BRILL

CHINA AND ASIA 4 (2022) 112–146

CHINA & ASIA
A Journal in Historical Studies
brill.com/cahs

Exile to the Equator: Chinese Anti-Colonialism and Nationalism in Southeast Asia, 1939–1946

Qian Zhu
Assistant Professor of Humanities, Duke Kunshan University, Kunshan, Jiangsu, China
qian.zhu77@dukekunshan.edu.cn

Abstract

This paper discusses and compares the ideas of Chinese leftists in exile, as expressed in their publications and journals and in their anti-colonial activism in collaboration with the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia from 1939 to 1946. Describing Chinese anti-colonialism and nationalism through a transnational conceptualization and an ethnographic approach, stories that occur "behind the scenes" enhance our ability to decode key words and reveal the complexities of concrete economic and political conflicts from multiple sources that involve migration, ethnicities, and capitalism. The class nature of Chinese anti-colonial internationalism that was forged during and after the Second World War was deeply embedded in the "liberal" discourses of freedom, democracy, equality, liberty, and women's emancipation. It was also rooted in the mass politics of anti-capitalism, which was global in scope and fine-grained, local, and rooted in everyday life. The Chinese leftist geopolitical configuration of the "nations below the wind" and "the equator" enabled the perception of a proto-global South—South alliance as a world-historical force, with the dual goals of overturning unequal development and achieving an integrated path of anti-colonialism and national independence.

Keywords

Chinese anti-colonialism – leftism – Nanyang – the equator – Southeast Asia – nationalism – global history of the Second World War

© KONINKLIJKE BRILL NV, LEIDEN, 2022 | DOI:10.1163/2589465X-04010005

Historical studies of Chinese anti-colonialism and nationalism during and after the Second World War have focused on how the Nationalist government and the Chinese Communist Soviet government dealt with their relationships with the United States and Soviet Russia, how they mobilized Chinese citizens and engaged in military campaigns against Japan, and how their ideological conflicts and military capacities impacted their wartime strategies and policies. While Chinese anti-colonialism in Southeast Asia during and after the Pacific War from 1939 to 1946 is rarely studied in European and American contexts, scholarship in the People's Republic of China (PRC) has investigated the facts that Chinese resistance leaders in fact joined the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and that their anti-war mobilizations followed the party's mass-line policy. To the extent that overseas Chinese nationalist sentiments and anti-colonial movements are considered indirectly—that is, only in relation to the Chinese state, one party or another, or their Chinese national identity—the transnational connections of Chinese resistance leaders and the local Chinese-language press with which they were closely engaged and intertwined are pushed to the margins of the picture.

This historiographical tendency derives in part from the two primary conceptual frameworks for understanding anti-colonial nationalism and the press in this period. The first is Benedict Anderson's emphasis on commercial newspapers in the development of a new consciousness of the nation. The fundamental role of domestic Chinese newspapers in stimulating the development of popular nationalism is well known. The role of the overseas Chinese press in the formulation of Chinese nationalism, by contrast, has been relatively unexplored. There is also little place within a conceptual focus on nationalism for the consideration of anti-colonial global alliances, for which national boundaries and citizenships were not definitive. The second dominant conceptual framework in the study of Chinese nationalism and print culture relates to the common transposition of Jurgen Habermas's work on a European bourgeois public sphere onto discussions of China. As in Habermas's work—in which the consideration of news flows from abroad is not developed into a conceptualization of transnational networks—discussions of the public sphere in China have largely been restricted to the consideration of the domestic state—society relationship, limiting examination of global relationships and news flows. During and after the Pacific War, the "we" that the political magazine *Below the Wind* (Fengxia 風下), published by Chinese left-wing activists in Southeast Asia, addressed, as well as the notion of "nations below the wind" itself, referred to the international anti-colonial and democratic community, in which the local Chinese-language press offered a transnational and contested communicative space for generating nationalist sentiments and activism.

Further, one of the historical conditions that permitted the rise of Chinese anti-colonialism in Southeast Asia from 1939 to 1946 was the strong political identification with China by overseas Chinese capitalists and political figures in Indonesia and Singapore, who generously provided financial aid to and entered into strategic alliances with exiles and contributed to the formation of the anti-colonial cultural united front under the Japanese occupation. This fits with historical research on Southeast Asian history in the Second World War, according to which Chinese nationalist movements in the colonial period, including those in which prominent overseas Chinese figures participated, were essentially China-oriented and uninterested in developing "a separate overseas Chinese identity" or in getting involved in local "indigenous nationalism."[1] Historians of Southeast Asia and the Second World War have concluded that this discourse of nationalism was postcolonial in character because it contended with colonial power and shaped emerging imaginations of the nation that sought to resolve the complexities of cultural, racial, ethnic, and class distinctions that were functional for colonial rule. New nations, as Benedict Anderson tells us, were not born after the collapse of empires but rather in the crucible of discourse in the imperial public sphere, through mass media or colonial state institutions. This produced imagined national communities before the birth of the actual national communities.[2]

Nevertheless, this paper intends to demonstrate that left-wing Chinese exiles promoted cross-ethnic alliances in Southeast Asia during and after the Second World War with the rise of anti-colonial internationalism and Chinese nationalism. The transnational origin of Chinese anti-colonialism has been well-explored from the perspective of the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. Gregor Benton has studied how overseas Chinese—industrial workers, seafarers, students, intellectuals, and traders—enthusiastically embraced internationalism and sought to address China's problems in the context of the larger world. In the first half of the twentieth century, migrant and ethnic Chinese sacrificed their lives as members of the International Brigades in the Spanish Civil War, fought shoulder to shoulder with people of other nationalities against both white racism and oppression within their own ethnic community, and provided assistance to their Indonesian comrades in the struggle for

1 Yen Ching Hwang, *Community and Politics: The Chinese in Colonial Singapore and Malaysia* (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1995), 218. See also Chui Kwei-Chiang, "Political attitudes and organisations, c. 1900–1941," in *A History of Singapore*, ed. Ernest C.T. Chew and Edwin Lee (Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1991), 76–78, 88–89.

2 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

independence.[3] Through increasing levels of literacy and the increasing availability of left-wing publications, a revolutionary-minded anti-colonial Chinese community was mobilized in the 1940s which, in the context of the global anti-colonial alliance, further developed political positions that had emerged in the prewar colonial period. In the 1940s, the distinct political discourses of "ethnicity" and "national form" and democratic and antiwar activism allowed openly active pro-China civic associations and political organizations to blossom. Rather than speaking as postcolonial subalterns whose agency and voices were denied in colonial politics, Chinese exiles fashioned an anti-colonial internationalism by engaging with the racial ideology, inequality, and oppression experienced by the colonized in their everyday lives: quotidian issues of plantation work, eating, living, and marriage and gender relations; legislative regulations and immigration policies concerning race, citizenship, and censuses; and contemporary international events and British colonial rule in Southeast Asia. Journalistic and ethnographic accounts of everyday life in left-wing publications enabled the colonized in Southeast Asia to debunk the colonial and racial categories to which they were assigned. Their notion of political agency was by no means that of a victimized and voiceless subaltern or colonial subject. Rather, it was by nature anti-colonial, anti-oppression, and democratic—features that were perceived as part of the common lived experience of all colonized peoples as well as of people in China living under Japanese occupation. Through print media and publication networks, the historical materialism of this form of Chinese anti-colonialism made it possible to fashion Chinese nationalism as a local form of anti-colonial internationalism and to communicate and engage with the local anti-colonial agendas of local national independence movements in Southeast Asia.

