
FUJIANESE PIONEERS AND JAVANESE KINGS: PERANAKAN CHINESE LINEAGE AND THE POLITICS OF BELONGING IN WEST JAVA, 1890s–2000s

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On February 8, 2004, Tubagus (Tb.) Okkie Adhika Tirta Monerie gathered his family, along with the local religious and government officials of the district of Ciampea in Bogor, West Java, at the local Chinese cemetery for the unveiling of the recently re-discovered and refurbished tomb of his great-great-grandfather, Tb. Abdullah bin Mustofa, alias Babah Embun Thung Tiang Mih (1793-1856).¹ Shaped like a typical round-mounded Fujianese tomb, the Chinese-style tombstone was rebuilt without any fresh inscription added to it. Instead, Okkie erected a vertical rectangular tombstone on the side, which traced seven sultans and two *pangerans*

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¹ This and the next paragraph are based on Okkie Tirta Monerie, *Bulletin Keluarga Tubagus Tirta Hidayat* [Family bulletin of Tubagus Tirta hidayat], private circulation, July 2005, and my interview with him in Jakarta on December 14, 2016.

(princes) of the Banten royal lineage among the family's ancestors. While refurbishing his great-great-grandfather's tomb, he also relocated the grave of his paternal grandmother, Thung Kip Nio, which was next to her grandfather's grave. Okkie was born in 1944 as "Tan Kie Hok," although he no longer uses his patrilineal Chinese name. "Monterie" is a Menadonese name from his mother's side. It is from his father's mother's ascending Thung line, however, that he traces his royal Bantenese lineage. The two side-by-side graves represent Okkie's connection to the "blue blood" of Javanese royalty. The public officials gathered at the unveiling ceremony on that rainy morning would not have missed that.



Tubagus Ishak unveiling the newly refurbished tomb of Tb. Abdullah bin Mustofa, alias Babah Embun Thung Tiang Mih, in the Chinese cemetery at Ciampea, Bogor, on February 8, 2004 (photo courtesy of Okkie Tirta Monterie)

Okkie Tirta Monterie's mode of memorializing his paternal grandmother and great-great-grandfather in creolized tombs reflects the multiple layers of cultural creolization remembered and ritualized by the descendant of a Chinese settler from late eighteenth or early nineteenth-century Java. Born of a Chinese Indonesian father and indigenous Indonesian mother in the 1940s, Okkie changed his name in 1967. His children and grandchildren no longer have Chinese names. In one important way, however, Okkie remains aligned with an elementary Chinese social structure—the same-surname lineage community. He continues to be a member of the Thung-Tirta ancestral hall of Bogor, from which he traces the first half of his composite family name, "Tirta Monterie."

In nineteenth-century Java, the name "Babah Embun Thung Tiang Mih" denoted one's belonging to the local born "Peranakan," or mixed-race descendants of Chinese

male settlers and indigenous women. For most of the nineteenth century, the Peranakan Chinese, especially the women, acculturated in language, dress, and food habits as they interacted with Javanese, Malay, and other indigenous groups. Although they still held fast to Chinese ancestral worship, they did so in a way that was no longer strictly patrilineal. The Thungs belonged to this group, who settled in Java in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century, and became creolized in culture over the course of the nineteenth century. The following century, in William Skinner's view,



Inscription on Thung Tiang Mih's refurbished tombstone (author's photo, July 30, 2016)

witnessed a succession of Chinese-diasporic, Dutch-Indies, and Indonesian nationalist “cultural offensives” for the “Peranakan soul.” Skinner identifies language use in schools and at home to conclude that, while Chinese-diasporic and Dutch-Indies

nationalism took turns to prevail earlier on, by 1960 it had become “clear to most Peranakans that both Dutchification and resinification are historical blind alleys.”²

In her fine-grain study of Chinese communities and colonial society in (East) Java, Claudine Salmon argues that “new [Chinese] entrepreneurs,” who arrived after 1870, “gradually took over the real leadership of collective [Chinese] life, even if officially the community heads were still representatives of the great Peranakan families.”³ In other words, the Dutch chose old Peranakan families as official representatives of the Chinese even as newer Totok (Bahasa: pure) Chinese communities settled and evolved. In the case of the Han lineage, whose first generation arrived in Java in the eighteenth century, Salmon shows how the second-generation local-born Han brothers “maintained close links with each other” even as one “became Muslim,” “merged into the local elite, [and their descendants] compiled their own genealogy in the way the *priyayi* [Javanese aristocracy] did, while the Peranakan continued to bear Chinese names ... listed in separate genealogies.” Remarkably, some “Muslim members of the family attended [twice-yearly ancestral worshipping] ceremonies until 1965.”⁴ For Salmon, the lineage-sustained elementary “collective life” of the Peranakan Chinese peaked in the nineteenth century when they became the entrepreneurial Chinese wing of the native aristo-bureaucratic elite in colonial society. Lineage-centered Chinese social life declined from the turn of the twentieth century, and came to an abrupt end with the official name-changing policy and the prohibition of any public display of Chinese cultural signs in Suharto’s Indonesia during the 1960s.

In this essay, I explore the micro-politics of cultural belonging in West Java in the historical experience of one Peranakan Chinese lineage community over the duration of the twentieth century. Disaggregating Skinner’s and Salmon’s language and associational-life centered framing of (Peranakan) Chinese identity, I join recent Indonesianist studies in examining how local actors deploy “sites, bodies, and stories” to appropriate nation-endorsed narratives for the construction of local ethnic and religious group identities.⁵ In his argument for more reflexive analyses of scale in

² William Skinner, “Java’s Chinese Minority: Continuity and Change,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 20, 3 (May 1961): 353–62; and William Skinner, “Creolized Chinese Societies in Southeast Asia,” in *Sojourners and Settlers: Histories of Southeast Asia and the Chinese*, ed. Anthony Reid (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1996), 92. More precisely, Skinner argues that diasporic “*totok*” Chinese cultural nationalism won the first round in the 1910s and 1920s, while the Dutch who joined the battle before 1910 made a comeback by the 1930s. Chinese cultural nationalism came back again briefly under the influence of socialist China in 1955, before the Indonesians won. See Skinner, “Creolized Chinese Societies,” 50–93.

³ Claudine Salmon, “The Chinese Community of Surabaya, from its Origins to the 1930s Crisis,” *Chinese Southern Diaspora Studies* 3 (2009): 50.

⁴ Claudine Salmon, “The Han Family of East Java: Entrepreneurship and Politics (18th–19th Centuries),” *Archipel* 41,1 (1991): 61.

⁵ See: Mary M. Steedly, *Rifle Reports: A Story of Indonesian Independence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013); and Susan Legêne, Bambang Purwanto, and Henk Schulte Nordholt, eds., *Sites, Bodies and Stories: Imagining Indonesian History* (Singapore: National University Press, 2016). Andreas Susanto and Hui Yew-Foong, for instance, have found funeral houses in Yogyakarta and Singkawang (West Kalimantan) as de facto “Chinese” associations where the commonality of death rituals continued to bind where people were no longer allowed to associate as co-ethnics. See: Andreas Susanto, “Diversity in Compliance: Yogyakarta Chinese and the New Order Assimilation Policy,” in *Chinese Indonesians and Regime Change*, ed. Marleen Dieleman, Juliette Koning, and Peter Post (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 65–89; and Hui Yew-Foong, *Strangers at Home: History and Subjectivity among the Chinese Communities of West Kalimantan, Indonesia* (Boston and Leiden: Brill, 2011). Recent works on late imperial China’s ethnic frontiers have likewise demonstrated how strategically flexible kinship and religious practices permitted movement among

cultural politics at the local level, Daniel Birchok shows how Islamic leaders belonging to an elite lineage group in the Seunagan district of Aceh deployed genealogy, sacred objects, and narratives to connect “themselves to, among other times and places, the Islamization of Seunagan [a sub-district in the province of Aceh], the rise of the modern Indonesian nation, and the Islamic cosmos.”⁶ Similarly, I trace how the Thung-Tubagus actors interchanged their genealogical identity between the Confucianist and Javanese cosmologies, and the rise of the Chinese, Indies, and Indonesian nations, while staying rooted to the locality of West Java over time.⁷

Members of the Thung-Tubagus lineage group negotiated the nationalist (Chinese, Dutch-Indies, Indonesian) politics of belonging from their provincial locality at the intersection of Confucianist and Islamic-Javanese cosmoses. Processes of negotiating genealogical change, as I will show, followed not only a nationalist script but also relied on the mutual recognition by the real and fictive kin, and religious gate-keepers of the respective communities on the ground. It is through these processes of negotiation and mutual recognition that Fujianese pioneers and Javanese kings became legible symbols of cultural belonging.

Part one of the article, set in late colonial Java (1901–42), explores the diasporic crossing the Thung family made at the turn of the century to connect their Java-based Chinese lineage to the Fujianese homeland. I argue that the recovery of the Fujianese Ur-ancestral sign was part of the Thungs’ cultural-political consolidation as an elite Dutchified “Chinese” political lineage in colonial society. Part two moves forward in time to the Sukarno-Suharto postcolonial years (1965–98), when the Thungs who remained in Indonesia embraced the historical Sultan Tirtajasa of Banten (r. 1653–82) as their new Ur-ancestor, while changing their family name to “Tirta.” In three sections, I examine how the lineage group renegotiated their belonging to West Javanese local society on the three inter-twined scales of kinship connections, the provincial cult of Javanese kings, and anticolonial nationalist hagiography.

Part One: Fujianese Pioneers and the Consolidation of a Colonial Peranakan Chinese Lineage in West Java (1900–42)

Salmon has conjectured that Peranakan Chinese Islamization processes on Java began to turn around when Chinese community leaders built ancestral and funeral halls in the colonial cities from the 1860s, but it was not until 1900 that resinicization took on a modern reformist bent.⁸ For close to a century after their settlement in West Java, the Thungs were not socially organized by the patrilineal lineage principle. It was the third-generation Thungs who journeyed to their ancestral homeland in Fujian and

surname groups or local ethnic structures of government. See: Michael Szonyi, *Practicing Kinship: Lineage and Descent in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002); and David Faure, *Chieftains into Ancestors: Imperial Expansion and Indigenous Society in Southwest China* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014).

