description of Singapore as “the ‘mix’ that counts, even

\textsuperscript{40} (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990:116)
if none of the components is uniquely Singaporean.” IC respondents believed themselves sufficiently westernized to sympathize with the bewilderment of their Western peers towards the Chinese clients’ elusiveness. Yet, they also saw of themselves as sufficiently Chinese to empathize with the Chinese guardedness towards Westerners. Most importantly, they were sufficiently moderate to not fall into either extremities. This instance sums up the approach to economic engagement of IC respondents:

“A team from Europe, two Europeans and one China Chinese went to the customer site in China. They (the team) were (onsite) troubleshooting, and suddenly, the Chinese (technical representative from the clientele) decided to lay the progress of the troubleshooting. He told the team, ‘You can go back to the hotel and rest. There’s a power failure, and when we solve that power failure, we will invite you back.’ Even the China Chinese (representative from ECI) tried to negotiate, but they were asked to go back. Then the team called me. I called my contact in China and I told him very specifically, ‘We have a problem to deal with, and ECI will deal with it. We cannot agree to such a delay. Our agreement is that we are there for one week, and we have to work. If your people are not prepared to work to solve this problem, I will pull out the whole team immediately.’ Then immediately, the problem was solved … I understood later that there were a lot of problems between the Chinese (China) and the Europeans. To solve the (technical) problem was not an issue. As a Singaporean Chinese, I could do it (not something to be pushed by the European or Chinese corporate representatives).” –Kelvin

As they found themselves caught between cultural cross-fires, they marveled at their ability to be a part, yet apart. In sum, the IC CRs adopted a balanced approach to reconciling cultural differences at work. An overwhelming 80 per cent of IC respondents believed this to be their advantage as Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives (see Chapter 5, Table 5.2).

41 (Chua Beng Huat, cited in Kwek 2006)
High levels of optimism toward career prospects in China reflected the confidence in negotiating the regional economic landscape. 90 per cent of IC respondents believed they possessed good career advancement prospects in China, relative to their Western peers. (see Chapter 5, Table 5.4) However, they lacked faith towards upward mobility within the Western-expatriate dominated Singapore regional headquarters. This observation requires further examination.

IC respondents were Singaporeans employed within the Singapore office. They predominantly perceived of their Western peers as corporate equals (see Chapter 5, Table 5.5). In face of inequality, rather than expecting higher management intervention, the majority of IC respondents believed in taking the initiative to overcome these barriers (see Chapter 5, Table 5.1). In addition, in the in-depth interview, the Vice-President assessed the IC group as the “most promotable” Singaporean corporate representatives within ECI. The likely personalities to fall into this group were also accurately identified by him. IC respondents appeared keen to climb the corporate ladder. Yet, they did not believe opportunities to be equally open for them when measured against their Western peers. The reason is likely found in the lack of faith that ECI promotions come with real authority. The ensuing paragraphs explain why this position was adopted by IC CRs.

The IC approach characterized the refrain from “fatalistic resignation or irresponsible utopianism”42. The respondents possessed a clear sense of reality that promotions do not open career opportunities for “locals” in the ECI. The group did not seek revolutionary changes. Instead, they sought to be co-opted into the establishment, re-negotiating the boundaries based on mutual reliance, rather than mutual antagonism. Structural inequality was not rendered invisible, but merely expressed with neither indignation nor avoidance. By serving both Western corporate and Chinese commercial interests, IC respondents sought to increase their employability as cross-

42 (Bourdieu 1991:136)
cultural mediators. They saw the constraints of their position within the economic equation and recognized them as such.

Kelvin, IC respondent, shared his perspective on how the global market structure necessitated his approach to cross-cultural economic activity. The relationship with Chinese clientele was defined by his function as a neutral arbiter. Yet, he also needed to offer some extent of cultural empathy:

“First of all they want to assess you, as the ECI corporate representative. They want to see if you can speak Mandarin. They want to see if you will do the complete translation or if you will hide or massage (the communication)... and that will have an impact on your relationship... The Chinese will not tell you in your face. The impact is after the negotiation, whether they choose to trust you, accept your proposal and push ahead with the negotiation.” –Kelvin-

The relationship between Chinese clientele and Western representatives differed from Kelvin’s. It was characterized by awe and caution:

“Historically in China, the Westerners have very strong influence. They may think that the Westerners are ‘upper-class’... Both are high-level people from the organizations, but when they meet, the China people suddenly become very humble, and I find it very strange because hey, you are the CEO of a client company, you don’t have to behave... [pauses to rephrase] the behavior and the facial expression becomes very different. I don’t know how to express it... It becomes a ‘no questions asked’. Whatever you (the Western counterpart) say, the answer is ‘Yes’ (in agreement).” –Kelvin-

The different manners in which Chinese clients related to Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives and their Western counterparts outlined the structure of the global political economy. The market privileged one group with autonomy and creative expression without the burden of proving cultural loyalty. Hence, the Western expatriates’ international mobility was regarded as “natural”, freeing them from long-term commitment to one region. But the Chinese Singaporean’s demonstration of fidelity was required. IC CRs
appeared best aware of the different treatments accorded to ethnonationalities, and yet were confident in leading commercial negotiations.

**Late-Industrialization and Occidentalist Discourse Constructions**

The Occidentalist views expressed by BAC respondents were predisposed by two childhood socioeconomic factors. Firstly, BAC respondents possessed self-assured predispositions due to affluent childhood (i.e. past) circumstances. Secondly, their Mandarin-primacy identification did not represent that of the dominant in Singapore society when they were undergoing their early education years. This forged the predisposition of rejecting “Western decadence” when language policies turned in their favor. When self-assurance was not given its full expression, BAC respondents sought to challenge the source believed to hinder their aspirations. They sought to establish themselves as the defenders of regional interests, characteristic of Occidentalist constructions. This posture was seen as disruptive and counter-productive by the management, rather than a demonstration of assertiveness. This is because the BAC predisposition was shaped by past circumstances, not current dominance. As a result, BAC assertiveness was not recognized as legitimate criticism. The BAC experience replicated global power relations, where dominance was demarcated by ethnonational distinctions. Collegial relationships hence distorted into culturally-indexed superior-subordinate relationships. “Local” employees may have made it to management ranks. But as elites “united solely by links of professional interest”\(^{43}\), the exclusion from informal networks with their Western peers remained. This posed challenges for their integration as leaders with authority. The successful integration of “local managers”, then, solely depended on their ingenuity in transcending ethnonational barriers. They had to first win the long-term approbation of the Chinese clientele, and at the same time be not just heard, but listened to by the Western expatriate management. Amongst BAC CRs, those more successful with the Chinese clientele

\(^{43}\) (Bourdieu 1971:171)
appeared much less anxious of uncertainty, as reflected in their UA scores (see Chapter 4). Lower UA CRs were more assertive about fighting for greater representation in the top management.

Within the regional political economy, Occidentalist objections are most aptly expressed by China, the ascendant regional hegemon. In contrast, Singapore’s twin deployment of Auto Orientalist and Occidentalist discourses requires reconsideration. Mentioned in Chapter 5, Auto Orientalist discourse constructions represent Singapore’s acknowledgement of the benefice from Western dominance. Here, Occidentalist discourse constructions express overtures to China of Singapore’s interest in performing its primordial link in Southeast Asia. In addition, perhaps Broinowski is right in pointing to Singapore’s regional ambitions in Southeast Asia. Occidentalist rhetoric is popular amongst aspirers of regional dominance. Business competition by Singapore GLCs in Myanmar, Thailand and Australia leads Chua to describe Singapore as an “irritating” neighbor. However, the observation of the BAC and CC (Chapter 5) approaches sheds insights on the appropriateness of Auto Orientalist-Occidentalist nation branding approach. The key problem with Auto Orientalist-Occidentalist disseminations lies in the negative connotations that accompany them. Both discourse constructions are responses to Dominant Orientalist impositions, whereby choosing one affiliation obligates the negation of the other. By coupling Auto Orientalist and Occidentalist discourses, Singapore hopes to communicate that “we are on both sides”. But where primordial affiliations are concerned, this can appear to be a rejection of affiliations, or worse, double-dealing within the East-West dichotomy. Summarily, there is a pitfall in the replication of Orientalist paradigms, especially when one does not occupy a dominant position. By piling Occidentalist replications on top of Auto Orientalist ones, Singapore brand managers attempt to patch one inadequacy with another. The

44 (2001)  
45 (Ellis 2007)  
46 (Chua 2007:209)  
47 (The Straits Times 2007a)  
48 (2007b)
problem with double negations is that two wrongs do not make one right. The redeeming factor to Singapore’s style of Orientalist discourse replications lies ironically in its limitation as a small country. Posing no competitive threat to hegemonic giants, the pressure on Singapore to pander to all affiliations elicits sympathy from them. Within the dual hegemonic landscape fractured by the East-West dichotomy, it may be necessary to frame state rhetoric according to the familiar Orientalist paradigm. The “irritating” slant of Singapore brand campaigns may not be “attractive”. Nevertheless, it communicates the desire of a small nation in wanting a part of the action and possibly facilitating the dual hegemonic interests in the process.

The presence of BAC respondents also points to an additional facet of late-industrializing societies unaddressed in Bourdieu’s social reproduction analysis. This thesis will apply its concept of Marcotted Development to explain the gaps in Bourdieu’s analysis. With first-mover presence in the late-industrializing landscape, affluent economic circumstances alone do not guarantee one’s dominance. The conditions for the contestations for dominance differ between first-mover societies and dual hegemonic late-industrializing ones. The application of Bourdieu’s framework needs to be sensitive to the first-mover/late-industrializing disjuncture. In Bourdieu’s analysis, dominance is enacted solely by elites local to the social framework. That is, the contestation for dominance is between classes local to the French society. As a result, local elites were often referred to by Bourdieu as one “ruling class”49. The “ruling class” is unified based on common interest to exclude the distribution of authority to other class groups. Therefore, there is a higher incidence of antagonism between the dominant elite and working class cadres. But within dual hegemonic framework, class interests are not as singular. Therefore, there is a higher incidence of competitive postures amongst the dominant. The nature of social relationships in dual hegemonic societies are distinctive from first-mover ones. For those predisposed to the “least affluent” habitus, the presence of dual hegemony offers alternatives to

49 (Bourdieu 1979:80-83)
Western decadence” as Occidentalism: resistance through primordial unification – Chapter 6

patronage. More relevant to this chapter, the habitus of affluent socioeconomic circumstances predisposes the perception of dominant outgroups (dual hegemonic opponent) as competition. When the dominant comprises almost exclusively local individuals, the salience of a dominant local collective is emphasized. But with dual hegemonic presence, the imposition of control by the local/regional hegemons experiences less opposition by the local affluent. Rather, the competition for dominance is directed at hegemonic impositions by perceived cultural outgroups. Therefore, the BAC perception of dual hegemony differed from CC respondents. BAC respondents saw themselves as an integral part of the Pan-Chinese network. Regional (China) hegemons were thus undifferentiated from the self. It was therefore characteristic of BAC respondents to speak from the Pan-Chinese perspective in the expression of Occidentalism. Dominance was deemed solely imposed by “Westerners”, the “cultural outgroup”. This cultural outgroup came to be represented by the Western expatriate management within the ECI. Although both BAC and CC groups recognized Western dominance, their responses to this recognition differed. Unlike the yielding predispositions of CC respondents, BAC respondents were confrontational. The problem is, BAC respondents were opinionated, but ran short of the relevant cultural capital to voice dissenting opinions in a manner acceptable to the dominant Western expatriates. The BAC predicament is distinctive to the late-industrialization landscape. Accelerated economic development allows late-industrializing populations to achieve material affluence quickly, but this does not come with the authority that accompanies the achievements of the first-mover legions. A further extension of this discussion in relation to nation branding will be raised in Chapter 8.

Conclusion

The twin deployment of Auto Orientalist and Occidentalist discourses attempts to communicate the following. Firstly, Singapore knows its place within the global political economy. Secondly, Singapore recognizes the
regional hegemony of China. Thirdly, Singapore aspires for regional
dominance in locales that coincide, but not collide with China’s interests.

However, within the dual hegemonic framework that operates on the
basis of the East-West dichotomy, clear-cut choices on “whose side are you
on?” have to be made. With a splash of luck, the global community appears
much accustomed to the “schizophrenic muddledom” of the city-state.
Perhaps the small and unthreatening can indeed pull through such antics
without tripping over its consequences.

Doing business through Singapore allows commercial enterprises to
circumvent political dogma. In Singapore, commercial interests are
consummated without the concern over human rights infringements by China
or hawkish encroachments by America. Insofar as states require antagonistic
bogeymen to rein in their population, Singapore’s role as the cross-cultural
mediator is indispensable. The sight of Singapore echoing both Auto
Orientalist and Occidentalist rhetoric at one go is “irritating”. But the
country’s presence is vital in facilitating communication in the dual
hegemonic landscape, even if at times, the city-state is at the receiving end of
the tensions. Although this does little for Singapore’s global hegemonic
influence, the want of some authority can still be attained at a smaller scale
(e.g. Southeast Asia).

At the same time, public statements by Singapore’s state leaders are
internalized by its nationals. Individuals with BAC and CC identifications
appeared more inclined to replicate Occidentalist and Auto Orientalist notions
(respectively). The past socioeconomic and linguistic identifications of these
individuals reflect the conditions present in the late-industrializing region that
emerged due to Marcotted Development. By identifying these factors as
moderators to Orientalist discourse replications, the understanding of nation
branding predispositions amongst late-industrializing nations can be further
improved.

In Chapters 5 and 6, the grounds for both the employment of Auto
Orientalist and Occidentalist discourses were established. The insights on
predisposition formation will be refined in Chapter 7. When the focus shifts out of the tensions in the East-West dichotomy, do predispositions remain constant? The ensuing chapter examines the question through ethnic management imageries of “Malay indolence”.
“Malay indolence”: the “hapless native”; the “willful native”

Thus far, the public discourses discussed aim to strategically locate the city-state within the East-West dichotomy. This chapter addresses the caricatures of the Malays as yet another state endeavor to proactively manage its national profile.

In *The Myth of the Lazy Native*, Syed Hussein Alatas illustrates that notions of “Malay indolence” are inherited conceptions from British colonialism. Extending from this notion, I explore how the modern Singapore state’s constructions of “Malay indolence” manifest amongst ECI respondents. The state predominantly concurs with the British colonial position, with some objections. The negative imagery spawned by the political elites in Singapore cannot be said to be entirely original. But the persistence of “Malay indolence” however, was ensured because it fits the state imperative.

In relation to the general scheme of this thesis, this chapter refines the understanding of how state discourses are contingently internalized by individuals of different socioeconomic origins. While both “hapless native” and “willful native” constructions of “Malay indolence” are present within state discourses, respondent choice of “Malay indolence” imagery approximates their childhood socioeconomic backgrounds. In the previous chapters, CC respondents were identified as predisposed to the conciliatory Auto Orientalist constructions, and BAC respondents, confrontational Occidentalist ones. I examine if similar predispositions will be replicated here.

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1 (1977)
“Malay Indolence”: Subjugation Through “Hapless Native” Discourse

Imageries of the “lazy native” are far from old colonial relics in post-independent Singapore. British caricatures of “Malay indolence” are integrated into contemporary racial discourse in the modern city-state. The Malays were described by the British as culturally impoverished and destined for subjugation if left to their own devices:

“The Malays are, by general consent, not at present capable of competing on equal terms economically and educationally with the ‘immigrant races’ – Chinese and Indian… we have pursued in the Malay States the policy of taking positive measures to prevent the submergence of the Malays in the public services and in the ownership of land by the more energetic, competent and resourceful Chinese.”

“… a question in the courts would be ‘asked in a language which is the language of an educated people, copious and fluent’ – English, in other words – only to be ‘translated into a poor language like Malay, which is again rendered into a rich language like the Chinese’.”

The above excerpts also revealed British impressions of the Chinese. The Chinese were perceived by the British as non-natives hailing from “rich” (East Asian) cultures. British perceptions imply that the most competitive colonial subjects in Asia are found beyond the Southeast Asian locale. These views were reiterated by Lee Kuan Yew:

“(The Chinese) is the product of a civilization that has gone through floods, pestilence, famine, breeding a people of very intense culture, with a belief in high performance in sustained effort, in thrift and industry … (The Malays), more fortunately endowed by nature, with sunshine and bananas and coconuts, and therefore not with the need to strive so hard.”

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2 (Stanley, Colonial Office, cited in Wade 2009:7)  
3 (Adamson, Legislative Council, cited in King 2009:432)  
4 (cited in Barr 1999:153)
Lee Kuan Yew’s views were reiterated in a less explicit manner by his successor, Lee Hsien Loong. In Lee Hsien Loong’s Prime Minister’s National Day Rally (2009), the discussion of economic performance is de rigueur. It is also customary to deliver the speeches in three languages: English, Mandarin and Malay. The English version extols Western MNCs as powerful growth engines of the Singapore economy:

“Rolls Royce, they make jet engines, marine engines. They moved their marine division global HQ to Singapore this year, not just an Asian HQ but for that part of the business, their global HQ, controlling things all over the world, is based in Singapore.”5

The Mandarin speech expresses his appreciation for local Chinese small-medium enterprises, not mentioned in the English speech:

“The government will fully support the SMEs, including helping them enter overseas markets. There are many business opportunities in Asia. As long as you understand the market and have good networks, you don’t have to worry about not having business.”6

In developmental state Singapore, the economic imperative is a key concern. But the Malay speech is silent on the topic of enterprise7. The Mandarin and Malay speeches are available in English transcripts, being that they are not duplicates of the English speech. The presence of English transcripts also implies that readership of these speeches extends beyond the community they seek to address. The speeches present caricatures of what the state perceives as the “key achievements (or lack of)” amongst the linguistics communities. By lauding all linguistic communities’ entrepreneurial abilities but the Malays’, powerful imageries of who are the socioeconomically inadequate in Singapore are presented. Through this, the discourses depict a dual hegemonic landscape of Western first-movers and ascendant East Asian descendents (i.e. the Chinese). The construction of modern “East Asian Singapore” is legitimized through reinterpretations of British “Malay indolence” imagery.

5 (Lee, 2009b)
6 (Lee, 2009a)
7 (Lee, 2009c)
Before going further into this discussion, the definition of what is meant by “East Asia” is required. Given the desirability of this moniker in Asia and its increased usage, the deciphering of this term is vital.

The term “East Asia” increasingly accommodates all-inclusive but confusing definitions; for instance:

“East Asia refers to the member of countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam), plus China, Hong Kong (China), Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia and Taiwan (China). Emerging East Asia refers to East Asia, minus Japan. Developing East Asia refers to emerging East Asia, minus Hong Kong (China), Korea and Singapore.”

I propose a refinement of the above inclusions. There are no strong grounds for the inclusion of Southeast Asia, but not South Asia, for instance, into the East Asian group of nations. The more clearly defined concept of “East Asia (China, Hong Kong, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan) plus one (Singapore)”, proposed by Chua, is adopted in this thesis.

Singapore is often compared to the likes of its East Asian contemporaries. One of the most renowned proponents is Hofstede. The nation’s strong economic performance is explained by East Asian cultural attributes of “Confucian Dynamism” (East Asia plus one) and/or Chineseness (China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore). Singapore was mentioned as an integral part of the Greater China rhetoric and high performance Chinese or East Asian economies. According to Primordialist assumptions, the rationale goes that if Singapore performs economically like East Asian economies, then Singapore must possess value orientations similar to East Asia. On its own,

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8 (Gill et al. 2006:6)
9 (2007a:115)
10 (Hofstede 1998:383-388; Kawai 2008; Moneta and Rüffer 2008)
the small city-state would have been less worthy of mention within the global political economy. But banded with the East Asian wagon, its global presence is significantly enhanced.

The successful rebranding of Singapore with accelerated East Asian economies is achieved through promoting its primordial Chineseness. Concurrently, its dissociation from moderate development in Southeast Asia is done through promoting “hapless native” notions of “Malay indolence”. Within the framework of Marcotted Development, accelerated economic development is imperative. When “indolence” equates with “sloth”, Singapore’s attainment of accelerated economic affluence becomes attributable to success despite Malay presence. This rationale can only be exacted if racial divisions form the underlying logic of social stratification.

Racial divisions are prioritized over class ones as the bases for social stratification in Singapore. In reality, ethnic Chinese Singaporeans can be found within all socioeconomic strata. But through racial stratification, a middle majority of “upwardly mobile East Asians” emerged. To occupy the middle position is to be constantly vigilant over the maintenance of boundaries within the social stratum. The upper stratum, the object of envy, was drawn from “foreign cultures” to provide the element of idealized exoticism. “Westerners” are placed within the upper stratum. This ensures the “locals” feel automatically excluded from the dominant stratum and the blame is transferred upon “Westerners”. “Westerners” as “foreigners” are also powerless against the state elite in posing any viable opposition. Who to place within the subordinate position is of crucial importance. Any group relegated to a subordinate position will be offended. But if group associations are already linked to the state’s opponents, then this offense is of much less concern to the ethnic managers. The historical antagonisms of separation from

13 (Rodan 1996:105)
14 Citing Scott, Hing and associates reinforced this point in the identification of the migration of mainland Chinese professionals as “a ‘normal’ middle class activity rather than something exclusively confined to an economic elite (i.e. Western expatriates).” (Hing et al. 2009:757-777).
15 (Creighton 1995:148)
Malaysia on racial grounds, outlined in Chapter 1, provided the ready justifications. If Southeast Asian Malaysia, for instance, deems the indigenous as privileged, then its reversal is to render them subordinate. Quah confirms state efforts at relegating the Malays to the bottom of the racial stratum. Malayness, from the 1980s, is strategically deployed for the reinforcement of Chineseness in Singapore.