Transnational Networks, Cultural Refugees, and the Anti-Colonial Cultural Battlefield

In 1941, after the central government of China in Nanjing moved to Chongqing, all left-wing publications and publishing houses were banned when the Guomindang (GMD) launched yet another anti-communist and anti-leftist campaign after the "Wannan Incident" (Wannan shibian 皖南事變), also known as the "New Fourth Army Incident." Thirty-eight Chinese intellectuals and activists were placed on the GMD blacklist and fled to Hong Kong.

3 Gregor Benton, *Chinese Migrants and Internationalism: Forgotten Histories, 1917–1945* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007).

Twenty-five of the original thirty-eight exiles fled to Singapore through Thailand, where the Overseas Chinese Wartime Cultural Circle was organized for the purpose of publishing, education, and literary, musical, and artistic production.[4] These exiled Chinese included communists Hu Yuzhi[5] and Shen Zijiu,[6] who had joined the CCP in 1939, as well as democratic and liberal intellectuals like the prominent romantic poet Yu Dafu, university professors, and left-wing activists based in Shanghai.

Southeast Asia, known in Chinese as Nanyang (the South Seas) is a historical area of Chinese migration. To obtain the support of the overseas Chinese, the GMD promoted unity among the populations of the "oppressed" colonies and the overseas Chinese who were "oppressed" by the governments of those colonies.[7] From 1923 to 1927, CCP members acted as GMD envoys in Chinese communities in Southeast Asia as well as in North and South America. Many Chinese there had sympathized with Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary cause prior to the collapse of the imperial Chinese government in 1911, which had failed to protect overseas Chinese from discrimination by the governments of their new home countries.[8] After the GMD purge in April 1927 (the "White Terror") and the GMD's break with the Comintern, many communists and left-wing

4 Zhang Chukun 张楚琨, epilogue to *Liuwang zai chidaoxian shang* 流亡在赤道在线 (Exile to the Equator), by Shen Zijiu and Hu Yuzhi, ed. Zhou Jianqiang 周建强 (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1985), 128–29.

5 Hu Yuzhi 胡愈之 (1896–1986) was and eminent leftist journalist and the first assistant director at the Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China in charge of publishing. He organized the Literature Society with Mao Dun in 1920 and during the New Culture Movement in the 1920s, he was the leading intellectual in the vernacular Chinese movement and the leader of China's Esperanto movement in the 1930s. In 1932, Hu became the chief editor of *Dongfang zazhi* (Eastern Miscellany). Hu was later arrested by the Nanjing GMD government when he became the founding member of The Chinese Association of People's Rights and the Shanghai Cultural Circle National Salvation Association in 1935–1938. For the details of Hu Yuzhi's political life, see Chen Rongli 陈荣力, *Dadao zhixing: Hu Yuzhi zhi zhuan* 大道之行: 胡愈之传 (On a Wide Road: A Biography of Hu Yuzhi) (Hangzhou: Zhengjiang renmin chubanshe, 2005).

6 Shen Zijiu 沈兹九 (1898–1989) was the editor-in-chief of two left-wing feminist journals in Shanghai in 1932–1935 and was appointed as the first editor-in-chief of the PRC government women's monthly journal *Xin Zhongguo funü* 新中国妇女 (New Chinese Women) in 1950. Shen was the founding member of the Shanghai Women's National Salvation Association and she later was appointed by Madame Song Mei-ling to lead women's participation in the New Life Movement in 1934–1936. For the details of Shen Zijiu's political life, see Dong Bian 董边, ed., *Nüjie wenhua nüzhanshi: Shen Zijiu* 女界文化女战士: 沈兹九 (Cultural Fighter in Women's Circle: Shen Zijiu) (Beijing: Zhongguo funü chubanshe, 1991).

7 Anna Belogurova, *Networks, Parties, and the "Oppressed Nations": The Comintern and Chinese Communists Overseas, 1926–1935* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 562.

8 Belogurova, *Networks, Parties*, 561.

intellectuals and activists fled to Nanyang, which developed into an overseas safe zone for anti-fascist and anti-colonial cultural workers. From the late 1930s into the 1940s, the CCP was better able than the GMD to capture the hearts and minds of young overseas Chinese by expanding its political networks and promoting cross-ethnic alliances within the working class. In the 1940s, the CCP built its base of support among the overseas Chinese through the educational and publishing efforts of left-wing intellectuals in overseas Chinese communities. Using the supplies, information, and refuge provided by these young people during the Japanese occupation, the CCP established underground offices in Sumatra, which were hidden behind the counters of pastry shops, Chinese medicine companies, soap factories, and wineries.[9]

By the 1930s, diasporic networks of Chinese around the world maintained a lively transnational press, communicated and organized around local conditions at sites of settlement, supported geographically dispersed social and political organizations, and coordinated transnational boycotts around issues of race and immigration.[10] Singapore became the political, military, economic, and cultural center of the Chinese diasporic network in Southeast Asia and in North and South America, where 12 million overseas Chinese resided. While radical new ideas and modes of organization travelled across the world through Chinese networks, dynamic multilocational anti-fascist and anti-colonialist social and political organizations were supported, through which Chinese exiles were able to survive and continue their endeavors in Nanyang. After the aforementioned GMD purge in 1927, communists continued their alliance with the Comintern; they focused on developing the revolution in Asia and established a number of national communist parties, relying on Chinese communists in places of historical Chinese migration.[11] Upon his arrival, Hu Yuzhi, the leading journalist and editor-in-chief of the major newspaper *Shenbao* 申報 in Shanghai, became the general editor of *Nanyang shangbao* 南洋商報 (Commercial Paper of Nanyang). This newspaper was published by the Hokkien Chinese[12] in Singapore, led by Chen Jiageng 陳嘉庚 (Tan Kah Kee),

9 The actors who did this were Chinese underground communists and left-wing intellectuals like Ba Ren, the pen name of Wang Renshu. Wang was best known by this pen name in Indonesia, or as "Pak Barhen [*sic*]" (Uncle Ba Ren). Ba Ren traveled from mainland China to Southeast Asia and worked as a teacher and journalist in overseas Chinese communities. For details of the CCP's support base in Southeast Asia and Ba Ren, see Taomo Zhou, *Migration in the Time of Revolution: China, Indonesia, and the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019), 36–51.

