

ENCOUNTERING COMPETING EMPIRES:
JOURNEYING CHINESE COMMUNITIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA UNDER
CHINESE, DUTCH, AND BRITISH IMPERIAL RULE

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This dissertation examines the relationship between China's expansionism and overseas Chinese empowerment in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It looks at the connection between the Chinese state's ambition of extending its political sphere beyond its territorial boundaries and overseas Chinese increasing political, social, and economic rights. By focusing on the Chinese in the Dutch East this multi-sited research shows that the two seemingly different projects, namely the construction of a pan-Chinese nation and state beyond its territorial boundaries and the overseas Chinese empowerment in colonial Southeast Asia are mutually enforcing processes that developed in tandem.

By approaching this topic from the perspectives of imperial competition and journeying overseas Chinese, I argue that China's construction of a pan-Chinese nation and state, and its competition with European empires and the emerging Japan for overseas Chinese support generated a new identification space for the Chinese in the Dutch East Indies. The competition between empires for overseas Chinese support created opportunities for the overseas Chinese to

transform their status from stateless subjects to Chinese nationals, Japanese imperial subjects, and Dutch colonial subjects. My dissertation reveals that Dutch Indies Chinese, a politically unimportant overseas Chinese community that was not recognized by any empire as official subjects before the late nineteenth century, subsequently became pivotal for the promulgation of new state policies. They organized transnational movements in the cities along the Chinese and Southeast Asian coasts and enhanced their statuses by maneuvering China's policies and negotiating for political and socioeconomic privileges in the Dutch colony.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Oi Yan Liu holds a doctoral degree in History from Cornell University and obtained her undergraduate and MA degrees in Chinese Studies at Leiden University. She specializes in modern Chinese History, modern Southeast Asian History, and Overseas Chinese History. Her research interests concern the study of empires and diaspora in transnational and comparative contexts. Her dissertation contextualizes the relationship between Chinese expansionism, European colonialism, and overseas Chinese empowerment in colonial Southeast Asia.

For my Father and Mother

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation examines the relationship between China's expansionism and overseas Chinese empowerment in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. More specifically, it looks at the connection between the Chinese state's ambition of extending its political sphere of influence beyond its territorial boundaries and overseas Chinese increasing political, social, and economic rights. By focusing on the Chinese in the Dutch East Indies (hereafter Dutch Indies Chinese) my dissertation shows that the two seemingly different projects, namely the construction of a pan-Chinese nation/ state beyond its territorial boundaries and the overseas Chinese empowerment in colonial Southeast Asia are, in fact, mutually enforcing processes that developed in tandem. Therefore, in order to understand the complexities of these interdependent processes, these movements cannot and should not be studied in isolation from one another.

The entanglement of the construction of a pan-Chinese nation and the increasing political power of the overseas Chinese was particularly evident in the first three decades of the twentieth century. Prior to the late nineteenth century, overseas Chinese communities were not recognized by the Chinese state. It was not until the mid-1890s, during a time when intellectuals, statesmen, and political thinkers were devising the future of a modern China and seeking to overcome

Western imperialism and domestic problems, that the Chinese state considered overseas Chinese to be subjects of China. As a consequence, after becoming conscious of the power of overseas Chinese as political and economic assets, the Chinese state increasingly intervened in overseas Chinese affairs at the end of nineteenth century. This interference became more pronounced and visible from 1906 onwards with the establishment of a government-ruled school for the overseas Chinese, and the promulgation of the Nationality law in 1909 that formally declared overseas Chinese as nationals of China. This period, and the subsequent two decades, were important for the increasing political, economic, and social power of the overseas Chinese who were at times considered as Chinese nationals and as Dutch subjects at other times.

My study provides a fresh approach to the study of nationality, the making of state identification, and the overseas Chinese's consciousness of their "in between-ness" amongst various states.¹ By approaching this topic from the perspectives of imperial competition and journeying overseas Chinese, I argue that China's construction of a pan-Chinese nation and its competition with European empires for overseas Chinese support generated a new identification

¹ Note that this dissertation focuses primarily on the creation and developments of nationality statuses. It discusses race issues, but only insofar as how race had informed nationality of the overseas Chinese communities. For major works with regards to the construction of the Chinese race in China, see: *Critical Han Studies: The History, Representation, and Identity of China's Majority* (2012, edited by Thomas Mullaney, James Patrick Leibold, Stéphane Gros); Michael Keevak, *Becoming Yellow: A Short History of Racial Thinking* (2011), *Thomas Mullaney's Coming to Terms with the Nation: Ethnic Classification in Modern China* (2011), Frank Dikotter's *Discourse of Race in Modern China* (1994), *The Construction of Racial Identities in China and Japan* (1997; edited by Frank Dikotter)

space for the Chinese in the Dutch East Indies. The competition between empires for overseas Chinese support created opportunities for the overseas Chinese to transform their status from stateless subjects to Chinese nationals, Dutch colonial subjects, and in a few cases Japanese subjects.

This dissertation focuses on the developments and transformations of political statuses within the context of competing empires. Based on multi-sited archival research in China, Taiwan, The Netherlands, Indonesia, and Singapore, my dissertation reveals that Dutch Indies Chinese, a politically unimportant overseas Chinese community that was not recognized by any empire as official subjects before the late nineteenth century, subsequently became pivotal for the promulgation of new state policies. They organized transnational movements in the cities along the Chinese and Southeast Asian coasts and enhanced their statuses by maneuvering China's policies and negotiating for political and socioeconomic privileges in the Dutch colony. They became active agents of the creation of the first nationality law of China, legal declaration of colonial *subjectness*, and the removal of Dutch racial segregation policies. While this dissertation emphasizes the role of the overseas Chinese as a primary agent for transforming state policies, I show that the competition among empires for loyalty and control of overseas Chinese peoples created room for the overseas Chinese to do so. By manipulating and maneuvering state policies, they aimed at enhancing their social, economic, and political positions.

The changing modes of political affiliation further cemented unbounded and bounded identities that resulted in the creation of nationality statuses. The

Indies Chinese played an active role in this process. They saw the transformation from unbounded to bounded identities as a means to escape from state subordination and ethnic survival. From the perspective of states, on the other hand, creating or imposing bounded identities was a tool to protect their sovereignty and to attract and claim authority over subjects. Hence, this dissertation argues that both Chinese expansionism and overseas Chinese empowerment were interdependent processes that mutually stimulated the shaping of China as an expanding state and nation, and the elevation of overseas Chinese position in China vis-à-vis European colonies.

By foregrounding the role of overseas Chinese on changing state policies within the context of the competition of empires, my dissertation aims at offering a more nuanced understanding of the issues of political allegiance, the creation of nationality statuses, and national consciousness. Placing the Indies Chinese at the center of analysis illuminates their role in creating and further shaping state policies that have otherwise been neglected in the scholarship on overseas Chinese.

Foregrounding “Journeying Chinese”

I see my dissertation as an addition to the study of the Chinese Diaspora, which is also referred to as Overseas Chinese Studies or the Study of the Chinese Overseas. The terms “overseas Chinese” or “*Huaqiao*” (華僑) in this dissertation refer to journeying overseas Chinese communities that did not have fixed

political allegiances with states. This dissertation therefore avoids using the term “Diaspora” that fixates on the idea of the lost homeland as the sole political and cultural entity. The problem of employing the term Diaspora and the Chinese Overseas has been widely discussed by various scholars.² As noted in other works, the use of the term “Diaspora” is misleading. Diaspora, originally used to refer to the experiences of Jewish communities, became a term to describe the scattered populations of various ethnicities and races that were exiled (voluntarily or involuntarily) and dispersed from their ancestral land. This notion of Diaspora carries meanings of yearnings for the homeland, and has been critiqued for its essentialist portrayal of the scattered communities as people who maintain perpetual longings for the lost homeland and who hold on to their unchanging and persisting cultural identities.

Heralding the use of a diasporic approach, McKeown has rightly criticized the conventional and essentialist understandings of the Diaspora-concept. According to him, Diaspora-centric frameworks construct a historical analysis that is built on teleological developments with fixed origins. These models do not look into the various processes that diasporic subjects have created at different historical movements and in various locations.³ According to McKeown, a linear understanding that is confined within a nation-based approach is not helpful for

² Ien Ang offers the most nuanced critique of the diaspora-model. See “Beyond Asia: Deconstructing Diaspora” part I, in *On Not Speaking Chinese: Living between Asia and the West* (London: Routledge, 2001), 20-92.

³ Adam McKeown, *Chinese Migrant Networks and Cultural Change: Peru, Chicago, Hawaii* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 12.

thinking about migration from a global perspective. Critiquing the monolithic social grouping that the conventional notion of diaspora displays, McKeown therefore emphasizes plurality and different identities and experiences of migrants according to different locales that were all embedded in larger global processes. More importantly, he stresses that scholarship should divert its attention to the transnational institutions and networks that are produced by migrants' experiences as a result of being embedded in global processes. For this purpose, instead of using "Diaspora" to define and describe social groups, McKeown suggests using "diasporic," which is derived from Diaspora, as a concept that directs the analysis of geographically scattered institutions, identities, connections, and movements.⁴ The diasporic perspective that he puts forward draws attention to global connections and migrant networks and activities that nation-based frameworks fail to reveal.

Shifting the focus to transnational institutions, flows and connections for understanding Chinese migration and the needs of ethnic Chinese, McKeown's concept of "the diasporic" for understanding historical changes and hybrid identities that take place through the connections between places, flows, and interactions is refreshing. Doing so helps erase dichotomous understandings of migrant identity that often result from nation-based frameworks that focus on the concepts of assimilation and integration.⁵ However, studying the era between

⁴ Adam McKeown, "Conceptualizing Chinese Diasporas, 1842-1949," in *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 58, No. 2 (May 1999): 307.

⁵ McKeown, "Conceptualizing Chinese Diasporas," 331.

1842 and 1949 (the period between China's defeat of the First Opium War in 1842 and China's isolation from the West in 1949) as the transformative period for examining Chinese migration,⁶ McKeown did not completely distance himself from nation-based theories. By taking China as the departure point of migration that emanated from China when China encountered the West, the diasporic perspective fails to recognize other scattered populations whose migratory experiences did not start from China in 1842. The search for a starting point of emanation is not helpful for understanding the identities of migrants who had settled outside of China prior to this period and does not fully acknowledge migratory experiences prior to this period and experiences of people whose migratory trajectory did not start from China.⁷

Furthermore, the diasporic angle does not work for all segments of overseas Chinese communities and is not uniformly applicable to all studies relating to overseas Chinese communities. Shu-mei Shih has pointed out that the diasporic angle is problematic because the "diaspora has an expiration date."⁸ She explains that the diasporic perspective is flawed because the second and third

⁶ McKeown argues that WWII marked the end of Chinese migration and therefore a disruption of transnational networks, causing the possibility of a "hybrid formulation" of ethnic identities such as Chinese American, Sino-Thai (lookjin) to emerge. From this period on McKeown explained that it is possible to adopt what he calls "co-nationality." See "Conceptualizing Chinese Diasporas," 327.

⁷ Common migration practice started at least as the Song-period, remigration and other forces of migrants.

⁸ Shu-mei Shih, *Visuality and Identity: Sinophone Articulations Across the Pacific*, Shu-mei Shih (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 185.

generations of Chinese migrants often choose to end their diaspora mentality due to localization. According to Shih, identity is place-based. Even though the study of the Chinese diaspora attempted to resolve questions of Chinese identity and Chineseness of migrants who left China as sojourners and settlers in Southeast Asia by taking the localized influences into account, it continues to be founded on the premise that ethnicity (which in her opinion is synonymous to the Han-ethnicity that excludes other ethnicities, cultures, and languages) and things Chinese are traced back to China as the foundational core and fails to sufficiently take place-based influences into account. She explains,

It is important to question, for instance, the unifying category of the Chinese diaspora, at once complicit with China's nationalist rhetoric of the 'overseas Chinese' who are supposed to long to return to China as their homeland, and the Western racialized construction of Chineseness as perpetually foreign. In postcolonial nation-states across Southeast Asia, Africa, and South America, the Sinophone peoples there are historically constitutive of the local.⁹

In order to distinguish her objects of study from the Chinese diaspora, she presents the term "Sinophone communities/ peoples" to refer to people outside China who speak a Sinitic language (whether Mandarin, Cantonese, Hakka, etc.) or segments of various Sinitic languages. In doing so, Shih places language

⁹ Shih, *Visuality and Identity*, 25.

(instead of race and ethnicity) for delineating contours of communities. Unlike the diaspora that perpetually reconnects to China as its center and disregards profound localization processes, a Sinophone community does not gradually vanish and, rather, lives as long a Sinitic language is maintained. By this, Shih deemphasizes the role of ethnicity and race for constituting identities. Shifting the emphasis from blood to language, the Sinophone network transcends national borders and posits that identity formation is shaped by experiences in dual or multiple places; it is not a matter of identifying oneself with either “ancestral country” or “host country.”

Similar to Shih, I refrain from using the term, “diaspora” or its derivative “diasporic” to emphasize the “rootless”-ness of various overseas Chinese communities. Identity is often unsettled and is being shaped by everyday life experiences in specific times and locales. To emphasize the unsettledness, in this dissertation I therefore prefer using the term “journeying Chinese” or using the terms “overseas Chinese” and “*Huaqiao*” with the understanding that their identities and political allegiance fluctuate. This dissertation primarily looks at peoples of Chinese descent (either full or partial) who led their everyday lives outside China. They were not political refugees who left China to further their political agendas. Considering the long history of Chinese migration, the fuzzy concept of state borders, and blurred and unfixed imaginary of the homeland in the eyes of migrants at the time, tracing the emanating origins of migration at any point of history is not useful. The diasporic perspective virtually eliminates and disregards groups that have settled outside China for longer periods of time and

neglects migrant groups who experienced remigration (meaning migratory circuits in the wider region) and their impact on China's policies. These groups could be part of the migrating experience without necessarily taking China as a point of origin. Contrary to the "diasporic perspective", the angle of "journeying Chinese" overcomes these conceptual problems and decenters China as the only emanating point for migrants' transnational linkages. Moreover, this approach shows appreciation for the voices of the Chinese peoples who were rooted outside of China.

This dissertation adopts the angle of "journeying Chinese" in a very broad sense. It not only refers to the peoples of (part) Chinese descent who were continuously mobile across various geographic locales, and economic and societal networks. The term also refers to the journeying nature of their unfixed mindset, their unsettled cultural identities, and their search for shifting political affiliations.

Nation-Based Theories

As mentioned earlier, this dissertation explores the political affiliations of the overseas Chinese, specifically the journeying Chinese who were mobile across the waters between China and Southeast Asia. Situated in a period when China was expanding its sphere of influence to overseas Chinese communities, it seeks to understand the motives and circumstances in which the overseas Chinese support China's political cause. By focusing on the Chinese in the Dutch East Indies, my project engages with political movements and the political orientation

of Dutch Indies Chinese in an era of nationalism in China, the very beginning of Japanese southward expansionism, and the emerging anti-colonialism in Southeast Asia. To date, most studies on this topic revolve around nationalism and situate themselves within nationalism studies. The dominant scholarship on Chinese nationalism in Southeast Asia concentrates either on the formation of local Chinese nationalism in reaction to anti-Chinese colonial policies by the colonial state or concentrates on the spread of Chinese nationalism from China to Chinese communities in Southeast Asia. These studies portray overseas Chinese political orientation as being unalterable; they do not take into account the perspectives that place changing political orientation of “journeying Chinese” or “diasporic Chinese” at the center of study.

The first dominant approach of overseas Chinese nationalism concerns the scholarship that focuses on the formation of Chinese nationalism in Southeast Asia in response to anti-Chinese colonial policies by colonial states. Merely focusing on the local context, this paradigm that dominates nation-based studies from the 1950s to the early 1980s has generally approached nationalist and political movements of local Chinese in Southeast Asia as a response to anti-Chinese colonial policies. Southeast Asian Chinese communities are portrayed as victims who suffered from racial discrimination and colonial violence. This framework resulted from decolonization processes that took place after the Second World War and the proceedings of cold war politics at the time. These political transformations led to interests in speculating about the political outlook of the Chinese in Southeast Asia. Studies reveal that the identification of

the Chinese in Southeast Asia with China had increased intensely during prewar Chinese political activities and the Japanese occupation. Another important factor was the rise of communism in China that resulted in the establishment of the PRC in 1949. Therefore, being situated in an era of ideological bipolarity between capitalism and communism, scholarship in this period was primarily interested in assessing whether the Chinese in Southeast Asia were inclined to support the decolonized Southeast Asian states or to a communist China.

Political concerns in world politics are reflected in the scholarship at the time. Pioneering studies by Purcell, Skinner, Willmott, and Williams show a particular interest in understanding the political orientation of Southeast Asian Chinese in the newly established post-colonial states. These studies are concerned with questions regarding whether or not Southeast Asian Chinese would express loyalty to former colonial powers, support the Southeast Asian nation-states, or reach out to China. For assessing the political orientation of the overseas Chinese, these studies have often covered the period of history between the 1850s and 1950s. Writing in 1951, just two years after Mao Zedong proclaimed the establishment of the People's Republic of China, Purcell alerted the West about the communist appeal that could win support from the Southeast Asian masses, particularly from Chinese minorities in Southeast Asia. He criticized the British colonial powers in Malaya, the Dutch in Indonesia, and the French in Indochina for limiting the Chinese population in gaining access to social, economic, and political privileges, such as education and participation in political affairs, Purcell warned his Western readers: "let no one underestimate

the attraction [that communism] might have for the masses of Southeast Asia if they were simultaneously convinced of the sincerity of the Communist professions and of the bankruptcy of 'bourgeois' promises."¹⁰ Purcell explained that the support for China and Chinese national consciousness among the overseas Chinese people grew with the intensification of Chinese nationalist movements and further crystallized with Sun Yatsen's *Three Principles of the People*. The solidification of Chinese and national consciousness and the increasing support for China was a process that intersected with overseas Chinese subjection to the growing racial segregation and discrimination in the European colonies.¹¹

The viewpoint that anti-Chinese colonial policies were the main causes for the growth of Chinese nationalism was further substantiated in country-specific studies. The 1950s and early 1960s saw studies by Skinner on Thailand, Willmott and Williams on Indonesia that have argued that local Chinese nationalisms primarily grew in reaction to anti-Chinese racial policies.¹² Restrictions on residential areas (*wijkenstelsel*), travel (*passenstelsel*), and education evoked

¹⁰ Victor Purcell, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1951), 671.

¹¹ Purcell, *Chinese in Southeast Asia*, 656-72.

¹² Donald E. Willmott, *The Chinese of Semarang: a changing minority community in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1960); Donald E. Willmott, *The national status of the Chinese in Indonesia, 1900-1958* (Ithaca: Southeast Asia Program, 1961); Lea E. Williams, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism: the genesis of the Pan-Chinese movement in Indonesia, 1900-1916* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1960); William G. Skinner, *Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1957).

Chinese resentment and further fostered Chinese nationalism in the Indies.¹³ Leo Suryadinata has identified three types of nationalisms among the *peranakan* Chinese¹⁴ from the first decade of the twentieth century till the Japanese occupation, namely, the China-oriented Sin Po group, Dutch-oriented Chung Hwa Hui group, and the Partai Tionghoa Indonesia group that supported Indonesia's independence from Dutch colonial rule.¹⁵

¹³ Willmott and Williams' studies focus on Java. Anti-Chinese policies were not limited to Java, however. Mary Somers Heidhues discussed Chinese unrest as a result of colonial policies in Borneo. The rebellion of 1912-14, according to Heidhues, was a response to Dutch policies such as tax increases, corvée demands, and travel restrictions. Heidhues's argument was solely based on Dutch primary sources. Mary Heidhues Somers, "Community and Political Life in Prewar Times," in *Golddiggers, Farmers, and Traders in the 'Chinese Districts' of West Kalimantan, Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).

¹⁴ *Peranakan* Chinese were people of Chinese descent whose ancestors have moved to the Malay-speaking world for generations. Due to longterm interaction with local societies, they were often of mixed blood and they have formed a unique culture with Malay characteristics. See William G. Skinner, "Creolized Chinese Societies in Southeast Asia," in Anthony Reid ed., *Sojourners and Settlers: Histories of Southeast Asia and the Chinese* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1996).

¹⁵ The Sin Po group emerged at turn of the twentieth century when reformers and revolutionaries from China extended their activities to Java. The Chung Hwa Hui group emerged in the 1920s. Members of this group were Dutch educated Chinese intellectuals. They criticized political exclusion in the colonial administration and aimed at obtaining political influence in the Dutch bureaucratic apparatus. The third group, Partai Tionghoa Indonesia (PTI) was established in 1932. It supported the Persatoean Bangsa Indonesia and aimed at achieving independence from the Dutch. PTI aimed at a strict separation between Peranakan Chinese and Totok Chinese. PTI members envisioned that in an Independent Indonesia, Totok Chinese should be excluded from voting rights. See Leo Suryadinata, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Java, 1917-1942* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Academic, 2005).

While some nation-based studies approached local Chinese responses to anti-Chinese colonial policies within the territorial boundaries of a colony, other nation-based studies have focused on the dynamics between local Chinese nationalism and Southeast Asian nationalisms. For instance, both Adam Ahmat and James Siegel have argued that the roles of the *peranakan* Chinese press and literature in the Dutch East Indies were important developments that fostered Indonesian consciousness. Being the first non-Dutch population in the colonial society that engaged in journalism and the press, *peranakan* Chinese established a model for the indigenous inhabitants in disseminating nationalist propaganda through print. Concentrating on the importance of language, Siegel has focused on the role of Sino-Malay literature in developing Indonesian as the national language.¹⁶

By looking at the involvement of Southeast Asian Chinese in Southeast Asian nationalisms and nation-building, scholarship in the 1980s and 1990s has further fortified the idea that the Chinese in Southeast Asia were part of the national histories of newly established Southeast Asian nation-states.¹⁷ This view has been further substantiated by the growing interest in migration history.

¹⁶ James T. Siegel, *Fetish, recognition, revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), Ch5; Ahmat Adam, *The Vernacular Press and the Emergence of Modern Indonesian Consciousness, 1855-1913* (Ithaca: SEAP, 1995), Ch4.

¹⁷ For case studies see, for instance, Jennifer Cushman and Wang Gungwu, eds., *Changing Identities of the Southeast Asian Chinese since World War II* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 1988); Wang Gungwu, "Adapting to Non-Chinese Society," in *Don't Leave Home: Migration and the Chinese* (Singapore: Times, 2003): 119-142.

Instead of assessing the degree of assimilation in specific times of major political transitions, these studies look at Chinese migration to Southeast Asia since earliest times. These studies examine the role of Chinese migrants in shaping Southeast Asian society over the *longue durée*. Instead of questioning the political orientation of Southeast Asian Chinese, the scholarship has shifted its focus to the gradual and durable fusion of cultural, socioeconomic, and linguistic elements that were brought to Southeast Asia by Chinese migrants. These elements underwent creolization and further helped shape present-day Southeast Asian societies. Jamie Mackie has perfectly summarized the purpose of the scholarship that emerged in this period: “[t]he history of the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia demonstrated of total integration into the host society, of long-term coexistence and competition with it, and of a variety of options in between. It has produced [as Skinner stated] ‘a wondrous array of acculturative, adaptive, and assimilative phenomena.’”¹⁸

The urge to present peoples of Chinese descent as full citizens of (what otherwise would be referred to as) “host-countries” has not been limited to the Southeast Asian Chinese, but prevails in the study of the overseas Chinese in

¹⁸ Anthony Reid, ed. *Sojourners and Settlers: Histories of Southeast Asia and the Chinese* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii, 1996), p. xiii. This collection of essays contains the strongest and most representative works for this approach. Particularly William Skinner’s “Creolized Chinese Societies in Southeast Asia” is a solid and convincing analysis on the gradual creolization and hybridization of Chinese migrants to local cultures. This Chinese culture that is shaped by migrants is distinctive from Chinese culture in China. It is not wholesomely transplanted from China but gradually molded in *peranakan*, *baba*, and *mestizo* cultures due to longterm contact and the exchange of local influences.

general. Wang Ling-chi notes that the end of the cold war and the transition to a new world order has raised new questions about identity. Together with Wang Gungwu, he has presented the *luodi shenggen* (落地生根)-concept for understanding Chinese people as citizens in their countries of settlement who obtained or should obtain equal rights and be treated with justice. This model approaches peoples of Chinese descent as minority peoples within the context of a nation-state. The *luodi shenggen*-model (literally translated as “the planting of permanent roots in the soils of different countries; growing roots where people land”) is presented in response to the earlier *luoye guigen* (落葉歸根) - paradigm (an approach that emphasizes people “returning to their roots”) that echoes sentiments of a longing for China and an eventual return to China, whether imagined or in reality.¹⁹ The interest in assessing the level of political loyalty, assimilation and integration of overseas Chinese in individual nation-states outside China started after the second world war and has aimed at highlighting their active role as citizens of Southeast Asian countries.²⁰

¹⁹ See for instance Wang Ling-chi and Wang Gungwu, eds., *The Chinese Diaspora: Selected Essays II*. This collection covers case studies of the Chinese in North America, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. For more on the *luodi shenggen*-concept, see the preface “On Luodi-shenggen” written by Wang Ling-chi *The Chinese Diaspora: Volume II* (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1998): viii-xi; Wang Gungwu “Preface,” in *The Chinese Diaspora: Volume I* (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1998): vii-ix.

²⁰ In the Philippines for example, Caroline Hau shows that instead of assimilation to Filipino culture, post-colonial Philippines promoted a policy of “selective national integration” with regards to Muslim, Chinese, and indigenous Filipinos, whereby the focus is not to look at assimilation of minorities to dominant Filipino culture, but political participation and sharing of civil society based on the idea of

Thus, the interest in nation-based histories resulted from the developments that followed immediately after the conclusion of World War II when former colonies were undergoing decolonization processes. At the same time, Asia became divided into three main regions, namely East Asia, Southeast Asia, and South Asia. Although this political division stimulated scholars to look at connections between countries within each region (primarily in a comparative manner), this postwar geographical construction further limited the interest in studying the intersected histories *across* these regions. The next section discusses scholarship that attempted to link Southeast Asia with China by looking at the role of overseas Chinese in connecting these regions.

Rethinking the Southeast Asia/ China Dichotomy

The emergence of the Southeast Asian nation-states, tripartition of the Asian region, and the communist/capitalist ideological bipolarity limited the scholarly interest in exploring the connected histories across these boundaries. In order to truly redefine Asia and bring to light the interconnectivity across these rubrics, I argue that it is important to analytically remove these postwar political divisions. This is particularly pertinent to studies relating to prewar history. Not only do these territorial and ideological boundaries further blur the manifold connectivity and entanglements in shaping what were to become the

respecting communal differences. See Caroline S. Hau, "Rethinking History and 'Nation-Building' in the Philippines," in *Nation-Building: Five Southeast Asian Histories*, ed. Wang Gungwu (Singapore: ISEAS Publications, 2005): 38-68. Other essays in this volume present similar viewpoints.

nation-states, but they also conceal the dynamic interaction across various locales and spaces. Freeing oneself from these geographic confinements reveals the otherwise hidden relationships that have helped shape histories within the region.

Minimal interest in examining the connections beyond the territory of the nation-state and regional boundaries prevailed until the transnational turn in the 1990s. Before transnational paradigms have replaced nation-based frameworks as the dominant approaches, there has already been an emerging interest among scholars in looking at the connections that transcended the territorial boundaries of the nation-state and regional divisions of Southeast Asia, East Asia, and South Asia. This emerging trend was coupled with an increasing popularity in diaspora studies. This approach, which I consider as the precursor of the transnational method, has been adopted by scholars who have called for attention to the connections between the overseas Chinese and China. The inclusion of the Chinese Diaspora in China's nation-building show the limits of nation-based frameworks that highlighted bounded territory.

Interest in the Chinese diaspora, in particular, has helped narrow the gap between Southeast Asia and China. Two decades before the trend of using transnationalism as a scholarly framework, Yen Ching-hwang already pointed out the importance of not overlooking the influences of overseas Chinese communities in China's political movements. Published in 1978, Yen's solidly researched book *Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution with Special Reference to Singapore and Malaya* illustrates the influential role the Chinese from British

Singapore and Malaya played in Chinese nationalism. While most works have relied on sources in Western languages, Yen has extensively based his study on Chinese sources. His timely book coincided with China's reentering the global scene after its closure due to isolationist policies. These developments have further stimulated the historical scholarship on the "national" connections between China and Southeast Asia by way of the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia.

According to Yen Ching-hwang, Chen Mong Hock, and Michael Godley, Chinese nationalism in Southeast Asia cannot fully be understood without including the relationship with Chinese nationalism in China. Contrary to Willmott, Skinner, Heidhues, and Williams, these scholars believe that the main cause of the Chinese in Southeast Asia for participating in Chinese nationalist movements was not solely based on local Chinese grievances, but rather, aimed at safeguarding the national and economic interests of the homeland (that is: China). This drove the overseas Chinese communities to contribute to China's nation-building. Chen Mong Hock has emphasized the role of the Chinese reform and revolutionary press in raising national consciousness among the Chinese in Singapore. Yen Ching-hwang has focused on the activities of revolutionaries in Singapore and British Malaya and the financial contribution of local Chinese leaders to the revolutionary cause, while Godley has concentrated on a few "mandarin-capitalists," who, being wealthy industrialists from Southeast Asia,

helped the Qing empire with its modernization program.²¹ In doing so, these works often portray overseas Chinese nationalism as an extension of Chinese nationalism from China.

Indeed, the fact that Yen Ching-hwang considers Chinese nationalism in prewar Southeast Asia as an extension of Chinese nationalism in China remains unchanged. Almost two decades after his groundbreaking study on the overseas Chinese contributions to the 1911 revolution, he states that “[o]verseas Chinese nationalism... was an outgrowth of modern Chinese nationalism and emerged as a result of the reassertion of traditional values, the politicization of the overseas Chinese, and stimulation of drastic political change in China.”²² It has been assumed therefore that Chinese nationalists who were seeking refuge overseas awakened the nationalist sentiments among overseas Chinese. Although Yen portrays the overseas Chinese as if he has revealed the political voices of overseas Chinese communities for supporting China’s political cause, his analysis is problematic because his research is primarily based on Chinese newspapers

²¹ Chen Mong Hock, *The Early Chinese Newspapers of Singapore 1881-1912* (Singapore: University of Malaya Press, 1967); Yen Ching-hwang, *The Overseas Chinese and the 1911 Revolution* (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press, 1976); Michael Godley, *The Mandarin-capitalists from Nanyang: overseas Chinese enterprise in the modernization of China, 1893-1911* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). Wang Gungwu, “The Limits of Nanyang Chinese Nationalism, 1912-1937,” in *Community and Nation* (Singapore: Heinemann, 1992), 40-57. Contrary to Yen and Godley, Wang claimed that overseas Chinese nationalism was (what he called) taught nationalism.” He believed that the Nanyang Chinese who felt attracted to Chinese nationalism was not due to passionate realization, but more due to skillful persuasion by educated Chinese from China.

²² Yen Ching-hwang, *Studies in Modern Overseas Chinese History* (Singapore: Times, 1995), 149.

that were published and circulated in the British dominions. These newspapers were mainly edited and written by Chinese nationalists in exile. As such, it did not completely take into account the voices of the settled Chinese communities in these areas under study.

Migration was another topic that gained popularity in Southeast Asian Chinese Studies. The field of Chinese migration, pioneered by Wang Gungwu, has looked into the cultural ties and the persisting connections that Chinese emigrants had with China. This interest coincided with China's opening to the world in the 1980s and raised questions about overseas Chinese's assimilation and integration in "host countries." To this day, Wang's influential work continues to form departure points of critical analyses on Chinese migration.

Despite Wang Gungwu's many insightful points and stellar scholarship, his approach is not completely free of weaknesses. By tracing overseas Chinese cultural and political identities and their migratory experiences that emanated from China's shore, he did not sufficiently give agency to the overseas Chinese themselves. Similar to Yen, in his earlier work Wang was unable to free himself from nation-based histories. By actively searching for uninterrupted ties that the Chinese overseas had with China, he too regarded overseas Chinese as an extension of China. In fact, he has emphasized that his early work primarily dealt with "the Chinese overseas," rather than "the overseas Chinese."

These studies have stimulated China scholars to look at connections beyond China's borders. With the ongoing trend of placing Chinese nationalism within transnational and global contexts since the late 1990s, Chinese

nationalism studies conducted by China scholars took a new turn. Studies by Rebecca Karl, Uradyn Bulag, Philip Kuhn, Prasenjit Duara, and Chris Vasantkumar,²³ to name a few, have shown that the overseas Chinese can no longer be excluded from understanding the construction of the Chinese nation, nationalism, and modern China. Although these studies reveal the dependency of the Chinese diaspora on constructing a new China, these studies do not sufficiently depart from a Sinocentric perspective due to their premises that overseas Chinese peoples were extensions of China and merely played a supplementary role in China's transformations. As Ien Ang aptly expressed this view:

[T]he transnationalism of the Chinese diaspora is actually nationalist in outlook, because no matter how global in its reach, its imaginary orbit is demarcated ultimately by the closure effected by the category of Chineseness [China's cultural center] itself.²⁴

²³ Rebecca Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002); Rebecca Karl, "Creating Asia: China in the World at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century," *American Historical Review* 103, no. 4 (October 1998): 1096-1118; Uradyn Bulag, *Collaborative Nationalism: The Politics of Friendship on China's Mongolian Frontier* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010); Philip Kuhn, *Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008); Prasenjit Duara, "Nationalists among Transnationals," Aihwa Ong and Donald Nonini, eds. *Ungrounded Empires: the Cultural Politics of Modern Transnationalism* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Chris Vasantkumar, "What is this 'Chinese' in Overseas Chinese? Sojourn Work and the Place of China's Minority Nationalities in Extraterritorial Chinese-ness." *Journal of Asian Studies* 2012, 71 (2): 423-446.

²⁴ Ang, *On Not Speaking Chinese*, 77.

Decentering China's position and moving beyond nation-based frameworks position, therefore, will redraw a regional landscape that can diminish the China/ Southeast Asian dichotomy. The next section discusses the most important transnational works that help break this dichotomy.

Undoing Dichotomy: the Transnational Method

Studies that employ Sinocentric approaches place the emphasis on China as the main catalyst for change and merely portray the overseas Chinese as fulfilling secondary or supporting roles. According to these studies, overseas Chinese communities unconditionally and uncritically supported China out of patriotism and nationalistic sentiments. In my mind, these studies do not give sufficient attention to the crucial impact that the overseas Chinese had on state policies. The perception of the overseas Chinese as an extension of the Chinese nation limits autonomy for the overseas Chinese for defining their own, and unique, cultural and political identities. The inability to completely break away from the "national" confines, therefore, further reinforces rather than diminishes the dichotomy between Southeast Asia and China that is still present in academic studies.

Despite this limitation, the emergence of these diaspora studies have paved the way for transnational studies that emphasize inter-Asian connectivity and transcend the limits resulting from the establishment of postwar geographical constructions. Theories on transnationalism are still developing, but in the past decade and a half, scholarship on Chinese transnationalism has rightly

called into question the enduring connection and unchanging support of the overseas Chinese to China. These studies mainly concern the period after 1978, which is the post-Mao period when China under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping stepped out of international isolation and re-entered the international scene. Although these studies are based on case studies in the contemporary period, their approaches, taken mostly from the disciplines of anthropology and cultural studies, have offered novel ways of theorizing the connections between Southeast Asian Chinese, China, and Southeast Asia within an increasingly globalized and integrated world. Compared to earlier studies that have merely regarded overseas Chinese as an extension of China, these recent studies have decentered the role of China in China's transformation and probed more deeply into the role of overseas Chinese in rethinking about the Asian region.

Works by Aihwa Ong, Ien Ang, Tu Wei-ming, Shu-mei Shih, and Caroline Hau in particular, serve as useful theoretical tools for my historical enquiry on the role of diaspora in reconceptualizing the Southeast Asian/ China dichotomy. These authors look at the dynamic interaction between the overseas Chinese and China, and the role of the overseas Chinese in the transformation of China and Southeast Asia. Their works destabilize the essentialist notion of Chineseness or "being Chinese" by calling attention to multi-centeredness for the creation of hybrid, plural, and fluid identities. Following their arguments, I agree that identities are not fixed and are contingent on geopolitical circumstances.

The visible signs of China's rise in the early 1990s produced speculations about the future of China. Concerned with the prospects of a "Cultural China"

within the context of the center-periphery framework, Tu has attempted to decenter China's position and argued that the periphery would probably determine the "future economic and cultural agenda for the center" in China.²⁵ According to him, the periphery, consisting of three symbolic universes would dictate the course of a cultural China.²⁶ The advent of Western imperialism in China since the mid-nineteenth century had destabilized China's Sinocentric order, disintegrated Chinese culture, and hence decentered China as the cultural core. The importance for the increasing importance of overseas Chinese for China's "disintegrating" center in the contemporary period particularly took place in 1949-1979, a period when China isolated itself from the world and did not benefit from the rise of industrialized countries that took place in the rest of East Asia. "[W]hile the periphery of the Sinic world was proudly marching toward an Asian-Pacific century," Tu writes, "the homeland seemed mired in perpetual underdevelopment,"²⁷ in economic, cultural, intellectual fields. With the exodus from Maoist China, intellectuals fled overseas where they furthered Chineseness. Tu believes that this group (those who were situated outside the internationally isolated China) became the key for reviving cultural China. He has concluded,

²⁵ Tu Weiming, "Cultural China: The Periphery as the Center," in *The Living Tree: the Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 13.

²⁶ Tu identifies three dimensions of the periphery. These symbolic universes are: places outside of China of which the majority are ethnically Chinese, e.g. HK, Taiwan, etc; overseas Chinese communities; and scholars, journalists, and other professionals who study China.

²⁷ Tu, "Cultural China," 12.

“although realistically those who are on the periphery ... are seemingly helpless to affect any fundamental transformation of China proper, the center no longer has the ability, insight, or legitimate authority to dictate the agenda for cultural China. On the contrary, the transformative potential of the periphery is considered so unlimited that it seems inevitable that it will significantly shape the intellectual discourse on cultural China for the years to come.”²⁸ In other words, Tu predicted that because the center of cultural China (so-called Chineseness) shifted from mainland China to the periphery, the periphery would direct the development of China’s future.

Similar to Tu, Aihwa Ong has looked at the transnational practices and connections that took place within political-economic forces but further highlighted the integration of Southeast Asia with China by way of the overseas Chinese.²⁹ Witnessing the changes in the 1980s and 1990s, Ong has urged for a reconceptualization of the study of Chinese identity. She argues that identity

²⁸ Tu, “Cultural China,” 34.

²⁹ Both Tu and Ong look at transnationalism in connection with political and economic circumstances and consider the post-Mao period as a revival of overseas Chinese and mainland Chinese interaction that would dictate the future of China and Greater China. Tu primarily looks at the disintegration of the mainland as China’s cultural center mainly due to the “void” of intellectual and economic elites in the period between 1949 and 1978 as the main cause of reviving a cultural “Greater China.” Ong places sole emphasis on the economic stimulation in Asia that would drive China intentionally or unintentionally in the economic sphere of prosperity. Her analysis echoes Samuel Huntington’s influences in *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*. Ong looks at the formation of a new “transnational” or regional “Chinese” civilizational or cultural identity that transcends nation-state borders and is posited against Western civilization.

should be understood in relationship with place-bound concepts, such as territory, nationality, ethnicity, and region. She has attempted to craft a theoretical framework that examines deterritorialized relationships that constitutes Chinese transnationalism in specific times and spaces. Ong uses “transnationality” for referring to the cultural interconnectedness and mobility across different spaces. She employs “transnationalism” to “refer to the cultural specificities of global processes and the plural conceptions and utilizations of culture.”³⁰ By placing transnational practices and changing cultural meanings at the center of discussions on globalization, Ong has presented an analytic framework that illustrates human identity formations and political responses being shaped by the economic rationalities of globalization and the accompanying cultural dynamics.³¹

Ong’s research is important for it is one of the first to introduce the concept of modern Chinese transnationalism, a concept that she relates to post-1978 capitalism in China. She does so by highlighting the role of economic power for creating and reinterpreting cultural and political identities. Her pioneering study examines the role of capitalism in shaping a fraternal network and identity that was based on distinctive and non-Western Chinese/ Asian cultural characteristics. By looking at elite discourses on Chineseness (an identity that was based on “shared culture”) by politicians, business executives, and scholars,

³⁰ Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: the Cultural Logics of Transnationality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 4

³¹ Ong, *Flexible Citizenship*, 5

she argues that the increasing globalization reinforced the tension between China's *territorialized* national identity vis-à-vis a Chinese *detrterritorialized* transnational identity, which is an identity that has been mediated by the overseas Chinese whom she referred to as "bridge builders" who transcended geographic boundaries.³² According to Ong, Chineseness as a territorially bounded moral entity promoted by the PRC contradicts Chineseness as a detrterritorialized and regionally moral economic force. While the territorialized system is "a nationalist imaginary that emphasizes essentialism, territoriality, and fixity of the modern state," its detrterritorialized counterpart is "a modernist imaginary of entrepreneurial capitalism that celebrates hybridity, detrterritorialization, and mobility of the late capitalism."³³ The detrterritorialized identity, fostered by capitalism and a market-oriented economy, highlights fraternal bonding and cultural similarity with the purpose of penetrating the market-oriented economies in China and areas that is dominated by peoples of Chinese descent. This identity characterizes the qualities of filial piety, and an everlasting loyalty to the motherland.³⁴ Although it has fostered regionalism, the detrterritorialized identity destabilizes the power of the communist party (CCP) that, despite market reforms, still adheres to the idea of a socialist future in which

³² Ong, *Flexible Citizenship*, 43-51 and 55-56. Lee Kuan Yew referred to this temporal transnational and regional identity of overseas Chinese and mainland China as the "momentary glow of fraternity."

³³ Ong, *Flexible Citizenship*. 55-56.

³⁴ Ong, *Flexible Citizenship*, 45.

the Chinese state holds central control over the Chinese society and economy.³⁵ This deterritorialized identity has also distinguished itself from Western modernity and its modern images by presenting itself as an alternative identity that is exclusively Asian. It therefore claims its own position in a multi-centric global capitalist world.

The investments and economic activities of overseas Chinese from primarily Southeast Asia have created various cross-border networks that made political identities (here: China's national identity) be subordinate to economic identity and trade benefits (referring to the transnational identity that was constructed on economic linkages within the Greater China idea).³⁶ At the same time, the shaping of a regional identity based on Chinese culture has also informed the position of "Chineseness" in the hierarchy of races, nation-states, and civilization.³⁷

³⁵ Ong, *Flexible Citizenship*, 57. In other words, China departing from its international isolation and adopting market reforms on the one hand made China participate in webs of transnational flows and networks engendered by global capitalism and integrated economy. On the one hand, reengaging with the global economy evoked a crisis in its cultural identity due to the transfer of images from abroad and dominance of overseas Chinese investments that has challenged the Chinese state to keep political and territorial interest separate from opportunism and capitalism. It was particularly for this reason, the fear of outflow, and the orientation of China's citizens towards the outside world that caused Deng Xiaoping decide to establish and open of SEZ's in China's border areas. In doing so, he believed, would foster market reforms that concentrated in the Pearl River delta while also securing economic reform within the state borders. See Ong, *Flexible Citizenship*, Ch. 2.

³⁶ Ong, *Flexible Citizenship*, Ch 1.

³⁷ Ong, *Flexible Citizenship*, 57.

These ideas echo Ong's earlier work, *Ungrounded Empires*, which she co-edited with Donald Nonini. Covering a wider temporal scope from the early twentieth century up until the mid-1990s, this collection of essays already was one of the first works that explored the multiple meanings of Chineseness that was guided by capitalism in a global era. This approach moved away from conventional, longstanding, and essentialist notions about Chinese culture and identity and showed that "'Chineseness' is no longer, if it ever was, a property or essence of a person calculated by that person's having more or fewer 'Chinese' values or norms. Instead, it could be understood only in terms of the multiplicity of ways in which 'being Chinese' was an inscribed relation of persons and groups to forces and processes associated with global capitalism and its modernities."³⁸ In other words, the theoretical framework that Nonini and Ong have suggested is based on the developments of a new type of capitalism that emerged in the Asia-Pacific region between the 1970s and 1990s. In this period, with China stepping out of international isolation and the rise of the Four Little Dragons (Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Singapore) stimulating regional economies, a phenomenon that often is often referred to as the "Asian miracle," the global economic strength shifted to the Asian region. This gravity of Asia and "Confucian"-oriented polities as a center of global economy has engendered celebratory and triumphal sense of Chinese/ Asianness. As a result, new ways of "being Chinese" that is shared by participants of new transnationalism were

³⁸ Aihwa Ong and Donald Nonini, *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism* (New York, London: Routledge, 1997): 3-4.

constructed through far-flung capitalist-driven transnational networks. In other words, similar to *Flexible Citizenship*, the premise of *Ungrounded Empires* is that human subjects and their formation of identities are subjected to a globalized political economy. The case studies in these works show that identities are not necessarily shaped by nationalism or political loyalty, but by economic forces within a global context.

Ungrounded Empires, like in *Flexible Citizenship*, defines modern Chinese transnationalism as “a third culture, an emergent global form” that offers alternative visions to Western-dominated capitalism. It generated new and distinctive social arrangements, cultural discourses, practices, subjectivities, and produces new identities, which were shaped by Asian capitalism and mediated by transnational practices and ideas such as travel, media, and multiculturalism.³⁹

The essays in *Ungrounded Empires* examine far-flung Chinese networks, the historical roots of transnational communities and the diaspora, their operational flexibility across space, and their circumvention of state-constructed boundaries and restrictions. Although modern Chinese transnationalism was a recent phenomenon that emerged in the 1990s, Ong and Nonini claim that modern Chinese transnationalism is built on the past. They state, “[w]e ... take modern Chinese transnationalism to be a recent global phenomenon with historical roots in premodern trade systems, European colonialism, and more recent American geopolitical domination of the Pacific.”⁴⁰ Unlike previous works

³⁹ Ong and Nonini, *Ungrounded Empires*, 11, 16.

Ungrounded Empires decentered China as the ultimate analytical reference for understanding the Chinese diaspora. Hence, its analytical point was taken from *within* the Chinese diaspora; not China as a point of origin.

In addition to removing China as the center for producing “Chinese” identities, Ong and Nonini also disagree with the idea that modernities in the non-West were merely responses and resistances to Euro-American capitalism. Instead of regarding Western notions as a derivative for Chinese transnationalism, the editors argue that the West is just a cultural form that helps mold new forms of identity.⁴¹ In other words, identity is therefore shaped not just by one center or single entity, but is produced by being involved in multiple centers.

This extremely illuminating framework successfully reveals the flaws of nation-based theories that were still dominating academic studies at the time. In her work, however, Ong ultimately seems to present capitalism over human actors as the main catalyst for identity change. Moreover, by presenting deterritorialized Chineseness or the Sinic bloc as almost a monolithic entity, she fails to convincingly point out the particularities that were present in different locales. More importantly, although this transnationalist framework succeeded in removing the Southeast Asia/ China geographical divisions by highlighting the intervention of Southeast Asian Chinese capitalists as bridge builders, it did not succeed in removing another dominant dichotomy, namely the east-west divide.

⁴⁰ Ong and Nonini, *Ungrounded Empires*, 11.

⁴¹ Ong and Nonini, *Ungrounded Empires*, 15.

In fact, in their studies Ong and others have argued that a Chinese/ Asian identity is an alternative identity that is evoked to contrast Western dominance.

Most transnational studies merely look transnational activities that transcend one boundary. This approach leads to the assumption that transnationalism is a deterritorialized phenomenon. The notion of ever-expanding movements from a single polity without boundaries is problematic. A fascinating book that examines race consciousness and citizenship of transnational communities by looking at the relationship between subject and multiple empires is Eiichiro Azuma's *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America*. By focusing on the transnational experiences of the Issei (first generation Japanese in America) during the period of westward policies of the Japanese empire across the pacific, on the one hand, and US's westward expansion in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries on the other hand, Azuma calls on historians "to confront the bounded meanings of nation and race through close analysis of the discursive strategies of everyday practices that the immigrants adopted and deployed relative to the different hegemonic powers,"⁴² which in his case were Japan and the United States. Thoroughly researched with sources collected from the national, state, and university archives, and Japanese and Japanese American periodicals, he has shown that Japan and the United States, two national and expansionist hegemonies and their ideas of modernity, jointly helped shape "modern" and

⁴² Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2005), 5.

“civilized” perceptions of Japanese immigrants. They adapted their understanding of modernity and civilization in their social practices and shaped their identities accordingly for ethnic and national survival. Japan and the United States each promoted its respective projects of nation-building, ideas of racial superiority, and colonial/ imperial expansion. Couched between these two clashing hegemonic state powers and being subjected to their dominant influences, the Issei, as Azuma explained, “constantly traversed, often blurred, and frequently disrupted the varied definitions of race, nation and culture... Their strategies of assimilation, adaptation, and ethnic survival took shape through the (re)interpretation of the bounded identity constructs that had their origins in the ideological imperatives of each state.”⁴³

By this, Azuma offered a picture of Japanese American history that differed from the dominant nation-based frameworks. According to Azuma, Japanese American history was often kept within the context of American domestic narratives. Often treated as a subfield within American national history, this approach neglected important elements of the Japanese American experience, which according to Azuma, extended beyond the boundaries of America as the only polity that mattered. By looking at the role of both Japan and the United States, he explored the various everyday practices and ethnic survival strategies that Japanese Americans used to relate to the two different hegemonic

⁴³ Azuma, *Between Two Empires*, 5.

powers.⁴⁴ Rather than focusing on transcending national boundaries, Azuma emphasized the “in-between”-ness of the Issei that helped mold Japanese American identity and the social practices which aimed at uplifting the Japanese race in America while attempting to maintain its identity as Japanese imperial citizens. To reach the aim of presenting a more complete representation of the Japanese American past he suggested using what he calls an “inter-National perspective” – a transnational approach that highlighted the interstitial (not transcendental) nature of Japanese American lives between the nation-states.⁴⁵ In this sense, Azuma looked at how Japanese Americans shaped racial and national identities by encountering and avoiding but not overstepping the rather fixed and segregated boundaries that were established by two hegemonic empires.

It is particularly the seemingly immutable state-constructed boundaries that set my analytical framework apart from Azuma’s. Although we share the same interests in unraveling identity formation of transnational communities within the context of multiple empires, my work shows that transnational communities (which I prefer to refer to as “journeying communities”), in search for their national belonging and political affiliation, were able to change state-constructed racial and national boundaries for their own causes.

⁴⁴ Azuma, *Between Two Empires*, 5.

⁴⁵ Azuma, *Between Two Empires*, 5.

The Formation of Unbounded and Bounded Identities

To recapitulate, primarily based on archival sources and supplemented with periodicals, this dissertation argues that China's construction of a pan-Chinese nation created opportunities for the overseas Chinese to organize nationalization movements across the coastal cities of China, Southeast Asia, and Europe. China's attempt at expanding its political sphere of influence beyond China's borders magnified the space allowing overseas Chinese to negotiate for their political power. Between 1890s and 1920s, Dutch Indies Chinese transformed their statuses from stateless subjects to nationals of China, Holland, and (in some cases) Japan and elevated their socioeconomic and political positions, with some movements being more successful than others. Based on a close reading of handwritten petitions by the overseas Chinese to Chinese and colonial authorities, intelligence reports by colonial authorities, and travel reports by Chinese and European imperial officials, this dissertation shows that the making of overseas Chinese as nationals to a state should be understood within the competition of empires. Due to imperial competition for controlling and attracting legitimacy from Indies Chinese, these journeying Chinese communities, in search for bettering their socioeconomic and political positions, became agents of changing state policies in China and the European colonies.

All dissertation chapters place human agency and imperial competition at the center for explaining subject-making. The dissertation looks at border-crossing activities of journeying people and states and shows how flows of people and extraterritorial governance shaped state-produced visions and subjects'

imaginaries that created room for the overseas Chinese to elevate their position in colonial, national, and international settings. This dissertation focuses on power relations and shows how overseas Chinese became nationals and obtained nationality statuses, both in the bounded sense (through officially sanctioned nationality statuses) as well as the unbounded sense (by nourishing the *feeling* of being a national). As shown in the following chapters, processes of becoming nationals were accompanied and formed by tensions -- tensions between a state and its subjects on the one hand, and between one state and another on the other hand. The theme of nationality makes it necessary to focus on the journeying Chinese community in the Dutch East Indies, because this community was most vocal on nationality issues and China's overall expansionist policies.

This dissertation argues that China's expansionism and its competition with the British and Dutch empires for overseas Chinese support created room for the Chinese in Southeast Asia to negotiate for their rights with the surrounding empires. The first part of this dissertation, therefore, focuses on the competition between the Chinese, British, and Dutch empires. The second part concentrates on the Dutch Indies Chinese and looks at how they utilized imperial competition to expand their rights with the Chinese state and, at the same time, created opportunities for racial uplift in the Dutch colony.