Excerpts from two speeches sum up the premises of Singapore’s East Asian campaign. The first was made in 1967 by the then prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew:

“Three women were brought to the Singapore General Hospital, each in the same condition and each needing a blood transfusion. The first, a Southeast Asian, was given a blood transfusion but died a few hours later. The second, a South Asian, was given a transfusion but died a few days later. The third, an East Asian, was given a transfusion and survived. This is the X factor in development.”

The second was made in 2009 by the current prime minister, Lee Hsien Loong:

“He (Grand Mufti of Syria) said, imagine a mother with 4 children, a Christian, a Buddhist, a Muslim, a Jew, 4 children…. Of course the mother will love all of them equally because they are all her children but she will most approve of the one who takes best care of his or her other three siblings.”

The two excerpts, using similar parallels, suggest that the ethnic Chinese carry special responsibilities towards its other siblings. This belief is further reiterated by ex-Prime Minister, Goh Chok Tong (1990-2004):

“We have always stressed that the majority Chinese community must make special efforts to give our Malay, Indian and Eurasian communities an equal place in Singapore.”

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16 (2009:231)  
17 (Lee Kuan Yew, cited in Barr 1999:145)  
18 (Lee 2009c)  
19 (1998)
Given the various caricatures of “Malay indolence”, the Malays came to be associated with a community besieged by socioeconomic woes. One of the more recent controversies was the candid discussion of how the community is over-represented in teen pregnancy statistics. Eight articles were featured in *The Straits Times* on teen pregnancy and engagement in premarital sex (June-September 2007). One had the term “Muslim” on the heading, but the Muslims referred to in the article were exclusively ethnic Malay. Three had the term “Malay” on the headings. Of which, the July 30 feature was accompanied by three articles on the personal experiences of Malay single moms. The saga was at its peak when Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong, addressed the issue during Mendaki’s (Malay self-help group) 25th Anniversary celebrations. Ensuing news features then concentrated on intervention to “nip this (problem) in the bud”\(^{21}\). Two of the articles attributed “the problem” to overly strict prohibitions of discussing contraception and abortion amongst Malays.\(^{22}\) It was argued that conservatism had backfired upon the community. Another article promoted Malay community-based self-help as intervention measures cannot contradict religious beliefs\(^{23}\). Only one sentence, buried in an article came across less non-racially aligned:

> Counselors and social workers interviewed say these births out of wedlock are more common among the poor, those with low education and those from broken homes – a profile more Malays fall into compared with other races.”\(^{24}\)


\(\text{---}^{21}\) (Dr. Yaacob Ibrahim, Minister-in-charge of Muslim Affairs, cited in Tan 2007)

\(\text{---}^{22}\) (Hussain 2007a; Hussain 2007b; Tan 2007)

\(\text{---}^{23}\) (Almenour 2007)

\(\text{---}^{24}\) (Hussain 2007b)
The line is submerged amidst the torrents of Malay teen sexual promiscuity, delinquency and troubled family environments.

In these constructions, “Malay indolence” was dealt with along the principles of “benevolence” that British colonialism had propounded. Assistance is to be rendered to alleviate the community’s socioeconomic woes:

“Others can, and must, chip in if the problem of dysfunctional families is to be effectively solved because at the end of the day, this is a national problem requiring resources that are beyond the capability of the Malay community organizations to provide, even jointly.”

The publicizing of aid initiatives makes explicit the relations of dependency. It tells of who occupies the upper hand in delivering aid, and who occupies the dependent position of receiving it. Notions of “benevolence” communicate that firstly, Malays are besieged by socioeconomic woes. Secondly, coming from a “poor” culture, they cannot help being in this predicament. Thirdly, Malays are incapable of closing the economic gap when pitted against aggressive Chinese competition. The reinforcement of Singapore’s Chineseness through “hapless native” discourse constructions communicates that although Singapore is located in Southeast Asia, its “roots” are undeniably East Asian.

**Stoking Chinese Insecurity: Mobilization through “Willful Native” Discourse**

Colonialist discourses on the “hapless native” are popular, but not the only imagery employed. In instances where the management of the Chinese-majority needs a confidence boost, the more “benevolent” imageries of sympathy are invoked. Where compliance of this majority is required, the Malays serve as negative demonstrations. In the latter situation, the Malays are captured as the marginalized who willfully disengage from the mainstream Singapore society as a show of resentment. In the “hapless native”, colonialist notions are reinforced and a concurrence with the imperative of “protecting

25 (Hussain 2007c)
the natives” is expressed. Here, colonialis actions are not rejected, but the imperative changes to one of reining in “willful natives”. British “benevolence” is believed to function as a double-edged sword. Its indulgences towards the natives are believed to breed a “crutch mentality” amongst Malays. That is, it breeds Malay reliance on financial handouts based on their status as natives. The practice of Malay indigenous privilege was expected to continue when Singapore was a part of the Malayan Federation. Article 152 of the Singapore constitution represents the pledge to continue Malay indigenous privilege, a legacy of British colonialism:

“The Government shall execute its function in such a manner as to recognize the special position of the Malays who are the indigenous people of Singapore, and accordingly, it shall be the responsibility of the Government to protect, safeguard, support, foster and promote their political, educational, social and cultural interests and the Malay language.”

With Singapore’s expulsion from the Malayan Federation on racial grounds, Article 152 is relegated to the symbolic26. The active promotion of Malay as the lingua franca ended in 196627. This abrupt switch from Malayanization to Anglicization marked the end of Singapore’s desire for integration into the Malayan Federation. It signaled the continued hegemony of the Anglophones, despite the tides of national independence in the late-industrializing region.

Present-day public discourse communicates its objections against the “crutch mentality”28 through “representatives of the Malay community”:

“Those who do not seek livelihood and fear to search for wealth are those who are weak and scorned in Islam, because they will be a burden to others.”29

26 (Chua 2009:241)
27 (Wee 2000:133)
28 (Hill 1995:102; Lai 1995:165)
29 (Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura 2000)
“We must also debunk the mindset that we are a receiving community and not a contributing community.”30

“But when a community is faced with undisputed evidence that brings into question its ethics, its value system - its entire way of life - then the one true test of the community's strength is how it responds. Let us approach this as a community that has no choice. The success story must continue, because the success of the Malay community is inexorably linked with Singapore's success, and it is our responsibility to make sure we do our utmost to contribute to Singapore's growth, its success, and its continued social cohesion.”31

In British colonial accounts, being the “hapless native” was viewed as an unintentional affliction. The propagation of this impression was therefore accompanied by a measure of sympathy. In contrast, the propagation of the “willful native” imagery works on the assumption of the community’s willful disengagement from mainstream society. The state objects to old British “indulgences” toward those unwilling to work hard in exchange for financial returns. A willful act of self-isolation is more objectionable than an hapless affliction:

“The Malay community will not feel the impact overnight because their children are not learning enough English, Mathematics and Science in the madrasahs (Islamic schools). But decades later, if things have gone wrong with the country, when our children analyze the causes, they will point an accusing finger at our generation for lack of political courage and vision.”32

Heightened religiosity amongst Malays is perceived as a silent protest against the denial of their original privileges under the British. If disengagement is

30 (Osman 2005)
31 (Nordin 2007)
32 (Goh 2000)
seen as willfulness, its ramifications will come to be perceived as “just deserts”.

George analogizes Singapore as an “air-conditioned nation”\textsuperscript{33}. Against the legions of postcolonial, late-industrializing nations, Singapore sought differentiation as a politically stable business oasis. Therefore, the city-state was cast as a prime piece of real estate unfortunately located in a bad neighborhood\textsuperscript{34}. Applying George’s analogy, the city-state was re-engineered by “air-conditioning” its place associations, cooling itself from the regionally-associated “tropical lull”. Singapore acquired the “individualistic” mindsets of the West\textsuperscript{35} believed to be beneficial for accelerated economic development. Eventually, with the advent of dual hegemony, “Chinese” mindsets were acquired by reviving Chinese primordialism. This further justified its success in accelerated economic development based on East Asian associations. Playing the racial card, Lee Kuan Yew became the staunch defender of Chinese primordialism:

“My neighbors (Malaysia and Indonesia) both have problems with their Chinese. They are successful, they’re hardworking and therefore they are systematically marginalized, even in education.”\textsuperscript{36}

This statement would have less credibility if not for the anti-Chinese sentiments rippling across the region following Western colonial pull-outs\textsuperscript{37}. That these sentiments are the outcome of colonial mass importation-sans-integration is thus believable. After all, different races lived in segregated enclaves under the colonial administration, as outlined in Chapter 1.

On the domestic front, that Singapore is surrounded by a “sea of Malays” was constantly reiterated by the state\textsuperscript{38}. Singapore was also likened to Israel by its state elites: a non-Islamic nation surrounded by Islamic ones\textsuperscript{39}.

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{33} (2000)
  \item \textsuperscript{34} (Peebles and Wilson 2002:8)
  \item \textsuperscript{35} (Lee Kuan Yew, cited in Chua 1995:27)
  \item \textsuperscript{36} (cited in Chua 2007b:210)
  \item \textsuperscript{37} (Regnier 1987:194)
  \item \textsuperscript{38} (Trocki 2006:140)
  \item \textsuperscript{39} (Fryer 1970:286)
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
This perception downplayed the historical antagonisms between the “Muslim-dominant” countries; for instance, the Konfrontasi (1962-1966) between Indonesia and Malayan Federation. Public statements were reinforced by symbolic actions of engaging the Israeli military to train the early batches of national servicemen. Regional animosity stoked this insecurity. Indonesian President Habibie’s infamous comment, that Singapore is just a “little red dot” (1998), reveals Indonesia’s disgruntlement towards its neighbor. The “little red dot” alludes to the “red” China in Southeast Asia, amidst the sea of Islamic “green”. This eventually became a term of endearment, symbolizing Singapore’s national integrity against all odds, as used in the 2010 Prime Minister’s National Day Rally speech in Mandarin. The global spread of Islamic Fundamentalism worked alongside to stoke insecurities amongst the non-Malay/Muslim population.

The term “stoke”, as opposed to “manufacture”, is used to describe the incitement of Chinese insecurity in the region. A “manufactured” insecurity infers that sentiments of insecurity were non-existent prior to its creation by ethnic management. This is not the case. Interracial tensions existed, culminating into the 1963-69 Chinese-Malay racial riots. Dormant insecurity becomes fully articulated when historical events are taken as evidence validating the cause of insecurity. Constantly reiterated by the state, historical

40 The Konfrontasi refers to the contestation of the Borneo territories between Indonesia and Malayan Federation. Then, Singapore was still a part of the Federation.  
41 (Mauzy and R.S 2002:178)  
42 (Chua 2004:100)  
43 (Lee 2010). The reference to the “little red dot” was absent in the English and Malay speeches.  
44 (Goh 2002): “But Singapore Muslims, like other Muslims around the world, are caught up in the global resurgence of Islamic fervour … Some Singapore Muslims too, have become more rigid in the practice of their religion… A MP (Member of Parliament) told me that some Muslim grassroots leaders had declined to join a dinner function in a restaurant, even though halal food would be served. The reason? The restaurant served alcohol.”; (Ibrahim 2005): “Prof Syed Hussein Alatas has argued strenuously against attempts to "Islamise" knowledge as being illogical and irrational. To this day, we find people suggesting that the social ills facing the community is the lack of Islam.”; (Yeo 2006): “MICA did not ban the film 'the Da Vinci Code' because it was entertainment and not likely to inflame hatred. Some Christians were unhappy of course but that was to be expected. However, if an equivalent distortion of Islam were to be screened, the reaction would have been extreme. When I was MITA minister, we banned Salman Rushdie's Satanic Verses while allowing 'the Last Temptation of Christ' because the Muslim reaction was entirely predictable.”
memories of the riots become integrated in the individuals’ judgments of race-related issues:45:

“… we were tough on the Chinese gangsters who were trying to start off a riot here. And I specifically spoke in Malay just now, about the problems or supposed problem that have been raised and discussed in the Malay press about their freedom of religion and so on.”46

“Do not think that racial riots would never break out again in Singapore. They could be caused by chauvinistic leaders. They could be triggered by insensitive handling of racial issues by an inept government. They could be instigated from outside.”47

“We have specific reasons to worry about racial and religious harmony.”48

“We do not, however, take racial harmony for granted. On the contrary, we constantly worry about not offending one another and not threatening inter-racial peace.”49

“Singapore, he (Lee Kuan Yew) said, needed a strong government to maintain good relations with Indonesia and Malaysia, and to interact with their politicians who ‘consider Singapore to be Chinese and expect Singapore to be ‘sensitive’ and comply with their requests’.”50

In “willful native” constructions, the state reveals Singapore’s regional ambitions and the rationale for behaving as an “irritating” neighbor.51 The
aspiration for dominance is engineered to coincide, not collide, with China’s regional ambitions. The underlying assumption that strong anti-Chinese sentiments exist in Southeast Asia is communicated by “willful native” discourse constructions. The Singapore state aspires, through regional pan-Chinese imagery, to be a champion of Chinese interests. This impression is further reinforced by the nation’s Chinese majority composition.

**Respondent Constructions of “Malay Indolence”**

Summarily, state discourse comprises two responses to the original British notion of the “lazy native”. The “hapless native” response replicates British notions of “benevolence” towards “Malay indolence”. They express the accommodation to “backward” afflictions of natives, incapable of matching up to the “progressive” migrant (East Asian) Chinese. The “willful native” response refutes Orientalist notions of harmless native afflictions. They frame interracial relations with the Malays as volatile. Historical antagonisms, it is assumed, cannot be underestimated. With the proliferation of contesting discourses, what would be the outcome of “Malay indolence” imagery on the respondents? Although both constructions possess negative connotations, they differ on their grounds for objection. As the discussion moves past “local-expatriate” divides into domestic interracial relations, a change of respondent attitudes occurs.

The data presented here came mainly from the respondents’ non-work related impressions. The dearth of non-Chinese colleagues under local engagement contracts meant respondents were less able to comment solely based on work experiences. The respondents’ limited interactions with Malays in their work and personal lives discounted the veracity of their impressions. But it reflected the reality where interracial interactions, most often than not, do not lead to deep, meaningful relationships.

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52 (Pruetthipunthu 2006:public forum): “A walk along Orchard Road reveals that most teenagers and young adults, if not all, hang out with people of the same race. This, in itself, is not a problem. However, it does hint at ‘glass walls’ between races… there may be a lack of
At first glance, most respondents had negative impressions of the Malays. A closer examination of the responses reveals that the negative impressions were derived from different bases of objections. Groups from more affluent childhood socioeconomic circumstances tended to echo “hapless native” constructions. SC and BAC respondents tended to attribute Malay “shortcomings” to hapless afflictions. Groups from less affluent childhood socioeconomic circumstances tended to echo “willful native” antagonisms. IC and CC respondents tended to attribute Malay “shortcomings” to intentional acts of diffused aggression.

SC respondents maintained the characteristically disengaged style of assigning a commercial value to their observations. Their comments on the Malays were diplomatically framed. But couched within the niceties, the expression of the SC superiority complex remained:

“They are a lot more laid back and that’s the type of value that is worth keeping… But that’s coming from my perspective from having a Chinese outlook, wanting to embrace a little more of the Malay culture, knowing that at the end of the day, if I really need to crank up the engine a little bit in order to produce things, I can. But if I were a true, true Malay, I may not be able to that, whatever.” –Carlos-

“If you look at companies we serve in the region, the biggest ones, they usually have an Asian face, oh sorry, a Chinese face, more than a Malay-looking or Indian-looking person. Most of the companies here, our biggest markets, are in Taiwan, China, or Hong Kong in the region. So, probably in the selection, they would like to match a particular face to a particular customer.” –Ron-

BAC respondents were remarkably “accommodating” to the Malays, compared with the “belligerence” towards ECI expatriates:

appreciation and desire to understand other cultures besides one's own.” See also (Ooi 2006; Pritchard 2007)
“Malays are more communal, meaning they are more kampong (Malay: village people), they stick together (instead of intermingling with the other races), not interested in making money but just interested in outward appearance and of course generally not interested in upgrading. I think these are of course related to their religion, which makes them think that gaining wealth is probably not their priority … I don’t think poverty is the issue because I have seen poor Chinese. I am not saying that they are more prone to crime and to have premarital sex while they are under-aged. I think for Malay culture, it’s because they are not supposed to talk about it and think about it and then this created a very different environment.” – Alvin-

“If you choose not to work hard, it’s ok, it’s your choice, the government will not cast you aside, but you will get what you will get (i.e. nothing, or very little). As much as many people will disagree, I still think it’s a fair system. If I earn more, I pay more tax. If I pay more tax, I treat it as a happy problem, because I earn more.” - William-

The switch from “belligerence” to “benevolence”, however, is not a deviation from the importance of Chinese primordialism to BAC respondents. Comparing SC and BAC responses in the above excerpts, SC comparisons of Chinese and Malays were less emotionally charged than BAC ones. When comparing with Malays, BAC respondents got to express associations with affluent childhood circumstances without feeling defensive over one’s linguistic primacy. The BAC posture of “Chinese primordialism” remained intact, but the atmosphere surrounding the issue changed with a different cultural comparison. A “belligerent” position was expressed when comparing themselves with “Westerners”, who are perceived to (unjustly) occupy the upper stratum within Singapore’s race stratification. Coming from more affluent childhood socioeconomic circumstances, BAC respondents’ experience of “Malay indolence” imagery was much less threatening. As the
Malays were perceived as a social group occupying a “lower position”, BAC respondents hence feel much less competitive towards them than the “upper stratum” of Western expatriates.

The IC respondents, in contrast, were much less tolerant towards the Malays. IC respondents propounded the belief that intercultural integration is essential to the smooth progression of cross-cultural economic activity. When expressing their disaffection towards the Malays, constructions of Malay antisocial behavior were used as justifications for their sentiments:

“It is important to go home safely to a neighbor who may be Malay, for example, without feeling that while you are away, your house will be in trouble.” –Phillip-

“The Malays still insist that they must have halal (Arabic: food prepared according to Islamic guidelines) food wherever they go. Even if they are with their Chinese friends in a Chinese restaurant, they still insist on taking halal food.” –Martin-

CC respondents’ culture circumventionist styles melted away where Malays are concerned. The expression of racial primordialism was also much less restrained:

“Like Lee Kuan Yew always likes to put it, ‘If you cannot afford it (do not have kids)’. To Chinese, we always try to control. But if we can afford it of course we can have more kids. If you are talking about the Malays, even if they have no money, to them, it’s god’s will, if they have kids, they have kids. They just keep on giving birth and then they have less education and I guess the parents don’t control them so they go wild.” –Norman-

“Malays, I don’t know, they don’t seem to have any good points at all. I am just speaking honestly … I find that since the past, the Malays like to buy Proton cars (Malaysian production). What is the reason?
As mentioned earlier, the racial stratum is prioritized over socioeconomic stratifications in Singapore. “Least affluent” childhood socioeconomic background CC respondents therefore felt much more confident asserting their sense of superiority over the Malays. However, the comfortable distance that characterized SC/BAC respondents’ experience of “Malay indolence” imagery was less so for IC/CC respondents. To IC/CC respondents, Malays were likely perceived as inferior, but “not too far behind”. This elicited stronger urges to be convinced of Malay ill intentions.

Socioeconomic Predispositions and Responses to Orientalist Discourse

Faced with pervasive ethnic management initiatives, racial stratification tends to take precedence over class ones amongst Singaporeans. As racial differences form the bases of social stratification, racial identifications tend to be characterized by exclusionary “a priori (sic.) social categories”. Under these conditions, social proximity may create competitive postures if a collective is a priori considered a cultural outsider. Therefore, amongst collectives perceived by the individual as cultural outsiders, those seen as occupying a social position further from one’s own are better accepted. Through the examination of “Malay indolence” discourse constructions, the insights from the previous chapters are further refined.

The majority of the respondents demonstrated the internalized perception that although Malays are fellow Singaporeans, they are nevertheless a communal outgroup to the Chinese Singaporean. Some respondents saw Malays as “hapless natives” who could not help themselves. Others viewed them as competition. National loyalties were questioned in the belief that Malays are “willful natives” who would not perform their national obligations. However, not all cultural outsiders were received in the same manner. That is, an individual may view one collective outgroup as innocuous,

53 (Bloul 1999:7)
and another as threatening. But these perceptions may not be random. Racial attitudes change according to the target of comparison. Respondents related to cultural outgroups on the basis of the socioeconomic credentials associated with these outgroups, relative to one’s own at the time the judgment is (pre)conceived. As the preconceptions are shaped by notions of where the generic outgroup stands socioeconomically, it is vital to examine the preconceived notions of where the respondents thought they stood within this stratum. The respondents were most exposed to state ethnic management imperatives during their early education years. Preconceptions of racial stratifications were thus most aggressively shaped during that time. Hence, it was childhood socioeconomic backgrounds that were most significant in moderating respondent perceptions of cultural outsiders. The BAC and SC groups, predominantly of “most affluent” childhood socioeconomic backgrounds, thus viewed themselves as having greater social proximity with the “Western outsider” than the “Malay outsider”. Malays, although perceived as a cultural outgroup, were seen as further in terms of social proximity and thus did not pose a competitive threat. Hence, “Malay indolence” imageries were subscribed to, but a laid-back posture of excusing the Malays as “hapless natives” was adopted. In contrast, as influenced by less enviable childhood socioeconomic backgrounds, the CC and IC groups saw themselves as closer to “Malay outsiders” than “Western outsiders”. Being separated by exclusionary identifications, this closeness did not produce feelings of solidarity. Rather, a competitive posture emerged. Negative imageries of “Malay indolence” were thus exploited to justify how “willful natives” cannot be trusted. In this chapter, the receptivity towards Western outgroups that characterized the IC group was not replicated towards the Malays. Also the competitiveness towards Western outgroups did not characterize the BAC group’s attitudes towards the Malays. Respondent attitudes towards cultural outsiders changed according to the scheme of power relationships captured in racial stratifications.
The above statements are framed in terms of perceptions because the judgments on social proximity are constructed. Judgments on social proximity are based on the respondent’s childhood socioeconomic circumstances, rather than present ones. Besides, respondent judgments on Malay socioeconomic circumstances were generalizations, rather than verified truths. The state-perpetrated impressions, as the findings suggest, were based on respondents’ internalized pasts. Its replications are habit-triggered by behavioral predispositions.