10 Philip A. Kuhn, *Chinese among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. 2008), 229–32.

11 Belogurova, *Networks, Parties*, 562.

12 The Hokkien Chinese, or the Min Chinese, refers to Chinese immigrants from Fujian, most of Taiwan, eastern Guangdong, Hainan, and southern Zhejiang.

a leader in the Chinese community in Singapore. It became the most prominent source of news for overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia.[13]

As overseas CCP members, Hu Yuzhi and Shen Zijiu were keen to promote anti-colonial liberation in alliance with local "oppressed nations." Under the collaborative leadership of Chen Jiageng and Hu Yuzhi, the Motherland Refugee Association (Zuguo liuwangzhe xiehui 祖國流亡者協會) was established with the goal of organizing an anti-Japanese united front. *Nanyang shangbao* quickly came to function as the key communicative and mobilizational forum of the association. Shen Zijiu, a leading feminist intellectual and editor-in-chief of several women's journals and magazines in Shanghai and Hong Kong, began publishing *Funü zhoukan* 婦女周刊 (Women Weekly) as a supplement to *Nanyang shangbao* in order to organize a women's "anti-separation" (*fanfenlie* 反分裂) democratic united front in Singapore. *Nanyang shangbao* also served as a key channel of communication for the anti-fascist democratic movement, through which a training camp for young cadres was organized to cooperate with local Chinese communities. These young cadres organized a labor assistance group, a militia, and a paramilitary squad. Another result of their efforts was the formation of an overseas Chinese anti-Japanese army, with three thousand soldiers, which fought against the Japanese when the British Navy was defeated and abandoned Singapore in 1942.[14]

At the same time, *Nanyang shangbao* also engaged in political activities in local Chinese communities with the aim of maintaining the anti-colonial united front. When the Nanyang Overseas Chinese Visiting Group returned to Singapore after visiting Chongqing and Yan'an in 1941, Chen gave a public lecture that praised the Yan'an Soviet for achieving Sun Yat-sen's "Three Principles of the People." As a major supporter of and donor to the GMD during the War of Resistance, Chen's speech appeared to Chiang Kai-shek in Chongqing as a betrayal. Wu Tiecheng, head of the GMD Department of Overseas Affairs, and the GMD-controlled Chinese embassy in Singapore collaborated with Chinese secret society leaders to prevent Chen from being reelected as the president of the General Association of Nanyang Chinese, the largest organization of overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia.[15] *Nanyang shangbao* published commentaries and voters' essays to highlight the association's support of the War of Resistance in donating 300 million yuan to the GMD government in Chongqing and in organizing local resistance movements in the previous two years, all under Chen's leadership. The paper also published editorials calling for the

---

13 Zhang Chukun, epilogue, 129.

14 Zhang Chukun, epilogue, 129–30.

15 Hu Yuzhi, "Nanyang zaji" 南洋雜記 (Miscellaneous memories of Nanyang), in Shen and Hu, *Liuwang zai chidaoxian shang*, 93.

unity of "all parties, all factions and organizations, the old and the young, and the rich and the poor" to resist the "colonial strategy of 'pitting Chinese against Chinese.'" When Chen Jiageng was reelected, the paper celebrated it as "victory of the common will" and a victory for the consolidation of all the overseas Chinese in Nanyang.[16]

When 100,000 Indian and Australian British army troops surrendered to 30,000 Japanese troops in Singapore in 1942, Chinese exiles collaborated with local Chinese anti-fascist communities and organized the Singapore Chinese Cultural Circle Wartime Working Group, for which Yu Dafu and Hu Yuzhi served as chairs. Later, the Culture Circle merged with the Singapore Chinese Anti-enemy Mobilization Committee led by Chen Jiageng, in which Hu Yuzhi served as the chief cultural advisor.[17] After Singapore was occupied by Japan, twelve exiles moved to Java with the assistance of a local Chinese businessman after the colonial government of the Dutch East Indies refused to issue visas to war refugees. The rest of the exiles, including Hu Yuzhi, Shen Zijiu, and Yu Dafu, went to Sumatra, which had had a strong Chinese community, including a number of successful capitalists who supported Sun Yat-sen's ideas about the unity of "oppressed nations" and democratic movements. This group managed to borrow a small amount of money from a local Chinese bank and opened a soap factory. They then opened a small bookstore and began preparations to publish a Chinese-language magazine. In 1943, they fled Sumatra to some islands in the Banda Sea to hide from Japanese forces. Two years later, after Japan was defeated in 1945, the exiles finally returned to Singapore.[18]

Hu Yuzhi and Shen Zijiu collaborated with local Chinese businessmen and opened the New South Ocean Publishing House, which published a report on their experiences in the deep forests and mountaintops of Sumatra in 1946, in *Below the Wind*. This was edited by Hu Yuzhi under the pen name of Sha Ping. In this report, called "Exile to the Equator" ("Liuwang zai chidaoxian shang" 流亡在赤道線上), Shen Zijiu described the lives of the Chinese activists and the local communities of northern Indonesia, the former Dutch colony that was occupied by Japan from 1942 to 1945. The report was published across twenty issues in *Below the Wind*. In 1985, it was compiled, edited, and reissued by *Jinghua ribao* 京華日報 (Jinghua Newspaper) and Sanlian shudian when Shen Zijiu became the director of the All-China Women's Federation and a standing member of the China Democratic League (Minmeng 民盟).[19]

16 Hu Yuzhi, "Nanyang zaji," 94.
17 Dong Bian, *Nüjie wenhua nüzhanshi*, 128.
18 Dong Bian, *Nüjie wenhua nüzhanshi*, 147–49.

"Nations Below the Wind": the Geopolitics of Anti-Colonialism

In the first issue of *Below the Wind*, Hu Yuzhi notes that the journal's title was derived from the phrase "nations below the wind" (*fengxia zhi guo* 風下之國), which had been used by Southeast Asians for some five hundred years.[20] According to Hu Yuzhi, although wooden sailing boats were important in the process of the Portuguese sailing from the Cape of Good Hope and discovering the East Indies, it was actually made possible by the monsoon from the Indian Ocean to the Pacific along the equator. Every year from May to September, the monsoon blew from the southwest to the northeast, while from October to December, it blew from the northeast to the southwest. It was also called "wind of trade," because it reduced the difficulty of long-distance trade from Southeast Asia to Africa and Europe before the invention of the steam engine. However, Hu Yuzhi explained that it was because the season of the wind from the southwest was longer than the one from the northeast that the East India Company was eventually able to control the Eastern trading markets and to claim the rich natural resources that were available in the region.[21]

Hu Yuzhi elaborated that when the Portuguese landed in Malaysia in the sixteenth century and pointed to the southwest, the native Malays called the west "the nations above the wind" (*negeri di ba wa angin*) and the east "the nations below the wind" (*negeri di atas angin*). Thus, in the Malay language, and later in the Indonesian language, "nations below the wind" refers to the region from Sri Lanka to the Philippines, and includes Burma, Malaysia, Vietnam, and the entirety of Indonesia, while the nations above the wind include Europe and the nations of the Near East. According to Hu Yuzhi, these nations below the wind became European and Japanese colonies, a situation similar to that of China, losing their economic, political, and cultural independence. However, after the two world wars, with the rise of independence movements around the world, the nations below wind were reluctant to be re-enslaved by the West.[22] By historicizing the colonial history of Southeast Asia in global terms, the region was renamed in accordance with its geopolitical significance in a colonial world, from the standpoint of the colonized. The term "nations below the wind," taken from the colonized Malaysian/Indonesian language, aimed to justify Malaysians' ownership of the region and their right to independence.