Chapter two examines China's expansionism to Southeast Asia in the 1920s by opening a Chinese school exclusively for the overseas Chinese. It probes into the question of why the republican state attempted to connect with Southeast Asian Chinese communities. What was the state's rationale for

reaching out to the overseas Chinese in this period? What role did the overseas Chinese play in the state's expansionist endeavor? Did the overseas Chinese fulfill the state's envisioned ambition? How did the colonial empires in Southeast Asia respond to China's expansionism in their territories? To answer the last question, chapter three shifts the attention to the reactions of the colonial empires. It discusses the discriminative and affirmative policies that British and Dutch authorities used to deal with "the Chinese threat." Chapter four further scrutinizes the idea of "the Chinese threat" and China's alignment with the overseas Chinese that emerged at the turn of the twentieth century. It examines the desires and benefits of China and overseas Chinese for realignment that helped shape the concepts of "Chinese race" and Chinese people. This chapter also aims at offering a glimpse of the early colonial responses at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Chapters five and six then focus exclusively on the Dutch Indies Chinese and their quest for racial equality. Both chapters examine Indies Chinese efforts in transforming their unbounded identities into bounded ones between 1900 and the mid-1920s. China considered Indies Chinese as nationals, but Indies Chinese were striving for a Chinese nationality status that was supported by law. They therefore launched two Chinese naturalization movements. Chapter five discusses the nationalization movement of 1908 and 1909. Chapter six examines the movement that took place one decade later. Why did Indies Chinese place such high importance on a legal status? Were they successful in their pursuing their goals?



A. Map of China, Indonesia (formerly Dutch East Indies), Malaysia, and Singapore. Source: www.southchinasea.org

CHAPTER 2

FORTRESS OF “CHINESE IMPERIALISM”

“Jinan is the principal fortress of Chinese imperialism in the modern period; it is not encouraged nor supported by the colonial powers in Asia.”⁴⁶

“[I]n the near future there will spring up one new independent country, the Malay peninsula, the Straits Settlements. The masters of this new political division will certainly be Chinese... Now is the time for your students to build up your political ability, because the future masters of the Malay Peninsula are you students of this college.”⁴⁷

A lecturer spoke these words in 1922 at Jinan College, which was the highest state-sponsored and state-governed institution for overseas Chinese students in this period. Spoken at Jinan in Nanjing, China, these words were not found in Jinan’s publications at the time but were documented by British intelligence officers in colonial Singapore who discovered this message in a Chinese newspaper that was published in San Francisco.⁴⁸ These words revealed that in the early 1920s, Jinan, under the guidance of the central government of

⁴⁶ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2830: Dutch envoy in Beijing, early 1920s.

⁴⁷ MBPI, no. 8 (1 October 1922), section 41. Emphasis added. This quote from 1922 was extracted from a lecture at Jinan college that took place two decades before decolonization. Jinan was the highest institution for the overseas Chinese that was established by the Chinese government. This passage showed that China’s ambition of taking over Southeast Asia from European colonial powers developed before the emergence of anti-colonial movements by indigenous inhabitants.

⁴⁸ MBPI, no. 8 (1 October 1922)

republican China, was in the process of urging overseas Chinese to become leaders of political entities that were ruled by Western powers. Colonial authorities considered China's ambition of constructing Sinic hegemony in the world by way of educating the overseas Chinese youth to be as a form of Chinese imperialism that would endanger the power of the West. Western colonial authorities in Southeast Asia particularly feared Jinan, where a branch of the Association Against Imperialism and Colonial Suppression was established.⁴⁹ A Dutch colonial officer described Jinan as "the principal fortress of Chinese imperialism in the modern period" and stressed that it should not be encouraged nor supported by the colonial powers in Asia.⁵⁰

Countering the accusations made by British and Dutch colonial authorities, Chinese authorities argued that China was *not* in the process of establishing an expansionist state project of any sort. In fact, China denied that it was pursuing imperialistic ambitions and avoided using the term imperialism (帝國主義) when referring to its purposes of reconnecting with its Chinese "nationals" overseas. The purpose of educating the overseas Chinese youth was, according to Chinese authorities, not to mold them into agents of China's state enterprise, but merely to enhancing the morals, racial status, and competitiveness of peoples of Chinese descent.

⁴⁹ F81 "The Chinese Movement in Netherlands India," 3.

⁵⁰ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2830: Dutch envoy in Beijing, early 1920s.

The differing claims of Chinese and Western authorities raise the following questions: Was China advancing a form of “imperialism” as Western powers claimed? What was the role of Jinan and the overseas Chinese in realizing China’s expansionism beyond China’s borders? Did the overseas Chinese share similar goals with China? What were China’s motivations for reconnecting with the overseas Chinese in the late 1910s and 1920s? The term “Chinese imperialism” was first coined by British and Dutch authorities in their colonial reports when China reestablished Jinan College in 1917, but without examining China’s rationale for reopening this state-sponsored school it is impossible to understand if colonial fears of Chinese imperialism were justified.

The Reopening of Jinan

Jinan College was established in 1906 during the waning days of the Qing empire but it closed down after the fall of Qing in 1912. Yuan Shikai, president of republican China at the time was reluctant to reopen the school out of fear that the revolutionary party Guomindang (GMD) would thrive at Jinan where most students had participated in the 1911 Revolution.⁵¹ After Yuan Shikai’s death and the end of his attempt of establishing a new imperial monarchy under his rule in

⁵¹ Lee Ting Hui, *Chinese Schools in British Malaya: Policies and Politics* (Singapore: South Seas Society, 2006), 28.

The Guomindang 國民黨 (GMD), also transliterated as Kuomintang (KMT), established in 1912, was the Chinese Nationalist Party of the Republic of China. Its predecessor Tongmenghui 同盟會 aimed at overthrowing the Qing empire which resulted in the 1911 Revolution.

1916, the recently restored republican government sought to continue its nationalization program that was disrupted by Yuan Shikai's rulership. For the purpose of nourishing "national bonding" and nurturing the overseas Chinese with "a national mind," the republican government reestablished its educational program as a means to rebuild the broken bridges with Nanyang Chinese. The Bureau of Overseas Chinese Affairs, *Qiaowuju* 僑務局 revived interest in overseas Chinese education.⁵²

When Jinan opened for the first time in 1906, the Qing regime used institutionalized education as a method for binding segments of people within the Chinese nation. It was part of the overall expansionist agenda that China was undertaking. For the purpose of including minorities in the frontier regions on China's territory and the overseas Chinese communities at the time, the Chinese government set up a uniform educational program that aimed at enforcing governmentally guided Sinicization campaigns.

The reopening of Jinan in 1917 was an attempt to re-centralize overseas Chinese education from Southeast Asia to China directly under the supervision of the Chinese government. Resuming the educational policy that the Qing regime started in the late imperial period, the republican government continued stimulating national education by putting all Chinese education overseas under the authority of the Ministry of Education. Although the finances were provided by the Chinese overseas themselves, the government took the role of patron that

⁵² DNA 2.05.90-528 #2641

oversaw the functioning of the schools. It provided general and practical guidance, designed curricula and schoolbooks, tutorials, honored contributors with decoration titles, and sent officials to carry out inspections periodically.⁵³

The spread of educational influences from China to overseas relied on a widespread web of networks. Besides governmental supervision from the top, provincial ruling authorities also fostered educational influences on the overseas Chinese through their ancestral provinces. Governmental and private educational organizations in metropolitan and coastal cities, such as Beijing, Nanjing, Shanghai, Amoy, and Guangzhou were connected with Chinese schools outside the territorial boundaries of China. In addition to institutional linkages, China regularly sent teachers and other educational support to Chinese schools in Southeast Asia through these inter-local educational associations that were registered in Beijing.⁵⁴

Besides spreading its educational influences that emanated from China to overseas in an outward direction, the Chinese government aimed at establishing China as the foundation of overseas Chinese by bringing the overseas Chinese youth to China. In an attempt to recentralize education, the republican government reopened Jinan as the principal institution of higher education for the overseas Chinese. Similar to Jinan's founding in 1906, the school continued

⁵³ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2635-42: "Overheidscontrole op particulier Chineesch Onderwijs". Bijdrage voor het Pekingrapport van 1922 no. 53 (Weltevreden, 19 August 1922). Report from Mouw (Adviseur and Hoofd of Kantoor voor Chin Zaken) to Governor-General of NEI in Buitenzorg.

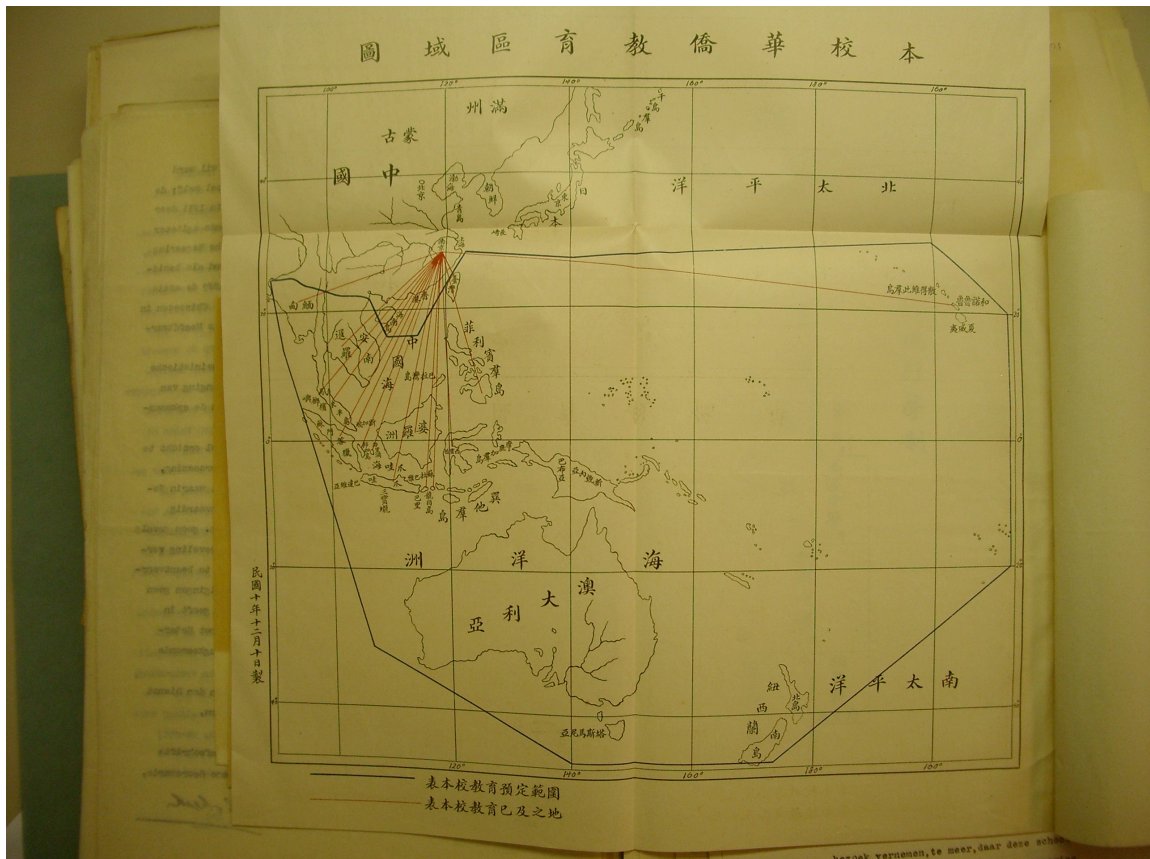
⁵⁴ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2635-42.

focusing on the construction of the idea of a pan-Chinese nation among overseas Chinese communities that were subjected to the rule of European colonizers. Following the footsteps of Qing envoys, officials of the republican government promoted the school by sending officials to Southeast Asia with the purpose of persuading the overseas Chinese to send their children to Jinan for schooling.⁵⁵

After reopening, Jinan expanded its student body and networks in Southeast Asia beyond its foundational networks of Chinese in the Dutch and British Indies. In 1925, at the height of republican China's antagonism towards the British empire and its own advancement of imperialist ambitions, there were more than eight hundred students at Jinan from various places, including Java, Sumatra, Bantam, Borneo, Straits Settlements, Malay peninsula, Burma, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Honolulu, Annam, Taiwan, and Siam. Jinan also accepted students from the Chinese community in Hawaii,⁵⁶ which was an important base of the revolutionary movement that led to the fall of the Qing dynasty and the establishment of republican China. Moreover, unlike the period when Jinan operated under the Qing regime, studying at Jinan was no longer limited to male students only. Not only did the school accept girls, but it also shaped a part of its curricula that was especially suitable for girls' education.

⁵⁵ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2829. Report no 1404 (10 April 1920).

⁵⁶ SMA Q240-1-270 (7): Cai Yuanpei (蔡元培), Guoli Jinan xuexiao gaige jihua yijianshu 國立暨南學校改革計劃意見書 (1927), p. 7



B. Map of Jinan’s educational exchanges. This map shows that students who studied at Jinan College in the mid-1920s came from Southeast Asia and Hawai’i. Source: Dutch National Archives 2.05.90-528

More important were the similarities and differences of ideological and political leanings of the GMD-guided Jinan in comparison with the Qing-guided Jinan. Similar to its foundational years before its temporary closure, the new Jinan aimed at using the overseas Chinese youth to spread pan-Chineseness beyond China’s borders that emanated from China as the center. However, instead of merely stimulating state-guided nationalism, Jinan (now following Sun Yatsen’s doctrine instead of the ideology of the Qing empire) attempted to cultivate Chinese imperialistic ideas into the minds of the overseas Chinese youth.

Jinan's political indoctrination was imperialistic because it not only nourished overseas Chinese with a love and appreciation for the fatherland, but more important, it nurtured the notion that the Southeast Asian territory that was occupied by white colonizers in fact *belonged* to China and the Chinese people. Based on Jinan's lectures and curricula it was obvious that the school was cultivating its students with a sense of legitimacy for territorial appropriation and the idea of racial superiority over the indigenous population and other nationalities, such as Arabs and Indians. By way of Jinan, the Chinese government trained the Chinese youth to become agents of -what European colonial powers considered as- Chinese imperialism. Over the course of the second decade of the twentieth century, Chinese authorities, educators, and intellectuals constructed the logic that European colonial territory should become Chinese property.

“Southeast Asia Belongs To China:” Reclaiming China’s “Lost” Territories

In 1927, ten years after the reopening of Jinan, Cai Yuanpei 蔡元培 , educator, member of the revolutionary party, and forerunner of the May Fourth Movement in 1919 released a public announcement in which he stated that China was *not* advancing a type of imperialism or statism.⁵⁷ By publicizing this announcement Jinan hoped that it could erase its image as the primary source of Chinese imperialism. Out of fear of being persecuted by colonial powers, this image, according to Jinan, had caused a decrease in the number of overseas

⁵⁷ SMA Q240-1-270 (7): Cai Yuanpei, p. 6.

Chinese students to return to China for continuing their education.⁵⁸ The governments in Southeast Asia had created hardships for overseas Chinese education by undertaking regular inspections, banning the opening of schools, and preventing Chinese students from traveling to China for further education. Therefore, at the first conference on Southeast Asian Chinese education that was held at Jinan College in June 1929, the school revealed that Chinese authorities had officially requested the British, Dutch, French and Siamese governments not to interfere with overseas Chinese education that was based on Three Principles of the People (*Sanmin zhuyi* 三民主義) and merely aimed at attaining freedom and equality.⁵⁹

Despite Chinese authorities denying that Jinan promoted imperialist and nationalist ideals, British intelligence reports revealed that Jinan took a strong anti-West position. Based on its mission, curricula, and correspondence between teachers, educators and students it was obvious that China's educators stirred up anti-West sentiments among its students. Colonial surveillance on the traffic of information and people between China and Southeast Asia tightened in the period of 1924-25 as a result of the British's continuous war against the GMD (particularly in the Straits Settlements and British-ruled Hong Kong that was

⁵⁸ SMA Q240-1-270 (7): Cai Yuanpei, p. 6.

⁵⁹ Jinan University (暨南大學), *Nanyang Huaqiao jiaoyu huiyi baogao 南洋華僑教育會議報告 (Report of the Nanyang Chinese Educational Conference)*, (Shanghai: 1930), p. 352.

located near Guangzhou). In this period the British government intercepted correspondence that not only revealed the hostility between China and the British empire, but also showed that the tension between Chinese and other European powers was spread across other areas in Southeast Asia. For example, referring to the harm of colonial restrictions on Chinese education in Southeast Asia, some secret letters written by a teacher at Jinan who previously taught in Batavia (which was the capital of the Dutch East Indies, now called Jakarta) complained that the “school registration in Malaya and the ‘cruel rules’ of the Dutch in Java are examples of foreign oppression which will destroy the foundation of China.”⁶⁰

More interestingly, intelligence reports also revealed that Jinan, as the central educational facility that was administered by the Chinese government, was nurturing students with visions of a future government in Southeast Asia that would not be ruled by Western powers but by Nanyang Chinese (that is: Chinese in Southeast Asia). On 8 February 1922, Jun Li, lecturer at Jinan University, expressed:

Look at the map of Asia; I have observed that in the near future there will spring up one new independent country, the Malay peninsula, the Straits Settlements. The masters of this new political division will certainly be Chinese. The British power in Egypt and

⁶⁰ MBPI (1 April 1925), pp. 22-5.

India is crumbling, so the tide of revolt will spread to the East, and the Malay Peninsula will be the first to catch its new influence... I do not advise you to revolt against the British authority at once, because first you must be prepared yourself to organize a government and conduct political affairs, otherwise even if the British authority should be overthrown, you will be helpless. Now is the time for you to build up your political ability, because the future masters of the Malay Peninsula are you students of this college.⁶¹

This lecture, given at Jinan more than two decades before decolonization in Southeast Asia, demonstrated that educators at Jinan were encouraging and preparing its students to become pioneers of anti-colonialism in Southeast Asia. Contrary to Jinan's public claim that it did not incite overseas Chinese to challenge Western colonial rule, this lecture showed that Jinan did, indeed, stir up movements against imperialist powers. By the 1920s, this institution intensified its voice against European colonizers, particularly against the British empire that was, as the most prominent European imperialist power in the region at the time, launching measures to curb the influence of the GMD to be spread in the British colonies.

⁶¹ MBPI, no. 8 (1 October 1922), section 41.

Anti-British sentiments were spread across Southeast Asia and China through educational networks. British intelligence reports showed that British authorities had intercepted letters in British-ruled Kuala Lumpur that indicated students were being indoctrinated with anti-imperialist propaganda. These intercepted letters claimed that the Chinese were the original people that developed Malaya before the British took over. Anti-imperialist rhetoric in these letters was clearly present:

[T]he Chinese were better off in Malaya before the English came: England from the West, and America from the East are crippling... the school registration in Malaya and the 'cruel rules' of the Dutch in Java are examples of foreign oppression. These things will destroy China's foundations. We Chinese opened Malaya – it is or ought to be ours.⁶²

Here the letter writer claimed that Western colonial authorities disrupted Chinese foundations in Southeast Asia, for their harsh treatments and strict policies obstructed and endangered the spread and growth of Chinese civilization in the region. The voice in this letter was not only anti-colonial, but it also validated Chinese imperialism. By referring to British and Dutch forces as “foreigners” and by indicating the Chinese as the people who developed Malaya

⁶² MBPI (1 April 1925), pp. 22-5.

without acknowledging the existence and rights of the indigenous population and other foreigners (such as Arabs, Indians, and so on), the letter writer implied that the Chinese were and should be the legitimate rulers in the area.

The Imperialist Mind of Liang Qichao

While educators and administrators focused on stimulating the idea of a future government that would, under the supervision of the government in China, be ruled by Southeast Asian Chinese, Chinese intellectuals such as Liang Qichao were constructing a logic that would justify China's territorial appropriation and racial domination of the colonial lands in Southeast Asia.⁶³ By the 1920s, Liang Qichao had developed his political thinking in a linear progression from reformist in the late nineteenth century, revolutionary and nationalistic in the early twentieth century to imperialist in the second decade of the twentieth century. Modernization, political reform, racial competitiveness, and enhancement of man's intellect, were no longer the only conditions for strengthening China as a nation. In order to enhance China's position in the world, he argued, it was important that China and Chinese people would take over Southeast Asia from Western colonial powers. To achieve this purpose, the role of the overseas Chinese was crucial.

⁶³ Liang Qichao was one of the most prominent political thinkers and a celebrated nationalist of 20th century China. A reformer turned revolutionary, he was an inspiration for modern thinking and had often been a subject of academic study. Besides his portrayal as a praised Chinese nationalist, in this chapter, I want to suggest that he was also as a promoter of "Chinese imperialism."

Liang Qichao emphasized the key role of the overseas Chinese for reclaiming China's "lost" lands in Southeast Asia by constructing the historical relationship of territorial belonging with the history of Chinese presence in Southeast Asia. In 1923, one year after Jun Li gave his lecture, Liang spoke at Jinan College. In this speech he urged that it was the responsibility of students to recover the territory that fell in the hands of white men. His speech, published in Jinan's newsletter of 13 January 1923, specifically called on the responsibility of students at Jinan University. By tracing the history of Chinese presence, their economic contribution in Southeast Asia and establishing the geographical connectivity between China and Southeast Asia he claimed that "the Southern Seas" (*Nanyang*, referring to Southeast Asia from China's perspective) belonged to the Chinese race (*minzu*).

Liang established the narrative of legitimizing territorial appropriation by tracing the presence of the Chinese state to the reign of Yongle 永樂, the Ming emperor who had ruled China from 1402 to 1424. During his reign he appointed Zheng He 鄭和, a Muslim eunuch of Hui descent, as naval admiral with the task to lead maritime voyages to the Southern Seas (meaning: Nanyang or Southeast Asia).⁶⁴ Between 1405 and 1433, the Ming empire sponsored seven naval expeditions with the purpose of decreasing private trade and piracy, imposing imperial control over global trade, looking for exotic goods, presenting the power

⁶⁴ See Liang Qichao, "Zheng He zhuan" "鄭和傳" in *Zhongguo weirenzhuan wuzhong* 中國偉人傳五種 (Taiwan: Zhonghua, 1936), 57-68; "Liang Qichao's speech" "梁任公先生演說辭" (notes taken by 陳希文 and 秦元邦), *Jinan Weekly* 13 January 1923, see DNA 2.05.90-528 #2842-46.

of Ming China in the Indian Ocean basin, and extending the empire's tributary system.

Liang Qichao described Fei Xin's two travelogues about Zheng He's voyages *Xingcha Shenglan* (星槎勝覽) and *Yinglao Yaolan* (瀛老要覽) as valuable books that were worth studying. In his speech for the overseas Chinese students at Jinan whose ancestral linkages mainly originated from the Guangdong and Fujian provinces (coastal areas in China), Liang highlighted Zheng He's contributions to the waves of Chinese emigration that emanated from Guangdong and Fujian. Liang claimed that the completion of Zheng He's voyages stimulated the people from Guangdong and Fujian to travel back and forth between China and Nanyang because the majority of the people who accompanied Zheng He in the voyages were people from these provinces.⁶⁵ China's presence in Nanyang therefore preceded the arrival of Westerners.

He continued his argument by explaining the relationship between Chinese presence, economic contribution, and political inability that resulted in Southeast Asia being ruled by Westerners. He reasoned that Nanyang belonged to the Chinese because the Chinese were the first people who opened and developed Southeast Asia. "Before Western powers had arrived Nanyang [i.e. Southeast Asia], Chinese people had already brought the economy under Chinese control," he said. "Although our ancestors opened and developed [Nanyang], our

⁶⁵ Liang Qichao's speech (13 January 1923)

country, unfortunately, did not have the political power to safeguard it.”⁶⁶ The inability of Chinese ancestors to maintain power in Southeast Asia caused the loss of Nanyang to Western colonial powers. In his speech, Liang described the expansion of China’s sphere of influence over Nanyang as an unfinished project, a task that was left to the offspring to complete.⁶⁷

The inception of Liang’s conceptualization of seeing Southeast Asia as a “Chinese domain” started to develop as early as 1906 when he wrote *Biographies of Eight Great Chinese Colonists* (中國殖民八大偉人傳).⁶⁸ In this essay he studied the great men in the history of Southeast Asia who were of Chinese descent and concluded that between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries, eight Chinese people with origins from Guangdong and Fujian became leading and heroic figures in Southeast Asia. Liang studied and described the contributions and biographical details of these “Great Chinese Colonists” according to the chronology of their arrival in Southeast Asia. The first, Liang Daoming (梁道明) who became king of Sambodja, Srivijaya in the fourteenth century was originally from Nanhai, Guangdong. One century later during the turbulent years under Ming emperor Jiajing’s reign (1476-1519), Zhang Lian (張璉) from Raoping, also from Guangdong province, migrated to Srivijaya. Also from Guangdong was Wu

⁶⁶ Liang Qichao’s speech (13 January 1923)

⁶⁷ Liang Qichao’s speech (13 January 1923)

⁶⁸ Liang Qichao, “Zhongguo zhimin bada weirenzhan” “中國殖民八大偉人傳,” in *Zhongguo weirenzhan wuzhong* 中國偉人傳五種 (Taiwan: Zhonghua 1936): 51-55.

Yuansheng (吳元盛) from Jiaying prefecture, who settled in Borneo and became king of Tayan in West-Kalimantan after having fought with the indigenous population in the late era of Qing emperor Qianlong's reign (1735-1796). Another colonist from Jiaying, Guangdong that ruled in West-Kalimantan was Luo Da (羅大), who became king of Pontianak, which was the capital of West-Kalimantan.

Besides describing the lives and the contribution of these royal men, Liang Qichao devoted the most detailed and extensive narrative to Taksin (鄭昭) who became king of Siam (now Thailand) in 1767. Although Taksin was born in Ayutthaya to a Chinese father and a Siamese mother, Liang Qichao identified him as a migrant from Chaozhou, Guangdong who had accompanied his father to Siam. It should be noted that Liang made no reference about his Siamese origin that he inherited from his mother's side and treated Taksin as thoroughly Chinese. Other great men that Liang included in his study were anonymous, including two settlers in Southeast Asia who were connected with the Chinese imperial state and became kings of Kalimantan and Java. To attribute Chinese settlement to Zheng He's voyages, he mentioned that one man who followed Zheng He to Nanyang had settled in Borneo during the Ming dynasty and became the king of a state in Borneo. Liang also documented that a king who went to Java for tributary relations eventually became king of the Sunda Kingdom in Northern Java, which was a place where many Chinese and other merchants from elsewhere anchored. Liang closed *Biographies of Eight Great Chinese Colonists* by giving credit to the Chinese from Jiaying, Guangdong who opened the British Straits Settlements. He

mentioned that these men were already engaged in mining in Singapore and Penang before the British empire established its rule in Singapore in 1819.⁶⁹

Liang's study of the heroic deeds of the Chinese men in Southeast Asia was written in a time period when he distanced himself from reformism and became a member of the revolutionary movement that was against Manchu rule. In this period, revolutionaries were constructing the idea of a Chinese race that excluded Manchus, the ethnic group that ruled China during the Qing dynasty. *Biographies of Eight Great Chinese Colonists* highlighted the contributions of what revolutionaries considered as Han Chinese, which included the category of overseas Chinese peoples.

In the historical narrative that Liang Qichao constructed, he traced the history of Chinese presence in Southeast Asia to Ming exploration voyages under the Yongle emperor and disregarded movements of Chinese migrants between the Chinese coast and Nanyang prior the Yongle era. This revealed that in Liang's mind, the primary agent of Chinese presence in Southeast Asia was the Chinese state and not the journeying Chinese commoners who traveled to Southeast Asia for economic and political reasons.⁷⁰ Liang expressed that his (re)discovery of the great Chinese colonists was simultaneously a "regret" and a "delight." He

⁶⁹ Liang Qichao, "Zhongguo zhimin bada weirenzhuang" "中國殖民八大偉人傳," 51-55.

⁷⁰ Contrary to Liang Qichao's analysis, studies by Wang Gungwu prove that Chinese presence in Southeast Asia dated at least as early as the Song dynasty. See Wang Gungwu, *China and the Chinese Overseas* (Singapore: Times, 2003); Wang Gungwu, *the Nanhai Trade* (Singapore: Times, 1998).

lamented that these national figures were buried in the Ming chronicles, and stated that the fact “[that they had been] left out of Chinese history is symbolic of how China itself has been left out of the present world struggle for survival.”⁷¹ On the other hand, the Chinese colonists illustrated the potential of China’s political power in the future. His study of these early Chinese settlers laid the foundation for his logic on the relationship between national vitality, maritime power, and the strength of peripheral communities as key to a nation’s strength. Assessing the potential growth of China by following American maritime power as an example,⁷² he argued that “[i]f in the future our country could expand her imperialism outward, people of [Guangdong and Fujian] would remain useful,” because “seven of these [great] men were from [these provinces].”⁷³ He praised these migrants for their “adventurous, assertive, and even imperialistic” nature but regretted that they lost their power to Europeans due to the lack of political support from the Chinese government.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Liang Qichao, “Liang Qichao’s Portrayal of Great Chinese Colonialists (1906),” tr. Philip Kuhn in *Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (2008), p. 245.

⁷² Liang Qichao’s impressions of America as a strong power developed when he traveled to the United States as a political exile in 1903. He was particularly interested in learning about the political system in America but concluded that it was not suitable for China. See “Liang Qichao on his trip to America,” tr. by Patricia Ebrey in *Chinese Civilization* (New York: Free Press), no. 53.

⁷³ Liang Qichao, “Liang Qichao’s Portrayal of Great Chinese Colonialists (1906),” 245.

⁷⁴ Philip Kuhn, *Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008), 244.

Liang's writing highlighted China's linkages with Southeast Asia by emphasizing the importance of Guangdong and Fujian. The connection was not only based on ancestral linkages of overseas Chinese peoples that had settled and built states in Southeast Asia, but Liang also referred to Guangdong and Fujian and Chinese racial superiority over these areas to promote his rationale for "reclaiming" the Nanyang territory from the hands of Western colonial powers. He used China's conquest of Guangdong and Fujian during the reign of Emperor Wu of Han dynasty 漢武帝(141 – 87 BC) as a justification for civilizing the people in these provinces by making them become subjects of the Chinese empire.⁷⁵ According to Liang, before China conquered (征服) Guangdong and Fujian, these areas were inhabited by "savage and wild tribe barbarians" (蠻夷的地方). Liang justified China's conquest and territorial possession of these previously non-Chinese territories by claiming that rulers of China proper, an area which was historically seen as the political and cultural center of Chinese civilization, opened and exploited undeveloped land and civilized its inhabitants. In his words: "if descendants of the Yan and Yellow emperors did not put their greatest efforts in opening and exploiting these areas, today's Guangdong and Fujian would have likely fallen in the hands of white men (白人)."⁷⁶ By this, Liang Qichao justified

⁷⁵ "Liang Qichao's speech (13 January 1923)." It was interesting that Liang referred to the Han Dynasty. In this period, not only did the Han empire conquered Guangdong and Fujian, but it further consolidated the political system of the imperial state that the Qin dynasty founded (with Confucianism, Han-race, etc.).

⁷⁶ Liang Qichao's speech (13 January 1923)"

expansionism of China's early empires, particularly by Han rulers who built an empire that had laid the foundation of the Chinese/ Han race and civilization. It could be argued that, since Guangdong and Fujian fell under the territorial and administrative domain of China's political center, the areas to where peoples of Guangdong and Fujian migrated to would have, by extension, also fallen under the political realm of the Chinese government.

Liang constructed this theory of Chinese racial superiority and political rule in China's periphery in a period when Chinese intellectuals and geographers in China used environmental determinism to justify Chinese territorial expansion and the conquest of the "less civilized races." In the 1920s and 1930s after studying Western theories that legitimized Western colonialism and white supremacy, Chinese geographers used geographic latitude and climate as scientific tools for justifying colonization, Han migration, and exploitation in frontier regions. Many intellectuals in this period claimed that the geographic location allowed China to establish itself as one of the most civilized countries in the world. In other words, Han Chinese's superiority over the less civilized natives was directly related to environmental factors. In China, unlike *turen* (aborigines) who lived in areas with extreme high or low latitudes, the Chinese from China proper (Han Chinese) lived in the most favorable places in the middle realm around the Yellow river and were therefore unaffected by environmental factors that caused people's degeneration.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ Zhihong Chen, "Climate's Moral Economy": Geography, Race and the Han in Early Republican China," in Thomas Mullaney, James Leibold, Stephane Gros, Eric

This theory of the relationship between geography and men's ability was also applied to the status of "less civilized races" beyond the territory of the China state. Claiming Chinese civilizational superiority over the indigenes in Southeast Asia, an intellectual argued that less civilized people originated from areas with hot temperatures, which could be illustrated with the case of Southeast Asia where monotonous tropical climate had made native people lazy. Denigrating the indigenous population in Southeast Asia, another intellectual depicted Dayak people as apes.⁷⁸ Moreover, in order to justify political rule by the higher civilized Han race, intellectuals took Chinese rule over the aborigines in Taiwan as an example. Many essays described that, before Han Chinese arrived in Taiwan, many "savages" lacked civilizational characteristics.⁷⁹ Writings by geographers and intellectuals often depicted frontier regions as untouched lands with rich natural resources that were waiting to be developed by Han Chinese people. Chinese people who contributed to land reclamation and civilizing the frontier,⁸⁰ including Southeast Asia which China considered as an extension of Guangdong and Fujian, were often glorified as national heroes of China.

Vanden Bussche, eds., *Critical Han Studies: the History, Representation, and Identity of China's Majority* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 81.

⁷⁸ These intellectuals were respectively Zhang Qiyun and Shen Meizhen. See Chen, "Climate's Moral Economy," fn 42.

⁷⁹ See for instance, Emma Teng, *Taiwan's Imagined Geography: Chinese Colonial Travel Writing and Pictures, 1693-1895* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006).

⁸⁰ Mullaney, Leibold, Gros, Vanden Bussche, eds., *Critical Han Studies*, pp. 82-84.

Like his contemporaries who were seeking an explanation for the connection between racial superiority, political rule, and environmental determinism at the time, Liang encouraged colonialism because he believed that Western powers had become internationally strong due to their colonial projects. Referring to Southeast Asia, he explained the relationship between political power and economic strength for attaining international competitiveness and regretted that the loss of Chinese economic power in Southeast Asia was due to China's weak political power coupled with its neglect of Chinese communities who were settled overseas. Highlighting the great numbers of Fujianese and Cantonese peoples in Southeast Asia and their geoeconomic significance in opening the Southeast Asian economies, he argued "[i]n the hundred or more kingdoms of the Nanyang, the majority of the population are descended from the Yellow Emperor. [Hence,] whether from the standpoint of geography or history, they are *natural colonies of our people*."⁸¹ Liang ignored the political ability of the native population and other foreign populations (such as Indians, Japanese, and Arabs) in Southeast Asia and revealed that the strife for political rule over the

⁸¹ Liang Qichao, "Liang Qichao's Portrayal of Great Chinese Colonialists (1906)," 246. Italics added.

Note that Guangdong and Fujian were historically considered as the periphery of China's proper, which was the center of Chinese culture, economics, and politics. It particularly became a politically significant area when Sun Yatsen used Guangdong as a base for revolution.

At the turn of the twentieth century, revolutionaries re-invented the image of "Yellow Emperor" (historically considered as a cultural hero of Chinese civilization) as the ancestor of Han Chinese people. By this, revolutionaries promoted anti-Manchu racial nationalism that was against Qing rule.

Southeast Asian territory was between two non-Southeast Asian races: namely the Chinese and white colonizers. Since Chinese presence preceded European presence, he claimed that Chinese people should repossess the Nanyang territory.

Liang went on to argue that, unlike when the Han empire conquered Guangdong and Fujian, the lack of political power of the Chinese prevented the Chinese from claiming the territory in Southeast Asia. As a result, white men, who arrived in Southeast Asia later than the Chinese, took the territory into their possession. In other words, European colonization and political inability disrupted the completion of incorporating Southeast Asia into China's governance. In the 1910s and 1920s, Chinese policy makers, educators, and intellectuals reopened Jinan with the purpose of achieving this goal. As the institution that cultivated the political ability of overseas Chinese, it would equip students with the ability that allowed them to reclaim the territory that in China's eyes belonged to them. Explaining the right of the Chinese to claim Southeast Asia, Liang claimed:

Our countrymen were the earliest people that arrived in Nanyang. If our country had political capacity, it would have been our territory long ago (我國的領土). But this is something that our ancestors (祖宗) were not able to complete, and left the task of

completion to us. We should take our courage and responsibility to complete this together.⁸²

Liang's concept of viewing Nanyang as "Chinese territory" in 1923 grew out of his 1906 study of Chinese royal settlers in Southeast Asia. In his speech at Jinan in 1923, he claimed that Chinese ancestors had started the project of opening and developing the territory in Nanyang, but due to the lack of political power, Chinese settlers were unable to complete the project. Therefore, the task for accomplishing this goal was now left to the descendants. Students at Jinan played a key role in completing this project. Liang saw Chinese students from Nanyang as being responsible for fulfilling the task of their ancestors, and was, according to him, their mission to glorify and expand Chinese culture and civilization. In his words:

With regard to today's Nanyang, we can not blame our ancestors. Because they have not completed the task, we have to put it into completion. Now that we have the task that our ancestors did not complete, we have to complete it. We have to spread and glorify the civilization of our country; so that our civilization would be planted and rooted in Southeast Asia (必使我國的文化種根于南洋).⁸³

⁸² Liang Qichao's speech

⁸³ Liang Qichao's speech

Students' Voices

Liang Qichao's message of the responsibility of the overseas Chinese at Jinan in Nanjing spread beyond the Chinese territory. Just a few months after Liang gave his speech in January 1923, Jinan alumni Ko Bou Tsan (head of Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan-school in Surabaya, the Dutch East Indies) told his students in a lecture that overseas Chinese students bore a heavier responsibility than students from mainland China. While students from China had the task to strengthen China, the overseas Chinese who lived under the power of foreign powers not only had the responsibility to help the fatherland but also to fight for their position in the foreign lands. Ko agreed with Jinan's president, Zhao Zhengping, that the purpose of the school was not only to teach students to read, but most importantly, to nurture students' interest in political engagement. Jinan had special relations with Nanyang; the overseas Chinese therefore had to take their responsibility in supporting their fatherland with China's diplomatic agenda.⁸⁴ He explained: "although Nanyang belongs to various powers, it is in reality possessed by the Chinese. Unfortunately the power of the Chinese government was limited and did not extend far, causing the [political] power to have fallen in the hands of foreigners. Therefore, you students have the important task and responsibility to consolidate and maintain the position of the overseas Chinese."⁸⁵ Liang Qichao's voice echoed clearly in this article from *Jinan Weekly*.

⁸⁴ *Jinan Weekly* 4 June 1923

⁸⁵ *Jinan Weekly* 4 June 1923

Published for students and by students, the articles in *Jinan Weekly* revealed the voices of Jinan students. Hostile voices against colonizers encouraged the overseas Chinese to resist Western powers. In the edition of 7 May 1923, for example, *Jinan Weekly* referring to white men as “the [weaponed] blue-eyed people”; it encouraged the overseas Chinese to prepare for colonial resistance against the West and overcome oppression. By describing how Dutch immigration rules and heavy taxes were measures meant for barbarians and that British school regulations treated Chinese as slaves, *Jinan Weekly* encouraged overseas Chinese to act against these supposedly unlawful measures. To overcome oppression, the Chinese had to become developed and economically strong. Moreover, Jinan encouraged Chinese officers to not serve foreigners but to support its countrymen instead. Unity was important for achieving their goal: “[we need] to combine our collective powers and eradicate our common enemy”⁸⁶ because “United we stand, divided we fall.”⁸⁷

As mentioned earlier, Juin Li further elaborated the overseas Chinese political role in his lecture “Chinese Emigrants and their Political Ability.” To have overseas Chinese engaged in politics at Jinan was a primary goal. Jinan’s goal was not only attaining nationality and citizenship in colonial areas, but its primary goal was to nurture overseas Chinese to become masters of the territory where the Chinese people had emigrated. Although China perceived the Britain, which

⁸⁶ *Jinan Weekly* 7 May 1923

⁸⁷ Juin Li, “Chinese Emigrants and their Political Ability,” *MPBI* no. 8 (1 October 1922), section 41 ‘Chinese affairs.’

was the greatest global power at the time, as its main enemy, it also saw the British as the model for expanding its political power through migrants. Inspired by British expansion and the role of emigrants from Great Britain, Juin Li stated:

Compare Chinese emigrants with the British as emigrants. The Chinese emigrant is never master of the new land, while the British, wherever they emigrate to, are the masters. The former [i.e. Chinese] lack the desire for a settled government while the British always have a settled Government. Once British [people] emigrate to a new country they are not so much interested in politics, but the Chinese are different –even after they are in the new country, they are still interested in the political affairs of their homeland. When the Chinese are in a new country, they are chiefly in their own Chinese community, the so-called Chinatown. Wherever the British go, they always strive to obtain the rights of citizenship... [L]ook at British people. Because of their political ability, when they emigrate into a new land, they are masters and do not have to ask the Home Government for assistance in every move they make, and this is the way the British Empire has been built up.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Juin Li, “Chinese Emigrants and their Political Ability”

This passage forcefully expressed China's vision of building a global empire. The lectures urged the overseas Chinese community to take the example of British emigrants who, unlike the overseas Chinese that requested China for assistance and protection when encountering problems, attempted to build their political ability by first achieving citizenship in the host country and then eventually ruling the country. Only by means of conquering the territory and becoming rulers of the host-territory, would it be possible for an empire to expand globally. This idea of building political strength and ability of the overseas Chinese as a means for Chinese imperialist expansion was not only limited to Southeast Asia but was also spread to other parts in the world, including the United States, once part of British domination. Juin Li's lecture was published in San Francisco-based periodical *Chinese World*, and gave the impression that the Chinese government encouraged students to take over rule of the "western powers" and nourished them to become future masters of Sino-world.

Source: 民國 19 年 Shanghai Archives Q240-1-270 (3)

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暨南大學創辦時校歌

鄭洪年作歌
董王瑞編詞

moderato

合唱
Voice

伴奏
Piano

瓜島殲倭寇 殘光 瀚日 有明 前途

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共 啟 人 間 土 田 遠 受 奇 玩 荷 表

resource center: Shanghai archives



我同胞 望九州, 何日 祝青天!

大地不受人情肉, 决赋秋, 倭胜劣, 则原天, 好待科学研。

尊为祖国张油桶, 大任吾家肩, 唤起伤魂, 筑锦, 尚好。

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C. Jinan's Anthem (1930)
Source: Shanghai Municipal Archives Q240-1-270 (3)

Denying Imperialism, Accommodating Overseas Chinese Desires

China's goal of taking over the Southeast Asian region by way of cultivating Jinan's students as agents of Chinese imperialism was hampered by colonial powers that launched policies to curb China's influence on the overseas Chinese. Denying its imperialistic ambitions, Jinan released a public announcement in 1927, in which the institution stated that it wanted to prevent its misunderstanding with imperialist powers. The school claimed that its mission followed Sun Yat-sen's political framework in that, according to the school, was meant to merely nourish generations of Nanyang Chinese with good personalities, knowledge, interest, and the ability to survive. The purpose was to train students who were settled or journeying overseas to become individuals that contributed to the society. Jinan claimed that its mission was not to train students to become rulers of Western colonial territory, but to help all peoples of Chinese descent maintain solid positions that the ancestors of the Chinese nation created. In line with long-term desires of the Chinese in Southeast Asia, Jinan reiterated that its task was to have Chinese settlers and sojourners who were subjected to colonial rule obtain equal political statuses and economic treatments. In the words of Jinan College:

We want to prevent misunderstanding of colonial governments, that is: we do not want them to think that the national establishment of Jinan College aims at constituting a type a statism or imperialism. We do not want colonial powers to think that we

instill students with thoughts of invading territories of others. We do not want them to think that once our students graduate and return to Southeast Asia (Nanyang), they will disturb the authority of colonial rule and stir revolutions against colonial governments in collaboration with indigenous communities.⁸⁹

This document revealed that instead of employing nationalistic terms that Jinan used in its foundational years, Jinan now used imperialistic vocabulary to disguise its imperialistic tendencies by differentiating the Chinese government from Western imperialist powers. Instead of having imperialist and nationalist ambitions, Jinan claimed that GMD's goal was simply to reach freedom and equality of China and have the Chinese overseas to enjoy freedom in international settings. Jinan hoped that the Chinese who were subjected to imperialist powers would not be oppressed and would not suffer from economic and political discrimination. They urged colonial powers to allow the Chinese in Southeast Asia to manage their Nanyang society in an autonomous manner. Addressing colonial powers in particular, this document went on to say that

To suppress [the overseas Chinese] is suicide, [colonial powers] have to allow our Chinese to manage the Southeast Asian society in an autonomous manner. We do not snatch the rights or territories

⁸⁹ SMA Q240-1-270 (7): Cai Yuanpei (1927, p. 6)

of others, which is imperialism. ... They think that our mission to train talented educators and merchants are just superficial words to the public. We want to prevent our misunderstanding with foreign governments.⁹⁰

Through this message, Jinan urged colonial powers to remove its anti-Chinese policies because it obstructed the flow of students returning to China for receiving education at Jinan. China considered Jinan a breeding ground for training youth as agents of expanding China's influence overseas. China's imperial project relied on the mediation of the youth, who were trained for the purpose of becoming leaders in various fields, including economics, politics and culture, in Southeast Asia. And without the youth returning to China for education, China would have trouble realizing its imperialistic ambitions. Although not explicitly stated in this message but clearly expressed in the lectures of Juin Li and Liang Qichao, these students were expected to take over the power of the European rulers in the long run.

The emphasis of helping the overseas Chinese to attain equality in colonial areas in Jinan's statement was, on the one hand, to conceal Jinan as a site for political indoctrination and training school for creating its students as ideological machinery. On the other hand, the rhetoric of helping the overseas Chinese to strengthen its economic, social and political positions was a means for attracting

⁹⁰ SMA Q240-1-270 (7): Cai Yuanpei (1927, p. 6)

the support of overseas Chinese communities. Dependent on the support of the overseas Chinese for realizing the state's agenda, Jinan continued presenting itself as the force that would meet the desires of the overseas Chinese. From the beginning of the reopening, the Chinese state was conscious that the main priority of the overseas Chinese was to improve their socioeconomic and political positions in the colonies. Their support of helping China to become a strong international power was a means for the overseas Chinese to achieve and maintain their economic, social and political strength.

Jinan explained that discrimination, that is, the inferior position of the overseas Chinese in colonial areas, was directly linked with people's level of knowledge, technological advancement, and educational background. Improvements in these three areas were mutually enforcing. Civilization enabled people to come together and bind as a unit, but technological advancement, educational improvements, and the increase of people's knowledge were crucial to compete with Western powers. Although the Chinese had a rich and long history of civilization, Europe and the United States had superseded China with their progress in technology, education, and knowledge. The overseas Chinese in Nanyang received bad treatment from the British, Dutch, French, and American colonial governments. Hence, in order to fight against discriminatory attitudes it was important to stimulate education and improve people's knowledge.⁹¹

⁹¹ Guoli Jinan Daxue (Jinan College). *Nanyang Huaqiao Jiaoyu Huiyi Baogao*. Shanghai: Dadong, 1930, pp. 1-2.

Writing Sino-Southeast Asian Connectivity in the Courses: One Curriculum, Two Purposes

Continuing the mission when Jinan opened for the first time in 1906, the school provided the overseas Chinese youth that had received preparatory education in Nanyang the opportunity to further their education in China with governmental funding. Students could accumulate knowledge and learn skills that were necessary for their survival in Southeast Asia while developing a strong love for the fatherland. However, compared to its foundational years when Jinan represented itself as a school that almost exclusively focused on stimulating nationalistic sentiments, in its second stage the school emphasized teaching students skills that were needed to prosper in commerce and trade. In the amended school statutes of 1923, Jinan announced that its mission was to “[bring] together *Huaqiao* [overseas Chinese] sons and daughters who ha[d] already received elementary education. [Our school] nourishes knowledge and skills according to the needs of Nanyang Chinese and develops patriotic thinking. Our goal is to improve and train students to engage in *Huaqiao* education and industries after their graduation.”⁹²

The dual goals of stimulating patriotism on the one hand and fostering professional skills on the other were formulated after Jinan realized that the expectations of *Huaqiao* attending Jinan differed from its own purpose of

⁹² DNA 2.05.90-528 #2812: “Gaiding Jinan xuexiao zhangcheng” “改訂暨南學校章程” This statute passed collectively through principal and head departments on 20 December (circa 1923).

expanding its territory and political dominance overseas. During its closure, overseas Chinese education developed increasingly in an autonomous manner.⁹³ Malfunction of the educational system and the closure of Jinan College in China caused overseas Chinese education to increasingly develop autonomously from China's educational policies. Many Nanyang Chinese felt the need to establish a school that would meet their own purposes.⁹⁴ In an attempt to strengthen the educational ties with Southeast Asia, China attempted to synchronize China's education with the demands of Nanyang Chinese.⁹⁵

Before the reopening of Jinan in 1917, Li Yuanhong (黎元洪), Yuan Shikai's successor, sent the educationalists Huang Yanpei (黃炎培) and Lin Dinghua (林鼎

⁹³ With the lack of higher education, there was an increasing need for a post-primary school among Nanyang Chinese. As early as in May 1913, Tan Kah Kee proposed to start a middle school in Singapore. The following year, consul-general Hu Weixian re-submitted the proposal and requested assistance from the Chinese government. It was not until 1917, however, that the Department of Education in China agreed with the Nanyang Chinese's request. Tan Kah Kee received financial assistance from the Chinese government (meanwhile headed by Sun Yat-sen) and donations from other places in Nanyang. He brought the proposal to Nanyang Chinese in the British and Dutch colonies in June 1918 and established the Xinjiapo Nanyang Huaqiao Zhongxuexiao (Singapore Nanyang Overseas Chinese High school) in 1919 See Lee Ting Hui, *Chinese schools in British Malaya: policies and politics*, (Singapore: South Seas Society, 2006), 28-29.

⁹⁴ See for instance Wee Tong Bao, "The Development of Modern Chinese Vernacular Education in Singapore – Society, Politics and Policies, 1905-1941" (MA thesis, Department of History, NUS 2001).

⁹⁵ Despite synchronizing Jinan's course offerings according to Nanyang needs, the proceedings did not go smoothly. Jinan noted that there were too many differences among students. A student as such was Su Hsiu Lin from Semarang. Jinan considered students like Su as important people for regaining control of overseas Chinese education.

華) to Nanyang with the task of examining the state of Chinese education in overseas Chinese communities. They visited Malaya, lectured in schools, and discussed the state of overseas Chinese education with the local Chinese. Based on his visits Huang concluded that the Nanyang Chinese desired to become teachers and people with commercial knowledge. Subsequently, upon their return to China, Huang requested that the central government reopen Jinan so as to train teachers and entrepreneurs and mercantilists.⁹⁶ In order to meet the demands of Huaqiao, Jinan offered two majors, namely commerce and education. To ensure that the school would properly meet the demands of students from overseas, Jinan appointed Zhao Zhengping as principal of Jinan, who was previously the principal of a primary school in Malaya.⁹⁷ In so doing, Jinan, although governed by the Chinese government, would be managed by the Chinese who returned to China from overseas.

Compared to the foundational years of Jinan, the school followed the example, there were proposals for an expansion to the school curriculum in order to meet the requests of Nanyang Chinese. To fulfill the wishes of the Nanyang Chinese, Jinan designed two majors, namely Commercial Studies and Teachers'

⁹⁶ SMA Q240-1-270 (7), p. 6; Lee Ting Hui, *Chinese Schools in British Malaya*, 28.

⁹⁷ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2812: "Gaiding Jinan Xuexiao Zhangcheng" "改訂暨南學校章程"; SMA Q240-1-270 (7): 6.

In 1925 students at Jinan forced Zhao Zhengping to resign from his post because he allegedly attempted to transform Jinan from a governmental college into a private college, he hindered overseas Chinese education, and embezzled school funding. MBPI, 1 July 1925, p. 34

Program. From 1921 the curricula began to place more emphasis on commerce, accounting, etc. Students also learned Chinese, English, Japanese, and the Chinese and Japanese business languages. Courses, such as bookkeeping, advertising, banking, business organization, tariffs and customs and business law, further prepared the students for engaging in the practices of commerce.

Furthermore, following an inquiry received from schools in Nanyang between 1928 and 1930, Chinese educational bodies suggested that teachers (both male and female) should be required to have sufficient knowledge of the following subjects: national language, English, math, sports, science, music, history, geography, drawing, public knowledge, Sun Yatsen's Three Principles, and handicraft. Above all, fluency in Mandarin Chinese *Guoyu*, the national language of China, was required.⁹⁸ The first two years focused on accumulating social and public knowledge through courses such as history, geography, politics, economics, and social studies. In the last two years, students would take Chinese and English as compulsory language courses, and learn Dutch, Thai, French or Japanese as a second foreign language.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ For the preparation of the book *Nanyang Huaqiao xuexiao zhi diaocha yu tongji*, the editor Qian He sent out more than 1000 questionnaires to Chinese schools in Nanyang. He states that only 10% of the schools responded to his investigation. *Nanyang Huaqiao xuexiao zhi diaocha yu tongji* (Qian He ed), pp. 3; 570-1.

⁹⁹ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2812: "Gaiding Jinan Xuexiao Zhangcheng" "改訂暨南學校章程" stipulation no. 6.