Bourdieu’s concept of the habitus came in handy in explaining how racial stratifications were reproduced in this analysis. However, its lack of fit with late-industrializing societies again emerged. Many late-industrializing nation-states are averse to class references due to the prevalence of Communist insurgency in these societies. Although the capitalist-industrial order was predominantly adopted, class references are still subjected to strict censorship due to old sensitivities. Therefore, racial references are used to delineate social divisions more than class ones. Bourdieu’s analysis of the habitus is strongly based on class comparisons. Respondents, in the absence of class references to express their self-comparisons with the Malays, thus appear to be voicing the same negative attitudes regardless of socioeconomic backgrounds. When a separate set of terminology (“hapless native” and “willful native”) was devised, the distinctive identifications emerged. These identifications reflect the respondent’s habitus.

Conclusion

Responses to stereotypes vary as the cultural other being assessed changes. The variation is related to changes in the nature of power relationships between the assessor and the assessed. Cultural targets are thus not just defined by cultural attributes per se. In the previous chapters, “Westerners” were stereotyped as socioeconomically dominant. In this chapter, “Malays” were stereotyped as socioeconomically marginal. The responses by the Chinese Singaporean respondents were thus significantly
different. By examining the responses through “hapless native” and “willful native” constructions, insights were derived from the choice of “Malay indolence” imagery being replicated. Respondent socioeconomic predispositions remained consistent. But the affective response of the respondents changed.

Most significantly, this analysis reinforced the late-industrializing concern with Marcotted Development. Through the employment of Primordialist discourses, the state expresses its imperatives, its affiliations and its ambitions. It reflects the obsession of the brand state in dealing with Marcotted Development constraints, leaving no stone unturned. By dramatizing colonialist notions of “Malay indolence”, Singapore’s accelerated economic development was advertised. Concessionary “hapless native” imagery was used by the state as overtures to East Asian primordial associations. Confrontational “willful native” imagery constructs the hegemonic intentions of the state towards Southeast Asia. Through the recognition of dual hegemonic influence, Singapore seeks to enhance its influence in Southeast Asia by primordial associations. By offering itself as the primordial link in Southeast Asia to China, its influence in the region is enhanced by association.
“Malay indolence”: East Asia in Southeast Asia – the “hapless native”; the “willful native” –
Chapter 7
This thesis sought to understand how Chineseness is managed, using Singapore as a case study. Respondents were asked for their personal identification with Chineseness, in comparison with the identities of their peers at work (Mainland Chinese and Western expatriates). Four key identifications emerged from the sampled respondents. Amongst them, two groups were found to replicate Orientalist discourses in the assessment of intercultural economic relationships. This led to an investigation of the notion of Chineseness through the framework of Orientalism. Integrating postcolonial theory with the further development of theories of late-industrialization, I found Chineseness also associated with late-industrialization. Outlined in Chapter 4, its expression represented responses to Western impositions of capitalist-industrial dominance. By dissociating expressions of Chineseness from links to some civilization core, “Chinese nations” were responding to capitalist-industrialization dominance, firstly from within a Cold War climate, and thereafter from within a dual hegemonic landscape.

A summary of the findings was presented to consolidate the key themes that emerged from ECI data. This summary provides the basis for the discussion of the implications of my research inquiry. To address this research question, a number of theoretical frameworks were employed.

The first section discusses the implications of applying these frameworks to the analysis of my findings. The gaps that emerged in the

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1 See Chapter 2 for the definition of the key components of Orientalist paradigms. Chapters 5-7 provide the explanations to what initially appeared to be random enactments of Orientalist discourse constructions in the research findings. In order to explain the causes of Orientalist discourse reproductions, tangible indicators are needed to measure economic and cultural capital. Respondents were firstly stratified according to childhood socioeconomic circumstances. Next, they were distinguished by their parent linguistic profile. For further details on how the tangible indicators were derived, see Chapter 4.
application of the existing theoretical frameworks were identified. I then outline how my concept of Marcotted Development serves to integrate and extend on the existing frameworks.

The second section discusses the insights of my research with relevance to nation branding, expanding on the compilation of works in the field of study\(^2\). Using Singapore as the primary illustration, I will attempt to illustrate how nation branding strategies can be better formulated.

**Summary of the Findings**

The least affluent (in childhood) respondents, who have made good under accelerated development, as hypothesized, were most supportive of state initiatives. As this proposition on accelerated development lays the basis of my discussion on Marcotted Development but is not the focus of the thesis, it was not presented in the findings chapters. Here, I outline some of the comments raised by CC respondents before proceeding to how the other research assumptions were addressed by the findings. The CC respondents’ appreciation of ethnic management was unprecedentedly voiced on the respondents’ own initiative:

“Singaporean Chinese birthrates are coming down... If we don’t import, the ratio will change. [In line with state initiatives, importation of ‘same race’ Chinese from overseas was believed to restore the dominance of Singaporean Chinese].” – Leon-

“Like Lee Kuan Yew puts it, ‘If you cannot afford it... (do not give birth to more children)’; to Chinese, we try to control.” – Norman-

“I wanted to say that we (Chinese Singaporean) are still more Asian probably because of government policies encouraging us to speak more Chinese.” – Shane-

\(^2\) See Chapter 2 and Appendix 2.1.
Yet, the benefits accrued from accelerated development did not override the expectation of disfavor acquired from childhood by CC respondents. Neither did it better prepare them for the arbitration of dual hegemony. The expectations of disfavor resulted in culture circumventing manifestations, as outlined in Chapter 5 on “the Complex”. Auto Orientalist discourses frame the approach of the CC group. In terms of ethnic management, the persistent sense of disadvantage of being Mandarin-primacy was unaltered despite changes in language policies. Also, when self-comparing against Western peers, the Auto Orientalist replications amongst CC respondents affirms my hypothesis that “respondents of less affluent childhood socioeconomic backgrounds have lower expectations of favor, or expect disfavor in their future work endeavors”.

BAC respondents provided the case-in-point of how favorable socioeconomic circumstances could shape predispositions that are very distinct from those of the CC respondents, despite sharing the same Mandarin-primacy. The expectations of favor from the Chinese clientele, whether founded or otherwise, were confidently vocalized by this group. In this, the hypothesis on childhood affluence and “higher expectations of favor” was reinforced. Nevertheless, the findings also reveal that power is not exclusively vested in tangible assets. Although BAC respondents did not manifest the CC replication of Auto Orientalist concessions, the cultural associations of being Mandarin-primacy manifests in the assertions of influence via Occidentalist confrontations, outlined in Chapter 6. In contrast, the possession of both affluent childhood socioeconomic background and English-primacy (cultural capital), as did the SC respondents, best simulates the social reproduction of symbolic power.

Finally, the Dialect-primacy IC respondents provide a good instance of how neglect may be a blessing in disguise within a dual hegemonic framework. The anxiety one suffers from neglect is less crippling than that suffered by one who was the focus for ethnic management disfavor.
The findings on the four typologies of Chineseness provide the following conclusions with regard to ethnic management in developmental state Singapore. Firstly, the attainment of material affluence through accelerated economic development does not alter the predispositions formed prior to this endeavor. Secondly, power is vested in the possession of both economic and cultural capital. Thirdly, to effectively arbitrate the dual hegemonic framework, one needs either to align with the cultural capital of the dominant, or to distinguish oneself from the ascending force.

**The Theoretical Implications of Marcotted Development**

In most instances, Bourdieu’s concepts provide a good basis for the examination of how individuals reproduce Orientalist discourses. Bourdieu’s concept of the habitus, “bodily tensions” shaping one’s predispositions, aided my inquiry on why Orientalist discourses continue to be replicated despite postcolonial scholarly attempts at demystifying them. Existing analyses of Orientalist discourse constructions focus primarily on the ideological notion of postcolonial “mental captivity”. This thesis complements the ideological focus with the study of how the habitus regulates the continued replication of Orientalism.

Past socioeconomic predispositions become habit-triggers that operate beyond ideological consciousness. In this way, ideological replications persist even when individuals are conscious of their own “mental captivity” by Orientalism. Ethnic management ideologies in Singapore are disseminated in both Auto Orientalist and Occidentalist forms. But as Chapters 5 to 7 illustrated, the selective subscriptions, if they are subscribed to at all, are based on predispositions formed prior to one’s exposure to ethnic management. Respondents’ predispositions are honed in childhood, inscribed upon the “socially informed body”. These predispositions reproduce family

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3 (2000:144)  
5 (Bourdieu 1977b:124)
socioeconomic circumstances\textsuperscript{6}. Consequently, one’s work engagements in adulthood does not commence on a blank slate.

The other concept of Bourdieu’s of relevance is the significance of cultural capital in the reproduction of dominance\textsuperscript{7}. At work, those without the requisite cultural capital tend to reproduce positions that reinforce their subjugation. The results show that individuals repeatedly formulate work approaches that reflect the cultural capital acquired from their childhood circumstances.

Through Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus and cultural capital, I found that Orientalist discourse constructions reflect how individuals manage their experiences within the global political economy. This experience constrains not just the mental/ideological faculty. Capitalist-industrialization involves both an ideological buy-in and the physical act of participation. Therefore, an individual’s approach towards economic activity is equally, if not more important than his/her value-orientation. One’s economic and cultural capital provide the resources for the articulation of habitus predispositions, the body (in tandem with one’s ideological orientation) completes the articulation.\textsuperscript{8}

Through the findings, I found the integration of Bourdieu’s social reproduction vital to the analysis of Orientalist replications.

However, some analytical gaps emerged in the application of Bourdieu’s concepts. Marcotted Development was devised to supplement the gaps. In particular, I find the application of Bourdieu’s social reproduction ill-fitting in the context of late-industrialization. At the abstract level, the application of Bourdieu’s concepts is seamless. But these concepts are derived from the observation of first-mover French society\textsuperscript{9}. A concept is moderated by the circumstances of the society from which it is derived. The French society works on different conditions from late-industrializing ones. For instance, social reproduction in late-industrializing societies is much more

\textsuperscript{6} (Bourdieu 1977b:86-124) \textsuperscript{7} (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990:99-210) \textsuperscript{8} (Bourdieu 1977a:659). \textsuperscript{9} (Bourdieu 1977a:659; Bourdieu 1991:40; Bourdieu and Passeron 1990:119)
complex. Here, I found the concept of Marcotted Development useful. Amongst ECI respondents, significant segments emerged with “mismatched” predispositions and financial statuses from those outlined by Bourdieu. Data was collected from a group of financially affluent corporate representatives. To qualify as a corporate representative, a good profile of education credentials and career exposure is a requirement. This position, as expected, comes with good financial returns that place the corporate representatives within the affluent middle class. However, the CC (least affluent, Mandarin-primacy) respondents represent instances whereby social reproduction constraints were overcome. While exceptions in social reproduction do occur, Bourdieu’s conceptual framework cannot account for the high incidence of these “exceptions” occurring within this Singaporean sample. How can so many of these individuals escape the constraints of social reproduction and attain financial affluence, good education credentials and occupational prestige? The results show that accelerated development reshuffles social reproduction, such that conventional barriers to upward mobility may not work as effectively in late-industrializing societies. This distinction is complemented by dual hegemonic presence.

Bourdieu also asserts that economic and cultural capital performs disparate functions in ensuring social reproduction, but the possession of one usually accompanies the other. Again, this is not the case amongst a significant portion of respondents within this inquiry. BAC respondents made good as corporate representatives in their adulthood. Being Mandarin-primacy predisposes them to building rapport with the Chinese clientele. But BAC respondents pale in comparison at winning the favor of their employers relative to the English-primacy SC group. The BAC respondents do not possess the cultural capital (English-primacy) to put them in good stead at building rapport with the Western expatriate management. That being said, SC CRs also do not command the same dominance as their Western expatriate peers. Although significantly more predisposed to dominance than their
Singaporean peers, SC respondents remain perceived as “local”, not “expatriate”. In these instances, the results show that the requisite cultural capital does not necessarily accompany economic capital within the dual hegemonic framework.

In order to address the analytical disjuncture of late-industrialization, I devised the concept of Marcotted Development to explain the cultural impact of accelerated development and dual hegemony. There is a higher incidence of Auto Orientalist manifestations in Singapore due to accelerated economic development. As late-industrializing economies induce growth by importing investments and expertise, huge time-savings are accrued for not having to develop these requisites domestically. However, this also bred the reliance on “Western imports” in all spheres of life. Especially for countries that have prioritized “buying” over “making” strategies of (late)-industrialization, which Singapore is, affluence is attained without the cultivation of the requisite cultural capital. The “leapfrogging” to material affluence was bought with the hidden cost of internalizing Orientalist notions. With these transgressions, the significant presence of affluent individuals with persistent Auto Orientalist predispositions is thus explicable. Therefore, it is necessary for efforts at tackling Auto Orientalism to first address the underlying structures driving its social reproduction within a late-industrializing context.

The BAC and SC instances show that financial affluence does not guarantee the requisite cultural capital in late-industrializing societies. Given the accelerated time frame in which capitalist-industrial expertise is imported, cultural capital accumulation is very constrained. Moreover, dual hegemonic presence implies that regardless of the cultural capital accumulated, one primordial alignment inevitably implies the misalignment with the other. This reflects the prevalence of Orientalism, whereby identities chosen within the East-West dichotomy are zero-sum options. It is possible for individuals to attain bilingual proficiency. But proficiency does not equal primacy. When cultural primacy within this dual hegemony is dichotomized as “East” and

11 (Amsden, 2001)
“West”, the expression of cultural primacy becomes a decision of where one stands within the dichotomy. For BAC respondents, this decision meant prioritizing regional affiliations within the dual hegemonic framework. This resulted in Occidentalist predispositions.

Given the conditions of Marcotted Development, I present three theoretical implications. Firstly, discourses replicating the Orientalist paradigm put late-industrializing nations in compromising positions. Predispositions towards these reproductions should thus be carefully managed. Secondly, as late-industrializing nations operate within the dual hegemonic framework, primordial alignments come at a cost. Individuals could replicate the SC position of prioritizing the dominant within the dual hegemony, while remaining detached towards primordial “roots”. That is, Chineseness may be used, but without the emotional attachments that characterizes the BAC approach. Alternatively, the IC is also a feasible and perhaps more effective alternative. Chapter 6 cautions of Chinese sensitivity towards fellow Chinese who appear to refuse primordial identifications. The IC position echoes Su’s recommendations for Chinese Singaporeans “to handle emotional kinship with China while being rationally detached from China … a keen awareness that we are not China to be useful to them.”¹² Within the dual hegemonic framework, the habitus of mediocrity perhaps better equips for economic life than that shaped by affluence. This is in contrast to mono-hegemonic landscapes. Chua expresses this dual hegemonic requirement as “the ‘mix’ that counts, even if none of the components is uniquely Singaporean.”¹³. Thirdly, accelerated economic development comes at a cost. The attainment of affluence is a necessary, but insufficient condition for effective long term engagement within the global political economy. The building of (multi)cultural capital is essential. It enhances the understanding as to how peers of dominant cultures like to be spoken to, based on common preferences. Individuals need to understand when compliance is not appreciated, and how

¹² (Su, 2010)  
¹³ (Chua Beng Huat, cited in Kwek 2006)
to make a good show of independence without appearing belligerent. Knowing how to express like-mindedness without the invocation of Orientalism requires the accompaniment of the requisite cultural capital. How can these insights be applied for a better understanding on nation branding endeavors? This chapter concludes the thesis with the ensuing discussion.

**Applying Marcotted Development on a Nation Branding Analysis**

Nation branding studies predominantly adopt a marketing slant, focusing on the effectiveness of the content communicated by brand campaigns\(^{14}\). However, the successful branding of nations does not solely rely on brand stylistics. Future research on late-industrializing nation branding may wish to venture beyond pure readings of content. Existing studies predominantly focus on the immediate aftermath of a campaign\(^{15}\). Some longitudinal studies have been conducted. But they mainly focused on tracing how national rhetoric has changed over time, rather than analyzing the effects of old campaigns on current brand image\(^{16}\). Here, I examine the implications of Marcotted Development on late-industrializing nation branding initiatives. Using Singapore as the primary illustration, the circumstances characterizing its political economy are first examined.

Singapore, firstly, needs to manage the tendency to employ Orientalist constructions of the East-West dichotomy. Due to Marcotted Development, the replication of Orientalist discourses is ingrained within the late-industrializing predisposition. This predisposition is not unique to Singapore. Through the analysis of nation branding literatures\(^{17}\), I found the same Orientalist themes in the public statements made by state leaders of countries in late-industrializing Asia. Further, late-industrializing nation brand campaigns are often inspired by Western-based public relations agencies and

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\(^{14}\) See Chapter 2 and Appendix 2.1.  
\(^{15}\) (Ooi 2008)  
\(^{16}\) (Zhang 2008)  
\(^{17}\) See Chapter 2 for definition of nation branding.
image consultancies (predominantly UK and US)\textsuperscript{18}. Given these considerations, to effectively minimize late-industrializing dependency, the management of Orientalist discourse replications is needed. Zhang’s compilation of China’s changing political rhetoric, for instance, reveals the nation’s intended adjustments of its branding strategies.\textsuperscript{19} China’s attempt in changing its predisposition of belligerence into one characterized by “peaceful rise” is notable\textsuperscript{20}. The “charm offensive”\textsuperscript{21} reflects the determination of abstinence from Occidentalist rhetoric outlined in Chapter 6\textsuperscript{22}. That said, the controversies that China continues to be embroiled within, tempt the rhetoric’s invocation\textsuperscript{23}. Ideological indoctrinations can be demystified. But the changing of habitus predispositions is a more challenging matter.

In comparison, it is much less challenging for Singapore to minimize Occidentalist outbursts. The root of its constructions in Singapore can be traced to the aspiration to pitch itself as the “best of the East and West”. Nevertheless, in a bid to improve its regional standing, Singapore unwittingly dampened its branding pitch with the wrong tools. This could be explained by Katzenstein’s differentiation between political standing as credibility or esteem\textsuperscript{24}. A nation’s standing is increased through credibility when it possesses the credible ability to do what it declares to do to its adversaries. This is the ability to “stand up” to international pressure.\textsuperscript{25} In contrast, a nation’s standing is increased through esteem when it is able to “stand for” its

\textsuperscript{18} (Szondi 2008:202-203; Youde 2009:132)
\textsuperscript{19} (2008:310-313)
\textsuperscript{20} (Zhang 1996:41)
\textsuperscript{21} (Kurlantzick 2007)
\textsuperscript{22} (2008:303)
\textsuperscript{23} See (AFP 2010): Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao on Sunday rejected foreign pressure on Beijing to allow its currency, the yuan, to appreciate, warning other countries to stop ‘finger-pointing’.” ; “he (Yang Jiechi, Chinese Foreign Minister) accused the United States of plotting against China, seemed to poke fun of Vietnam's socialist credentials and apparently threatened Singapore, according to US and Asian officials in the room. 'China is a big country and other countries are small countries, and that's just a fact,' he said, staring directly at Singapore's Foreign Minister George Yeo, according to several participants at the meeting.” (The Washington Post, cited in The Straits Times 2010b); “Japan will reap as it has sown, if it continues to act recklessly” (Jiang Yu, on Japanese seizure of Chinese fishermen and boat in the disputed Diaoyu/Senkaku territorial waters, cited in Hirokawa 2010).
\textsuperscript{24} (2010)
\textsuperscript{25} (Katzenstein 2010)
values and beliefs\textsuperscript{26}. It represents the esteem accorded to a nation based on the “attractiveness” of its brand associations\textsuperscript{27}. The voicing of Occidentalist rhetoric alleviated Singapore’s previous Auto Orientalist postures. But this enactment only succeeded in improving Singapore’s standing in terms of esteem, not credibility. The nation has some capability of delivering its support to regional partners, but poses no threat to its so-called “adversaries”. This is perhaps a blessing in disguise, in that “adversaries” are thus not inclined to take its bellicosity seriously. Singapore state leaders using Occidentalist rhetoric, as outlined in Chapter 6, are likely aware of this. Its use appears to be a calculated risk taken with measurable success in acquiring regional esteem. As with the proliferation of ethnic management in Southeast Asia\textsuperscript{28}, the popularity of Occidentalist rhetoric is based on the low probability of it backfiring. That being said, its utility only serves Singapore’s aspiration to arbitrate cross-cultural economic activity to a limited extent. The gain from using Orientalist justifications works only for short term and sabotages long term value creation. In the process of Orientalist discourse replications\textsuperscript{29}, barriers to further growth potential were also enacted. A campaign thus cannot be concluded as successful unless its long-term ramifications are considered. Its success is determined both at the point of implementation and whether the necessity emerges to undo implementation fault-lines in a decade to come. An examination of the resource gaps that require further cultivation provides a more complete picture of campaign effectiveness. In order to do so, an investigation into past factors contributing to Singapore’s Orientalist

\textsuperscript{26} Katzenstein’s concepts are offshoots to Nye’s “Command Power” and “Co-optive Power” (Nye 2008:30). Nye’s concepts represent the wielding of power to elicit compliance. This thesis thus employed Katzenstein’s terms as they more adequately describe Singapore’s situation of a small country aspiring to enhance its national standing.