⁶ Daniel Birchok, “Putting Habib Abdurrahim in His Place: Genealogy, Scale, and Islamization in Seunagan, Indonesia,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 57, 2 (2015): 498.

⁷ “Cosmologies” refers to the cultural worldviews that explain the coming into being, and the structure of the universe, especially in relation to time, space, and causality.

⁸ Salmon, “Ancestral Halls, Funeral Associations, and Attempts at Resinicization in Nineteenth Century Southeast Asia,” in *Sojourners and Settlers*, ed. Reid, 183–203.

revived the lineage as a social organization for the fraternal group. Third- and fourth-generation Thungs were at the forefront of both the Confucianist reform movement and the demand for Dutch education for Chinese subjects. A closer reading of their lineage-inflected cultural choices reveals the entanglements between the processes of resinicization and Dutchification as the brothers and their sons rose up the colonial-status hierarchy.

The nine Thung brothers who collaborated to build a new ancestral hall in 1900 were third-generation settlers in West Java. Their Chinese genealogy, started at about the same time, traced their founding forefather in Java to a Thung Tiang Mih (湯長彌, 1793–1856), supposedly a first-generation settler, born in Zhangzhou, Fujian, and migrated to the Ciampea district, in the Bogor (colonial Buitenzorg) region of West Java during the early nineteenth century.⁹ He married a woman with a Chinese name, and they had two daughters and a son. These children were married into the wealthier Song, Phoa, and Tan (宋, 潘, and 陳) families in the Bogor region. Typical of the creolized bilateral Peranakan Chinese kinship system described by Skinner, the second-generation son Thung Ho Boen (1837–97) was in an uxori-local marriage arrangement with the Tan family, where he lived and worked as an administrator on his wife’s brother’s landed estate in Cianjur, near Bogor.¹⁰ As a result, and again in accordance with the bilateralized pattern of Chinese patrilineal ancestral worship, Tiang Mih’s ancestral tablet and his tomb were maintained not so much by his son as by one of the daughters who married a Song-surnamed man in Ciampea.

The resinicization the Thung’s experienced from the mid-1890s forward was couched in an older Confucianist form that valorized the locality’s relationship with the civilized imperial center. The nine brothers “returned” to their Fujianese diasporic homeland to reconnect their genealogy as they moved up the colonial social ladder and saw it befitting themselves to set up a lineage hall dedicated to their ancestors. Sometime between 1897 and 1900, the Thung brothers obtained a copy of their ancestral genealogy from Yunling/Changtai, in Zhangzhou, southern Fujian.¹¹ In 1900, they named their ancestral hall “Kioe Seng Tong” (九承堂), after Kioe Seng Sie (九承事), a ninth-generation descendant of Tang Zhi (湯智), the Ur-ancestor of the larger Thung clan of Fujian, and reputedly a deputy of the Tang dynasty folk-hero deity General Chen Yuanguang (陳元光).¹² The Chinese characters “Kioe Seng,” literally

⁹ Information on the nine Thung brothers in this section, unless otherwise stated, is drawn either from the official genealogy Robert Tjan Hin Tjiang compiled, *Thung Tiang Mih Pedigree*, private circulation, 2013 edition; or from a Masters thesis written by a fifth-generation descendant of Twie Nio, Marinkelle-Tan, “De Negen Gebroeders Thung, 1859–1942: Etnische Relaties in de Indische Koloniale Samenleving” [The nine Thung brothers, 1859–1942: Ethnic relations in the Indies colonial society], masters thesis, Vrije Universiteit (Amsterdam), 2000.

¹⁰ Skinner, “Creolized Chinese Societies,” 63. Salmon finds, however, an earlier wave of the resinicization of the creole Chinese beginning from the 1860s, when “collective temples for ancestor worship and ... voluntary associations for the proper conduct of weddings and ... funerals” were founded in Surabaya and Makassar. See Salmon, “Ancestral Halls.”

¹¹ *Kioe Seng Tong Genealogy* [manuscript document in Chinese]. It is not clear when, exactly, and which of the brothers made the trip. It could not have been their father because the genealogy was updated in Fujian as late as 1897, the year the father died. Reconnecting their dead father’s line with the Fujian genealogy deepened the Thung brothers’ lineage by an additional eighteen generations.

¹² *Kioe Seng Tong Genealogy*, 7. Chen was killed in 711 in the process of putting down border unrest in Fujian. He was later canonized by the Tang emperor, and worshipped as a local deity. See Yoshihiro Nikaidō, *Asian Folk Religion and Cultural Interaction* (Göttingen: Niedersachs V&R Unipress, 2015), 177–81.

meaning “nine” and “succeeding” (or “inheriting”), were an allegory for the nine Thung brothers’ joint inheritance of their father’s estate, but it also referenced the classical pedigree of the lineage that extended in Chinese history to Tang dynasty military generals who colonized Fujian under the mandate of the son of Heaven. At the heart of the ritual community stood the ancestral hall, on the main market street (*Handelsstraat*) in Bogor, a communal gravesite in one of their plantations at Kebon Pedes, and a new diasporic patrilineal orientation towards a Fujian-mediated Confucianist cosmos.

The timing of this ritual-political consolidation coincided with the rise of the Thungs as respectable Dutch-appointed merchant leaders for the local Chinese community. Previous works have stressed the political-economic power of these merchant leaders as collaborators with the Dutch without giving due consideration for their leadership roles as ritual and legal mediators of a late-imperial Chinese cosmos for local Chinese settlers.¹³ The case of the Thungs suggests that genealogical authenticity and pedigree from a respectable lineage was just as important for the appointment of Chinese *kapitans* (community leaders) as for members of the native aristocratic bureaucracy.¹⁴ The “Kioe Seng” ancestral hall was established in 1900, a year after the Dutch colonial government appointed Thung Tjoen Ho (Fifth Brother) Chinese Lieutenant of Bogor (in office 1899–1914). Having jointly inherited their father’s wealth, the nine Thung brothers also named their family firm after their Fujinese Ur-ancestor: Kioe Seng Liong Limited Liability Company (九承隆兄弟公司).

The Thung brothers built a network of enterprises between the 1890s and 1910s based on what they inherited, and by leveraging their affinal networks. Their main enterprise was their father’s rice-milling operation, which they co-inherited and expanded into a regional import-export rice and tea trading business. Besides the rice-milling operation, First Brother ran a tea plantation at Cianjur (Sindanglaka); Third Brother, based in Batavia’s Chinese quarter, operated a warehousing facility; while Bogor-based Fifth Brother, the director of the Kioe Seng Liong trading firm, handled the commercial side of operations. Seven of nine brothers were married to daughters from the wealthy Tan lineages of Bogor and Batavia. These far-reaching kinship connections with the big Chinese landowners of Bogor and Batavia no doubt gave the brothers the business connections they needed for access to markets and bank credit.

If the diasporic ancestral idiom was cosmologically Confucianist, the concomitant lineage organization entrenched the brothers within the political economy of colonial West Java. The nine Thung brothers adhered to the ritually mandated patriarchal generation and sibling order status hierarchy, excepting cases of significant disparity in wealth and socio-political status. To begin with, formal membership in the Kioe Seng Tong was restricted to the “male descendants of Thung Ho Boen who have attained the age 21 years old.”¹⁵ It was not until 1957 that the rules were changed to admit Thung daughters and sisters in principle, and not until 1967 that the first of

¹³ See: Mona Lohanda, *The Kapitan Cina of Batavia, 1837–1942: A History of Chinese Establishment in Colonial Society* (Jakarta: Djambatan, 2001); and James Rush, *Opium to Java: Revenue Farming and Chinese Enterprise in Colonial Indonesia, 1860–1910* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990).

¹⁴ Heather Sutherland, *The Making of a Bureaucratic Elite: The Colonial Transformation of the Javanese Priyayi* (Singapore: Heinemann Educational Books, 1980).

¹⁵ *Kioe Seng Tong Association Minutes* (henceforth, *KST Minutes*), September 29, 1929.

them entered the Kioe Seng Tong as executive members.¹⁶ Leadership within the patrilineal group devolved strictly according to one's place in the genealogical order.¹⁷

The mutually co-constitutive place of the local Dutch-Indies civil society and the civilized Confucianist diasporic identity was embodied in the public-private life of Seventh Brother, Thung Tjoen Pok, in the 1920s and 1930s. A philanthropist and lobbyist for a local Dutch-Chinese school, and a local municipal councilor, Tjoen Pok was named Knight (1926) and Officer (1941) of the Order of the Oranje-Nassau by the Dutch government—honors that he chose to receive at the Thung ancestral hall, before his extended family and the cosmopolitan elite of Bogor society.¹⁸ The celebration of Tjoen Pok's receipt of Dutch imperial honors at the ancestral hall ritually channeled the "merits" of the lineage elder to the descendants by having said honors dedicated to one's ancestors.¹⁹ As a public figure, Tjoen Pok judiciously made personal monetary contributions to Chinese nationalist, Dutch imperial, and local West Javanese civil society causes in the last years of his life.²⁰ As a lineage elder, he conscientiously consulted his lineage juniors to ensure consensus views on decisions the lineage had to make as a community—donations to building a school building, maintaining ancestral graves, and providing subsidies for the grave-keeping families in the Fujianese Thung village.²¹

By the 1930s, the Kioe Seng Tong founder-brothers' sons came to embody the private-public ethics of late colonial Java's plural society. By a combination of inherited wealth, early access to elite Dutch education, and affinal alliances with other wealthy Chinese families of West Java in addition to their respectable lineage background, the fourth-generation Thungs were well-positioned to succeed their

¹⁶ *KST Minutes*, October 12, 1958, and August 13, 1967.