The curricula for these study programs would meet the demands of both Nanyang Chinese and “national needs.” Although the primary goal to place emphasis on commerce was to fulfill the request of Nanyang Chinese who desired more practical learning, stimulating overseas Chinese commerce would also help stimulate economic progress in China, which would further benefit strengthening the state. The latter point was clearly explained at the first conference for overseas Chinese education in China that was held at Jinan in 1929 by a participant who discussed the importance of education for stimulating the overseas Chinese contribution of China’s modernization and industrialization. After the unification of China, the educational policy was guided by Three Principles of the People and concentrated on science. For this, the republican government welcomed overseas Chinese returning to China and developed enterprises in order to develop knowledge and the overseas Chinese ability. Overseas Chinese had the knowledge and ability for production, a knowledge that, according to the discussant, could help the state accumulate knowledge to improve China’s production and elevate its position.¹⁰⁰ He strengthened his point of recovering knowledge and ability for national survival by comparing China with Japanese imperialism. Unlike Japan that lacked minerals and iron, China possessed resources and industrial potential. Hence China should not have

¹⁰⁰ Ye Yu 業裕, “Nanyang Huaqiao Jiaoyu Huiyi Baogao Guoli Jinan Daxue 南洋華僑教育會報告” (Shanghai: Shanghai Dadong Shuju yinshuasuo, 1930): 326.

become backward, but yet it had become so with regards to education. He explained:

If we compare with Japan's imperialists, Japan is the one that is productively and economically backward, because Japan lacks minerals and iron. Therefore, the environment and resources will not stimulate Japan's production and economic development. Yet, Japan has become an industrial advanced country. What is the difference with China? The difference lies not on economic or productive aspect, but on *education*. Although Japan lacks resources for industrialization, but they know Euro-American scientific civilization (*kexue de wenming*). Japan uses this to stimulate Japanese imperialism. Japan uses Euro-American knowledge and uses resources of other countries for production. Knowledge and production, according to the author, is a matter that relates to education.¹⁰¹

To remedy this problem the discussant called for recovering the Greater China spirit (中華民族 *Zhonghua minzu*) that Sun Yatsen argued for. It is important to

¹⁰¹ Ye Yu, "Nanyang Huaqiao." Italics added.

recover morality, knowledge and ability of Greater China – all which were responsibilities of Education.¹⁰²

In addition to practical courses oriented toward commerce, students took history and geography courses. Although these courses helped build a profound understanding of China, the South Seas, and the relation of these regions within the wider world, they did not offer knowledge about the history and geography of European powers. According to the proposal that Cai Yuanpei (蔡元培) presented, courses that centered on Southeast Asia were necessary for Southeast Asia Chinese to understand the region. China-centric courses, on the other hand, would feed the overseas Chinese with an understanding Chinese nationalist ideology, which was an ideology and knowledge that each Chinese national (*guomin* 國民) should be equipped with, according to Cai. In addition to these area-specific courses, Jinan offered general courses that were meant for students to gain understanding about people and their lives in the world.¹⁰³ By way of these three concentrations within the curricula, Jinan aimed at cultivating its students to fulfill three roles simultaneously, namely as residents of Southeast Asia, nationals of China, and world citizens.

Without using the terms, “imperialism” and “state expansionism,” and without directly stating that its mission was to indoctrinate students with imperialistic and expansionist thinking, Jinan cultivated the concept of

¹⁰² Ye Yu, “Nanyang Huaqiao,” 324-326.

¹⁰³ Shanghai Archives no. Q240-1-270 (7): Cai Yuanpei, pp. 34-35.

incorporating Southeast Asia into the territorial domain of China by way of its coursework. The courses that the school offered shaped the notion that China and Southeast Asia (which China referred to as the *Nanyang*, literally translated as “the South Seas”) were interrelated regions. The concept of geographical connectivity was fostered by courses such as “Modern Industrial and Commercial History,” “Modern Chinese History,” and “History of the Development of the South Seas” in the first year of study and followed by geography courses on global commerce, China, and the South Seas, and the course “Legal and Financial Institutions of China and the South Seas” in the subsequent years.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2800-15: Bijdrage voor het Pekingrapport van 1924 no. 24. Dutch Consul General in Shanghai visited Jinan-school in Nanjing on 21 December 1923.

Jinan’s original Course of Study, College of Commerce:

Freshmen Year: Courses: Chinese, English, Japanese, Business Arithmetic, College Algebra, Modern Industrial and Commercial History, Modern Chinese History, History of the Development of the South Seas (Nanyang), Essentials of Agriculture, Farm Products, Economic, Typewriting, Abacus, and Physical training.

Sophomore Year (2nd year): Chinese, English, Japanese, Bookkeeping, Political Science, International Law, Industrial Studies, Psychology, Business Organization, Scientific Managements, Commercial Geography of the World, Commercial geography of the islands of the South Seas, Commercial geography of China, and Physical training.

Junior Year (3rd year): Business Chinese language, English and Business English, Accounting, Finance, Salesmanship [Marketing], Advertising, Money and Banking, Money Exchange, Water and Land Transportation [Logistics], Business Law, and Physical Training.

Senior Year (4th year): Business Chinese language, English and Business English, Practical Banking, Studies of Commodities, Statistics, Social Problems, Insurance, Tariff and Customs, Domestic and Foreign Commerce, Investigation and Analysis

Race was the key to the geographical connectivity between China and Southeast Asia, according to Jinan. The school claimed that the Southeast Asian society was “a society that was created by the Greater Chinese nation (*Zhonghua minzu*).”¹⁰⁵ Obviously disregarding the presence of indigenous populations and other major “foreign” populations such as Arabs, Indians, and the Japanese in Southeast Asia, Jinan further explained that: “the majority of the Nanyang population were Chinese. Hence, we want our generations to have the knowledge of *zhonghua minzu* and the history of China. With their knowledge, we want our students to improve the Nanyang society.”¹⁰⁶ Neglecting other ethnic communities as potential rulers, Jinan took the viewpoint that the success of Southeast Asia of overcoming Western colonial rule lay in the hands of the Chinese. To claim that *zhonghua minzu* was indestructible even when it was invaded by the other race (here: white race), the school spread the message that “the success of Nanyang relies on ‘our people’ [that is: Chinese people].”¹⁰⁷ This message revealed that Jinan educators not only saw Nanyang as an extension of China, but also saw Chinese people, including the overseas Chinese under the leadership of China, as the rescuers of the entire Southeast Asian region.

of Local Commerce, Business Practice, Legal and Financial Institutions of China and the South Seas, Business Usages [Customs] of China and the South Seas, and Thesis.

¹⁰⁵ SMA Q240-1-270 (7): Cai Yuanpei, pp. 32-34.

¹⁰⁶ SMA Q240-1-270 (7) Cai Yuanpei, pp. 32-34.

¹⁰⁷ Zheng Hongnian, *Guoli Jinan Daxue. Nanyang Huaqiao Jiaoyu Huiyi Baogao* (1930), p. 1.

Students, who were trained by educators of the Chinese government, therefore were the key elements for solidifying the relationship between China and Nanyang and served as agents of improving the Southeast Asian society. The proposal for Jinan's reorganization stated that particularly the course "*minzu jingyan*," a course title that Jinan translated as "Race-course" in English, focused on the understanding of racial experiences with the purpose that this knowledge could contribute to a better future society.¹⁰⁸

Jinan spread the idea of the Sino-Southeast Asian geographical connectivity and the expansionist vision of Chinese people as saviors and future leaders of the South Seas to Southeast Asia by way of its Teacher's program. This program trained its overseas Chinese students to become professional educators at schools outside of China where they would further disseminate this message. Students who were enrolled in the teacher's program (officially called the "normal school") were tasked to further spread love for the ancestral land (i.e. China) in overseas Chinese education. Jinan molded the overseas Chinese youth who were enrolled in the teacher's program as agents of spreading Jinan education and its mission overseas. The school also mediated for the supply of teachers for Chinese schools overseas, such as in the Indies.¹⁰⁹

In connection with realizing China's goals, there was a demand for female teachers. In 1922 Jinan that had until then only admitted boys as students,

¹⁰⁸ SMA Q240-1-270 (7): Cai Yuanpei, pp. 32-34.

¹⁰⁹ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2830: From emissary in Beijing 5 Jan 1923 no. 30.

opened up the training program for girls.¹¹⁰ It was not until this period that Jinan considered women as crucial for education. Women started to play an important role in fostering and spreading anti-imperialist thinking. For example, Jinan hired Cheong Shing Yee, an educator from Chung Wah Girls' School in Batavia to teach classes exclusively for female students. The admission of girls to this school was strongly connected with the political mission, because it was urgent to "now educate our women with these views."¹¹¹

Conclusion

Was China advancing a form of "imperialism" as Western powers claimed? "Imperialism" as a term for referring to China's expansionism did not appear until the early 1920s. Due to China being victim of Western imperialism, Chinese authorities avoided using the term "imperialism" to refer to its expansionist ambitions and practices. "Imperialism" carried a negative connotation for territorial encroachment. The concept of "Chinese imperialism," therefore was not introduced by Chinese policy makers and intellectuals at the time, but was first appropriated by Western colonial powers as a response to the describe increasing "Chinese threat."

Before Western powers used "imperialism" as a term to refer to China's infiltration on Western territory, in the first two decades of the twentieth century

¹¹⁰ In the early years, Jinan only admitted boys, but with the reopening it also recruited women, particularly for the teachers' program.

¹¹¹ MBPI (1 April 1925), p. 24.

Western colonial officers used the word “nationalism” to describe Chinese expansionism on territories that were colonized by the West. Although Western authorities did not clearly define the term “Chinese imperialism,” it was always used within the context of China’s desire and intention to expand its sphere of influence on European territory.

Indeed, without using the term “imperialism” China was advancing its imperialist ambitions in this period. By the 1920s China’s ambition was no longer limited to strengthening and modernizing the Chinese nation on Chinese territory. It was in the process of expanding its sphere of political influence in Southeast Asia, both in terms of geographic expansion and with regards to constructing the idea of political and racial superiority in the region. The republican state promoted these notions to Southeast Asian Chinese by way of education at Jinan – the overseas Chinese school in Nanjing that the Dutch described as “fortress of Chinese imperialism.” Jinan’s coursework and lectures by people such as Liang Qichao and Juin Li nourished the idea that Southeast Asia belonged to China. Jinan’s rationale differed from most of its students, however. In order to attract the overseas Chinese youth to study at Jinan it therefore adjusted its curricula according to overseas Chinese demands. Hence, in addition to nourishing political ideas, the school offered practical courses that would help overseas Chinese commerce flourish.

CHAPTER 3

SINOPHOBIA

“Compared to Japanese imperialism, Chinese imperialism is different. Japan is in the process of establishing a hegemonic position in East Asia, which fosters a dangerous form of imperialist thinking in the region... The ‘Chinese threat’, on the other hand, is the great number of Chinese people and large-scale immigration to the Indies [which] becomes increasingly significant to the Chinese government... Although China has not ripened its pure imperialist visions in a modern sense, it would mature in the years to follow... Chinese imperialism could be fateful for Dutch future.”¹¹²

As discussed in the previous chapter, Jinan’s reopening alarmed colonial authorities. British and Dutch authorities took it as a sign that China was pursuing its imperialist ambitions. Although the war between Chinese and British authorities was most intense, the British were not the only Westerners to fear “Chinese imperialism.” The quotation above penned by a Dutch envoy to Beijing in 1920, for example, echoed Dutch despair and anxiety of “Chinese imperialism.” Although wary of Japan’s expansionism, particularly with regards to the idea of “Asia for Asians,” British and Dutch authorities in the 1920s were more concerned with obstructing Chinese expansionism to Southeast Asia than with a growing Japan. As the quotation above revealed, this Dutch envoy anticipated that Chinese power could eventually end Dutch colonial rule in Southeast Asia.

¹¹² DNA2.05.38-2787: Letter from Oudendijk to Netherlands Foreign Affairs (7 April 1920).

What were the measures that colonial authorities took for eradicating Chinese expansionism on their territories? How did they attempt to prevent the establishment of a state within a state? Were their policies countering Chinese imperialism successful? How did their policies affect the Chinese who were subjected to British and Dutch rule?

Protecting the Colonial Borders: Controlling the Flows of Thought

British

In 1920 the British colonial government launched its education bill in Malaya with the purpose of controlling overseas Chinese education in their colonies. With this ordinance British authorities wanted to exert ideological control over its colonial subjects. The purpose of this bill was to remove any political propaganda that was hostile to British authority. British authorities declared schools that contained Guomindang's propaganda as illegal institutions and forced these schools to close. One of the clauses in the ordinance declared: "[i]f the Governor in Council considers that any school is being used for purposes of political propaganda detrimental to the Colony's interests, he may after giving due notice to the manager, declare such school an unlawful one."¹¹³ In order to remove any political content at Chinese schools, this Ordinance not only declared the right to perform periodical inspections, but also required all existing and new schools to be registered with the Director of Education. Schools that failed to

¹¹³ CO 273/510/49105: Registration of Schools Ordinance 21 of 1920, clause 19 (1)

register were forced to close. Moreover, all staff members, including teachers, managers, etcetera, too, were subjected to registration.

The ordinance ignited panic among the Chinese in the British possessions. Mass demonstrations among local Chinese erupted, propelling the Straits Chinese to petition the government in Beijing. They requested the Chinese government act on their behalf and asked the British government to nullify the regulation. The Penang Chinese Chamber of Commerce, for instance, held an urgent committee meeting.¹¹⁴ Wellington Koo¹¹⁵ acted on the Straits Chinese request and asked the British government to lift their colonial policy. He explained that Chinese residents in the British colony, which comprised more than 50% of the colonial population, were filled with fear.¹¹⁶ The Straits Chinese objected this policy with the reason that, unlike English and Malay vernacular schools that received governmental funds, Chinese schools were established without governmental assistance and was financed with private funds of wealthy Chinese.¹¹⁷

The Straits Chinese attempted to lift the restrictions in two ways. First, China spoke with the British government on the diplomatic level. Second, the

¹¹⁴ CO 273/510/52960 (September 1921)

¹¹⁵ V.K. Wellington Koo 顧維鈞 (1887-1985) was a diplomat. He started serving the Republic of China in 1912 upon finishing his Ph.D. in Diplomacy and International Law at Columbia University. In 1919, he accompanied Lu Zhengxiang for participating at the Paris Peace Conference, where he engaged with Indies Chinese's request on nationality issues.

¹¹⁶ CO 273/510/49105 (2 May 1921)

¹¹⁷ CO 273/510/49105 (7 June 1921)

Straits Chinese sent two representatives to London to discuss this issue directly with the British imperial government.¹¹⁸ The Chinese were concerned that the Education Bill would cause a serious setback for Chinese education, because the functioning of Chinese schools relied on the supply of teachers from China.¹¹⁹ A few months later, in August 1921, British authorities explained that the colonial government would not interfere with Chinese education, the instruction of Chinese language, and the use of Chinese textbooks as long as they did not contain teachings that harmed the welfare of the British empire.¹²⁰

Rather than eliminating ideological indoctrination that was hostile to British authority in Malaya, the Education Bill of 1920 in fact accelerated Jinan's voice of Chinese imperialism. The lectures by Jun Li and Liang Qichao on the political responsibility and ability of Chinese emigrants that were discussed in the previous chapter showed the anti-imperialist (particularly anti-British) rhetoric did not appear until 1923. Jinan became increasingly vocal against the British Empire that was considered the most powerful European imperialist power at the time. By the mid-1920s China's war against British imperialism climaxed when British colonial authorities repeatedly launched policies to eradicate GMD branches and Sun Yat-sen's influence in Malaya. British aggressive

¹¹⁸ CO/ 273/510/44887; CO 273/511/3578

¹¹⁹ CO 273/510/49105 (2 May 1921)

¹²⁰ CO 273/511/3578 "Reply to the Hon'ble Mr. P.T. Allen to a question by the Hon'ble Mr. Song Ong Siang on the working of the Registration of Schools Ordinance." (26 December 1921).

strategy on the GMD in British Malaya and Hong Kong escalated China's hostility towards the British empire.

Jinan did not target British authorities as its main enemy when it reopened in 1917, however. Examining the history of Jinan, British intelligence analysts revealed that the British empire did not become China's exclusive target of attacking Western imperialism until the British had launched its education bill in 1920. According to their reports, the Chinese residing in the Straits Settlements and Sumatra complained to the Chinese government that British authorities passed laws that restricted Chinese education in the Malay Peninsula. They, therefore, requested to receive education at Jinan.¹²¹

British intelligence officers were convinced that Jinan at the time of its founding in 1906 and reopening in 1917 did not have anti-British motives. It reported that compared to Jinan, "Chin Bee" College in Amoy (most likely referring to Xiamen University) had more anti-British leanings and an overall political agenda that was hostile to British authority. Its president, Lim Boon Keng, was a fervent supporter of the British empire but became increasingly oriented towards China after British authorities made Queen scholarships and high positions in civil administration impossible for Straits Chinese of non-European descent. With the downfall of Manchus and the founding of the Republic of China, Lim subsequently became increasingly supportive of China. He served as Chinese consul to Surabaya in 1913-1914 and became president of

¹²¹ MBPI no. 8 (1 October 1922), p. 42

Xiamen University that was mostly funded by Tan Kah Kee. Despite China's rhetoric of taking over European territory in Southeast Asia, British authorities did not seem worried about China's threat with regards to realizing their ambition, for according to British authorities, the Chinese realized they lacked the political ability to do so.¹²²

Therefore, despite Anglo-Chinese or Straits Chinese requests, British authorities did not mitigate its policies. In fact, it further intensified its goal of eradicating influence from China. In 1927, a few years after the British colonial government declared the Education Bill with the purpose of eradicating GMD's ideological indoctrination, it launched a regulation that declared all GMD branches as illegal associations. British war on Chinese expansionism concentrated on the British possessions. Despite Jinan's anti-British standpoint, the British did not directly confront Jinan. Instead, it focused on eliminating all political ideas that were engendered and propagated by the GMD, the party that served above Jinan.

Jinan was particularly vocal against the British empire and by the mid-1920s China's war against British imperialism peaked when British colonial authorities repeatedly tried to eradicate Guomindang branches and Sun Yat-sen's influence in Malaya. The process of suppressing political indoctrination among the Chinese in Malaya, the British that its colonial policies against the increasing

¹²² MBPI no. 8 (1 Oct. 1922), p. 42

Chinese political penetration to Malaya through education had accelerated Jinan's voice of promoting Chinese imperialism.

Dutch

British enactment of the education bill motivated Dutch authorities to reinforce its restrictions on Chinese education in the Indies. Already starting from at least 1907, Dutch colonial authorities sought ways for preventing Chinese “consoling” officials, educational examiners, and teachers from entering the Indies, but found that immigration rules were insufficient to cut off all influences from China seeping into the Colony. In January 1920, the Secretary of the Government suggested enforcing stricter border control and restricting people from entering the colony altogether.¹²³ However, it was not until 1922, after the British had launched the School Restriction Ordinance in 1920, that the Dutch government launched a more aggressive policy to control the spread of what they called “Chinese imperialism.” Chinese expansionism was primarily based on educational networks between China and Southeast Asia. Therefore, Dutch colonizers naively assumed that by tightening anti-Chinese policies after British authorities had launched its harsh educational policy that their image as the greatest oppressor of Chinese people would disappear.¹²⁴

¹²³ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2635-42: “Overheidscontrole op particulier Chineesch Onderwijs” (Governmental control on Chinese private schools), Bijdrage voor het Pekingrapport van 1922 no. 53 (From Weltevreden, 19 August 1922)

¹²⁴ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2640

Dutch authorities started launching their policies against the proliferation of Chinese schools and its ideological influence more than one decade before British authorities actively eradicated the influences of Chinese education on the colonial population. Already since the earliest stages of China's expansionism in Southeast Asia by way of the overseas Chinese, Dutch central and colonial governments sought ways of curbing China's influence on the Indies Chinese. They countered China's interference on Indies Chinese affairs on Dutch territory by continuously launching the so-called *afweer-politiek* (politics of defense or resistance), particularly in the fields of politics, education, and commerce. In the end, however, Dutch authorities stated that protecting the Dutch colony from Chinese imperialism or interference was not successful. From a Dutch state's perspective, although Dutch naturalization campaign was relatively successful on the political or naturalization field, it failed to make satisfactory progress on limiting China's educational influences.¹²⁵

Evaluating China's expansionist strategies in 1922, the Dutch concluded that education was the most effective method for expanding China's sphere of influence beyond China's borders. Dutch authorities regarded Chinese education as a vehicle of "Chinese imperialism," and realized that it was a powerful tool for feeding the sense of Chinese nationhood. According to the Dutch government, out

¹²⁵ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2801-15: "Bijdrage voor het Pekingrapport van 1924 no. 24" - Dutch Consul General in Shanghai visited Jinan in Nanjing on 21 December 1923 (for covering letter see DNA 2.05.90-528 #2796-2800), along with commentary letter from Mouw (Hoofd van den Dienst der Chineesche Zaken) DNA 2.05.90-528 #2797-2799.

of several methods that China had used for building a “Young China,” education had been the most effective tools for propagating nationalism. Education was most threatening for Dutch rule because, according a Dutch official, “this type of nationalism was anti-Western and contained imperialistic tendencies.”¹²⁶ Especially private education was dangerous. By receiving education about the history of Chinese governance at schools, all peoples of Chinese descent were drawn to the aspirations of a “Young China” that contained nationalist, anti-Western, and imperialist characteristics.¹²⁷ For this reason, Dutch authorities continuously tried to eliminate the influence of private Chinese schools, known as *Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan*-schools (THHK 中華會館) in the Indies that were established in 1901 by THHK.¹²⁸

At the earliest stages of THHK’s founding, Dutch worries about emerging pan-Chineseness in THHK was not spread through China, but by Straits Chinese reformers in Singapore. A Dutch civil servant noted that “enlightened Chinese”

¹²⁶ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2635-42 “Overheidscontrole op particulier Chineesch Onderwijs” (Governmental control on Chinese private schools), *Bijdrage voor het Pekingrapport van 1922* no. 53. (From *Weltevreden*, 19 August 1922). Report from Mouw to Governor-General of Netherlands East Indies in Buitenzorg.

¹²⁷ BB 2194/32. This document refers to document no. 371/22 that was written on 19 August 1922.

¹²⁸ THHK-schools were opened by the THHK-association. The first THHK association was established in Batavia in 1900. Considered as the first pan-Chinese association in the Dutch East Indies, the THHK diminished the division of *peranakan* Chinese and *totok* Chinese and included members from various Chinese dialect groups. See Lea E. Williams, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism: the Genesis of the Pan-Chinese Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1916* (Glencoe, Ill: Free Press, 1960).

outside of Java had guided Indies Chinese, and showed that education and the press were effective tools to realize political ambitions.¹²⁹ Singapore, in particular, played an important role in framing the educational system of THHK in its initial stages. *The Straits Chinese Magazine*, edited by Straits Chinese reformers Lim Boon Keng and Song Ong Siang, stated that their Straits Chinese representative visited schools in Java on a regular basis and the Chinese in Java declared that “they derived the germ of their ideas on [education] from Singapore.”¹³⁰ Lim Boon Keng, in particular, who started promoting modern Chinese education during the Confucian revival movement in the Straits Settlements at the end of the nineteenth century, played an important role in the initial stages of THHK’s founding in Java.¹³¹ He toured throughout Malaya and the Indies promoting Confucianism and education through lectures between 1894-1911.¹³² When the THHK-school in Batavia was established, it received assistance from Dr Lim Boon Keng in Singapore. A report showed that Lim Boon

¹²⁹ L.H.W. van Sandick, *Chineezen Buiten China* (Den Haag, Van der Beek, 1909), 424.

¹³⁰ “Chinese Schools in Java”, *The Straits Chinese Magazine*, Vol 10, no. 2 (June 1906): 100.

¹³¹ Yen Ching-Hwang, “The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya, 1899-1911”, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (March 1976), pp. 33-57.

¹³² The British Straits Settlements only issued visas to the Dutch East Indies for Chinese people with good reputation, such as Lim Boon Keng DNA 2.05.15.13-66 (year doc 1901); Song Ong Siang, *One hundred years' history of the Chinese in Singapore*, (Singapore: University Malaya Press), pp. 235-6; Yoe Tjai Siang and Tan Ging Tiong, “Introduction,” *Kitab Tai Hak – Tiong Iong* (1900).

Keng had provided Louw Koei Hong, who was originally hired in Japan for a position in Singapore, to become the first principal for the Chinese school in the Netherlands Indies.¹³³ Lim Boon Keng also appointed a teacher for THHK.¹³⁴ Straits Chinese reformers also helped set up THHK's coursework. Even before the official opening of THHK the *Magazine* announced that THHK would offer courses in the Chinese and Dutch languages, Chinese manners and customs, Confucian doctrine, mathematics, geography, and other useful and practical subjects.¹³⁵

Dutch authorities were worried when, in 1902, THHK extended its education in Batavia with the institutionalization of the English school called Yale Institute. Yale Institute was founded by Lee Teng-Hwee (李登輝), a peranakan Chinese born in Batavia who studied at Yale University, but THHK supervised the school.¹³⁶ The Dutch colonial government risked that their subjects, through their

¹³³ Ming Govaars-Tjia, *Dutch colonial education: the Chinese experience in Indonesia, 1900-1942*, (Singapore: Chinese Heritage Centre, 2005), p. 55

¹³⁴ Sandick, *Chineezzen Buiten China*, p. 251.

¹³⁵ "Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan", *The Straits Chinese Magazine*, Vol.4, No. 16, (December 1900): 183.

¹³⁶ Lee stayed in Batavia till 1903. He resigned on 1 May 1903 and left Batavia for the US in pursuit for a post-graduate degree in political economy at Columbia University. He was denied to enter the American border due to visa issues and was deported to China with coolies in July 1903. He stayed in China after his deportation. See: *New York Times*, 20 July 1903, p. 1; *The Straits Chinese Magazine*, Vol. 6, No. 21 (March 1902): 53. "Lee Teng Hui, 1872-1947" in *Shijie Huaqiao Huaren Cidian* (Beijing: Beijing University Press, 1990): 377.

Lee Teng-Hwee was an educator who tried to model education in Batavia according to his alma mater Yale University. Lee, a Batavia-born Chinese, had strong institutional connections with Singapore. He studied at the Anglo-Chinese

connections with the Chinese in the Straits, would become more supportive to British rule. The Dutch were particularly worried about fostering the idea that Dutch rule was less favorable than its imperial competitor, because the Chinese in the British possessions received better colonial treatment than Dutch Indies Chinese. THHK's curriculum was similar to schools in the Straits, and its schools taught children to read and write Chinese. It also taught "modern" subjects, such as math, singing, gymnastics, physics, and (when funding permitted) English.¹³⁷ Initially, THHK wanted students to learn Dutch, but it soon proved to be impossible.¹³⁸ Hiring Dutch instructors was too expensive, so the Dutch government did not allow Chinese to learn and speak Dutch because in the Indies the Dutch language was considered the language of authority and the language of the ruler.¹³⁹ Social stigma and lack of funding to learn Dutch caused THHK to teach English as a European language. For the Chinese in the Indies, learning English had its benefits. The Dutch were losing its power and status as the most powerful empire to the British. English, therefore, had become a more useful

School headed by William Oldham in 1886 and taught at its Penang branch as English director upon his return from Yale University. Together with fellow Christian, Lim Boon Keng, Lee opened an English private school in Penang.

¹³⁷ Sandick, *Chineezen Buiten China*, 252.

¹³⁸ Before the opening of its school, *The Straits Chinese Magazine* announced that THHK-school would be offering Dutch language courses. After its establishment THHK decided to offer English courses instead of Dutch. See *The Straits Chinese Magazine*, Vol.4, No. 16, December 1900; Vol. 6, No. 21 March 1902.

¹³⁹ P.H. Fromberg, *Mr. P.H. Fromberg's Verspreide Geschriften* (Leiden: Leidsche uitgeversmaatschappij, 1926): 424.

language for engaging in commerce. Within the first year of the establishment of Yale Institute, observers already noticed that the Chinese in Batavia were starting to prefer English language above Dutch.¹⁴⁰ Dutch worries that the government was losing its subjects to British power escalated when the British launched a new legal plan to protect Chinese immigrants, which was not good for Dutch interests.¹⁴¹ The close relationship between Straits Chinese and Indies Chinese raised concerns that Indies Chinese would prefer British rule above Dutch rule.

The Dutch colonial regime took note of increasing educational exchanges between the Straits Chinese and Indies Chinese from the onset of Sinicization movements in the region, but worries about the British, a white power, did not drastically affect Dutch policy towards Indies Chinese. It was not until 1906, when Dutch authorities saw the rise of the yellow powers, that Dutch government made a major shift in their educational policies. Two developments ignited Dutch fear. The first fear was the possible collaboration between China and Japan.¹⁴² Japan's victory in the Japan-Russo War in 1905 sparked hope among Asians who were victims from Western imperialism. Japan became a model for China and Chinese people. One student from THHK in Batavia wrote in his essay:

¹⁴⁰ Lea Williams, *Overseas Chinese Nationalism*

¹⁴¹ DNA 2.05.15.13-65 (#8404-10) (dated 1901)

¹⁴² DNA 2.05.03-578: Japan, Race (dated 1906-1908).

China is so much vaster and bigger than Japan! How great could we become if the great China reorganizes! We could become the most powerful nation in the world, but first we need education to reach that goal.¹⁴³

The second development was the intensifying relationship between Indies Chinese and the Chinese state that became involved with THHK. Dutch fear for Chinese education emerged particularly with the reopening of Jinan in China. Already since its establishment in 1906, Jinan (also referred to as “the Java-school”) aimed at training Indies Chinese children to become leaders of anti-colonialism. They were given the task to stir the larger Indies Chinese community to sever political allegiance (*staatsverband*) with the Dutch empire. Jinan, operating under the Viceroy of Nanjing (who called himself Minister of the South Seas 南洋大臣), was establishment as a training school (*kweekplaats*) for Indies Chinese. By stirring their students to move against Dutch power, it started to establish a system of political interference. In 1909 Dutch Consul-General Mr Von Zeppelin confronted the Qing state on this matter, but Dutch authorities found that Jinan’s mission, goals, and attitude remained unchanged after it reopened.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ Sandick, *Chineezten Buiten China*, 255.

¹⁴⁴ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2801-15: “Bijdrage voor het Pekingrapport van 1924 no. 24”

Jinan closed after the fall of Qing, but the reopening the institute in 1917 further escalated colonial anxiety because in Western opinion Jinan consciously cultivated the spirit of aggressive patriotism and anti-foreignism. The Dutch regime regarded China's imperialism as "a resurrection of Sinocentrism," where the idea regenerated that Chinese emperors were rulers, followed by vassals who controlled the power beyond the center.¹⁴⁵ Dutch parties applied this metaphor to describe the Chinese republican state as the Chinese emperor ruling from the center. The vassals referred to the overseas Chinese community. In this configuration, the Dutch empire was positioned as the bad ruler that was doomed to lose power. Dutch authorities were extremely concerned with Jinan because it propagated Chinese patriotism and hatred towards the colonial government as the oppressor.¹⁴⁶ Therefore, Dutch authorities strongly resisted Jinan's growth, for in their mind, "Jinan was the principal stronghold of Chinese imperialism in the modern period that should not be welcomed by the colonial powers in Asia."¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2835

¹⁴⁶ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2835

¹⁴⁷ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2830: by Dutch envoy in Beijing in the early 1920s.

Controlling the Flows of People: Students, Teachers, and Consuls

Students

Dutch authorities enforced stricter border controls after Jinan resumed its anti-colonial cause in 1917. Many students at Jinan came from the Indies and evoked Dutch fear that students were trained to become extremists of anti-Western rule.¹⁴⁸ Therefore, viewing Jinan students as dangerous agents of spreading Chinese imperialism overseas, Dutch immigration officers rejected Indies Chinese students from returning to the Indies upon receiving education from Jinan.¹⁴⁹ This regulation was in stark contrast with the earlier Dutch policy during Jinan's foundational years when Dutch authorities exempted students at Jinan for registering Dutch *onderdaanschap* that was decreed in 1910. In doing so, the Dutch government aimed at attracting Indies Chinese to remain Dutch subjects and welcomed them to return to the Indies after their education in China. During the 1920s, however, the colonial government rejected them from re-entering the Dutch colony.

Soon after Dutch authorities implemented restrictions at the border, the Chinese government initiated in improving its diplomatic relations with Holland by inviting Dutch officials to visit the school. Mouw, chief official at the Bureau of Chinese Affairs, mistrusted China's intention of reconciling Sino-Dutch diplomatic

¹⁴⁸ F81 "The Chinese Movement in Netherlands India," p. 3.

¹⁴⁹ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2801-15.

relations.¹⁵⁰ Since its establishment in 1906 Jinan took a hostile standpoint against Dutch rule, but Dutch officials were particularly suspicious with Jinan's strong relationship with the Colonists' League (*Lianhehui* 聯合會). The Colonists' League was intensely involved in overseas Chinese affairs and led the Chinese re-nationalization campaign at the time.¹⁵¹ With branches extending over the port cities in Southeast Asia and coast cities in China, the League worked closely with overseas Chinese communities, Chinese associations, and the local and central governments in China. Strong connections between the League and Jinan were evident, for example, in one of the visits when the League's secretary took a Dutch official for a tour at Jinan. At this meeting the secretary showed the Dutch official students' yearbooks of 1922 and 1923. Most students on these lists were not allowed to return to the Indies, out of fear that their pro-Chinese and anti-West and imperialist spirit would spread to the Dutch colony.¹⁵²

The suspicion that students carried out their political mission on behalf of China was particularly applicable to students who returned to the Indies.

¹⁵⁰ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2801-15

¹⁵¹ The Colonist's League (*Lianhehui*) was established in 1911 by Bai Pingzhou who was anti-Dutch. He was involved in the Chinese naturalization campaign of 1908-1909. The League served as a middleman for the movement against Dutch naturalization and turned its building into the headquarters of the movement. The League also engaged in educational and economic affairs. In the early 1920s, it was involved in Jinan's affairs and at the same time intervened of undoing European laws in the South Seas at the benefit for China's industry. See 2.05.90-528 #2801-15.

¹⁵² DNA 2.05.90-528 #2816: Dutch Consul General in Midden-China (Shanghai, 13 Dec 1923)

According to a Dutch official in Shanghai, many students at Jinan stayed in China after their graduation with the purpose of establishing branch offices of their family businesses that were headquartered in the Indies. Their primary goal for attending Jinan was merely acquiring skills, knowledge and languages that were useful for commerce.¹⁵³ These students were not interested in fulfilling China's political expectations and were primarily interested in advancing and expanding their family businesses from the Indies to China. Despite this, the Dutch were still suspicious of those students who decided to return to the Indies because they most likely served as agents who spread Jinan's influence among the Indies Chinese population in the archipelago.

Teachers

Students were not the only transnationals that posed a threat to the colonial authorities. Besides refusing Jinan's students re-entry to the Dutch colony, the Dutch government also enforced stricter border controls for the entry of teachers. The network between the Chinese government and Chinese schools, particularly the THHK, was tight. Most teachers who went to Southeast Asia originated from the coastal areas of China. In January 1925, for example, three

¹⁵³ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2745-46: "Onderwijzend personeel uit China voor Indië." From Neth. CG in Midden China (Groeneman) to Mr. WF Roëll, Legation in Beijing (Shanghai, 7 Aug 1925); DNA 2.05.90-528 #2835: Bruineman (Adviseur/ Hoofd van den Dienst der Chineesche Zaken). Bijdrage voor het Pekingrapport van 1923 No. 73: "Toelating van Chineesche onderwijzers in Nederlandsch-Indies, afkomstig van de school te Nanking (Chinan Institute)"

teachers originating from Jiangsu went to Java and Billiton. In addition, one teacher from Zhejiang, along with one teacher from Jiangxi and one teacher from Jiangsu, became head of THHK in Batavia.¹⁵⁴

The institutionalization of Jinan's teacher training program and admission of female students accelerated the enactment of stricter measures. After opening the training program, Jinan continuously sent teachers to work at Chinese schools in Southeast Asia. Dutch authorities perceived teachers who were sent by Jinan as "products of anti-Western imperialism," and believed that each teacher was "an extension of Jinan."¹⁵⁵ Fearing that anti-Dutch thoughts would seep into the Indies, the colonial authorities expressed:

The purpose of these movements [of students and teachers] is clear: [China] continuously tries to make the youth active across different locales and make them serve for the interests of the fatherland. The colonial government is propagandized as a usurper and an oppressor... We can no longer tolerate this interference [from China]. We have to strictly inspect the teachers that were

¹⁵⁴ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2746-47: The additional information that follows, gives an idea of the reach of Chinese teachers from coastal China who were sent to teach at THHK branches in the Indies. Jiangsu had a strong network with Batavia and the Outer Islands in particular. In February 1925 one teacher from Anhui went to Banka, one teacher from Zhejiang went to Deli, one teacher from Kiangsu went to Batavia. In March 1925, two teachers from Hunan went to Pekalongan. In July 1925, one teacher from Jiangsu went to Banka. In August 1925 three teachers from Kiangsu went to Pontianak.

¹⁵⁵ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2835

granted entry recently. The number [of teachers] is increasing and each number is an extension of Jinan.¹⁵⁶

These governmental actions prompted a streamlining of the exchange of information between the Dutch consulate in Beijing, Shanghai, and the colonial government in the Indies. In order to remove enemies on their territory, the Dutch Immigration Office inspected teachers and updated their information regularly. Dutch authorities in Shanghai did not issue visas for instructors without consulting the Indies government. Dutch consulate generals did not issue permits unless they had sufficient reasons that proved the teachers were not propagandists.¹⁵⁷

Refusing teachers to cross the Dutch borders reached its height in 1925 when Dutch authorities hailed the slogan: "Close the borders for extremist instructors that are provided by Jinan!"¹⁵⁸ This expression emerged when Guomintang's anti-colonial voice reached its heights. Fearing that the GMD would "awaken the rebellious spirit" among the overseas Chinese, the Dutch

¹⁵⁶ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2835: Bruineman (Adviseur/ Hoofd van den Dienst der Chineesche Zaken). Bijdrage voor het Pekingrapport van 1923 No. 73: "Toelating van Chineesche onderwijzers in Nederlandsch-Indies, afkomstig van de school te Nanking (Chinan Institute)"

¹⁵⁷ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2745-46: "Onderwijzend personeel uit China voor Indië." (Shanghai, 7 Aug 1925); DNA 2.05.90-528#2835: Bijdrage voor het Pekingrapport van 1923 No. 73: "Toelating van Chineesche onderwijzers in Nederlandsch-Indies, afkomstig van de school te Nanking (Chinan Institute)"

¹⁵⁸ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2749 (Beijing 21 July 1925)

government strictly prohibited access to education for Guomindang-members and refused teachers from Jinan to enter the colony. The danger of “poisoning” children with Chinese education (*vergiftiging van Chineesche onderwijs*) came particularly from GMD-members who diligently followed their duty of propagating the party’s principles through the curricula. These members, especially, stirred students engage in political demonstrations.¹⁵⁹

Consuls

Besides limiting the circulation of teachers, students, and political thoughts, the Indies government had problems with eradicating Chinese officials’ intervention in Chinese schools. One example was the establishment of a Chinese Middle School in Surabaya in 1929. In this year, Mouw, chief of the Bureau for Chinese Affairs, reported that the first signs of the Chinese government interfering with education for the Indies Chinese re-emerged. By this, the Dutch authorities discovered that the Chinese were simultaneously carrying out two contradicting policies. Despite China settling on an agreement of non-interference with Holland in 1914, Dutch officials uncovered a document that proved consular intervention in educational affairs was of utmost importance for China. This document from China’s Ministry of Education in Nanjing stated that engaging with educational affairs was an integral task of Chinese consuls, including those who were stationed in the Dutch East Indies.¹⁶⁰ On the one hand

¹⁵⁹ DNA 2.05.90-528#2753-72

it was obvious that, at the level of international politics, China adopted a conformist policy in which it agreed not to interfere with colonial politics on overseas Chinese affairs, while on the other hand, on the national and domestic domain, China continued strengthening its ties with overseas Chinese communities and coordinated its educational influences by way of its consuls overseas.

It was clear that GMD consul-generals were involved in building middle schools in Batavia and Surabaya in this period.¹⁶¹ Based on police reports from Surabaya, Mouw concluded that the Chinese consul was closely involved in the establishment of the Chinese Middle School in Surabaya 荷屬華僑學堂 (Heshu Huaqiao Xuetang).¹⁶² A report revealed that on the advice of the consul, the school recruited two Chinese instructors who were educated in the United States. Under the supervision of the consul, three elected committee members of the school board examined the teachers' skills and credentials. A consul-in-training was appointed to manage the daily affairs. Aiming at opening the school in

¹⁶⁰ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2503-05: "Bemoeienis van den Chineeschen Consul te Soerabaja met onderwijs-aangelegenheden" (3 August 1929).

¹⁶¹ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2503-05. In Perniagaan of 22 July 1929, the Chinese Consul-General in Batavia announced that he was trying to establish a middle school in Batavia. The Consul-General in Surabaya and Li Shuanghui were in the process of building a similar school in Surabaya in this period.

¹⁶² DNA 2.05.90-528 #2503-05: "Bemoeienis van den Chineeschen Consul te Soerabaja met onderwijs-aangelegenheden" (3 August 1929); 2.05.90-528 #2506-09.

September, the school board was in the process of launching school propaganda, asking for donations, and preparing for entry exams for students.¹⁶³

Subsequently, in order to deny further interference of the Chinese consul in Surabaya with educational affairs on its colonial subjects, Mouw referred to a written statement dated from 18 May 1914 in which China's Minister of Foreign Affairs Sun Baoqi (孫寶琦) at the time guaranteed that Chinese consuls who were posted in the Dutch Indies would not intervene in educational affairs.¹⁶⁴ In 1929, with the purpose of thwarting consular interference in Surabaya, Mouw referred to this written statement,¹⁶⁵ which was signed three years after the Sino-Dutch consular treaty. This agreement between Sun and the Indies Governor General

¹⁶³ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2506-09: Police report with regards to the School's committee meeting on 19 July 1929, dated 23 July 1929 by officer Friehs. These teachers were: Zheng Paoyuan 鄭保元 who received his Ph.D. at University of Washington and Doctors' degree at a state university in the United States. His wife Lin Yuying 林玉英 obtained a Ph.D. and was sent to the United States by Chin Kua university on government fees, she was 28 years old. They were in Singapore and were going to Surabaya (also see *Kiau Sing Djit Po* Surabaya 23 July 1929). Attendants included: Li Shuang Hui 李雙輝 (Lie Siong Hwe), Consul Guo 郭領事 (Consul Kuo), Thio Tjee An 張濟安, Oen Siau Giok, Yap Djim Swi 葉王水, Poh Kho Eng 傅可英, Ko Han Tjong 古漢宗, Lee Kong Yauw, Lie Kong It, Lim Tjeng Hoen, Gouw Sie Soen, Tjioe Tjeng Yan, Yap Tan Boe, Kiauw Im Kong, Koh Siok Hoek, and Tjou Toen Bwe.

¹⁶⁴ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2501 – 2502: "Bemoeiing van den Chineeschen Consul met onderwijsaangelegenheden." From Algemeene Secretarie in Buitenzorg 13 August 1929 to GG in Eastern Java.

Sun Baoqi, a Qing official and a supporter of Yuan Shikai, served as Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1913 and 1914.

¹⁶⁵ DNA 2.05.90-528 # 2501 – 2502

allowed China to appoint consuls on the condition that China would follow a policy of non-interference. Mouw uncovered this written statement fifteen years later and used it as a tool to forbid any further interference from the Chinese consul in Surabaya. He also asked the Governor-General using this statement as a warning for the Chinese consul, demanding him to end his interference with the Chinese educational affairs on the Indies because it was in conflict with the Sino-Dutch agreement.¹⁶⁶

Although the Chinese consul in Surabaya played a leading role in the construction and organization of the school, the request for building a school came from Li Shuanghui (Lie Siong Hwie 李雙輝), former president of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Surabaya. In his letter to Consul Guo in Surabaya he expressed: "When I arrived here I saw that there were no continuing education for the 30,000 children. I therefore proposed to establish a middle school in Surabaya, with the purpose of maintaining the level of education and development for Chinese immigrants."¹⁶⁷ Li's outreach to the Chinese consul prompted the colonial government to tackle the matter directly with the Indies Chinese community with forced measures. On the advise of Mouw, the provincial governor warned Li Shuanghui, who became president of the Middle School that the Chinese consul was not allowed to intervene in educational affairs. If the school deviates from this rule, the colonial government would invalidate the

¹⁶⁶ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2503-05

¹⁶⁷ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2512: Li Shuanghui's letter to Chinese Consul Guo in Surabaya; *Sin Po* 25 April 1929)

instructors' permission to teach in the Indies. Using "the power of legal documents" for legitimizing authority, the colonial government claimed it was allowed to do so when matters threatened their authority. The Dutch government used a governmental regulation (*staatsblad* 1923 no. 136) for declaring that the relationship between Chinese residents with Chinese consuls endangered the interest of the Colony and threatened "public peace and order."¹⁶⁸

Fragile Borders

As the incident above revealed, in 1914 the Dutch government signed an agreement of non-interference with Sun Baoqi who was Minister of Foreign Affairs under Yuan Shikai's rule at the time. In an attempt to prevent consuls intervene with Dutch Indies Chinese affairs, Dutch authorities forced the Chinese to state in consular agreement that consuls were only limited to engage in commercial activities. Subsequently, the agreement of 1914 with Sun highlighted that interference with education was strictly forbidden. However, as the example in 1929 showed, the regulations and policies only had limited effect, as China continued participating in educational matters.

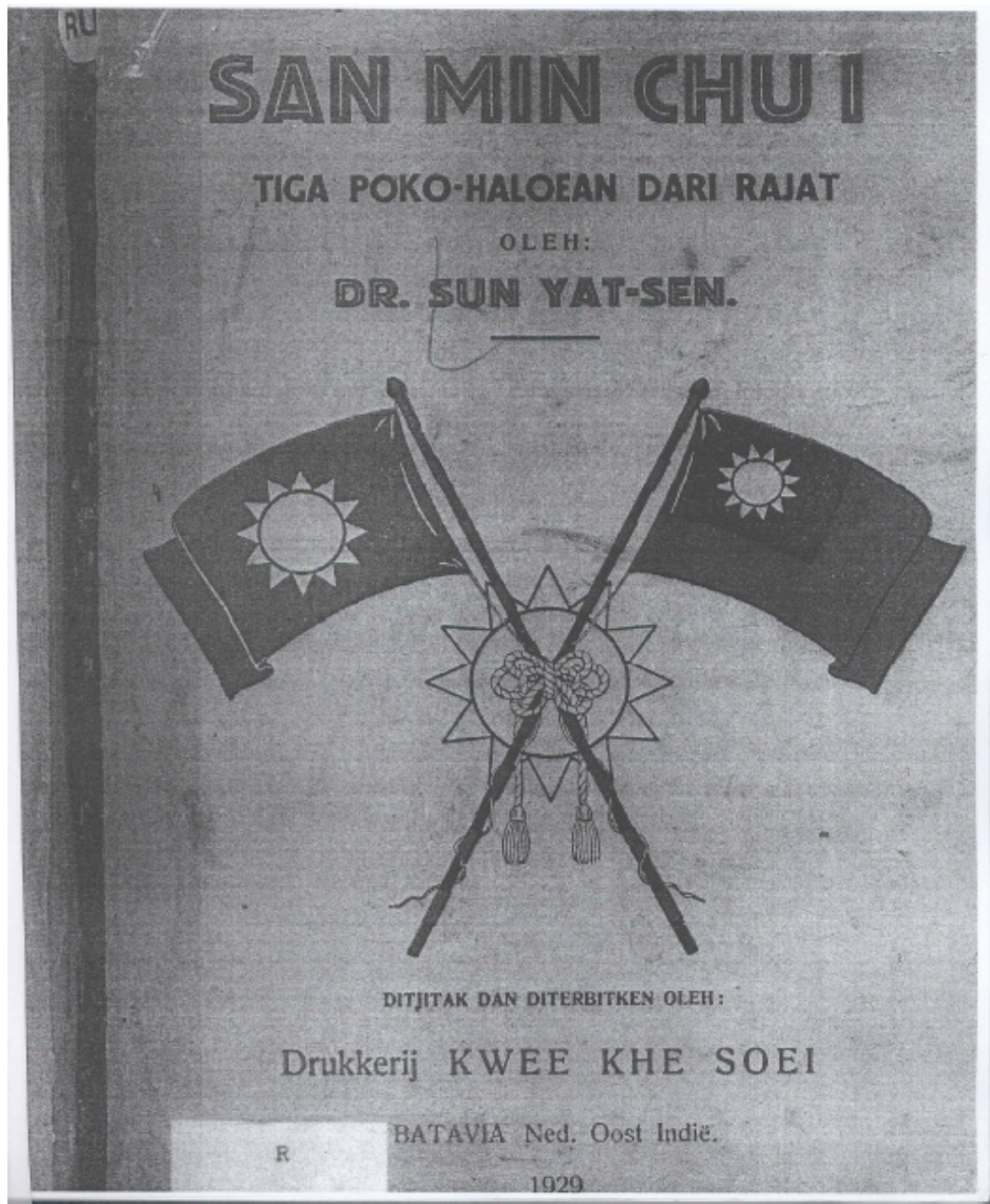
Although the denial of instructors and students from China entering European colonies helped reduce the flow of Chinese "imperialist" thoughts entering the colonies, stringent border control never succeeded in completely eliminating the circulation of political ideas and the intervention of the Chinese

¹⁶⁸ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2503-05.

government on educational affairs. A report on detained and expelled instructors revealed that colonial authorities continued tackling the threat of Chinese schools. This document about the expelled and arrested teachers at overseas Chinese schools (華僑學校教職員出境及被捕表) revealed that in 1929 the Dutch, as the only colonial government on the list, punished 33 instructors.¹⁶⁹ The list of names included mostly teachers from Java, some from Sumatra, and a few from Borneo and Menado. All instructors were punished for political reasons, including teaching political ideologies (such as Sun Yatsen's Three Principles of the People) and for using political tutorials. In most cases the instructors were expelled from the Indies. Some instructors were detained while others were forced to stop teaching for unclear reasons. Students were subjected to investigation as well. In one case a teacher was forced to leave his post after being discovered that a student wrote an essay in which he or she discussed the subject of judicial equality.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁹ This report also contained information about punishments of the Siamese government. Dutch and Siamese governments have punished 52 Chinese instructors, out of which 19 instructors were penalized by the Siamese government. Generally speaking, Siamese punishments were more severe than Dutch punishments. See Qian He, ed., "huaqiao xuexiao zhiyuan chujing ji beibubiao" in *Nanyang huaqiao xuexiao zhi diaocha yu tongji* (Shanghai: Dahua, 1930).

¹⁷⁰ This fascinating list released names of detainees and "colonial violators." It also revealed the names of schools where these instructors were employed, their punishments, and the reasons and dates for punishment. A number of instructors spread anti-foreignism and taught the youth to "hate foreigners" and organize boycott committees with the purpose of boycotting foreign goods. Teachers who arrived the Dutch Indies often used textbooks that were based on Sun Yat-sen's



D. Malay Translation of Sun Yat-sen's Three Principles of the People (1929)
(Source: KITLV)

Three Principles (*sanmin zhuyi*). Dutch prohibited instructors who taught anti-foreignism or used *Sanmin zhuyi* to continue teaching. See F81 #34, 36, and 29.

Dutch Affirmative Policies

One of Holland's softer methods for decreasing Indies Chinese's political orientation towards China was "Dutchification," or, making Indies Chinese more Dutch-oriented. The strategy and curricula that Dutch schools adopted for this was similar to the teaching content at Chinese schools. Witnessing the power of education for nourishing Chinese national consciousness, Dutch authorities established Dutch Chinese Schools (called HCS, short for *Hollandsche Chineesche School*) exclusively for Indies Chinese in 1908. Similar to the Chinese government, Dutch authorities aimed at drawing emotional legitimacy and political loyalty through schools.

Paranoia about the flow of anti-Dutch ideas prompted Dutch authorities open *Hollandsche Chinese School* (Dutch Chinese school, hereafter HCS). HCS were schools especially targeted to the Chinese (especially *peranakan* Chinese) audience and were monitored by the Dutch government. These public schools for Chinese people were opened under the same conditions as for indigenous inhabitants. Instruction at HCS was completely in Dutch, and the curriculum was similar to curricula at European primary schools. Admission to HCS was conditioned upon sufficient proficiency in the Dutch language.¹⁷¹ Some Indies Chinese regarded the founding of HCS as a good start but were not completely satisfied. For instance, soon after the Dutch government provided educational opportunities for the Chinese, community leader Tan Siau Lip (*Kapitein*

¹⁷¹ Sandick, *Chineezzen buiten China*, 204-5.

Chinees) from Semarang expressed that besides education, he wished that the Chinese in Java would have equal job opportunities. He stated:

The [Dutch] government has now started to fulfill our educational needs for the Chinese, but I hope these wishes do not just end with providing education similar to Europeans. We hope that the gate will further open for our children. We hope that our children are allowed taking exams under the same conditions as Dutch children, and that upon passing the exams, our children will have equal professional opportunities as Dutch children.¹⁷²

The establishment of HCS succeeded in attracting Indies Chinese, particularly *peranakan* Chinese, to become more oriented towards the Dutch. Indies Chinese responses to HCS foundation revealed that the main goal of Indies Chinese was to attain equal rights and status.

The first HCS opened in 1908, one year after Jinan's founding. Motives for establishing HCS included competing with the Chinese government on controlling education of the Chinese and wiping out ideological influences from China. HCS's curriculum aimed at "Dutchifying" Indies Chinese as opposed to the curricula of THHK in the Indies for Sinification. After THHK's establishment, the Chinese empire attempted to develop patriotism among overseas Chinese and construct a

¹⁷² Sandick, *Chineezzen buiten China*, 206.

pan-Chinese empire. Out of fear that the Indies Chinese were becoming increasingly politically supportive to the Chinese empire through educational efforts, Dutch authorities wanted to reduce the wave of Chinese nationalism in the Indies and reinforced Dutch authority over its subjects by implementing affirmative policies.¹⁷³

Dutch authorities were extremely concerned with the educational traffic between Jinan and the Indies. They feared Jinan's propaganda where children were indoctrinated with pro-Chinese and anti-foreign thoughts. As a measure to undo the growth of Chinese nationhood through what Dutch parties referred to as "peaceful penetration," the Dutch, likewise, used education to nourish the sense of inclusion within the Dutch colonial society.