\textsuperscript{27} (Nye 2008:30)

\textsuperscript{28} See Chapter 1.

\textsuperscript{29} The replication of both constructions can be derived from Ooi’s compilation of Singapore political rhetoric. Due to “our colonial days” Singapore perceives itself as “very close to the Western world” (Baey Yam Keng, Director of Creative Industries Singapore, cited in Ooi 2008:292). Yet, “founder of modern Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, does not forget a show of independence by expressing that “the Chinese model has challenged the western view of development” (Ooi 2008:298).
predispositions is needed. Applying the same framework for the examination of the ECI case study, an analysis of brand state predispositions is conducted.

Singapore’s historical status as a vassal and experience of accelerated development mean strong cultural capital is unlikely to emerge. This condition is often expressed in the form of Singapore being “an immigrant society”\textsuperscript{30}, in need of cultivation into a “gracious” one\textsuperscript{31}. Chua, likewise pointed out that Singapore had no indigenous political system to boast of\textsuperscript{32}. These expressions highlight Singapore’s predicament as a wealthy nation that nevertheless continues to act poorly. State leaders may have the best intentions in attempting to re-engineer national identity. But even with the willingness to overcome old habits, campaigns may still be limited by cultural capital considerations. Singapore lacks the cultural resources to hone an identity independent from the Orientalist paradigm. Yet to remain within this paradigm within a dual hegemonic landscape is a tall order requiring strong cultural credentials. Lee Kuan Yew conceded, 30 years after the implementation of the Speak Mandarin campaigns, the belief that a child could acquire two language proficiencies with equal élan was misconceived\textsuperscript{33}. This reinforces this thesis’ proposition on the significance of linguistic primacies as cultural capital. Also significant is Oon’s report on the changes in the Chinese Singaporean’s linguistic primacy over time. While only 1 in 10 was English-primacy in 1982, 6 in 10 are English-primacy now\textsuperscript{34}. This reflects the preferred cultural capital accumulation by the population within the dual hegemonic framework, despite state Mandarinization efforts. Will childhood socioeconomic background play a more significant role in moderating individual predispositions than linguistic primacy in future? This thesis argues that it is unlikely. The “English-educated” and “Chinese-educated” divide continues to be significant in Singapore.\textsuperscript{35} The divide

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{Ong2009} (Ong 2009:89)
\bibitem{Wan2008} (Wan and Tan 2008:145)
\bibitem{2009} (2009:241)
\bibitem{Oon2010} (Oon 2010)
\bibitem{2010} (2010)
\bibitem{Oon2010} (Oon 2010)
\end{thebibliography}
remains despite the fact that the majority of the population now come from English-medium schools. Insofar as dual hegemony characterizes the late-industrializing landscape, the divide will persist, even if it takes another form. When campaigns cease to be relevant, they cannot simply be overwritten with new ones. Orientalist discourses, once internalized, are enduring constructions that penetrate the mindset and habits of a nation. To undo their effects is near impossible. Nations can at best only minimize them through an arduous re-engineering effort over an extended time frame. Summarily, overly harsh ethnic management policies that worked in previous political climates may hinder a nation’s future developmental initiatives. Nevertheless, remedial efforts are worthwhile in alleviating the long term impact of Orientalist predispositions. Doing something to minimize the long term ramifications before receiving the full-blown impact is better than doing nothing.

Ideally, nations need to develop the required cultural capital before rolling out campaigns. With due consideration given to the time constraints of late-industrializing nations, this thesis recommends moderate “acculturation programs” to rid nations of Auto Orientalist/ Occidentalist predispositions, which will run alongside the brand campaigns. Perhaps, with regard to Singapore, as an implicit acknowledgement of the previously draconian misdemeanors, current political rhetoric appears to have mellowed. The recent remedial efforts in ethnic management appear promising as a precursor to this endeavor.

A concerted effort in mending previously draconian measures is observed. Recent media reports work toward reinstating the contributions of independence activists previously branded as “Chinese chauvinists”. Work is also done to correct misconceptions that Singapore state leaders were anti-Indian (due to their “favoritism” towards the Chinese). Even the institution

36 Oon defines “Chinese-educated” as “not just the ageing alumni from the Chinese-medium schools of an earlier era, but also a younger generation of bilingual professionals and students.” (Oon 2010)
37 (Cai 2010a; Cai and Au Yong 2009; Li 2009)
38 (Datta-Ray 2010)
of the CMIO matrix (Chinese, Malay, Indian, Others)\(^{39}\) has taken on a more open-ended slant to its implementation.\(^ {40}\) The commitment to creating a “common space” where individuals explore more options in ethnic identifications was also pledged. These, of course, were accompanied by habit-disciplining policies. Language policies now guide, rather than command, predisposition formations in school. For instance, the association of Tamil as “mother-tongue” no longer applies to all ethnic Indian students. The introduction of other Indian languages (e.g. Hindi) into the education curriculum is slated\(^ {41}\). Perhaps the most symbolic of all is the move implemented in 2010 for children of mixed racial marriages to have both racial identifications registered in the citizen identity cards\(^ {42}\). The commitment of undoing previous prohibitions is commendable. It remains to be seen if these measures will eventually lead to the cultivation of the requisite cultural capital. Future initiatives will do well in alleviating Orientalist habitus predispositions.

Work needs to be done in alleviating Auto Orientalist postures. I propose a quicker pace at expanding the “common space” for organic ethnic identifications. This encourages the development of a population that is more confident of their standing within the global political economy. Material affluence alone does little if unaccompanied by cultural capital. That being said, marginal economic circumstances could also produce problems, as illustrated by the “least affluent” respondents. The continued maintenance of an affluent middle class majority needs to remain a key state concern.

The next move in alleviating the effects of Occidentalist replications is much more challenging. It involves demonstrating assertiveness without incurring perceptions of adversarial intent. China, for instance, is poised for an increasingly assertive role in the global scene. But despite accelerated economic growth, this aspiration remains hampered by a cultural void. The

\(^{39}\) See Chapter 1.

\(^{40}\) (Lee 2006; Yu-Foo 2006)

\(^{41}\) (The Straits Times 2007c)

\(^{42}\) (Tay 2010)
ascendant hegemon is thus also in urgent need of building its distinctive cultural capital. Expanding on Nye’s concept of “soft power”\textsuperscript{43}, Tu, for instance, recommends the deployment of Confucianism as China’s cultural persuasion\textsuperscript{44}. Likewise, Singapore needs to cultivate the cultural capital to express confidence without appearing obnoxious. Lee Kuan Yew’s amended belief that a small country should act in a way befitting its physical stature marks the beginning of new initiatives\textsuperscript{45}. The insights derived from this thesis’ findings best express what these new initiatives represent: the conversion of BAC postures to IC ones. The constraints of Marcotted Development may be alleviated if the management of dual hegemony does not degenerate into Orientalist reproductions of the East-West dichotomy. In contrast to the previous declarations of an alternative order to Western development, recent state leaders remind that Western investments remain a mainstay of the economic well-being of Singapore\textsuperscript{46}. A visible effort was observed in the attempt to balance the hegemonic tensions between “East” and “West”. On the international platform, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong lauded China for having “energized the whole of Asia and has changed the global balance”, while reiterating that “no other country can take its (America’s) place” in Asia (Lee 2010). The recent drive in Singapore, encouraging its citizens to be accepting of all foreign nationals, regardless of regional origins, appears promising\textsuperscript{47}.

I conclude that persistent Orientalist replications in Singapore are detrimental to its developmental objectives. Instances of continued foreign

\textsuperscript{43} (2003)  
\textsuperscript{44} (2010)  
\textsuperscript{45} (Au Yong 2010). “‘The first thing you learn as a small country is to act small and humble. If you go around telling people what to do, they will say, ‘You're out of your depth, you don't understand my problems.’ So we keep our mouths shut unless we are asked... But even then, let me tell you, we had a Singaporean, not an official... In the evening he was drinking with a Chinese friend, China-Chinese friend, and the China-Chinese says, ‘How old is your country?’ ‘40 years.’ ‘Mine is 5,000 years.’ So that puts an end to any teaching. They got 5,000 years of experience, what more do you want?’ MM Lee when asked if Singapore could influence the world to change its behaviour.”  
\textsuperscript{46}(Lee 2009b). In comparison to the strident Occidentalist rhetoric compiled in Chapter 6, the 2009 Prime Minister’s National Day Rally rarely attempted a maneuver on “Western decadence”, short of the mention of American obesity in its Mandarin speech (Lee 2009a).  
\textsuperscript{47} (Hussain and Cassandra 2010)
investments appear to refute this assertion. The Prime Minister, for instance, proudly announced the relocation of the Rolls Royce global headquarters (marine division) to Singapore.\textsuperscript{48} This signified yet another achievement by the state. However, these success stories are incomplete unless considered in tandem with the instances of MNC relocation away from Singapore. In 2010, Singapore ceased to be ECI’s regional headquarters. The Asia Pacific market has been divided into parcels, where the most lucrative markets, China and India, are placed under one reporting line to the corporate headquarters, independent of Singapore’s. The Vice-President, at the point this thesis is written, is based in Beijing to head the Chinese operations. Although the Singapore office remains, its significance within the Asia Pacific has declined. A single case study of the ECI may be far from representative of the commercial decisions of MNCs globally. But it does provide insights to the push factors against Singapore’s brand appeal. As a short-term measure, the need to frame brand campaigns in formats recognizable to global investors supports the replication of the Orientalist paradigm. But as a long-term measure, it works against the appeal of the Singapore brand\textsuperscript{49}. Although other factors may override this attenuation of brand appeal, their infallibility should not be assumed. An examination of how Orientalist predispositions can be minimized is needed. To do so, an awareness of how these predispositions function within the global political economy is essential.

\textbf{Conclusion}

This thesis examined, through the late-industrialization perspective, how Chineseness is managed in developmental state Singapore. Chineseness is used as a resource for Singapore to strategically position itself within the global market, employing the familiar notions of the Orientalist paradigm. This is common to late-industrializing nations, as income for these economies comes primarily from first-mover foreign investments. For better or worse, the

\textsuperscript{48} (Lee 2009b)
\textsuperscript{49} See Chapters 5 and 6.
emergence of dual hegemony puts an end to the “success formula” of replicating Auto Orientalist predispositions.

Marcotted Development outlines the current situation within the late-industrializing landscape. Accelerated development enables the rapid attainment of material affluence without the luxury of time to cultivate the accompanying cultural capital. This however, does not imply that late-industrializing societies are devoid of cultural capital. But within the dual hegemonic framework, the cultural capital possessed may be mismatched with the capitalist-industrial order.

The above extensions of Marcotted Development put nation branding analyses of late-industrializing societies in another perspective. Existing nation branding literatures adopt a marketing slant in the analysis of public diplomacy effectiveness. A commercial approach focuses on tangible economic imperatives, as if the intangible noneconomic realms do not matter. But as made apparent in this inquiry, culture does not disappear the moment one dons a corporate suit. The persistence of Orientalist themes, despite commercially-oriented brand campaigns, testifies that habit-triggers override rational calculations of economic benefit. I proposed that nation branding, as a marketing endeavor, needs to confront the structural-historical factors of a country, because they shape national predispositions.

Branding exercises are guided state leaders’ assessments of where a nation stands within the global political economy. But this assessment may not be entirely objective. Nations, unlike products, are inextricably bound to long-standing historical developments. Past experiences tend to interfere in decisions on how a nation is most competitively positioned. With this in mind, a Bourdieuan analytical framework is most apt in piecing together the various Orientalist replications. By examining brand campaigns in terms of a nation’s social reproduction, a better understanding of how historical experiences reproduce branding predispositions is attained. To render Bourdieu’s framework more relevant to late-industrializing societies, I extended the analysis with the concept of Marcotted Development.
What took a decade to implement may take several more decades to undo. The adjustment of habit-triggers is challenging. Change is needed when a nation’s cultural capital is mismatched with global hegemonic demands. But without the requisite cultural capital to exact the change in habit-triggers, old predispositions tend to override newfound awareness. Change is needed, not only of population mindsets, but also of the habit-triggers from previous initiatives. This is especially so when draconian approaches used to drive state initiatives. With this understanding on the persistence of habit-triggers, the source of an effective brand campaign is revealed. An effective brand campaign is backed by the cultural capital to deliver campaign content in a manner appealing to global investors. Specific to late-industrializing brand states, the campaigns should reflect the understanding of the long-term benefits of not engaging in Orientalist discourse constructions. Effective brand campaigns invest in strengthening a nation’s standing within the global order.
This inquiry had initially intended to examine the impact of ethnic management initiatives on individual race-ethnic identifications. In this, the study sought an understanding of ethnic management’s impact at two levels. Firstly, how state power is consolidated through ethnic management policies. Secondly, how ethnic management initiatives shaped the individual’s race-ethnic identifications, thereby influencing his/her approach to cross-cultural economic activity.

As the inquiry progresses, it was found that the deployment of ethnic management by the state is not solely for the purpose of consolidating state influence. Other than consolidating state power, ethnic management initiatives are also designed to align a population with global hegemonic imperatives. While ethnic management tackles the domestic population, nation branding manages the nation’s international profile, so as to gain a strategic position within the global political economy. At the same time, nation branding establishes signposts to the population on the requisite behavior for ensuring collective affluence. Ethnic management ensures that the claims forwarded by nation branding are fulfilled. Therefore, Singapore’s past deployments of ethnic management closely mirrors the changing developmental imperatives of the nation’s political economy (Chapter 1). In turn, developmental imperatives are derived from shifts in hegemonic influences within the global political economy. Further, ethnic management was found to be particularly prevalent amongst affluent late-industrializing nations. This suggests that late-industrializing economies need to be more responsive to global hegemonic demands. In exchange for this responsiveness, the nations are rewarded with economic affluence.

If the racial state is formed out of the necessity to be responsive to global hegemonic demands, then the study of ethnic management cannot be solely restricted to how the state consolidates its power. In the review of
literatures in Chapter 2, most studies on the racial state restricted the discussion to how state controls were implemented to consolidate its influence on the population. This focus makes sense, with due consideration that most of the studies were conducted on first-mover nation-states. Relative to late-industrializing nation-states, first-mover nation states are much less at the mercy of global hegemonic demands. However, as this study focuses on ethnic management in the late-industrializing region, the scope needs to be expanded to accommodate the constraints of Marcotted Development. Given the circumstances of accelerated development, the predispositions acquired prior to the participation in capitalist-industrialization may continue to persist. The dependency on first-mover investments and expertise also mandates the recognition of dual hegemonic presence. As such, the examination of ethnic management in the late-industrializing context cannot be conducted with the nation as an isolated entity. The analysis of late-industrializing ethnic management imperatives needs to be carried out in tandem with considerations of where the nation stood historically within the global political economy. How would the above constraints posed by Marcotted Development, then, be manifested in the individual’s engagement in cross-cultural economic activity?

Using the notion of Chineseness, I explored the race-ethnic identifications of the ECI Chinese Singaporean corporate representatives (Chapters 4-7). It was found that most respondents echo state rhetoric. However, given the array of ethnic management initiatives introduced, respondents may prioritize one set of imperatives over another. Moreover, the choice seemed moderated by the respondent’s childhood socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds. This finding corresponded with how late-industrializing nations relate to its position within the global political economy. The findings suggested that Marcotted Development constraints shape how states respond to global hegemonic demands, but the responses may be further moderated by where a nation stood prior to its engagement
with the global political economy. The predisposed responses are then introduced to the individual through ethnic management initiatives.

Based on the analyses forwarded in this thesis, there is little hope for overriding the logic of Marcotted Development. The predispositions of individuals, collectives and political economies, once set, are harder to undo than economic circumstances. However, this does not mean that moderate change attempts are impossible to attain. The awareness of Marcotted Development can facilitate moderate attempts at minimizing its replications amongst the ascendant, thereby creating a better balance of power between the core and periphery of the global political economy. This opens up the space for the next global hegemon(s) to define the next scheme of discourse constructions. As for small developmental states, the role of Singapore is to adapt.
Appendices

Appendix 2

Guide to the Appendix 2

The literatures reviewed in the Appendices (2.1, 2.2a and 2.2b) are organized through the SWOT analysis of “Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats”\(^1\). While cultures may differ, value differences are assigned by the authors. The SWOT analysis lends its relevance by facilitating the identification of the authors’ value assignments. It highlights the authors’ interpretation of what are deemed “Opportunities” and “Threats” in respondent dispositions. These identifications, when read in tandem with the authors’ descriptions of differences in cultural traits, lend insights to the types of value assignments on the respondent groups by the authors. The “cultural traits” of collectives, as reported by Orientalist discourses, are compiled under “Strengths” and “Weaknesses”. Traits the authors believe to be vital to the competitiveness of a collective are listed under “Strengths” (S). Conversely, traits the authors believe to weaken the competitiveness of a collective are listed under “Weaknesses” (W). In addition, the value of these traits is ascertained by its cross-cultural comparison with other collectives. Statements on the competitiveness of these traits are compiled under “Opportunities” and “Threats”. By examining the “Opportunities” and “Threats” identified by the author(s), their inferences to the “Strengths” and “Weaknesses” can be obtained. Traits inferred by the author(s) as relatively competitive (to other cultural groups) are compiled under “Opportunities” (O). Conversely, traits inferred by the author(s) as barriers to this competitiveness are compiled under “Threats” (T). For instance, assertions that Eurocentric cultures adopt engaging communication styles (Strength) and Chinese culture value the avoidance of confrontation (Weakness)\(^2\) does not make explicit the intent of cultural stratification (see Figure 2.2). But when collective traits are compared alongside the overt arguments, inferences on cultural stratification are made explicit. Arguments that engaging collectives are more open to

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\(^1\) (Pahl and Richter 2009)

\(^2\) (Lu and Hsu 2008:76)
communication, unlike confrontation avoidant collectives\textsuperscript{3}, imply that former group is more likely to fulfill crucial job functions better.

\textsuperscript{3} (Lu and Hsu 2008:85-86)
Appendix 2.1

Auto Orientalism and Negative Occidentalist amongst Asian Nations

One of the channels through which nations engage in dialogue is through its brand campaigns. Investing nations express what they seek in potential markets. Sellers respond to the needs of the investors and may attempt to meet, or resist them.

The business of brand campaigns is to communicate the corporate identity of a product to the market. Within the market, some investors will be deemed a more valuable target audience than the others. Being the global hegemon, it comes as no surprise that the United States is the most-valued target audience of nation brand campaigns. Furthermore, when the key investors cluster around the neighboring regions of the US (the West), the communication of brand identities needs a medium best understood by this region. Within the global political economy, the West had come to know exogenous regions through the Orientalist paradigm. In Asia, nation branding is thus worded with strong allusions to the familiar East-West dichotomy.

Nation branding literatures have by far focused on buyer-seller relationships unencumbered by considerations on national pride. The conventional marketing scenario, where sellers will do all to please the buyer, is used in nation branding theory. Under some circumstances, the seller is much less at the mercy of the buyer. Sellers may establish a monopoly by co-opting other sellers, thereby fortifying its bargaining edge against the buyer. This however, has not led to brand rhetoric free of the historical ambivalences of the East-West dichotomy. As this review will come to show, the outcome is that different modes of Orientalist discourses may be preferred. It was found that two main types of Orientalist paradigms are employed amongst late-industrializing nations: Auto Orientalist and Negative Occidentalist paradigms.

A special feature on Asian nations is being selected from the journal, *Place Branding and Public Diplomacy*. All articles in this feature were reviewed, with the exception of one addressing destination branding for
tourism in Kerala, India. Nation branding for tourism is excluded because tourism advertising banks on exotic destinations as a selling point. Often, exoticism works against other developmental imperatives of the nation\(^4\).

Nation branding literatures provide insights to how nations position themselves strategically in the global market. The responses of late-industrializing nations to Dominant Orientalist discourse are reviewed. The literatures reveal the target audience of these brand campaigns, the responses to the imperatives of this target audience, and how responses are shaped by national historical circumstances. The concerns of late-industrializing Asia originate from US imperatives. The knowledge of US priorities is vital to the understanding of the manners in which Asian nations frame their brand campaigns, and the reasons for the emergence of Orientalist notions in these exercises.

Five articles featuring a variety of country profiles in Asia (China, Iran, Singapore, South Korea, United State’s role in Asia Pacific) were extracted from the special feature, “‘Nation Branding’ in Asia”. In addition, an article from the same journal on three Middle Eastern nations (Oman, Qatar and United Arab Emirates) was also reviewed. This article was added as a point of comparison to Iran, a nation featured in the special feature. The developmental imperatives of the three Middle Eastern nations were often frustrated by associations with terrorism. But the approach to Orientalist discourses differs from that of Iran. An Auto Orientalist approach characterized the three Middle Eastern nations. Despite the sharing of common regional and cultural profiles with Iran, their approach was more similar to South Korea. Iran, on the other hand, adopted the Negative Occidentalist approach, as with China. Singapore adopted a mixed approach of Auto Orientalist and Negative Occidentalist discourses. The excerpts from this review are presented according to the identified Orientalist discourse constructions in Figure 2.1.