¹⁷ First Brother, a landowner, remained Kioe Seng Tong's leader (president) from its founding to his death in 1915. Subsequently, leadership devolved directly to the Third Brother (1915–16), a trader who had been appointed to serve as the Chinese member of the Batavia Municipal Council; then to Fifth Brother (1916–21), the Chinese Lieutenant of Bogor; and after an inheritance dispute-induced hiatus (1921–25), to the Seventh Brother (1925–26), a Bogor municipal councilor who was knighted for his philanthropic services. Second and Sixth Brothers were bypassed most likely because they had not established themselves entrepreneurially or politically. The question of Fourth Brother's leadership did not arise because he predeceased (in 1915) Third Brother by a year. See Marinkelle-Tan, "De Negen Gebroeders Thung," 46–54.

¹⁸ A photo from 1926 shows the entire lineage lined up in front of the Kioe Seng Tong ancestral hall, along with Dutch colonial and Native officials, to celebrate Tjoen Pok's Dutch knighthood. The photo was printed in Tjan, "Thung Tiang Mih Pedigree," 64.1. For his philanthropy and public service record in education, public health, fund raising for the 1930 Merapi eruption, and other appreciations, see: *De Indische Courant*, March 5, 1940; *Bataviaasche Nieuwsblad*, August 11, 1925; *Bataviaasche Nieuwsblad*, November 30, 1930; and *Het Nieuws van den Dag voor Nederlandsch-Indië* (henceforth, *Het Nieuws*), January 3, 1931, and July 28, 1933.

¹⁹ Ancestral halls of Chinese *kapitans* in Batavia have performed this ritualized re-channeling act from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. When Tan Yik Yok was promoted to major in 1847, he dedicated the honor to his Fujianese Ur-ancestor in 1847 with the words "Let his virtues flow to his descendants (德垂後裔)." The Tan (Chen) Clan Ancestral Hall in Batavia, founded in the mid-eighteenth century, provides an archetypal model of the ritual interplay between the colonial present, the ancestral past, the lineage community, and the political self. See Claudine Salmon and Denys Lombard, *The Chinese of Jakarta: Temples and Communal Life* (Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'homme, 1980), 108.

²⁰ He donated to the nationalist war efforts in both China (US\$3,000 in 1937) and the Netherlands (1,000 Dutch gulden in 1940), and charities in Buitenzorg and Batavia (3,000 Dutch gulden in June 1941). See: *De Indische Courant*, October 30, 1937; and *Bataviaasch Nieuwsblad*, May 29, 1940, and June 16, 1941.

²¹ *KST Minutes*, July 11, 1937.

fathers' and uncles' place in colonial West Java's civil society. Some were entrepreneurs and estate administrators, while others moved into the professions. Almost all the eldest sons in the fourth generation achieved some form of colonial public office (see table below).²² Between 1931 and 1942, under the leadership of the eldest brother's eldest son, Thung Siang Hiap, the fourth generation further consolidated the ritual community by adding a liturgical oath to their annual gatherings attributed to their Java-branch founding ancestor, Thung Tiang Mih.²³

Sibling order in lineage	Name	Occupation	Public Office
1 st Br. 1 st Son	Siang Hiap (1886–1949)	Rubber and tea plantation owner	Member of the Provincial Council of West Java (1934–42?) ²⁴
3 rd Br. 1 st Son	Liang Djin (1887–1970)	unknown	Chinese member of the Batavia Municipal Council (1915–18?) ²⁵
6 th Br. 1 st Son	Liang Hoat (1906–62)	unknown	Alderman (<i>wethouder</i>) of the Bogor Municipal Council (1938–42) ²⁶
7 th Br. 1 st Son	Tjeng Louw (1897–1965)	Agriculture engineer, rubber plantation owner	European education committee Bogor; member of Chinese Landowner's Association, Chung Hua Hui
8 th Br. 1 st Son	Tjeng Hiang (1897–1960)	Graduate of Royal Agriculture College at Wageningen, government service	Head of the Plant Diseases Institute in Bogor (1939-42) ²⁷
9 th Br. 1 st Son	Liang Tjay (1903–67)	Tea factory owner	Chinese member of the Sukabumi Municipal Council (1934–41) ²⁸

Fourth-generation KST Thung lineage public/political office holders according to sibling order

²² The one exception was a third-ranked son, Liang Lee, of Third Brother. He received his political science training at the London School of Economics before he carved out a career as a writer and propagandist, then as an ambassador for Nationalist China, and then a minister in the Manchukuo regime. He returned to Indonesia in 1945–46. Liang Lee's political career outside Dutch colonial Java can perhaps be read as the exception that proved the rule. Among Liang Lee's siblings, it was still his eldest brother who was appointed to take over their father's seat in the Batavia municipal council when the latter died in 1915.

²³ The lineage group acceded unanimously to an unnamed member's request for "the Testament of the deceased gentleman Thung Tiang Mie to be read aloud before the deliberation in every meeting, and for this to be set up as a traditional custom [*traditioneele gebruik*]." *KST Minutes*, February 14, 1938.

²⁴ *Het nieuws*, July 16, 1934.

²⁵ See: *Bataviaasch nieuwsblad*, February 23, 1915; and *Het nieuws*, August 8, 1918.

²⁶ See: *Het nieuws*, December 19, 1938; and *Bataviaasch nieuwsblad*, May 14, 1941.

²⁷ Marinkelle-Tan, "De Negen Gebroeders Thung," 53.

²⁸ See: *Het nieuws*, June 29, 1934; and *Bataviaasch nieuwsblad*, March 14, 1941.

Lineage organization around the diasporic Fujianese Ur-ancestral name strengthened the political unity of two generations of Thung men. Centered on rituals surrounding the ancestral hall and the graves of their ancestors in Java and Zhangzhou, Fujian, the logic of Confucianist patrilineal precedence patterned both the intra-lineage, and public actions of the Kioe Seng lineage group in late colonial West Java. The ancestral idiom was diasporic with a resolutely provincial twist. But the local graves of the first, second, and third-generation Thungs were already accumulating in West Java, adding to the local orientation of the ancestral cult. The level of political unity, and the relative wealth the Thungs enjoyed in Indies society, will be severely eroded during the next quarter of a century (1942–67) of war, revolution, and political polarization that characterized the making of Indonesia. The assimilationist Indonesian state, in its demand for the ethnic Chinese to indigenize their names, presented an identity crisis to the lineage, insofar as their shared surname, the Ur-ancestral sign, and the history of descent from Fujian symbolized in that sign, could no longer be used, in the public sphere at least.

Part Two: Indigenizing Reconnections

Indonesian nation building in the 1950s and 1960s was not so much aimed at expelling the Chinese, as had been done to the Dutch, but at absorbing Chinese into the nation's body-politic. Indonesian citizenship was automatically conferred on Chinese born in Indonesia or resident for more than five years unless formally renounced.²⁹ To be fully “assimilated,” however, both the Sukarno and Suharto governments encouraged the Chinese to adopt indigenous-sounding names during the 1960s. Ariel Heryanto has argued that Suharto's New Order regime continued the colonial “practice of Othering the ethnic Chinese” as “non-native ... in order to assert an identity of Self (the so-called *pribumi*, or ‘native’) in a binary opposition.”³⁰ This explains the seemingly paradoxical goals of the Suharto-era Assimilation Program that aimed at removing from Indonesian public life all cultural signs of Chineseness, down to Chinese names, even as it continued to single out ethnic Chinese for positive discrimination (identity cards, school admission quotas).³¹ Remarkably, faced with these pressures to conform, the Thungs went beyond the assimilationist call for name-changing and refashioned, instead, their Fujianese line of virtuous ancestors as indigenous kings and princes of West Java. In the next three sections, I explore how the intertwined processes of a negotiated indigenization of Thung lineage identity in the forms of (a) incorporating “lost” native kin into their lineage while adopting new

²⁹ Donald Willmott, *The National Status of the Chinese in Indonesia, 1900–1958* (Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1961), 25–27.

³⁰ Ariel Heryanto, “Ethnic Identity and Erasure: Chinese Indonesians in Public Culture,” in *Southeast Asian Identities: Culture and the Politics of Representation in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand*, ed. J. S. Khan (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1998), 95–114.

³¹ See: Filomeno V. Aguilar, “Citizenship, Inheritance, and the Indigenizing of ‘Orang Chinese’ in Indonesia,” *Positions: East Asia Cultures Critique* 9, 3 (Winter 2001): 501–33; Nobuhiro Aizawa, “Assimilation, Differentiation, and Depoliticization: Chinese Indonesians and the Ministry of Home Affairs in Suharto's Indonesia,” in *Chinese Indonesians and Regime Change*, ed. Marleen Dieleman, Juliette Koning, and Peter Post (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 47–64; and Tsai Yen-ling, “Materializing Racial Formation: the Social Lives of Confiscated Chinese Properties in North Sumatra,” in *Chinese Indonesians Reassessed: History, Religion, and Belonging*, ed. Sai Siew Min and Hoon Chang-Yau (London: Routledge, 2013), 83–102.

names, (b) interchanging their genealogical identity through practicing the *abangan-priyayi*-inflected Javanese cult of kings, and (c) re-writing lineage history as anticolonial nationalist hagiography.

Kinship Connections, Name-changing

The Chinese in Java changed their names sooner and in larger proportions than elsewhere in Indonesia.³² The longer history of settlement, residential proximity with the Javanese, early prevalence of mixed marriages with indigenous women, and contiguity with the political center of the nation may all be contributing factors. The Thungs in the 1960s retained memories of some of these indigenous maternal ancestors, despite their exclusion from the sinicized Kioe Seng Tong genealogy since 1900. As pressure to assimilate by name-changing increased from 1966, the Thungs made provincial kinship connections and transactions with a local indigenous family to legalize their adoption of “Tirta” as their new surname, and Sultan Tirtajasa of Banten as their new Ur-ancestor.