Two Competing Teacher's Programs: Jinan and HCS

Jinan closed its doors after the fall of the Qing empire. Yuan Shikai, president of republican China at the time was reluctant to reopen the school out of fear that the Guomindang opposition would thrive at Jinan where most students had participated in the 1911 Revolution.¹⁷⁴ The reopening of Jinan in 1917 after its temporary closure during Yuan Shikai's rule signaled China's intention of resuming its expansionist strategy. This intention was confirmed by

¹⁷³ Wen Guangyi 溫廣益, *Yindunixiya Huaqiao shi 印度尼西亞華僑史* (Beijing: Haiyang, 1985): 461.

¹⁷⁴ Lee, *Chinese Schools in British Malaya*, 28.

1920, when Jinan added the Teacher's Program to its curricula. This program trained its Chinese students from overseas with the task to extend their instruction to Southeast Asia upon their graduation. Following Jinan, the Dutch likewise, soon extended its educational program by establishing a Teachers' School in Meester Cornelis, a section in the town Eastern Batavia, where Indies Chinese students received training to become instructors at HCS. Previously, teachers at HCS were solely of Dutch descent, but with HCS's Training Program, Dutch government aimed at instructing Indies Chinese who would further teach their own community. This system in Dutch mindset would be more effective for nourishing loyalty to the Dutch state.

Dutch authorities established a general training school in the town Meester Cornelis in 1917 – the year that Chinese authorities reopened Jinan. By 1920 this school underwent complete reorganizations where its goal was to train exclusively teachers of Chinese descent that would teach at HCS after graduation. During their curricula of five years at this boarding school, teachers-in-training would learn skills for teaching classes of maximum of 25 people under the supervision of the local committee of European schools (Europeesche Schoolcommissie) and Inspecteur of Lager Onderwijs. The coursework was determined by the Directeur of Education and Eeredienst (Onderwijs en Eeredienst). Students learned Dutch language, writing, math, biology, musicology, drawing, pedagogy, gymnastics, arts, violin, history and geography of the Netherlands and the Dutch Indies. Like Jinan, Dutch authorities also included courses that would meet the demands of the Indies Chinese community. The

curricula concentrated on practical learning and offered Chinese language, but did not offer Chinese history or geography classes. It also included Chinese celebrations in addition to Christian and Dutch national holidays. The content of HCS's coursework was similar to Jinan's and THHK's curricula, and also took into account the demands of Indies Chinese who desired to receive education in practical learning.¹⁷⁵ The Dutch training schools resembled Jinan's training schools in many respects: both aimed at training Chinese teachers with the purpose of attracting loyalty. These teachers, who served as intermediaries between the state and larger masses, would then further spread their loyalty to the state to the rest of the Chinese community.

However, strict admission requirements and lack of statistical data caused difficulties for evaluating the results of this training program. Selection criteria for attending this school were extremely strict. Only students who graduated from seven years of primary school at an HCS-school or European school (Europeesche school) were eligible to apply. The chief of the educational department (Onderwijs and Eeredienst) then determined the acceptance and rejection of students. Students who lacked hard-working skills, whose proficiency in the Dutch language was not sufficient, and who carried improper behavior or suffered from contagious diseases risked being suspended from school.

¹⁷⁵ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2690-97: "Ontwerp leidraad voor de Kweekschool tot Opleiding van Chineesche onderwijzers en onderwijzeressen bij het Hollandsch Chineesch onderwijs" (Design for the Trainingschool for Teachers at HCS) (Batavia, 10 April 1920)

Education and Naturalization

Out of all admission requirements, the possession of Dutch naturalization (*onderdaanschap*) was most important.¹⁷⁶ The introduction of the new educational program in the Dutch colony was closely interwoven with the Chinese re-nationalization movement that also took place in this period. By way of the re-nationalization movement, as discussed in the chapter “The Road to Equality,” the Indies Chinese aimed at invalidating their status as Dutch subjects and re-established themselves as Chinese nationals. Representatives of this movement, Han Xiqi, Xiong Li, and Huang Xuanyou had strong connections with Chinese educational institutions and associations. They were involved in expanding and stimulating Chinese education among the Indies Chinese. They even participated in planning to open a national university for Indies Chinese in the capital of China.¹⁷⁷

Dutch authorities hoped ending the growing re-nationalization movement among the Indies Chinese and gain political allegiance and loyalty from the Indies Chinese, by implementing educational policies that would benefit the Indies Chinese. Therefore, the new educational policy for the Indies Chinese was intrinsically interwoven with Dutch policies on nationality issues.¹⁷⁸ The school was exclusively limited to boys and girls who were naturalized as Dutch subjects.

¹⁷⁶ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2690-97

¹⁷⁷ DNA 2.05.90-536 #5850-64; 2.05.90-528.

¹⁷⁸ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2690-97

Compared to subjects with other national backgrounds, the Dutch government was most concerned with the issue regarding its subjects of Chinese descents, for this group “dealt with the *onderdaanschaps*-issue most unpleasantly.”¹⁷⁹

There were three reasons for Dutch authorities including nationality requirements in its educational policy. First, limiting its admission to only Dutch subjects would further secure and cement Indies Chinese loyalty to the Dutch state. Second, by making the school only available for Dutch subjects, Dutch authorities expected that it would attract members of the Indies Chinese population to naturalize themselves as Dutch subjects. Being conscious that Indies Chinese communities felt attracted to Chinese education that contributed to the Chinese becoming nationals two decades ago, the Dutch were convinced that problems with regards to education and nationality were intertwined. In his report to Beijing, Chief of the Chinese Affairs Office Bruineman stated that the privilege of becoming a teacher at the HCS training schools was that they would only allow Dutch subjects, which would make Dutch naturalization attractive to the Chinese.¹⁸⁰ The Chinese Affairs Office explained that insufficient attention was paid on the point of education when Dutch authorities were concretizing the Law of Dutch subjectness in 1910 (staatsblad 1910 no. 296) that included the Chinese within Dutch political membership. The neglect of including the

¹⁷⁹ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2684-2686: Adviseur en Hoofd v/d Dienst der Chineesche Zaken (Bruineman) to Directeur v. Onderwijs en Eeredienst (dated Weltevreden, 19 June 1920).

¹⁸⁰ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2683: Letter from Dir van Onderwijs en Eeredienst to Gouverneur-Generaal of Dutch Indies (dated 3 August 1920).

educational issue into account had caused the peak and extensive scale of the movement against Dutch naturalization.¹⁸¹

Besides nourishing loyalty and bringing the Indies Chinese people closer to the state, the Dutch state intentionally sharpened the division between the Indies Chinese population from the new immigrants (*totoks*, or *singkehs*). The third reason for only allowing students with Dutch *Onderdaanschap* enter the school aimed at segregating Indies Chinese from *singkehs*. Bruineman requested privileging Indies Chinese above *singkehs* by amending *staatsblad* 1908, sub I and by strictly not allowing *singkehs* to attend HCS schools.¹⁸² Bruineman explained that the rules the Dutch government created for the Chinese had been applicable to both its subjects and non-subjects. Yet, disadvantageous regulations, such as the conscription law (*militie-wet*), were only applicable to subjects. The conscription law and problems with Chinese consular protection became recurrent complaints after the Kudus-incident took place and were the incentives for Dutch subjects of Chinese descent to discard Dutch status (*onderdaanschap*).¹⁸³ Dutch affirmative policy on education was therefore a way for the Dutch government to prevent losing its subjects to China. To assure emotional attachment, according to Bruineman, it was important that the Indies Chinese should feel privileged. The many requests for establishing and expanding

¹⁸¹ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2684 – 2686

¹⁸² DNA 2.05.90-528 #2683

¹⁸³ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2684 – 2686

schools and disappointed comments of parents whose children were denied admission to Dutch schools revealed that the Indies Chinese were disappointed on Dutch educational policy.¹⁸⁴

Furthermore, solely admitting *peranakan* Chinese would help counter political influences from China that were often spread by *singkehs*. Privileging Indies Chinese for school admissions would also help segregate Indies Chinese from *singkehs*, a group of Chinese whom Dutch authorities considered as “problem migrants.” In the opinion of the Dutch government, *singkehs*, who as recent immigrants carried direct influences from China and were largely nationalistic, would hinder Dutch goal of nourishing Indies Chinese with “a sense of commonness” (*gevoel van saamhorigheid*) towards the Dutch state. In particular, Bruineman strongly opposed if a *singkeh*-Chinese would become head or an advisor at the training school for HCS.¹⁸⁵

Conclusion

The reopening of Jinan in Nanjing in 1917 stirred widespread colonial anxiety in British and Dutch Asia. Jinan was the school that Dutch authorities described as “the fortress of Chinese imperialism” that used education for overseas Chinese as “peaceful penetration” to extend its sphere of influence to colonial Southeast Asia. Colonial authorities were anxious not only because the school nourished anti-colonial sentiments, but as the previous chapter “Fortress

¹⁸⁴ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2684 – 2686

¹⁸⁵ DNA 2.05.90-528 #2685 (2684-84); DNA 2.05.90-528 #2684 – 2686

of Chinese Imperialism” revealed, it also nurtured the idea that Southeast Asia belongs to China. Because of prevailing Sinophobia in the region, British and Dutch colonial authorities launched educational policies to obstruct the spread of Chinese expansionism.

Whereas British authorities limited political ideological influences on Straits Chinese by launching the Education Bill in 1920, the Dutch government adopted both discriminative and affirmative policies. Discriminative actions included barring students, teachers, and Chinese officials from entering the Dutch colony. Meanwhile, considering *peranakan* Chinese (but not *totok* Chinese) as its subjects, Dutch authorities, for the first time, opened public schools exclusively for the Chinese. In doing so, Dutch authorities attempted to compete with local Chinese schools, namely the THHK that were connected with the Chinese government and Jinan.

The curricula at HCS-school were in many aspects comparable with THHK’s coursework. From the example of Chinese schools, Dutch authorities observed that education was a powerful weapon for evoking sense of Chineseness and for narrowing the ties between Chinese authorities and the overseas Chinese. Therefore, when Jinan opened its teacher’s program with the purpose of training students to become educators at Chinese schools, Dutch authorities, using a similar rationale, too, opened a teacher’s program to train Dutch subjects of Chinese descent become teachers of HCS schools. From Dutch viewpoint, having Indies Chinese students to receive instruction from Indies

Chinese teachers would be an effective way to decrease the popularity of Chinese schools and attract the support and loyalty to the Dutch state.

Why, then, were Dutch policies less successful than Chinese ones? Absence of Dutch inspection reports with regards to the weaknesses of educational policies at the time makes it difficult to make firm conclusions of why Dutch counter-integrative policies did not succeed in removing China-oriented schools entirely. However, some facts released by Dutch and Chinese authorities can offer tentative explanations to this phenomenon. By the 1920s, China-oriented schools had spread to the Outer Islands. Schools in Java continued to exist, but centers of pro-China activities had moved from Java to the Outer Islands. Chinese schools thrived in areas such as Aceh, where the Chinese revolutionary party gained increasing popularity after the success of the 1911 Revolution against Manchus.¹⁸⁶ Furthermore, in Borneo for instance, Chinese nationalism with strong anti-Dutch sentiments grew rapidly. Chinese nationalistic anti-Dutch attitudes were particularly present at the private Chinese schools.¹⁸⁷ Outer Islands had high concentrations of new migrants where Chinese schools had more room to thrive by being away from the colonial administration in Batavia. Moreover, Dutch language proficiency requirements excluded the majority of

¹⁸⁶ BB 4379: report about inspection trip in Aceh (12 April 1915). Private Chinese schools in Aceh were mostly called Soe Po Sia (*Shubaoshe* 書報社). These schools were opened and managed by revolutionaries.

¹⁸⁷ B39: Onderwijs voor Inlanders en Vreemde Oosterlingen. Overheidstoezicht op bijzonder onderwijs voor Inlanders en Vreemde Oosterlingen (Weltevreden, 27 July 1922).

Indies Chinese (who mostly spoke Chinese or local dialects) from being eligible to attend schools run by the Dutch government. In fact, Dutch aimed at attracting support from the upper and middle classes of the Chinese community because Chinese settlers of the upper strata were considered as the most industrious residents who helped the colonial economy thrive.¹⁸⁸ HCS establishments therefore concentrated in the main cities of Java, including Batavia, Surabaya, Semarang, and Makassar in Celebes– places with relatively high concentrations of settlers of Chinese descent.¹⁸⁹ Dutch policies were therefore not only based on ethnic lines but also on class.

¹⁸⁸ A proposal was presented at an annual audience. The proposal suggested to review the judicial status of the *settled* community only. Chinese settlers in the Indies were considered as the most industrious residents in the Indies; Dutch colonial authorities therefore wished to maintain its sovereignty over settlers. See Fromberg, *Verspreide geschriften*, 431. Dutch focused on gaining political support from the middle and upper classes of the Indies Chinese community; it did not target at lower classes that formed the majority of the Chinese population in the Indies. See: Wen Guangyi. *Yidunixiya Huaqiao shi*, 461.

¹⁸⁹ Sandick, *Chineezen buiten China*, 205.

CHAPTER 4

BECOMING CHINESE

It was not until the turn of the twentieth century that overseas Chinese became recognized as “Chinese people.” Widespread sinicization movements in various parts of Southeast Asia emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁹⁰ Why and how did the overseas Chinese, whom the Qing state considered as “undesirables” until 1893 become subjects and nationals of China?¹⁹¹ Under what circumstances did competing Chinese forces (i.e. the Qing

¹⁹⁰ For sinicization movements and histories of creolized communities, see: Claudine Salmon, “Ancestral Halls, Funeral Associations, and Attempts at Resinicization in Nineteenth-Century Netherlands India,” in Anthony Reid, ed., *Sojourners and Settlers* (St Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1996); Kwee Tek Hoay, *The Origins of the Modern Chinese Movement in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1969); Lea E. Williams, *Overseas Chinese nationalism: the genesis of the Pan-Chinese movement in Indonesia, 1900-1916* (Glencoe: Free Press, 1960); and “The Confucian Revival Movement in Singapore and Malaya, 1899-1911”, *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (1976): pp. 33-57.

¹⁹¹ Early Qing rulers considered emigrants as deserters, traitors, criminals, members of secret societies, and potential anti-Qing rebels. In 1728, emperor Yongzheng further reinforced restrictions on overseas Chinese by banning Chinese migration and declaring that people who left China’s territory without imperial approval would be banned and sentenced to death should they ever return to China. However, Qing’s perspective of the overseas Chinese communities shifted towards the end of the nineteenth century. The imperial edict of 13 September 1893 invalidated the edict of 1728. Since the early 1890s, the Qing regime increasingly encouraged “returnees” from overseas to invest in China’s modernization projects, such as railroad construction, purchasing of honors, titles and medals, and participation in the state exams. See: Yen Ching-hwang, “Ch’ing Changing Images of the Overseas Chinese (1644-1912), *Modern Asian Studies*, 15, 2 (1981); Philip Kuhn, *Chinese Among Others*, 88-89; DNA

state, reformers, and revolutionaries) re-acknowledge overseas Chinese as part of China's national body in this particular time period? This chapter examines these questions from two angles. The first examines the overseas Chinese's shifting perceptions on China from the perspective of Lim Boon Keng, a *peranakan* Chinese from Singapore who spread the Confucian revival movements in British Malaya, the Straits Settlements, and the Dutch East Indies. The second approach looks at how Chinese reformers, revolutionaries, and monarchists competed for overseas Chinese support.

Manchus and Chinese: A View from Lim Boon Keng

Qing's acknowledgement of Southeast Asian Chinese as its subjects in the first decade of the twentieth century was closely related with Qing's fear for growing anti-Manchu sentiments among Southeast Asian Chinese communities. Anti-Manchuism in Singapore was present before revolutionaries relocated their base to Southeast Asia in 1906. Already in ca. 1900, Lim Boon Keng, a pioneer and influential leader of the reform movements among the Sino-Malay communities in British Malaya and the Dutch East Indies, criticized Manchu rule in his writings. In the English periodical, *The Straits Chinese Magazine*, that he co-edited with Soon Ong Siang between 1897 and 1907, he used various pen names and

2.05.90-585 #4665; Mak Lau Fong, *The Sociology of Secret Societies: a Study of Chinese Secret Societies in Singapore and the Malaysian Peninsula* (Kuala Lumpur and New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); J. J. M. de Groot, *Het Kongsuwezen van Borneo: Eene verhandeling over den grondslag en den aard der Chineesche politieke vereenigingen in de koloniën; met eene Chineesche geschiedenis van de kongsi Lanfong* (Den Haag: M. Nijhoff, 1885); Yuan Bingling, *Chinese democracies - a study of the Kongsis of West Borneo (1776-1884)*, (Leiden: CNWS, 2000).

wrote articles and poems about Manchus, the reform movement in China, and the urge for regenerating Chinese civilization. His most pronounced critical comments on Manchus were expressed in his book, *The Crisis from Within* (1901). Published under his pseudonym, Wen Ching, he highlighted antagonistic differences between Chinese and Manchus. He referred to “Chinese” as the people from “China proper” and described “Manchus and their parasites” (the latter referring to mandarin officials) as people who were the root of “foreign troubles of China.”¹⁹² Lim expressed his discontent of China being ruled by Manchus and attributed them to the cause of Chinese people’s apparent hostility towards Westerners. He wrote that:

In China the Chinese are not free. Manchus have the upper hand in the village as well as in the capital... Their one hope is to keep the Chinese in the same old rut as themselves, and make the unhappy millions [of Chinese people] the buffer between the invading foreigners and themselves. At all costs, the Chinese must be urged [by them] to hate the [European] foreigners and to resist the encroachments of western civilization.¹⁹³

¹⁹² Lim Boon Keng (Wen Ching), *The Crisis from Within* (London: G. Richards, 1901), 30.

¹⁹³ Lim, *Crisis from Within*, 31.

Lim, a pacifist of East and West, implied that Manchus obstructed the reconciliation between Western and Chinese civilizations.

According to Lim, Manchus were the source from where notions of the “Yellow Peril” came about. Due to Western fear over Chinese threat, Western powers denied providing rights and privileges for Chinese people, which caused Chinese people and Chinese civilization to enter a period of deterioration. A promoter of moral regeneration and social reform, he worried about declining moral conduct, intellect, and the social, economic, and political positions of the Chinese people in the world. The worsening state in these fields was, on the one hand produced by Western misconceptions of the “Yellow Peril.” On the other hand, Qing created incorrect notions of “White peril” among the Chinese populace.

Lim argued that the portrayal of China and Chinese people as the Yellow Peril was very much a Western construction that should not be applied to Chinese people. Lim illustrated this by pointing out that the idea of the “Yellow Peril” was not produced by Chinese people, but stemmed from the Mongolian invasion of Europe in the thirteenth century and further reinforced by Manchus. Lim implied that Chinese people did not take part in these events and complained that Manchus and Europeans signed treaties without the knowledge or consent of the Chinese.¹⁹⁴ It is clear that Lim made a sharp distinction between Manchus and Chinese. In his eyes, Manchus were foreigners who were not members of Chinese

¹⁹⁴ Lim Boon Keng, “The White Peril: From The Popular Standpoint,” in *The Crisis from Within*, 190.

civilization. Lim was especially concerned about the consequences that the image of the Yellow Peril had caused and worried about the degeneration of Chinese civilization due to Europe's continuous denial of rights for Chinese people.

According to Lim, Manchus not only caused Western misconception of the Chinese as Yellow Peril, but also generated Chinese's image of Westerners as the "White Peril." Instead of seeing Western imperialism and European invasion as the root of Chinese suffering, he claimed that it was the Manchus who caused Chinese people to suffer. He wrote, for example, that "a good deal of the ill-feeling in the Chinese people against foreigners arises from the utter disregard by the framers of treaties for the interests of the natives." Describing Manchus as "framers of treaties for the interests of the natives" and "the real possessors of the Chinese Empire" he complained that Manchus were not concerned with maintaining the interests of the Chinese. Comparing the Manchu regime to British and American rule, he explained that unlike Manchus, British and American governments did not take away privileges and immunities of its own population while the Qing government "with its heartless tyranny"¹⁹⁵ traded away people's communal, commercial, and religious privileges and family and individual rights. These were the main grievances among Chinese people, he argued and went on to explain that Qing's neglect on these aspects made many Chinese want to naturalize themselves as foreign subjects.¹⁹⁶ Chinese who were naturalized foreign subjects often enjoyed better privileges and rights than in Qing China.

¹⁹⁵ Lim, *Crisis from Within*, 190.

¹⁹⁶ Lim, *Crisis from Within*, 190-192.

Whereas Chinese people subjected to Qing rule were restricted by all kinds of laws and customs, foreigners or naturalized foreign subjects of Chinese descent were free from any restrictions and taxes.¹⁹⁷ By this, Lim inferred that Chinese people suffered discrimination in their native country; the main cause of which stemmed from the Manchu's governance and not Europe.

Lim was particularly concerned with fulfilling the rights of Chinese people. He expressed that the rights and interests, particularly in commercial, communal, and religious aspects, of the "national life" were hitherto neglected. He complained that the problem of state powers, whether Western or Manchu, was not military might but the "inertia of the Chinese civilization."¹⁹⁸ He feared for further degeneration of Chinese people, and aimed at reviving Confucianism (albeit with new interpretations) as a moral force. Therefore, even though he did not completely agree with Kang Youwei's political ideology, he firmly supported the neo-Confucian social and moral reforms that Chinese reformers proposed.

Lim considered all overseas Chinese, both of full and mixed blood, as people of Han. Unlike Manchus, he considered overseas Chinese peoples as "real" Chinese people. In "A Voice Heard in Canton," a poem he wrote after Cixi aborted the Hundred Days of Reform, he lamented Han's fall and referred to Manchus as

¹⁹⁷ Lim, *Crisis from Within*, 202-203.

¹⁹⁸ Lim Boon Keng, "The White Peril: From The Imperial and Official Standpoint," in *The Crisis from Within*, 178.

the barbarians who looted their land and eradicated their ancestor's grave and temples.

He recited:

Arise! Ye luckless sons of Han, arise;

Hark! Whence the awful sounds that rend the air?

Methinks, I hear, your wives and children's cries.

Behold! What's there in yon far distant glare!

Barbarian hordes with impious hands despoil

Your fathers' graves; to th' ground your temples raze;

Your homes they loot and rob the fruits of toil

And leave your hamlets reeking and ablaze!

Unsheath your swords! Ye braves – avenge the woes

On you brought down by base usurpers bold.

Go forth fight against your ruthless foes!

To win or die! The rights of man t'uphold!¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁹ Stanza 2, 4, and 5 of the poem, "The persecution of the reformers. 'A voice heard in Canton'." Written by Wen Ching, pseudonym of the nationalistic Straits Chinese Lim Boon Keng. Original source: *The Straits Chinese Magazine*. Vol. IV, No. 13 (March 1900), 24.

Creation of the Yellow Race

Fear for “inertia of civilization” and the purpose for social, economic, moral betterment were aspects that appealed to the reform leaders and journeying communities in Southeast Asia. As mentioned earlier, before the late nineteenth century, China did not consider people who emigrated from China and their descendants as subjects or nationals of China; they were not considered Chinese people. Keeping this in mind, why and how did people like Lim Boon Keng, an Anglicized peranakan Chinese become “Chinese” and more specifically identified himself as “Han-Chinese”? Under what circumstances did people of Chinese descent who migrated overseas become part of the discourse of the Chinese race?

The recognition of the overseas Chinese as nationals of China emerged concurrently with attempts by China at strengthening its position in the world by way of constructing a Chinese nation based on race. In light of China’s weakening power as a result of its domestic unrest and foreign encroachment, Chinese political thinkers were envisioning, conceptualizing, and promoting the idea of a Chinese nation that would consist of multiple ethnicities, as well as those Chinese who sojourned and settled outside of China. Therefore, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries marked a redefinition of Chinese people and the invention of the Chinese race. Serving as a tool for nation-building, Chinese political thinkers were creating the idea of a single race and shared “Chineseness” that emphasized “sameness” among various ethnic groups in China and beyond.

The reform party led by Kang Youwei was the first group that incorporated overseas Chinese into the discourse of the Chinese race. Reformers redressed the meaning of the color yellow and invented the concept of the yellow race when China was suffering from Western imperialism – the latter being referred to as “white peril.” In this period Westerners frequently used “yellow” with reference to the “less civilized status” of the Chinese people and used the “Yellow Peril” for illustrating the Asian threat.²⁰⁰ By contrast, reformers turned the meaning of yellow race from a negative to a positive one. They invented the notion that inhabitants of China were all descendants of the Yellow Emperor, who, according to Chinese legends, was the first ancestor of Chinese civilization. “Yellow” was also the color of Chinese imperial families and a symbol of agricultural fertility in feudal China. These symbols served as effective means for creating a unified racial identification among various ethnicities under Qing rule. By casting Chinese people as yellow people with a positive meaning they distinguished themselves from other races, particularly from the white race.

Reformers constructed this unified and single-race identity in the 1890s. They blended Western social-Darwinist theories of race with early Qing understandings of lineage-based group identity (*zu* 族).²⁰¹ In the earlier periods

²⁰⁰ Michael Keevak, *Becoming Yellow: A Short History of Racial Thinking* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), Introduction, Ch1, and Ch5.

²⁰¹ Ideologies of group solidarity based on family and patrilineal descent became increasingly important during the Qing era due to conflicts between lineages and ethnicities. The idea of unified descent groups led by the gentry was forged to strengthen kinship solidarity. The reign of Emperor Qianlong (1736-95) further

during the Qing regime the growth of Manchu power, incorporation of multiple ethnicities through conquest, and the increasing rivalry between families made the formation of large, strong, and unified lineages a necessity for sustaining power. By the end of the nineteenth century, reformers further built on this theory of lineage unification and kinship solidarity for dealing with the relationship with the West as the “Other.” Similar to reinforcing unified lineages for decreasing feuds between lineages and ethnicities during the earlier stages of Qing’s conquest, reformers now argued that a unified lineage-based race would help “yellow descendants” fight against the threat of “white imperialists.”²⁰²

Thus, by the end of the nineteenth century, *zu* became a term that referred to both lineage and race of the Chinese nation. Reformers like Liang Qichao and Kang Youwei created a racial discourse by using notions of a unified identity based on patrilineal kinship. They claimed that all inhabitants of China were part of *huangzhong* 黃種. The yellow race included all peoples of China who belonged to the lineage of the Yellow Emperor. Placing all descendants of the yellow emperor into one racial category helped create national cohesion. Reformers

cemented the grouping of people according to patrilineal descent lines by taxonomizing the population into the categories of Han, Manchu, Mongol, and Tibetan. This politico-ethnic categorization was used to maintain clear group boundaries within the Qing body-politic. See Frank Dikötter, “The Discourse of Race in Modern China,” in *Race and Ethnicity: Comparative and Theoretical Approaches*, eds. John Stone and Rutledge Dennis (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 126-127.

²⁰² Frank Dikötter, “The Discourse of Race in Modern China,” 126-127; Frank Dikötter, “Race as Lineage (1895-1903)” in *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 61-96.

equated lineage to race and often applied the term *zhongzu* (種族) to emphasize that both terms belonged to the same category.²⁰³ Reformers also wrote about lineage extinction (*miezu* 滅族) in connection with racial extinction (*miezhong* 滅種) for expressing their fear of a disappearing Chinese race caused by China's suffering from Western imperialism.²⁰⁴

In order to recover from Western imperialism, Chinese reformers believed that China and its people should be first strengthened from within. China, falling victim to Western dominance seen by reformers to be a result of China's weak political system that was plagued by corruption, bureaucracy, and backwardness. Hence, to strengthen the nation, reformers implemented moral and social reforms based on new interpretations of Confucian thought.²⁰⁵

Descendants of the Yellow Emperor

The advantage of constructing a group identity based on lineage and kinship was that an identity as such was not bound by territorial limitations and could allow for the concept of a Chinese race to travel beyond the Qing borders.

²⁰³ For a thorough discussion on the relationship between race and lineage, see Dikötter, "Race as Lineage (1895-1903)," 61-96.

²⁰⁴ Dikötter, "The Discourse of Race in Modern China," 126-127; Dikötter, "Race as Lineage (1895-1903)" (Chapter 3), 61-96.

²⁰⁵ For Kang Youwei's interpretations on Confucianism and Liang Qichao's comments on Kang Youwei's view, see Kung-chuan Hsiao, "Confucianism as a Philosophy of Reform and a Religion," in *A Modern China and a New World: K'ang Yu-wei, Reformers and Utopian, 1858-1927* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press), 97-136.

The political concept of a single race forged by patrilineal kinship by way of the Yellow Emperor as the first ancestor began to be applied to the overseas Chinese communities outside of China. In this period, the Qing state had reconnected with overseas Chinese merchants and encouraged them to “return” to China for investing in railroads and purchasing honors and medals. Yet, their status of political membership remained unclear because the Qing state saw “returning Chinese” primarily as a financial resource and failed to clearly articulate what exactly the status of such Chinese was.

As mentioned earlier, Chinese reformers were the first group of political thinkers that established an identity in which overseas Chinese were included. Reformers’ articulation of racial membership particularly appealed to the overseas Chinese gentry-merchant elites who were mobile between China and the Southern Seas. Arguing from the reformers’ perspective, although many overseas Chinese were disconnected with China and were officially barred from being Qing subjects, the overseas Chinese (including those of mixed blood and cultural heritage) began to think of themselves as members of the Chinese race based on their paternal Chinese surnames and through their upholding of certain Chinese traditions.

Reformers held formal and informal meetings in cities in order to establish relations across different regions, both in China and beyond. One of the earliest connections between Chinese reformers and overseas Chinese took place

in Shanghai through Khoo Seok Wan (邱菽園).²⁰⁶ Khoo, a literate from Singapore who held a *juven*-degree, attended some meetings in the coastal cities. In an interview he recounted that Kang Youwei established the reform association Baoguoahui (Save the Nation Party) with its headquarters in Shanghai in March 1898.²⁰⁷ This reform association aimed at safeguarding Chinese race, Confucianism, and the Chinese nation. Their motto was “save the country (保國 *baoguo*), save the race (保種 *baozhong*), save the doctrine or religion (保教 *baojiao*), and”²⁰⁸ and implied the message to protect the nation’s land, people, and religion.²⁰⁹ According to reformers, these three aspects were indispensable for survival on the world stage. Khoo attended some meetings and maintained personal contacts with reformers whom he met at these meetings.²¹⁰ Aimed at

²⁰⁶ Khoo Seok Wan was the son of a wealthy merchant in Singapore. Khoo was born in China and was trained in the Chinese classic. He obtained a *juven*-degree.

²⁰⁷ *Thien Nan Shin Pao*, 20 August 1898, p. 2.

After the end of Hundred Days of Reform the reformers who succeeded to escape and fled abroad where they continued the reform movement under the name Baohuanghui.

²⁰⁸ *Thien Nan Shin Pao* 19 August 1898, pp. 2-3. In an interview, Khoo Seok Wan explained that members of Baoguoahui avoided using the word *hui* meaning “party”. Throughout the history of imperial China, the word “party” is taboo, for the political regime often considered the formation of a party as a sectarian activity. To prevent prosecution from the Qing regime, reformers rather referred themselves to the three pillars of the association.

²⁰⁹ Murata Yūjirō, “Dynasty, State, and Society: The Case of Modern China,” in Joshua E. Fogel and Peter G. Zarrow eds., *Imagining the People: Chinese Intellectuals and the Concept of Citizenship, 1890-1920* (1997), 114. See pages 113-116 for the historical background of Baoguoahui.

spreading the reform movement among overseas Chinese communities, reformers persuaded Khoo to promote reform in Southeast Asia by establishing the reform press. Subsequently, in May 1898, at the height of Hundred Days of Reform in China, he co-founded the Chinese language newspaper *Thien Nan Shin Pao* 天南新報 with the aforementioned Lim Boon Keng.²¹¹

Chinese reformers considered overseas expansion of high significance. Overseas Chinese, particularly merchants, were useful for the success of the reform movement for two reasons. First, they were wealthy and they fell outside the jurisdiction of Chinese political authorities. Reformers in China were continuously under political pressure of the powerful conservative faction. Their reform activities were labeled as sectarian undertakings that attempted to overthrow the existing regime and endangering political stability. Second, through overseas expansion, reformers had more room to accumulate financial support and power. Simply put, overseas Chinese were a good financial source for the propagation of reform.

Although Khoo, frequently traveling between China and Singapore, was oriented towards China's politics, most Chinese in Southeast Asia were politically apathetic and culturally disconnected from China. Therefore, Chinese reformers proposed specific ways for domesticating overseas Chinese into the Chinese

²¹⁰ *TNSP*, 20 August 1898, p. 2.

²¹¹ Feng Ziyou, *Huaqiao geming kaiguoshi* 華僑革命開國史 (Taipei: Taiwan Shangwu), 57.

nation. By way of establishing Confucian temples, schools, commercial institutions and a maritime office, reformers aimed at including the Chinese in Southeast Asia into the Chinese nation. Reformers promoted their cause by using the slogans “save the religion” and “save the (Chinese) race” that would eventually help “save the Chinese nation.” Reformers assumed that as descendants of the Yellow Emperor, overseas Chinese people would help them realize their goal.

Reformers explained that Confucian temples in overseas Chinese communities were necessary for spreading Confucian morality, including fraternal bonding and universal humanity. Chinese schools were the key for nurturing talents and for teaching them about their lost sense of Chinese culture and history. Among the establishments that reformers proposed, particularly the founding of modern schools, commercial and maritime institutions met with the desires of the overseas Chinese. From the perspective of the journeying overseas Chinese merchants, commercial institutions (which later became the Chamber of Commerce) and the maritime office were necessary establishments to protect their position in the Southern Seas. Commercial institutions (eventually developed into Chinese commercial consular offices) helped safeguard the commercial rights and economic positions of Chinese merchants. Without the presence of consular offices, the Chinese who settled outside China continued suffering from unequal tax policies on trade that the imperial powers imposed on them. The establishment of a maritime office also guaranteed merchants’ rights. Trade by way of the maritime network in the region was important for the

Chinese in Southeast Asia, who suffered from economic benefits, because Western companies with monopolistic power demanded expensive fees. Therefore, a maritime office headed by the Chinese government would stimulate and protect the trade between China and overseas Chinese.²¹²

Hybrid Identities, Multiple Loyalties, and the Need for Self-Culture

Pioneers of the reform movement in British Malaya and the Dutch East Indies particularly welcomed the establishments of Confucian temples, schools, commercial institutions and maritime offices. Education was especially favored, as educational institutions were much needed in the Dutch East Indies.

Particularly the Chinese communities in the Dutch East Indies desired for education that is accessible for all peoples of Chinese descent, which was continuously denied by the Dutch colonial government. Their desire for education was strongly related to the loss of their economic power. Over the course of the last decades of the nineteenth century, the Chinese lost their privileged status as commercial intermediaries. In an attempt to take control over the economy, the colonial government monopolized Indies Chinese economic enterprises.²¹³ Indies Chinese strove for regaining their economic position by way of intellect and commercial protection. In their mind, studying

²¹² *TNSP* 15 June 1898, 19 August 1898, pp. 2-3; p. 1, 24 October 1899, pp. 1-2; 26 March 1900, p. 1; 27 March 1900, pp. 1-2; 15 December 1900, pp. 1-2.

²¹³ Twan Djie Liem, *De Distribuereende Tusschenhandel der Chineezzen* ('s Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1952)

courses that benefited commerce would help them regain their economic power in the area. Living under a strictly racially divided society, the Indies Chinese were conscious of the hierarchy of races. For example, under the so-called Ethical Policy, the Dutch government provided privileges for indigenous inhabitants but excluded Chinese from enjoying colonial benefits. Under this state policy, the Dutch provided education and subsidies for indigenous natives, but, with the exception of few Indies peranakan Chinese who converted to Christianity and were well versed in Dutch and Malay, Dutch colonial authorities continued denying education to the Chinese. Therefore, the Indies Chinese were particularly encouraged about reformers' educational reform that highlighted practicality and was modeled after the education system of imperialist powers with the goal of increasing one's competitiveness. Providing modern Chinese education would fulfill the need for education and would enhance the economic competitiveness of the Indies Chinese community whose livelihood often depended on commerce.

The desire for increasing their economic competitiveness and intellectual advancement also applied to the Chinese in Singapore. Although the peoples in Singapore received better treatment and more privileges than their counterpart in the Indies, reformers such as Lim Boon Keng and Soon Ong Siang worried about the degeneration of people's intellect and power. Lim was particularly active in fighting against opium-use and providing education for all peoples of Chinese descent (both male and female). He believed that Confucianism would enhance one's moral and social conduct. Hence, the Straits Chinese community leaders supported Kang Youwei's reform proposals. Straits Chinese also

suggested that they themselves should direct the reform movement in the British Malaya under their own leadership.²¹⁴ This was particularly the case in the first years of the twentieth century when Chinese reformers relocated the center of the reform movement from urban China to Singapore. Lim Boon Keng stated “[w]e in Singapore ought to take the lead in matters of reform. This was emphasized by reformers last year.” Yet, it would be incorrect to assume that Straits Chinese reformers uncritically adopted the reform ideas that Chinese reformers propagated. He emphasized that Straits Chinese have an agenda and mission that differs from Chinese reformers by stating, “[o]f course our scope is confined to the social sphere and we have nothing to do with political scheming... Let us leave minor things for the present and eschew the questions on which we hold opposite views.”²¹⁵ Straits Chinese reformers were particularly interested in

²¹⁴ Lim Boon Keng stated “[w]e in Singapore ought to take the lead in matters of reform. This was emphasized by reformers last year. Of course our scope is confined to the social sphere and we have nothing to do with political scheming... Let us leave minor things and for the present eschew the questions on which we hold opposite views.” See By One of Them, “The Reform Movement among the Straits Chinese,” *SCM* Vol. 2, No. 7 (September 1898): 174-175.

In another article, *The Straits Chinese Magazine (SCM)* shows its support of rescuing China through social reforms. While expressing political allegiance to the British empire, *SCM* was concerned about the political fate of China and stated that the real salvation of China did not lie on the grounds of military competition, but on the improvement of social issues such as education, abolishing foot-binding, promoting missionary, and the constructions of roads, railways, telegraphs, etc. See “Mr Taw Sein Ko and the Hong Kong Telegraph,” *SCM*, Vol. 1, No. 5 (March 1898): 35.

²¹⁵ Lim Boon Keng, *SCM*, pp. 174-175. See By One of Them, “The Reform Movement among the Straits Chinese,” *SCM* Vol. 2, No. 7 (September 1898): 172-175.

educational reform, but whereas for Chinese reformers, educational reform was primarily a political necessity that would strengthen political China domestically and internationally, for the Straits Chinese, reform was a means to secure their social, economic, and political status in the colonies and the region. In other words, while Chinese reformers were concerned about safeguarding China from Western powers as a state, Straits Chinese were concerned with protecting their own livelihood in territories that were ruled by European powers. Different incentives but a unitary purpose (that is: strengthening their positions vis-à-vis Western powers) allowed the idea of a deterritorialized greater Chinese nation to emerge. To foster unity it was necessary to forge the idea of sameness and common ancestry through the idea of blood.

Although Straits Chinese leaders encouraged the overseas Chinese to support China in “Baba development in China,” they clearly articulated their own agenda.²¹⁶ While encouraging overseas Chinese to help China, the Straits Chinese leaders were primarily concerned with the situation in their local society, particularly preventing the local populace from degenerating. Lim was concerned with the loss of tradition, language, religion, and self-respect, something he called “national suicide.” He explained that China’s inter-Asian junk trade dwindled away with the presence of European traders and their steamships. As a result, the population in the Malay archipelago became increasingly Europeanized and demoralized. The Malay population began to use European goods, and the Chinese in British Malaya became Europeanized. More depressing was opium

²¹⁶ *Baba* is another term for *peranakan* Chinese in Southeast Asia.

consumption and how it not only impoverished Chinese people, but also developed “habits of sloth and idleness [among] the once powerful *orang China* [Chinese people] in the whole of the Malayan region.”²¹⁷

Distinguishing themselves from Chinese reformers who mainly considered education as a tool for strengthening the position of China as a state, the Anglo-Chinese considered modern education as a means for cultivating and solidifying what they called “self-culture.” Conscious of their hybrid identity that resulted from the “co-mingling of nations, tongues, races, etc.,” the Straits Chinese aimed at establishing an educational system that fostered “self culture.” According to them, an education as such would strengthen the future prospects of the Straits-born Chinese who lived in a place where commerce between East and West met.²¹⁸ A small group of Straits Chinese reformers could, in their minds, lead to the “evolution to our [Straits] people.” They considered themselves “[a]s [both] British subjects and as descendants of an ancient and cultured race.” According to them, the Straits Chinese should realize their positions and get the very best education locally that would serve as “the very means of entry into all sorts of professions and trades.”²¹⁹ Emphasizing limited dependency on other forces, such as Chinese reformers, and highlighting their own effort, they stated,

²¹⁷ Lim Boon Keng, “Address Before the Singapore Chinese Christian Association,” in *The Republican Advocate of China* (1912), pp. 397-399.

²¹⁸ “What is Loyalty?” *SCM*, Vo. 1, No. 2 (June 1897): 71-72.

²¹⁹ MC Lin, “Straits Chinese educational needs,” *SCM*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (March 1904): 9-11.

“the Straits Chinese community as a powerful and respectable element of our complex society depends entirely upon our ability to hold our own in the near future.”²²⁰

Lim praised the social reforms that Kang Youwei suggested but disagreed with his political views. In *The Straits Chinese Magazine*, for example, the Singapore-based periodical that Lim and Soon Ong Siang edited, the editors expressed: “We have never been a blind admirer of Kang Youwei and his party. Still we must confess that with all their disadvantages, and even with their ignorance, they tried their utmost to improve the government of their country.”²²¹ In 1903, when Kang Youwei toured to the Dutch East Indies promoting his reformist cause, the editors again stated: “Although we cannot say that we agree with all of Kang’s political views, yet we admire his ardent and unwavering zeal in the noble cause he has espoused.”²²² According to them, Kang’s travels and the continuation of the reform movement outside of China would benefit the reforms he promoted in China.²²³

Unlike Kang, Lim was not supportive of Manchu rule. Moreover, claiming that Kang was anti-West, Lim emphasized that Chinese people in general are not

²²⁰ Lin, “Straits Chinese educational needs,” 9-11.

²²¹ Historicus (Lim Boon Keng’s pseudonym), “Mr Ku Hung Ming’s Apotheosis of Tsu-Hsi,” *SCM* Vol. 5, No. 18 (June 1901).

²²² “Kang Yu Wei,” *SCM*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (September 1903).

²²³ “Kang Yu Wei,” *SCM*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (September 1903).

anti-foreign. He described the Chinese who migrated overseas as representatives of Chinese people as a whole and wrote:

The Chinese, as a whole, are not anti-foreign, nor are they strongly opposed to foreigners. The fact that during the last three hundred years they have emigrated to all parts of Asia, and have carried on business with other nations, is conclusive evidence of their appreciation of foreign intercourse. In the Malay islands and states, especially in the Straits Settlements, we have a good example of what the Chinese really are. They are no enthusiastic in their reception of new ideas; but when shown how their ways may be improved they do not hesitate to change their views. So out of China the Chinese have slowly but surely advanced... The Chinese [in Singapore] have no objection to anything foreign, are friendly to all races, and endeavor in every possible way to avail themselves of the achievements of Western science.²²⁴

The pioneers of the reform movement in Singapore particularly criticized the anti-West viewpoint that Chinese reformers propagated. By using the pseudonym "One of Them" Lim Boon Keng wrote: "It is regrettable that many reformers in

²²⁴ Lim Boon Keng (Wen Ching), "The Jealousy Between Chinese and Manchus," in *The Crisis from Within* (London: G. Richards, 1901): 30-31.

China are also anti-foreign...”²²⁵ In his essays and poems, Lim showed his concern for China’s political upheavals, but he did not reject British governance. According to the Straits Chinese leaders, it is possible to hold hybrid or plural identities and political loyalties. In his article “What is loyalty?” Lim, using another pseudonym, wrote that the “[f]irst degree of loyalty is founded on kinship... the second founded on birth in territory ruled over by sovereign... the third based on naturalization.”²²⁶ Lim was a naturalized British of *peranakan* Chinese descent (i.e. Chinese of mixed heritage) who was born in Penang and raised in Singapore. He identified himself as a British subject and when he referred to his political allegiance towards Britain, he avoided using blood as a measurement for assessing political loyalty. Race and ethnicity were irrelevant to one’s political allegiance. The Straits Chinese leaders rejected race-based classification of people by stating:

We write to show the silliness of making distinctions [of races], among the different races who claim the privileges of a British subjects... because be true, heart and soul, to the British Constitution, and bears perfect allegiance to Her Majesty, then he’s a loyal subject of the Queen, a fit member of the British Empire.²²⁷

²²⁵ “One of Them” (Lim Boon Keng’s), “The Reform Movement among the Straits Chinese,” *SCM*, Vol. 2, No. 7 (September 1898): 172.

²²⁶ “What is loyalty?” *SCM*, Vol. 1, No. 2, No. 7 (September 1898): 172.

²²⁷ “What is loyalty?” 172-5.

Political loyalty and allegiance, therefore, were, and should not be, founded upon skin color but on the mind and inner self. To further express that there were no particular racial preferences or ethnic priorities, Soon Ong Siang and Lim Boon Keng wrote that their targeted audience was all people in the Straits, and not just limited to Chinese.²²⁸ However, they envisioned that Straits-born Chinese would be the most important segment of the population that permanently settled in the British colonies.

The different types and levels of loyalties laid out by Lim were not irreconcilable. Disagreeing with Kang Youwei's white versus yellow peril contrast, Lim not only claimed that the Eastern and Western civilizations could coexist, but more importantly loyalties towards these 'great civilizations' were complementary. As a British subject who had (fictive) lineage ties with China, Lim believed that Straits Chinese could contribute to making China stronger. As a Chinese of mixed heritage, Straits Chinese leaders domesticated reformers' concept that they belonged to the Chinese race that was founded on lineage. As Emma Teng in her study on early twentieth century Eurasians had explained, the practice of Eurasians adopting Han Chinese surnames and the creation of fictive lineages in this period stressed the significance of descent according to paternal lines. The importance of paternal kinship as a form of proving one's Chineseness or Chinese identity is even more illustrated by Eurasians who used their Chinese maternal lineage connections to claim Chinese paternal linkages. By

²²⁸ "Our Programme," *SCM*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (March 1897).

“paternalizing” Chinese maternal side, peoples of mixed heritage could arguably become Chinese within one or two generations. By favoring the idea of patrilineal descent, adopting Han surnames, and practicing ancestor worshiping (often according to what is believed to be Confucian tradition), “a ‘mixed’ family could effectively ‘become [Han-] Chinese’... Descent, ancestry, lineage and ‘blood’ are therefore crucial criteria in the Eurasian’s ‘Chineseness,’ which becomes a matter not just of culture but also of race. Physical appearance, or phenotype, however, seems to be of relatively less importance than claims of [real] paternal inheritance and ‘blood.’”²²⁹

Lim considered himself a Chinese, or more precisely, a Baba (Peranakan) Chinese. His essays about Chinese civilization, Chinese people, and Manchu politics, revealed that his definition of Chinese was narrower than Kang Youwei’s concept. His essays revealed that, despite his mixed ancestry, he considered himself and Chinese migrants (both full and mixed blood) as Han Chinese. He blamed Manchus for the downfall of China. Therefore, in order to remedy the defects of Chinese institutions that Manchus caused, he encouraged the Straits

²²⁹ Emma J Teng, “On Not Looking Chinese: Does ‘Mixed Race’ Decenter the Han from Chineseness?” in *Critical Han Studies: The History, Representation, and Identity of China’s Majority*, Mullaney, Leibold, Gros, Vanden Bussche eds. (Berkeley, LA, London: University of California Press, 2012), 70. By studying writings by Eurasian novelists Irene Cheng, Han Suyin and Chineseness of other Eurasians, Teng showed that their ‘being mixed’ often coexisted with ‘Chineseness’. More interesting, although ‘blood,’ or rather the idea of blood, was important for defining Chinese group membership that was based on patrilineal kinship (including Chinese mothers who had ‘paternalized’ Chinese blood of their children), the issue of blood quantum was never a concern for inclusion of Chinese membership. See her essay “On Not Looking Chinese,” 45-72.

Chinese to acknowledge their Chinese ancestry and believed that they, as British subjects, should spread the benefits of British influence from the Straits to China. He asked, "Why should you, Straits Chinese, be content at home [that is: the Straits]? Take your fair share of heritage that belongs to the sons of the Han."²³⁰

Lim was not unique in this regard. Many Straits Chinese, both in the Straits Settlements and the Dutch East Indies had developed hybrid identities and multiple loyalties. However, as other chapters show, Dutch Indies Chinese were generally more directed towards China as the political protector than the Straits Chinese. Unlike the Chinese under British rule who were relatively well treated, Dutch Indies Chinese were subjected to harsh colonial discrimination. Between the period 1900 and 1930 the Indies community sought ways to escape from direct Dutch colonial rule while residing or settled in the Indies. The Straits Chinese, such as Lim Boon Keng, became increasingly oriented towards China when the British government increased its restrictions on Chinese education. The abolishment of Queen's scholarships for Straits Chinese in 1911 and British war on the Kuomintang in the 1920s affected the lives of the Straits Chinese.

²³⁰ Lim Boon Keng, "The role of the Babas in the development of China," *SCM* Vol. 7, No. 3 (September 1903): 94-100, particularly 98-100.

Affirming Han Blood

Witnessing the success of reformers in extracting support from the Chinese in the Southern Seas, revolutionaries followed reformers' example and competed with reformers for overseas Chinese support via the press and schools starting from 1905. Like reformers, revolutionaries drew on the Yellow emperor as the symbolic ancestor of Chinese people. However, unlike reformers who included all inhabitants dwelling on Chinese territory as descendants of the Yellow emperor, revolutionaries only considered Han people as Chinese people. Like Lim Boon Keng, revolutionaries considered Manchus to be barbarians that drove China to a state of decline. "Foreignness," then, did not only refer to white imperialists but also included Manchus and other ethnicities and nomadic communities in China. Excluding Manchus, Mongols, Tibetans, and other nomadic people, revolutionaries narrowed the descendants of the yellow emperor to the Han-people (people from China proper/ Huaxia).

A contemporary of Kang Youwei, Zhang Binglin, a reformer turned revolutionary, was a pioneer in conceptualizing the notion of the Han race in the early twentieth century. By drawing on reformers' emphasis of lineage for defining race, he reformulated "Chinese people" as people belonging to the lineage of Han (*hanzu* 漢族). Like Kang Youwei, he used lineage (*zu*) interchangeably with race (*zhong*). Hence, the term *Hanzu* was often used with

hanzhong 漢種.²³¹ By the turn of the twentieth century, Zhang's writing shifted from fighting against imperialism to overthrowing the Manchu government. Building on the myth that reformers constructed, he claimed that Han Chinese people were the offspring of the Yellow Emperor and should not be oppressed by the alien Manchus. Zhang became part of the Tongmenghui and in 1906, along with the conceptualization of *minzu* (民族, literally: nation), he claimed that Han-kinship would bond all members of the Chinese nation.

According to revolutionaries' narratives, members of the Han race were people whose culture could be traced to the Huaxia civilization (華夏). Huaxia roots originated from the central plains surrounding the Yellow and Yangzi rivers and was superior to nomadic and barbarian cultures outside of China proper.²³² Like reformers, revolutionaries defined "Chinese" as people who shared (fictive) blood through the Yellow Emperor, as well as a shared culture. However, revolutionaries reinforced the importance of "blood" and "descent," and during

²³¹ The urge to formulate a clear distinction between Manchus and Han people rose particularly after Cixi's conservative party aborted the Hundred Days of Reform in 1898.

²³² Kai-wing Chow, "Imagining Boundaries of Blood: Zhang Binglin and the Invention of the Han 'Race' in Modern China," in Frank Dikötter ed., *The Construction of Racial Identities in China and Japan: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 34-52; James Leibold, "Searching for Han: Early Twentieth-Century Narratives of Chinese Origins and Development," in Thomas Mullaney, James Leibold, Stéphane Gros, and Eric Vanden Bussche eds., *Critical Han Studies: The History, Representation, and Identity of China's Majority* (Berkeley, LA, London: University of California Press, 2012), 210-233. See Chow Kai-wing for a discussion of how the Yellow Emperor became a collective image of exclusively the Han-race. James Leibold discusses the conceptualization of Han as anchor of the Chinese nation *Zhonghua minzu*.

the foundational period of 1902 and 1911, the notion of Han-blood developed simultaneously with the concept of *minzu* 民族 (nationality). Revolutionaries used this term to create boundaries of blood and descent. Compared to reformers who emphasized social-moral foundations and the idea of *Datong* (harmony and universality) for articulating the Chinese race, revolutionaries stressed blood as the unifying factor. In contrast with Chinese reformers, revolutionaries maintained sharp distinctions between Chinese (Han peoples) and non-Chinese (Manchus and other ethnicities). While reformers built the racial discourse on the existing lineages – including all people who inhabited on the soil of the Yellow emperor - revolutionaries narrowed the category of descendants of the Yellow emperor (“real” Chinese people) by clearly distinguishing Han from Manchus, Tibetans, Mongols, etc. in racial terms. Thus while the notion of the yellow race emerged in a relational context between China and the West, the concept of the Han race developed in opposition to both foreign powers and the ruling Manchus. Revolutionaries delineated Han people with clear racial boundaries by virtue of imagined blood and descent.²³³ Therefore, in order to de-emphasize the role of

²³³ Sun Yatsen (1866-1925) became one of the principle proponents of a Chinese *minzu*, which he claimed was primarily linked by “common blood.” His concept of blood relations played a unifying role in the politics of the nation, regardless of class: it promoted unity against foreign aggressors and suppressed internal divisions. The importance of blood surpassed the significance of class and culture. Members of secret societies, peasants, etc. could be also regarded as descendants of the Yellow Emperor. By this, emerging notions of “equality at birth” spread with new modes of governance that invoked “the people” and “nation” rather than “class.” Frank Dikötter, “The Racialization of the Globe: Historical Perspectives,” in *Racism in the Modern World: Historical Perspectives on*

culture and civilization and highlight the notion of blood, revolutionaries elevated the Yellow Emperor as the national symbol (in contrary to Confucius by reformers as symbol).