\(^4\) (Anholt 2008; Sanches and Sekles 2008)
In Figure 2.1, the SWOT highlights what are deemed “Strengths”, “Weaknesses”, “Opportunities” and “Threats” in nation branding. A nation communicates its moral position on global issues in order to make explicit what potential investors might expect if they were to establish their business operations there. The excerpts organized under “Strengths” (S) represent the moral positions that created positive impressions according to global hegemonic imperatives. These “positive” impressions guide the formation of “positive” dispositions towards the presence of the globally hegemonic investors, termed “Opportunities” (O) in this analysis. Conversely, moral positions believed to weaken the attractiveness of a nation are listed under “Weaknesses” (W). “Weaknesses” translates into dispositions that require adjustments, as they are deemed “Threats” (T) that will deter investor confidence. The SWOT highlights what are deemed “Strengths the authors’ interpretations of the national branding strategies though these statements.

The importance of understanding US priorities is demonstrated by its inclusion in the special feature on Asian brand campaigns. The significance of US priorities is reflected in the way Asian brand campaigns appear to either comply, or resist against them. US priorities were communicated through the identification of its “friends” or “foes” in Asia. The target audience of the US campaign is made apparent through the SWOT analysis of Graham’s article, “US Public Diplomacy in the Asia Pacific” (see Figure 1, “Dominant Orientalist”). Asian nations that won positive appraisal by the US are rewarded by special mentions as “key allies” (Dominant Orientalist, “Strengths”)\(^5\). Countries earning this stamp-of-approval (Japan, South Korea) can expect future opportunities for joint cooperation with the global hegemon. They can expect to play key support roles when the US exercises its influence on “security, economic and political interest” (Dominant Orientalist, “Opportunities”)\(^6\). The US campaign communicates to the Asian market, that Japan and South Korea are “friends”. Markets who want the patronage of US

\(^5\) (Graham 2008:352)  
\(^6\) (Graham 2008:337)
investments should therefore model themselves after the two Asian exemplars. Compliant Asian nations encourage the maintenance of US presence in the region. For instance, “Japan’s unwillingness and inability to oppose Washington”, is notable\(^7\).

Asian nations that incurred negative appraisal were handled with US rhetoric that sounded like mild reproaches. Those that had fallen short of US expectations were referred to by generalized regional terms (“Asia Pacific”, “East Asia” or “Southeast Asia”) (Dominant Orientalist, “Weaknesses” and “Threats”)\(^8\). The only threat to US hegemonic influence being singled out with direct references was China.\(^9\) From the perspective of “Beijing as a source of (alternative) trade and regional order” (Dominant Orientalist, “Weaknesses”), the United States expresses its dissatisfaction with Asia. It highlights that not all nations are as unconditional in their support of the United States. Nations drawn to replicate the negative example of Beijing are warned against turning their backs on the US: “small Asian nation-states should be balancing against the rising China, but increasingly they rally toward it out of Asian cultural pride and an understanding of the historical-cultural reality of Chinese dominance.”\(^10\). These nations may need to bear the consequences of dwelling on issues that dramatizes the regional “historical antagonisms and cultural heterogeneity” (Dominant Orientalist, “Threats”)\(^11\). US insecurity towards Chinese ascendancy manifests over national affiliations. By commanding that an overt choice be made on a nation’s position towards US imperatives, old Orientalist enactments of the East-West dichotomy are imposed. US branding rhetoric can thus be said to be Dominant Orientalist in nature. This campaign strategy is thus the contemporary enactments of the rifts between the Occidental-Oriental divisions. Firstly, the hegemonic imposition is exercised

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\(^7\) (Radtke 2007:396-397)
\(^8\) (Graham 2008:337-353)
\(^9\) (Graham 2008:353)
\(^10\) (Khanna 2008)
\(^11\) (Graham 2008:337)
Figure 2.1: SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis of Nation Branding in Asia (Iran, China, Middle East, Singapore, South Korea, United State’s role in Asia Pacific)

**IRAN**
- **S:** “humanity has had a deep wound on its tired body caused by impious powers for centuries.” (Mahmoud Ahmadenijad, cited in Chaudhri and Fyke 2008:326)
- **W:** “the Iranian nation is a victim of terrorism.” (Mahmoud Ahmadenijad, cited in Chaudhri and Fyke 2008:326)
- **O:** “Some big powers still behave like the victors of the World War and regard other states and nations, even those that had nothing to do with the war, as the vanquished, and humiliate other nations and demand extortion from a condescending position similar to that of the master / servant relationship of medieval ages.” (Mahmoud Ahmadenijad, cited in Chaudhri and Fyke 2008:325)
- **T:** “big powers’ create ‘nonexistent enemies’ and an insecure atmosphere so that they can ‘control all in the name of combating insecurity and terrorism’.” (Mahmoud Ahmadeinjad, cited in Chaudhri and Fyke 2008:325)

**CHINA**
- **S:** “The Washington Post observed that ’While it [China] initially concentrated [use of soft power] on the immediate neighborhood of Southeast Asia, China has lately expanded its soft power play into Latin America, Central Asia and Africa. … a survey conducted by the BBC in 2005 shows that 48 per cent of people polled in 22 countries said China ’s role was mainly positive - more than the case of the United States and Russia - and only 30 per cent saw it as mainly negative.” (Zhang 2008:303)
- **W:** “the officials often cut a harsh, dogmatic image that does them little good overseas.” (The New York Times, cited in Zhang 2008:308)
- **O:** “(On US-China trade ties): principle of consultation on an equal footing (sic.)” (Wu Yi, Vice-Premier, cited in Zhang 2008:313)
- **T:** “The workings of Singapore social security differ from that of Western welfare states. This aids in our creation of a distinctively Chinese social security.” (Yan 2007)

**USA**
- **S:** “bilateral ties with its key allies Japan and South Korea.” (Graham 2008:352)
- **W:** “The rise of East Asia in diplomatic and economic terms has significant implications for Washington’s influence in Southeast Asia, as leaders of the region look increasingly to Beijing as a source of trade and regional order.” (Graham 2008:353)
- **O:** “the Asian context: a major sphere of US security, economic and political interest.” (Graham 2008:337)
- **T:** “The Asia Pacific is also a region in which historical antagonisms and cultural heterogeneity still looms large” (Graham 2008:337)
### MIDDLE EAST

**S:** “Economic remedies on their own cannot yield long-term results if they are not paired with serious political and social liberalisation. .. Initiative, excellence, and innovation cannot take hold in closed societies.” (King Abdullah, Jordan, cited in Cooper and Momani 2009:109)

**O:** “the regional debate on how to promote progressive political and liberal economic change was initiated by the United Nations Development Program’s 2002 report entitled the Arab Human Development Report (AHDR).” (Cooper and Momani 2009:108)

**W:** “business people have strong incentives to counter backward-looking isolationist tendencies that challenge both the economic and political stability of the region.” (John Taylor, Under Secretary for International Affairs, US Treasury, cited in Cooper and Momani 2009:111)

**T:** “there are also persistent negative images of the Middle East and the Arab world in general. As noted, one of these images is a dangerous and aggressive Middle East that acts as a competitor of the West.” (Cooper and Momani 2009:113)

### SINGAPORE

**S:** “Singapore is based in Asia but because of our colonial days, the way we have connected to the world, the way our education is structured, we are very close to the western world.” (Baey Yam Keng, Director of Creative Industries Singapore, cited in Ooi 2008:292);

**O:** “While a large part of Asia, including China, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia, is not known for the protection of intellectual property (IP), Singapore stands out in the crowd… Companies can file for protection for their IP globally from Singapore, as it is a signatory to major IP conventions and treaties such as the Patent Cooperation Treaty, the Paris Convention, the Berne Convention and the Madrid Protocol.” (Ooi 2008:293-294)

**W:** “founder of modern Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, recently argued that the Chinese model has challenged the western view of development…” (Ooi 2008:298)

**T:** “Foreign creative workers, for example, are welcomed because they are there to produce certain types of products. They are not allowed to engage in local politics and stir up ethnic and religious trouble… Paradoxically, a stable and organized image of Singapore was eventually propagated, which fits well into the creative Singapore branding…” (Ooi 2008:298)

### SOUTH KOREA

**S:** “They are a democracy in a western sense (Senior Accountant at a major investment company)... I just feel kinship to them because of their alliance to the United States and because they are also a democratic nation (Vice-President at a private university).” (cited in Lee et al. 2008:278-279)

**O:** “South Korea has been a longtime political ally…” (Lee et al. 2008:273)

**W:** “I had an uncle who served in the Korean War. And I’ve heard stories (Human Resources Manager at a global manufacturing company) ... Parallels, or lack thereof, in Vietnam (CEO and anchor of a local television network)... When I was there in the Korean War, things were so miserable. People there were basically a peasant class. China still has to deal with that today. North Korea has remained that way. Today, through education, and through having a democratic society, there has been much change (Art Director of a magazine).” (cited in Lee et al. 2008:278-279)

**T:** “Whenever I think of South Korea, I think of North Korea (CEO of an industry association).” (cited in Lee et al. 2008:279); “except the protests against the (US) military. It just kind of ticks me off... we spent millions over there in their country, and it thrives today because of us (Vice-President at a major commercial bank).” (cited in Lee et al. 2008:279)
from the outside of the region of control. This is reminiscent of the Occidentalist imposition of Orientalist notions on exotic targets of imperialist ambitions. The US exercise of control as a “resident power”\(^\text{12}\) of Asia makes explicit the right to define how the region is to think and act, even if the hegemon is not strictly a member of the region. Secondly, the US uses its hegemonic authority to prescribe that loyalty to the US must override regional affiliations. If Southeast Asian leaders “look increasingly to Beijing as a source of trade and regional order”, their support for the US must surely have declined. The zero-sum contest between US and China, which leaves the region with no option of pledging its affiliations to both, can only be understood when placed within the perspective that East and West are irreconcilable. This becomes more apparent as the other excerpts are discussed: the support for the US is assessed based on the extent Asian nations have successfully “westernized”. By surveying Asian nations in terms of Dominant Orientalist discourse, Asian nations are either “friend” or “foe”. From this perspective, the United States communicates its cautionary through Beijing’s example. A critical outcome to making enemies with the United States, for instance, is manifested in its isolationist policies against China.\(^\text{13}\) The past refusal to award the most-favored-nation status to China is characteristic of US refusal to award business opportunities to “foes”. Nations who wish to avoid becoming a “foe” should not follow Beijing’s example.

Most Asian nations participating in the global economy would adopt brand strategies that market themselves as “friends” of first-mover nations (see Figure 2.1, “Auto Orientalist”). The articles reviewed shows that small Middle Eastern nations\(^\text{14}\), South Korea\(^\text{15}\) and Singapore\(^\text{16}\) adopt Auto Orientalist discourse in their nation branding campaigns. These nations comply with the dominant buyer’s expectations by fashioning themselves according to the demands of Western investors, the target audience of Auto

\(^{12}\) (Armitage 2010; Gates 2009)
\(^{13}\) (Huan 1994:435)
\(^{14}\) (Cooper and Momani 2009)
\(^{15}\) (Lee et al. 2008)
\(^{16}\) (Ooi 2008)
Orientalist discourse. As mentioned earlier in the discussion of Dominant Orientalist rhetoric by the US, being on “friendly” terms with the global hegemon is contingent upon the extent an “Asian nation” has “westernized”. An Auto Orientalist position forwards the belief that “Asian nations” have to come to adopt Western cultures and practices in order to gain an accord with “Western nations”. This notion infers that “Asian nations” lack the positive traits possessed by Western ones, and have to come to terms with embracing an alternative set of beliefs and practices that were not originally their own.

Feedback by US opinion leaders on South Korea shows the nation has an edge over other late-industrializing nations. South Korea was viewed favorably as “They are a democracy in the Western sense” (Auto Orientalist, “Strengths”). This willingness to abide by the rules of the game is an important precondition for positive diplomatic relations with first-mover economies. South Korea’s efforts in becoming a “Western” democracy is rewarded by the special mention in US branding rhetoric as a strategic ally in Asia (Auto Orientalist, “Opportunities”)17. The Middle Eastern cases, in comparison, have gained much less progress in “westernization”. Jordanian alliance with Western first-movers is thus framed in terms of the openness towards “westernization”. The pledge to abandon existing practices to embrace “serious political and social liberalization” is expressed (Auto Orientalist, “Strengths”). The encouragement cues communicated by “progressive” Middle Eastern leaders offer entry to first-mover sponsored organizations like the United Nations Development Program. This move provides opportunities for the reception of “progressive political and liberal economic change” (Auto Orientalist, Opportunities)18, and with it, the influx of Western investments. Likewise, Singapore courts Western investments by declaring its affiliations with the Western world through its colonial history and Anglicized education system (Auto Orientalist, “Strengths”)19.

17 (Graham 2008:352; Lee et al. 2008:203)
18 (Cooper and Momani 2009:108)
19 (Ooi 2008:292)
From the Auto Orientalist perspective, Asian nations need to disown some negative (Eastern) cultural traits before they can develop positive (Western) ones. Yet, “Asian-ness” cannot be fully shed, further confirming Orientalist notions on the irreconcilability of the East-West dichotomy. The South Korean example shows how an “Asian nation” may have successfully “westernized” through the embracement of democratic political institutions, but remains within the semi-peripheral. An “Asian” nation cannot shed its “primordial” associations, no matter how “westernized” it becomes. Despite the successful efforts at democratization, US opinion leaders continue to associate South Korea with its neighboring communist (or ex-communist) regimes (Auto Orientalist, “Threats”)\(^20\). In addition, past incidences of defiance against US hegemonic imperatives (e.g. protesting US military presence) can significantly reduce South Korea’s brand attractiveness, despite its other achievements (Auto Orientalist, “Threats”)\(^21\). In the Middle Eastern case, Cooper and Momani believes the “backward looking and isolationist policies” must end (Auto Orientalist, “Weaknesses”)\(^22\). The image of being “dangerous and aggressive… a competitor to the West” can lead to the loss of opportunities for being “anti-Western” (Auto Orientalist, “Threats”)\(^23\). This shows the persistent challenges experienced by the Middle East’s attempts at dissociations with terrorism, whether one belongs to the “progressive” or “backward-looking isolationist” camps. Singapore straddles between Auto Orientalist and Negative Occidentalist constructions. Encouragement cues by the US on “westernization” draws nations to take pride in its strongly “westernized” identity (Auto Orientalist, “Strengths”)\(^24\). Yet, its semi-peripheral status within the global landscape reminds of Singapore’s inevitable primordial affiliations with the “Chinese model” (Auto Orientalist, “Weaknesses”)\(^25\). This results in campaigns that notably advertizes both

\(^{20}\) (Lee et al. 2008:278-279)  
\(^{21}\) (Lee et al. 2008:279)  
\(^{22}\) (2009:111)  
\(^{23}\) (Cooper and Momani 2009:113)  
\(^{24}\) (Ooi 2008:292)  
\(^{25}\) (Ooi 2008:298)
“progressive” images of flexible western-style business enterprise (Auto Orientalist, “Opportunities”) and “staid” government control of political freedom (Auto Orientalist, “Threats”)\textsuperscript{26}. “Asian-ness” can only be minimized, but not eradicated through “westernization”.

Most late-industrializing Asian nations embrace “westernization” in order to gain a foothold on economic progress. This position is prevalent, but not unanimously embraced. The US concern over the region’s “historical ambivalence and cultural heterogeneity” points to the existence of a less concurring alternative position. In continuation of the discussions on Orientalist discourse constructions, I term this alternative position Negative Occidentalism. This position is distinctive from Orientalism in Reverse, in that the developmental initiatives put forth by the US are not rejected. That is, nations adopting Negative Occidentalist rhetoric still express the desire for the continued participation in the existing political economic order. China, for instance, seeks its integration into the global political economy by courting the international community through “soft power” (Negative Occidentalist, “Strengths”)\textsuperscript{27}. Iran seeks the same through universalistic appeals of humanism and justice (Negative Occidentalist, “Strengths”)\textsuperscript{28}. Singapore takes it from the perspective of pro-business developmentalism (Negative Occidentalist, “Strengths”)\textsuperscript{29}.

However, as with Orientalism in Reverse, the Negative Occidentalist position resists Dominant Orientalist notions forwarded by the hegemonic US. This contrasts with the concurring Auto Orientalist positions discussed earlier. China, through its competition with the US for the favor of the international community\textsuperscript{30}, seeks “consultation on an equal footing (sic.)” (Negative Occidentalist, “Opportunities”)\textsuperscript{31}. Iran’s desire for the same was voiced in that “some big powers” need to end the unequal terms under which nations

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{26} (Ooi 2008:293-298)
\item\textsuperscript{27} (Zhang 2008:303)
\item\textsuperscript{28} (Chaudhri and Fyke 2008:326)
\item\textsuperscript{29} (Ooi 2008:298)
\item\textsuperscript{30} (Zhang 2008:303)
\item\textsuperscript{31} (Zhang 2008:313)
\end{itemize}
negotiate with one another (Negative Occidentalist, “Opportunities”)\(^\text{32}\). Singapore’s Negative Occidentalist rhetoric slightly differs from China’s and Iran’s. It is expressed alongside Auto Orientalist ones. Singapore is inclined towards “westernization” (Negative Occidentalist, “Strengths”)\(^\text{33}\). But unlike most nations who voiced Auto Orientalist sentiments, the nation is equally amenable to embracing the “Chinese model” that “challenged the western view of development”\(^\text{34}\).

Nevertheless, as with Auto Orientalist positions, Orientalist elements remain in the voicing of Negative Occidentalist rhetoric. The resistances against Dominant Orientalist impositions still allude to the irreconcilability of the East-West dichotomy. China continues to forward the assumption that a “distinctively Chinese social security” should be developed based on the Singapore model, as “western welfare states” alternatives are incompatible (Negative Occidentalist, “Threats”)\(^\text{35}\). Iran thwarts prevalent imageries of the “dangerous and aggressive Middle East”\(^\text{36}\) by framing their association with terrorism as the outcome of victimization by the “‘big powers’ (that) create ‘nonexistent enemies’” (Negative Occidentalist, “Threats”)\(^\text{37}\). Singapore defends its sociopolitical differences from the West (Negative Occidentalist, “Threats”)\(^\text{38}\) through Chinese adages that such differences are in fact Asian virtues (Negative Occidentalist, “Weaknesses”)\(^\text{39}\).

Summarily, Auto Orientalist rhetoric increases the attractiveness of late-industrializing Asian nations as first-mover investment targets. However, this does not equate to the attractiveness of these nations as qualifying members of the first-mover league. Late-industrializing nations replicating the passive responses of Auto Orientalism are limited by this accommodating stance in the long-run. In contrast, nations who employ Negative Occidentalist

\(^{32}\) (Chaudhri and Fyke 2008:325)
\(^{33}\) (Ooi 2008:292)
\(^{34}\) (Ooi 2008:298)
\(^{35}\) (Yan 2007)
\(^{36}\) (Cooper and Momani 2009:113)
\(^{37}\) (Chaudhri and Fyke 2008:325)
\(^{38}\) (Ooi 2008:298)
\(^{39}\) (Ooi 2008:290)
rhetoric appear much less passive. But this also decreases the attractiveness of these nations as first-mover investment targets. For instance, China is perceived as “harsh (and) dogmatic”\textsuperscript{40}, Singapore, staid\textsuperscript{41} and Iran as the perpetrator of terrorism\textsuperscript{42}. Negative Occidentalist predispositions appear to sabotage the nation branding logic, but seem favored options of nations aspiring for a greater balance of power in the global political economy. However, I am equally hesitant over being overly-optimistic towards the success of Negative Occidentalist resistance efforts. These efforts have by far focused on lambasting the “bad behavior of (many?) westerners”. They do not offer a vision of an independent world order in its own right.

From the analysis of the nation profiles summarized in Figure 2.1, I found the preferred Orientalist discourse construction reflects a nation’s hegemonic position within the pre-capitalist industrial order. Auto Orientalist discourse subscribers are predominantly the first late-industrializing nations who benefited from embracing capitalist-industrial development. Historically, these nations play subordinate roles to ex-regional hegemons in the pre-capitalist industrial order. South Korea submitted to the influence of China in East Asia\textsuperscript{43}. Also, in contrast to Iran, the smaller Middle Eastern nations in Cooper and Momani’s study did not possess the historical experience as regional empires\textsuperscript{44}. Acknowledging the hegemony of an external power is thus less challenging for these smaller nations. When hegemonic alignment requires the identification of “friends” or “foes”, the preference for the more powerful global hegemons would be a logical choice for these nations. Moreover, as global hegemons are far removed from home, distance buffers these nations from hegemonic encroachment. The patronage from global hegemons also frees these nations from the encroachment of the closer-to-home regional hegemons. Singapore’s acknowledgement of both the global (Western) and regional (Chinese) hegemones provides a case-in-point to this

\begin{itemize}
  \item\textsuperscript{40} (Zhang 2008:308)
  \item\textsuperscript{41} (Ooi 2008)
  \item\textsuperscript{42} (Chaudhri and Fyke 2008)
  \item\textsuperscript{43} (Langlois 1988:166-167)
  \item\textsuperscript{44} (Podeh 1995:8-12)
\end{itemize}
observation. Being geographically removed from China, Singapore experiences less pressure to escape Chinese encroachment (e.g. due to territorial disputes, maintaining national integrity). At the same time, China is not too far removed for the nation to be perfectly at ease. So, the nation seeks to balance this relationship by simultaneously courting the patronage of both the global and regional hegemons. More importantly, as Singapore seeks to play a leading role in Southeast Asia\(^45\), an overly submissive posture does not do well. One needs to be seen as championing the rights of regional peers. Singapore had the choice of joining the Western first-movers to rein in China. But this position does not set it apart from countries like Japan and South Korea, close allies to the United States. Therefore, Singapore partakes in both Auto Orientalist and Negative Occidentalist discourses.