The assimilationist strain of thought in the Thung family predated the 1960 launch of the *Star Weekly*-based Peranakan Chinese-led assimilation movement. In 1954 the fourth-generation Thung Liang Lee (3rdBr.3rdSo) chastised Indonesian Chinese, whom, he pointed out, “succumbed to the Dutch view of regarding the Indonesians as a somewhat inferior race.”³³ Despite the proximity of their language and psychology, he lamented that “there were few intermarriages” between the Chinese and indigenous groups. Liang Lee turned to precolonial history for lessons on how Chinese settlers assimilated completely with the native population before Dutch divide-and-rule.³⁴ “Princely Houses and aristocratic families of Indonesia like the sultan of Palembang, Bantam, Cirebon, and the regents of Tjiamis and Sumedang,” he pointed out, “have had Chinese ancestors and are proud to acknowledge the fact.” In fact, embracing Indonesian nationality status should not be limited to “realizing the unreality of Chinese nationalism.” For the descendants of the mixed-race creole Chinese, he called for a “change of heart” to “realize ... Indonesia [as] the country of our mothers, our grandmothers, great-grandmothers, and great-great-grandmothers.”³⁵

It was not, however, until anti-Chinese violence and coercion in West Java escalated in the 1960s that the Thungs as a lineage community made their move to creolize their ancestors *en masse*. Racial riots against the Chinese in cities and towns

³² In December 1968 the Department of Justice, in charge of receiving applications for name-changing, announced that about 60 percent of the Chinese Indonesian population in the province of Semarang (Central Java) had changed their names. Comparing that number to the statistic that only about 230,000 out of Indonesia’s three million ethnic Chinese had changed names by August 1969, it appears that the majority of Chinese who changed their names in the law’s early years were those from Java. I do not have the figures for West Java. These statistics are cited in Leo Suryadinata, *Pribumi Indonesians, The Chinese Minority, and China* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Academic, 2005), 148, 263, 264 n. 73.

³³ Thung Liang Lee, “The Unreality of Chinese Nationalism in Indonesia: An Apologia and a Reorientation,” *Indonesia Review* (Jakarta) 2, 1 (1954): 69–75.

³⁴ Ong Hok Ham, “Tentang nama2 warganegara Indonesia keturunan Tionghoa (I)” [On the names of Indonesian nationals of Chinese descent], *Star Weekly* 6, 2 (1960): 41–42.

³⁵ Lee, “The Unreality of Chinese Nationalism in Indonesia,” 69–75.

across West Java in March and May 1963, as J. A. C. Mackie highlights, were “eruptions of popular sentiment which were condemned by the government and (in theory, though not always in practice) by the local authorities.” Student-led riots in May 1963 in Sukabumi led to four deaths and extensive damage to Chinese houses, shops, and factories.³⁶ After the passing of the name-changing laws, Sukabumi was also the only district across Java where local authorities held a mass exercise to enforce name-changing. On May 29, 1966, pro-assimilation Chinese leaders and the military assembled and gave Sukabumi’s Chinese population three days to reregister new Indonesian names in a mass ceremony on June 1, 1966.³⁷

The Thungs were able to refashion their ancestors as Bantenese sultans through the intermediation of Tubagus Ishak’s Sundanese-Islamic family. Sometime in 1966, the then president of the Kioe Seng Tong, Thung Liang Tjay (9thBr.1stSon), and his eldest son, Liong Pho, both residents of Sukabumi, were introduced to Tubagus Muhammad Ishak (b. 1912) through the latter’s ethnic Chinese neighbor.³⁸ Ishak’s biography highlights the porosity of colonial-era “racial” boundaries at the lower ends of its class structures. Ishak was brought up a Muslim in the Bogor region, but he remembered and acknowledged that his father (Tb. A. Hamid/Thung Siang Leng) and grandfather (Tb. Gozalie/Thung Eng Lie) had Muslim and Chinese names from the 1930s. Although Mely Tan, in her field report of the Chinese in Sukabumi in the mid-1950s, found the number of Chinese-Muslim converts to be “negligible,” the broader patterns of inter-religious interactions is instructive for the present encounter.³⁹ The term used to refer to these Chinese-Muslim converts, “*Mualap*” (Sundanese-Arab: convert), had “popularly acquired the derogatory connotation of a hobo, a wanderer, a displaced person.”⁴⁰ When I met and interviewed Ishak in August 2016, one of the stronger themes in his autobiographical narrative was how he grew up destitute, with little education, but still made it on his own as a building contractor who later employed several engineers in his company. By 1966, he had established himself as a middle-class resident in Sukabumi, who counted well-to-do Chinese as his neighbors.

³⁶ J. A. C. Mackie, “Anti-Chinese Outbreaks in Indonesia, 1959–68,” in *The Chinese in Indonesia: Five Essays*, ed. J. A. C. Mackie (Melbourne: Nelson, 1976), 97, 103–6.

³⁷ Charles Coppel, *Indonesian Chinese in Crisis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 82–85. I thank Charles Coppel for sharing with me a University of Pajajaran (Psychology Faculty) report on this exercise, “Research Project on the Development of the Assimilation Process after the Gestapu/P.K.I. Incident at Kotamadya, Kabupaten Sukabumi, September 1966.”

³⁸ Events on the 1966–67 encounter between Thung Liang Tjay, Thung Liong Pho, and Tb. Mohammad Ishak are based on Thung Liang Tjay, “Mystificatie over de beweerde afstamming van de familie Thung uit Chineesche voorouders? (1967)” [Mystification of the proclaimed descent of the Thung family from Chinese ancestor?], reprinted in Tb. Rahardja Tirtakusumah [alias Thung Liong Pho], *Siapakah Gerangan Thung Ho Boen?* [Who might Thung Ho Boen be?] (privately circulated family document, 2005–08), Annex 1; and on my interview with Tb. Mohammad Ishak in Sukabumi, July 24, 2016.

³⁹ Mely G. Tan, *The Chinese of Sukabumi: A Study in Social and Cultural Accommodation* (Ithaca: Modern Indonesia Project, Cornell University Southeast Asia Program, 1963), 197–200. The few registered Chinese-Muslim converts, with the exception of a businessman, were all of working class status—there was a barber, a driver, a ticket seller, and two housewives.

⁴⁰ Mely Tan, *The Chinese of Sukabumi*, 198. Mely Tan suggests that while middle-class Peranakan Chinese respected Islam and understood its basic tenets, there was a strong stigma against Chinese-Muslim converts who were seen as poor and lazy, and taking advantage of the largesse of Sundanese-Muslim society.

The provincial kinship reconnection was achieved by two transactions in received race/gender and written/oral genealogical practices between the Peranakan Chinese and the Sundanese-Islamic families. First, the Thungs had to be prepared to question the authenticity of their almost seventy-year-old Chinese genealogy in exchange for the oral-based genealogy of the Ishak's family. In a five-page typescript, "Mystification of the Proclaimed Descent of the Thung Family from Chinese Ancestors," the lineage society president explained how the compromise was eventually made. Confessing that he would have preferred positivist genealogical evidence, Liang Tjay nonetheless settled for an "oral tradition" within the latter's family as the basis for authenticating the indigenous roots of their lineage:

Family archives, with the exception of a few princely lineages, are almost non-existent in Indonesia. Some family records can very well be found here and there, to an individual's best knowledge recorded on the basis of traditions [*overleveringen*], handed down by parents or by the parents' family members to a child or a young one ... In relation to our story [*verhaal*], according to oral testimonials, the common ancestor of the so-called "Chinese" and Sundanese group *must be the son of Pangeran Moestopa*, who went by the name *Tubagus Abdullah bin Mustopa alias Thung Tiang Mih*, also known among the people as "Baba Embun"⁴¹ [*emphasis added*].

The second transaction was an internal one among the Thungs—the incorporation of a genealogically forgotten indigenous maternal ancestor into their new hybrid genealogy. The Thungs' Chinese genealogy only recorded the Chinese names of the primary wives. Liang Tjay himself recalled this maternal ancestor, at whose Ciampea tomb Thung Tjoen Pok (Seventh Brother), the lineage elder in the 1920s and 1930s, used to worship with "great devotion." She was "a certain 'Ma Bugis,' whose grave [Liang Tjay] regularly visited in his youth almost every year [at the time of Tjeng Beng, or Qingming—the Chinese festival for commemorating ancestors]," being asked to go with his uncle Thung Tjoen Pok. Tjoen Pok told him that 'Ma Bugis' was of Bugis descent and that she would be the great-great-grandmother ... of the writer."⁴²

This race-altering kinship "reconnection" was sealed in a genealogy hand drawn by Ishak in 1967.⁴³ In this agreed-upon scheme of origins, both Liang Tjay's and Ishak's grandfathers became brothers, while their fathers and uncles became same-generation cousins. In a sign that the genealogy was drawn up in haste, the nine Thung brothers appeared only with their Chinese names, while the rest of the lineage had both their Chinese and Sundanese-Islamic names.

The genealogy was authenticated in Serang, the capital of Banten province, by Tubagus Kosimihardja, an army officer by profession, who, on November 1, 1967, also claimed to be the controller of the genealogy of the Cheribon-Banten Royal Family.⁴⁴ For registering their new royalist names with the Department of Justice, the Thungs

⁴¹ Thung, "Mystificatie over de beweerde afstamming," 3.