Revolutionaries' expressions against Manchu rule became more pronounced in 1906 when revolutionaries established Tongmenghui with its headquarters in Singapore. Most writing during its preceding period (xingzhonghui) focused on reviving China and protecting China from further foreign encroachment. When revolutionaries established Xingzhonghui in Hong Kong 1895, this association proclaimed: "the main purpose [is] banding together patriotic Chinese at home and abroad to find out feasible methods to make the country rich and strong, to revitalize China and to preserve her independence and territorial integrity." The declaration further stated:

In China today the political situation is becoming worse and worse and public and private morality has degenerated more than ever. Nationals of the great Powers look down upon the Chinese people and subject them to all sorts of indignities and humiliations. This has been due to lack of national solidarity and to the fact that

Cultural Transfer and Adaptation, eds. Manfred Berg and Simon Wendt (New York and London: Berghahn Books, 2011), 32.

everybody pays attention only to his own selfish interests in total disregard of the long-range interests of the nation as a whole.²³⁴

Xinzhonghui did not make clear viewpoints with regards to race or its severe hostility towards Manchus. Their mission resembled reformers' goal, namely to regenerate morality and unify Chinese in China and abroad. In doing so, China and overseas Chinese could become strong and coherent unit that enabled China to protect itself from further foreign encroachment.

On its surface, using historically fixed, clear, and immutable "biological" delineations as articulated by revolutionaries, Han people seemed to be the only and authentic people of Chinese descent. Their Chineseness was based on firmly rooted genealogical foundations and blood relations that originated from a common ancestor (that is: the Yellow Emperor). In fact, as recent studies have shown, since premodern times the racial lines of Han were not fixed. Han identity resulted from continuous interethnic formations, absorption of surrounding "minor cultures" and influences from neighboring communities.²³⁵ By the early

²³⁴ Milton Shieh, trans., ed., "Manifesto of the Hsing-Chung Hui of Hong Kong" (February 18 1895), in *The Kuomintang: Selected Historical Documents, 1894-1969* (New York: St. John's University Press), 4.

²³⁵ Mark Elliott, for example, shows that the understanding of Han people as a fixed category throughout centuries was a myth. During the Ming dynasty, for example, Zhu Yuanzhang followed Mongols example and expanded the people of Han by including people from Southern areas – the people that Song rulers excluded from being Han. See Mark Elliott, "Hushuo: The Northern Other and the Naming of the Han Chinese, in Thomas Mullaney, James Leibold, Stéphane Gros, and Eric Vanden Bussche eds., *Critical Han Studies: The History, Representation, and Identity of China's Majority* (Berkeley, LA, London: University of California

twentieth century revolutionaries' application of its notion of the Han race seemed equally fluid and its equation of Han as officially defined by revolutionaries to Chinese is conceptually flawed. The exclusion of Manchus but (like reformers) inclusion of overseas Chinese – including those of mixed blood – revealed revolutionaries' flexible use of blood ties for defining Han Chinese.

The inclusion of the overseas Chinese in the revolutionaries' race narrative was not so much based on the purity of blood but more on pragmatic reasons and ideological grounds. From the revolutionaries' perspective the primary enemies were not all foreigners, but mainly those barbarians that ruled China. Overseas Chinese were officially not subjected to Manchu rule and were, therefore, considered as human and financial resources that could pose a threat to Manchu rule. Later labeled as "the mother of revolution," the overseas Chinese, particularly merchants, became the financial source of the movement. Sun Yat-sen's party Tongmenghui was established in Honolulu, Hawaii, but in 1905 witnessing the success of reformers, Southeast Asia's proximity to China, and realizing the financial wealth of the Chinese in Nanyang, revolutionaries relocated their political base in Asia to Southeast Asia as the center of political operation. Reformers' earlier presence and activities benefited the revolutionaries. Not only did revolutionaries propagate their ideas through

Press, 2012), 173-190. Valerie Hansen's *Open Empire* has also shown that China through its earliest civilization is formed out of continuous evolvement of contacts between communities from different social strata. Her work challenges the standard view of China as a fixed, unchanging entity that is established only by the elite. See *Open Empire: A History of China Through 1600* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000).

familiar channels (through the press and schools), but it also built on the concern for China that the reformers had introduced.²³⁶

Rerouting Overseas Chinese Education to China

Qing's actions of nourishing national consciousness among overseas Chinese were directly linked with revolutionaries. Qing did so through education. In 1906, Qing established Jinan in Nanjing to launch a program of "nationalization" among overseas Chinese. Jinan was the first school for overseas Chinese on Chinese soil and was one the highest educational institution for the Chinese.²³⁷ Although Qing authorities lifted its migration ban and encouraged overseas Chinese investments in China to help strengthen the economy and modernize China as early as the nineteenth century, it was not until the opening of Jinan that Qing attempted to spread its concept of national identity through education among the overseas Chinese peoples. Jinan was the first institute of higher education that was especially designed for the overseas Chinese. Directly

²³⁶ Moreover, considering the fact that Lim Boon Keng's anti-Manchu sentiment developed around the same time (if not slightly predated) revolutionaries' official war against Manchus, it might be possible that overseas Chinese thought (not only wealth) had an impact of articulating revolutionaries' anti-Manchu thinking.

²³⁷ The founding of Jinan was part of Qing's educational reform program. The Qing abolished the examination system that had existed since the Han-dynasty and launched a system for 'modern education.' Instead of testing candidates on their knowledge of the Chinese classics, students were now trained in practical matters. Initial efforts for implementing curricula for 'modern' education was put into practice in 1898 by Emperor Guangxu (due to urgent requests of Kang Youwei) but was aborted by the right-wing Empress Cixi, who subsequently persecuted Kang Youwei and his adherents and acted as defacto ruler of the Chinese emperor.

governed by Qing authorities, Manchus aimed at bringing promising overseas Chinese students to China where they could further their schooling. The Qing regime expected students to become cultural and political brokers between Qing and Nanyang masses upon graduation. To reach this goal, Jinan's mission was to disseminate Chinese culture and Chineseness (華夏精神 the spirit of Huaxia) beyond China's territorial borders by way of Jinan's students.²³⁸

How did the Qing court define Huaxia's spirit and Chinese people? What was the national identity that Qing spread through its educational system? Like reformers, Qing's concept of race and national identity was based on the idea of a universal Chinese race that encompassed multiethnic differences and incorporated multiple ethnicities (Manchus, Han, Mongols, etc.). As early as the seventeenth century, the Qing court started transforming the view of "China" as being something unique to Han people and created a new definition of China as a multiethnic entity that incorporated the non-Han groups of Inner Asia. Over time meanings of both "China" and "Chinese" had developed into what closely resembled to what is now associated with the national identity of twentieth-century China and Chinese citizens.²³⁹ With this definition of China, all subjects under Qing rule, regardless of their ethnic background, were considered Chinese

²³⁸ 邢濟眾, 暨南大學百年華誕, 新加坡校友會六十五周年紀念特刊(2006), 1.

²³⁹ Gang Zhao, "Reinventing China: Imperial Qing Ideology and the Rise of Modern Chinese National Identity in the Early Twentieth Century," *Modern China*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (January 2006): 14. Emphasis is Zhao's.

people. By this, “Chinese people” no longer exclusively pertained to Han-people. This, for instance, was reflected in a memorial of 1907 in which an official expressed that “the Manchus, Mongols, and Han are different branches of a single tree. Originally, they came from the same ancestor and they will develop into a unity.”²⁴⁰

Although Manchu rulers made the term “the Qing state” synonymous with “China” throughout their rule (particularly when dealing with diplomatic relations), it was not until 1900 that the Qing regime started applying this multiethnic notion of “China” and “Chinese people” to their subjects. The regime introduced this concept along with nation-wide educational reforms that the reform party proposed. The schools propagated Qing’s notion of Chineseness, for example, in geography classes at modern schools. Classes, as such, were meant to nourish patriotism and instill Chinese national identity into the minds of subjects of both Han and non-Han descent.²⁴¹ By this, the Qing court attempted to create the idea that all subjects of China, despite their ethnic varieties, were Chinese because they shared the same ancestor.²⁴²

The state attempted to spread this idea of a multiethnic Chinese race to commoners in Qing’s frontier areas through education as early as 1900, but it was not concerned with disseminating this idea among overseas Chinese

²⁴⁰ Gang Zhao, “Reinventing China,” 22 (quoted).

²⁴¹ Gang Zhao, “Reinventing China,” 16-18.

²⁴² Gang Zhao, “Reinventing China,” 22.

communities until 1906 when revolutionaries used Singapore as their base for revolutionary activities in Asia. In this year, the Qing court hastily opened a school for higher education in China especially designed for overseas Chinese, with the purpose of recentering overseas Chinese education from Southeast Asia to China. The state's sudden decision for opening an educational institution and train students with Qing ideology was directly linked with the growing popularity of political exiles, particularly revolutionaries, who extended their movements overseas and relocated their base to Singapore. They established networks with Chinese communities across Southeast Asia and particularly gained much support in British Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies.

In 1905 Cen Chunxuan 岑春煊, Governor-General of Guangdong and Guangxi, sent Liu Shiji 劉士驥 to various cities in Southeast Asia for examining Chinese schools. Liu reported that ethnic consciousness among Nanyang Chinese had risen rapidly. Qing officials feared that if they continued delaying seeking support among Huaqiao, Nanyang Chinese would increase the support for the Court's adversaries, namely Kang Youwei's reform party and Sun Yatsen's revolutionary party. The Qing regime was particularly threatened by the Guomindang that aimed at overthrowing Manchu rule. From 1905, using Singapore as a base, revolutionaries had been intensively propagandizing their activities by way of schools, the press, and drama troupes on a large scale in Nanyang . Liu reported to Cen that most Guomindang's branches were located in

Nanyang, and therefore schools needed to be monitored before it was too late.²⁴³ Qing feared that the anti-Manchu sentiment would intensify with the proliferation of revolutionary activities.

On January 1, 1907, three Qing officials, Chen Baozhen 陳寶箴, Qian Xun 錢恂, and Dong Hongwei 董鴻禛 attended an ad hoc meeting that the THHK-Batavia organized. At the meeting Qian announced that the Department of Education in Beijing was accepting returning overseas Chinese to further education at Jinan College.²⁴⁴ The school was led by Wen Bingzhong 溫秉忠 as manager, and Zheng Hongnian(鄭洪年) as principal. The first group of students at Jinan came from Java.²⁴⁵ Prior to the establishment of Jinan, the Qing empire and the Chinese in Java had existing educational exchanges through Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan (THHK). The Department of Education sent qualified teachers with certification from China to teach in Java upon the request of THHK.²⁴⁶ With the establishment of Jinan, the THHK committee selected students who were sent to

²⁴³ “Huaqiao minzu yishi de juexing ji qi yu zhongguo geming yundong he dangdi minzu duli yundong de guanxi”, in *Yindunxia Huaqiaoshi* (Beijing: Haiyang chubanshe, 1985), 296-338.

²⁴⁴ “Huaqiao minzu yishi,” 296-338.

²⁴⁵ Ma Xingzhong 馬興中, “暨南大学與新加坡” (Jinan University and Singapore)” in *Xinjiapo Jinan Xiaoyouhui 新加坡暨南校友會出版委員會 ed. Jinan Daxue Bannian Huadan – Xinjiapo Xiaoyouhui liushiwu zhounian jinian tekan 暨南大學百年華誕, 新加坡校友會六十五周年紀念特刊* (2006), 30-33.

²⁴⁶ Sandick, *Chineezzen buiten China*, 251.

China.²⁴⁷ In China, these students received further education under the auspices of the Chinese government.



E. Students at Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan (THHK). These THHK-students were leaving the Dutch Indies for Jinan. They were the first group of students from THHK in the Dutch East Indies who were sent to Jinan College for further study. Source: Jinan University

²⁴⁷ "Our Java Letter", *SCM*, Vol. 11, No. 1, March 1907, p. 34.



F. Students at Jinan College. The first group of students came from the Dutch East Indies (see illustration E). They were wearing wearing Manchu-style school uniforms at Jinan College. Source: Jinan University

It would be incorrect, however, to assume that Nanyang Chinese uncritically embraced the Chinese government. Initially, the Indies Chinese reacted Qing's outreach to Java with suspicion. One source reported "... at first, our association [THHK] did not think of sending our kids to China, because we did not know if we could count on the Chinese state."²⁴⁸ Questioning the accountability and reliability of the Qing state was understandable, for the Qing banned maritime affairs in 1644 and prohibited officials and commoners from leaving Qing's territory without imperial approval. Until 1893, when Xue Fucheng

²⁴⁸ Sandick, *Chineezen buiten China*, 252.

(薛福成) petitioned to re-recognize overseas Chinese, Nanyang Chinese were considered “traitors” of the Chinese state.²⁴⁹ THHK, therefore, was cautious about sending Chinese children from Java for further studies at a school opened by the Chinese empire.

Dutch authorities were wary of THHK. THHK, the first “modern” Chinese school, was founded by Confucian revivalists and community leaders in Java, including Lee Hin Lin, Tan Kim Sun, Lie Kim Hok,²⁵⁰ and Phao Keng Hek.²⁵¹ After

²⁴⁹ For a translated section of Xue Fucheng’s Proposal see Philip A. Kuhn, “Xue Fucheng’s Proposal to Remove Stigma from Overseas Chinese (29 June 1893)” in Kuhn, *Chinese Among Others*, 241-3.

²⁵⁰ “Chinese Schools in Java”, *SCM*, Vol 10, no. 2 (June 1906): 100.

Lie Hin Liam was a founding member of THHK who was interested in political affairs in China at the time. He hosted Kang Youwei on his visit to Batavia, and supported revolutionaries in 1911. In 1980 he became president and a founding member of Siang Hwee in Jakarta.

Tan Kim San (b. 1873, Jakarta). After his education at a local Hokkien school in Batavia and an English school in Singapore, he became a founding member of THHK-Batavia where he served as secretary from 1900 to 1902. From 1904 to 1916 he served as master of ceremonies. He was appointed director in 1915.

Lie Kim Hok (1853-1912), born in Buitenzorg where he attended missionary school, and learned Chinese (huawen) in later life. He was a founding member and elected executive of THHK and THHK-school, where he was in charge of Confucianism, and customary affairs. In 1909, he received a medal from Qing government.

For biographical information I refer to: Leo Suryadinata, *Prominent Indonesian Chinese: Biographical Sketches*, (Singapore: ISEAS, 1995)

²⁵¹ Phao Keng Hek (b. 1857-1937, Buitenzorg/ Bogor, Java). Leader of the Chinese community and president of THHK from 1900 to 1923, son of a Chinese Kapitein. He attended the missionary school in Cianjur with European students, where he met Lie Kim Hok. He also went to a Hokkien school. He furthered

continuous denial for admitting youth of Chinese descent to Dutch public education, these reformers decided to establish a school for all Indies Chinese. The school was funded with annual support of three thousand guilders from the Chinese Council (*Kong Koan*), and aimed at providing free education for all children of Chinese descent. The funds for its establishment came from the sale of land owned by local Chinese. Kong Koan then used these funds to invest in charity programs.²⁵² In its foundational years, Lim Boon Keng and Kang Youwei were instrumental in building the school.

Like Lim Boon Keng's social reform movements, THHK was a reform-minded school and followed the educational scheme according to Kang Youwei's reform ideas. In its foundational years it received help from Lim Boon Keng and Kang Youwei. It also maintained contact with the Qing government. The Dutch

education at Europeesche Lagere School (Bogor) that was opened especially for Dutch children in the Dutch East Indies. He moved to Jakarta after his marriage and worked in agricultural products business. Phao knew Dutch, Hokkien. He was a founding member and president of THHK-association and school. He criticized Dutch discriminatory policies. He often uses his pseudonym Hoa Djin (Huaren) to write in *Perniagaan* the Sino-Malay press (in Malay language), and criticizes the racial discriminative and educational policies of the colonial government. He was instrumental in the ban on gambling in Bekasi (Western Java). He received official recognition and was knighted by the Dutch queen in 1937.

For biographical details, see: *Shijie Huaqiao Huaren Cidian* (Beijing: Beijing University Press, 1990), 884; Leo Suryadinata, *Prominent Indonesian Chinese: Biographical Sketches* (Singapore: ISEAS, 1995), 130-1.

²⁵² "Our Batavia Letter", *SCM*, Vol. 6, No. 22 (June 1902), 88; "THHK" school, *SCM*, Vol. 6, No. 24 (December 1902): 168.

were well aware of the intensifying connections between the Chinese court and Indies Chinese. A Dutch inspector reported that:

We have learnt from Tjian Soen [Qian Xun] and Tong Hong Wie [Dong Hongwei] (repectively secretary and attaché of Chinese *gezantschap* in The Hague) who visited THHK schools in 1906, that the Onderkoning Toan Hong gives our students the opportunity to complete their studies in Nanjing... On 21 February 1907, the first 21 students went to Nanjing. They received state-sponsored education and stipends... According to their letters to their parents, these students do not want to return to Java unless they have completed their studies. The Chinese state has also told them, that after they have completed their studies, they can continue their studies in Europe, Japan, or the US by using funding of the state.²⁵³

The Chinese court expanded its educational network with other Chinese communities in maritime Southeast Asia in the second round of student recruitments. In 1908, Jinan recruited 38 students from several schools in Java, but students from the Straits Settlements took a major part of the student

²⁵³ Sandick, *Chineezen buiten China*, 252-3.

body.²⁵⁴ Zuo Binglong 左秉隆, Consul in Singapore, selected 54 Huaqiaos in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, and Penang to go to Jinan in 1908. Since 1908, the Qing regime requested Zuo Binglong to send 45 students to Jinan on an annual basis.²⁵⁵ Many students from Jinan engaged in the fields of business, finances, education, and culture after graduation.²⁵⁶ Jinan College aimed at educating Nanyang students business, finances, and nourished affections for China. Based on the school's curricula, it can be concluded that the school not only aimed at nourishing national consciousness, but also aimed at training students to become leaders in the fields of finances, commerce, and education – fields that were considered as crucial by both China and Nanyang Chinese to compete with Western imperial powers.

²⁵⁴ On 5 October 1908, 38 other boys, originating from several schools in Java, went to Nanjing. In 1909, the number of students from Java since the first dispatch to Jinan totaled to 111. (See Sandick, *Chineezen buiten China*, 252- 254).

²⁵⁵ Ma Xingzhong 馬興中, "Jinan Daxue yu Xinjiapo 暨南大學與新加坡" (Jinan University and Singapore)," 30-33.

²⁵⁶ The Wuchang Uprising in October 1911 caused the Qing empire to close down Jinan Xuetaang. During the first few years under the republican government, however, many overseas Chinese and people in China requested to reopen Jinan Xuetaang. On 1 November 1917 the government gave Jiangsu Education Association 黃炎培 Huang Yanpei the task to reopen Jinan Xuetaang. Yangzheng school 養正 in Singapore sent three Huaqiao to Jinan Xuetaang in that year. In 1927, under the lead of Zheng Hongnian 鄭洪年, Jinan relocated to Shanghai and was renamed Jinan University. Jinan, in the meantime, has reached out to Chinese in other places in Southeast Asia. Jinan sent a soccer team to Saigon, Singapore, and Bangkok in 1928 to help promote Jinan through sports. In 1928 there were 78 Huaqiao from Singapore to study at Jinan (out of which 14 for College, 64 for High school). See Ma Xingzhong, "Jinan Daxue yu Xinjiapo."

British authorities were not concerned with Jinan in these early stages, but Dutch authorities were already worried. Dutch authorities were particularly concerned with Jinan when Dutch officials discovered “Malay looking Chinese” attending Jinan.²⁵⁷ Jinan opened in 1906 with Indies Chinese from Java as its first students. In China, these students received further education under the auspices of the Chinese government. Its purpose was to nourish ties of Indies born Chinese towards “the motherland,” and to keep China’s national enterprises running. The press reported that the Chinese in the Indies were “stepchildren” who were abandoned by Dutch Indies’ government but who were awakened and recognized by their own father (i.e. China) who had been previously “dormant.”²⁵⁸

Qing’s strong connections with Chinese schools on Dutch territory further raised Dutch anxiety for phenomenon of a state within a state, i.e. the growth of the Chinese nation within the Dutch empire. THHK nourished Chinese national consciousness among Indies Chinese. One student commented:

China is so much more vast and bigger than Japan! How great could we become if the great China reorganizes! We could become the most powerful nation in the world, but first we need education to reach that goal.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁷ DNA 2.05.03-41 File 2 (1909)

²⁵⁸ Fromberg, *Verspreide Geschriften*, 425.

²⁵⁹ Sandick, *Chineezzen Buiten China*, 255.

This expression was from the notes of Sandick, Controleur of Binnenlandsche Bestuur, who investigated essays that were written by students of the Tiong Hoa Hwee Koan-school in Batavia. This source from 1909 revealed that at the time, Indies Chinese students felt that they were being and want to be part of China. They positioned the status of China and the Chinese, including those residing overseas, among other nations in the world, and envisioned that (by comparing themselves with Japan as inspiration) China including the Chinese overseas could become the most powerful entity in the world through education.

Conclusion

A new notion of China as a political entity and a new definition of Chinese people emerged at the turn of the twentieth century. The concept that “China” was constructed on multiple ethnicities meant that the Chinese people referred to a community consisting of various ethnicities. It was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that efforts were made to construct a homogeneous Chinese race that consisted of heterogeneous ethnicities. Just as “China” stood for Qing, “Chinese people” became synonymous with Qing subjects. Conceptual arguments were made that all subjects of China despite their ethnic varieties were Chinese, because they shared the same ancestor.²⁶⁰

Looking at how such notions were applied to the Straits Chinese political outlook at the end of the nineteenth century, it is clear that although the Straits

²⁶⁰ Gang Zhao, “Reinventing China,” 22.

Chinese were sympathetic with affairs in China, they were loyal to the British empire as their political ruler. In order to assert loyalty to their Chinese heritage and concern for China they thought that kinship or lineage, promoted by China as the greatest force of loyalty, was not necessarily bounded by territory. At the same time, they expressed their loyalty to the British empire by emphasizing a place-based identity based on place of birth.²⁶¹ In their minds, both loyalties, a “deterritorialized genealogical identity” that linked Southeast Asian Chinese with China based on lineage and kinship bonds, coexisted with a “territorialized identity” that rooted peoples’ loyalty in the places where they were born and raised. These dual identifications should make them fulfill the “rights as British citizens,” and at the same time sympathize with “their countrymen from the Chinese empire.”²⁶²

Compared to the Straits Chinese leaders, Dutch Indies Chinese reform leaders were less supportive of their colonial rulers. Although the reform movements in three different locales, respectively China, British Straits Settlements, and Dutch East Indies, were connected, each movement had its own agenda. Chinese reformers used the reform movement to strengthen China.

²⁶¹ Although British subjects of Chinese descent received less racial discrimination than their Dutch counterpart, the British empire made a sharp distinction between British citizens and British colonial subjects. British law for its subjects was based on *jus soli*, but British imperial authorities made a distinction between “British Protected Persons” and British citizens. In British Hong Kong, for instance, subjects of Chinese descent and Eurasians did not enjoy the same rights as British citizens of full European descent. See Emma J Teng, “On Not Looking Chinese,” 49-50.

²⁶² “Editorial,” in *SCM* Vol. 8., No. 1 (March 1904): 1.

Straits Chinese reformers and Dutch Indies reformers used reformism to strengthen and secure their own positions in the local society. Whereas Straits Chinese leaders such as Lim Boon Keng was more concerned using reform schools to regenerate the moral and social conduct of people, Dutch Indies Chinese established reform schools in reaction to Dutch the denial of providing public and “modern” education to students of Chinese descent. Therefore, THHK’s establishment by Dutch Indies Chinese was an early sign of anti-colonialism. THHK was less concerned with political ideology and was primarily concerned with strengthening the social and economic position of Indies Chinese. Although each group, Chinese reformers, Straits Chinese reformers, and Indies Chinese reformers, and the Qing state had an agenda of their own, reformism and widespread sinicization in the Sino-Malay speaking world helped stimulate the idea of a pan-Chineseness and the idea of a unified Sinic unit without borders. This form of unbounded identity that was crystallizing at the beginning of the twentieth century raised worries for Western colonial empires, particularly Dutch colonizers who feared losing control and authority over its subjects.

CHAPTER 5

NATURALIZING STATELESS SUBJECTS

In December 1908, Dutch Indies Chinese, as the first overseas Chinese community, sent petitions to Qing provincial and central authorities with the request of creating a Chinese nationality law – a law that did not exist in China at the time. The Indies Chinese made this request in response to the feared rumor that the Dutch empire was soon to promulgate new colonial laws that would officially claim and label Dutch Indies Chinese as “Dutch colonial subjects.” Dutch intention to make Indies Chinese be subjected to Dutch rule by law was directly related to China’s recognition of overseas Chinese as its nationals. Frustrated that China had re-acknowledged the overseas Chinese as its nationals based on blood ties, Dutch authorities, therefore, had been searching for ways to ‘de-nationalize’ Chinese national statuses of Dutch Indies Chinese.

How did China respond to Indies Chinese petition of creating a Chinese nationality law? What are the dynamics between the Indies Chinese, Chinese authorities and Dutch empire in the process of creating legal statuses? Who were the agents of the creation of these laws? Would the making of a Chinese nationality law based on the bloodline principle help Indies Chinese escape from

Dutch colonial rule? ²⁶³ Was the campaign against Dutch naturalization successful? The following discusses how, why and under which circumstances China and Holland created the laws of Chinese nationality vis-à-vis colonial subjection.

Rumor: Forced Naturalization

On 18 December 1906, in light of Dutch parliamentary actions on naturalization laws, the Netherlands Minister of Justice in The Hague asked the Minister of Foreign Affairs the following question: “*Would a Chinese lose his Chinese nationality (onderdaanschap) through Dutch naturalization?*” This question was crucial because it was the first time that the Dutch authorities, since their colonization of the Dutch East Indies, considered granting the Indies Chinese to naturalize themselves as Dutch citizens.²⁶⁴ The Dutch government was searching for ways to dissolve Chinese nationality statuses of the Dutch Indies Chinese, which was, according to Chinese concept of nationality at the time, not

²⁶³ Dual nationality for the Chinese in Southeast Asia was permissible except for the Dutch East Indies. The Dutch empire was the only government that showed resistance when China created the Chinese nationality law of 1909 based on *jus sanguinis*. Until the Second World War many Southeast Asian Chinese were considered as nationals in China and in the European colonies. See Jamie Mackie, “Introduction,” Anthony Reid, ed. *Sojourners and Settlers: Histories of Southeast Asia and the Chinese* (Honolulu: Univ. of Hawaii Press, 1997), p. xv.

²⁶⁴ Dutch presence in the Indonesian archipelago existed as early as in 1602 with the establishment of the VOC (Dutch East India Company) that dominated trade in Asia in the seventeenth century. In 1800, after the bankruptcy of VOC, the Dutch government took over VOC’s possessions and placed its territory under Dutch colonial administration. The colony is formerly called ‘The Dutch East Indies’; also referred to as ‘Netherlands India’.

defined or supported by law, but was merely based on “natural” ties between the homeland and its nationals overseas.²⁶⁵ In 1907, with the purpose of evaluating the feasibility of de-nationalizing the Chinese nationality status by way of Dutch naturalization, the Dutch government approached foreign governments and Dutch consulates based in the United States, British and French colonies in Asia

²⁶⁵ Published in 1926 Carlton Hayes’s essay “What is Nationalism?” gives a good explanation of how he defined ‘Nationality’. The term ‘Nationality’ emerged in the early nineteenth century in Europe and was derived from the word ‘Nation’. Carlton states that ‘Nationality’ “is most common and can be most properly used to designate a group of people who speak either the same language or closely related dialects, who cherish common historical traditions, and who constitute a distinct cultural society.” (Hayes, “What is Nationalism?” p. 5). Furthermore, according to Hayes, ‘nationality’ is not necessarily delineated by geographic boundaries and involves mixture of races. Although race constructs a sense of unity that is necessary for nationality, a nationality consisting on a singular ‘race’ does not exist. He argues: “Purity of race, if it exists at all, exists nowadays only among uncivilized tribesmen. Nationality actually cuts through and across race, though it must be confessed, in deference to racial propaganda, that an imaginary belief in blood relationship, that is, in race, has been an effective force in building and cementing nationalities.” (Hayes, “What is Nationalism?” p. 8). Nationality rested initially on cultural elements until lawmakers and states politicized this term in a legal sense and began using it to refer to ‘Citizenship’. A modern concept that is connected with modern civilization, ‘Nationality’ with a legal aspect was used for forging a political unit and sovereign independence (Hayes, “What is Nationalism?” p. 4). See Carlton J. H. Hayes, “What is Nationalism?” in *Essays on Nationalism* (New York: Macmillan, 1926), 1-29.

Hayes’s theory of ‘Nationality’ is useful to understand the Chinese notion of ‘Nationality’. Discourse on nationality in China took place in 1907. Hayes defined nationality as a modern concept, but some Chinese presented ‘nationality’ as an old phenomenon. Both approaches, however, agreed on the characteristics that constructed nationality, which were: language, dress, race, and religion. In the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries China was in the process of redefining the Chinese race. The new definition of the Chinese race was constructed on ethnic diversity and incorporated the overseas Chinese and various ethnic groups in China under one unit of ‘blood ties’. See “Lun Jinri Yiding Guojifa 論今日宜定國籍法” (discussion of why nationality law should be settled now) in *Dongfang Zazhi 東方雜誌* no. 2 (7 April 1907): 35.

for queries about the effect of naturalization acts for people of Chinese descent.²⁶⁶ By legally claiming the Indies Chinese as their colonial subjects, they hoped to end China's increasing political influence and interference with the Indies Chinese affairs.

Both the Dutch and Chinese empires considered themselves as legitimate rulers over Dutch Indies Chinese, but neither government had given their subjects an official and legal status of subjectness (that is: the state of people being subjected to a government). The Dutch government, considering itself as the sovereign ruler over the Indies Chinese who were settled on the Dutch possessions, felt threatened by the intensified relationships between China and the Indies Chinese. Qing authorities increasingly interfered with overseas Chinese affairs on non-Chinese territory and had repetitively asked for permission to establish Chinese consular representations in areas with large concentrations of Chinese communities, including in the Netherlands Indies. Moreover, Qing authorities had redefined its concept of the Chinese race along with the formation of a pan-Chinese nation that transgressed Chinese borders.

²⁶⁶ British authorities and Dutch representatives in Hong Kong and the United States responded to the question regarding naturalization of people of Chinese descent. The British granted naturalization papers to the Chinese. The fact that China regarded the Chinese under British rule as Chinese subjects did not affect their naturalization as British subjects. This was also applicable to the Chinese in Hong Kong, whom China (even after ceding the port city to the British) considered as Chinese subjects. (See DNA 2.05.03-43 (1) ARA 194; 195 #3611; ARA 207 #3622; ARA202 #3618; DNA 2.05.38-2786 from CG Southern China to Min Foreign Affairs in The Hague, dated Hong Kong 8 March 1909 #8888). Naturalization in the US was only limited to free white persons and people of African descent. People of yellow race (Chinese and Japanese) were not eligible for naturalization (see DNA 2.05.03-43 (1) ARA# 200 #3616).

Disturbed by the fact that China acknowledged the Indies Chinese, both of full and mixed blood, as nationals of China, Dutch authorities were devising ways for denationalizing Dutch Indies Chinese as nationals of China.

By emphasizing its right as the sole ruler over the populace of its territory, the Dutch empire was considering to define Indies Chinese's colonial status by law. Rumors that the Dutch government was drafting Dutch naturalization laws exclusively for Indies Chinese spread among the Indies Chinese community. The Indies Chinese interpreted this alleged naturalization act as forcing Indies Chinese to become Dutch subjects and forcing them to recognize the Dutch empire as their only legitimate ruler. They disagreed with the inclusion of colonial subjectness by law, out of fear that they would be permanently subjected to Dutch colonialism and suffer from Dutch discriminative policies. Under these circumstances Indies Chinese, for the first time, urgently launched a campaign against Dutch naturalization by way of Chinese legal nationalization.²⁶⁷ They petitioned to Chinese authorities for creating a nationality law based on the principle of blood ties (*jus sanguinis*) as soon as possible.

²⁶⁷ Naturalization seems more appropriate, because it involves legality. Nationalization can refer to not only the political allegiance between subject and ruler, but can also refer to aspects such as culture.



G. China and Holland competing for Dutch Indies Chinese. A Dutch official (right) is forcing Indies Chinese (center) to break the political relationship with a Chinese official during the late Qing era (left). Source: Dutch National Archives 2.05.90-585

Campaign Against Colonial Subjectness

This proactive movement was the first collective action of prominent Indies Chinese associations against Dutch naturalization. On behalf of all participating associations, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Surabaya (Eastern Java) wired to several Qing authorities with the urgent request of appointing consuls and declaring a nationality law based on blood ties. Dutch Indies Chinese explained that the promulgation of a Chinese nationality law was the necessary measure for obstructing the implementation of Dutch naturalization laws, for guaranteeing China's image, and for the protecting the overseas Chinese. Recipients of these telegrams included the Ministry of Agriculture, Industries and Commerce, Envoy Lu Zhengxiang (陸徵祥) in the Netherlands,²⁶⁸ the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Viceroy of the coastal

²⁶⁸ Lu Zhengxiang (Lou Tseng-tsiang 陸徵祥, also known as René Lou and Dom Pierre-Célestin) was appointed Qing envoy to the Netherlands. An official who was fluent in French and had a good command of English and Russian, he held important positions in the last decade of the Qing regime. He was envoy to Russia where he met his elitist Belgian wife Berthe and held important diplomatic posts. In addition to starting negotiations for a Sino-Dutch consular treaty, he represented China at the international peace conferences that were held in The Hague in 1899 and 1907. In the early republican era, he served as foreign minister and prime minister under Yuan Shikai. In 1915, Yuan Shikai gave him the task to negotiate the "Twenty-one Demands" with Japan. Lu also led China's delegation at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. He refused to sign the Treaty of Versailles when it was decided that Germany would concede Shandong to Japan instead of returning the area to China. Already in his early career he was conscious about the low ranking of China in international politics and, hence, was a firm promoter of equality. See Shi Jianguo 石建國, *Lu Zhengxiangzhuàn 陸徵祥傳* (Shijiazhuang shi: Hebei renmin chubanshe, 1999); Luo Guang 羅光, *Lu Zhengxiangzhuàn 陸徵祥傳* (Hong Kong: Xianggang zhenli xuehui, 1949); David

areas (including the Viceroyalties of Zhejiang and Fujian, of Guangxi and Guangdong, and of Jiangsu and Jiangxi).²⁶⁹

Dutch Indies Chinese aimed at attaining rights and a higher status in the colonial society, but anticipated they would become perpetual victims of Dutch colonialism if Dutch authorities would force a legal status upon them, which would officially make them become Dutch subjects. They were particularly concerned with the official relegation from second to third rank status in the colonial society.²⁷⁰ A rumor was spread that Dutch authorities were intending to

Strand, "Losing a Speech," *Unfinished Republic: Leading by Word and Deed in Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 186-235.

²⁶⁹ *Union Times* (南洋總匯新報), 29 January 1909, p. 3 (letter dated 10 December); The President and Vice-President of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Surabaya were respectively Li Shuanghui (Li Song Hoei 李雙輝) and Jiang Baoliao (Tsioe Po Liao 蔣保料). Prior to this petition to authorities in China, the Dutch Indies Chinese sent a petition to Lu Zhengxiang on approximately 10 December 1908, in which they requested China to determine a nationality law that would declare the Chinese residing in the Indies as subjects of the Emperor of China as soon as possible. See DNA 2.05.03 – 41 (2), ARA #90 #32380 – 32400 (Document from Batavia, 10 April 1909).

²⁷⁰ In 1854, Dutch colonial authorities placed the position of Dutch Indies Chinese in a complex legal framework with article no. 109 of the Regeeringsreglement (Government's regulation). Before 1854 there was no racial distinction in colonial statistics. The colonial population was divided according to religious affiliation (Christians versus non-Christians) and not on race and ethnicity. Article 109 of 1854 transformed this division of the population. The Dutch colonial government applied a dualistic legal framework, in which the main categories were "Europeans" and "Natives." Dutch authorities placed Chinese, Japanese and Arabs under the racial category "Foreign Orientals" (*Vreemde Oosterlingen*). In 1854 law, there was no separate legal category for Foreign Orientals, however. Dutch authorities placed "Foreign Orientals" under the public law of "Natives," making "Foreign Orientals" to be subjected to jurisprudence of "natives," but at the same time applied European civil and commercial law to "Foreign Orientals." Eric Tagliacozzo explains that since most "Foreign Orientals"

legally declare the position of Chinese that was equal to that of the indigenous population. The Indies Chinese had been striving to reach a status equal to that of Europeans that would allow them to enjoy the same rights and privileges as Europeans. Chinese descendants felt they were superior to “the lower people of Malay descent” and considered the equalization to the indigenous inhabitants as a perpetual demotion in the racial ladder.²⁷¹ They mistrusted Dutchmen and described them as being “arrogant” and “dishonest.” Their petition read:

If the Dutch indeed determined laws that incorporated Chinese emigrants with [Dutch] nationality, it would be a way for the Dutch to mistreat Chinese people again later in the future. By that time, the Chinese government would not be able to help, because we would have officially become Dutch subjects. So now, we have to take proactive action... Chinese *officiëren* are bad advisors. They do not know what is right or wrong. They are trying to obstruct our

were engaged in commerce, the placement of this racial category into European private and commercial law would be more efficient for conducting trade. This arrangement of legal bifurcation suggests that on the hand “Foreign Orientals” were important for trade, hence were important for state income. On the other hand, Dutch authorities saw this group as a threat to the colonial state that needed to be controlled, and therefore placing them under the criminal law and jurisprudence for “Natives.” See Eric Tagliacozzo, *Secret Trades, Porous Borders: Smuggling and States Along a Southeast Asian Frontier, 1865-1915* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), Ch6 “‘Foreign Asians’ on the Frontier,” particularly p. 130.

²⁷¹ DNA 2.05.03 – 41 (2), ARA #94 #32480 – 32490; DNA 2.05.03 - 41 (2), ARA # 1 #3070 – 3075. Words between quotation marks originate from ARA #1.

ambitions (*streven*) and are trying to persuade us to become Dutch subjects. We therefore request the appointment of a China consul [for our protection] as soon as possible... [W]e [also] request [a declaration of] a nationality law based on blood ties as soon as possible... This is the collective desire of all collaborated associations.²⁷²

The Chinese nationality law should be based on the principle of *jus sanguinis*, according to the Indies Chinese. The participating associations explained that the most important relationships were based on blood ties and that the principle of blood connected people with their fatherland. From their perspective, no matter how long or how far people were distanced from their fatherland, people always remained being nationals of their ancestral land. They explained that this view not only referred to the Chinese in the Dutch possessions, but to all Chinese

²⁷² *UT* 1 Feb 1909, p. 3

Note on 'Chinese *officiëren*': Chinese *officiëren* were officials who worked for the Dutch. They monitored Chinese communities. Appointed by the Dutch, they worked as mediators between the Dutch colonial regime and the Indies Chinese population. Dutch colonial administration appointed officials of various backgrounds for administering the plural colonial society. For instance, they appointed Chinese officials to monitor Chinese communities, and Arab official for monitoring Arabs.

people in the world.²⁷³ The content of this petition resulted from an ad hoc meeting in Surabaya.²⁷⁴

On 30 and 31 December 1908, representatives of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and school associations in the main port cities across Java held an urgent meeting in Surabaya to discuss actions against Dutch naturalization. Attendants at this meeting included Wang Guangqi 王廣圻 (Secretary of Legation in The Netherlands 駐和參贊 whom the Chamber of Commerce had invited to come to Surabaya from Macassar), Wang Fengxiang 汪鳳翔 (Educational Observer in Java), Bai Pingzhou 白蘋洲 (translator), and representatives of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and school associations from the cities of Batavia, Semarang, Yogyakarta, Solo, Pekalongan, Bali, Macassar, Ampenan, Pontianak, Surabaya and a school association in Kediri.²⁷⁵ Representatives at this meeting

²⁷³ DNA 2.05.03 – 41 (2) ARA #89 #32370; *UT*, 1 Feb 1909, p. 3.

²⁷⁴ Surabaya is a port city in Western Java. It was and is one of the principal cities for commerce in Indonesia and has a large Chinese community. Besides commerce, the Chinese in Surabaya were very active in political and cultural movements. At the beginning of the twentieth century, it was a center of Chinese cultural revivalism, overseas Chinese nationalism, and anti-colonialism.

²⁷⁵ AS 02-21-015-04-005; *UT*, 2 February 1909, p. 3. Representatives of the associations included: 翁秀章、胡先情 (Batavia 華商總會), 鄭豐威, 馬厥猶 (Semarang Chamber of Commerce), 郭禎祥、張廷序 (日惹 Deli Chamber of Commerce), 張先興 (梭羅 Solo Chamber of Commerce), 郭禎祥 (more commonly referred to as Guo Chunyang), 陳瑞村、葉先英、榮廷鳳 (Bali Chamber of Commerce), 洪學振 (安班蘭 Chamber of Commerce), 欲濟乏船電依眾議 (Macassar), 欲來不及電遵議決施行 (坤回 Chamber of Commerce), 楊錦長 (爪哇金島學務總會 Java Jindao Educational Association), 徐博興 (諫義旦中華學堂). Note that some names were not released in *Union Times*; these names were found in archives of Academia Sinica.

decided on ten points of action for the mobilization against Dutch naturalization and discussed about the establishment of Organization for Nationality Research of the Dutch Possessions in Nanyang (Nanyang Heshu Gedao Huaqiao Guoji Diaochahui 南洋荷屬各島華僑國籍調查會).²⁷⁶ The meeting resulted in the following points of action against Dutch naturalization:

- 1) Present all the advantages and disadvantages (pros and cons) to the general population by printing multiple copies of speeches.
- 2) Act in accordance with the form for National Origins Research (Guoji Diaocha 國籍調查) as soon as possible.
- 3) Wire petitions to the Ministry of Agriculture, Industries and Commerce, Chinese envoy in the Netherlands Lu Zhengxiang, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Viceroy of Fujian and Zhejiang (*Min* area), Viceroy of Guangxi and Guangdong (*Yue* area) and Viceroy of Jiangsu and Jiangxi (*Jiang* area).
- 4) Inform the circumstances to all commercial associations (*siang hwee*), schools and presses and ask for their assistance.
- 5) The Chamber of Commerce (*Sianghwee*) and schools (*Haktong*) would widely spread this news to the general populace, including students and their families, families, friends, staff, partners, etc.

²⁷⁶ AS 02-21-015-04-005 Representatives were present. Two officials attended the meeting: names of these officials and names of the representatives of these associations were not mentioned in the press.

- 6) Ask people in China and other overseas Chinese communities for assistance.
- 7) Deal with this in a peaceful manner.
 - a) Break the relationship with those who opposes, even if he is a brother, family or friend.
 - b) Break the commercial relationship temporarily,
 - c) Withdraw money at banks if you have deposits there.
 - d) If you have stocks exchange into money immediately.
 - e) Wire and request help from Beijing, envoy Lu Zhengxiang, Viceroys of Guangdong & Guangxi, Jiangsu & Jiangxi and Fujian & Zhejiang, Chambers of Commerce in Canton, Xiamen and Shanghai, and the presses.
 - f) Help people who are harmed resulting from this action.
- 8) All attendees of this meeting will act accordingly and promote this movement in other cities. Offer mutual assistance if needed.
- 9) All actions are made in collective spirit.
- 10) Complete the regulations/ constitutions of the Confucian society 聖教公會 (started by Guo Zhengxiang 郭禎祥 also known as Guo Chunyang?). There are some regulations/ constitution of this

society that are not completed. Request Guo for revision and apply it.²⁷⁷

Between Indies Chinese and China: the Role of the Chinese Legation in Dutch Metropolis

Dutch Indies Chinese associations launched the campaign against Dutch naturalization, but their actions were mediated by Lu Zhengxiang and Wang Guangqi (王廣圻), respectively Envoy and Secretary of the Chinese Legation to the Netherlands. Both names were mentioned in the petitions.²⁷⁸ Lu Zhengxiang

²⁷⁷ *UT* 2 Feb 1909, p. 3; AS 02-21-015-04-005. Point of action no. 10 was not included in *UT*

Petitions with similar content see: AS 02-21-015-04-004 (petition received at Min. of Agriculture, Industries and Commerce on 19 February 1909); AS 02-21-015-04-014 (petition containing the content of meeting in Surabaya and advise from Lu Zhengxiang); AS 02-21-015-04-009; AS 02-21-015-04-009 (letter from the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Surabaya to the Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai)

²⁷⁸ In this period Lu Zhengxiang, appointed Qing envoy to the Netherlands, was based in the Netherlands with the task to open negotiations for the possible establishment of Chinese consular representation in the Dutch Indies. He was concerned with the position of Dutch Indies Chinese and considered the establishment of consular offices and appointment of Chinese consuls as an important medium to protect the Chinese in the Dutch East Indies. When the negotiations for a consular treaty did not go smoothly, he asked Chinese authorities in Beijing to recall him back to China. He left Holland with an excuse, because he anticipated that it would be more favorable for China to relocate the negotiations of a Sino-Dutch consular treaty from The Hague to Beijing. Holland and China signed the treaty in Beijing on 8 May 1911. See Shi, Lu Zhengxiangzhuàn; Luo, Lu Zhengxiang zhuàn; David Strand, *Unfinished Republic: Leading by Word and Deed in Modern China*, 186-235.

was extremely concerned with the position of the Indies Chinese and attempted to open negotiations for Indies Chinese protection rights by way of a Sino-Dutch consular treaty. The awareness of the rumored Dutch naturalization by force emerged some time between August and September 1908 when Secretary Wang visited Java for a mission. Wang was examining the situation of the Chinese in Nanyang (literally translated as Southern Seas, referring to Southeast Asia).²⁷⁹ He met with the Chinese community in Java and spoke with more than forty people. From the Chinese in Surabaya he learned that Dutch authorities felt threatened by the increasing power and influence of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Chinese schools. In response, Dutch continued launching discriminative policies on them. Hence, the Indies Chinese community desired for receiving China's state protection so as to protect them from colonial suffering. While being in Batavia (now called Jakarta), Wang learned about the news that Holland was intending to send officials to China for a discussion on nationality issues of the Indies Chinese. He reported this news to Chinese authorities and expressed that the Indies Chinese feared Dutch naturalization.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁹ AS 02-21-015-04-002. Wang Guangqi's letter (received on 31 January 1909). He went to the Indies via Singapore in the seventh month of Xuantong's first year of reign. He first went to Batavia then went to Sumatra. In late December of that year, he returned to Java, via Macassar, to participate in the meeting in Surabaya where representatives of Chinese Chambers of Commerce were devising action plans to counter Dutch naturalization.

²⁸⁰ AS 02-21-015-04-002. Note on Batavia: Batavia, now called Jakarta, was the capital of the Dutch East Indies. Located on Eastern Java, this port city was the center of colonial administration and a center for commercial, political and cultural developments. It has a large Chinese community and its Chinatown

Lu Zhengxiang confirmed this rumor a few months later. Lu, China's envoy who was stationed in The Hague (political center of the Dutch government) for negotiating a consular treaty between Holland and China, wrote a letter to the Chinese Chambers of Commerce in Surabaya on 6 December 1908, in which he informed that at the latest parliamentary meeting in The Hague, the government spoke of drafting a new law that would declare people who lived in the Indies for a long time as colonial subjects.²⁸¹ Upon learning this news from Lu Zhengxiang, Indies Chinese feared that the enforcement of Dutch naturalization would make them perpetual victims of Dutch colonialism. Representatives of the Chinese community in various cities held an ad hoc meeting in Surabaya in late December to discuss actions against Dutch naturalization and invited Wang Guangqi to participate in the meeting. Wang and the representatives discussed about the harm of and sent letters to Lu Zhengxiang and petitions to the Department of Agriculture, Industries and Commerce. Meanwhile, Lu Zhengxiang started the program for National Origins Research in his office in The Hague and asked the overseas Chinese (*Huaqiao*) to fill out the "Questionnaire for Overseas Chinese Nationality" (調查華僑國籍). Attendants at this meeting agreed with Lu's plan of action.

(formerly called Patekwan) was a center for Chinese political, social, educational and cultural activities.

²⁸¹ AS 02-21-015-04-005. Letter from Chamber of Commerce 商務總會 in Surabaya to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 外交部.

Nationality Origins Research

Petitions to the Qing court went through two channels: one way originated from the Indies Chinese community while the other went through inter-departmental channels. Soon after the Indies Chinese's request to higher authorities, Lu Zhengxiang sent petitions with similar content to the emperor. He reported that he received numerous letters from the Chinese Chamber of Commerce from various places and knew that they cared about their ancestral land. He mentioned that the Indies Chinese were thinking of options against Dutch naturalization that resulted in the Chamber's ten points of action. As of 25 February 1909 when Lu sent out the petition, the Constitutional Compilations Bureau 憲政編查館, a bureau that was established in 1905 and reorganized in 1907 with the commencement of Qing's reform program to examine state affairs and constitutional law, was in the process of drafting a nationality law. Lu pled lawmakers not to wait any longer and urged them to launch a nationality law based on the bloodline principle. For this end, he reported, Indies Chinese were participating in the National Origins Research (國籍調查) that was promptly carried out by Wang Guangqi who participated in the meetings in Surabaya on 30 and 31 December 1908.²⁸²

In this research, Lu asked Indies Chinese to fill out a registration form of their status and ancestry.²⁸³ The Chinese Chambers of Commerce and school

²⁸² AS 02-21-015-04-005

associations served as facilitators of this research. These associations were responsible for spreading the forms among the Indies Chinese population before returning the filled out forms to Lu Zhengxiang in The Hague. This research was meant to collect information about the population and place of residence of people who resided outside of China. The questionnaire asked detailed questions about family members and ancestry. Rubrics that were asked included name, age, place of origin in China, year of emigration to the Netherlands East Indies, place of residence in the Indies, names of paternal great-grandparents, grandparents, parents, siblings and spouses, wife and concubines, children and their spouses and children (plus spouses), great grandchildren and other lived in-relatives.

Detailed questions about family connections on the form revealed that Qing's idea of a Chinese descendent was very broad. It stretched at least four generations and included concubines and indirect family members.²⁸⁴ It is also noteworthy to mention that these forms did not ask for any questions about race, ethnicity or ethnic belonging. The emphasis on lineage and irrelevance of blood specifics on the registration form was in line with the national identity of that prevailed in the early twentieth century China when the idea of "nation based on race" emerged. The concept of race as nation was basically an extension of the idea of race as lineage. "Nation" was both an organic and a corporate unit. It was constructed on the idea of a lineage that shared a territory and the same

²⁸³ The form was part of the research on nationality origins. Lu Zhengxiang likely intended to use these questionnaires were also used as identification of nationality.

²⁸⁴ DNA 2.05.03 - 41 (2), ARA # 180 #3115 – 3118.

ancestor.²⁸⁵ This notion was applicable to the overseas Chinese, for they too, as it was promoted to overseas Chinese communities, belonged to the same lineage and shared a common ancestor (albeit invented) as the Chinese in China.

On the registration form, the ancestral tracing to China can be explained by the question concerning the year of emigration from China. Questions on the registration form revealed that the Qing state considered those who had ancestral relationships with China as Chinese nationals. It therefore included people of mixed race, as long as an ancestral linkage originating from China was present. This form about one's national origins was an important stage for implementing the nationality law. By filling out the form, the Indies Chinese could receive protection from the Qing government.²⁸⁶ The national origins form, therefore, marked the early beginning of establishing legal formal ties between the Chinese state and the overseas Chinese, by which the overseas Chinese could formally claim themselves as nationals of China.

However, even though the Indies Chinese movement was mainly carried out by commercial and educational associations in the principal port cities, this Chinese nationalization movement was not widespread among the Indies Chinese population. By the end of April 1909, one month after the first Chinese nationality

²⁸⁵ Frank Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China*, 97. Dikötter only focused on subjects on Qing territory and did not include overseas Chinese in his study. However, as this study shows, the Qing regime aimed at gaining legitimate control over the Chinese overseas. Therefore, this writing replaces territory with "government."

²⁸⁶ BB #2139 (28 June 1921)

law was promulgated on 28 March Lu only received 800 responses from people in Batavia who had filled out Nationality Origins Form. Lu Zhengxiang urged the Indies Chinese in other cities to fill out the form as soon as possible and announced that those who responded to the form would be rewarded. By early July, the number of respondents increased to 2800 people, which was still a very small number of the total Indies Chinese population that counted 57,700 people at the time.²⁸⁷

Proceedings with regard to the nationality movement were not widely circulated in the Indies Chinese press. Plans of action were published through Chinese newspapers from Singapore in the section “news from other cities,” but were not announced in *Sin Po*, which was the most important and most widespread Sino-Malay newspaper in the Indies.²⁸⁸ To encourage participation,

²⁸⁷ DNA 2.05.03 - 41 (2), ARA #180 #3115 – 3118. Lu Zhengxiang wrote to the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Sukabumi on 9 June 1909. This document concerns the state of Nationality Origins Research as of 29 April 1909. On 6 July 1909, 2800 people applied for Chinese nationality.