As shown in Figure 2.1, China and Iran are quite different from the other Asian nations. They possess the historical circumstances predisposing them to adopt Negative Occidentalist paradigms. The two nations are the best examples of how historical memories and past experiences accumulate to form current predispositions. These nations were dominating the region in terms of material wealth and influence prior to the emergence of first-mover nations. Although not currently the richest in the region by per capita income, they shared the common identity as regional centers-of-influence before the capitalist-industrial movement. These nations had previously spurned the capitalist-industrial path. Not willing to be subjugated to the first-movers as late-industrializing tributaries, they had sought to establish alternative world orders. As a result, China became a very late entrant to the capitalist-industrial race. It is thus explicable that these ex-hegemons seek the reinstatement of their position as regional hegemons. The tactic of subjugation through the Dominant Orientalist paradigm will not be as effective in these cases. The knowledge of this limitation thus led to US isolationist policies on China\(^46\), reflecting an insecure anticipation of hegemonic contestations if the ex-

\(^45\) (Broinowski 2001)
\(^46\) (Huan 1994:435)
regional hegemon is allowed to rise. This move ironically produced both intra and inter-regional alliances amongst late-industrializing nations⁴⁷. China and Iran bank on being cultural insiders in their communication of Negative Occidentalist rhetoric. They seek to champion for a greater voice from the periphery within the global political economy against Western hegemony based on primordialist grounds.

⁴⁷ (Bill 2001:97)
Appendix 2.2

Replication of Dominant Orientalist Paradigms in Cross-Cultural Communication and Business Literatures

Using the Australian National University online journal search device, a search for online journal titles with keywords “intercultural” and “cross-cultural” was conducted. The search for “intercultural” yielded four “hits”, but only one was selected for the analysis: *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research*. The journals, *Intercultural Education*, *Intercultural Pragmatics* and *Journal of Intercultural Communication* were less relevant to this discussion. As the focuses of the three journals were on education and linguistics-related intercultural communication, they were excluded from the review. The keyword “cross-cultural” produced three “hits”, of which *Cross-Cultural Management* and *Cross-Cultural Research* were selected for the analysis. Again, *Cross-Cultural Communication* predominantly examines the linguistic nuances of cross-cultural communication.

Having identified the journals relevant for this review, an analysis of the journal articles ensued. A multilevel content analysis approach was employed. All recent articles (2006-2009) published in this compilation of journals were reviewed to identify, firstly, if the published articles present their discussion of the findings according to the Orientalist paradigm. A first count ascertained the percentage of articles re-enacting this paradigm in each journal reviewed. Out of the articles presenting Orientalist themes, a second count identified articles formulating arguments on the basis of the “dysfunctional Oriental” and their proportional representation in each journal reviewed. This process highlights that a significant portion of articles recently selected for publication in journals continue to be inspired by the Orientalist paradigm. With due consideration to the controversies of the Orientalist paradigm, further investigations of the articles through this inquiry is needed.

A second detailed reading was conducted to identify the sub-themes of contemporary Orientalist replications. The race-ethnic identities that the respondents were identified by were also compiled. From the compilation, an
article will be selected to illustrate the premises of each sub-theme. Based on the four sub-themes identified, statements were extracted from the selected articles and sorted through the SWOT analysis (the identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)\(^{48}\). While cultures may differ, value differences are assigned by the authors. The SWOT analysis lends its relevance by facilitating the identification of the authors’ interpretation of what are deemed “Opportunities” and “Threats” in respondent dispositions. These identifications, when read in tandem with the authors’ descriptions of differences in cultural traits, lend insights to the types of value assignments on the respondent groups by the authors. The “cultural traits” of collectives, as reported by the authors, are compiled under “Strengths” and “Weaknesses”. Traits the authors believe to be vital to the competitiveness of a collective are listed under “Strengths” (S). Conversely, traits the authors believe to weaken the competitiveness of a collective are listed under “Weaknesses” (W). In addition, the value of these traits is ascertained by its cross-cultural comparisons with other collectives. Statements on the value of these traits are compiled under “Opportunities” and “Threats”. By examining the “Opportunities” and “Threats” identified by the author(s), their inferences to the “Strengths” and “Weaknesses” can be obtained. Traits inferred by the author(s) as valuable are compiled under “Opportunities” (O). Conversely, traits inferred by the author(s) as liabilities are compiled under “Threats” (T). The first article illustrates the claim on how cultural values mediate communication abilities, being that communication avoidance forms the dominant theme that emerged from this review. The second article examines the authors’ argument that culturally-mediated conflict avoidance results in negative ramifications at the workplace. This forms the second theme that surfaced amongst articles focusing on dysfunctional cultural traits in the replication of the Orientalist paradigm. The third looks at the framing of cultural manifestations in the form of defensive avoidance. This theme is related to the fourth, which examines emotional restraint as culturally-
mediated repression. The illustrations seek to confirm the use of the East-West
dichotomy to justify that dysfunctional traits are exclusive to respondents who
are identified as culturally “Oriental”.

The third content analysis was conducted to highlight the logical
fallacies committed in the authors’ interpretations of the findings. For greater
consistency, the same articles illustrating the sub-themes will be used. This
detailed reading points out how Orientalist assumptions create confounding
factors to objective data interpretation. The analysis provides the
counterargument that the differences are outcomes of inequalities within the
global political economy, more so than intrinsic cultural differences.

From the compilation of cross-cultural research journals, the incidence
of published articles replicating Orientalist dichotomous constructions varies
between journals. However, the analysis also reveals that the published
articles in these journals, especially those re-enacting notions of the
“dysfunctional Oriental”, do comprise a significant proportion to warrant
further discussion.

The first content review reveals the following statistics on the
percentage of articles re-enacting Orientalist dichotomous constructions in the
respective journals reviewed. 42 per cent (18 articles) of the articles published
in the Journal of Intercultural Communication Research (2006-2008) were
presented in the Dominant Orientalist format. Out of these 18 articles, 89 per
cent (16 articles) enacted the imagery of “dysfunctional Oriental”. Cross-
Cultural Management had much lesser articles: only 17 per cent (12 articles)
of the published articles (2007-2009) were found to employ the Dominant
Orientalist paradigm. But out of the 12 articles, 92 per cent (11 articles)
replicated similar imagery. In Cross-Cultural Research, 23 per cent (10
articles) of the total articles published (2008-2009) employed the Dominant
Orientalist paradigm. Within those, there was a 60 per cent (6 articles) fit
with similar imagery. In the second content review, “avoidance” was found to
be a dominant theme (Cross Cultural Management: 4 articles; Cross-Cultural
Research: 2 articles; Journal of Intercultural Communication Research: 10
Appendices

articles). In order to improve the focus of this review, only those re-enacting notions of “avoidance” will be presented in the findings of this inquiry. “Avoidance” refers to the authors’ use of the term to describe the dispositions of a culturally-identified set of respondents, or the use of descriptions with strong allusions to the respondents’ avoidant dispositions. This compilation highlights the sub-themes emerging from the authors’ interpretation of “avoidance” construction amongst a specific set of respondent. The ethnonationality of the respondents were identified to illustrate the enactment of East-West polarization through the cross-cultural comparisons with another set of “engaging” respondents. In this, the key traits the authors associate with the respondents in the enactments of dichotomous identities are examined. This is vital to the discussion on the preoccupation with cultural dysfunctions amongst subscribers to the Orientalist paradigm.

Figure 2.2b presents the cross-cultural literatures compiled on engaging and avoidant cultural collectives. They emerge as an outcome of the authors’ comparisons between respondents type-casted as associated with the Occident (“Westerners”) and the Orient (“Easterners”). On the one hand, engaging “Westerners” were described as racially “White”, coming from “individualistic” cultures on the whole. On the other hand, those considered further away from the “White Anglo Saxon Protestant American” (WASP) prototype were polarized as avoidant cultural collectives. Avoidant “Easterners” were typecast in the Orientalist paradigm replications as racially “Colored” and hailing from “collectivistic” cultures on the whole. The most common profile from which respondents were selected to represent “White”, “Western” and “individualistic” are “Americans”. At times, identities believed to share some affinity with were also integrated into this typology. For instance, “Westernized Chinese” 49, “European Australians” 50 or “Israeli Jews” 51 were believed to be individualistic cohorts. On the other hand, those considered further away from the WASP prototype were polarized as avoidant

49 (Fellows and Rubin 2006)
50 (Wong et al. 2009)
51 (Galin and Avraham 2009)
cultural collectives. Avoidant “Easterners” were typecast in the Orientalist replications as racially “Colored” and hailing from “collectivistic” cultures on the whole. The “Eastern” reference point is much less unified, as reflected in the ethnonational profiles of the samples used (see Figure 1). This suggests that the comparisons are likely inspired by an effort to attain some form of understanding about a plethora of “Eastern” cultures, from the vantage point of a unified “Western” cultural prototype.

What, then, are the premises conveyed through this East-West divide? Four sub-themes to “avoidance” were identified in this compilation, namely, “communication avoidance”, “conflict avoidance”, “defensiveness” and “emotional restraint”. Before elaborating on the imageries of the “Oriental subject”, it is necessary to first outline the basis from which the caricatures had emerged. The emergence of Orientalist imagery, this review found, is the outcome of the attempt to form an understanding of “exogenous” cultures, thereby attaining a unified notion of the “Western prototype”. The authors’ objections against avoidant traits, therefore, need to be understood in the light of what is upheld as positive traits.

In direct contrast to the sub-themes to “avoidance”, the “Western prototype” is captured as “engaging”, “assertive”, “self-assured” and “open”. It is perhaps beyond coincidence that these are vital requisite traits of a good expatriate manager. As the origins of worldwide investments are traced to Western MNCs, human resource expatriation predominantly hail from the Western region. Therefore, the Western expatriate manager possesses greater resources to engage as active cross-cultural communicators. For instance, “locals” from the host societies are more familiar with the “Western expatriate” stereotype and are hence more receptive towards their presence. With the higher incidence of Western expatriation, the availability of expatriate community support networks are also more established. Most importantly, in comparison to the traditional expatriations hailing from the

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Western region, expatriation is relatively recent for most countries hailing from the Non-Western regions\textsuperscript{54}. 

This disposition towards the active engagement in cross-cultural communication is also found in “Western” samples of the cross-cultural research review. In place of the structural explanations of exposure to cross-cultural arbitration, the authors provided cultural explanations to their findings, as indicated in the articles excerpts in Figure 2.2b. For instance, the openness to communication with people of another culture when in foreign lands was observed as a Western cultural attribute: “Eurocentric communication styles values personal thoughts, feelings and actions in communications”, which arguably produces the lack of inhibition towards cross-cultural communication\textsuperscript{55}. Occupying top management positions within the corporate hierarchy, assertiveness, self-assurance and openness are valued traits. Correspondingly, the prioritization of assertiveness over the preservation of social harmony was a taken-for-granted assumption to Galin and Avraham.\textsuperscript{56} Autonomy is perceived as a distinctive and indisputably positive cultural attribute, even if manifested in the form of direct aggression. Under Merkin, self-assurance is associated with national identities, which leads to an enlightened management unconcerned with the trappings of maintaining strict superior-subordinate boundaries\textsuperscript{57}. To Honeycutt and McCann, a culture of openness to confrontation results in benevolence\textsuperscript{58}. The ability to hold open, self-assured and engaging conversations while maintaining one’s assertiveness is a positive trait. However, the hyping up of this ability as a no-flipside cultural exclusive, as it has been made to appear in these literatures.

The review reinforces Alatas’ observation, that the comparison of “Western prototypes” with “Non-Western” ones in Orientalist discourses is an attempt of “‘confirming’ that they (Non-Western societies) were the opposite

\textsuperscript{54} (Aihwa Ong, cited in Lan -:3)  
\textsuperscript{55} (Lu and Hsu 2008:76-86)  
\textsuperscript{56} (2009:31-40)  
\textsuperscript{57} (Merkin 2006:152)  
\textsuperscript{58} (Honeycutt and McCann 2008:38-39)
of what Europe represented”\textsuperscript{59}. As the literatures compare respondents as if they were mutually exclusive, the avoidant traits appear to be exclusive to “Easterners”, with the source of “avoidance” traced to cultural dispositions. (See Figure 2) Moreover, the basis the arguments, that one set of traits are superior to another, are made on the assumption that one set of inadequacies (i.e. Western) are not as bad as the other (i.e. Eastern The lack of regard for the appropriateness of linguistic expressions may impede cross-cultural communication. But the low regard for language competency (Americans) is made to appear less objectionable when contrasted with communication inhibition due to the desire for language competency (Chinese)\textsuperscript{60}. Likewise, the desire for interpersonal harmony (Arabs), to the wielders of the Orientalist paradigm, is interpreted as a sign of repressed aggression, believed to cause greater harm than directly aggressive acts (Jews)\textsuperscript{61}. In leadership positions, the dispositions of “higher status individuals” from the respective cultures reflect the different levels of self-assurance. In contrast with individuals from Australia and America, individuals from Japan, Singapore and Thailand maintain a strong power-distance and are arguably more inclined to be defensive when self-esteem is threatened\textsuperscript{62}. A direct communication strategy may incite conflict, but being controversial is deemed better than being defensive. Honeycutt and McCann argues that engaging individuals who “do not want to avoid the offender” are less prone to rumination. This confrontational posture is rendered a positive trait that characterizes “Western” respondents, as rumination is said to characterize “Eastern” ones. The “lack of rumination” was said to create forgiving individuals, and forgiving individuals are more open-minded than ruminating ones. In contrast, “Eastern” respondents were argued to be

\textsuperscript{59} (2006:32)
\textsuperscript{60} (Lu and Hsu 2008:85-86)
\textsuperscript{61} (Galin and Avraham 2009:39-40)
\textsuperscript{62} (Merkin 2006:145-152)
Figure 2.2a: Compilation of Dominant Orientalist Discourses in Cross-Cultural Research

Communication Avoidance with ethnic outgroups in host societies and with strangers, to the extent of appearing passive or withdrawn (Fellows and Rubin 2006: Chinese traditionalists; Harzing and Feely 2008: subsidiary employees; Lim et al. 2008: Koreans; Lu and Hsu 2008: Chinese; Pearson and Child 2007: Indians; Pederson et al. 2008: Indians; Wong et al. 2009; Yum and Li 2007: Koreans)

Conflict Avoidance for interpersonal harmony (Bernstein and Norwood 2008: Korean new minorities; Galin and Avraham 2009: Arabs in Israel; Park and Guan 2006: Chinese)

Defensiveness in face-threatening situations for persons in power (Merkin 2006: high power distance Chileans, Japanese, Hong Kongers)


Engagement through the concerted attempt to engage the host society (Fellows and Rubin 2006: Westernized Chinese; Harzing and Feely 2008: Western MNC HQ; Lim et al. 2008: Americans; Lu and Hsu 2008: Americans; Pearson and Child 2007: Americans; Pederson et al. 2008: Americans; Wong et al. 2009 European Americans/Australians; Yum and Li 2007: Americans)

Assertiveness prioritized over the preservation of social harmony (Bernstein and Norwood 2008: African American old minorities; Galin and Avraham 2009: Jews in Israel; Park and Guan 2006: Americans)

Self-Assurance as face-threatening situations not an issue to persons in the position of power (Merkin 2006: low power distance Israelis, Swedish, Americans)

Openness a manifestation of a confident, cosmopolitan engagement style (Gong 2009: Hong Kongers, Taiwanese; Honeycutt and McCann 2008: Americans; Lombardo 2009: Americans)
Figure 2.2b SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis of Orientalist Discourse in Cross-Cultural Business Literatures

**Strengths**

1. "Eurocentric communication styles values personal thoughts, feelings and actions in communications." (Lu and Hsu 2008:76)
2. "members of low collectivist culture value autonomy and individual independence." (Galin and Avraham 2009:31)
3. "Australians (small PD) prefer direct, explicit communication strategies… US (small PD) counterparts… are more concerned with fairness and assertiveness." (Merkin 2006:145)
4. "Forgiveness occurs when people do not want to avoid the offender" (Honeycutt and McCann 2008:39)

**Weaknesses**

1. "Direct confrontation is discouraged and silence is valued." (Lu and Hsu 2008:76)
2. "Members of high collectivist cultures cherish interpersonal harmony" (Galin and Avraham 2009:31)
3. "Singaporeans and Thais (large PD) skirt around problematic issues… Japanese (large PD) (are) concerned with relationships and… use more avoidance tactics" (Merkin 2006:145)
4. "Rumination results in heightened feelings of depression, hopelessness, and sadness." (Honeycutt and McCann 2008:38)

**Opportunities**

1. "Competence in Chinese language is not important for initiating conversations with Chinese people." (Lu and Hsu 2008:85-86)
2. "Israeli Jews (low collectivists) displayed higher levels of direct aggression toward their managers than Israeli Arabs (high collectivists). However, unexpectedly, we found that Israeli Arabs (high collectivists) display higher levels of indirect aggression toward their managers than Israeli Jews." (Galin and Avraham 2009:39-40)
3. "Contrary to expectations individuals from large-PD cultures were more likely than small –PD culture members to use direct facework strategies in response to a face-threatening situation." (Merkin 2006:152)
4. "Forgiving is associated with a… lack of rumination" (Honeycutt and McCann 2008:39)

**Threats**

1. "Language competence (is important) among Chinese, but not Americans." (Lu and Hsu 2008:85)
2. "It is noteworthy that the use of indirect aggression is more dangerous from an organizational perspective than direct aggression, because in many cases harm is caused before the aggressive act is identified." (Galin and Avraham 2009:43)
3. "Higher status individuals tend to use more direct strategies because it is not considered improper or impolite." (Merkin 2006:152)
4. "Revenge is associated with rumination and dwelling on negative thoughts." (Honeycutt and McCann 2008:39)

**Avoidance**

1. Avoid Communication
2. Avoid Conflict
3. Defensiveness
4. Emotional Restraint
more rumination-prone and this becomes a cultural weakness. It creates vengeful individuals.\(^{63}\) From the four articles discussed (see Figure 2.2b), the authors’ explanations of the findings are based on Orientalist distortions. The structural factor of inequality in the global political economy is a more convincing explanation. The ensuing paragraphs illustrate how.

In the first article, Lu and Hsu attributed to “Eurocentric communication styles” for the lack of inhibition towards cross-cultural communication amongst Western expatriates.\(^{64}\) This conclusion overlooked the many observations of how Western expatriates and their Non-Western contemporaries receive differential evaluations and treatments in host countries. The expatriates’ “socio-biological” profile (i.e. religion, nationality and ethnicity) is subjected to high scrutiny in host countries.\(^{65}\) Wang and Kanungo attribute the better reception enjoyed by Western expatriates (in China) to the distinctiveness of “North American and European” physical attributes (as opposed to Japanese and Korean).\(^{66}\) However, the findings from Lan\(^^{67}\) and Carr\(^^{68}\) suggest otherwise. Lan describes the situation whereby an African American applicant was rejected a job position (Taiwan), with his physical attributes cited as a reason, while White job applicants are “totally spoiled”, even as they “speak little Chinese”.\(^{69}\) Carr, likewise, points out that Non-Western expatriates working in the West, despite their distinctive physical attributes, may not receive the same positive treatment as Western expatriates working in Non-Western regions. Given the discriminatory reception, it becomes explicable that Non-Western expatriates are more hesitant towards establishing cross-cultural contact. “Language competence (is important) among Chinese, but not Americans”\(^{70}\) because language

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\(^{63}\) (Honeycutt and McCann 2008:38-39)
\(^{64}\) (2008:76)
\(^{65}\) (Mamman, cited in Carr 1996:109)
\(^{66}\) (Wang and Kanungo 2005:172)
\(^{67}\) (-)
\(^{68}\) (Carr 1996)
\(^{69}\) (-:9-11)
\(^{70}\) (Lu and Hsu 2008:85)
competence is an important mediatory factor to cross-cultural receptivity for the former, but not the latter.

An Asian superior’s need to assert one’s status is the outcome of the inequality in the global distribution of power. Merkin reads it as the cultural need for “saving face” (i.e. defending one’s self esteem) amongst “higher status (Asian) individuals” \(^71\). However, I find that the need for “saving face” ought to be read in tandem with the critique on the lower receptivity towards the authority of Non-Western expatriates. If the authority of Western “higher status individuals” are better accepted \(^72\), then the tendency to respond to “face threatening situations” with direct strategies of re-asserting authority is hence lower than their Non-Western contemporaries \(^73\). Conversely, the onus is greater on the latter group in stemming challenges to their authority due to power imbalances.

The authority of Western expatriates, as Carr re-affirmed, is symbolically embodied in their “socio-biological background” \(^74\). Therefore, this authority can be maintained without the exercise of power. Face threatening situations can thus be dealt with through acts of benevolence \(^75\). Higher status Non-Western individuals, to a lesser extent, are also empowered by ascribed positions to attempt a reversal of Orientalist impositions by confronting face threatening situations \(^76\). But how about lower status Non-Western individuals? Lacking in the capacity to voice objections, tensions from face-threatening situations are repressed. The “heightened feelings of depression, hopelessness and sadness” (i.e. avoidance) that Honeycutt and McCann describe of the Japanese (Eastern) \(^77\) need not necessarily be due to the culture of “rumination”. While cultures between the two classifications may indeed differ, they are not mutually exclusive. It thus comes as no

\(^71\) (Merkin 2006:152)
\(^72\) (Carr 1996; Lan -; Wang and Kanungo 2005)
\(^73\) (Merkin 2006:152)
\(^74\) (Mamman, cited in Carr 1996:109)
\(^75\) (Merkin 2006:152)
\(^76\) Ibid.
\(^77\) (2008:38)
surprise that similar characteristics of “avoidance” emerged in Bourdieu’s description of the French (Western) working class:

“the working classes are forced to choose between negatively sanctioned outspokenness (sic.) and silence, and the ruling class, whose linguistic habitus is the realization of the norm (sic.), can manifest the ease given by self-assurance (the exact opposite of insecurity).”78

The resonance between the constructs suggests “Oriental” characteristics are not exclusive to “Easterners”, as posited by Dominant Orientalist discourse. “Silence” (or avoidance) characterizes collectives on the periphery of influence; in other words, those who are reliant on the patronage of the core. The working class, peripheral labor of core economies, manifests “avoidant” characteristics, as do peripheral “Easterners” within the global political economy. Power credentials are more accurate gauges to the value of culture. Intrinsically, culture does not produce the consequences of socioeconomic value.