19 Zhang Chukun, epilogue, 141.

20 Hu Yuzhi, "Fengxia shiming" 風下釋名 (The Meaning of *Fengxia*), *Fengxia* 風下 (Below the Wind) 1 (1945): 18.

21 Hu Yuzhi, "Fengxia shiming," 18.

22 Hu Yuzhi, "Fengxia shiming," 18.

As the colonized seized the right of naming, the names served to underline the fact that the colonized—the East—defined itself in equal terms with the colonizers—the West. In doing so, the figure of "the colonized" grounded itself firmly in a territorial and social space inherited from the pre-colonial past. That is, pre-colonial history was discovered and publicized in order to affirm the equal status of the West and the East in terms of human development. Such arguments served to debunk the form of colonial history that made the East inferior to the West. The new anti-colonial history, then, was intended to restore equality to and reclaim ownership of the region, which had been seized by a series of colonial powers.

In Chinese anti-colonial geopolitics, "the nations below the wind" became the subject of global anti-colonial history, whose agency enabled the nations in the region to establish a united front against their common enemies. That is, the linguistic origin of the name and the commonality of the experience of colonialism reinforced the transnational unification of anti-colonial national independence movements in the region—geographically the East, from the perspective of the colonizers. Nevertheless, the transnational anti-colonial alliance was in no way defined by this linguistic and cultural commonality; rather, it prioritized the experiences of the colonized in determining who was a friend and who was an enemy. Although geographically and linguistically China was not in the same region as the "nations below the wind," its experience of colonization made it a member of this global anti-colonial united front and the global movement for the independence of nations. The idea of "nations below the wind" and "nations above the wind" defined the worldview of the Chinese exiles. It reconfigured the geopolitics of global colonialism, such that the colonized became the agents of the national independence movements. The monsoon that enabled the entry of European traders into the markets of the equator rendered the origin of global colonialism into a kind of historical contingency, while technological innovation and industrialization were seen as secondary to the rise of colonial power because they occurred much later. More importantly, for the Chinese exiles, colonialism as a political project was always accompanied by global capitalism, in which international trade resulted in a global division of labor and the exploitation of the colonized regions. In a map entitled "The Affluent Island of Java" (Fig. 1), Java is represented as an arrangement of areas of specialized production of natural resources, railway transportation, and the cities occupied by the British and the Dutch in 1946, when Britain supported the Dutch colonial government's efforts to reestablish its authority in Indonesia. The areas of specialized production—including those of sugar, gas, rubber, coffee, spices, grains, and quinine—signified the island and its affluence, the labor force of

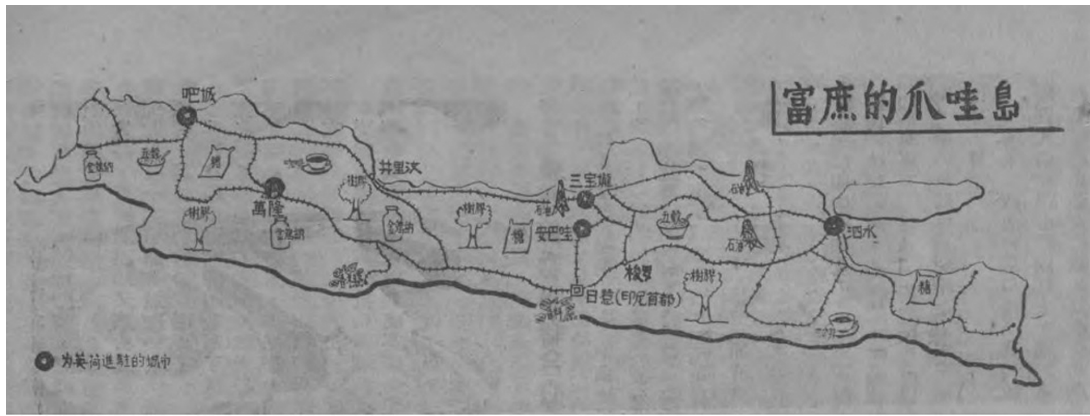

FIGURE 1 "Fushu de Zhaowa dao" 富庶的爪哇島 (The Affluent Java Island).
SOURCE: LIN ZHIWEN 林之文, "XIAN JIEDUAN DE YINNI JUSHI" 現階段的印尼局勢 (THE CURRENT SITUATION IN INDONESIA), *FENGXIA* 17 (1946): 315–17.

which was organized and divided by the colonial government and controlled by the cities that had been built where railways connected to seaports, to supply the European consumer market. The "affluence" of Java referred to its abundant natural resources, which were extracted to satisfy international consumer markets, as opposed to the indigenous workers who produced the commodities and made profits for colonial capitalists. Colonial governments deprived the indigenous people of the right to own land and the resources on or in it, and to control profits. This legal infrastructure paved the way for capitalist production and guaranteed the profits of the colonizers. While viewers of the map can see the "surface" of Java as exemplary of global capitalism, the indigenous people have "disappeared," rendered invisible by the alienation of labor under global capitalism.

However, for the Chinese exiles, the geopolitical reality of global colonialism in no way suggested that the colonized were submissive and passive. Below the map, a report on "The Indonesian Situation in the Current Stage" explains that the resistance of the Indonesians and the anti-war feelings of Indian soldiers forced the British and Dutch colonial government to retreat from Java. The essay details the powerful effects of Indonesian resistance and of the fact that Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru persuaded the Indian soldiers in the region that they were being used by the British as tools to suppress weaker and smaller nations.[23] The juxtaposition of the map and the report demonstrated the co-existence of colonialism, capitalism, and the dynamics of local anti-colonial resistance. While the capitalist division of labor dehumanized

23 Lin Zhiwen 林之文, "Xian jieduan de Yinni jushi" 現階段的印尼局勢 (The Current Situation in Indonesia), *Fengxia* 17 (1946): 315–17.

the indigenous workers and rendered them invisible in the space of colonization, the struggles of local people were articulated and became visible to Chinese readers. In this geopolitical reality, "nations below the wind" was configured as a political concept to form an international anti-colonial community, in terms of which the nations above the wind were identified as both colonialist and capitalist. They were the ones who seized and employed international trade, technology, geographical and seasonal advantages, and military force to exploit the means and forces of production in order to generate capitalist profit. Anti-colonialism, then, was essentially a transnational alliance and practice of resistance against global capitalism, i.e., the global division of labor and the unequal distribution of surplus value.

It is important to note that the image of wind, as an irresistibly spreading force, was appropriated by the Chinese exiles to represent and position *Below the Wind* as a powerful means of communication and networking among local anti-colonial communities, one that went beyond the geographical boundaries of the region of Southeast Asia. As Hu Yuzhi asserted in the inaugural issue, "How to understand the situation of colonized peoples in these nations, how to listen to their voices, and reflect on their desires—these are the purposes of the journal *Below the Wind*."[24] The journal published travelogues and miscellaneous notes that recorded ordinary people's lives in the postwar period. It also published photographs, a regular woodblock print cartoon, "The World of Cartoons" (Manhua de shijie 漫畫的世界), and materials in the English, French, and Indonesian languages in order to render visually the coexistence of the various forces. In an issue published in 1948, "The World of Cartoons" comprised two woodblock prints in order to overcome the barriers involved in trans-linguistic communication (Fig.2).[25] A European-looking woman looks up at a large US dollar symbol and a nuclear bomb, pondering. The caption highlights the postwar colonialism represented by the US, which eventually employed dollar diplomacy to assist the "counterrevolutionary powers against the people" in order to control the economy of Western Europe.[26] However, along with the development of revolutionary power in China, Greece, and Eastern Europe, "people in the Western European countries are awakening and gaining in power." In the other cartoon, a man, labeled "the common people," is sitting and facing east. He says, in English, "You are powerful when you're split, but we're terrific when we're united."[27] The caption makes the nuclear

24 Hu Yuzhi, "Juanshouyu" 卷首語 (Opening Remark), *Fengxia* 1 (1945): 1.
25 "Manhua de shijie" 漫畫的世界 (The World of Cartoons), *Fengxia* 108 (1948): 2.
26 "Manhua de shijie," 2.
27 "Manhua de shijie," 2.