Population numbers were derived from Wang Guangqi’a report. See AS 02-21-015-04-002

²⁸⁸ *Sin Po* is a newspaper in the Malay language that contained articles about Indies Chinese affairs. Between 1910 and 1912 many news articles concerned education and culture, but there was barely written about nationality issues. The absence or limited discussion on nationality issues indicated that the nationality issue was not widespread and was limited to the principal associations in the urban centers, such as Batavia and Surabaya. In the initial stage of the nationality movement, dialogue took place between leaders of major commercial and educational associations, Chinese government, and Lu Zhengxiang. Although functioning as initiators of the movement for Chinese nationality law, the Indies Chinese associations would serve as intermediaries between the Chinese government and the Indies Chinese population for furthering the movement of promulgating the Chinese nationality law.

Wang Guangqi wrote a letter, released by another Sino-Malay press, in which he explained that the intensified competition between races would lead to increasing colonial restrictions on the overseas Chinese. Unequal treatment made everyone's obligations towards the government identical, but the rights were unequal. According to Lu and Wang, China differed from Western powers on this respect. Despite that many descendants of China resided overseas, Wang claimed that the Chinese government regarded them as equal to the Chinese in China. He explained that due to temporal and physical distances, the Chinese overseas lost their sense of nationality and losing one's nationality was comparable to losing one's personality or humanity. The act of naturalization (meaning the act of adopting the nationality of another country) was comparable to calling "the stranger as father." He urged the Indies Chinese to participate in the Chinese nationalization process, so that the Chinese government could protect them and that they could uphold their personality. Vice-President of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce Jiang Baoliao (Tsioe Po Liao 蔣保料) further commented on this letter and emphasized the importance of filling out the Nationality Origins Form. Only by this way could the Chinese government protect people who were situated outside of China.²⁸⁹

While Wang encouraged Indies Chinese communities to participate in the Nationality Origins Research, he approached other Chinese authorities and

²⁸⁹ DNA 2.05.03 - 41 (2), ARA #182 #3121 – 3122

emphasized the importance of the nationality issues. In his report of January 1909, Wang noted that the Nationality issue was not a small matter. According to Dutch statistics of 1908 there were 27,700 Chinese in Java and Madura. In the other islands, the number of overseas Chinese totaled 30,000 people, out of which 90% were born and bred in the Indies and 10 % were from China. Many have been in the Indies for decades and have established businesses, such as in the sectors of production and agriculture. Dutch naturalization causes serious consequences. What would happen to commercial and educational associations if Dutch authorities institutionalized the law of colonial subjectness (*Onderdaanschap*)? There were commercial institutions established in ten places in the Dutch possessions, and there were more than 70 schools. He also passed on Indies Chinese concerns and their patriotic sentiments to the upper levels of China's administration.²⁹⁰

The Creation of the Nationality Law of China

Chinese authorities acted quickly on Indies Chinese petitions and Lu Zhengxiang and Wang Guangqi's requests to create a nationality law based on the bloodline principle. On 13 February 1909 lawmakers stated that they were revising the regulations for the nationality law.²⁹¹ On 28 March, two months after

²⁹⁰ AS 02-21-015-04-002

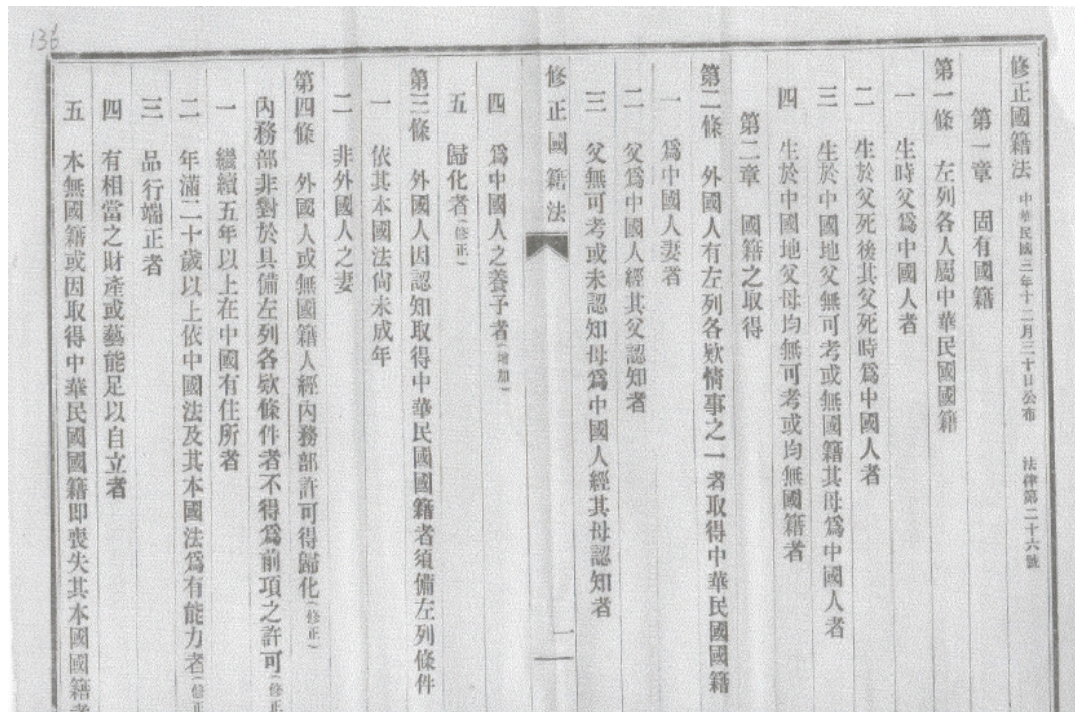
²⁹¹ AS 02-21-015-04-007 Document dated 27 February 1909. The lawmaking department was deciding on the regulations for entry to and departure from

the petition of the Indies Chinese, China promulgated its first nationality law. Under the imperial edict, the Constitutional Compilations Bureau 憲政編查館, consisting of chief officials Yi Kuang 奕勳, Shi Xu 世續 and Zhang Zhidong 張之洞, released the stipulations of the nationality law. This law applied to all Chinese peoples, both born and residing in China as well as outside the Qing territory. Article one of section one declared that the following people possessed a Chinese nationality (中國國籍) regardless of their place of birth: any person whose father is Chinese when he or she was born; any person who is born after the death of his father and whose father is Chinese at the time of death; any person whose mother is Chinese and whose father is of uncertain nationality or stateless.²⁹²

Although the first Chinese nationality law was promulgated upon the urgency of Dutch Indies Chinese and the Chinese legation to Holland, legal inclusion of the overseas Chinese was not merely a unidirectional desire of the overseas Chinese towards China. Serious consideration for implementing a nationality law to draw the boundary between nationals and foreigners started in China with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Civil Affairs and Department of Civil affairs, and Department of Law/ Judiciary.

²⁹² As explained earlier, “blood”-relationships (particularly from the father side) were important for recognizing one as being Chinese. The nationality law followed this concept and used the bloodline principle as the condition for defining one as Chinese according to law. Although “blood” is important, blood quantum was not an issue. The nationality law of 1912 under the Chinese republic was founded on the same principles as the law of 1909. From 1929 onwards, the gender condition (that favored patrilineal kinship) in defining nationality was removed. Children who were born to either a Chinese father or mother could be considered members of the Chinese nation. See Teng, “On Not Looking Chinese,” 49.

1907. In this year Qing lawmakers translated nationality laws of Malaya, European nations (such as England, Germany, Austria and France) and the United States. The Qing court was particularly interested in studying and assessing the



H. The Chinese Nationality Law of 1909 (Revised December 1914).

Source: Academia Sinica 03-25-001-02-020

potential of subjects' integration by way of nationality laws.²⁹³ According to Chinese thought, prior to the early twentieth century, there was no need for a nationality law. A Chinese person was considered being a Chinese national when he or she shared the same race, religion, language and dress. This perception was

²⁹³ Su Yigong 蘇亦工, "Wanqing falükao 晚清法制考," in *Zhongguo Fazhishi Kaozheng: Lidai Fazhikao, Qingdai fazhikao 中國法制史考証: 歷代法制考·清代法制考* Vol. 7 (2007), 581-629.

also applicable to the overseas Chinese, whom Chinese authorities recognized as Chinese nationals due to their yellow complexion and queue. A foreign subject who looked and acted as a Chinese would be regarded as a Chinese – even if he or she were subjected to foreign rule. Those who shared the same race and dress belonged to the same country (同國人); those who were different were considered as foreigners (異國人).²⁹⁴ Nationality (國籍) enabled the state to uniform its people. However people's increased mobility caused multiple ethnicities, various dress and diverse religions to emerge. As a consequence, this old notion of nationality became inappropriate for uniting and regulating the members of a state. Therefore, it is necessary to determine one's national status by way of a nationality law, for it would secure one's ties with the state.²⁹⁵

China's new notion of race and culture developed a sense of shared nationhood. Overseas Chinese support for China's strengthening and their hope for Chinese survival as a race indicated that they regarded themselves as being part of the Chinese nation. Inclusiveness of this type of national belonging, however, was merely emotionally and ideologically bound and lacked a clear defining line of who was considered as a "Chinese national." More important, the problem of forming a community based on resurrected common cultural markers

²⁹⁴ DNA 2.05.03-43 (1) (ARA #208 #3607-09: Letter from the Dutch legation in Beijing to Netherlands Minister of Foreign Affairs D.A.W. van Tets van Goudriaan (letter dated Beijing 4 March 1907); "Lun Jinri Yiding Guojifa 論今日宜定國籍法" (discussion of why nationality law should be determined now), 東方雜誌 no. 2 (7 april 1907): 35.

²⁹⁵ "Lun Jinri yiding guojifa," 35.

and invented kinship would not prevent one from transgressing the parameters of nationhood. Cultural, racial and other malleable boundaries did not guarantee participation and loyalty of its community members.²⁹⁶ Hence, the Chinese state needed legal arrangements to further promote, secure and solidly determine a member's belonging to the Chinese nation and state.

“Big China, Small Holland/Java”: Benefits of Being Chinese Nationals

The alignment of overseas Chinese with China was based on mutual desire and bilateral interest. China's strengthening policy with overseas Chinese support and overseas Chinese search for China's state protection against the abuse of colonial powers in the early twentieth century developed in tandem. For

²⁹⁶ In his study on 'the Nation', Duara identifies soft and hard boundaries that would transform communities with fluid boundaries into a clearly demarcated single political community. Soft boundaries are cultural practices such as language, rituals, kinship rules etc. Although members within soft boundaries share similar or identical characteristics, it is permissible for them to share this or even adopt characteristics of communities outside these boundaries. The 'hardening' of these soft boundaries would clearly define the characteristics of a community. Hard boundaries are the elements that survive as the dominant markers of identifying a community. Duara used this theory to explain how racial and cultural boundaries 'hardened' and came to define two dominant definitions of Chinese nationhood: one based on the ancestry of Han Chinese, the other based on cultural doctrines and values of a Chinese elite. In extension of Duara's framework, I want to suggest here that the characteristics of 'nationhood' are soft boundaries, because from the perspective of the members, one's perception of being part of nationhood is changeable. This is exemplified with reformers who would later support the revolutionary cause. It is therefore important to determine a nation with fixed markers. The boundaries of 'nationhood,' in the Chinese case, were solidified with a clearly defined, unchangeable legal foundation; that is the nationality law. For Duara's discussion of 'soft' and 'hard' boundaries, see Prasenjit Duara, "Bifurcating Linear Histories in China and India" (Chapter 2), *Rescuing History from the Nation: Questioning Narratives of Modern China*, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995), 51-82.

China to achieve international standing through modernization and industrialization, overseas Chinese financial support and intellectual knowledge were crucial. They were seen as assets to China's industrialization project.

The desire to have overseas Chinese involved in China's railway construction, for instance, was obvious in 1907 when the railways in Fujian were under construction. Railways were considered crucial for stimulating prosperity and benefiting commerce, which would help strengthen China. China's vast territory contained gold mines and coal. Fujian had the potential of becoming great and wealthy, but it needed assistance from the overseas Chinese. One voice pleaded: "You, Chinese outside of China: even though you are doing well elsewhere, you have to think that you and the Chinese in China constitute one nation. It will benefit you, too. China is the country of your ancestors and brothers and China's revival will also benefit you."²⁹⁷ Advocates of railway constructions compared China's vast territory, resources, and potential growth with smaller countries.

Other voices directly addressed the problem of Dutch naturalization and persuaded Indies Chinese not to become Dutch subjects by comparing the growing potential of the Chinese empire with the weakening Dutch empire. One article explained:

²⁹⁷ DNA 2.05.03 – 41 (2), ARA #93 #32460 Semarang, 27 January 1907

Although China is still weak, we see many changes: the establishment of the parliament, the establishment of many schools, military exercises, warships and travels. Each day and every month there are changes. You should all know this. China, with its extensive territory of thousands of miles and with a population of 400 million people, will rule the whole world in about ten years... [Holland, on contrary,] is a small country with a small population, and is therefore meaningless. Hence, Dutch citizenship cannot be compared to Chinese citizenship, for in ten years we will rule the mainland. ... We will progress immensely and all nations will fear for us... China with its great, vast land will achieve so much more when it progresses. There will not be any hope for the Dutch... If you have become Dutch then you can only benefit from the small and meaningless territory of one thousand miles. You will lose huge advantages that are gained from mines, railways, industries and commerce in the immeasurable China... Now, the Dutch encourage you to become Dutch by reducing the strictness of some rules, but when you are trapped they can do whatever they want. By that time, you cannot become Chinese again. What can you do? You have to adopt the Chinese nationality.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁸ DNA 2.05.03-41 (2) (ARA #1 and #2 #3070 – 3075). The author of this letter is unknown, but based on the content of this message, the letter was likely

This passage emphasized that being a Chinese national provided more advantages than being a Dutch subject. Contrary to the weakening power of the Dutch, China had the potential of becoming great. When seeking for overseas Chinese support, promoters of the Chinese nationality law did not evoke Chinese patriotic feelings, but placed the emphasis on the benefits of adopting a Chinese nationality. Seeking membership with the Chinese nation had far more benefits than being a Dutch subject. Whereas Dutch subjects would face governmental restrictions, immeasurable opportunities for Chinese nationals were available. Those who would adopt a Chinese nationality would take part in China's self-strengthening project for national survival against imperialist powers. China believed that stimulating industries and commerce and opening up mines and railways would help China reach international standing, which would enhanced the ability of China to protect its nationals against the abuse of foreign powers. Messages that were directly related to Chinese nationalization vis-à-vis Dutch naturalization escalated when rumors of Dutch naturalization by force escalated.

“Dutch Indies-born Chinese are ‘Netherlanders’”

The Chinese nationalization movement vis-à-vis anti-Dutch naturalization movement on the Indies did not go unnoticed by Dutch authorities. However, Dutch authorities learned about the Chinese nationalization movement not so

written by Lu Zhengxiang (China envoy to the Netherlands who had visited Java and Holland, and who had (through his wife Belgian wife Berthe) connections with Belgium.

much by Indies Chinese activities on the ground, but mainly by way of the Chinese press in Singapore, which was the main medium that commercial and educational associations in the Dutch Indies used to propagate their action against the rumored Dutch naturalization movement. The colonial government was unaware of the local movement on the ground and did not take action until two months after Indies Chinese requested Chinese authorities for the institutionalization of a Chinese nationality law.²⁹⁹

In March of 1909, just a few days before China decreed its nationality law, the Office of Chinese Affairs in Batavia confronted the president of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce about the petitioned telegram to Chinese authorities. The Chamber's president explained that the rumor about the Dutch government devising a law that would officially equalize the position of the Dutch Indies-born Chinese to that of the native population ignited panic over the Indies Chinese. The relegation of their status in the colonial society was not in accordance with their own desires. They were unable to accept that a law as such was in progress without their agreement and against their own will.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁹ DNA 2.05.03 – 41 (2), ARA #92 #(32410-32440). At the first collective meeting against Dutch naturalization in Surabaya, the Chambers of Commerce and educational associations decided to propagate against Dutch naturalization movement by two ways, namely by word of mouth and through the Chinese press. The Chinese press of Nanyang Chinese concentrated in Singapore. It is therefore not surprising that Dutch officials learned about the movement from news in Singapore.

³⁰⁰ DNA 2.05.03 – 41 (2) ARA #94 332480-32490: Letter from Official of Chinese Affairs H.N. Stuart and Gouvernements-Secretaris De Graeff to Director of Justitie (Batavia, 19 March 1909)

Soon after, the Governor General of the Dutch East Indies in Buitenzorg notified the Minister of Colonies in The Hague that the movement of adopting the Chinese nationality law, led by Chinese commercial associations and supported by Lu Zhengxiang, had started on various places in the Indies. He stressed that the urgency of a legal arrangement for residents (*ingezetene*) in the colonies had become increasingly urgent.³⁰¹ The urgency was based on reports from Stuart and Henri Borel, who were officers at the Bureau for Chinese Affairs in respectively Batavia and Pontianak (near Surabaya). These reports drew three important conclusions. First, Chinese people who resided in the Dutch colonies were, with Qing's support, protesting against Dutch measures that would officially declare them as Dutch Indies subjects. Second, the Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Chinese schools led this movement. These associations used educational and commercial interests as a disguise to achieve their political goals, according to Dutch officials. Third, the anti-Chinese movement is supported by the Chinese legation (Lu Zhengxiang) in The Hague. With these three points, Dutch officials in the Indies urged the highest authorities in The Netherlands to enforce the status of subjectness on the residents of Asian descent *before* the Chinese government would take action.³⁰² According to them, China took

³⁰¹ DNA 2.05.03 – 41 (2) ARA #89 #32370 (letter sent from Buitenzorg, dated 16 April 1909)

³⁰² DNA 2.05.03 – 41 (2) ARA #90 #32380 – 32400 (Document from Batavia 10 April 1909). Reports of Stuart and Borel, dated respectively 27 February 1909 and 4 and 19 March 1909, were carried out before China decreed its Nationality Law on 28 March 1909. Dutch Indies officials foresaw that the Chinese

advantage of the lack of a legal status for the Indies Chinese. Prior to China's recognition of Indies Chinese as nationals of China, Dutch authorities did not find it necessary to establish a legal status of subjectness for the Indies Chinese, for (according to them) all foreign states regarded the Indies-born Chinese as Dutch subjects.³⁰³

Dutch perspective of unnecessary legal statuses for the Indies Chinese changed when China recognized Indies Chinese as its subjects. The movement against Dutch naturalization affected Dutch policies on three levels. On the least significant level, this action would change Dutch policy towards the Chinese Chambers of Commerce and school associations who had been using their educational and commercial agenda to disguise their political ambitions. On the next level, the movement would affect Dutch policies on the Indies Chinese population (*Chineez-en-politiek*) in general. Yet, since the Dutch government believed that the greatest threat came from the outside, the movement would mostly affect Dutch foreign politics.³⁰⁴

Advisor to Japanese Affairs Van Wettum and Secretary of Department of Justice and Governor-Secretary (Gouvernements-Secretaris) De Graeff observed that the anti-Dutch movement was motivated from the outside. Dealing with

government would take the supportive role into action. Hence, with these reports they urged Dutch authorities in The Hague to legalize the status of Indies Chinese as soon as possible. However, the reports of the residencies were not processed from Batavia until 10 April 1909.

³⁰³ DNA 2.05.03 - 41 (2) ARA #92 #32410 - 32440: "Beweging der Jong Chineez-en in NI" (23 March 1909)

³⁰⁴ DNA 2.05.03 - 41 (2) ARA #92 #32410 - 32440

internal threat (that is: the Indies Chinese) was therefore less urgent than resolving external threat. According to them, the incentive that sparked Indies Chinese associations to mobilize the movement against Dutch naturalization was Lu Zhengxiang's letter to the Chamber of Commerce in Surabaya on 6 December 1908. This letter was addressed to Chinese communities in the Indies and was released in a Chinese periodical of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Batavia.³⁰⁵ Lu's letter contained patriotic messages and statements on the importance of nationality, which some officials thought had instigated the anti-Dutch naturalization movement.

Yet, the same officials believed that this movement was part of an ongoing Chinese nationalization movement (i.e. the educational movement that THHK started) that started at the beginning of the twentieth century. Kang Youwei's presence in Java in 1903 further stimulated the Sinicization (Chinese nationalization) movement in the Indies. A Dutch official, Ezerman, believed that Kang Youwei was possibly involved in the Chinese naturalization movement of 1909. Based on the writing style, content, and emphasis on love for the fatherland, Ezerman suspected that Lu Zhengxiang's letter to the Indies Chinese in December 1908 was in fact written by Kang Youwei.³⁰⁶ While Ezerman's claim

³⁰⁵ The reliability of this source is questionable. The incorrect dates suggest that this report contained factual errors.

³⁰⁶ Kang fled overseas after Empress Cixi's coup d'état that interrupted Kang Youwei's Hundred Days of Reform in China in 1898. Although he was persecuted for his reform program, the Qing regime soon adopted many of his reforms onto the agenda of the state. Kang's trip to Java in 1902 had implications for the

cannot be proven with solid evidence, it is possible that the inspiration for obstructing Dutch naturalization by way of a Chinese nationality law originated from Kang. Kang Youwei met Lu Zhengxiang for the first time in The Hague in circa 1906 or 1907. In this period Dutch authorities were devising a naturalization law in order to de-nationalize the “natural” national status of Indies Chinese. Lu Zhengxiang corresponded with the Chambers of Commerce in Surabaya in 1908 soon after he met with Kang Youwei. In an interview Lu expressed that Kang Youwei regarded Lu as his rescuer and that they had built up a friendship. Lu kept the meeting with Kang Youwei in The Hague secret from the Chinese government, for at that time Kang Youwei was persecuted due to his involvement in Hundred Days of Reform movement in China in 1898.³⁰⁷

As mentioned above, although the anti-Dutch naturalization movement was activated and mobilized by Indies Chinese commercial and educational associations, it was supported and possibly incited by China’s envoy Lu

Chinese movement in the Indies. According to Dutch archival sources, his presence was directly related to the first boycott against the Handelsvereeniging HVA in Surabaya to take place. The Dutch feared for another boycott and called boycotts as secret weapon (*geheime wapen*) of the Indies Chinese. See: DNA 2.05.03 – 41 (2) ARA #92 #32410 – 32440 (Beweging der Jong Chineezzen in Nederlandsch-Indië) (document dated ca. 23 March 1909)

³⁰⁷ Kang Youwei’s meeting with Lu Zhengxiang in The Hague probably took place in 1906 or 1907, when Lu was serving as China’s representative in The Netherlands. Dutch authorities were probably not aware of Kang Youwei’s presence in The Netherlands. Dutch authorities were very wary of Kang Youwei’s influence and his activities. They saw him as an instigator of the Chinese movement in the Indies. No records of his visit are found in the Dutch archives; Dutch authorities were therefore probably not aware of it. For the meeting between Kang and Lu see Shi, *Lu Zhengxiangzhuàn*, 72-75.

Zhengxiang in The Hague. Therefore, Dutch authorities found that countering external threat was more important than eradicating internal propagators. Countering intensification between China and the Indies Chinese took place by using two measures. One measure was to limit contacts between Chinese officials and the Indies Chinese by denying entry of officials from China to the Indies. In 1909, when Lu Zhengxiang intended to visit the port cities in the Indonesian archipelago on his way to China, Dutch colonial authorities refused giving him permission of entry to the Indies, fearing that he would further stir Chinese patriotic and anti-Dutch sentiments in the Colony.³⁰⁸



I. Kang Youwei in Batavia. Kang Youwei and THHK's students in Batavia (1 March 1903). Source: *Yindunxia Huaqiaoshi*, (Beijing: Haiyang chubanshe, 1985)

³⁰⁸ DNA 2.05.03 – 41 (2) ARA #92 #32410 – 32440 (Beweging der Jong Chineezzen in Nederlandsch-Indië) (document dated from ca. 23 March 1909)

The second countermeasure was to officially declare the Indies Chinese as Dutch subjects. Rumors that Dutch authorities were creating forced naturalization laws had been going on, but it was not until China's implementation of the first nationality law that the Dutch government put the intended naturalization laws into effect. On 16 April 1909, less than one month after China had decreed its nationality law, Queen Wilhelmina released an explanatory memorandum on the status of Dutch subjects:

Our law does not sufficiently take into account with Dutch *onderdaanschap* [i.e. status of subjectness] of our own people in the Netherlands Indies, whose *onderdaanschap* is resulted from Dutch rule in the Netherlands Indies. The characteristics/ features of *that onderdaanschap* are **not** legally determined. The law of *Nederlanderschap* [i.e. status of Netherlanders who were naturally born Dutch nationals] gives the incorrect impression that the Kingdom of Netherlands does not regard her own people in the Netherlands Indies as *Dutch onderdaan* [i.e. subjects]. The government refers to *vreemdelingen* [i.e. strangers or foreigners] to all those who hold the conditions of *Nederlanderschap* but whose [status] are not legally determined. When speaking of 'Netherlanders', regulations in other laws should be applicable to all Dutch subjects. Otherwise, the division of stranger/ foreigner vs.

Netherlander is inappropriate, because it should refer to all Dutch subjects.

It is therefore necessary to legally determine the conditions of Dutch *onderdaanschap* for those who come from the Netherlands Indies, and to connect the related laws in relation to the *onderdaanschap*.³⁰⁹

By this explanatory note, the Dutch government amended the regulation of the 1892 Law of *Nederlanderschap and ingezetenschap* (staatsblad 268) that declared the possession of citizenship or nationality based on the bloodline principle (*jus sanguinis*). According to this law, all subjects who were not Netherlanders belonged to the category '*vreemdelingen*' (strangers or foreigners). The Dutch government claimed that the foundation of Dutch *onderdaanschap* – the status for non-Dutch persons who were subjected to Dutch rule – was in fact identical to Dutch *Nederlanderschap*, those whose status for persons who were naturally born Dutch (Netherlanders). According to the Queen's clarification, subjects merely lacked legal foundation. Despite the absence of a legal status, the government emphasized it regarded people originating from the Netherlands Indies as its subjects. Moreover, by stating that the laws pertaining to 'Netherlanders' were applicable to all Dutch subjects, the government implied

³⁰⁹ DNA 2.05.90 – 585 #4736 - 4738 Zitting (Meeting) 1908-1909 (- 266), Memorie van Toelichting No. 4. Emphasis present in original. Copied term in 'bold' from the original document

that Dutch subjects would enjoy the same rights as Dutch nationals (i.e. Netherlanders).

The equalization of subjects to nationals was disputable. The reluctance of the Dutch government to consistently apply the term “Netherlanders” to laws meant for its subjects, raises doubt on the equality between subjects and nationals. This conclusion is drawn from the following stipulations in the explanatory note:

The first law, Law of Dutch *onderdaanschap*, applies to those who originate from the Netherlands Indies. [It] will be modeled after the Law of *Nederlanderschap*. However, this has to be taken into account with the circumstances relating to the Indies. Of particular attention is the rule of adopting and losing Dutch *onderdaanschap*. This applies to people and their children who stay outside of the Netherlands Indies [for periods of time]. An important consideration for this is consular protection for subjects who often leave the Netherlands Indies for nearby countries in Asia... If children of Dutch subjects who were born in foreign Asian countries would stay there continuously, they will be too much associated with the people of that state; more than that they would be referred to as Dutch subjects.

The second legal arrangements pertains amendments that are related to Dutch *onderdaanschap*. We have agreed to adjust *only* the *necessary* amendments in lawmaking. There are laws and regulations that the term ‘Netherlanders’ could be substituted, but it is not necessary to do so, because they may not apply to Dutch subjects who originate from the Dutch East Indies. If it appears that it needs to be applied in practice then it is easy to amend it.³¹⁰

Despite that the Law of *Onderdaanschap* followed the Law of *Nederlanderschap* as model, Dutch authorities were unwilling to substitute the term “Netherlanders” with “subjects” and vice versa in legal regulations. This memorandum refused to clearly determine the conditions, rights and privileges of subjects and left room for maintaining the difference between nationals and subjects. The equalization of Dutch subjects to Dutch nationals is therefore merely an arrangement on paper. Legal clarification of the subjects’ statuses was particularly necessary for people who dealt with foreign governments. On the one hand, it defined regulations for people who resided in or traveled to other countries in Asia, such as China. On the other hand, this law would ascertain their legitimacy for controlling its subjects and claim the principle of non-interference directed to other governments. The

³¹⁰ DNA 2.05.90 – 585 #4736-4738 Memorie van Toelichting No. 4. Emphasis added.

main purpose of the Law of Subjectness was to make China's interference with the Indies Chinese in the Netherlands East Indies impossible.³¹¹

The Dutch government officially enacted the Law of Subjectness (*onderdaanschap*) on 10 February 1910 with staatsblad no. 55. This regulation further stipulated the status of subjects after Queen Wilhelmina released her explanatory note on 16 April 1909.³¹² Article 1 of Staatsblad no. 55 stated that according to the law of the status of Netherlander and Domicile, the following people are Dutch *subjects* even when they were not Netherlanders: 1) Those who were born in Netherlands Indies of parents who were settled (居留) in the Indies, 2) Those who were born in the Netherlands Indies whose parents were unknown... 5) The children born outside of Netherlands Indies of parents who were Dutch subjects according to this article (i.e. children of people who were declared as Dutch subjects according to the 1910 statute).³¹³

³¹¹ DNA 2.05.90-585 #4956-58: Letter from Minister of Foreign Affairs Von Swinderen to Dutch envoy in Beijing Beelaerts van Blokland (letter from The Hague, 6 May 1910)

³¹² Prior to this statute there was no law or legal foundation of Dutch *onderdaanschap* for non-Dutch people. Based on article 22 of the law of 6 April 1875 (staatsblad no. 66), which was amended with staatsblad 268 on 12 December 1892, non-Dutch in the Netherlands East Indies were regarded as Dutch subjects even though there are ineligible for *Onderdaanschap*. DNA 2.05.90-585 #4667. Letter from Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Von Swinderen to Beelaerts van Blokland in Beijing.

³¹³ DNA 2.05.90-585 #4667-4672. Notice: Staatsblad of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (No. 55), Law of 10 February 1910, regulating the Status as Netherland Subjects of the Population of Netherland India. 和屬印度居民如何方入籍民之格則例

Compared to the Chinese government that had adopted a very broad definition of Chinese nationals, including those who had settled outside of China for many generations, the Dutch government was narrower with determining people they wanted to include in the colonial society. While China emphasized the bloodline principle, the Dutch, amending the 1892 Law of *Nederlandschap* with the 1910 Status of Subjectness (*Onderdaanschap*), now placed the importance on the principle of birthplace. With the exception of the subjects' children who were born elsewhere, they only perceived those who were born on Dutch territory to settlers as its official subjects.³¹⁴ The principle of *jus soli* was a way for the Dutch to distinguish settlers (often referred to as *peranakan* Chinese) from new immigrants (also called *singkeh* or *totok* Chinese) from China. With the implementation of *Onderdaanschap* the Dutch wanted to exclude new immigrants from becoming Dutch citizens.

³¹⁴ DNA 2.05.90-585 #4667-4672. Notice: Staatsblad of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (No. 55), Law of 10 February 1910.

NOTICE.

STAATSBLOD OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS (No. 55).

LAW of February 10th 1910, regulating the Status as Netherland Subjects of the Population of Netherland India.

ARTICLE 1. The following persons are Netherland subjects even when they are not Netherlanders according to the Law on the Status of Netherlander and Domicile:—

- 1.—Those born in Netherland India of parents settled there, or, if the father is unknown, of a mother settled there.
- 2.—Those born in Netherland India whose parents are unknown.
- 3.—The wife or non-remarried widow of a subject such as is mentioned under (1) or (2).
- 4.—The unmarried children, born out of Netherland India, of a subject such as mentioned in this article, so long as they are not yet 18 years old.
- 5.—The children, born out of Netherland India, of parents who are subjects according to this article, if, after their marriage, or after they have reached their 18th year, they are settled or settle in the kingdom, as well as their wives and unmarried children who are not yet 18 years old, if they also settle in the kingdom.

ARTICLE 2. The status of Netherland subject mentioned in article 1 shall be lost:—

- 1.—By naturalisation in a foreign country. This loss shall extend to the woman married to the naturalised person and to those of his children who are not yet 18 years old.
- 2.—By marrying a man to whom the provisions of article (1), (2) or (5) do not apply.
- 3.—By entering foreign military or State service without the permission of the Governor-General of Netherland India.
- 4.—In the event of sojourn in a foreign country, by omitting to give notice to a Netherland consular officer in that country within three months after arriving, and, in case of continued sojourn, by omitting to repeat that notice within the first three months of every calendar year.

The notice given by a husband or father for his wife or children, and by a widow for her children, shall have the same force as if the notice had been given by the wife or children themselves.

A person who has lost the status of Netherland subject according to the provisions laid down in (4) and who has not thereafter become situated in circumstances such as are mentioned in (1), (2), or (3), shall reacquire the status of Netherland subject by settling in Netherland India.

ARTICLE 3. This law shall also be binding for the colonies and possessions in other parts of the world.

第壹款以上條款所有本國屬土亦當遵守

- 大和國則例(第五拾五條)即和歷壹千玖百壹拾年貳月拾號所立之詳明和風印度居民如何方入籍民之格則例
- 第壹款按照本國土民及居住則例下列人等須非本國土民惟體均作籍民論
- (甲) 凡在和風印度生產者其父母係在該處居留經不知父名但其母係在該處居留者
- (乙) 凡在和風印度生產惟父母均不知名者
- (丙) 凡以上甲乙兩款所言籍民之妻或守寡之婦等
- (丁) 凡籍民所生子女非在和風印度出世如未嫁娶並年未及拾捌歲者
- (戊) 凡籍民所生子女非在和風印度出世且已嫁娶或已年及拾捌歲者但在本國或屬土居留方得作籍民論再此等籍民之妻及其未嫁娶或年未及拾捌歲之子女等若均在木國或屬土居留者亦入籍民之格
- 第貳款所有籍民人等如有違犯下列條款者即作出籍
- (甲) 凡在外國入籍者雖其妻並年未及拾捌歲之子女等亦不得作籍民論
- (乙) 凡婦女出嫁其夫不是第壹款之甲乙丙戊各條款所言之人者
- (丙) 凡未領有和風印度總督憲堂准照擅入外國軍界或投身外國政界者
- (丁) 凡喬遷外國於到步叁月內不依例在駐劄該處本國領事呈報者如接連寄居但不於每年春季內依例在駐劄該處本國領事再行呈報者
- 爲夫若代其妻呈報爲父者或爲寡婦者若代其子女呈報即作其妻或其子女等親行呈報
- 丁節所言出籍人等如未常違犯甲乙丙各條款後復回和風印度居留仍可爲籍民

J. Dutch Law of Colonial Subjectness (Staatsblad no. 55, 1910)
Source: Dutch National Archives 2.05.90-585

Eliminating Undesirable Transnationals

The creations of the Chinese nationality law and Dutch *Onderdaanschap* were tools for the competing empires to attract political loyalty and secure political allegiance of Indies Chinese, but it also served as a means to eliminate undesirable overseas Chinese people and their transnational practices that journeyed across the East Asian and Southeast Asian waters. In the nineteenth century both Chinese and Dutch authorities identified overseas Chinese people abusing their national statuses for personal pursuit and benefit. In an attempt to remove undesirables, both authorities (particularly Chinese authorities) were seeking ways of exerting political control over them.

China's recognition of overseas Chinese as nationals of China based on "natural ties" fostered the idea of nationhood, but at the same time it also created opportunities for overseas Chinese merchants to make flexible use of their "national statuses." Hence, in addition to its uniting and nationalistic effect, the creation of the nationality law was also a means to control the behavior of overseas Chinese merchants who, as transnational subjects moving across various imperial boundaries, evaded judicial penalties. They conveniently used their statuses as subjects of both the Chinese and foreign empires. China's removal of the emigration ban in 1893 and the re-recognition of the overseas Chinese allowed returnees to go back to China as "Chinese nationals," because

Qing authorities were particularly interested in attracting returnees who could help stimulate industries and strengthen the nation.³¹⁵

The image of the overseas Chinese was paradoxical. On the one hand, overseas Chinese were considered as assets of China's survival. On the other hand, they were often seen as those who hindered China's authority by avoiding its judicial system. One of the main complaints was that they interchangeably used their national and foreign statuses to maximize their personal benefits and evaded imperial regulations. Upon returning to China, these returnees, mostly merchants, used their rights and privileges as subjects of China, but when they encountered lawsuits or court cases they claimed they were "foreigners" by presenting their naturalization papers or travel passes that were issued by Western powers. Such incidents occurred when subjects attempted to escape from crimes, debt, and bankruptcy. When these situations occurred, the transnational subject often rapidly changed its status as a Chinese subject to the status of a foreign citizen.

The Court found it problematic that it was unable to exert control on these subjects. The unequal treaties that China signed since 1860 gave imperialist powers the right of consular presence and jurisdiction in territories that were ceded to them. China was unable to exert control in these territories and was unable to hold trials over subjects who acquired foreign citizenship statuses. The

³¹⁵ In 1728, Qing emperor Yongzheng banned Chinese emigration. Those who went abroad were banned and were sentenced to death in case they would return to China. The imperial edict of 13 September 1893, however, invalidated the edict of 1728. See: DNA 2.05.90-585 #4665. Note that illegal migration did take place in this period.

Chinese court found lenient Western naturalization policies problematic, because it created room for the overseas Chinese to abuse their foreign statuses at the expense of China's benefit. According to the unequal treaties, foreigners held the right to be trialed by foreign jurisdiction. Therefore, foreign citizens that committed crime in China were protected by foreign laws. China found law evasion problematic and aimed at claiming complete control of the system. It suggested that crime committers should not be allowed to use their foreign statuses unless their crimes were completely cleared.³¹⁶

Peoples of Chinese descent who became Portuguese subjects, for example, made use of this strategy. The Court complained that Western authorities in and near China, especially the Portuguese government in Macao, had easily issued naturalization certificates for political and economic reasons. Recipients of naturalized papers were to residents in China who were allegedly born in the colonies. These peoples of Chinese descent lived in China and received political and civil rights as subjects of China, but turned to their foreign statuses for law evasion when they wanted to receive privileges for foreigners.³¹⁷ The Court

³¹⁶ Yang Yuhui 楊毓輝, "Lun gaiji xieyue wei guoji zuiyao zhi wenti 論改籍協約為國際最要之問題", *Dongfang Zazhi 東方雜誌* no. 7 (21 august 1908): 8-18; DNA 2.05.03-39 Droeze's report (Hong Kong, September 1896) stated that the overseas Chinese (whom he referred to as the "foreign Chinese") behaved and considered themselves as completely Chinese in China when it suits their benefit. They traveled through China with a passport and received higher status than "domestic Chinese"; Tsai Chutung, "The Chinese Nationality Law, 1909", *The American Journal of International Law*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (April 1910): 405-6.

³¹⁷ Hungdah Chiu, "Nationality and International Law in Chinese Perspective," *Occasional Papers/ Reprints Series in Contemporary Asian Studies*, no. 3, 1990 (98): 5-6; Tsai Chutung, "The Chinese Nationality Law, 1909", 405-6; Yang Yuhui

aimed at ending the situational use of Chinese and foreign statuses and wanted to exert control over residents in China whom they regarded as subjects of China.³¹⁸

The Chinese government considered overseas Chinese (華民) as its nationals but the lack of a nationality law allowed room for them to use both nationalities, which were the Chinese nationality based on blood ties and a non-Chinese nationality through naturalization. In China there were no rules that forbade domestic people (內國人) for adopting a foreign nationality. By taking Russia as an example, where it was not permissible to simultaneously hold two nationalities, China was looking for ways that disfavored the possession of dual citizenship.³¹⁹ Overseas Chinese's flexible use of their nationalities undermined China's sovereignty on its own territory. According to the Chinese periodical *Dongfang Zazhi* (東方雜誌), an independent and self-governing (獨立自主) nation needed three things, namely territory (土地), people (人民), and sovereignty (統治權). Analysts believed that the priority was to obtain complete sovereignty. If sovereignty had not been complete, how could China speak of independence and self-governance? Overseas Chinese flexible use of nationalities damaged China's power to rule. They were loyal to the fatherland, but when they committed a crime they turned to foreign countries for protection. Hence, from

楊毓輝, "Lun gaiji xieyue wei guoji zuiyao zhi wenti 論改籍協約為國際最要之問題", 10.

³¹⁸ Tsai, "Chinese Nationality Law," 405-6

³¹⁹ Yang, "Lun gaiji xieyue wei guoji zuiyan zhi wenti 論改籍協約為國際最要之問題," 8

the perspective of Chinese authorities, it was important to exert complete authority on them by way of a nationality law. The law would be a necessary tool for ascertaining a citizen's (*guomin* 國民) absolute obedience (服從) to the state.³²⁰

The Qing regime was not the only authority that was affected by the overseas Chinese flexible use of statuses. At least as early as 1896, Dutch authorities identified that journeying Chinese strategically used Dutch travel permits to gain consular protection rights for undertaking businesses in China. A lengthy report by Haver Droeze, Dutch consul-general in Hong Kong at the time, was particularly useful for gaining insight on this matter. The consulate in Hong Kong was the main Dutch consular representative in Southern China and monitored people's movements in the whole region.³²¹ Droeze observed that movements and activities of Indies Chinese in China generally did not extend beyond the provinces of Guangdong and Fujian. The majority of Chinese from the Dutch Indies concentrated in Canton, Swatow and Amoy along the Chinese coast. In normal circumstances, most travelers and migrants who settled in China as Chinese subjects did not seek Dutch consular protection. Yet, Droeze identified

³²⁰ "Lun jiri yiding guojifa 論今日宜定國籍法," 35-37; Yang, "Lun gaiji xieyue weiguoji zuiyao zhiwenti 論改籍協約為國際最要之問題," 8.

³²¹ Several Dutch consul generals were stationed in Southern China to monitor movements of people (such as coolies) and to report current affairs to the government seat in The Hague and consular branches in Netherlands East Indies. In this period, Dutch consul general in Hong Kong had centralized all consular affairs in Hong Kong only.

instances of Indies Chinese merchants who used their travel permits (*reispassen*) as personal identification with the purpose of receiving Dutch consular protection in these areas in certain occasions.³²² This statute gave Dutch subjects who were not Dutchmen the right to receive protection upon registration at a Dutch consulate.

Indies Chinese suffered from restrictions due its Foreign Orientals status in the Indies, but enjoyed flexibility and a higher status once they returned to China.³²³ Through their “dual statuses” these transnational subjects used flexible strategies, such as circumventing law and connections with other Chinese, to maximize their personal benefits. Although they were subjected to restrictions in their political, social and economic lives in the Dutch colony, Indies Chinese merchants who traveled to China upgraded themselves to the wealthier and middle classes in China. Merchants often took advantage of their statuses as

³²² DNA 2.05.03-39. Report by Droeze, Hong Kong September 1896: “Nota betreffende de consulaire bescherming in China van Nederlandsch-Indische ingezetenen, die geen Nederlander zijn volgens de wet van 12 December 1892 (staatsblad no. 268).” Droeze mentioned the following firms and merchants: Lie Khong Fock – Goan Hoeat & Co Merchant, Fan Khoen Giok, Go Tjian, Go Kering, Bee Kee & Co, Lie Sin Seng, Lie Kian Goan, Lim Choa Ghee, Lim Soa Fiat, Lie Yok Djin, Nieman & Co. Note on travel passes: until 1910 the Indies Chinese did not have a legal status of Dutch subordination. However, the Dutch government issued travel passes to its subjects who were traveling (both in the Indies and abroad). The Indies Chinese used these travel passes as personal identification documents when dealing with Chinese authorities and Dutch consulates outside of the Indies. It is very possible that Chinese authorities mistook or treated these travel passes as proof of foreign nationality.

³²³ The literal translation of the Dutch term “Vreemde Oosterlingen” is “Foreigner” or “Strange Easterners.” This term had been used to refer to Chinese and Arabs in the Indies. This category of people has been often referred to as “Foreign Orientals” in English sources.

foreign subjects and were engaged in illegal businesses. They resided in China or would send their sons to Chinese port cities where they worked as commercial agents for firms in the Straits Settlements, Siam, Indochina, Manila, and the Netherlands East Indies. These commercial intermediaries were central for the functioning of the commercial network between China and Southeast Asia.³²⁴ Their knowledge of China, linguistic abilities and dual statuses of being both a Chinese national and foreign subject gave them room to thrive in commerce. These merchants applied flexible strategies not only to evade Chinese law, but also foreign law.

Tracing Dutch subjects who engaged in illegal business operations was hardly possible, according to Droeze. Indies Chinese merchants often worked together with business partners who were subjects of China or other foreign powers, such as British or Spanish subjects. When problems occurred, it was not uncommon for the Indies Chinese in question to disappear and avoid Dutch law. Dutch authorities were unable to confront and further investigate their business partners for they were not subject to Dutch judicial system.³²⁵

³²⁴ DNA 2.05.03-39; Liem Twan Djie. *De distribueerende tusschenhandel der Chineezzen op Java (The distributive intermediate trade of the Chinese on Java)*. ('s-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1952)

³²⁵ DNA 2.05.03-39. Droeze (Hong Kong, September 1896): "Nota betreffende de consulaire bescherming in China van Nederlandsch-Indische ingezetenen, die geen Nederlander zijn volgens de wet van 12 December 1892 (staatsblad no. 268), pp. 19-23. It should be noted that only Dutch subjects of Chinese descent applied law evasion. Foreigners other than Chinese, such as the Javanese, Malay and Arabs did not have a record of misusing its Dutch status in China (Droeze, p. 19).

Droeze was not in favor of providing consular protection to Foreign Orientals due to these “illegitimate businesses” (*duistere zaken*). He suggested applying the rule of consular protection to Indies indigenous inhabitants only. He commented that other Foreign Orientals, such as Moslems and indigenous inhabitants had not taken advantage of their Dutch statuses in China.³²⁶ Droeze was concerned about the image of the Dutch empire. He believed that protection for the Indies Chinese would provide more harm than good. The Indies Chinese were not of great importance to the Dutch state, according to him. In China, the Indies Chinese only identified themselves as members of the Dutch empire for practical reasons, such as enjoying more freedom in conducting businesses. Their identification with the Dutch empire was therefore not based on political loyalty.³²⁷ This problem continued to persist in 1907, when Dutch officials remarked that the Dutch Indies Chinese largely considered themselves as Chinese until they encountered judicial problems.³²⁸ Therefore, when Holland and China signed the consular agreement in 1911, both parties agreed that Indies Chinese would lose its status as Dutch subjects and regain its status as a Chinese national.³²⁹

³²⁶ DNA 2.05.03-39. Droeze (Hong Kong, September 1896), p. 23. This remark is understandable, for these groups were not considered as Chinese nationals. Hence, they did not have the opportunity enjoy dual statuses in China.

³²⁷ DNA 2.05.03-39. Droeze (Hong Kong, September 1896), p. 23.

³²⁸ DNA 2.05.03.43 (1) (ARA #208 #3607-09).

³²⁹ BB 2195

Flexible use of various identification statuses was not only a tool for law evasion, but was also a way for Indies Chinese to escape from racial discrimination. Some merchants presented themselves as Japanese subjects for the purpose of elevating their positions *within* the Dutch colonial society. After Japan colonized Taiwan in 1895, for example, some overseas Chinese merchants traveled to Taiwan and took the opportunity to become subjects of the Japanese empire by buying land property. Japanese authorities revealed that many *Taiwan Sekimin*, overseas Chinese who applied for Japanese nationality, held multiple nationalities for convenience. A study showed that merchants of Fujianese origins who were active across China, Taiwan, and Southeast Asia, in particular, benefited from acquiring Japanese nationality statuses. A Japanese nationality would allow these merchants to be exempted from *lijin* taxes in China and would also allow them to open commercial establishments in Taiwan.³³⁰

The Japanese imperial government welcomed the opportunity to strengthen its ties with overseas Chinese merchants. Japan, stepping out international isolation and aiming at becoming a self-reliant empire, was expanding toward Southeast Asia for stimulating its economy. The location of Taiwan, with its geographical proximity to China and Southeast Asia, was a lucrative location for Japan to pursue its goals. Japan was well aware of the power of overseas Chinese merchants in Southeast Asia and China. Overseas Chinese

³³⁰ See Lin Man-Houng (2001). "Overseas Chinese Merchants and Multiple Nationality: A Means for Reducing Commercial Risk (1895-1935)," *Modern Asian Studies*, 35: 985-1009.

with its extensive economic work that stretched across the South China Sea and Southeast Asian waters dominated the economy of Southeast Asia and stimulated the economy of China. Therefore, in the early stages of Japan's expansion toward Southeast Asia, Japan granted special privileges and created opportunities for overseas Chinese that helped Japan realize its southward ambitions. Before the Qing and the Dutch empires officially declared the legal statuses of overseas Chinese as its subjects, Japan already issued "naturalization papers" for the overseas Chinese, including Indies Chinese, who upon their return to the Dutch Indies could enjoy the rights of a "Japanese." Kwik Djoen Eng, for instance, was a wealthy man from the Indies who had naturalized himself as a Japanese subject. He maintained good relations with the Japanese consul and other Japanese subjects and was interested in contributing large sums to the Taiwan Bank. This financial institution was established in Taiwan during Japanese rule. Through this bank Japan established relationships with overseas Chinese. Dutch authorities were worried that the Chinese would ally with the increasingly powerful Japan.³³¹

One of the merchants who adopted multiple nationalities and took advantage of economic purposes was Guo Chunyang, an Indies Chinese who held Dutch, British, Japanese, and Chinese nationalities. Guo's business with its headquarters in the Indies branched out to Xiamen, Zhangzhou, Shanghai, Tianjin,

³³¹ BB #4370: Insulinde en Japan (17 November 1916)

Taiwan, and Hong Kong.³³² Guo, who left the Indies as Dutch Indies Chinese and returned to the Dutch colony as a Japanese subject. He was well aware of the privileges and benefits of being a subject of the Japanese empire. However, adopting a Japanese nationality was not merely a way for overseas Chinese to escape from legal and economic restrictions that were imposed by governmental authorities. Japanese nationality and the fact that Japanese subjects received a status and treatment that was equal to Europeans motivated the Indies Chinese to fight for racial uplift in the colonial society. As a merchant who held various nationalities and who hoped that the entire Indies Chinese population would be relieved from colonial discrimination, it is therefore not surprising that Guo became a leader who activated the Indies Chinese movement for creating the Chinese nationality law in 1909.

³³² Guo Chunyang (1859-1935) was one of the wealthiest merchants in the Dutch East Indies. He established wealth by engaging in sugar trade, rubber, tea trade, and banking. In addition, he opened schools, became the president of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Java, and was the founder of Confucian Association "Great Unity." Born in Tongan, Fujian with humble family backgrounds, Guo moved to Semarang in 1877 at the age of eighteen due to his family connections and engaged in commerce. Under Guo's management of forty-two years the company he worked for made over 3 million guilders (i.e. Dutch currency at the time). After Guo inherited the business, the company accumulated than 10 million guilders. In addition to expanding the business into a transnational company that extended from Indonesia to China, Japan-ruled Taiwan and British-ruled Hong Kong, Guo established his own company Ching Siong & Co, a company that was mainly occupied with exporting refined sugar for its market in China. Chiong Sing was headquartered in Hong Kong and had branches in Singapore. By 1934, Guo's sugar company controlled 38% of Java's sugar supply and became the largest sugar company in the Indies. By this he surpassed the market share in the sugar industry of his rival Ong Tiong Ham (Huang Zhonghan). See Lin, "Overseas Chinese Merchants and Multiple Nationality," 985-1009.

Indies Chinese succeeded in persuading the Qing government to create China's first nationality law in 1909. Fearing that it would lose control over its colonial subjects, the Dutch government hastily officially declared Indies Chinese (especially the settled community) as its colonial subjects. Although the Chinese nationality law was declared invalid in 1911 just before the fall of the Qing empire, the Chinese national law, though short-lived, motivated the next generation of Indies Chinese to launch the re-nationalization movement in the next decade.

Conclusion

How, why, under which circumstances, and on what conditions were the laws of Chinese nationality vis-à-vis Dutch colonial subjectness decreed? The first nationality law of China was declared upon the request of the Dutch Indies Chinese. Physically situated on Dutch colonial territory but emotionally and nationally connected to China, they believed that China's protection would help them relieve from colonial discriminatory policies. The notion of China as a political patron developed with the re-recognition of the overseas Chinese as nationals of China at the end of the nineteenth century. Being a Chinese national based on "natural" ties would include them as members of the Chinese state and nation but would not effectively protect them from overcoming Dutch colonialism. Upon learning the news that the Dutch metropolitan government was in the process of declaring the Indies Chinese as colonial subjects by law, the Indies Chinese community, led by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Java and

mediated by the envoy and secretary of China's legation in The Hague, urgently organized a nationalization campaign and requested China to launch the nationality law based on the principle of bloodline. In their opinion, a nationality that was sanctioned and protected by law would reinforce their status as subjects of China, which was particularly necessary when dealing with foreign governments. Creating a Chinese nationality law was, according to them, the only way to obstruct Dutch colonial subjectness by force effectively.

What started as a campaign to thwart a rumored, not yet concretely devised Dutch policy on forced naturalization, in fact accelerated and concretized the law of Dutch colonial subjectness. Although Dutch authorities considered creating a legal status for the Indies Chinese as early as late 1906, the intention of launching the colonial law of subjectness (*Onderdaanschap*) did not materialize and was not definitively formulated until China had decreed its nationality law in 1909. Competition with China as the legitimate ruler over the Dutch Indies Chinese caused Holland to immediately change and officially formulate its definition of the colonial subject, followed by the declaration of the Law of Subjectness in 1910.