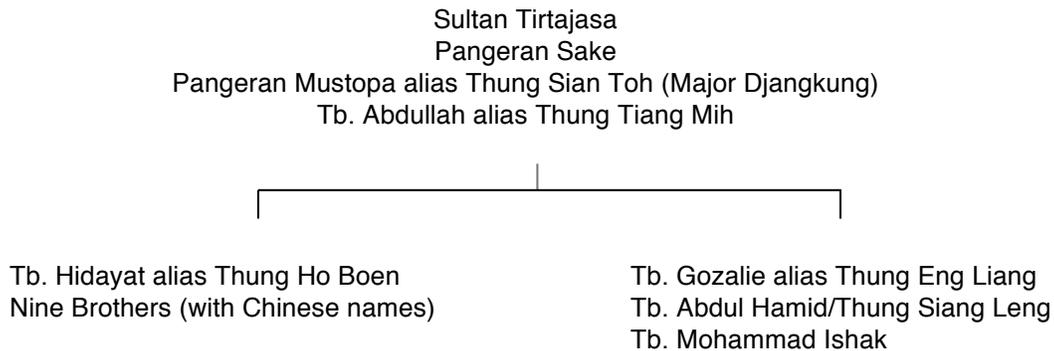
⁴² Thung, "Mystificatie over de beweerde afstamming," 2. For the creolized Hokkien kinship term, see Tan, *The Chinese of Sukabumi*, 116–19.

⁴³ I saw this genealogy still hanging on Mohammad Ishak's house in Sukabumi when I visited him on July 24, 2016. It was clearly written by a barely literate hand. In his interview, Ishak stressed that he was from humble origins and did not attend more than a few years of school.

⁴⁴ Email correspondence with Okkie Tirta Monterie, March 2, 2017.

received authentication from Kosimimhardja, and he also provided each of them a notarial *Penyataan* (Declaration) that included the relevant portions of the genealogy (see below) to prove their descent from the Banten royal family.⁴⁵ Led by Ishak, the first contingent set off from Bogor for Serang in August 1968.⁴⁶ Thung Liang Tjay's eldest son, Liong Pho, who succeeded his father to be president of Kioe Seng Tong, was among the first in the lineage to change his name—it became Rahardja Tirtakusumah. Others in the Kioe Seng Tong lineage society soon followed suit.⁴⁷

Reproduced below is a simplified version of the new genealogy, which was still hanging in Ishak's house when I visited in August 2016:



Major figures in the genealogy; chart drawn by Ishak in November 1967

Within two years of fusing their genealogy with Mohammad Ishak's, the Kioe Seng Tong lineage group embraced "Tirta" as their new ancestral name/sign. Meaning "water" in Javanese, Tirta retained part of the original meaning of the Chinese character "Thung" (湯)—soup or broth.

By the time Kioe Seng Tong met in November 1969, Liong Pho, who replaced his father (d. 1967) as president of the lineage society, took note of the fact that "Tirta" was "now used by many in the Thung family." In a list of twenty-six members dating from the mid-1970s, all but one had changed names. Among these, fourteen chose to have "Tirta" in their new family names.⁴⁸

Although Chinese Indonesians, like all Indonesians, were expressly forbidden from adopting feudal *priyayi* titles (*gelar*)—such as sultan, Raden, Raden Mas, and Ratu—in their new names, there was, in fact, no legal regulation on status-defining *priyayi*

⁴⁵ Thung Tjiang Hoa (7th Br. 2nd Son. 1st Son), for instance, made the trip to Serang and received his *Penyataan* in June 1972. See: "Pernyataan Keturunan Thung Tjiang Hoa" (Notarial document, June 8, 1972); and "[Extract] Staat Asal-Oesoel Sedjarah Pentjari ke Banten, Tubagus Abdullah, Juni 1931" (Notarial document, June 8, 1972). *Thung Tjiang Hoa Private Papers* (care of his son, Ajie Bagus Kurnia [alias Thung Djie Kian]).

⁴⁶ Liong Pho, Robbie Tan (Thung) Kie Liang (alias Robertus Tirta Monterie), and Thung Tjiang Pek (alias Permadi Tirtarahardja). Email correspondence with Thung Julan, January 24, 2017.

⁴⁷ Email correspondence with Thung Ju Lan, January 22, 2017.

⁴⁸ For instance, Thung Liong Koan became Anwar Tirtaraharja, Thung Hok An (alias Andeyanto Tirtakusumah), Thung Goat Nio (alias Ratih Tirtapurnama), and Thung Som Kiauw (alias Sonny Tirta). Tellingly, the next most popular surname, with three subscribers, was "Setianegara"—loyalty to state.

names. Although “Tubagus” was an aristocratic title of the Banten royal family, it was probably not included on the prohibited list because the kingdom had been abolished since 1813. The Thungs might have felt they needed the official genealogical authentication for their high *priyayi* and royalist-sounding Bantenese names.

In the pamphlet *How Do You Change Your Name?* the pro-assimilationist author F. S. Wignjosumarsono simply encouraged his readers to “choose names that are commonly [*lazim*] used in Indonesia.”⁴⁹ Wignjosumarsono did not make any distinction between high- or low-status names. The “common names” prescribed included *priyayi* names (such as “Entjin Widjajakusuma,” “Lilis Widaningsih”), but high-status *priyayi* or royalist names (Harjonagoro or Pakubuwono) were not to be found.⁵⁰ Not all the Thungs who embraced “Tirta” in their names gave themselves the “Tubagus/Ratu” title—roughly half did.⁵¹

Having adopted a Banten royalist lineage, the lineage group proceeded to also adapt its Ur-ancestral name accordingly. “(W)ithout any less respect or gratitude for our ancestors’ choice of ‘Kioe Seng Tong,’” Liong Pho declared, “the time has come to return the name of our lineage association to its origins [*asal*].”⁵² Liong Pho’s proposal to amend the association’s name to *Rukun Wargi “Dharma Tirta”* (Tirta Benevolence Family Association) was approved by all but one member.⁵³ In the same meeting the group also agreed to move the Thung ancestral graves from a private family plot to the public Chinese cemetery at Gunug Gadung (Bogor). The new “graves [were to] be constructed closer together so as not to take up too much space,” and the original family plot at Gunung Pedes was to be “donated to the municipality for social needs.”

Recalling the forgotten history of intermarriage and the porosity of racial boundaries at the lower reaches of Javanese society allowed the Thungs to make the two race-and-gender transactions with Tubagus Ishak in exchange for his oral royal genealogy. By creolizing the first settler ancestor, Thung Tiang Mih, as Tb. Abdullah bin Mustopa, the Thungs connected themselves with Tubagus Ishak’s provincial, but also royal, ancestors. If it appears on first sight that the Thungs made these transactions to serve the urgent need to adopt new names for themselves and their lineage society, their altered ancestral revering practices in subsequent years suggests a deeper reconnection with the spiritual landscape of West Java.

Interchanging Ancestral Cults

“Tombs on Java,” according to anthropologist James J. Fox, “whether the mausoleums of great personages ... or the simpler graves of village founders, local

⁴⁹ Signjosumarsono, *Bagaimana Ganti Nama?* (Jakarta: Jajasan Pembinaan Kesatuan Bangsa Pusat, 1965), 18.

⁵⁰ Signjosumarsono, *Bagaimana Ganti Nama?*, 22. The author was more concerned with the Chinese choosing names that would blend in with their region of residence (pp. 19–25). The names he prescribed were hence categorized by region and language: Sundanese (West Java), Javanese (Central/East Java), Minang (West Sumatra), Sanskrit (Java and Bali), and Arabic. In fact, he reassured the Chinese by suggesting intermediate names that preserved one of the following from the Chinese names: the original meanings, initials, sounds, or (Chinese) family names.

⁵¹ Tjan, *Thung Tiang Mih Pedigree*.

⁵² *KST Minutes*, undated (likely May 1969).

⁵³ *KST Minutes*, November 30, 1969.

dignitaries, or religious teachers ... [are] resting places [*pasarean*] [that] provide references to the past.”⁵⁴ Comparing the history of Senopati in the *Babad Tanah Jawi* with his tomb within the cemetery, and its history as mediated by the *juru kunci* (tomb keepers, or, literally, keepers of the keys), Fox argues that the latter safeguard and interpret the contextualized knowledge of the Javanese past for pilgrims who seek the graves for protection and blessings. If the fifth-generation Thungs had obtained their legal authentication as descendants of Sultan Tirtajasa by August 1968, their ancestors were not fully incorporated into an authenticated *Silsilah* (genealogy) until 1973. Such genealogical authentication also required the Thung-Tirtas to connect their ancestors’ Chinese graves to the province’s wide network of princely tombs and through pilgrimage and consultation with tomb- and genealogy-keepers.

For the fourth- and fifth-generation Thung-Tirtas, acquiring a creolized royalist name also meant a reorientation of their ancestral worshipping practices to include the tombs of their newly acquired ancestors. The Thung’s reconfigured their ancestral cult to the spiritual landscape of West Java by making pilgrimages (*penziarahan*) to princely tombs, pursuing tomb-centered mystical knowledge from *juru kunci*, and incorporating their ancestors into the Sundanese-Islamic genealogical chart. The ubiquity of revered princely tombs across West Java is both a sign of the popularity of the Javanese cult of kings and a reminder that princely tombs there cater to localized communities of pilgrims. The history of social degradation and dispersal of the Banten sultan’s family in the West Java countryside made it fertile ground for tomb-keepers everywhere to stake claims of descent from princes and kings for their local village-founder (*cikal bakal*) or protective spirit (*danyang*).⁵⁵

While the Thungs had adopted Sultan Tirtajasa as their Ur-ancestor, they traced this connection not so much directly through his tomb in Serang but rather through a local Bogor tomb of the sultan’s son—Pangeran Sake. In 1966, when Liang Tjay and Ishak were negotiating how to enjoin their ancestry, the latter brought the former on an investigative “trail, which should lead us to Pangeran Sake, the father of Pangeran Mustopa. We even visited his grave in Citeureup and the grave keeper, but this turned up nothing.”⁵⁶ Despite initially “turning up nothing,” the Thung family eventually accepted the Ishak’s way of tracing descent to Sultan Tirtajasa through Pangeran Sake. That the location of the tomb in Citeureup, Bogor, where the third-generation lineage elder Thung Tjoen Pok owned a part of his rubber plantation since the 1920s, added to the allure of this new ancestor to the Thungs.