漫畫的世界

金元與原子彈，這是美帝國主義手中的兩件武器。不過，直到目前爲止，美國還不敢發動世界大戰，因此也不敢動用原子彈；用得最廣泛的還是金元這柄武器。它用金元幫助各國的反動勢力向人民進攻，它用貸款援助的手段操縱西歐的經濟與政治。但是，蘇聯的強盛，中國與希臘的革命力量的壯大，東歐新國家的趨於鞏固，西歐各國人民的覺醒與抬頭，已日益證明，美國即使用金元這柄銳利的武器，亦已無法征服全世界的人民了。

這個「一般的人民」說：「原子呀，在你分裂的時候，你是有威力的，可是當我們團結起來的時候，我們的力量是可怕的。」一點兒也不錯，原子要分裂才能發出力量，而全世界人民一團結起來卻可發揮比原子更強大的力量。在另一方面，帝國主義反動派最希望全世界人民分裂，它才能實施它奴役人民的計劃；而全世界人民則應該團結成一條反帝的民主陣線，才能爭取真正的和平，民主與進步。

FIGURE 2 “Manhua de shijie” 漫畫的世界 (The World of Cartoons).
SOURCE: FENGXIA 108 (1948): 2.

bomb into an analogy of imperialism—“a new form of postwar colonialism” that “wishes for the people of the world to split [as nuclear bombs depend upon splitting the atom] so it can achieve its goal of enslaving the people.”[28] The “we” here refers to the anti-colonial democratic united front, which could “achieve real peace, democracy, and progress.” For the Chinese anti-colonialists, “the common people” in the Western nations here express their desire to form a transnational anti-colonial alliance with the colonized peoples in the East.

While in the past the monsoons brought colonialism from the West to the East, *Below the Wind* was analogized to a powerful trans-regional monsoon in spreading the voices of anti-colonialism and enabling them to be heard. With its sensible and audible nature, wind signified that the journal sought to

28 “Manhua de shijie,” 2.

serve as a way of creating a global community of hearing among "the common people,"[29] in which the nations below the wind would, as Hu Yuzhi asserted, "determine the future of war and peace."[30] *Below the Wind* redefined the geopolitical significance of colonized Southeast Asia as a driving and uniting force after the Second World War; the region was no longer simply a colony, a periphery to the metropole, as it was in the colonial worldview. The dynamics of the anti-colonial struggles in Southeast Asia made the region significant in the global anti-oppression and national independence movement, the voice which had to be heard if global imaginations of unity and mobilization were to be created.

As a communicative forum for global anti-colonial movements, *Below the Wind* also recognized that the power of publishing could be analogous to the unpredictable, uncontrollable, multi-directional, and formless nature of a monsoon. Yet it could also be employed as a means of producing political and cultural consciousness. To possess and utilize the power of publishing was the key to "cultural war between colonialism and anti-colonialism in the postwar era."[31] *Below the Wind* published articles to identify and increase awareness of the various forms of destructive force that colonialism required. In his 1948 essay "A Bad Wind Blowing on the Nations Below the Wind," Hu Yuzhi warned his readers that the wind from the West was "a bloody and evil wind from which we can hear the cry, 'kill, kill, kill.'"[32] Hu Yuzhi said that the *Times* newspaper in London had announced that China was a future enemy of Southeast Asia and supported the anti-Chinese movement in Malaysia. Hearing this cry in the wind, Hu Yuzhi continued: "people begin to discuss the possibility of a third world war, while the opportunists are prepared to make money by selling arms."[33] He claimed that this wind stemmed from the plan to split Europe along the Iron Curtain since 1945, in which the ideological endeavor of anti-communism was employed to generate civil war and interrupt the process of national peace reconstruction. This "bad wind" from the West aimed to split the united democratic front in Southeast Asia and to reduce the strength of the various national independence movements in the East.[34]

---

29 By using "hearing" here, I refer to the relationship of mutual correspondence and communication between the people in Southeast Asia, the contributors and editors of the journal, and the readers.

30 Hu Yuzhi, "Juanshouyu," 1.

31 Hu Yuzhi, "Juanshouyu," 1.

32 Hu Yuzhi, "Waifeng chulai fengxia zhiguo" 歪風吹來風下之國 (An Awry Wind Blowing on the Nations below Wind), *Fengxia* 120 (1948): 1–2.

33 Hu Yuzhi, "Waifeng chulai fengxia zhiguo."

34 Hu Yuzhi, "Waifeng chulai fengxia zhiguo."

For Chinese cultural elites, print culture in general was seen as a transnational contested space that made global audiences possible. It was also a space in which political ideologies and the results of global debates could be exhibited and interpreted to generate future global audiences for anti-colonial democratic movements. More importantly, *Below the Wind* served as a center of organizing for local anti-colonial and democratic activities for Chinese communities of resistance in Singapore. In 1946, the civil war between the GMD and the CCP broke out as Chiang Kai-shek sent three armies to encircle the CCP's largest soviet in Henan province. Chen Jiageng, as the elected president of the General Association of Nanyang Chinese in Singapore, sent a telegram to President Truman and the US Congress in protest against the GMD's civil war policy, with which the US government was allied. Chen's appeal was supported by overseas Chinese communities and by American activists. About ten protests against US support for China's civil war took place in the US. *Below the Wind* published protest announcements, pamphlets, reportage, and articles that coordinated with local anti-war activities. It also directly criticized the Blue Shirt clique in Singapore, who attempted to assassinate Chen Jiageng at one of the anti-war events; it also helped to organize protests in front of the US embassy in Singapore and public demonstrations in support of Chen.[35]

The Equator: Matriarchal Society, the Alienation of Labor, and the Frontline of Global Anti-Colonialism

The anti-colonialism claimed by the Chinese exiles grounded itself firmly in a social space inherited from the pre-colonial and pre-capitalist past, but one which had been reshaped by the colonial and capitalist present. Published in *Below the Wind* from 1946 to 1947, "Exile to the Equator" was an extended report by Shen Zijiu that documented the agrarian society of the local Minangkabau community and the transformation of the social structure under the Dutch colonial government. According to Shen Zijiu's report, the Chinese exiles had to rely on the exchange of rice and vegetables with the mountain Minangkabau villagers while they hid in the forest from their enemies. In the mountains, they visited the *bales* (meeting halls), *rumahs* (houses), and *sopos* (rice barns), the three main types of building common to the various Minangkabau groups. The *rumahs* had traditionally been large houses in which a group of families lived communally. During the day, the interior was shared living space, and