The dynamics between the Indies Chinese and the Chinese and Dutch empires during the process of the creation of nationality and colonial laws of subjectness suggests that these three forces upheld conflicting notions of authority and legitimacy. Adhering to Westphalian notion of sovereignty, the Dutch considered themselves as the sole legitimate ruling authorities that possessed control over the people in their territory. They rejected China's

political interference of Indies Chinese affairs in the Dutch possessions by denying China's consular presence and by claiming people who were born on Dutch territory as its colonial subjects. Dutch law of 1910 (no. 55) responded to China's claim of being the ruling authority of its people. The emphasis on birthplace revealed that the Dutch government wanted to clarify that they enjoyed sovereign power over the rule of Chinese born in the Dutch Indies, for they were born on *their* territory.³³³

Not considering the intervention of overseas Chinese affairs as illegitimately or inappropriately interfering with the "internal" affairs of other states, the Qing regime propagated its involvement of overseas Chinese affairs as its duty of protecting its citizens. It was its right to do so because the overseas Chinese were, in Qing's opinion, "Chinese nationals" based on the idea of shared race. By allowing the overseas Chinese to adopt the Chinese nationality law they officially would become part of the Chinese state. From the perspective of the Chinese empire, the legal institutionalization of nationality not only solidified the political relationship between the Chinese empire and its national overseas, but more importantly, confirmed their relationship in the international political system.

³³³ Note on the philosophy of Western states: Western states connected legitimacy of rule with territory. The Netherlands East Indies was under Dutch possession. Hence, from the viewpoint of the Dutch government, they were the legitimate and sovereign rulers of Chinese who were born in their territory. Immigrants (those born in China) were born in Chinese territory and hence not subject to Dutch rule.

The institutionalization of nationality within a legal foundation would help China deal with foreign governments concerning overseas Chinese affairs. This was needed not only to fulfill the wishes of the overseas Chinese, but also to control overseas Chinese people who attempted to evade Chinese law when committing crimes. Crime committers often used foreign naturalization papers and travel passes, such as Portuguese, Japanese, British, and Dutch statuses, to escape from the Chinese judicial system. If the Indies Chinese were legally excluded from the Dutch colonial society and legally included in the Chinese state, the nationality law would give its authorities the legitimate right to intervene with Indies Chinese affairs. By launching legal statuses, both the Qing and Dutch governments claimed to be legitimate rulers over the Indies Chinese. It was a mutual sign to the other state that it was their right to govern its people.

The Indies Chinese shared mutual understandings of legitimacy with China, but refused to accept the Dutch colonizer as the ruling authority. The petitions of the Indies Chinese to Chinese authorities for the institutionalization of the nationality law and their request for state protection revealed that the Indies Chinese considered China as the sole legitimate ruling authority. Based on the content of their written requests and their longing for the protection of the “ancestral” land, it can be concluded that, in their opinion, legitimacy of authority was not based on a ruler’s possession of territory, but was constructed on emotional legitimacy and human will. Although the majority of the Indies Chinese have settled in the Dutch East Indies for generations, they disapproved Dutch policy on forced naturalization that was enforced without their agreement and

beyond their will. In their opinion, a nationality that is legally sanctioned and protected by law would reinforce their status as subjects of China, which was particularly necessary when dealing with the Dutch government. Creating a Chinese nationality law was, according to them, the only way to obstruct Dutch colonial subjectness by force effectively.

CHAPTER 6

THE ROAD TO EQUALITY

In 1920 Dutch Indies, 29050 households (counting 92612 people) expressed their desire to become nationals of China (中華國籍) by signing declaration forms. These names, collected from 261 stations in various cities, were compiled into six volumes. The purpose was to present these lists of names to the Chinese government along with their petitions for re-nationalization.³³⁴ The Indies Chinese lost their legal and official status as nationals of China and officially became Dutch subjects after China signed the consular treaty with Holland on 8 May 1911.³³⁵ The Dutch Indies Chinese believed that their ongoing suffering from Dutch colonialism was due, in large part, to the absence of Chinese state protection. In their opinion, the most effective method for overcoming colonial suffering was not directly confronting the Dutch government (like most anti-colonial movements in Southeast Asia where the colonized subjects often directly resisted colonizers with various forms of resistance) but through diplomatic intervention of the Chinese government. Through diplomatic intervention they hoped to attain equal treatment in the Dutch colony.

³³⁴ AS 03-23-023-03-011: Petition from Zhu Moushan 朱茂山 (Tjou Bou-san), head of *Sin Po* 新報, to Ministry of Foreign Affairs (waijiaobu) (29 April 1920)

³³⁵ AS 03-23-024-01-008 (25 May 1920); DNA 2.05.90-548 #7120-22 (Van Mouw, Batavia, 5 Feb 1919).

Similar to the pioneers of the Chinese nationalization movement of 1908-1909, supporters of the re-nationalization movement a decade later believed that establishing official ties with China was the most effective way to detach their political affiliation with the Dutch empire. State-to-state negotiations were the key for escaping from Dutch colonial rule, and a new generation of petitioners urged Chinese authorities to negotiate for their nationality status and rights with the Dutch in the hope of eradicating Dutch discriminative policies.

The earliest petition that my research discovered dated from February 1917, and the number of petitions rapidly increased in the years of 1919 and 1920 when the Indies Chinese across Java launched an organized campaign for revising the stipulations of the Sino-Dutch treaty of 1911. Similar to the Indies Chinese's movement against Dutch naturalization in 1908-1909, which prompted China to urgently promulgate the Chinese nationality law, the majority of these petitioners originated from commercial and educational circuits. Moreover, this movement was well organized and underwent thorough planning, unlike the movement of 1908-1909 that erupted in an ad-hoc manner. Promoters of the re-nationalization movement understood the power of diplomacy and written agreements. This generation of petitioners established connections with transnational Indies Chinese beyond the Dutch colony and was well acquainted with law and civil rights. Compared to the movement of 1908-1909 that was stimulated and closely intervened by Chinese diplomat Lu Zhengxiang and its secretary Wang Guangqi, organizers of the current movement were thoroughly

prepared. The Indies Chinese took charge of directing the course of proceedings with minimal intervention of Chinese officials.

The re-nationalization movement gave rise to the emergence of new associations that were founded on a collective spirit. The first meeting of the Colonists' League (also known as Huaqiao Lianhehui 華僑聯合會), a general assembly of Indies Chinese representatives from the principal cities of Java, took place in Batavia on 20 July 1919. The assembly could be seen as the conception of the movement as a collective unit. Indies Chinese from various regions acted unanimously against Dutch subjectness by way of recovering their status as nationals of China. In their opinion, re-nationalization was a way to escape from direct Dutch colonial rule, to obtain equal treatment, and to safeguard their lives and assets in the Indies.

Prior to the general meeting, each port city established its regional association within three months' time. On 23 January 1919 the Colonists' League of Eastern Java 荷屬東部華僑聯合會³³⁶ was formed in Surabaya, followed by the

³³⁶ Members of the Colonists' League in Surabaya included: Chen Xianyuan 陳顯源 (recipient of 3rd rank Order of the Golden Grain; President of THHK-Surabaya 泗水中華會館, President of the General Association of Chinese Education in the Dutch Indies 荷屬華僑教育總會會長); Lin Qiugui 林秋桂 (Board member of THHK-school in Surabaya 泗水中華學校董事); Li Shuanghui 李雙輝 (President of Chinese Chamber of Commerce-Surabaya 泗水商會會長); Zhang Shibao 張石寶 (President of Shengqihui Association 聲氣會會長); Cai Jingxing 蔡敬興 (President of Hehehui Association 和合會長); Chen Bingjie 陳秉節 (Board member of Shengqihui 聲氣會董事); Lin Tianguai 林添貴 (Editor of Chunqiubao 春秋報撰述); Ye Jianai 葉建愛 (president of Zhonghuahui 中華總會董事); Yan Xihan 顏西漢 (president of Zhonghua zonghui 中華總會董事); Chen Xuzhi 陳續智 (Vice-

establishment of the Colonists' Leagues of Western Java 荷屬西部華僑聯合會³³⁷ and Central Java 中部華僑聯合會³³⁸, respectively established on 30 March 1919 in Batavia and 25 April 1919 in Semarang. These three associations collaborated under the collective name of the Colonists' League 華僑聯合會. Committee members representing various regional associations of the League varied from seven to twelve people. The leagues were run by leading members of the most prominent associations, including the Chinese Chambers of Commerce, Tiong Hoa

President of Hehehui Association 和合會副會長); Xiong Li 熊理 (Observer of education in the Dutch possessions 荷屬群島視學); Wang Shaowen 王少文 (President of Baoyushe Zhenwen-school 保虞社振文學校總理) . See *Shen Pao* 22 January 1920.

³³⁷ Members of the Colonists' League in Batavia included: Qiu Xieting 丘燮亭 (recipient of 4th rank Order of the Golden Grain; President of Chinese Chamber of Commerce-Batavia 巴城商會會長); Huang Xuanyou 黃宣猷 (Managing Director of Chinese Chamber of Commerce-Batavia 巴城商會坐辦); Li Yinfu 黎殷甫 (Vice-president of THHK Patekwan-Batavia 巴城八茶館中華會副總理); Zhang Ruisheng 張瑞生, Jian Chengquan 簡澄泉 and Huang Kunyu 黃坤輿 (managers of THHK-school Patekwan-Batavia 巴城八茶館中華學校主任幹事); Chen Bingding 陳丙丁 (President of National Goods Company 中華國貨公司;智育會館總理 president of Zhiyu-Association 智育會館總理); Chen Junli 陳俊禮 and Liu Yulan 劉玉蘭(Xinbao/ Sin Po editors 新報編輯 Xinbao editor); Chen Bopeng 陳伯鵬 (President of Huaqiao Subaoshe/ Soe Po Sia 華僑書報社社長); Xu Donglin 徐東林 and Lin Shoujian 林守堅 (president of Guangzhaohui 廣肇會館會長). See *Shen Pao* 22 January 1920.

³³⁸ Members of the Colonists' League in Semarang included: Zheng Junhuai 鄭俊懷 (President of Chinese Chamber of Commerce-Semarang 三寶壟商會會長; President of THHK-Semarang 中華會館總理); Zheng Xiuli 鄭修立, Cheng Guangtan 陳光談 and Lin Qinxiang 林欽祥 (Managers of THHK-school Semarang 三寶壟中華學校幹事主任); Ye Ruichang 葉端昌, Yin Yanzuo 郭延祚 and Guo Jingxing 郭景星 (Managers at *Zhongyang Jawabao* 中央爪哇報經理). See *Shen Pao* 22 January 1920.

Hwee Koan (THHK 中華會館) and the largest Sino-Malay newspaper in the Indies *Sin Po* (新報).

The general assembly on 20 July 1919 was held at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Batavia and prompted discussions about the position of Chinese in the Indies and commercial developments.³³⁹ The League periodically held meetings and formed an international study committee of six members including Hou Deguang (候德廣) that would study the case of the Sino-Dutch treaty of 1911.³⁴⁰ At the meeting in July, committee members publicly elected Xiong Li (熊理) representing the Chinese from Surabaya³⁴¹, Huang Xuanyou (黃宣猷)

³³⁹ There were circa seventeen attendants. Lim Kim Siang and Han Xiqi were representatives of Semarang. The Kiang Sing and Tio Siek Poo were delegates from Surabaya, Thio Peng Gwan was a representative from Pekalongan. Xiong Li was also present. *Perniagaan* 21 July 1919; DNA 2.05.90-548 #7093-96 Letter from Mouw (Batavia, 25 July 1919), *Shen Pao* 22 January 1920.

³⁴⁰ Hou Deguang (also transliterated as Hauw Tek Kong), a merchant from Batavia, took charge of processing six volumes of signatures of Indies Chinese who desired for recovering their status as nationals of China. When he went to Shanghai, Dutch authorities accused him of stimulating Indies Chinese agitation against the Dutch government and damaging the relationship between the Indies Chinese and Dutch authorities. See AS 03-23-023-03-011; BB #2193 (17 May 1922); DNA 2.05.90-548 #7143-45: “修改中和約意見書展期辦理” (6 Feb 1920).

³⁴¹ Xiong Li (熊理), also documented as Xiong Hong San, Him Li, Hsiung Li, Joeng Foeng Sam, was Director of Chinese General Chamber of Commerce in the Netherlands East Indies. Xiong went to the Indies in December 1915 with a Dutch visa that was requested by China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. By way of the Ministry of Education in Beijing, he became appointed head of Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan (THHK) in Surabaya. He was often referred to as Educational Observer (*Onderwijs-inspecteur*) in the Dutch archives. See DNA2.05.38-2787 #8715-8720.

representing the Chinese from Batavia³⁴² and Han Xiqi (韓希琦) representing the Chinese from Semarang³⁴³ to travel to China and personally request the Chinese government in Beijing to start negotiations with the Dutch government on behalf of the Indies Chinese community.³⁴⁴ They had an audience with the president of China on 31 March 1920,³⁴⁵ and from the years 1919 to 1921 these elected

³⁴² Huang Xuanyu (黃宣猷) or Oey Swan-joe (Oey Soean Yoe) was Secretary of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Batavia and Director of Oeij Ek Kiam 黃益謙 (Exploitation Enterprises). According to Dutch archival sources, he was a Dutch subject and was at the time circa sixty years old. His family, of Fujianese origin, had settled in the Netherlands Indies for generations. He was part of the Fujianese association in China, where he complained about his situation. He had connections with influential people in China, including Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs. Due to his involvement in the movement for revision of the Sino-Dutch treaty, Dutch authorities attempted to deny his re-entry from China to Java. Seeing him as a threat for public peace and order (*openbare rust en orde*), the Dutch were seeking for ways to invalidate his status of Dutch subjectness. See DNA 2.05.38-278 #8663-8337: letter from Oudendijk to Min. For. Aff. (from Beijing 22 June 1920 to The Hague 9 Aug 1920).

³⁴³ According to Dutch sources, Han Xiqi (韓希琦) was likely connected with Jinan Xuetang (also called the 'Java-school') in Nanjing. Han traveled to the Indies for educational affairs. See DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8715-8720. Han was in Semarang at the time the Indies Chinese movement started. See DNA #7093-96.

³⁴⁴ The trip was funded by collective money of various *Huaqiao* communities. At the time when the meeting took place, only the Chinese from Surabaya had prepared for sufficient financial funding. They were reluctant to fund the traveling fees for representatives from Semarang and Batavia. I am unsure who, in the end, funded the trip. See DNA 2.05.90-548 #7093-96; *Shen Pao* 22 January 1920 “和屬全體華僑聯合大會呈北政府文 (Petition to Beijing Government submitted by collective Huaqiao-associations in the Dutch possessions)”; (DNA 2.05.90-548 #7153-73).

³⁴⁵ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8735-41.

spokesmen, along with Qiu Xieting (丘燮亭)³⁴⁶, Chen Xianyuan (陳顯源)³⁴⁷ and Zheng Junhuai (鄭俊懷)³⁴⁸ (chairmen of the Colonist's League Western, Eastern and Central Java, respectively) sent petitions on behalf of the Indies Chinese community to authorities in China.

Appointed petitioners were engaged in educational and commercial affairs and traveled between Java and coastal China. As an Educational Observer, Xiong Li observed the Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan-schools in Java. At the time of the movement he was in the process of planning his travel to China for educational affairs. In this period, Han Xiqi was visiting Semarang to carry out a task of Jinan College in Nanjing and planned to return to China after his assignment. Jinan (暨南學堂) was the first school in China that the Chinese government established for the overseas Chinese.³⁴⁹ Huang Xuanyou, a trilingual in Chinese, Dutch and Malay, was Secretary of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Batavia who also worked as Secretary for the Chinese Consul General in Batavia.³⁵⁰

³⁴⁶ Qiu Xieting 丘燮亭 was president of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Batavia. His son Qiu Xiangrong 丘向榮 was also involved in the Chinese re-nationalization movement.

³⁴⁷ Chen Xianyuan 陳顯源 was Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan and Head of Education in the Dutch Indies.

³⁴⁸ Zheng Junhuai 鄭俊懷 served as President of Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan.

³⁴⁹ DNA 2.05.90-548 #7093-96 (Perniagaan 21 July 1919)

³⁵⁰ DNA 2.05.90-548 #7090-92 (Weltevreden 7 Aug 1919)

This chapter is composed of two parts and will examine the specific political and economic desires of the petitioners, how they sought to fulfill these wishes by seeking to amend the Sino-Dutch Consular Treaty of 1911, and why the Indies Chinese felt the urgent need to make these petitions in the first place. The first part of the chapter looks specifically at how these petitioners (on behalf of the Indies Chinese community) demanded amendments to the Sino-Dutch treaty through the power of written petitions and their knowledge of international law, as well as by sending representatives to China to negotiate for the following four objectives: 1) re-nationalization of the Indies Chinese as nationals of China; 2) providing *Huaqiao* protection by increasing the task of consuls; 3) attaining treatment that was equal to Europeans, Americans and Japanese; and 4) amending the Sino-Dutch commercial treaty. The second half of the chapter will explore what the motivating factors were for why the Indies Chinese launched their movement between 1917 and 1921? Why, in particular, did they petition for their long-term concerns of re-nationalization, equality and protection in this specific period?

Re-nationalization

The Indies Chinese petitioned for the re-institutionalization of their legal status as nationals of China by removing the appendix of the Sino-Dutch consular treaty of 1911. Arguing that amending the consular treaty of 1911 would be the only way to revalidate their nationality status based on blood ties (屬人主義 or

血統主義), the Indies Chinese hoped that hundred thousands of nationals (國民) who were born and raised in the Dutch possessions would no longer fall in the category of “other races” (異族).³⁵¹ They argued that studies on international private law at the time showed that most laws identified with people (國民) and not with territory (國土). The acquisition of nationality based on *jus soli* was more likely subjected to discrimination than acquiring a nationality based on the principle of blood. This was the case with the Chinese in the Dutch possessions. China’s agreement with placing the Chinese in the Indies under Dutch legal system caused the racial relegation of the Indies Chinese, making them equal to “Inlanders” (indigenous inhabitants (土人) and “shamanistic tribes” (巫族).³⁵²

Retrieving their Chinese nationality statuses would further stimulate the relations between China and the Indies Chinese, they argued,³⁵³ and explained that the consular treaty of 1911 not only broke the national ties between the Indies Chinese and China, but involuntarily made Indies Chinese become colonial subjects of the Other. Zheng Junhuai 鄭俊懷, president of the Colonists’ League of central Java pleaded:

³⁵¹ AS 03-23-023-01-006 p5L7-p7L6: Petition from Zheng Junhuai 鄭俊懷 (president of Semarang Chamber of Commerce) on behalf of the associations Chamber of Commerce 中華總商會 in Batavia, Semarang and Surabaya to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (petition written on 28 December 1918, received at Waijiaobu on 20 February 1919.); AS 03-23-024-01-006 Xiong Li’s petition to Min. For. Aff. (20 April 1920).

³⁵² AS 03-23-024-01-007: Petition from Han Xiqi 韓希琦 (20 May 1920)

³⁵³ AS 03-23-024-01-007

We don't have any rights and privileges (權利). We feel very unfortunate and feel we are treated badly by people. We feel that our lives are low, like ants. The reason for this is probably that the previous government of our ancestral country (祖國政府), the Qing government, was not well acquainted with the situation outside of China and established inappropriate regulations. Therefore, those who suffered do not have appropriate regulations for protection. [Qing authorities] gave up the responsibility to protect us... due to their great mistake of agreeing with treaty regulations that broke the relationship with several hundred thousands nationals who were born and raised overseas (生長海外之國民). This caused us to become colonial subjects of Others, and caused us to be placed at a position that is equal to natives. All these resulted from the consular treaty that the Qing signed with Holland.³⁵⁴

The agreement between Qing China and Holland overturned the validity of the Chinese nationality law of 1909 that the Qing regime created on the request of the Indies Chinese for the prevention of officially making the Indies Chinese as subjects of Dutch colonialism by law. In the opinion of petitioners, signing the treaty two years later after the promulgation of the Chinese nationality law had

³⁵⁴ AS 03-23-023-01-006 p1, l1-11: Petition from Zheng Junhuai (petition written on 28 December 1918, received at Min. For. Aff. on 20 February 1919.)

caused the Indies Chinese to become barbarians or Others of their own nationality.

The forced national exclusion from China and the compulsory inclusion of Dutch subjectness (*onderdaanschap*) was not in accordance with Indies Chinese's wishes and was processed without their consent. They therefore decided to organize a campaign for re-nationalization and acted against this regulation as one collective unit.³⁵⁵ All branches of *Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan*, for instance, held meetings for disapproving Dutch subjectness. The Indies Chinese strongly disagreed with the appendix of the consular treaty and decided not to acknowledge Dutch subjectness. Based on the will of the community, they hoped that the Chinese government would recover the status of the overseas Chinese.³⁵⁶ Cultural traits were used as "evidence" for maintaining their national identity, and in their petition to Chinese authorities, the Indies Chinese expressed that they maintained their national relationship with China by upholding their nationality and national customs despite living and working in the archipelago for several hundreds of years. Furthermore, when the national relationship became supported with a legal foundation, they completely obeyed the regulations of the Chinese nationality law that was issued on 28 March 1909 with

³⁵⁵ *Shen Pao* 22 January 1920 (DNA 2.05.90-548 #7153-73).

³⁵⁶ AS 02-23-024-01-006. Xiong Li's petition to Min. For. Aff. (20 May 1920).

its amendments on 18 November 1912 (law no. 4) and 30 December 1914 (law no. 26).³⁵⁷

The Dutch, threatened by the national relationship, ignored Indies Chinese's desires of belonging to the Chinese state and forced them to become Dutch colonial subjects by decreeing the Law of Subjectness (*Onderdaanschap* 荷蘭屬地殖民籍法) without the consent of the Indies Chinese. The Indies Chinese did not acknowledge Dutch status of subjectness that was enforced upon them. In their words:

We *Huaqiao* feel that we already have a [Chinese] nationality; we already have a nationality law. Now they [that is: the Dutch] took us by force, which caused our blood ties and bodies to be cut off [from our Chinese nationality]. Our spirits of yellow flame are made into barbarians. How can we feel satisfied about this?³⁵⁸

Zheng Junhuai's petition revealed that the Indies Chinese held the Qing regime responsible for causing them to become barbarians of their own nationality. According to them, Qing China agreed with denationalizing Indies Chinese by signing the consular treaty of 1911, thus directly causing the fate of one million of

³⁵⁷ Shen Pao 22 January 1920 (DNA 2.05.90-548 #7153-73); AS 03-23-023-01-006 p1L1-11; See AS 03-25-001-02-020 for the complete amended version of the nationality law of 30 December 1914.

³⁵⁸ Shen Pao 22 January 1920

Huaqiao and their millions of possessions to fall into the hands of foreigners. The treaty stipulated that in case conflicts between Dutch and Chinese subjects (臣民) in the Dutch colonies emerge, the subjects were required to abide by Dutch colonial law. Indies Chinese used their knowledge of international law to counter-argue the legality of this regulation. In the opinion of the Indies Chinese, this stipulation was not in accordance with international law. They argued that a study of international law concluded that in case nationality laws of two countries would come into conflict, the person should follow the law of his country of nationality, which in their opinion, was Chinese nationality.

Rejection of Dutch subjectness and Qing's denationalization of the Chinese nationality status was clearly voiced by Huang Xuanyou 黃宣猷. Huang who was the most prolific representative for writing petitions, appealed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by stating that the forced legal inclusion of the Indies Chinese as Dutch colonized subjects was against their will and therefore against international law. He pointed out the right to freedom of choice and criticized that the stipulations of Dutch law of subjectness did not include regulations that would allow subjects to distance themselves from Dutch subjectness. This was problematic, according to Huang, because the right and freedom to choose one's own political affiliation was a civil right and was recognized by international law.

Obviously, based on the terminology that petitioners used in their writing, the Indies Chinese were influenced by the worldwide spirit of freedom and civil rights that started to emerge in this period. In their plea of invalidating Dutch

status of subjectness and recovering their Chinese nationality status, petitioners argued:

[W]e are fully nationals of China according to Chinese nationality law. The Dutch made us *Huaqiao* become Dutch subjects by force. British legal expert 亞本亥 [Oppenheim] cited ‘assimilation by force is an action that is against the international law’. We do not approve Dutch forced inclusion 強迫歸化 now and we will never agree with this in the future. We absolutely disagree that our Government [that is: Qing China] cut off 一筆勾銷 the nationality of several hundred thousands of *Huaqiao* with one stroke.³⁵⁹

Forced inclusion into the Dutch empire vis-à-vis involuntary exclusion from China damaged unity of both nation and families. The Sino-Dutch agreement not only disrupted the unity between China and the Indies Chinese as one unit but further caused rifts in families. Petitioners complained that the colonial law of subjectness was completely based on the principle of *jus soli* (屬地主義) for it

³⁵⁹ AS 03-23-025-03-013 Huang Xuanyou’s 黃宣猷 petition to Waijiaobu (21 May 1920), pp. 6-7; AS 03-23-025-03-013 Huang Xuanyou’s petition to Internal Affairs 內務部, pp. 12-13; AS 03-23-025-03-013 Huang Xuanyou’s petition to Guowuyuan and Min. For. Aff. (5 January 1921). Huang cited page 180 of Oppenheim’s writing; AS 03-23-024-01-009 (25 May 1920).

declared that all those who were born and bred in the Dutch colonies were Dutch subjects (屬地籍民). Those who originated from China and went to the Indies as newly arrived immigrants, however, remained nationals of China (中國國民). This was problematic and harmful for families because an influx of Chinese immigrants to the Indies emerged at the turn of the twentieth century. Many immigrants started families in the Indies; such immigrants remained Chinese nationals while their children became Dutch subjects (荷蘭國籍). The agreement between the Qing regime and Holland caused families to split in two because its regulations caused two different nationalities to exist in one household at the same time. Nothing else was as destructive as breaking the family unit.³⁶⁰

Compared to most petitioners, Han Xiqi proposed one of the more compromising options. Instead of resolutely rejecting Dutch subjectness, he argued that individuals should be allowed to freely choose his or her nationality, whether adopting a Dutch or Chinese nationality. Both Chinese and Dutch requirements for naturalization were extreme opposites, and hence, both states found it difficult to accept mutual statuses of subjects. Enforcing Chinese nationality law based on *jus sanguinis* on non-Chinese territory was a radical policy that certainly would not be recognized by the Dutch government. On the other hand, the Indies Chinese found Dutch subjectness based on *jus soli* unacceptable. Referring to the case of England, North America and Portugal as examples, Han Xiqi suggested that China allow the acquisition of nationality

³⁶⁰ Shen Pao 22 January 1920 (DNA 2.05.90-548 #7153-73).

based on both principles (*jus soli* and *jus sanguinis*). He reasoned that, besides its relationship with China, the Chinese who were born and raised in the Indies also developed ties with territories that were possessed by the Dutch. He suggested the idea of adopting nationality based on freedom of choice: Once a Chinese had reached a mature age, an individual could choose his/her nationality based on free will.³⁶¹ Han's suggestion of compromise was novel but probably did not gain much support from the Colonists' League because the majority of petitioners argued for drastically un-tying the political relationship with the Dutch.

De-nationalization of the Chinese nationality status and the enforcement of the colonial status of Dutch subjectness were legally confirmed by Dutch and Chinese authorities by way of the consular treaty of 1911 but were not recognized by the subjects themselves. In his fourth petition, Huang Xuanyou declared: "We *Huaqiao* do not recognize the rule of the Dutch government that declared all *Huaqiao* who were born and raised on Dutch territory as being Dutch

³⁶¹ AS 03-23-024-01-007: Petition from Han Xiqi (20 May 1920). Han divided nationality laws that were concurrent at the time into four categories. The first category was based on *jus sanguinis*, and was adopted by Germany, Italy, Austria, Hungary, Norway and Sweden. The second category, principle based on *jus soli*, was utilized in Latin America. The third category was founded on the principle of blood but filled gaps with the principle of place of birth. Countries such as Japan, France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Sweden utilized this method. The fourth category, to compromise both the principles of blood and birthplace, was the option that Han Xiqi suggested. He suggested that China could follow the footsteps of England, North America and Portugal. Han's knowledge on nationality was not completely reliable. With regards to the case of North America for instance, the right for nationalization or naturalization was not based on the principle of equality. The United States, for instance, did not allow Asians to become naturalized Americans.

subjects (荷屬民籍).”³⁶² The Indies Chinese suggested revalidating the Chinese nationality status through a treaty revision. As the denationalized status with China was caused by the consular treaty, amending this agreement was the most effective solution for invalidating Dutch authority over the Indies Chinese and re-nationalize them as Chinese nationals.

In case Dutch authorities disagreed with the proposed revisions, the Indies Chinese saw terminating the treaty as the only solution to remove themselves as colonial subjects of the Dutch empire. In their opinion, with the absence of a valid agreement, they would naturally re-establish their national status with the Chinese government.³⁶³ They explained that the promulgation of the Chinese nationality law preceded the declaration of Dutch law of subjectness. because the Chinese nationality law, which was based on *jus sanguinis*, was declared in 1909 while the Dutch law of subjectness, enforced in 1910, was based on *jus soli*. According to the stipulations, the Chinese nationality law did not allow possession of dual citizenship or changing citizenship. Dutch status of subjectness, therefore, should be ineffective and invalid because political ties

³⁶² AS 03-23-025-03-013 Huang Xuanyou’s fourth petition to Guowuyuan and Waijiaobu (5 January 1921). (note that petitioner used the term: Zhonghua minji 中華民國籍 instead of Zhongguo guoji 中國國籍 which was used by the petitioners of 1908-1909).

³⁶³ AS 03-23-025-03-013 Huang Xuanyou’s petition to Min. For. Aff. (21 May 1920)

between the Dutch government and the Indies Chinese that were sanctioned by law did not exist before Dutch declaration of the status of *onderdaanschap*.³⁶⁴

In support of the petitions, *Sin Po*, the leading Sino-Malay newspaper in the Indies and a leading force of the movement against Dutch subjectness (*onderdaanschap*), distributed the following declaration among its Malay reading public:

I the signed, [name], from the province..., born in ..., on ... declare that by this I do not agree with the Law of Dutch Subjectness [*Wet of Nederlandsch Onderdaanschap*]. We object that I and my descendents will be regarded as Dutch subjects. I and my descendants want to remain Chinese subjects.³⁶⁵

Sin Po was in the process of collecting the names and declarations of people who desired to recover their Chinese nationality. Petitioners presented these signatures to Chinese authorities along with their petitions to show the many unanimous voices of the Indies Chinese. By 1920, according to the petition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from *Sin Po*'s leader Zhu Moushan (Tjou Bou San) 朱茂山, records of names were compiled in six large volumes by Hou Deguang,

³⁶⁴ AS 03-23-025-03-013 Huang Xuanyou's fourth petition to Guowuyuan and Waijiaobu (5 January 1921)

³⁶⁵ *Sin Po* 27 January 1919

former leader of newspaper *Bibao* 叻報 who became a member of the committee on studying the Sino-Dutch consular treaty that was named by the Colonists' League.³⁶⁶

Protection

Consular representation was a goal that both the Chinese government and the Indies Chinese community strove for. Consular representation could bridge the distance between overseas Chinese communities and the Chinese government. By way of establishing consular offices and appointments of consuls in areas with high concentrations of overseas Chinese people, the Chinese government could establish a foothold of direct political influence on its nationals overseas. For the overseas Chinese, the presence of Chinese consuls could help them deal with overseas Chinese matters, especially when dealing with foreign governments. By 1907, China's consular representations in Asia were present in Yokohama, Kobe, Nagasaki, Seoul, Pusan, Manila and Singapore.³⁶⁷

The appointment of a Chinese consul in the Indies was an issue that dominated the diplomatic dialogue between Qing China and Holland during the Qing's waning years. Lu Zhengxiang traveled to The Hague as Chinese envoy in

³⁶⁶ AS 03-23-023-03-011: Petition from Zhu Moushan 朱茂山 (Tjou Bou-san), head of *Sin Po* 新報, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (29 April 1920)

³⁶⁷ DNA 2.05.38-2786 #8510 #8889-90: Report Droeze "Emigratie Chineesche Consuls" (CG Hong Kong 28 March 1907). There were no consuls in Formosa, Hong Kong, Macao, Indochina, Siam, Penang, British North Borneo, Labuan and Sarawak yet.

1907 with the purpose of establishing a consular treaty. In 1911, after years of negotiation, Holland reluctantly agreed to China's request of sending Chinese consuls to the Indies but required that a consul's duty would be strongly restricted to serving as a commercial agent between the two states.³⁶⁸ The Dutch colonial government forbade any form of political interaction between consul and the Indies Chinese community.

In the re-nationalization movement, consular protection was one of the most important demands that the Indies Chinese petitioners requested. The issue of protection depended on the nationality status because, according to their understanding of sovereignty and the right to govern people, China could only protect its nationals overseas by revalidating the Indies Chinese's status as Chinese subjects that was recognized by law. Petitioners found the approved duties of Chinese consuls as stipulated in the treaty of 1911 problematic. Article 2 of the Sino-Dutch consular treaty stated that consular protection was only limited to trade-related issues and was exclusively applicable to merchants. Petitioners argued that consular protection should be applicable to Chinese people of all occupations, not only to those who were engaged in trade.³⁶⁹ The majority of the Chinese in Java were merchants, but the Chinese in the Outer Islands, including Sumatra, Banka, Billiton, and the area near Pontianak were mostly laborers who were engaged in agriculture. With the absence of a consul, laborers had nowhere to go for protection when encountering maltreatment. Protection of Chinese

³⁶⁸ AS 03-23-024-01-008 (25 May 1920)

³⁶⁹ *Shen Pao* 22 January 1920 (DNA 2.05.90-548 #7153-73).

people other than merchants became increasingly necessary, petitioners claimed. Starting from early 1900, the number of Chinese laborers (*huagong*) that are recruited from China to work in the Indies counted several ten thousands per annum. According to the statistics of the Dutch government, the number of laborers would amount to 80.000 people in a few years. These laborers, or coolies (often called “little pigs”) were treated harshly and subjected to stringent restrictions. Bound by the consular treaty, Chinese consuls were unable to offer them protection, and even though consuls heard their sorrow, they did not have the power to solve their problems or save them from misery. The Chinese in other professions encountered less suffering than coolies, but all Chinese shared the sorrow that laborers suffered.³⁷⁰

Furthermore, according to the petition by the Bureau of Laborers (or: *Huagong* Affairs) (僑工事務局) the consular treaty was not effective in diminishing illegal coolie trade. More than fifty per cent of laborers were tricked to work in Nanyang. Despite the fact that the Chinese, British and Dutch authorities devised plans to prohibit illegal coolie trade, the Bureau of Laborers in Java concluded that the coolie market had not decreased. Due to restrictions of the consular agreement, Chinese authorities, especially the Chinese consul in Java, were unable to alleviate coolies’ mistreatment and were unable to trial crime

³⁷⁰ *Shen Pao* 22 January 1920

committees of illegal trade who did not fall under Chinese jurisprudence.³⁷¹ The Bureau of Coolies Affairs requested the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to include stipulations for coolie protection and supervision of coolie affairs in the revision of the consular treaty. Expanding consuls' duties and bringing crime committees under Chinese jurisprudence would help minimize the coolie problem.

The absence of consular protection urged Indies Chinese to unanimously beg the Chinese government for state protection. Clearly, they understood the power of written agreements and the significance of terminology in legal documents. The Indies Chinese did not request a completely rewritten agreement of the Sino-Dutch Consular Treaty, but rather suggested that the word "commercial" be deleted from the sentence, "under our jurisdiction/ control are people who receive our commercial protection" in the treaty of 1911. They also suggested that a clause be rephrased to read as follows: "all those who fall under the protection of our jurisdiction/ control are those who are engaged in agriculture, industries, commerce and other professions. All have obtained nationality and are eligible for protection."³⁷²

³⁷¹ AS 03-23-023-03-006: From Bureau of Coolies Affairs 僑工事務局 to Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (3 April 1920). In a different document, Li Guangheng 李光亨, committee member of the Bureau of Coolie Affairs, cited cases of coolie abuse and mentioned that a Dutch shipping company transported more than 300 laborers to Belitung and more than 200 laborers to Sumatra. The lack of Chinese governmental supervision gave space for the abuse of coolies. The Bureau of Coolie Affairs requested China to take coolies' lives into account and include stipulations for coolie protection when revising the consular treaty. See AS 03-23-023-03-017.

³⁷² AS 03-23-024-01-015; AS 03-23-024-01-007

Besides making consular protection accessible to Chinese who were not engaged in commerce, petitioners also demanded an adjustment to rights and privileges for merchants. Even though the Sino-Dutch agreement agreed to provide consular protection for merchants, protection of merchants was only permitted insofar as it concerned commercial matters and did not provide consuls the right to intervene in issues that were not related to trade. Merchants continued to suffer from discriminatory and unequal treatment in areas such as judiciary and daily life. The agreement did not optimize the interests of Indies Chinese merchants, and in the opinion of the Indies Chinese, inadequate protection resulted from a series of unequal treaties that China signed with foreign powers. The unequal position between China and Holland was rooted in the commercial treaty that the two empires signed in 1863 (which was one of the unequal treaties that China was forced to sign with imperialist powers in this period) and was further echoed in the Sino-Dutch consular treaty of 1911.

Petitioners, many of whom were associated with the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, described the treaty as being inappropriate for serving the needs of merchants who were active in the region stretching between China and the Dutch possessions. In their opinion, the Sino-Dutch commercial treaty was a one-sided agreement that only benefited commercial rights and various privileges for the Dutch in China. The treaty of 1863 extensively stipulated the rights that Holland enjoyed for their trade activities in China in detail but barely mentioned the rights of the Chinese. According to the Indies Chinese, this commercial treaty negatively affected Chinese merchants who traded in the Dutch territories. The

lack of benefits and rights for the Chinese to trade on Dutch territory affected the commercial interests of Chinese merchants. The unequal treaty provided Dutchmen in China to enjoy all kinds of commercial privileges but continued making *Huaqiao* subjected to all sorts of restrictions.³⁷³

The lack of reciprocity in treaties motivated the Indies Chinese to demand a new commercial treaty on which one million of *Huaqiao* could rely on.³⁷⁴ The desire for a treaty that was suitable for the conditions of Chinese in Southeast Asia was even more pronounced in Huang Xuanyou's petition. Huang complained, for example, that Japan, Britain, the United States, Germany and Siam signed commercial treaties with Holland that protected its citizens for trading activities in the archipelago. According to Huang, these treaties caused Indies Chinese businesses to be unable to compete with Dutch treaty partners who were protected by commercial privileges and rights. Therefore, in order to protect their commercial interests, the Indies Chinese required China to sign a treaty that was modeled after the treaties that Holland signed with its other foreign treaty partners.³⁷⁵

³⁷³ The comparison between the Indies Chinese on Dutch territory and Netherlanders on Chinese territory is interesting. It reveals that the Indies Chinese were conscious of the notion that diasporic phenomena on non-national territory would not naturally define the resident of 'Other' origin as a national.

³⁷⁴ AS 03-23-024-01-006 (Xiong Li's petition to Min For Aff., 20 May 1920).

³⁷⁵ AS 03-23-024-01-009

Equality

Considering themselves as nationals of China, petitioners also used the concept of reciprocity for emphasizing unequal treatment of mutual citizens. The Colonists' League studied nationality laws of China and Holland and objected that Chinese people on Dutch territory were not treated at the same level as Netherlanders in China. They explained that China and Holland had a long history of commerce; the nationality law of China had not forced Dutchmen who were born and bred in China to become subjects of China. Using the same rationale, how could the Dutch government force the Chinese who were born and bred in the Indies to become Dutch subjects?³⁷⁶

Petitioners argued that it was their right to receive equal treatment and used their understanding of international law to demand for this equal treatment. Indies Chinese petitioners concluded that Dutch treatment of the Chinese people was not in accordance with international law because according to international law, all states, regardless of the strength of the state, should enjoy equal rights and duties. Petitioners also pointed out inconsistencies in Dutch law. In principle, Dutch law adopted the principle of equality between Netherlanders and foreigners. Dutch Civil Code (*Burgerlijk Wetboek*, 民法) of 1829 stated that foreigners enjoyed the same personal or private rights (私權) and were subjected to the same regulations as Netherlanders (內國人). However, chapter six of the Civil Code contradicted this principle of equality. Statutes of the Dutch

³⁷⁶ *Shen Pao* 22 January 1920 (DNA 2.05.90-548 #7153-73)

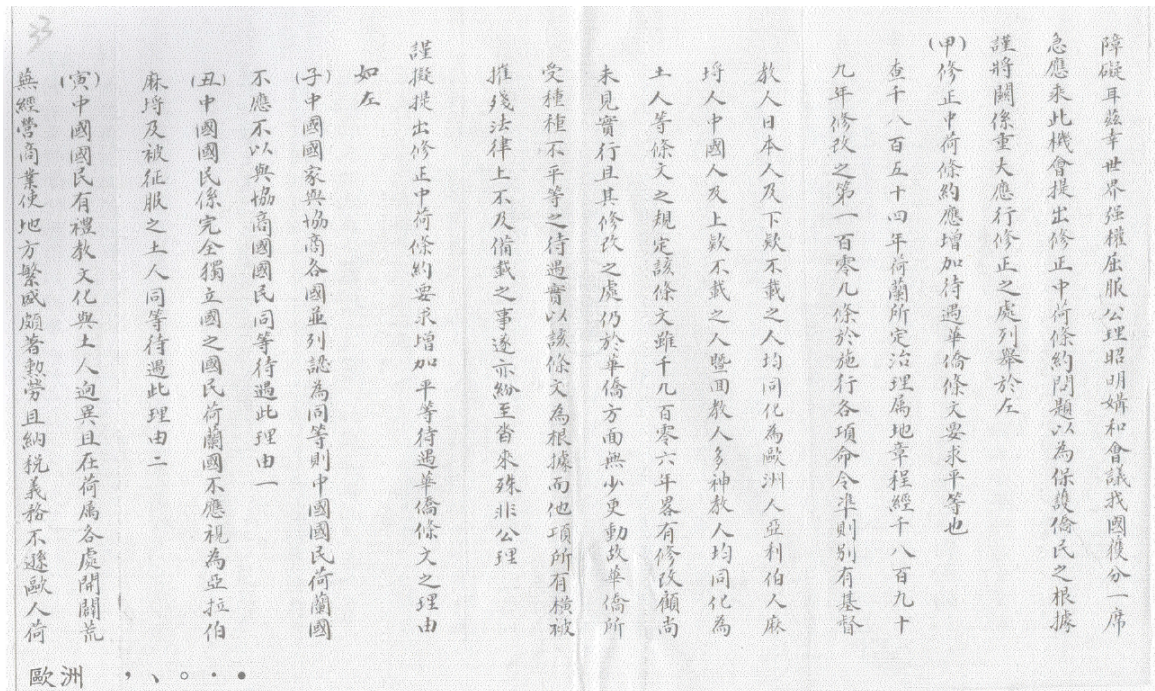
possessions (荷蘭屬地章程) maintained the rule that *Huaqiao* were not equal to Europeans or Japanese. The reason for this discrepancy in Dutch law was incomprehensible.³⁷⁷

Inequality of races was determined by RR 109 (a governmental regulation), which stated that Christians, Japanese and all those who were not mentioned in the category of Inlanders/ Natives would be regarded as Europeans. Arabs, Chinese and those who were not mentioned in the category of Europeans, such as Moslems and polytheists, would be regarded as Inlanders.³⁷⁸ Duality of the main racial groups of “Europeans” and “Natives” was utilized in the dual system of civil law 民法, criminal law 刑法 and commercial law 商法 for Europeans and Inlanders (and those equal to them). Dutch authorities maintained two different systems of jurisprudence. Europeans and their equals abided by the European system of law; Inlanders and their equals (including the Chinese) were subjected to laws for Inlanders. Petitioners were convinced that the placement of Chinese under the racial category of Inlanders was due to China’s weak position as a state. Petitioners argued that the inequality that resulted from differences in power between states was against international law. Since the principle of equality and supporting the weak was on the international

³⁷⁷ *Shen Pao* 22 January 1920

³⁷⁸ AS 03-23-023-01-004 (December 1918)

agenda, petitioners requested the Chinese government to propose diplomatic interactions with the demands of ending such inequality.³⁷⁹



K. Petition for Chinese Re-nationalization (17 December 1918)

Source: Academia Sinica 03-23-023-01-003

Re-nationalization, consular protection and equal treatment were the demands that were related with nationality issues. Without recovering their status as nationals of China, the Indies Chinese would officially remain being colonial subjects of the Dutch empire. They would be subjected to Dutch rule and would not be able to enjoy consular or state protection of the Chinese

³⁷⁹ *Shen Pao* 22 January 1920

government and receive equal treatment. Using their understanding of international law as a reference, they criticized Dutch law for violating the principle of free will and equality. Indies Chinese petitioners demanded China renegotiate their rights and privileges on their behalf. They required amendments in the Sino-Dutch consular treaty of 1911, with re-nationalization, consular protection and equality as their principal demands.

Petitioners considered the period between 1919 and 1920 as the right timing for the Chinese government to start negotiations with Dutch authorities. The treaty was signed on 8 May 1911 with a validity term of five years. China and Holland agreed that should one of the parties wish to end this treaty, this party needed to notify the other party one year before the expiration date. Therefore, in case negotiations over the revision failed, the petitioners requested the Chinese government sending an official letter to the Dutch government with the notification of ending the treaty in spring 1920. As the consular treaty had denationalized Indies Chinese status as nationals of China, petitioners believed that the abolishment of the treaty would naturally re-enact Indies Chinese's status as nationals of China 中國國民, a status that according to them would benefit both the Chinese state and its people.³⁸⁰

At the time when the Indies Chinese launched their campaign for revising the Sino-Dutch treaty of 1911, China entered the warlord era. Due to political

³⁸⁰ AS 03-23-025-03-013 Huang Xuanyou's petition to Waijiaobu 21 May 1920; AS 03-23-024-01-009 Huang Xuanyou's petition to China Ministry of Foreign Affairs (25 May 1920; Shen Pao 22 January 1920 (DNA 2.05.90-548 #7153-73).

instability, fragmentation of a central government, and the recently formed North-South division, the Indies Chinese sent their petitions to both the government in Beijing and to the senate in Guangzhou, which became the political center of Southern China. The Colonist's League of Western Java 和屬西部華僑聯合會 wrote a letter to the senate in Guangzhou (author was most likely president of the league Qiu Xieting 丘燮亭), along with a letter regarding the Sino-Dutch treaty from Qiu Xieting's son Qiu Xiangrong 丘向榮, who was studying in Paris at the time.³⁸¹ At the Senate's second assembly in Guangzhou, senate member Shen Zhifu 沈智夫 initiated in discussing the proposal of the Colonists' League. He expressed that with the exception of the Chinese people, people of all nationalities in the Dutch Indies were treated well. Shen linked the main cause for Chinese maltreatment in the Indies directly with China's position in the world. According to him, the unequal treaties that imperialist powers forced a weak China to sign had only benefited imperialist powers. These treaties were inappropriate because the treaties did not allow China offer protection to its nationals who migrated overseas. According to him, the purpose of treaties should be to protect its *Huaqiao*, but the reverse happened.³⁸² The lack of

³⁸¹ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8688

³⁸² DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8744-8749: Shen Zhifu, Officieel blad van de Senaat te Canton 1920, 2e zittingsperiode no. 20. Report of the 29th Senate meeting in Canton.

reciprocity in treaties was the main cause for Indies Chinese suffering in Dutch territory.

Like petitioners, senate members who supported the revision of the Sino-Dutch consular treaty traced the issues of inequality and non-reciprocity back to 1863 when China signed a commercial treaty with Holland. This treaty consisting of sixteen articles dealt with how Dutch commercial interests in China could be protected, including low taxes and Dutch right of extraterritoriality in China, but did not stipulate China's extraterritorial protection rights for its nationals overseas.³⁸³ The same problem of Dutch single-sided advantages manifested in the consular treaty of 1911. The seventeen clauses of the treaty merely dealt with the duties of the Chinese consuls in the Indies, but did not contain any rights and protection of Chinese in the Indies.

In Shen's opinion, the absence of clauses on the protection of the Indies Chinese gave room for Dutch authorities to launch policies of aggression on the Indies Chinese which caused the Indies Chinese not being able to escape colonial discrimination.³⁸⁴ Senate member Zhang Luquan 張魯泉 and two other members of the senate agreed that a revision of the Sino-Dutch consular treaty would be necessary. Zhang carefully studied the stipulations of the Sino-Dutch treaty and

³⁸³ It is interesting to note that petitioners and supporters of this movement traced the issue of inequality back to the first Sino-Dutch treaty of 1863, for it was not until 1893 that China re-recognized overseas Chinese as nationals of China.

³⁸⁴ DNA 2.05.38-2787 (pp. 8-9) #8744-8749

concluded that the treaty that China signed with Holland in 1911 disadvantaged China and its nationals overseas, for it did not include any protection rights for the overseas Chinese. Zhu Nianzu (朱念祖) said he learned about the harsh treaty during his stay in Paris. Jiang Hao (江浩) expressed that as members of the parliament they had the duty to assist Chinese nationals overseas and rescue them from their misery.³⁸⁵

Not all senate members were in favor of the petition of the Indies Chinese. Conscious of the limited power of the regional government in Southern China, Jin Yongchang (金鏞昌) for instance, agreed that the proposal for treaty revision was important, but believed that the timing was not right. In order to open negotiations with success, Jin believed that it was important for the southern government to first reach international prestige. As long as the southern government had not received international recognition yet, chances of Dutch refusal for a treaty revision would be present, which would only harm the position and status of the regional government.³⁸⁶ The senate held a vote on the possibility of further processing the petition. The majority of senate members in Guangzhou voted in support of Shen Zhifu's proposal. Shen announced that he

³⁸⁵ DNA 2.05.38-2787 (pp. 8-10) #8744-8749: Zhu Nianzu and 江浩 Officieel blad van de Senaat te Canton 1920, 2e zittingsperiode no. 20. Report of the 29 senate meeting in Canton.

³⁸⁶ DNA 2.05.38-2787: 金鏞昌 (no. 20), (no. 82) in Officieel blad van de Senaat te Canton 1920, 2e zittingsperiode no. 20 (8744-8749) Report of the senate meeting in Canton.

was in the process of writing a petition and would officially present it to the Northern government, so that China could start negotiating with the Dutch.³⁸⁷



L. Violence on Overseas Chinese (1912). Source: Shanghai Municipal Archives D2-0-2422-45.

³⁸⁷ DNA 2.05.38-2787: 金鏞昌 (no. 20), (no. 82)

Movement Across Borders

In addition to written petitions to governmental authorities in China (particularly to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and State Council), the Colonists' League elected Han Xiqi, Huang Xuanyou and Xiong Li as representatives of the Indies Chinese community to travel to China (as well as attempts to make use of already established representatives in Paris) with the purpose of further discussing their requests in person. They met with the president on 31 March 1920 and emphasized the following requests, as mentioned above, regarding to the revision of the Sino-Dutch treaty: 1) re-nationalization: the delegates emphasized that resolving the nationality issue was the decisive factor of intensifying the relationship between *Huaqiao* and China; 2) providing *Huaqiao* protection by increasing the task of consuls; 3) attaining treatment was that equal to Europeans, Americans and Japanese; and 4) amending the commercial treaty that was modeled after the commercial treaty between Japan and Holland. China notified the representatives that the government already proposed a revision of the Sino-Dutch treaty to Dutch authorities two weeks before they had the audience with the president.³⁸⁸

Prior to their audience with the president in Beijing, they attended a big meeting organized by the Colonists' League in Shanghai (中華民國華僑聯合會)

³⁸⁸ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8735-41. The duration of the meeting was approximately forty minutes.

that was presided by Li Denghui (李登輝).³⁸⁹ Li was a *peranakan* Chinese who was born in Batavia. After his education at Yale University (US) he worked in Batavia and the Straits Settlements before settling in Shanghai. He left Nanyang for China in 1903 where he later became president of Fudan University, the Colonists' League in Shanghai, and editor of the periodical *The Republican Advocate*. Although he resided in Shanghai and rarely returned to the Indies, Li seemed to be involved with the campaign for the treaty revision since its inception. Before the Colonists League in Java elected Han Xiqi, Xiong Li and Huang Xuanyou as spokesmen, the Indies Chinese initially planned on sending Li as representative of the Indies Chinese community to talk with Beijing authorities. Li was actively involved in the movement for a treaty revision and even before the meeting in Shanghai, he wrote petitions to the State Council (國務院) and Ministry of Foreign Affairs in which he requested improvements of the stipulations of the consular treaty for the sake of protecting the lives and property of *Huaqiao*. To persuade the Chinese government to fulfill the Indies Chinese's wishes, Li emphasized that the protection of the lives and property of *Huaqiao* was strongly related with China's national prestige (國體). Li also stated

³⁸⁹ Li Denghui (李登輝) was a Java-born Chinese of the seventh generation who migrated to Shanghai where he became head of Fudan University, president of 'Union of Students Who Returned from the West' and chief editor of the *Republican Advocate*. A returnee to China of *peranakan* Chinese origin, there is little known about his life in Southeast Asia and the United States. Chinese language biographies tend to emphasize his contribution in China, including establishing Fudan University's reputation and his anti-Japanese activities. These biographies describe Li as a citizen of China and seem to minimize his roots in Nanyang and life experiences outside of China.

that *Huaqiao* contributed to China with donations and investments in the industries since the establishment of the republican government.³⁹⁰ The emphasis on the relationship between the protection of lives and assets and Indies Chinese's contributions to China revealed China's financial and economic benefits for helping the Indies Chinese.