The social minority, as defined by class, race or gender, tend to be the subject of exoticization. Disparate traits tend to be evaluated as deviations from an ideal prototype and hence inferior. In some instances, collectives who do not fit into the “Western prototype” may attempt to reduce their deviation from “Western” characteristics by playing up the “Oriental” characteristics of another. In the attempt to affirm the “individualism” of Israeli Jews in their sample, Galin and Avraham conjured negative traits of the sampled Israeli Arabs. While the objective data did reveal the Arab collectivistic desire for “interpersonal harmony”, it did not confirm that this desire is linked to the tendency for “indirect aggression”, which the authors believe is the “natural” deduction. 79 The conclusion that harmonious orientations are “more dangerous” is logically fallacious, as it remains the authors’ speculation, rather than empirically correlated findings. In this way, the “(Israeli Jews)

78 (Bourdieu 1977:658)
79 (Galin and Avraham 2009:43)
direct aggression toward their managers” is legitimized as a valued trait, based on the spurious argument that the desire for interpersonal harmony leads to “dangerous” indirect aggression.
Appendices

Appendix 3.1
Demographical Profile of Respondents by Education Attainment and Gender

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Appendix 3.2

Themes from Discourse Analysis

1. Demonization of the West
   a. Postcolonial anglophilia
   b. Western moral decay
2. Malaysia as Alter-Ego
3. CMIO Ethnomulticulturalism
   a. Chinese
      i. Riotous
      ii. Roots in China
      iii. Confucianism, not Communism
      iv. English-Mandarin bilingual matrix
      v. Chinese language as heritage
      vi. Chinese language as resource for business negotiation with China
      vii. Mandarin prioritized over Chinese dialects
      viii. Modern Chinese Singaporean possess liberal attitudes in comparison to other ethnic minorities
      x. Commitment to racial harmony
   b. Malay
      i. Roots in Southeast Asia
      ii. Use of “Malay/Muslim” as if the terms are interchangeable - conflation with other Muslim ethnic groups
      iii. Conflation did not occur when talking about economic development – the Arabs were mentioned separately in these instances
      iv. But still encouraged to seize the opportunities in the Middle East
      v. Pan-Islamic flashpoints and differentiation of Malays in Singapore as a peaceful lot.
      vi. Racial riots – ethnic management needed
      vii. Malays need to integrate with the wider community
      viii. Malay sensitivity
      ix. Socioeconomic woes and external mediation through ethnic Malay state representatives
      x. Role model Malays who have broken the mold
   c. Indian
      i. Roots in India
      ii. Ethnic Chinese share good relationship with ethnic Indians
      iii. Business opportunity in India (ethnic hinterlands) not as fantastic as China, but possess good potential
Cross-Cultural Diversity in the Global Knowledge Economy

Dear Respondent,

Thank you for participating in this survey. This survey aims to gauge how attitudes, beliefs and values relate to wider social culture, and how cross-cultural diversity impacts on Singapore's development in the global knowledge economy.

To ensure the confidentiality of your identity as a participant, *your email addresses will NOT be tracked* as you complete the questionnaire, unless voluntarily provided by you.

If you are a **Singapore Citizen or Permanent Resident, ethnic Chinese (according to your identity card)** and employed in the **XXX (omitted)** industry, please take some time to complete this survey.

Do note that some questions may appear repetitive, but they are measuring different dimensions, so *please read the questions carefully.*

If you have any questions pertaining to this survey, feel free to email me at *daphnee.lee@anu.edu.au*. Thank you.

Regards,
Daphnée Lee

1) According to my **personal values**, I prefer a leader who ...
(PDI P Awe)
- Is awe-inspiring. (4)
- Is formal. (3)
- Is approachable. (2)
- Is easy-going. (1)

2) According to **my culture**, a good leader is someone who ....
(PDI C Awe)
- Is awe-inspiring. (4)
3) According to my **personal values**, I prefer a leader who...

(PDI P Fdbk)
- Is formal. (3)
- Is approachable. (2)
- Is easy-going. (1)

4) According to **my culture**, a good leader is someone who ....

(PDI C Fdbk)
- Is a mature leader. (4)
- Is a mature leader with accumulated experience. (3)
- Is a youthful leader with quick response ability. (2)
- Is a youthful leader. (1)

5) According to my **personal values**, I prefer a leader who ...

(PDI P Age)
- Is a mature leader. (4)
- Is a mature leader with accumulated experience. (3)
- Is a youthful leader with quick response ability. (2)
- Is a youthful leader. (1)

6) According to **my culture**, a good leader is someone who ....

(PDI C Age)
- Is a mature leader. (4)
I am a mature leader with accumulated experience. (3)
I am a youthful leader with quick response ability. (2)
I am a youthful leader. (1)

7) According to my **culture**, I prefer a leader who ...
(IDV P Consensus)
- Seeks general consensus. (4)
- Seeks consensus from trusted employees. (3)
- Makes independent judgments based on feedback by trusted employees. (2)
- Makes independent judgments. (1)

8) According to **my culture**, a good leader is someone who ....
(IDV C Consensus)
- Seeks general consensus. (4)
- Seeks consensus from trusted employees. (3)
- Makes independent judgments based on feedback by trusted employees. (2)
- Makes independent judgments. (1)

9) According to my **personal values**, I prefer a leader who ...
(IDV P Team Needs)
- Takes care of team needs over individual ones. (4)
- Takes care of team needs as I am a part of the team too. (3)
- Takes care of individual needs over the team. (2)
- Takes care of my needs over the team. (1)

10) According to **my culture**, a good leader is someone who ....
(IDV C Team Needs)
- Takes care of team needs over individual ones. (4)
- Takes care of team needs as I am a part of the team too. (3)
- Takes care of individual needs over the team. (2)
Takes care of my needs over the team.  

11) According to my **personal values**, I prefer a leader who ...  
(IDV P ability/connections)  
- Trains the team with the ability to ace our sales campaigns.  
- Trains the team to make the right people connections to ace our sales campaigns.  
- Has the ability to ace our sales campaigns.  
- Makes the right people connections to ace our sales campaigns.  

12) According to **my culture**, a good leader is someone who ....  
(IDV C ability/connections)  
- Trains the team with the ability to ace our sales campaigns.  
- Trains the team to make the right people connections to ace our sales campaigns.  
- Has the ability to ace our sales campaigns.  
- Makes the right people connections to ace our sales campaigns.  

13) According to my **personal values**, I prefer a leader who ...  
(UAI P firm)  
- Is able to stand firm in times of crisis.  
- Is able to stand firm in times of crisis while making some allowances for flexibility.  
- Is able to adapt in times of crisis while standing by some core principles.  
- Is able to adapt in times of crisis.  

14) According to **my culture**, a good leader is someone who ....  
(UAI C firm)  
- Is able to stand firm in times of crisis.  
- Is able to stand firm in times of crisis while making some allowances for flexibility.  
- Is able to adapt in times of crisis while standing by some core principles.
Appendices

- Is able to adapt in times of crisis. (1)

15) According to my **personal values**, I prefer a leader who ...
(UAI P guidance)
- Adopts a proactive approach at managing employees. (4)
- Provides some guidance to employees. (3)
- Provides guidance to employees only when they request for it. (2)
- Believes that employees can manage themselves. (1)

16) According to **my culture**, a good leader is someone who ....
(UAI C guidance)
- Adopts a proactive approach at managing employees. (4)
- Provides some guidance to employees. (3)
- Provides guidance to employees only when they request for it. (2)
- Believes that employees can manage themselves. (1)

17) According to my **personal values**, I prefer a leader who ...
(UAI P differences)
- Sends clear signals of what is expected. (4)
- Sends clear signals of what is expected but gives allowances for individual differences. (3)
- Respects individual differences and manages employees according to one’s believes. (2)
- Respects individual differences and manages employees based on their feedback. (1)

18) According to **my culture**, a good leader is someone who ....
(UAI C differences)
- Sends clear signals of what is expected. (4)
- Sends clear signals of what is expected but gives allowances for individual differences. (3)
- Respects individual differences and manages employees according to one’s believes. (2)
Respects individual differences and manages employees based on their feedback.

19) A good marketing campaign is one that …
   (UAI P control)
   ☐ Gets to the point and unfolds as planned. (4)
   ☐ Gets to the point and unfolds with some modifications as situation demands. (3)
   ☐ Adapts to situations as plan unfolds. (2)
   ☐ With minimal planning so that campaign adapts freely to unfolding situations. (1)

20) **According to my culture**, a good marketing campaign is one that …
   (UAI C control)
   ☐ Gets to the point and unfolds as planned. (4)
   ☐ Gets to the point and unfolds with some modifications as situation demands. (3)
   ☐ Adapts to situations as plan unfolds. (2)
   ☐ With minimal planning so that campaign adapts freely to unfolding situations. (1)

21) I will be more concerned if colleagues…
   (UAI P rules)
   ☐ Does not follow the company rules all the time. (3)
   ☐ Does not follow the company rules most of the time. (4)
   ☐ Follows the company rules most of the time. (1)
   ☐ Follows the company rules all the time. (2)

22) **According to my culture**, one will be more concerned if colleagues…
   (UAI C rules)
   ☐ Does not follow the company rules all the time. (3)
   ☐ Does not follow the company rules most of the time. (4)
   ☐ Follows the company rules most of the time. (1)
Follows the company rules all the time.  

23) The type of client I dislike the most is ...  
(UAI P New)  
☐ A young, inexperienced person; stubbornly believes that problems can be solved with innovation.  
☐ A young, inexperienced person; stubbornly believes innovation should not be restricted by rules and regulations.  
☐ A mature, experienced person; stubbornly believes innovation must still consider rules and regulations.  
☐ A mature, experienced person; stubbornly believes innovation is but fanciful ideas that creates administrative burdens.  

24) **According to my culture**, the type of client that is most disliked is ...  
(UAI C New)  
☐ A young person new to the industry; believes problems can be solved with innovative ideas.  
☐ A young person with experience in the industry; believes innovative ideas is more important than approaching the right department.  
☐ A mature person with experience in the industry; believes innovative ideas must still consider rules and regulations.  
☐ A mature person with experience in the industry; believes innovative ideas are fanciful ideas that creates administrative burdens.  

25) When assessing my personal work performance, I evaluate according to ...  
(IDV P perf appraisal)  
☐ the performance appraisal criteria at work.  
☐ my personal judgment of good work performance, but I also consider performance appraisal criteria.  
☐ my personal judgment of good work performance, but I also countercheck with colleagues.  
☐ my personal judgment of good work performance.
26) **According to my culture**, personal work performance is assessed according to ...

(IDV C perf appraisal)

- the performance appraisal criteria at work. (4)
- my personal judgment of good work performance, but I also consider performance appraisal criteria. (3)
- my personal judgment of good work performance, but I also countercheck with colleagues. (2)
- my personal judgment of good work performance. (1)

27) I value...

(IDV P prestigepay)

- A job with high professional prestige more than pay. (4)
- A job with high professional prestige even if the pay is a little low. (3)
- A job with high pay even if the professional prestige is a little low. (2)
- A job with high pay more than professional prestige. (1)

28) **According to my culture**, one values...

(IDV C prestigepay)

- A job with high professional prestige more than pay. (4)
- A job with high professional prestige even if the pay is a little low. (3)
- A job with high pay even if the professional prestige is a little low. (2)
- A job with high pay more than professional prestige. (1)

29) I love my job because …

(IDV P harmony)

- My colleagues and I share good relationships. (4)
- My clients and I share good relationships. (3)
- My clients give me challenge. (2)
- My colleagues and I have healthy competition. (1)

30) **According to my culture**, an enjoyable job is one that …

(IDV C harmony)
Appendices

31) When my boss compliments me on my work performance, I am …
(PDI P goodjob)
- Proud of the recognition from my boss. (4)
- Proud of the recognition from my boss; I have worked hard. (3)
- Proud of my achievements; even my boss notices. (2)
- Proud of my achievements. (1)

32) **According to my culture**, when the boss compliments on good work performance, one is …
(PDI C goodjob)
- Proud of the recognition from the boss. (4)
- Proud of the recognition from the boss; one has worked hard. (3)
- Proud of one’s achievements; even the boss notices. (2)
- Proud of one’s achievements. (1)

33) When my boss makes a mistake in his sales presentation, I …
(PDI P oops)
- Think, “That can’t be true!” (4)
- Subtly highlight to my boss after the presentation in private. (3)
- Correct my boss directly after the presentation in private. (2)
- Correct my boss. (1)

34) **According to my culture**, when the boss makes a mistake in his sales presentation, one …
(PDI C oops)
- Think, “That can’t be true!” (4)
- Subtly highlight to my boss after the presentation in private. (3)
- Correct my boss directly after the presentation in private. (2)
Correct my boss.  

35) When a problem is encountered, I …  
(PDI P problem)  
☐ Trust that my boss already knows.  
☐ Countercheck with colleagues before highlighting the problem to my boss.  
☐ I drop by my boss’s office to chat with him/her about it.  
☐ Act on the problem so my boss doesn’t need to waste time on it.

36) According to my culture, when a problem is encountered, one …  
(PDI C problem)  
☐ Trusts that the boss already knows.  
☐ Counterchecks with colleagues before highlighting the problem to the boss.  
☐ One drops by the boss’s office to chat with him/her about it.  
☐ Acts on the problem so the boss doesn’t need to waste time on it.

37) Your Age (for analysis purpose):  
☐ Below 20  
☐ 20-29  
☐ 30-39  
☐ 40-49  
☐ 50 and above

38) Your Sex (for analysis purpose):  
☐ Female  
☐ Male

39) Highest Education Attained (for analysis purpose)  
☐ O Levels and below (or equivalent)  
☐ Diploma / A Levels and below (or equivalent)
Appendices

Graduate
Postgraduate

40) Is intensive travelling (at least once a fortnight) to meet overseas clients on behalf of your company an important part of your job requirement?
Appendices

Appendix 3.4
In-depth Interview Guide

Respondent as Chinese Singaporean

1. In the survey, I have asked about your opinion on “cultural values”, and left the definition of “cultural values” to your interpretation. Can you share with me, what, to you, are your “cultural values”?

2. What to you is authentic culture? Is it important to you that culture is authentic?

3. When China opened its gates to liberalize the economy, commercial creativity, risk-taking and profit-making became obsessions without consideration for honesty, integrity and ethics, as reflected by the bad press on baby formulas, cardboard meat buns, and so on. Do you think risk-taking, flexibility, creativity and enterprise can be achieved without compromising honesty, resolve, integrity and ethics?

4. The government often refers to Singapore’s races as CMIO (Chinese, Malay, Indian, Others).
   a. Which ethnic group do you first recall when you think of the race category “Others”?
   b. Can you name me good traits and bad traits, based on the prevalent social perceptions, associated with the Chinese, the Malays and the Indians?
      i. Which is easier; naming the good traits or bad?
   c. We often hear of arguments that race is just superficial physical differences, but why is it that there is still so much talk about race?
   d. Do you think we can put an end to racial differences if we set our minds on it?

5. I heard some colleagues emphasize that they are Chinese Singaporean (not with customers), and not just Chinese when they go on business trips in China…
   a. Can you share with me your ideas on why that is so?
   b. How about you? Have you done the same? Can you give me some actual examples?
   c. Why do you think this happened?
   d. Does this in your opinion, influence your perceptions of the customers?

6. Individualism is commonly associated with Western societies, human rights and voicing one’s opinions. Collectivism is commonly associated with Asian societies, team above self; harmony:
a. Do you think this is an accurate caricature?
b. In your opinion, is Singapore a more Asianized / Westernized country?
c. Do you see yourself as similar or dissimilar to the Singapore society?
d. Do you think individualism and collectivism can co-exist?

7. It has been argued that Singaporeans find developing the character of entrepreneurship a challenge due to the “East Asian reverence for scholarship”.
   Do you agree that the “East Asian reverence for scholarship” plays a part in our lack of entrepreneurial ability? Why so?

8. It has been said that cultural majorities tend to be conformist and lack the qualities of entrepreneurial innovation. What is your take on this issue?

9. (Mention the Indian racial protest in Malaysia) Why do you think, for example, when the Malaysian Indians are being oppressed in Malaysia, the Indian prime minister raised his objections?

10. Being in a multicultural country, we embrace cultures other than our own, like we enjoy foods from different cultures, wearing the costumes of different cultures, and so on. Beyond such practices, do you see a deeper sense of fusion between the races?

11. With the recent media attention on India here, it has been suggested that the Chinese Singaporeans are more receptive towards the new immigrants from India than the Malays, or the Indians in comparison.
   a. Do you agree with this observation? Why?

Respondent as ECI local hire

12. What regions are you in charge of?

13. What are the key advantages, between hiring you, as compared to an expatriate to be in charge of this regional market?

14. What are the key advantages, between hiring you as compared to someone from China to deal with the customers there?

15. I have often heard about the different working styles between the locals and expatriate staff.
   a. Do you agree with this statement?
   b. Can you share with me what are some of the differences in working styles?
16. Do you think the ECI local employees have good promotion prospects?
   a. I have noticed that since I left, more local staff were promoted to director positions?
      i. (Agree): Why do you think the management is taking the initiative to give greater representation to the local employees? How can the balance of power be further improved?
      ii. (Disagree): What do you think are the areas that limit success of these efforts?
   b. What, in your opinion, are the qualities that determine if a local can be promoted to a director’s position?
      i. Are the promotion criteria any different from that of expatriates?
   c. How is the performance ability of the local directors, in comparison to the expatriates, in your opinion?
   d. So far, there are no non-Chinese Singaporean local employees in director positions. Can you share with me your opinion on the reasons for this?

17. Singapore emphasized on the need for pragmatism as a way of life.
   a. What do you understand by pragmatism?
   b. Can you relate the need for pragmatism in Singapore to your personal life?
Appendix 3.4a

Themes that Emerged from the Analysis of the In-depth interviews

1. **Situational Chineseness (SC)**
   a. What is my culture?: Culture is what I make of it (e.g. corporate culture, inter-organizational politics, my “situational awareness”, political relations between dominant and the subjugated).
   b. Approach to cross-cultural economic activity: Commercial objectives take precedence over cultural affiliations.
   c. Race-ethnic identification implicit within expressed approach to cross-cultural economic activity: Cultural affinities are constructed and people do not “naturally” share intrinsic cultural solidarity. However, I am willing to make use of what people perceived as my race-ethnic identity for commercial gain.
   d. “Western decadence”: no dominant manifestation
   e. China: it’s a jungle out there; admiration of China’s progress
   f. CMIO: no distinctive variations
   g. Rate of fusion between races: yes, fusion is happening (or at least more so amongst the affluent).
   h. Honesty: incompatible with commercial dealings
   i. Local-Expatriate relations: a counter-productive issue

2. **Born-Again Chineseness (BAC)**
   a. What is my culture?: Culture is what I have compiled from the various race-ethnic resources available (e.g. fusion of the East-West dichotomy, multiculturalism in Singapore).
   b. Approach to cross-cultural economic activity: I am a part of the region and therefore, my commitment to the region is my selling point.
   c. Race-ethnic identification implicit within expressed approach to cross-cultural economic activity: I embrace my personal race-ethnic identification, and with this sincerity, I build thicker relationships with the like-minded.
   d. “Western decadence”: Westerners are ethnocentric, impressionable, and tend to over-mystify the East.
   e. China: distrust of the West; admiration of China’s progress
   f. CMIO: no distinctive variations
   g. Rate of fusion between races: yes, fusion is happening
   h. Honesty: no distinctive pattern
   i. Local-Expatriate relations: expatriates should self-reflect and make changes
3. **Integrated Chineseness (IC)**

   a. What is my culture?: Culture is what I have compiled from the various race-ethnic resources available (e.g. my personal knowledge of ethnonational stereotypes allows for better gauge of the type of commercial strategies to engage with the customer when no/limited information is available. But I am also prepared for variations from these stereotypes.)

   b. Approach to cross-cultural economic activity: I am the mediator of the East-West dichotomy. I am an essential mediator as I am familiar with the regional work attitude and behavior. I am sufficiently exposed to Westernization, but remain predominantly Asian.

   c. Race-ethnic identification implicit within expressed approach to cross-cultural economic activity: I am a part of the region but sometimes I also set myself apart from the region. Because I am aware that culture works to simultaneously facilitate and constrain my advantage in negotiating commercial relationships. These constraints can be resolved by adopting a conciliatory stance to all cultural affiliations.

   d. “Western decadence”: Westerners are ethnocentric, impressionable, and tend to over-mystify the East.

   e. China: distrust of the West

   f. CMIO: greater knowledge of what comprises “Others”

   g. Rate of fusion between races: no, fusion is not happening

   h. Honesty: this is Singapore’s corporate brand name

   i. Local-Expatriate relations: an issue that both play a part but one should take the initiative rather than wait for things to happen

4. **Culture Circumventions (CC)**

   a. What is my culture?: Culture is the identity I inherited (e.g. ethnic hinterlands, heritage roots). Racial differences should not come into the picture in commercial relationships. But I maintain strong racial bonds in my private life.

   b. Approach to cross-cultural economic activity: I am a professional who does not allow my personal racial affiliation interfere with work affairs.

   c. Race-ethnic identification implicit within expressed approach to cross-cultural economic activity: The presence of racial affiliations is disruptive for economic life. But the subscription of these identifications in private life is essential to one’s desire for cultural expression.

   d. “Western decadence”: no dominant manifestation

   e. China: incredibly quiet over the issue.

   f. CMIO: no distinctive variations
g. Rate of fusion between races: no, fusion is not happening. Take oneself for example.
h. Honesty = no distinctive pattern
i. Local-Expatriate relations: a counter-productive issue
Appendix 3.5
Follow-Up Questionnaire

I. Local-Expatriate Relations

Rank the options [a, b, c, and d] in terms of which one best fits your personal position. “1” being the best fit and 4 being the least fit. Place options in the brackets next to the ranked position. For example:

1 ( d )
2 ( a )
3 ( c )
4 ( b )

*All options listed here positive work traits; there is no right or wrong answer.*

1. It is said that local staff do not enjoy equal “weight” with the expatriates even when promoted to director positions:
   - a. The individual has to overcome these barriers. 1 ( )
   - b. Management should do something; promotions should come with real authority. 2 ( )
   - c. Local directors give up too easily. 3 ( )
   - d. We have different head-starts (race, employment terms, old-boy’s networks); no point pondering over this issue. 4 ( )

2. I see my the expatriates in my office as:
   - a. No different from my other colleagues 1 ( )
   - b. My competitors, but we compete on unequal terms 2 ( )
   - c. Peers (equals) 3 ( )
   - d. Superiors (better) 4 ( )

3. Often, a divide is drawn between the East (Asians) and the West (Westerners), even within a multinational corporation. My take is that:
   - a. I am Westernized as much as I am Asian 1 ( )
   - b. There is much to admire about the West, but I am more identified with my home-ground, Asia 2 ( )
   - c. I am more Westernized than most Asians in the region 3 ( )
   - d. Though the West is stronger than Asia in many respects, I am undeniably still true to my Asian roots. 4 ( )

4. When political infighting happens, it is because:
   - a. Unnecessary lines are drawn between locals and expatriates, causing misunderstandings; we should focus on commercial wins. 1 ( )
   - b. Of the lack of transparency of the expatriate management, causing misunderstandings between the locals and the China subsidiary. 2 ( )
   - c. It is between the locals for the favor of the expatriate management 3 ( )
   - d. 4 ( )
d. There are differences between locals and expatriates, but we should focus on being professional.