35 Yan Bo 煙波, "Hu Yuzhi xiansheng zai Nanyang" 胡愈之先生在南洋 (Mr. Hu Yuzhi in Nanyang), *Dushu yu chuban* 讀書與出版 (Reading and Publishing), October 1946, 11.

at night cloth or matting drapes provided families with privacy. Shen Zijiu notes that the small *sopos* near the larger *rumahs* were rice barns and owned by the women of the Minangkabau community. Shen dubbed the mountainous region the "women's kingdom."[36] However, this agrarian society had been transformed into a factory for the specialized production of cash crops like sugar, gas, rubber, coffee, spices, grains, and quinine, which led to corresponding changes in its social structure. When the exiles fled and then settled at Pajakoem Boeh, a small town in the west of Sumatra, they were welcomed by local Chinese Indonesians who had migrated from Fujian two centuries before to work on the sugar and quinine farms.[37] The coexistence of specialized production for the colonial market and indigenous agricultural production made the multicultural and multiethnic society of Indonesia possible under the Dutch colonial government.

For Shen Zijiu, it was the form of the Dutch East Indies colonial governance that allowed indigenous traditions to continue to exist in the west of Sumatra. In Pajakoem Boeh, Shen paid close attention to the local Minangkabau society. Shen praised Minangkabau society as "particularly excellent" among all the ethnic groups in Indonesia because it was matriarchal and Minangkabau women held the power of property ownership. Before the establishment of the Dutch East Indies colonial government, the matriarchal Minangkabau society was a system of rural communes where mutual aid and the fair distribution of products was enjoyed by all members of the community. However, colonial commercial capital destroyed this social structure, and many able-bodied male laborers began to migrate to other places to make money. Female landowners then had to employ migrant Sumatran coolies to perform farm labor. Exploited by heavy taxation, the female landowners of Minangkabau went bankrupt. Hardworking female landowners, however, were still able to make a living by selling rice and commercial agricultural products, such as coffee, tobacco, and vegetables, in local seasonal markets.[38] Shen Zijiu observed that women were the primary sellers in the weekly bazaar in Pajakoem Boeh. According to Minangkabau tradition, female landowners had to reside close to their land. Even if a woman lived outside of the village with her husband, clan custom required her to reside in the village one year out of every three years to demonstrate her right to the land. The global recruitment of labor under capitalism made it possible for propertyless Minangkabau men who were unable

36 Shen and Hu, *Liuwang zai chidaoxian shang*, 12.

37 Shen and Hu, *Liuwang zai chidaoxian shang*, 20.

AQ9

38 Zi Jiu 茲九 [Shen Zijiu], "Minanjiabo de muquan shehui" 米南加波的母權社會 (The Matriarchal Society in Pajakoem Boeh), *Fengxia* 14 (1946): 272.

or reluctant to marry Minangkabau women to work in modern industries in other places in Indonesia and Malaysia.[39] Shen insisted that among these Minangkabau men were revolutionaries and political leaders who participated in the national independence movement in Indonesia, while Minangkabau women, the property owners, were rarely known in the greater context of revolutionary endeavor.[40] Shen Zijiu's analysis of Minangkabau society under colonialism highlighted the coexistence of premodern traditions and social structures with the capitalist alienation of labor. Her field research demonstrates a dualism of gendered property ownership. For Shen, this was the social condition that, on the one hand, allowed women to become active agents who were visible in the economy and social life. But on the other hand, it was also this social structure that made female landowners into the structural agents of the traditional society, and thus politically conservative. Meanwhile, Shen's critique of gendered forms of property ownership under colonialism involved the proletarianization of Minangkabau men in the alienation of labor.

Nevertheless, Shen's ethnographic account notes that Minangkabau society had been "distorted" in the contemporary world. On the one hand, it eventually developed patriarchal features. At a time when five-sixths of the world was patriarchal, Minangkabau society was reshaped and turned into a "semi-patriarchal society" in which elderly male heads of the matriarchal clan and uncles of young female landowners determined land possession rights, even though they didn't own any land.[41] Shen explains further that the matriarchal society also was reshaped after the introduction of Islam, which legitimated polygamy, five hundred years before, together with the colonial settlement. Propertyless Minangkabau men became willing to have more than two wives. In this polygamic marriage system, the matriarchal custom that a bride's family paid for the wedding and the living expenses of her husband still persisted. Besides, the bride's family—her mother, her sisters, and the elderly clan head—decided the marriage arrangement, so this "distorted" matriarchal society had little to do with women's right of marriage freedom.[42] Reshaped by global migrations, the matriarchal system of property ownership certainly did not guarantee women's rights in any liberal sense. Rather, as the marital system was intervened in and changed by global patriarchal culture as a result of global colonialism and migration, Minangkabau women lost their matriarchal rights to make their own life decisions.

39 Zi Jiu, "Minanjiabo de muquan shehui," 272.
40 Zi Jiu, "Minanjiabo de muquan shehui," 272.
41 Zi Jiu, "Minanjiabo de muquan shehui," 273.
42 Zi Jiu, "Minanjiabo de muquan shehui," 273.

While global capitalism made the alienation of Minangkabau male labor possible, the proletarianization of Minangkabau men was seen as the condition of possibility of the emergence of political agency in the global anti-colonial and national independence movement. Shen convincingly demonstrates the lingering power of local Minangkabau matriarchal society even after colonialism had destroyed the native agrarian economy. In Minangkabau society, Shen observes, Chinese immigrants were assimilated, which led to the development of a new matriarchal familial structure. Shen introduced Chinese "male wives" (*xiongfuren* 雄夫人) in West Sumatra who married into Chinese women's clans.[43] Even though Chinese immigrants adopted this indigenous Minangkabau tradition, the two ethnic groups never intermarried because the Minangkabau community was reluctant to relinquish property to non-Minangkabau ethnic clans. Chinese assimilation also made possible the emergence of the powerful businesswomen who controlled the familial economies of West Sumatra.[44] For Shen Zijiu, while global capitalism—the alienation of labor and patriarchal culture—reshaped gender relations and relations of production in the Minangkabau matriarchal society, the matriarchal system of property ownership inherited from the pre-colonial and pre-capitalist past remained in place and prevented women from participating in revolutionary anti-colonial endeavors and from collaborating in this work with different ethnic communities in Indonesia.

Seeking the possibility of long-term self-sufficiency in the multi-cultural Indonesian society under the Japanese campaigns against intellectuals and resistance forces, the Chinese exiles experimented with a series of small businesses: a rice wine shop that sold a Japanese sake called "First Love," for example, and a toothpaste shop, the main ingredient of which was derived from the local white clay. Later, Shen Zijiu noticed that the majority of the local Indonesians were Muslims who typically used grey soaps to bathe, especially during Ramadan, when they bathed twice a day for a month. The exiles operated a successful business selling grey soaps and became popular in local Indonesian Muslim communities.[45] In "Exile to the Equator," these business experiences were documented in the section "Days of Self-sufficiency," which also described the day-to-day struggles of local Chinese Indonesians against Japan's coercive extractions of Pajakoem Boeh's rich resources. Both the new migrants and the Chinese settlers who had been there for generations

43 Zi Jiu, "Minanjiabo de muquan shehui," 273.
44 Zi Jiu, "Minanjiabo de muquan shehui," 273.
AQ10
45 Zi Jiu [Shen Zijiu], "Zili gengsheng de rizi" 自力更生的日子 (Days of Self-Sufficiency), *Fengxia* 57 (1947): 97.

experienced the same perils of violence, bullying, racism, and discrimination, as well as threats to the sustainability of their communities under colonialism. This shared everyday experience, for Shen, called for a unification of all the colonized. As she wrote, "Our lives are the same as the plum trees: there is no security and we are constantly in danger."[46] Both the territorial space and the social space of the colonized had been reshaped by colonial capitalism. Thus, they shared the same fate of alienation, exploitation, and suppression.