As part of the broader West Java landscape of protective place spirits (*demits/danyang*), some of these newly acquired ancestral princes were, in fact, already

⁵⁴ James J. Fox, “Interpreting the Historical Significance of Tombs and Chronicles in Contemporary Java,” in *The Potent Dead: Ancestors, Saints, and Heroes in Contemporary Indonesia*, ed. Henri Chambert-Loir and A. J. S. Reid (Sidney and Honolulu: Allen & Unwin and University of Hawai’i Press, 2002), 160.

⁵⁵ Historian Sartono Kartodidjo has shown how the Banten sultan’s exile to Surabaya in 1816 did not fail to dispel popular and *priyayi* respect and awe for the occasional charismatic but “false” claimant to the throne throughout the nineteenth century. See Sartono Kartodidjo, *The Peasants’ Revolt of Banten in 1888: Its Conditions, Course, and Sequel, A Case Study of Social Movements in Indonesia* (’sGravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), 61, 74–82.

⁵⁶ Thung, “Mystificatie over de beweerde afstamming,” 2.

part of the spiritual landscape of Thungs attracted to Javanese mysticism (*kebatinan*).⁵⁷ In particular, Thung Tjoen Pok's grandson, the fifth-generation Thung Tjiang Hoa (1930–94), who inherited part of the plantations and lived in Citeureup from around 1960, became heavily involved in these lineage-tracing pilgrimages after 1972. Tjiang Hoa's personal compendium of mystical knowledge compiles notes about the one hundred protective spirits he worshipped in a holy room (*kamar suci*) and around his Citeureup house. His notes indicate that he had invited the spirit of Pangeran Sake to protect his family in the form of a Kupa tree planted in August 1960 "because the plantations in Gunung Hambalang, and Goenoeng Poetrie, belong to his area of authority." Getting involved later than most in the lineage community, Tjiang Hoa noted that it was only "since June 1972, [that] it became clear that TTH [Thung Tjiang Hoa] is a direct descendant of Pangeran Sake."⁵⁸ Another member whose pursuit of *kebatinan* merged with her lineage-tracing pilgrimages was Thung Eng Nio (1stBr.10thChild, 1906–95), alias Ratu Tirta Sri Rahayu, who was living in Surabaya in East Java in the late 1960s and early 1970s, when the name-changing campaign was in full swing. Thung Tjiang Hoa encountered his aunt in Banten during one of these pilgrimages in October 1974. From the shrines Eng Nio said she visited across West Java, it indicates that she was combining the ascetic and meditative pilgrimage along with paying respects to her new princely ancestors in the Banten region.⁵⁹

If some Thungs were already connected to the Javanese cult of kings through their practice of mysticism, those tracing their descent from Banten kings had to solicit knowledge from tomb keepers and mystical teachers in the revelatory mode. Eng Nio's knowledge of her Bantenese descent was apparently revealed to her by a possessed mystical teacher. She recounted how she only chanced upon Tb. Kosimihardja, the authenticator of the Thung-Tirta genealogy, on her way to search for her royal roots in the Baduy highland region of southern Banten:

Since 1971, I was recognized as *Ratu* of Bantam, through a person by the name of Sosro Kartono, who lived in Malang (and was regularly possessed by spirits). I was ever asked to go to Cibeo [Baduy] to look for the tomb of Tubagus Buang ... [As] I stopped by in ... Serang ... that was when I met Jing, a brother of Kosimihardja.⁶⁰

Liong Pho and Ishak were most likely led to Tubagus Kosimihardja in Serang through mystical networks among the *juru kunci* or other practitioners of *kebatinan*. Discussions with *juru kunci*, as James Fox tells us, "were in a kind of 'revelatory' mode consisting of hints, allusions, and returned questions rather than any direct exposition."⁶¹ Thungs who tried to trace their descent actively sought revelatory knowledge to resolve questions they had about their ancestors' past. Unlike Liang Tjay,

⁵⁷ See: Clifford Geertz, *The Religion of Java* (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1960), 16–29; and John Pemberton, *On the Subject of "Java"* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 236–68 (on village cleansing).

⁵⁸ Thung Tjiang Hoa, "16. mBah Gandawulu Prabu Sake" in his: *Ilmu Kebathinan* [Notes on Mystical Knowledge], 1970s. *Thung Tjiang Hoa Private Papers*.

⁵⁹ Besides Serang in Banten, she also went on this trip to Lembang in Bandung (for the shrine of Ki Buyut Kumpul), Batu Tumpang in Garut (Ki Buyut Kimpang), Cheribon (Sunan Gunung Jati), Belaraja in Tangerang, and Ciampea. *Thung Tjiang Hoa Diaries*, October 9, 1974.

⁶⁰ *Thung Tjiang Hoa Diaries*, October 9, 1974.

⁶¹ Fox, "Interpreting the Historical Significance," 162.

his son Liong Pho did not dismiss *juru kunci* as mere “tradition.” In October 1967, in an interview he and Ishak conducted with a certain Tubagus Abdul Kadir, they extracted knowledge about Thung Ho Boen’s origins from a *juru kunci*-like figure:

1. Whose son is Thung Ko Yi [TKY; Thung Ho Boen’s posthumous name]?
Ans: He is the son of Sultan Sjafiudin, from his second wife.
2. Where does TKY’s wife come from?
Ans: She is a native from Banten.
- ...
16. Do the grandchildren of TKY know about his story?
Ans: Yes
17. May I get an explanation if I went to Ciampea?
Ans: Yes
18. Does this grandson have a native or a Chinese name?
Ans: Native name
19. Did he carry this native name from young or after he changed names?
Ans: From young. His name is Tubagus Kyai Hadji ...
20. Is the house of the grandson of TKY who lives in Ciampea near the tomb of Pangeran Yusuf?
Ans: Yes. On its northern side.
21. Are there other grandchildren besides Tubagus Kyai Hadji in Ciampea?
Ans: No
22. Is that Tubagus Kyai Hadji in Ciampea the same [person] as the name noted by Thung Liong Po/Ishak?
Ans: Yes
23. Did TKY become an adopted son of Thung Tiang Mih?
Ans: Yes⁶²

As the above exchange shows, Ishak’s 1967 hand-drawn genealogy (shown earlier) was not a straightforward transfer of his genealogy to the Thungs. Both Liong Po and Ishak sought revealed knowledge in tracing their descent from Sultan Tirtajasa and Pangeran Sake. Their assumption and leading question about a certain Thung Ho Boen’s native grandson, whom they thought lived near Pangeran Yusuf’s tomb in Ciampea, suggests that they were trying to trace their descent from *juru kunci* to *juru kunci*.

If Tb. Ishak’s 1967 genealogy connected the nine Thung brothers to Sultan Tirtajasa, Kosimihardja’s 1973 version extended it to the Islamic prophets and Adam:

⁶² “Interview with Tubagus Abdul Kadir, 1967,” in Tirtakusumah, *Siapa Gerangan Thung Ho Boen?*, Annex 10.

Adam

Prophet Mohammad

Sunan Gunungjati

Banten Sultans

Other descendants (including 9 Thung brothers using their Bantenese names)

Major figures in the Banten-Cheribon royal family genealogy (1973)

As a royal genealogical chart, it traced descent from the full list of Banten sultans to the prophet and first Islamic conqueror of West Java, Sunan Gunung Jati, to the Prophet Mohammad and Adam. The origins of this 1973 genealogical chart were revealed through a mystical encounter, as explained in the key (*keterangan*) to the chart, as follows:

The origins of the *patinggi* (nobility) genealogy was revealed [*terbuka*] on 14 June 1931 on Mountain Batu Djembatan Merah, Cisadane River, Bogor, by Tb. Abdurachman bin Tb. Syaripan, son of P. Mustopa Dyankung Abdul Hae, on the basis of the revelation of the *patinggi* secret in 1891 to Tb. Abdurachman. He was ordered to search for his relatives who were lost with no reason. Armed with his mandate to perambulate in the region of Priangan while embarking on his ascetic pilgrimage [*bertapa*], the revelation occurred ... in Bogor in the year 1931. The secret [*rahasia*] of the *patinggi* was revealed after about forty years. This is what is now recorded in this genealogy.⁶³

The three key words in this passage are “*Bertapa/tapa*,” “*rahasia*” and “*terbuka*.” *Tapa* refers to the self-disciplinary deprivation of food and sleep in the Javanese mystic’s quest for spiritual strength. Clifford Geertz’s opinion surveys in 1950s indicate that the majority of *priyayi* and *abangan* still believed meditation (*semèdi*) and *tapa* increased one’s physical strength and ability to achieve any goals—including getting rich.⁶⁴ It was through the accumulation of spiritual power by *tapa* that the secret nobility status of the Thungs was eventually *terbuka*—revealed—presumably after almost forty years of devotional pilgrimages.

These Javanese concepts of being genealogically “chosen” by revelation and accumulating power by pilgrimage were at the center of the rediscovery of Tb. Abdullah bin Mustafa alias Thung Tiang Mih’s tomb in 2002–04. I began this essay with the anecdote of Okkie Tirta Monerie’s and Tb. Ishak’s unveiling of Thung Tiang Mih’s grave in Ciampea in 2004. According to Okkie, his father, on his deathbed, told Okkie about the “secret” of his descent from Bantenese sultans in 1966. But it was not until Okkie’s retirement from a lifelong career in banking in 2002 that he felt he had to fulfill his father’s mandate (*amanat*). In March 2003, accompanied by family and Liong Pho alias Tb. Rahardja Tirtakusumah, Okkie went on a pilgrimage to Serang. After calling on the keeper of the family’s genealogy, Tb. Yaman Effendi, the son of Tb.

⁶³ “Nota A” in “Salsilah, Controle Familie Sedjarah Kraton, Tjirebon + Banten,” (Serang 1973).

⁶⁴ Geertz, *Religion of Java*, 324–25.

Kosimihardja, in Serang, the group paid their respects at Kosimihardja's grave before proceeding to the royal graves in Masjid Agung in Banten Lama.