II. You as a corporate representative of a Western MNC – your experience in China:

Rank the options [a, b, c, and d] in terms of which one best fits your personal position. “1” being the best fit and 4 being the least fit. Place options in the brackets next to the ranked position. All options listed here positive work traits; there is no right or wrong answer.

5. Does your race-ethnic identity come into the picture at work?
   a. I am only interested in achieving commercial objectives 1 (   )
   b. Yes, I share a common Chinese identity with customers in China. 2 (   )
   c. Yes, I am both Chinese and Singaporean; I am the same and yet different with the customers in China. 3 (   )
   d. At work, I am a professional; race-ethnic issues shouldn’t intervene. 4 (   )

6. Your take at allowing your racial/ethnic/cultural identity to intervene at work:
   a. I will use my racial identity if it is useful towards gaining commercial advantage. 1 (   )
   b. Sharing a common identity in Asia, especially with China, brings us closer to the customers. 2 (   )
   c. I highlight both my nationality and race (Singaporean-Chinese; being associated with Chinese in China may not be a good thing). 3 (   )
   d. Western identities are more advantageous, so I do not allow these personal dimensions to intervene at work. 4 (   )

7. Criticism has it that no matter how Chinese Singaporeans try to revive our Chinese roots, we will never be more Chinese than the Chinese in China. What competitive edge does the Chinese Singaporeans have when dealing with the Chinese customers, in comparison to China salespersons?:
   a. The real advantage is the economic advantage. Money talks bigger than all other ties. 1 (   )
   b. Singaporean Chinese will have no advantage even though we are the same race; China-Chinese will be closer with each other. 2 (   )
   c. Singaporean Chinese still have advantage: we share the same racial identity as the customer, but can still offer an outsider’s point of view as foreigners to the country. 3 (   )
   d. Singaporean Chinese will not have the advantage when compared to either Westerners or China-Chinese when dealing with customers in China. 4 (   )
8. The importance of maintaining a Chinese cultural identity when dealing with customers in China is often emphasized as the defining competitive advantage in comparison to the Western counterparts:
   a. I will adapt to whichever cultural identity that helps me with a commercial win; Chinese, Western, or whatever. 1 ( )
   b. I agree. This is our home-ground; the Westerners lack the same commitment to the region as we do. 2 ( )
   c. Apart from being Chinese, we also need to maintain a Singaporean identity: best of the East and West. 3 ( )
   d. I disagree. Customers prefer Westerners. But I still maintain a strong sense of my Chinese cultural identity at home. 4 ( )

9. There has been much bad publicity on the lack of honesty and business ethics in China:
   a. Chinese (China), or anyone for the matter, have never been known for honesty and good business ethics since the olden days. 1 ( )
   b. Westerners are no better than Chinese in honesty and business ethics 2 ( )
   c. Singaporeans have the best reputation for honesty and business ethics 3 ( )
   d. Problem is with the breakdown of good-old Confucian ethics. 4 ( )

10. Should there be plans to base a Singaporean Chinese Managing Director to head the China subsidiary:
    a. No problem: whoever is good will do well as an expatriate to a Western multinational corporation 1 ( )
    b. Problem: unlike the ready acceptance of Western expatriates, subordinates will question your right to differentiate yourself as you are “the same” 2 ( )
    c. Problem: It is motivated by the assumption of cultural similarity, which is far from the case; differences in nationality matters. 3 ( )
    d. Western multinational corporations still need Western expatriates based in regional subsidiaries; they need to put their “own people” to ensure control 4 ( )

11. This is my overall position as a corporate representative to an Asian customer base:
    a. Sharing a common cultural background with my regional customers, I am better able to understand what they want; that contributes to commercial wins. 1 ( )
    b. Commitment to cultural kindred is the mark of a successful regional player. I am willing to speak up against the management on their behalf if required. 2 ( )
c. A familiar regional player knows when to take a stand, even one that opposes their cultural kindred when required.

d. Professionally, I follow corporate objectives to a tee; other concerns shouldn’t intervene.

III. Personal

12. Before the Speak Mandarin Campaigns (1980s), I felt:

   a. My Chinese-English [race, parents’ language background] identity was a favored asset and still remains so today.

   b. My Chinese-Mandarin/Dialect [race, parents’ language background] identity was not favored, but there was no negative stigma attached.

   c. My Chinese-Dialect [race, parents’ language background] identity was disfavored and negative stigmas were attached.

   d. My Chinese-Mandarin [race, parents’ language background] identity was disfavored and negative stigmas were attached.

   Answer: (  )
Appendix 3.6a
List of Questions on Respondent Linguistic Preferences in Informal Settings

Hi <Respondent Name>,

Thanks for the insights you shared with me during the interview. It's simply amazing for me to see how patterns emerge! I have found some significant patterns in the responses, but need further information from you to make a more conclusive explanation. Simply reply to this email with your answers to these questions, and I will do the rest:

1. Language spoken by your parents to you most of the time:

2. Language spoken at home (other than with your parents) most of the time:

3. Language spoken amongst friends most of the time:

4. Language spoken amongst colleagues during unofficial interaction most of the time:

5. Language you are most comfortable with:

6. Have you ever had any overseas education experience? If your answer is NO, please skip Q.6.
   If your answer is YES, 
   a. please state the country of your overseas education experience:
   b. highest level attained from the overseas education experience:

7. Have you ever had any overseas work experience for an extended period of time (i.e. requiring major relocation)? If your answer is NO, please skip Q.7. If your answer is YES,
   a. please state the country of your overseas work experience:

8. Do you have anything else to add that you think is related to the above questions? Please feel free to jot them down here:

THANK YOU!

Regards,
Daphnée Lee
Appendix 3.6b

List of Questions on Childhood Socioeconomic Background

Dear Respondents,

Thank you for the feedback you have generously provided so far. I am currently correlating the significance of early childhood socioeconomic background (up to the time you were 12 years old) on future commercial attitudes. Of course, the most direct way will be to ask for your parent’s household income during then, but I also understand that may be pragmatically unachievable. Hence, I have also included other indicators in this question set to assist the assessment in the event you are unable to recall the household income question. There are only 4 VERY SHORT QUESTIONS.

Hope to hear from you soon, and have a Merry Christmas! Thank you so much.

1. Up to the time you are 12 years old, your parent’s annual household income was:
   - I don’t remember
   - Yes, I remember; it was: ______________

2. Up to the time you are 12 years old, the type of housing you were living in was:
   - HDB; specify room type: ______________
   - Private housing; specify type: ______________
   - Others; please specify: ______________

3. Up to the time you are 12 years old, your family mode of transport was:
   - Public transport; specify main mode: ______________
   - Family car; specify brand and model: ______________

4. Up to the time you are 12 years old, the most expensive overseas vacation my parents brought me to was:
   - We have never been on an overseas vacation
   - Yes, it was in: ______________ for about: ___________
     (duration)

-End. Thank you!-
Appendix 3.7

Sample of Participant Consent Form

1. I ____________________ (name) consent to taking part in the research project undertaken by Daphnée Lee, Ph.D. research candidate from the Australian National University. I have read the information sheet for this project and had understood its contents.

2. I understand that this research project is undertaken by Daphnée Lee with no affiliation whatsoever to the company of my employment.

3. I understand that the participation in the research project involves a questionnaire to be completed, either at my own time or with the assistance of an interviewer. It may also include face-to-face interviews and participation in group discussions.

4. I understand that information gained during the research project may be published in reports to the Australian National University, and in academic journals or books. I give my permission for the researcher to use information that I have furnished for these purposes.

5. I understand that any identifiable information with regard to my name and organization will be decoded and not identifiable in the research or any future publications. I understand that the confidentiality of my identity is preserved through the use of pseudonym(s) which I had requested to choose personally.

6. I understand that personal information, such as my name and work contact details, will be kept confidential insofar as it does not infringe into matters related to legal or criminal consequences. This form and any other identifying materials will be stored securely under the possession of the researcher in a locked office at the Australian National University. Unprinted data will be stored in a computer accessible by fingerprint identification softwares of only the researcher. I provide herein my preferred contact phone number and email address to avoid infringements to my respondent identity through spyware that can be introduced to my office communications equipments for the surveillance of my responses in this research:

   Preferred Mobile Contact: ______________________________

   Preferred Email Contact: _______________________________

7. I grant permission for the interview and the conversations to be tape recorded and transcribed, and to be used by Daphnée Lee for the analysis of interview data. I understand that the tapes will be stored securely under
the possession of the researcher and will be erased when the interview has been transcribed in paper.

8. I understand that if I have any questions or complaints about the study, I am free to contact:

   Daphnée Lee, Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Australian National University, Mobile: 9682 2106, Email: daphnee.lee@anu.edu.au

   Rachel Bloul, Ph.D. Candidate Supervisor, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Australian National University, Tel: +61 (2) 6125 5178, Email: rachel.bloul@anu.edu.au

If I have concerns regarding the way the research was conducted, I can also contact the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee:

   Human Ethics Officer, Human Research Ethics Committee, Australian National University, Tel: +61 (2) 6125 7945, Email: Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au

9. I understand that I may withdraw my participation and contribution at any stage of the interview process. I am entitled to refuse the answering of any questions that I am not comfortable with.

Signed ………………………………….  Date ………………………
Appendix 4

A Detailed Analysis of the Correlations of the Approach to Cross-Cultural Economic Activity and Respondent Demographical Profiles

Tables 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 present the detailed analyses on the correlations between the approach to cross-cultural economic activity and respondent demographical profiles.

In Table 4.5, the correlation between respondent approaches to cross-cultural economic activity and childhood socioeconomic background is outlined. In particular, the table highlights the relationship between respondent culture circumvention in economic life and the perception that one’s race-ethnic identity is not favored or disfavored during one’s childhood schooling experience. Respondents of “least affluent” childhood socioeconomic backgrounds voice this perception more than their peers of more favorable circumstances.

In Table 4.6, the correlation between respondent approaches to cross-cultural economic activity and childhood linguistic primacy is outlined. The distinction in cross-cultural economic approaches between English and Mandarin-primacy respondents is raised, given their symbolic affiliations with dual hegemony.

In Table 4.7, the correlation between respondent approaches to cross-cultural economic activity and their AEA scores was outlined. This correlation illustrates the different approaches to cross-cultural economic activity according to respondent comfort level with ambiguity. Different approaches to cross-cultural economic activity involve different degrees of ambiguity. Thus, an individual’s comfort level with ambiguity influences the approach adopted by the respondent. In general, Low AEA scorers are more inclined to subscribe to the SC approach, Mid-Low to BAC, Mid-High to IC and High to CC.
Correlation of Approaches to Cross-Cultural Economic Activity and Childhood Socioeconomic Background

Table 4.5: Respondent profiles sorted according to childhood socioeconomic background and its correlation with respondent approach to cross-cultural economic activity

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</tbody>
</table>

In Table 4.5, respondents are sorted into “most affluent”, “reasonably affluent” and “least affluent”. The “least affluent” overwhelmingly believe their race-ethnic identity was not favored, or was disfavored, prior to the Speak Mandarin campaigns. It shows a strong correlation of socioeconomic circumstances in one’s childhood and the level of confidence in one’s ability at deploying cultural affiliations in cross-cultural economic activity. Respondents from the “least affluent” profile on the whole also had high AEA scores. The “Least affluent” respondents mainly adopted the CC approach. The profiles of this group of respondents are highlighted in blue. Outlined in Chapter 4, CC respondents are characterized by circumvention of the race-ethnic dimension at work. In contrast, the “most affluent” express a variety of approaches to cross-cultural economic negotiation, with the exception of culture
circumvention. The case is also similar for “reasonably affluent” respondents. This observation suggests that the moderation of childhood socioeconomic circumstances is strongest for individuals from “least affluent” circumstances.

**Correlation of Approaches to Cross-Cultural Economic Activity and Childhood Linguistic Primacy**

Table 4.6: Respondent profiles sorted according to childhood linguistic primacy and its correlation with respondent approach to cross-cultural economic activity

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<td>shane</td>
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Table 4.6 illustrates the correlation between childhood linguistic primacy and one’s approach to cross-cultural economic activity. Dialect-primacy respondents are predominantly mid-range AEA scorers of “reasonably affluent” socioeconomic background in their childhood. There are a number of “least affluent” Dialect-primacy respondents. They differed from the more affluent in the approach towards cross-cultural negotiations at work. While the more affluent Dialect-primacy peers engaged the IC approach (highlighted in orange), “least affluent” Dialect-primacy
peers circumvented this style of engagement (CC approach - highlighted in blue).

Mandarin-primacy respondents are likewise influenced by childhood socioeconomic circumstances on how to best approach cross-cultural economic activity. The socioeconomically better-off Mandarin-primacy respondents adopt the BAC approach (highlighted in turquoise) while the “least affluent” ones, the CC approach.

Up to this point, the results suggest childhood socioeconomic background overwrites similarities in linguistic primacies. This statement is valid to the sample until English-primacy respondents are factored into the analysis.

The analysis first needs to isolate respondent linguistic primacy from the effects of childhood socioeconomic background. Hence, the comparison of English and Mandarin-primacies is first restricted to “most affluent” respondents only. Despite sharing the “most affluent” profile, English and Mandarin-primacy respondents differ in their approach to cross-cultural economic activity. English-primacy respondents adopted the SC approach (highlighted in yellow) and Mandarin-primacy respondents, the BAC approach. The possession of similar childhood socioeconomic backgrounds as the “most affluent” did not lead to similar cross-cultural approaches. Rather, “most affluent” respondents share greater proximity in their engagement style with “reasonably affluent”, but similar linguistic primacy peers. An examination of respondent AEA scores further reinforced the significance of respondent linguistic profiles.

However, the influence of childhood socioeconomic background should not be undermined. This is especially so for “least affluent” respondents. The impact of childhood socioeconomic background on “least affluent” respondents is not just significant; it is drastic. This reflects the persistent impact of less-than-ideal past financial circumstances, even with its dramatic chances in the present.
Correlation of Approaches to Cross-Cultural Economic Activity and AEA scores

Table 4.7: Respondent profiles sorted according to Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety (AEA) and its correlation with respondent approach to cross-cultural economic activity

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</table>

Table 4.7 illustrates respondent profiles sorted according to AEA scores and cross-cultural economic activity approach. The higher the AEA score, the higher levels of anxiety a respondent experiences when embracing ambiguity in a work situation. Conversely, the lower the AEA score, the lower levels of anxiety a respondent experiences when embracing ambiguity at work. AEA scores provide insights to the choice of approaches to cross-cultural economic activity.

Respondents with better-off childhood socioeconomic circumstances tended to possess lower AEA scores than their lesser-endowed peers. But this is not the case for “most affluent” Mandarin-primacy and “reasonably affluent” English-primacy respondents. “Most affluent” Mandarin-primacy respondents had significantly higher scores than their English-primacy peers,
both “most affluent” and “reasonably affluent” inclusive. English-primacy respondents on the whole have lowest AEA scores, whether “most affluent” or “reasonably affluent”. Having the advantaged linguistic primacy is a significant factor to one’s comfort level towards work ambiguity in adulthood. Insofar as one fulfills the base requirement of being “reasonably affluent”, linguistic primacy takes over as the key moderating factor.

**Exceptions**

Respondents whose approach to cross-cultural economic activity are exceptional from their peers who share similar demographical profiles and/or AEA scores are indicated in asterisks (*) in the tabulations. This section accounts for the reasons to these exceptions.

Subscribers to the CC approach overwhelmingly possess “least affluent” childhood socioeconomic backgrounds. Two respondents who adopted the CC approach, Haden and Lance, however, possess “reasonably affluent” childhood socioeconomic backgrounds. They are considerably younger than other CC subscribers, being born-1970s, as opposed to their born-1960s CC peers. Also, although both had high AEA scores, their scores were nevertheless only borderline “High”, relative to their similarly grouped peers. In terms of demographical profiles, Haden and Lance are more closely matched with respondents who are identified as “Born-Again Chineseness” (BAC): Joseph, Alvin, William, George and Jeremy. But BAC respondents believed in the cultural connection in building rapport with their peers and customers in China. In contrast, Lance and Haden were insistent over differentiating themselves from the Chinese association. Lance confided he experienced downward mobility from better (“most affluent”) childhood socioeconomic circumstances than the one being shared in this research. Although Lance’s childhood socioeconomic circumstances remained “reasonably affluent”, downward mobility likely produced considerable shifts in value orientation and behavior. Haden’s example had traceable reasons that
cannot be stated without exposing his identity. This thesis took the discretion to leave the reason unaccounted for.

“Least affluent” childhood socioeconomic circumstances and high Ambiguity Embracement Anxiety need not necessarily doom one to culture circumvention strategies. Damian, although coming from “least affluent” childhood socioeconomic circumstances, did not adopt the CC approach. He also had High AEA scores, which matched the score range of the “least affluent”. But he approached cross-cultural economic activity in a manner more aligned with IC subscribers. Especially, the characteristic manifestations of pessimism and passivity amongst CC subscribers (see Chapter 5) were absent in Damian’s responses. An examination of Damian’s profile did not reveal factors likely accounting for this exception. This observation suggests much as childhood socioeconomic backgrounds predispose individuals towards specific value-orientations, the predispositions are far from set-in-stone.

Ron and Alvin illustrated that later-life experiences could also modify one’s value orientations and behavior. The two did not share the IC approach with their Dialect-primacy, “reasonably affluent” peers. Unlike the locally-educated IC respondents, Ron received his tertiary education in the West. With this exposure, he became more aligned with the SC approach. Although not as rare as in the 1950s, for instance, sending children overseas was still uncommon in Ron’s time. Alvin, as with Haden, had reasons that cannot be stated without exposing his identity. This thesis had thus taken the option to leave the reason unaccounted for. Age is also likely a factor. Both Ron and Alvin are much younger, being born 1970s, as opposed to their born-1960s IC colleagues.

Nash and Sam shared the same IC approach with Mid-High AEA scorers, but their AEA scores were significantly much higher. Like George and Jeremy (BAC), both scored 19, placing them in the High score range with the Culture Circumvention respondents. However, like George and Jeremy, too, the profiles of Nash and Sam differed significantly from the CC
respondents’. Apart from childhood socioeconomic background differences, Nash and Sam approached cross-cultural economic activity characteristically matched with IC. In perceiving Western expatriate peers as “equal/no different”, Nash and Sam reiterated the position strongly associated with the IC approach:

Table 4.8: I see the expatriates in my office as: (a) no different/equal to my other colleagues; (b) my competitors, but we compete on unequal terms, (c) superiors (better).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>no different/equal</td>
<td>structural inequality</td>
<td>innate superiority</td>
<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
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<td>SC</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>BAC</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC 30</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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Nash and Sam however, differed in some instances from their IC approach peers. In face of inequality, they prefer the passive stand of expecting intervention from the management to “undo the injustice”. Most IC subscribers, on the other hand, expect one’s own initiative in overcoming the barriers of inequality. Nash and Sam are two of the respondents from the IC approach who believed otherwise.

Table 4.9: It is said that local staff do not enjoy equal “weight” with the expatriates even when promoted to director positions: (a) The individual has to overcome these barriers; (b) the management should do something / we have unequal head-starts.

<table>
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<td>overcome barriers</td>
<td>innately unequal / management should do something</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHINESE</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>CC 30</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC 40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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