Meanwhile, Shen Zijiu also reflected on the internal conflicts over economic interests and the variety of national identifications among Chinese immigrants in Indonesia that resulted from specialized production and colonial governance. Shen conducted a series of interviews with Chinese Indonesians in Pajakoem Boeh. Because the various forms of production in the Dutch East Indies were specialized to supply the European market, the majority of the two thousand Chinese Indonesians were engaged in commerce, especially exports of tobacco, gambir, and coffee beans. However, there was a great deal of clan bias and discrimination within the Chinese communities. Newer immigrants accused previous generations of immigrants of being the slaves of the foreigners, while the latter referred to the new immigrants as "Tang Shan folks," which derived from the term for "bandit heaven."[47] Shen concluded that it was because of competition over economic interests that the Chinese community had divided itself into clans: the "Golden Gate Clan," the "Hakka Clan," and the "Guangdong Clan," based on family and regional origins. These kinship- and region-based feudal relations were taken from China and appropriated by the overseas communities because of commercial competition. As for the Chinese Indonesians who had been there for generations, they received their education from Dutch schools, spoke Dutch and standardized Indonesian, read the publications that described colonial policy, and socialized with the Dutch. Shen Zijiu notes that they embraced the colonial view of China as a dirty and chaotic place. Thus, it was impossible for the longstanding Chinese immigrants to "love their motherland."[48]

Shen's analysis of the political economy of the Chinese immigrant community in Indonesia emphasizes the dualisms of colonialism, feudalism, and capitalism in relation to the global anti-colonial movement in the 1940s. On the one hand, feudal relations, capitalist commerce, and colonial markets functioned as the conditions for immigrants to settle and live sustainably. On

46 Zi Jiu, "Zili gengsheng de rizi," 97.

47 Zi Jiu [Shen Zijiu], "Liuwang zai chidaoxian shang" 流亡在赤道線上 (Exile to the Equator I), *Fengxia* 58: 115.

48 Zi Jiu, "Liuwang zai chidaoxian shang," 115.

the other, family-based feudal regionalism, colonial ideology, and economic competition erected barriers to the consolidation of any global anti-colonial alliance. Shen also notes the role of Dutch and English publications in promoting China's international status among Chinese Indonesians by reporting the fearless struggle of the Chinese people against Japanese fascism.[49]

In 1943, Hu Yuzhi and Shen Zijiu organized the "Tong Ren She" (the Society of Brotherhood) to collaborate secretly with local anti-Japanese organizations, the name of which carried the double meaning of "cooperation among colleagues" and "the association of people who share the same 'humane' rejection of the violence of the war." The society functioned as a means of communication to make connections with the exiles on the islands of East Sumatra. It was also a research organization for the study of questions important to Indonesia, publishing and circulating pamphlets of research notes among the exiles and local Chinese communities.[50] Relying on communication between the western and the eastern parts of Sumatra, the Chinese exiles were able to escape the Japanese anti-resistance campaign and hid on the highest mountain of Brastagi, in northeastern Sumatra. In the section "From the Second Exile to Japan's Surrender," Shen noted that Brastagi was named by the Dutch and that its name meant "rice store," due to its pleasant high-altitude weather that was favorable to a particular type of red rice plantation. The Chinese called it Ma Da Mountain, while they had historically called the people of Brastagi "*Ma Da ren*," or the people of Ma Da. However, under the Japanese occupation, the mountaintop became a hospital and a retreat for the Japanese army, and the production of plum sugar replaced that of rice because Japanese troops craved sweets.[51] Unlike the Minangkabau Muslims in West Sumatra, the Brastagis were Christians or polytheistic and raised pigs and chickens, which had been exploited first by the Dutch and then by the Japanese. Like in West Sumatra, poverty remained endemic in the northeast due to colonial exploitation.[52] Although the eastern and western parts of Sumatra were very different in terms of their geographies and ethnic compositions, they shared the experience of the negative consequences of suppression and exploitation under Japanese colonialism. Firmly rooted in considerations of both the pre-colonial past and recent colonial history, Shen's ethnographical report on Sumatra's society and history served to justify the Indonesians' ownership of the region, which had been seized by both the West and Japan, and their struggle for independence.

49 Zi Jiu, "Liuwang zai chidaoxian shang," 115.
50 Hu Yuzhi, "Nanyang zaji," 103.
51 Shen and Hu, *Liuwang zai chidaoxian shang*, 33–34.
52 Shen and Hu, *Liuwang zai chidaoxian shang*, 34.

Huaqiao, Ethnicity, and National Form: Anti-Colonial Nationalism

The writings of the Chinese exiles identified the specific structural position of Nanyang as a multiethnic and socially fragmented region under global capitalism, which called for an anti-colonial united front to organize all the *huaqiao* 华侨 (that is, the Chinese "sojourners") in Southeast Asia to engage with the national independence movements in China and around the world. From the late nineteenth century to the 1940s, the term *huaqiao*, which connoted a continuous link with the homeland, became both the official and the popular term for overseas Chinese.[53] Nevertheless, it was a euphemism that was not based on empirical knowledge of how particular populations of overseas Chinese felt about their land of origin or their host societies.[54] In 1909, Chinese legislation that was to have far-reaching consequences declared that all children of Chinese fathers (or mothers if paternity was unknown), wherever they were born, were automatically Chinese nationals.[55] In Southeast Asia, this "law of bloodline" (*jus sanguinis*) eventually complicated the relationships between *huaqiao* and their host societies and governments.[56]

In the early 1940s, *huaqiao* comprised a sizeable portion of the population of Nanyang and their numbers were even higher in cities that served as political, cultural, and commercial centers. Seventy-five percent of the population of Singapore, 49 percent in Penang, 35 percent in Malacca, 16 percent in

53 Historical research on *huaqiao* has focused on the idea of a natural affinity and inextricable bond between the homeland and the émigré, and has thus been based on the assumption that overseas Chinese are included in the construction of the modern Chinese nation. See Prasenjit Duara, "Nationalists among Transnationalists: Overseas Chinese and the Idea of China, 1900–1911," in *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism*, ed. Donald Nonini and Aihwa Ong (New York: Routledge, 1997), 39–60; Rebecca E. Karl, *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002); Tsu Jing, "Extinction and Adventures on the Chinese Diasporic Frontier," *Journal of Chinese Overseas* 2, no. 2 (2006): 247–68. Soon Keong Ong argues that Chinese nationalist discourse has rather segregated them as a sub-ethnic group of Chinese. Especially after they were recast as *huaqiao*, overseas Chinese were defined as Chinese while abroad and "thus permanently tied to China, and yet deemed not Chinese enough to be allowed to fully reintegrate into Chinese society when they returned to China"; Soon Keong Ong, "Chinese, but Not Quite: *Huaqiao* and the Marginalization of the Overseas Chinese," *Journal of Chinese Overseas* 9, no. 1 (2013): 4.