At the royal graves in Masjid Agung, Okkie "received a vision" in the form of "a light that was dazzling and blue in color, after which [he] saw one by one the sultans and also their queens and concubines."⁶⁵ Returning from the pilgrimage, Okkie obtained a copy of the same authenticated genealogy from Tb. Yaman Effendi, but with himself and his descendants incorporated therein. Together with Tb. Ishak, to whom Okkie gifted a two-by-two-meter copy of this genealogy, they went in search of Tb Abdullah alias Thung Tiang Mih's missing grave in a Chinese cemetery in Ciampea. "As if guided and given signs by his ancestors," Okkie chanced upon "the tomb that faced Mecca as befitting a Muslim tomb, did not carry a tombstone as befitting the tomb of a sultan, and it only resembled a Chinese tomb in its shape." After having the tombs renovated and new tombstones inscribed, installed, and officially unveiled, he went on a pilgrimage to the tombs of Pangeran Sake in Citeureup (Bogor), Sultan Tirtajasa in Ponten (Banten), and Pangeran Jusuf in Ciampea (Bogor).⁶⁶

If the Thungs had needed the legal authentication of their descent from Sultan Tirtajasa for the collective name-changing, the lineage leaders of the 1960s and 70s continued the search for the spiritual authentication of their Chinese ancestral line. Some lineage members were already believers in Javanese mysticism prior to the name-changing exercise. Essentially, the Thung-Tirtas merged their preexisting Chinese ancestral cult with the West Javan provincial cult of historical Bantenese princes. This merger of the two ancestral cults was negotiated through shared Javanese idioms of pilgrimage and revealed knowledge.

Princely Hagiographies: Reversing the Peranakan Logic in Lineage Histories

If southern Chinese genealogical stories structure the migration and colonization relationship between a civilized imperial center and distant villages, Malay-Javanese genealogical histories (*sejarah, babad*) frame stories of heroic kings to justify the "exemplary center" of contemporary power-holders.⁶⁷ In post-colonial Indonesia, the Thung-Tirtas wrote at least four genealogical histories (1971, mid to late 1970s, 2004, 2008) to reinvent the sovereign reputation of the lineage's name in the anti-Chinese political climate of New Order society. Reframing their Chinese diasporic lineage narrative as patriotic anticolonial Indonesian history involved an aesthetic reversal of the Peranakan logic of Chinese creolization: instead of being the offspring of Chinese men and Indonesian women, they retraced their descent from Indonesian men and Chinese women.

The Thung-Tirtas latched onto the canonization of their newly adopted Ur-ancestor, Sultan Tirtajasa, to publicize the Indonesianization of their names and aristocratic genealogical roots. In August 1970, the Indonesian government declared the Sultan Tirtajasa "National Hero" (*Pahlawan Nasional*) for his struggles against

⁶⁵ Okkie, "Family Bulletin," 13.

⁶⁶ Okkie, "Family Bulletin," 20.

⁶⁷ J. Ras, "The Genesis of the Babad Tanah Jawi; Origin and Function of the Javanese Court Chronicle," *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 143, 2/3 (1987): 343–56.

Dutch V.O.C. (Vereenigde Oost-indische Compagnie, Dutch East India Company) interventions in Banten in his reign.⁶⁸ A year later, the lineage elder Thung Liang Lee⁶⁹ published under his new name Tb. Pranata Tirtawidjaya an article in *The Indonesian Review of International Affairs*.⁷⁰ This was an English-language journal Liang Lee edited for a Jakarta-based think-tank that hosted Indonesian and foreign scholars for monthly lectures, and counted former Premier Mohammad Hatta as an honorary president. This article not only made known the facts of the lineage members' name-changing, but gave the whole exercise the force of a patriotic moral through a carefully told "chapter" of nationalist history.

Omitting the mystical connection in the lineage's cult of princes, Liang Lee weaved his Banten ancestors in a neo-orthodox secularized *sejarah/babad* narrative for the Indonesian nationalist audience. Banten's struggle with the Dutch V.O.C. in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had been popularized in intellectual circles with the Dutch historian H. J. de Graaf's Dutch-language *History of Indonesia*.⁷¹ Sultan Tirtajasa was exiled to Batavia in 1682 for his opposition to Dutch interventions in court politics. Between 1750 and 1752, disfavored princes and an Islamic-mystical teacher Kyai Tapa led a rebellion against Dutch meddling in succession arrangements by the old sultan. Based on de Graaf's history, Liang Lee related the names of his new ancestors onto two anticolonial Bantenese figures mentioned in de Graaf's historical narrative: Pangeran Purbaya, a son of Sultan Tirtajasa; and the aforementioned Kyai Tapa. Liang Lee made Pangeran Sake in the ascendant Thung-Tirta line a younger brother of Pangeran Purbaya:

The people's struggle in Banten against the company was continued by *Pangeran Sake*, and on his death in 1725 the anti-Dutch leadership fell upon Sake's son, Pangeran Mustofa, one of the greatest guerilla fighters Indonesia had ever had ... he inflicted repeated defeats on the Dutch, and, when himself defeated or encircled merely disappeared, to reappear unexpectedly at another place under a new name. *Pangeran Mustofa was generally known as Ki Tapa* after he had retired to Gunung Munara near Tangerang where he had lived as a hermit ... Ki Tapa ... refused to surrender, but solemnly directed his family and his followers "to go underground" and assume a new identity. *Pangeran Mustofa alias Ki Tapa* took on a Chinese identity, settled in Tjampea near Bogor. He took the name of *Thung Sian Toh* and so complete was the transformation

⁶⁸ "Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa," in *Ensiklopedia Pahlawan Nasional* (Jakarta: TandaBaca, 2007), 4–5. Sukarno launched the National Heroes project in December 1959, when he designated November tenth (the anniversary of the 1945 "Battle of Surabaya") as a public holiday for the "memorial of the souls of the deceased [*peringatan arwah*]." See: Klaus H. Schreiner, "The Making of National Heroes: Guided Democracy to New Order, 1959–1992," in *Outward Appearances: Dressing State and Society in Indonesia*, ed. Henk Schulte Nordholt (Leiden: KITLV, 1997), 261; and Schreiner, "National Ancestors: The Ritual Construction of Nationhood," in *The Potent Dead*, ed. Chambert-Loir et al., 183–204.

⁶⁹ Liang Lee became the de facto lineage elder after Liang Tjay died in 1967. See *KST Minutes*, August 13, 1967. See Liang Lee's biography in Mary Somers Heidhues and Leo Suryadinata, "T'ang Leang-Li," in *Southeast Asian Personalities of Chinese Descent: A Biographical Dictionary*, ed. Leo Suryadinata (Singapore: Chinese Heritage Centre and ISEAS, 2012), 1133–35.

⁷⁰ Pranata Tirtawidjaya, "The Re-Indonesianization of the Lost Branch of the Banten Dynasty: A Chapter in the History of the Banten Struggle against the V.O.C.," *The Indonesian Review of International Affairs* 1, 2 (July 1971). Liang Lee was most likely the founder of the Indonesian Institute of International Affairs. The journal published an annual issue between 1970 and 1975, and was stopped after he died in 1976.

⁷¹ H. J. de Graaf, *Geschiedenis van Indonesië* (Den Haag: W. Van Hoeve, 1949).

that he soon emerged in Bogor as the Head of the Chinese community of Kebon Djati ... [*emphasis added*]⁷²

Liang Lee historicized the name “Pangeran Mustofa alias Thung Sian Toh” in Ishak’s genealogy by turning his Chinese name into a latter-day cover for his rebellious native aristocratic identity. This composite figure was made an anticolonial hero by suturing the biography of Kyai Tapa, the historical figure, onto the Thung-Tirta ancestor. This sleight of hand gave the lineage group an alibi for their Chineseness in the colonial period. “Thung Ho Boen’s numerous progeny became so thoroughly sinicized, in manners, customs, dress, religious rites, that most of them were totally ignorant of their Banten origin; they were truly ‘underground.’”⁷³ The *sejarah* form of genealogical history was given a nationalist twist to trace the Thung-Tirtas’ descent from a line of anticolonial aristocratic ancestors.

In the mid- or late-1970s, Thung Tjiang Hoa (fifth generation, 7thBr.2ndSo.1stSo) combined mystical stories with creative readings of Dutch history publications to trace the Thung-Tirtas through a period of political exile in China. The new lineage history was part of a joint effort with two other members to persuade the skeptical members about the authenticity of their genealogical history.⁷⁴ In the twenty-page Dutch-language text “Genealogy (Family History) of Thung Ho Boen,” Tjiang Hoa gave the Chinese undercover narrative a new twist by having his anticolonial Bantenese ancestors seek political refuge in China:

... Pangeran Mustofa married a second time with a Buginese princess, Ratu Neira. From this Ratu Neira, he begot another son in 1793. Kyai Tapa ... brought the son of Pangeran Mustofa and Ratu Neira to safety in China, where he could be safely brought up and trained in Kyai Tapa’s arts so that he could return in the future as legal descendants to continue the fight against the foreign occupiers.⁷⁵

Tracing the genealogy to Banten through the undercover sinicization narrative remained the orthodox lineage history throughout Suharto’s New Order regime (1965–98), and the narrative has survived to this day. When Netherlands-based Tan Twie Nio (fifth generation, 5thBr.8thDa.2ndDa.) interviewed lineage members in Indonesia about their genealogical origins in the late 1990s, she found some members to be skeptical of the Bantenese-descent claim. These members continued to trace their descent from the Kioe Seng Tong Chinese genealogy. Yet Liang Lee’s version of the “official genealogy ... [was] the only one in circulation” within the community in the late 1990s.⁷⁶ Twie Nio described her historical research as “an expression of the respect that I experienced in my relationship with my forefathers,” and as a “Western-

⁷² Tirtawidjaya, “Re-Indonesianization,” 108–9.

⁷³ Tirtawidjaya, “Re-Indonesianization,” 109.