Attendees at the meeting in Shanghai further discussed the request for a revision of the Sino-Dutch treaty of 1911. Xiong Li and Han Xiqi represented the Chinese from the Dutch East Indies. Lin Dinghua (林鼎華), who planned on going the Indies in the year of 1919 also participated in the meeting. Lin, an official, accumulated in-depth knowledge about the situation of the Chinese in the Indies. His reports of his mission to examine industrial and educational affairs in late 1918 elaborately described the unequal position of the Indies Chinese and outlined their desires of improvement.³⁹¹ He observed that Nanyang had a large *Huaqiao* population with abundant property and finances. His meetings with the gentry and merchants (紳商) in various cities with Nanyang revealed that, compared with other colonial powers, Dutch authorities had the most severe encroachment ideology (侵畧主義) over the Chinese. Due to Dutch oppression,

³⁹⁰ AS 03-23-023-02-016: Li Denghui's petition to the State Council (Guowuyuan) (23 March 1920); AS 03-23-023-03-019: Li Denghui's petition to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (29 March 1920)

³⁹¹ AS 03-36-174-07-031 (from Lin Dinghua to Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 17 December 1918); AS 03-36-174-07-031 (from Lin Dinghua to Min For Aff, 17 November 1918). The State Council (Guowuyuan) sent Lin to Nanyang for examining the state of industries and education.

the gentry and merchants requested the Chinese government (via Lin Dinghua) to offer protection and increase *Huaqiao* rights through the revision of the consular treaty.³⁹²

Paris

At the beginning of the re-nationalization campaign, the Indies Chinese initially intended to send representatives of the Indies Chinese community directly to Paris where the peace conference would be held. China held a seat at the Paris Peace Conference. The intention was to send Bai Pingzhou, a friend of *Sin Po's* leaders and who was involved with the movement for the creation of the Chinese nationality law in 1909, to the conference site. Bai attended the first meeting of the Chinese nationalization movement that was held in December 1908 at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Surabaya.³⁹³ Instead of sending representatives to Paris, the Colonists' League changed its mind and anticipated that it would be more effective to send delegates directly to Beijing.³⁹⁴ The decision to send representatives to Beijing was announced in February 1919.³⁹⁵ While appointed Indies Chinese representatives and chairmen of the Colonists' League were occupied with petitioning to the higher authorities in Beijing,

³⁹² AS 03-23-023-01-001: Lin Dinghua's report (Dec 1918).

³⁹³ DNA 2.05.90-548 #7097-7103

³⁹⁴ DNA 2.05.90-548 #7090-7121

³⁹⁵ *Sin Po* 10 Feb 1919

activities in Paris were carried out by Qiu Xiangrong 丘向榮, son of Qiu Xieting 丘燮亭 who was the president of the Colonists' League and Chamber of Commerce in Batavia.

The extension of the Indies Chinese campaign from the Indies to Paris was based on familial ties. Qiu Xiangrong, who was studying in Paris at the time, notified his father in Batavia about the proceedings of the Paris Peace Conference through written communication. In fact, extending the movement to Shanghai and Guangzhou was most likely Qiu Xiangrong's idea. In his letter of 1919 he notified his father about his plans of informing the proceedings concerning the proposal for a treaty revision to the Colonists' League in Shanghai and the Senate in Guangzhou.³⁹⁶

During China's participation in the conference from January 1919 until June 1919, Qiu Xiangrong wrote to Lu Zhengxiang in Paris with the request of negotiating the revision of the Sino-Dutch consular treaty at the Paris Peace Conference.³⁹⁷ Lu was China's appointed chief delegate at the conference and since Lu Zhengxiang was a key supporter of the nationalization movement of 1908 and 1909 in which Indies Chinese urged Qing authorities to create the Chinese nationality law, the Indies Chinese expected that Lu would be in favor of Indies Chinese's re-nationalization movement. Upon receiving Qiu's letter, Lu's assistance Zhu Songhan 朱頌韓 (who was appointed to become consul of Padang

³⁹⁶ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8690-93: son Qiu Xiangrong's letter to his father Qiu Xieting.

³⁹⁷ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8690-93

in Indies' Sumatra and was therefore interested in Indies Chinese affairs) invited Qiu for a meeting whereby Qiu learned that the Chinese government already had plans of submitting a proposal for a treaty revision. Qiu's letter of request only reinforced the importance of the matter.³⁹⁸ Qiu Xiangrong never met with Lu, but in a letter to his father, Qiu expressed that contrary to Indies Chinese expectations, Lu did not show much concern about the matter. Lu reportedly answered that he did not have time for Qiu's request.³⁹⁹ Qiu then made the same request to Wang Zhengting 王正廷, who discussed this matter with the Chinese envoy in London.⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁸ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8690-93

³⁹⁹ AS 03-23-023-02-004: Qiu Xiangrong wrote a letter to his father on 18 February 1920. This document does not provide much content about the letter from son to father.

Lu was probably occupied with the May Fourth protest. Qiu Xiangrong's letter was only one of the many petitions that Lu Zhengxiang received in this period. Numerous petitions and demonstrations from political and commercial communities were sent to the Chinese delegation in Paris after the news of Versailles' decision to cede Shandong to Japan was announced. Students and demonstrators urged the Chinese delegation not to sign the Treaty of Versailles on 28 June. See Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, 288-89.

⁴⁰⁰ AS 03-23-023-02-004: Qiu Xiangrong wrote a letter to his father on 18 February 1920. This document does not provide much content about the letter from son to father.

II) Local, Regional and Global Stimuli

Why did the Indies Chinese launch their movement between 1917 and 1921? Why did they petition for their long-term concerns of re-nationalization, equality and protection in this specific period? This section discusses local, regional and global events that motivated the Indies Chinese to take action in these few years.

Kudus-incident

On 31 October 1918, a conflict between natives and the Chinese took place in Kudus (古突士 or 古多士), a regency in Central Java, in which Inlanders (indigenous people) killed seven Chinese people and looted properties owned by the Chinese out of racial hatred.⁴⁰¹ The Kudus-incident motivated the Indies Chinese to attempt to amend the consular treaty.⁴⁰² The Chinese in central Java complained that Dutch officials in Semarang were slow with sending fighting forces to stop the aggressive act of Inlanders, causing the loss of lives and property of the local Indies Chinese community.⁴⁰³ The Chinese Chamber of

⁴⁰¹ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8735-41: Letter from Beijing to Dutch Min. For. Aff. (7 April 1920); DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8750-51: Letter from Oudendijk to Min. For. Aff. (5 May 1920)

⁴⁰² AS 03-23-024-01-002 (18-19 April 1920).

⁴⁰³ AS 03-23-024-01-002. Letter from Wang Zengsi 王曾思 to Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Notes from Wang regarding the meeting with Chinese representative Han Xiqi and Xiong Li.

Commerce in Semarang collaborated with the Chinese Chambers of Commerce in Surabaya and Batavia for the request of China's assistance. Concerned about the safety of their lives and property, they requested China to send warships to the Dutch Indies for their protection. Furthermore, with the assistance of the Chinese government, the Indies Chinese hoped for successfully negotiating with the Dutch about increasing rights and obtaining indemnity for their losses that occurred at the Kudus-incident.

Throughout the year of 1920 Han Xiqi and Xiong Li were particularly active in petitioning to the Chinese government due to the Kudus-incident. Nationality-issues with the question of "who was a Dutch subject and who was a Chinese subject?" complicated China's involvement in this incident.⁴⁰⁴ Dutch authorities rejected Chinese governmental interference in the incident stating that the victims of the Kudus-incident were Dutch subjects. The Chinese government was therefore not allowed to negotiate with Dutch authorities on behalf of the Indies Chinese.⁴⁰⁵ Victims of the Kudus-incident were not considered as Chinese nationals, and the Indies Chinese community feared that a similar incident might reoccur.

Continuous irreconcilability between Dutch and Chinese authorities regarding the nationality issue only complicated the issue. The Kudus-incident

⁴⁰⁴ DNA 2.05.90-547

⁴⁰⁵ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8735-41: Letter from Beijing to Dutch Min. For. Aff. (7 April 1920)

took place in October 1918, but as of March 1920 the Dutch had not improved protection measures for the Indies Chinese.⁴⁰⁶ Unresponsiveness and inactivity of the Dutch government and the fear of recurring aggression acts on the Indies Chinese motivated *Huaqiao* to regain Chinese nationality by canceling the appendix of the Sino-Dutch consular treaty.⁴⁰⁷ The Indies Chinese were clearly concerned with protecting their lives and assets, particularly after the Kudus-incident had taken place. Only by being Chinese nationals would China be capable of placing Indies Chinese under Chinese jurisprudence and protection. In their opinion, protection would be reached first through the re-institutionalization of the nationality law, then by claiming the Dutch to treat Chinese nationals in the Dutch East Indies on an equal footing to subjects of other powers (including the Netherlanders).⁴⁰⁸

Besides the Kudus-incident, new Dutch policy of enforcing conscription on the Chinese population was an important incentive for many Indies Chinese to deny Dutch *onderdaanschap*. Although none of the petitions of the Indies Chinese to Chinese authorities mentioned conscription as a motive for Chinese re-nationalization, compulsory military service was an important incentive for the Indies Chinese denial of Dutch subjectness. This was particularly the case for

⁴⁰⁶ AS 02-23-023-02-018 (28 March 1920).

⁴⁰⁷ AS 03-23-024-01-006 Petition from Xiong Li 熊理 to Min. For. Aff. (20 May 1920)

⁴⁰⁸ DNA 2.05.38-2785 #9399-9405: Beijing 17 Feb 1917 "Revision of the 1911 Sino-Dutch consular treaty (1917).

those who were born and raised in the Indies. The Dutch government imposed conscription only on the *peranakan* Chinese population, i.e. the Chinese whom the Dutch empire considered as its official subjects.⁴⁰⁹ New immigrants (those who were born in China and who therefore did not fall under Dutch law of subjectness) were exempted from this regulation. Dutch authorities considered expanding its local defense measures and with the growing threat of indigenous nationalist movements, Dutch authorities felt that they were “fully entitled to require” large Chinese communities participate “in the defense of the territory in which they live and prosper.”⁴¹⁰ They supposed that it was the duty of its subjects, including the Chinese, to defend the territory in which they were subjected to. The Indies Chinese regarded the requirement of serving in the colonial militia for the purpose of Dutch local defense as a form of Dutch oppression. Dutch authorities were convinced that the Indies Chinese compared themselves with the Chinese in the neighboring Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States, where the British colonial government did not oblige its subjects to commit to military service.⁴¹¹

The Sino-Malay press discussed the issue of *Militie* (conscription). *Perniagaän*, for instance, was particularly concerned about compulsory military

⁴⁰⁹ DNA 2.05.90-548 #7097-7103: Letter from H. Mouw to Algemeene Secretarie (31 January 1920)

⁴¹⁰ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8750-51: Letter from Oudendijk to Min. For. Aff. (5 May 1920)

⁴¹¹ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8750-51: Letter from Oudendijk to Min. For. Aff. (5 May 1920)

service, and *Sin Po* argued that *Perniagaan's* standpoint regarding military service was insufficient. Their fight against Dutch subjectness was not only because of conscription but also because of injustice.⁴¹² The periodical explained that conscription was strongly related with the issue of *Onderdaanschap*. The Dutch government enforced military service on those who were Dutch subjects but not those “foreigners” who were born in China. *Sin Po* was concerned about this issue, because the issue of military service would soon be dealt in the Volksraad (Dutch colonial parliament).⁴¹³

Political Change in China

The first petition for a revision of the 1911 Sino-Dutch treaty was presented in 1917 after Wu Ting-fang (also known as Ng Choy), a Singapore-born Chinese who became Acting Premier of republican China, announced in the Chinese press about his intention of revising all the treaties that China had signed.⁴¹⁴ Wu attended school in British Hong Kong, studied law in England and became the first barrister of Chinese origin. A diplomat who was exposed to both Chinese and Western civilizations, he was particularly keen on comparing China to the West. Wu served as Qing's envoy to the United States, Peru and Spain

⁴¹² *Sin Po*, 28 January 1919 “Maksoed kita membantras Nederlandsch Onderdaanschap” (Our purpose of fighting against Dutch subjectness).

⁴¹³ *Sin Po* 29 Jan 1919, “Militie dan Onderdaanschap” (Militia and Subjectness).

⁴¹⁴ DNA 2.05.38-2785 #9399-9405: Beijing 17 Feb 1917 “Revision of the 1911 Sino-Dutch consular treaty (1917).

between 1896 and 1902 and between 1907 and 1909, and later held the post as Minister of Foreign Affairs in republican China. He gave lectures and wrote about Chinese politics and civilization, often in comparison with the West, particularly American civilization. He wrote praiseworthy essays about Chinese civilization, hoping that this knowledge would decrease foreign discrimination against the overseas Chinese.⁴¹⁵

Between the fall of the Qing empire, Sun Yatsen's return to China in 1916, and call for reunification in 1917,⁴¹⁶ the ties between the Indies Chinese and the Chinese government eroded. The Indies Chinese mistrusted China under the leadership of Yuan Shikai, and the twenty-one demands that Japan required from China in 1915 accelerated the downfall and decreasing popularity of Yuan's

⁴¹⁵ Wu Tingfang, *America, through the spectacles of an Oriental diplomat* (Bastian Books, 2008); Scott K. Wong, "Chinatown: conflicting images, contested terrain", *MELUS* 20(1) :3-15. Wu Tingfang wrote his essays in a period when the US promulgated the Chinese exclusionist laws, in which the US forbade Chinese immigration of laborers to the US (merchants and students were allowed to enter the US, but were ineligible for citizenship). These laws were in effect from 1882 to 1943.

⁴¹⁶ In 1913 Yuan Shikai forced Sun Yat-sen to go into exile. While being abroad Sun spent time restructuring Kuomintang. Sun planned to carry out revolution in three stages. The first two stages would be carried out directly under Sun's control. The first stage focused on military power. In the second stage, Sun would take the role of protector of the Chinese people. According to Sun, only when the second stage was completed, would the Chinese people be capable for selfrule under a republican constitution. In the period from his return to China in 1916 to the early 1920s, Sun Yat-sen traveled between Shanghai and Canton and hard difficulties garner political power. Under the warlord in Guangdong Chen Jiongmeng, he was named president of the newly established Chinese People's Government in 1921 and 1922. In August 1922, Chen asked Sun to leave Guangzhou, because Chen, a supporter of federalism and local elections, disagreed with Sun's intention of using Guangzhou as base for national unification through military force. Sun returned to Guangzhou in 1923 with the support of communists. (Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, Ch. 14).

regime. Yuan Shikai's ambition to restore the emperorship in China helped hasten the emergence of warlordism, which only fragmented China further.⁴¹⁷ The vision that China would become a strong power and overseas Chinese expectation to receive governmental protection diminished considerably. The significance of the Chamber of Commerce, THHK, and the revolutionary association Soe Po Sia as Chinese political bodies in the Indies weakened.⁴¹⁸ In 1916, Oei Tiong Ham (黃中涵), also known as the "Sugar King" from Semarang who became one of the wealthiest merchants in Southeast Asia due to his success in the sugar business, stated that less than two percent of all Chinese residing in Java had an affection for China.⁴¹⁹

Sun Yatsen's return to China and his participation in governance helped to re-establish trust among the overseas Chinese. Wu Ting-fang's announcement of revising treaties motivated Han Xiqi and other Chinese of Semarang to petition for the revision of the 1911 Sino-Dutch consular treaty. Unlike petitioners of the nationality law of 1909 that did not make an ethnic distinction between Chinese and Manchus, petitioners of the re-nationalization campaign emphasized that the Manchu rulers (rather than using the term Chinese rulers) were responsible for

⁴¹⁷ For historical background in this period, see Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, Ch12.

⁴¹⁸ BB 4370: Official report regarding the Chinese in Semarang (Batavia, 17 November 1916)

⁴¹⁹ BB 4370 (Batavia, 17 November 1916)

the de-nationalization of the Indies Chinese. Their anti-Manchu expression resonated with Sun Yatsen's political doctrine on race.

In their petition they expressed that their faith and trust in the fallen Chinese empire broke when Qing rulers signed the consular treaty with Holland. Explicitly referring China's previous rulers to Manchus instead of Chinese rulers, the Indies Chinese took Manchus as being responsible for the invalidation of the Chinese nationality status. Without acknowledging them as being creators of the nationality law, they blamed Manchus for breaking the national ties between China and the overseas Chinese. Petitioners complained: "the Qing empire ... signed [a treaty] with Holland. By this the Qing cut off ties with hundred thousands of subjects. This affected the lives and property of the Indies Chinese."⁴²⁰ In their opinion, the Qing regime abandoned the Indies Chinese as nationals of China by signing them off as "Other." The consular treaty of 1911 not only officially confirmed Indies Chinese subjectness to Dutch power but also had negative ramifications for the Indies Chinese. The lack of rights and privileges and the perpetuation of being victims of aggression were linked to the loss of their national status. The treaty eradicated any possibility for the Chinese government to offer protection and help Indies Chinese fight for their rights. Wu Tingfang's interest in revising unequal treaties gave Indies Chinese hope for improving their fate in the Dutch East Indies.

⁴²⁰ DNA 2.05.38-2785: Beijing 17 Feb 1917 "Revision of the 1911 Sino-Dutch consular treaty (1917) #9399-9405.

The Indies Chinese were not against the idea of a consular agreement, but they disagreed with the stipulations of the treaty. The consular treaty was a good idea, but it should not invalidate the status of overseas Chinese as nationals of China and should protect the lives and assets of its nationals. The 1911 consular treaty mainly confirmed the benefits of the Dutch party and lacked clauses that would benefit China and the overseas Chinese. The consular treaty allowed Chinese consuls serve as commercial agents, but according to the petitioners, its primary role should have been to guarantee protection for its nationals overseas.⁴²¹

Despite the challenges of unifying Chinese nationals in an era of political fragmentation in the post-Yuan Shikai era, the Chinese government's interest in solidifying its relationships with the Indies Chinese was mutual. When Han Xiqi, Xiong Li and Huang Xuanyou met with the president on 31 March 1920, the president expressed that it was the government's duty to protect its Huaqiao. He further lamented that the great geographical distance created a barrier between Huaqiao and their fatherland. In order to narrow the gap, the president urged Huaqiao from the British, French and Dutch colonies, the United States, and Siam to establish associations in Beijing. Permanent presence of representatives in these associations would help maintain close relationships between China and the overseas Chinese. The president urged the Indies Chinese delegation to

⁴²¹ DNA 2.05.38-2785: Letter Beijing 17 Feb 1917 "Revision of the 1911 Sino-Dutch consular treaty (1917) #9399-9405.

spread this idea upon returning to Nanyang.⁴²² Although China had placed consuls in countries with high concentrations of overseas Chinese, being situated on the territory of foreign governments, the influence of the Chinese government on the overseas Chinese was limited. By requesting overseas Chinese communities to establish representative offices in Beijing (the administrative metropole of the Chinese government), the Chinese government would have access of direct communication with overseas Chinese affairs without the interference of foreign governments.

After receiving written petitions, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs established a committee for revising the Sino-Dutch consular treaty even before Huang, Xiong and Han met with the president in Beijing. Lin Dinghua, an official who stayed in the Indies for periods of time and hence was familiar with the state of affairs there, became appointed committee member. Lin was a suitable person for this task. He had good connections with the Indies Chinese and, as an official, also with the Chinese administration. Lin attended meetings of the Colonists' League in Shanghai and assisted the delegation of the Indies Chinese with their re-nationalization activities in China. Lin used his political networks and requested Tuan Chi-jui and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to revise the Sino-Dutch consular treaty.⁴²³

⁴²² DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8735-41

⁴²³ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8750-51: Report Oudendijk to Min. For. Aff. (Beijing, 5 May 1920); DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8663-37: letter Oudendijk to Min. For. Aff. (From Beijing 9 July 1920 to 13 September 1920).

Engaging in World Politics

Emerging global awareness of equality and the atmosphere in world politics in the aftermath of the First World War stimulated the Indies Chinese to envision equal treatment for themselves. With China gaining a seat at the Paris Peace Conference and Japan's proposal for racial equality at the conference in 1919, the Indies Chinese anticipated that the political outlook for attaining equal treatment was favorable.

The Indies Chinese looked to Japan, a major Asiatic power and a "yellow race" that attained a status that was equal to Europeans, and its aim at abolishing racial discrimination. Negotiations for racial equality took place between late January and late April of 1919. Contrary to general assumption, Japan's proposal did not aim for universal equality of race, but merely aimed at guaranteeing equality of Japan's nationals only. Joining the League of Nations was a clear sign that Japan stepped out of seclusion and participated in world politics. The purpose of the racial equality proposal was to resolve anti-Japanese immigration issues in the United States and British territory that resulted from Japan's unequal status. For Japan, to join the league would signify and solidify Japan's new status as a great power. Most importantly, the motivation for Japan's racial equality agenda was constructed on Japan's struggle as a "non-white great power" in the League. Japan's insecure and unstable position as a great power was reflected by events such as Triple Intervention (1895), wave of the threat of Yellow Peril generated by its victory over Russia (1905) and the implementation of the Californian Alien Land Law (1913). These episodes were particularly

targeted against Japanese.⁴²⁴ By way of the proposal for racial equality, Japan hoped to eradicate unequal statuses and discrimination from White powers. Although Japan did not succeed in passing the proposal, the awareness of racial equality influenced the overseas Chinese ambition to fight for equality.

The Peace Conference (歐洲和議) that supposedly promoted the ideals of equality was, in the minds of the Indies Chinese, an opportune time for eliminating discrimination against the Chinese. Writing from Beijing, Dutch envoy Oudendijk reported that Han Xiqi's petition was forwarded to the higher levels of the Chinese government. The Indies Chinese requested the Chinese government start negotiations with the Dutch government. The fact that China was part of an entente would largely benefit the proposal for a revision of the Sino-Dutch consular treaty.⁴²⁵ The Dutch government was particularly concerned because Lu Zhengxiang, who previously played a key role in the Indies Chinese movement for

⁴²⁴ For a thorough study of Japan's racial equality proposal, see Naoko Shimazu, *Japan, Race and Equality: the Racial Equality Proposal of 1919* (London: Routledge, 1998), especially 164-188.

The Alien Land Law of California was part of series of US's anti-Asian immigration policies. It was particularly targeted on Japanese immigrants who were dominating the agricultural industry in California. The law prohibited Japanese from land ownership and limited tenancy of land to three years. See for instance, Eiichiro Azuma, *Between Two Empires: Race, History, and Transnationalism in Japanese America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005)

⁴²⁵ DNA 2.05.38-2785: Letter Beijing 17 Feb 1917 "Revision of the 1911 Sino-Dutch consular treaty (1917) #9399-9405; AS 03-23-023-02-019 Petition Li Denghui to Waijiaobu (29 March 1920).

the creation of the Chinese nationality law of 1909, was leader of China's delegation to the peace conference.⁴²⁶

Mouw, chief official of the Bureau of Chinese Affairs in Java, predicted that on behalf of the Indies Chinese, the Chinese government would require Germany to pay indemnity for the losses that the Indies Chinese suffered as a result of the World War. More important, however, was that the Indies Chinese wanted China to address the issue of subjectness at the peace conference by claiming that "tyrannical" policies imposed on them by Dutch authorities were not in accordance with the principles of law and justice. Expectations were that the Indies Chinese would criticize the Dutch government for ignoring the right to self-determination, which was promoted by the Allies.⁴²⁷ Indies Chinese's involvement in world politics placed pressure on the Dutch colonial regime which worried that the participating states at the peace conference would force the Dutch to acknowledge Dutch Indies-born Chinese as subjects of China grew. If the peace conference would meet with the desires of the Indies Chinese, Holland would be forced to give up the people they had ruled for centuries, which would greatly threaten Dutch sovereignty.⁴²⁸

⁴²⁶ DNA 2.05.90-548 #7119-7120: Letter from Mouw (Batavia, 5 February 1919).

⁴²⁷ DNA 2.05.90-548 #7101-7102

⁴²⁸ DNA 2.05.90-548 #7102-03

China's negotiations at the peace conference failed with the Conference's decision of ceding Shandong to Japan instead of returning the area to China.⁴²⁹ China's delegates, headed by Lu Zhengxiang, did not sign the Treaty of Versailles. China's retreat from the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, therefore, did nothing to eliminate the unequal treatment of the Chinese in the Indies. The rejection of Japan's racial equality proposal and China's inability to recover sovereignty over lost territories indicated that the power of the "yellow states" in world politics was limited. However, the spirit and awareness of global equality continued to stimulate the Indies Chinese to work towards their goal. After the failure at the peace conference, the Indies Chinese shifted their strategy from negotiating for their cause at a global level to resolving the nationality problem via bilateral diplomacy. It was in this period that the number of petitions to Chinese authorities sharply increased, but without the pressure of other states, it was more challenging for China and the Indies Chinese to demand a revision of the consular agreement.

Despite the challenges, the Indies Chinese felt the need to take advantage of the global discussion on equality in world politics. They argued that it was unfair that legal differences between a state's nationals and foreigners were defined according to the power of the state. It was the opportune time to fight for equality: "Now the concept of equality has been promoted. To support the weak is present. If we do not protest now, then we fear we cannot rise [in the

⁴²⁹ For historical background see Jonathan Spence, *The Search for Modern China*, Chapter 12 and 13.

future]."⁴³⁰ The Indies Chinese's voices for striving for equality were clearly expressed in the petitions that were written by the Indies Chinese and their supporters. That the First World War stimulated the Indies Chinese to fight for an equal status through diplomatic intervention was, for instance, expressed in the following letter of the Colonists' League that was addressed to all branches of the Chinese Chambers of Commerce:

Since the war in Europe [WWI] one is aiming for equality. There are circa one million of Chinese people in the Dutch possessions in Nanyang. In the last couple of years they underwent harsh treatment. The treaty with the Netherlands caused us to lose many rights that are disadvantages for the Huaqiao. Huaqiao have accumulated all the pain with unbearable treaties. Hence they established a large Huaqiao association in the whole of Dutch colonies. We chose Xiong Li, Huang Xuanyu and Han Xiqi as representatives to return to China. They will complain with the Chinese government and require a revision of the Sino-Dutch treaty... Now that the colonists are suffering, their brothers in China cannot ignore that. We now request you to act collectively from all strata and support the government. We beg your pity and request you to send telegrams to the Chinese government for opening

⁴³⁰ *Shen Pao* 22 January 1920 (DNA 2.05.90-548 #7153-73), p. 6.

negotiations. If this is the case, millions of Chinese people will praise.⁴³¹

The letter was written when China had approached Holland for a treaty revision after the hopes were shattered at the peace conference. Despite its failure, the spirit of equality that started to emerge after the ending of First World War persisted and continued to encourage the overseas Chinese to strive for equal treatment. The idea of a shared destiny of victimization due to inequality fortified the relationship between the Indies Chinese and China.

Proposing the End of Racial Segregation

On 13 March 1920 China officially requested Holland to revise the consular treaty according to Indies Chinese demands. Writing from Beijing to the Dutch metropole in The Hague, envoy Oudendijk commented that China's request for approving consular protection for the whole Indies Chinese population was inappropriate because it was not in line with Dutch perspectives on the principle of extraterritoriality.⁴³² Extending China's consular rights beyond commercial protection meant that Holland would sanction foreign governmental intervention with the affairs of its colonial subjects. On 11 February 1921, almost one year after China had formally proposed the revision of the consular treaty, Oudendijk

⁴³¹ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #1871-1872.

⁴³² DNA 2.05.38-2787: Letter from Beijing (Oudendijk) to Min For Aff in The Hague, dated 2 February 1920.

rejected China's request of amending the treaty by explaining that Holland already gave China privileges with the of establishment of Chinese consular representation on the Dutch Indies, which was, until the signing of the consular treaty in 1911, impermissible. On behalf of the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Oudendijk claimed that the content of the Sino-Dutch consular agreement was identical to the consular agreements that Holland signed with other countries, including Britain, Japan, French and Italy. These countries enjoyed the same privileges of appointing consuls for the sake of stimulating their commercial interests in the Indies. Holland disagreed with China and claimed that the content of the consular treaty met all the standards of international public law. Hence, there was no need to change stipulations of the consular treaty. Maintaining that Holland treated China as equally as other states, Oudendijk expressed that all treaty partners, including China, had the option of keeping or discarding the privilege of consular representation in the Indies.⁴³³

Although the movement for a treaty revision did not succeed in realizing Indies Chinese's goals of resolving the nationality issue through Chinese diplomatic intervention, it prompted Dutch authorities to reconsider their policy of racial hierarchy that was deeply entrenched since the inception of Dutch

⁴³³ AS 03-23-024-02-001: Letter from Oudendijk (Dutch envoy in Beijing) to W.W. Yen (head of Waijiaobu), 11 February 1921. The Dutch were dishonest on this regard: the Sino-Dutch treaty was not identical to treaties that the Dutch signed with other states. For instance, the Dutch laughed and ridiculed the Chinese for replacing 'Japan' with 'China' in their proposed treaty. China always wanted consular representation in the Dutch Indies, but Dutch rejected, fearing China's interference with Indies Chinese. Other states were allowed consular representation without too much difficulty.

colonialism. Throughout the year of 1920, before Holland gave China a firm rejection of revising the consular treaty in February 1921,⁴³⁴ Dutch authorities communicated back and forth between the Netherlands Indies, China and The Hague. Through three-way communication, Dutch officials stationed in different areas sought ways for resolving nationality issues that formed the foundation of the Indies Chinese movement.

Before China's retreat from the Paris Peace Conference, Mouw, head of the Bureau of Chinese Affairs (*Kantoor voor Chineesche Zaken*) in the Indies, already proposed an implementation of legal equality for all races (*gelijkstelling voor de wet van alle rassen*). According to him, racial equality was the solution for countering the danger of being forced to give up Indies Chinese as Dutch subjects to foreign powers.⁴³⁵ Even after the failure of China's negotiations at the peace conference, Mouw persistently argued for defining laws of racial equality. In January 1920 he suggested removing RR 109 because he explained that this regulation sparked the Indies Chinese equalization movement and was the incentive of the Indies Chinese for denying their status of colonial subjectness. Coinciding with the hopes and promises that China generated, the Indies Chinese believed that they could improve their position by renouncing and refusing their

⁴³⁴ AS 03.23-024-02-001: Letter from Oudendijk (Dutch envoy in Beijing) to W.W. Yen, 11 February 1921.

⁴³⁵ DNA 2.05.90-548 #7102-03

Dutch status of subjectness.⁴³⁶ Mouw predicted that the Indies Chinese would not give up on fighting against *Onderdaanschap* (Dutch status of subjectness) unless they succeeded in realizing their goals. Agitation against the status of colonial subjectness and their ambitions to recover their Chinese nationality statuses would not disappear unless the Indies Chinese had achieved complete equality in law.⁴³⁷

Dutch envoy to Beijing, Oudendijk, also suggested for lifting racial segregation policies. At the time when the movement against the Sino-Dutch consular treaty of 1911 was spreading from the Indies to China, Oudendijk suggested meeting the request of Indies Chinese “agitators” and the Chinese government by proposing the equalization of the Chinese status to that of other ethnic groups. According to Oudendijk, the purpose of the movement for a treaty revision was not to realize new ambitions but was aimed at Indies Chinese’s long-term goal of strengthening and confirming their position within the Dutch colonial society.⁴³⁸

Oudendijk’s perspective was based on Chinese newspapers that were circulating in China at the time. The Chinese press criticized the Dutch government and depicted Dutch policies as “barbarous cruelty” and

⁴³⁶ DNA 2.05.90-548 #7105-7113: Letter Mouw to Governor General of Dutch East Indies, Min. of Justice, 21 January 1920.

⁴³⁷ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8717: Letter from Beijing (Oudendijk) to For Aff in The Hague, dated 2 February 1920.

⁴³⁸ DNA 2.05.38-2787#8738-41: Letter from Oudendijk to Foreign Affairs (Beijing, 7 April 1920).

“tyrannical.”⁴³⁹ Oudendijk condemned the press for launching a “smear campaign” (*lastercampagne*) that was propagated by Han Xiqi, Xiong Li, the Colonists’ League and Lin Dinghua.⁴⁴⁰ The main complaint of the Indies Chinese was their differences of treatment compared to the Japanese. Referring to “Holland” as the “oppressor of the Chinese” (*verdrucker van Chineezers*), Indies Chinese search for China as a protector stemmed from their anxiety of being extinguished, interned and killed, and their fear of losing their residence and freedom of speech. These expressions were exaggerated, according to Oudendijk, but the only way to silence the voices of people such as Xiong Li and Han Xiqi was to implement unification of law in the Indies.⁴⁴¹

Indies Chinese ongoing struggle for equalization was harmful for Dutch authority for, as Oudendijk explained, the so-called Chinese movement in the Netherlands Indies (also called the Indies Chinese movement) interweaved with what he called “Chinese imperialism,” which he depicted as a form of “peaceful Chinese penetration.” Regardless of whether or not the entanglement of both movements was intentional, Oudendijk foresaw that as China was becoming stronger, its power would continue to be a threat to Dutch authority in the years to follow. Compared to Japanese imperialism, in his opinion, Chinese imperialism

⁴³⁹ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8750-51 (Letter from Oudendijk to Min. For. Aff. (Beijing, 5 May 1920)

⁴⁴⁰ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8744-51: Letter from Oudendijk (Beijing 14 April 1920)

⁴⁴¹ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8715-8720: Letter from Oudendijk to Min. For. Aff. (23 January 1920).

was different. Japan was in the process of establishing a hegemonic position in East Asia, which fostered a dangerous form of imperialist thinking in the region, including engendering imperialist ideas among its co-ethnics. The “Chinese threat,” on the other hand, was the great number of Chinese people and large-scale immigration to the Indies. The support of hundreds of millions of Chinese people traveling overseas from China would become increasingly significant to the Chinese government. Their importance was due to the increasing number of Chinese people in the Indies, their flexible abilities for adaptation and assimilation, and their hardworking and frugal ethic. Although China had not yet “ripened its pure imperialist visions in a modern sense,” Oudendijk anticipated that it would mature in the years that would follow. He was fearful of China and its followers in the Indies, because, in his words, “Chinese imperialism could become fateful for Dutch future.”⁴⁴²

Oudendijk opined that obstructing Chinese imperialism by force would not extinguish the fire among the Indies Chinese. China’s expansion and the Indies Chinese movement were growing hand in hand; both movements were mutually driven by each other. The root of the Indies Chinese movement was caused by inequality within the Dutch Indies. Therefore, erasing external threat (from China) would not solve the problem. A more successful approach would be

⁴⁴² DNA 2.05.38-2787: Letter from Oudendijk to Foreign Affairs (from Beijing, 7 April 1920) #8738-41. Oudendijk used the term of “Chinese imperialism.” When speaking of imperialism in the historiography of modern China, China is often depicted as the victim of imperialism (particularly of Western and Japanese imperialism). It is interesting that from the perspective of the West, China was considered as an imperialist power that threatened the West.

erasing the threat from within, namely by institutionalizing racial equality that was supported by law. He wrote:

“Our best weapon against China’s peaceful penetration in Southeast Asia was to strike against all types of Chinese expansionist or clandestine measures of usurpation in the Indies by way of racial equality in law.”⁴⁴³

In so doing, a Dutch Indies society based on Dutch civilization could be formed where each person would know its place and position regardless of racial diversity. As long as legal inequality of race persisted in the colonial society, no matter how many needs were fulfilled, the intensity of the Chinese movement would not decrease. The Chinese government would continue interfering with Dutch policies.⁴⁴⁴

Dutch paranoia of the “Chinese threat” and the fear of losing its colonial subjects prevailed in the Indies and China where the movement against Dutch subjectness took place. Officials in these areas called for the removal of racial segregation policy in order to counter the Indies Chinese movement, which was intertwined with China’s expansionist policies overseas. Politicians in the metropole did not share a unanimous opinion, however. The Minister of Colonies

⁴⁴³ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8738-41: Letter from Oudendijk to Foreign Affairs (from Beijing, 7 April 1920).

⁴⁴⁴ DNA 2.05.38-2787 #8738-41

considered removing the distinction among Europeans, Inlanders and Foreign Orientals in Indies' colonial law favorably,⁴⁴⁵ but the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs had his reservations about institutionalizing racial equality as a means to extinguish the "Chinese threat." The latter had two concerns: it would be difficult to realize the removal of racial segregation policies with the colonial government in the Indies; it would also mean taking a step back to the system that former Dutch envoy to Beijing Beelaerts van Blokland (who was in charge of the 1911 Sino-Dutch agreement) had institutionalized.⁴⁴⁶ The governmental discussion of removing racial segregation policy was generated by the Indies Chinese re-nationalization.⁴⁴⁷ Although the re-nationalization movement did not succeed in re-validating the validity of the Chinese nationality law, it did succeed in opening the discussion of racial equality in the Colony.

⁴⁴⁵ DNA 2.05.90-548 #6808-09: Letter Netherlands Min For Aff, Dept Judiciary issues, The Hague 21 Dec 1920.

⁴⁴⁶ DNA 2.05.90-548 #6812-14: Letter Netherlands Min For Aff to Min of Colonies, The Hague, 30 July 1920

⁴⁴⁷ For a thorough study on the proceedings of equal rights see Patricia Tjook-Liem, *De Rechtspositie der Chinezen in Nederlandsch-Indies, 1848-1942* (Leiden, 2009)

Conclusion

The validity of the Chinese nationality law for the Indies Chinese (1909-1911), though short-lived, was an important enactment for the Chinese community in the Indies. Their desire to adopt Chinese nationality was not so much based on a romanticized sense of nationalism, patriotism or any form of love for the ancestral land, but was mainly driven by their desire to escape from Dutch colonial rule. Although attempting to escape from Dutch colonialism, the majority of the Indies Chinese did not intend to leave Dutch territory. Their goal was to physically stay in the Indies under the jurisdiction and governance of China. In other words, they hoped that China would gain extraterritorial rights in the Indies and serve as their “political protector.” Sino-Dutch consular agreement annulled the validity of the nationality law for Indies Chinese, but the campaign for the creation of the nationality law of 1908-1909 left a legacy for the leaders and supporters of the movement for Chinese re-nationalization one decade later. Conflicts between Chinese and the native population, political change in China, and the emerging global trend of equal rights in the aftermath of World War One motivated Indies Chinese to launch a Chinese re-nationalization movement. The new generation of petitioners adopted the strategy of using petitions for persuading China to negotiate for their rights with Dutch authorities on their behalf.

The petitioners that are mentioned in this chapter were individuals that were mostly unheard of. By revealing their petitions, this chapter aims at placing their voices and their significance at the center of study. Although they were not

or barely documented in history writing, these people were important, for they were the agents of changing state policies. People such as Han Xiqi, Huang Xuanyou, Xiong Li, etc. succeeded in persuading the Chinese central and provincial government to start negotiations with the Dutch government. Although Sino-Dutch negotiations failed, their petitions, transnational movements, and the widespread support they gained, succeeded in taking the initial steps for Dutch authorities to change their racial policies. Realizing that “the Chinese problem” would not be solved by enforcing strict rules and rejecting any foreign influences, Dutch authorities started considering removing their deeply rooted racial segregation policies in the colonies. Indies Chinese did not succeed in retrieving their Chinese nationality status, but succeeded in maneuvering Dutch policies that elevated their social, economic, and political positions.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Journeying Chinese Amidst Competing Empires: A Transnational Approach

This study pays special attention to the Dutch Indies Chinese who were wedged between European colonial powers, the Chinese state, and to some extent the Japanese empire. This dissertation has shown how journeying Indies Chinese – seeking to elevate their political, social, and economic positions and privileges in China as well as in colonial societies – succeeded in outmaneuvering the policies of Asian and European empires. A close study on the archival sources that deal with Chinese state policies toward overseas Chinese, petitions by Indies Chinese to Chinese and colonial authorities, diplomatic records between China and colonial governments, colonial state policies on the overseas Chinese, and colonial intelligence reports, reveals that the relationships of the overseas Chinese with surrounding empires was unsettled and underwent periods of tension, manipulation, and negotiation. In order to obtain a more thorough understanding of how overseas Chinese became part of the national body of the Chinese empire, nation, and colonial makeup, I argue that overseas Chinese empowerment should not be approached by looking merely at the relationships between a single state and its subjects. Instead, overseas Chinese political allegiance to a state has to be

understood within the context of competing empires that were striving for overseas Chinese support.

To that end, I have attempted in this dissertation to look at the intersections of two concurrent transnational movements and the visions that were shaped by these movements. I have done so at two levels. The first is the transnational movement of the Chinese state and nationalists that aimed at expanding their political influences beyond China's territorial boundaries. This expansion, in which overseas Chinese played a key role for realizing China's ambition, created room for the second level: overseas Chinese empowerment. It enabled overseas Chinese peoples to envision and act on recovering and elevating their political, economic, and social position and privileges. The intensifying relationships between China and the journeying Chinese were intertwined and further created room for racial uplift in colonial settings. It was in this period that China was searching for a definition or place of what Westerners termed as "nation," "the national," or "nationality," which was at times unsettled and discursive. In short, my project deals with two sets of transnational agents: the political states that created room for overseas Chinese empowerment, and the journeying Chinese who directed the course of changing state policies.

This dissertation illuminates the interconnection of the two movements mentioned above, namely China's expansion overseas and overseas Chinese empowerment, by first probing into the situation of imperial competition from the states' perspective, followed by a detailed study of how Indies Chinese made use of states' competition to reach their goals of racial equality. Chapters two, three, and

four focus on the competition between the Chinese, British, and Dutch empires for overseas Chinese support.

Chapter two, "Fortress of Chinese Imperialism," places the emphasis on the expansionist vision of the Chinese republican state and the role that the overseas Chinese played in this imperialist project. The Chinese state reopened Jinan, the school that was exclusively designed for overseas Chinese, with the purpose to train promising overseas Chinese students to become the leading elite in Southeast Asia. Jinan nourished these students with the idea that Southeast Asia belonged to them and considered these students as key agents of China's extension of its sphere of influence. In order to realize its ambition to take over Southeast Asia from European powers, the Chinese state in the 1920s adapted to overseas Chinese wishes who had an agenda that was distinct from the Chinese state. In addition to courses on Chinese race and Chinese history and politics, Jinan attracted overseas Chinese students by including practical courses such as commerce. The purposes of the overseas Chinese and the Chinese state were not identical. Although the overseas Chinese considered the legal statuses as the most important issue on the Chinese nationalization agenda, the Chinese state gave priority to "molding the Chinese mind" through education. Extending its vision from strengthening a Chinese nation to establishing a greater Sinic state, republican authorities eyed on taking over Southeast Asia from European powers by way of training the overseas Chinese youth.

Overseas Chinese as agents of Chinese imperialism sparked widespread fear from British and Dutch empires. Chapter three "Sinophobia" focuses on British and Dutch reactions to Chinese expansionism in the 1920s. These governments launched

oppressive and affirmative colonial policies that resulted from prevailing Sinophobia in the Dutch and British territories. The fear for Sinic hegemony throughout the 1920s sharpened race policies in the British colonies but loosened racial segregation policies in the Dutch East Indies. Dutch authorities changed its policies and opened educational opportunities that were inaccessible to Indies Chinese until the opening of Chinese schools in the early 1900s.

Chapter four seeks to trace the reconnection between China and the Chinese communities that emerged two decades before Chinese expansionism and Dutch and British Sinophobia in the 1920s. It did so by probing into the developments at the turn of the twentieth century when Qing China and overseas Chinese people were suffering from Western imperialism and colonialism. It examines China's shifting perceptions of the overseas Chinese in the eyes of the Qing imperial state and Chinese nationalists and explores reasons for why China re-recognized the overseas Chinese peoples, who were, until the late nineteenth century, not considered as subjects of the Chinese empire nor nationals of China at the turn of the twentieth century. It discusses the various discourses on the Chinese race that emerged at the time and focused on the role of education in forging the idea of a Chinese national race. This chapter ends with Dutch colonial actions of breaking fictive "national" ties between China and Dutch Indies Chinese through desinicization efforts.

Chapters five and six discuss how Indies Chinese communities negotiated for their rights and privileges as a result of being situated within the competition of empires. Both chapters focus exclusively on the Indies Chinese and examine their

efforts in transforming their unbounded identities into bounded ones between 1900 and 1920s. They became active agents in creating the Chinese nationality law and racial uplift in the Dutch colony. Chapter five “Naturalizing Stateless Subjects” looks at multi-layered processes by which unbounded national ties became officially bounded categories with the promulgation of the Chinese nationality law in 1909 and Dutch colonial law of subjection in 1910. Although the Chinese state and political activists formulated various definitions of “what is a Chinese national,” the Dutch Indies Chinese community, led by a small group of merchants and educators, was the primary agent that initiated a demand to cement and protect these formulations with legal foundations. The official declaration of overseas Chinese peoples as nationals of China by law prompted the Dutch empire to establish the law of colonial subjection, by which Dutch authorities legally claimed Dutch Indies Chinese as Dutch colonial subjects by force. Although the Chinese national law was declared invalid in 1911, this first Chinese nationality law that was created in 1909 became an important foundation for overseas Chinese empowerment and a tool for negotiating their political positions and rights in the following decade.

Chapter six “The Road to Equality” focuses on a new generation of journeying merchants and educators that took up the role as promoters of re-institutionalizing the Chinese nationality law for the Dutch Indies Chinese community. In collaboration with merchants, intellectuals, and officials in China, Dutch Indies Chinese launched re-nationalization movements between 1917 and 1921 as a projected solution to escape from Dutch colonialism. The re-nationalization movement was motivated by proceedings in the aftermath of World War I, political

transformation in China, and racial conflicts in the Indies. Dutch colonial administrators proposed removing racial segregation policies as a way to obstruct Indies Chinese inclination toward China. The problem of Indies Chinese intensifying inclination towards China prompted Dutch colonial authorities to end their deep-rooted racial segregation policies.

This dissertation encourages thoughts for further study. The period between 1890s and 1920s saw the emerging signs of Japanese imperialism in Southeast Asia. How did intensified Japanese southward expansionism and anti-colonial movements of indigenous inhabitants affect overseas Chinese economic, political, and social rights and privileges from the 1920s up until the Second World War? Did these developments further encourage or limit overseas Chinese empowerment? Furthermore, this dissertation ends in the late 1920s just before the Civil War in China broke out. As this dissertation revealed, revolutionaries (first during the late Qing under the Tongmenghui era, then in the republican period under Guomintang's rule) played an important role in bridging overseas Chinese with China. Did the war between the communist and nationalist parties interrupt the relationship between overseas Chinese and China?

A Transnational Approach

On a theoretical level, this dissertation aims at contributing to the conceptualization of transnational paradigms. As I described in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, most transnational models emphasize deterritorialization and the idea of limitless transnational activity. In order to

illuminate both the possibilities and limitations of transnational activities, I propose using the approach of “the competition among empires,” which I also refer to as “imperial competition” as an angle for studying the political and national affiliations of “journeying Chinese communities” that were mobile across China, the Dutch East Indies, and British Straits Settlements. Looking at how journeying communities encountered, struggled, overcame, and set boundaries that were then officially articulated by various states, it is important to study the concurrent exchanges of journeying communities with multiple forces. Although the relations between diaspora and one empire or nation have been widely studied, there are few studies that examine the political relations involving two or more empires or states.⁴⁴⁸

Based on multi-sited research, I propose using the angle of “competition between empires” to understand transnational activity. In this dissertation I have argued throughout that two seemingly different projects, namely China’s expansion beyond its territorial boundaries and the overseas Chinese empowerment in colonial Southeast Asia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, were mutually enforcing movements that developed simultaneously. This study focuses on the period from the late 1890s to the mid 1920s because the entanglement of the construction of a pan-Chinese nation and the increasing political power of the overseas Chinese was particularly evident during this period.

⁴⁴⁸ Most transnational studies on Southeast Asia look at different would-be nations after independence, e.g. within French Indochina. The scholarship on Chinese in Southeast Asia is predominantly Singapore-centric. Although there are studies that take a “transnational” approach, the study of many of these transnational linkages remain within the British Empire (e.g. Hong Kong, Britain, etc.). There are few studies that look at transnational linkages that transcend imperial borders.

Prior to the late nineteenth century, the Chinese state (ruled by Manchus at the time) was not interested in extending its sphere of influence to Southeast Asia by way of overseas Chinese. Therefore, it was not until the mid-1890s when we began to see intellectuals, statesmen, and political thinkers engage in a project of creating a modern China in order to compete with and overcome Western imperialism. They became conscious of the power of overseas Chinese as political and economic assets and looked for ways to domesticate them into the Chinese nation-body. The Chinese state increasingly intervened in overseas Chinese affairs at the end of nineteenth century. This interference became more pronounced and visible from 1906 onwards with the establishment of government-ruled schools for the overseas Chinese and the promulgation of the Nationality Law that formally declared overseas Chinese as nationals of China in 1909.

National inclusion did not solely depend on the state decision, but resulted from a process that underwent negotiations and adjustment with the people that were to be included, in this case: the overseas Chinese peoples. The period under study was also transformative for the overseas Chinese. Although officially not recognized by any state, between 1900 and 1930, the overseas Chinese gained increasing political, economic, and social power, both in China and in the colonies. During this transformative period their identities were in flux. This manifested in their multiple and interchangeable affiliations with various states. At different times, and sometimes simultaneously, they identified themselves (and were being identified) as Chinese nationals, Dutch subjects, British subject, and occasionally Japanese imperial subjects.

My multi-sited research indicated that the changes in their economic, social, and political power occurred especially when surrounding empires (China, Holland, Britain, and Japan) competed for overseas Chinese support. I argue, therefore, that overseas Chinese empowerment should be understood within the context of imperial competition. The competition between governments for drawing overseas Chinese loyalties and allegiances created room for the overseas Chinese to negotiate for rights and privileges that were hitherto denied to them. Their racial elevation in the Dutch colonial society manifested itself in the provision of Dutch-sponsored education for people of Chinese descent, eligibility for Dutch naturalization, overcoming racial inferiority status, and the removal of racial segregation policies. Often, these developments were preceded by changes in China's politics of inclusion. Excluded from the Qing state prior to the late nineteenth century, overseas Chinese gradually received recognition and special privileges that were offered by the Chinese state. These included the addition of overseas Chinese to the category of "Chinese race" and nation, the establishment of schools that were exclusively for overseas Chinese, and the declaration of the Chinese nationality law.

Similar to transnational studies that are discussed in the introduction to this dissertation, my work intersects with the flows of people, ideas, imaginaries, and governance across the territorial boundaries of nation-states and empires. The shaping of multi-sited, fluid, and hybrid forms of Chinese identities resulting from the mingling of transnational flows challenge the perpetual and essentialist notion of things Chinese and offer a reminder that Chineseness or a Chinese cultural identity was not simply transplanted from a core in China. My research has helped

shape my skepticism towards nation-based scholarship that claims that overseas Chinese unconditionally supported Chinese nationalist movements because of patriotism, political loyalty and the longing for their homeland.

In my research I discovered that overseas Chinese support for China's "national" causes was not everlasting or consistent; nor did they support China without taking their own benefits into account. Instead, their political support for China or other governments was often negotiated, divided, fragmented, and sometimes overlapping. This was particularly evident in the different voices of overseas Chinese lived experiences that were expressed in their petitions to Chinese and colonial authorities at the time. This dissertation shows that their identification as a "Chinese national" was not so much due to their unconditional and perpetual concern for China as it was that their political relationship stemmed from mutual benefits between states and the journeying people.

The conceptual framework of my work is informed by transnational theories that highlight the porosity of borders, multiplicity of identities, capitalist-driven identity formations, and the role of overseas Chinese in shaping regional identities. Challenging nation-based theories, these approaches encourage scholarship to look beyond the territorial boundaries of nations and states, which illuminate the connections across boundaries that are otherwise neglected due to postwar constructed geographic categories. Diminishing the attention to territorial boundaries was important in these transnational studies. At the same time, what distinguishes my proposed analytical framework from these transnational theories is my confrontation with deterritorialization. My study shows that adopting a

deterritorialized perspective for approaching transnationalism is not free of its weaknesses.

Emphasis on the circumvention of state boundaries and the premise of an ever-expanding transnational movement with limited obstructions do not provide a complete picture of the transnational phenomena. Although deterritorialization praises the openness and numerous possibilities for a borderless identity in an increasingly globalized world, it fails to recognize the limits that transnational movements encounter and conceals subtle differences that are present in different locales within a wider spectrum of the crystallization of a regional identity. As my research suggests, although transnationalism magnifies the space for identity formation, the expansive movement has its limitations and often creates new boundaries or readjusts the old ones (particularly non-geographic boundaries, such as delineations of race, national, and political identity). In other words, even though cross-border practices often circumvent or transgress boundaries, my research shows that transnational movements also confront boundaries.

Similar to studies on deterritorialized Chineseness, this dissertation illustrates how two movements, namely China's expansionism beyond its territory and overseas Chinese increasing power, developed simultaneously and were mutually enforcing. On the one hand, China relied on the overseas Chinese, especially the journeying merchants and students who dominated the regional economic power and far-reaching educational networks across the China Seas and Malacca Strait, to realize its ambition of expanding its sphere of influence. On the other hand, as is evident in the preceding chapters, overseas Chinese ability to

enhance their rights in China was contingent on the roles that overseas Chinese could play in realizing China's ambitions. Previous studies, particularly those with regards to Chinese nationalism, portrayed the state, nation, nation-ness, and nationality as rubrics that were inherently present and unchanging, but I have argued in this dissertation that the shaping of the Chinese nation, and its derivative of "national," was not fixed and was very much connected with the political inclination of the journeying Chinese.

Hence I contend that journeying Chinese were the primary agents for shaping "China" and "the Chinese national." Situated between East and West as mediators, they played key roles in realizing China's ambition of becoming a strong empire and nation in the transformative and increasingly globalizing period between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The contours of "nation" and "national" in this period were very fluid and unfixed, which caused multiple "loyalties" to emerge. Processes of defining ultimate boundedness of identities were not simply delegated by the state through top-down approaches, but resulted from dynamic concurrent movements and negotiation between two or more forces, particularly the forces that the state would consider as "peripheral," such as overseas Chinese communities that were journeying between China and Dutch and British Southeast Asia.

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