⁷⁴ Writing to Thung lineage members in April 1976, Tjiang Hoa, Goat Nio, and Tb. Enoch Abdulhamid (Ishak’s cousin) pointed out that the “struggle of Uncle Thung Liang Tjay and [his son] Brother Tb. Rahardja Tirtakusumah on this question has been delayed,” because of the “lack of cooperation and disunity of opinion over investigations into the origins of the genealogy.” See Thung Tjiang Hoa to Relatives, 25.4.1976, in *Thung Tjiang Hoa Private Papers*.

⁷⁵ Thung Tjiang Hoa, “Salsilah (Sedjarah Familie) Thung Ho Boen,” 10 in *Thung Tjiang Hoa Private Papers*.

⁷⁶ Marinkelle-Tan, “De Negen Gebroeders Thung,” 42.

rational form of ancestral worship.”⁷⁷ In her case, she seems to side more with the skeptical members who saw “the alleged descent from kings ... as a blatant political deployment of ethnicity.”⁷⁸

The reversal of the historiographical politics of Chinese settlement and intermarriage was complete in the most recent round (2008) of lineage history-rewriting. The fifth-generation lineage elder Thung Liong Pho (b.1930) alias Tb. Rahardja Tirtakusumah was in his late seventies when he wrote and circulated “Who Might Thung Ho Boen Be?” to the lineage community. His narrative served to synthesize genealogical names, times, and places where such information was often lacking in the original sources: the Chinese genealogy (dated, but only Chinese names), Pangeran Sake genealogy (undated, only Bantenese names), and Dutch-chronicled histories of the Bantenese revolts (dated, with places and incomplete names).

Stripped of its more mystical elements, Liong Pho borrowed Thung Tjiang Hoa’s trope of the China-exiled Bantenese prince and Indonesian marriages with Chinese women to explain how the Bantenese line passed off as Chinese in the early nineteenth century. Like Tjiang Hoa’s (late 1970s) account, this version also involved rebellious Bantenese princes making multiple trips to China where they bore sons with their Chinese wives, and returned to continue their anticolonial rebellions against the Dutch.⁷⁹ Subtitled “A Critical Review and Analysis Concerning the Veil [*tabir*] [covering] the Thung Family in Ciampea, Bogor,” Liong Pho reprinted the Bantenese genealogical and Dutch secondary sources he cites in the text, giving the revolting princes’ movements between Java, China, and Mecca, and their birthdates with some semblance of historical precision.⁸⁰

Sultan Tirtajasa remains the Ur-ancestor of the Thung-Tirta lineage for now. Since at least the 1990s, lineage genealogies have stuck to Liang Lee’s orthodox patriotic narrative of the Thungs as Bantenese patriots living “underground” as Chinese. Subsequent narratives went a step further by reversing the familiar Peranakan story of Chinese men marrying native women on arrival in Indonesia. The Thung-Tirtas came to trace their creolized descent from patriotic Indonesian male ancestors who, while in exile in China, married Chinese women and became sinicized in the process. This extraordinary race-and-gender-reversing tale earned the Thung-Tirtas a place in a recently published, semi-scholarly coffee-table book, *Indonesian Chinese Peranakan*. In a feature story, the Thung-Tirtas tell their heroic anticolonial story of descent from the rebellious Bantenese sultans. But in post-New Order Indonesia, they no longer hide the fact that “most members of the Thung family preserved their Thung identities.”⁸¹

⁷⁷ Marinkelle-Tan, “De Negen Gebroeders Thung,” 1.

⁷⁸ Marinkelle-Tan, “De Negen Gebroeders Thung,” 43.

⁷⁹ Tirtakusumah, “Siapakah Gerangan,” 19–20.

⁸⁰ Tirtakusumah, “Siapakah Gerangan,” 21–24.

⁸¹ Rusdi Tjahyadi, “Chinese Peranakans: More Cultural Less Genetic Matters,” in *Indonesian Chinese Peranakan: A Cultural Journey*, ed. Lily Wibisono, Mary Northmore, Rusdi Tjahyadi, and Musa Jonatan (Jakarta: Indonesian Cross-Cultural Society and PT Intisari Mediatama, 2012), 76.

Lineage and Chinese Indonesian Identities

In both historical moments, the 1900s and the late 1960s, the Thung-Tirtas went out of the way to recover ancestors and names from the past, and to maintain lineage communities with shared Ur-ancestors. The recovery of a Fujianese Ur-ancestor reconnected the Thungs to the traditions of the Chinese empire, but this was also a way for the Thungs to negotiate their social ascendancy in the Dutch colonial context. The ethno-religious crossing in the 1960s and 1970s involved retrieving a cultural idiom from the local cult of princes in West Java to signify their patriotic belonging to nationalist Indonesia. If “Chinese” lineage solidarity conferred certain political-economic advantages in the late-colonial period, the refashioning of the Thung lineage as native and aristocratic since the 1960s and 1970s maintained semblances of their former elite status in a new guise.

The preservation of some form of lineage organization for religious (ancestral worship) and mutual-aid purposes was common among the old Peranakan Chinese families until 1942, if not 1965. Like the three major Peranakan Chinese lineages of Surabaya, the Thungs built their ancestral hall and drew up their genealogy as part of a broader self-resinicization movement that began in Java in the 1880s.⁸² The secular Dutchification of the Chinese elite in Java did not exclude official recognition of this aspect of Chinese social-religious life in the colony. In what is perhaps a more extreme case, as mentioned above, members of the Han lineage of East Java who had converted to Islam by marriage remained within the ritual community up to 1965. The Thungs were likewise exceptional in their collective quest to indigenize their ancestors and reincorporate their lost indigenous kin under New Order Indonesia.

The comparative case with Chinese Malaysians is instructive in the religious sphere. Anthropologist Cheu Hock Tong found a significant rise in Chinese Malaysians adopting and erecting sinicized Malay-style animistic holy shrines (*keramat*) in the 1970s and 1980s at the same time that these practices, deemed superstitious by the Islamic religious authorities, were on the decline among Malays.⁸³ Chinese-Malaysians adopted native shrines without losing their cultural identity. Chinese Indonesians adopted native names, and in cases like the Thungs, went to the extreme of reindigenizing their ancestral cult.

Today, lineage organization and ancestral worship remain an aspiration, if no longer a significant social organization, among Chinese Indonesians of the Confucianist persuasion.⁸⁴ While most Chinese Indonesians have changed their names,

⁸² Salmon, “The Chinese Community of Surabaya.”

⁸³ “The Sinicization of Malay Keramats in Malaysia,” *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 71, 2 (1998): 29–61. Compared to Malaysia, the shrines of the kings and princes of Java’s past are more closely connected to Indonesian historical identity and remain more widely revered among contemporary Javanese. For the rise of the cults of Javanese kings in New Order Java, see John Pemberton, *On the Subject of ‘Java’* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 269–310.

⁸⁴ In a recent Confucianist exposition of Chinese traditions dedicated to the “people [*umat*] of Confucius and all sympathizers across [the Indonesian] homeland,” the Chinese-Indonesian author identifies the celebration of Lunar New Year (*Imlek*), same-surname lineages (*marga*), and Chinese genealogies (*silsilah warga Tionghoa*) as three institutions that “have contributed to the prosperity of the nation (*bangsa*) and to a good world since time immemorial.” See E Setiawan, *Tahun Baru Imlek, Marga dan Silsilah Warga Tionghoa* (Semarang: publisher unknown, 2011). Chinese tombs in Jakarta, Bogor, and Ciampea cemeteries that I have visited remain well-maintained.

and families generally share the same Indonesian family names, the case of claiming descent from a local sultan is exceptional.⁸⁵ As mentioned above, there are skeptical members within the Thung lineage who still suspect that the indigenization of the ancestral line was politically motivated. In 2004, the publication of the Gan Peng lineage genealogy (1770–2004) included President Abdurrahman Wahid (in office 1999–2001) as a descendant, and a note from Yogyakarta Sultan Hamengkubuwono X lauding their “natural ... process of assimilation.” This is perhaps the closest comparable case of a Chinese lineage (in Central Java) incorporating an Indonesian “king” and other indigenous sub-branches to publicly demonstrate its exemplary Indonesianization.⁸⁶ Like the Thungs, the Gan genealogy included indigenous kin, most likely reconnected after the end of Dutch colonialism, traced to a pair of sisters who married Javanese men in the early nineteenth century.⁸⁷ Unlike the Thung-Tirtas, however, in post-New Order Indonesia the Gans remained a Chinese patrilineal community with the first settler Gan Peng as its Ur-ancestor.

Rather than read the merger of the Thung ancestors and the Bantenese princely cults as a purely self-interested attempt at elevating their social status, I argue that it was an exceptional case of interchange between two forms of ancestral cults on Java. The Thung case illuminates the extent to which, under pressure to change their names and “assimilate,” the already existing Chinese-indigenous cross-ethnic kin connections, shared devotional orientations to local spirits and ancestors, and local knowledge about Javanese histories and legends could be mobilized to rename and reframe the alien Chinese as authentic provincial nationalists. To the extent that Suharto’s official “Solution of the Chinese Problem” turned out to be another means for marking the Chinese Indonesians as aliens and for surveillance, acquiring the cultural idioms of belonging served as much as a refuge as they were signs of patriotic assimilation.

⁸⁵ Russell Jones, *Chinese Names: The Traditions Surrounding the Use of Chinese Surnames and Personal Names* (Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications, 1997), 64–68.

⁸⁶ The genealogy claims President Abdurrahman as co-descendent not so much through the eighteenth century’s Gan Peng as another Gan, an admiral in Zheng He’s voyages 350 years earlier. Gan Kong Siang and Steve Yeo Tjong Hian, eds., *Silsilah Keturunan Gan Peng, Yan Bin’s Genealogy* (Jakarta: Paguyuban Keluarga Keturunan Gan, 2004), 23, 95, back cover.

⁸⁷ Gan et. al., *Silsilah Keturunan Gan Peng*, 10, 507–68.