54 Wang Gungwu, "A Note on the Origins of Hua-ch'iao," in *Community and Nation: Essays on Southeast Asia and the Chinese* (Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann Educational Books, 1981), 118–27.

55 Yen Ching Hwang, *Community and Politics: The Chinese in Colonial Singapore and Malaysia* (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1995), 199–202.

56 Kuhn, *Chinese among Others*, 543.

Batavia, 25 percent in Saigon, and 75 percent in Cholon (a rice trading center in Indo-China) were Chinese.[57] Before the spread of Mandarin-language education in the 1920s, a single community known as "the Chinese" hardly existed in Nanyang. *Huaqiao* were often plagued by internecine rivalries and separated by mutually unintelligible dialects. Economic and cultural activities and organizations such as *huiguan* (clan associations), temples, guilds, industries, and even villages and streets were established according to the prevailing dialect. Few social events crossed the boundaries of dialect, and conflicts and tensions were expressed through dialect-based groupings, such as the Hokkien, Cantonese, Teochew,[58] Hakka, and Hainanese. Individual migrants had no choice when they arrived but to join the group that best matched the dialect they spoke. In addition to these communities, there was in addition a community of Straits-born Chinese who were educated in English and served the British authorities, the Chinese community, and Singapore in general.[59]

Three interconnected movements dramatically altered the *huaqiao* population in the early twentieth century: economic development, the development of Mandarin-language education, and Chinese nationalism. The promise of economic success drove *huaqiao* to seek higher education either in English or in Mandarin, and the latter facilitated the crossing of dialect-based boundaries. National crises in China soon resulted in the spread of Chinese nationalism into Nanyang and, by the 1930s, made questions of local leadership in the Chinese community in Singapore highly politicized and combustible.[60] Many local movements and campaigns bore witness to the increasingly widespread embrace of Chinese nationalism. Boycotts of Japanese goods, campaigns for the return of skilled Chinese professionals to serve in the GMD government, the organization of relief funds for China—all revealed the convergence of rival forces under a single leadership represented by Chen Jiageng, the new symbol of *huaqiao* patriotism.[61] The establishment of the General Convention of Southern Sojourners (Nanqiao zonghui) in 1938 made it clear that diverse dialect groups had now organized themselves into one organization to support

57 Patricia G. Barnett, "The Chinese in Southeast Asia and the Philippines," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 226 (1943): 32–33.

58 The Teochew, or the Chaoshan, refers to the Chinese immigrants from the Chaoshan region of eastern Guangdong and of southern Fujian.

59 Yong Ching Fatt, "A Preliminary Study of Chinese Leadership in Singapore, 1900–1941," *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 9, no. 2 (1968): 258–61.

60 Yong Ching Fatt, "Leadership and Power in the Chinese Community of Singapore during the 1930s," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 8, no. 2 (1977): 195.

61 Fatt, "Leadership and Power," 195.

the anti-Japanese war.[62] In terms of cultural integration, the May Fourth Movement and other anti-imperialist campaigns had an enormous influence among *huaqiao* in Nanyang, where writers, scholars, Chinese newspapers, and Chinese schools proliferated. The majority of *huaqiao* were mobilized and traditional dialect boundaries began to break down as a result. These years also saw the emergence of pan-Chinese organizations that played increasingly important roles in a variety of public affairs. The rise of such unified forces heralded a trend toward the recognition of a greater pan-Chinese world, politically and ethnically.[63]

When the British and Dutch joint colonial government was reformed in Southeast Asia after the defeat of Japan in 1945, classifying the *huaqiao* into categories of ethnicity and citizenship became the primary immigration policy for controlling the floating population and restoring colonial rule in the region. In 1947, a household registration survey was carried out in Malaya, the primary goal of which was to restore the British racial policy that the Japanese colonial government had abolished between 1941 and 1945. More importantly, the census was also considered an effective mechanism in reforming colonial self-rule into a multi-ethnic British polity, in order to equalize the Chinese in Malaya and to eliminate the ethnic tensions between the Malays and the Chinese that had been caused by the anti-Chinese policy in place during the Japanese occupation. The census of "all of the population" of the crown colony was seen as the British colonial rulers' recognition of the Chinese contributions to the Malayan Peoples' Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA) which, although firmly rooted in the organization of the MCP (the Malayan Communist Party), had been the most effective resistance force against the Japanese.[64] In the household registration survey, the population of Malaya was classified into six races: Malays, Chinese, Indians, Europeans, Eurasians, and "other." The Chinese were promised that they would be assimilated into the European category, a state of affairs "which at present obtains with respect to the Chinese in Netherlands Indies."[65] Meanwhile, on August 17, 1945, the Proclamation of Indonesian Independence was announced, the wording of which had to

62 Harry Harding, "The Concept of 'Greater China': Themes, Variations and Reservations," *China Quarterly* 136 (1993): 668.

63 Harding, "The Concept of 'Greater China,'" 668.

64 Graham Brown, "The Formation and Management of Political Identities: Indonesia and Malaysia Compared," CRISE: Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity Working Paper 10, University of Oxford, February 2005.

65 Amry Vandenbosch, "The Chinese in Southeast Asia," *The Journal of Politics* 9, no. 1 (1947): 87.

balance the interests of conflicting internal Indonesian and Japanese interests at the time.[66] This declaration marked the start of the diplomatic and armed resistance of the Indonesian National Revolution, which fought against the forces of the Netherlands and pro-Dutch Indonesians until the Dutch officially acknowledged Indonesia's independence in 1949.[67]

In an essay critiquing the household registration census in Malaya, Hu Yuzhi focused on the colonial vision of "the Chinese race, which aimed to separate colonized people into separate camps. While all the inhabitants of British Malaya were differentiated into six racial categories, there were in addition ten kinds of Chinese, according to where they came from: Fujian, Guangdong, Chaozhou, Qiongzhou, Keshu, Fuzhou, Fuqing, Guangxi, Xinghua, and "*biesheng*" (Chinese from any of the other provinces). Hu Yuzhi called the ten kinds of Chinese "the old normal" of colonial society in the East Indies. While the Chinese inhabitants of Malaya were familiar with the ten kinds of Chinese, Chinese people who never went to Nanyang would "find it absurd."[68] Hu further elaborated that the Chinese *zu* (ethnicity) had, historically and anthropologically, been identified as the Hua (the Han), the Yi, and the Miao, while the modern Chinese *zu* included the Han, the Hui, Mongols, Tibetans, the Miao, the Yao, and a multitude of other minor ethnicities. Thus, Hu claimed that it was "unscientific" to divide the people from Fujian province in Malaya into Fujian, Fuzhou, Fuqing, Xinghua, and Keshu, because doing so lacked a historical basis. Ethnic division was also "absurd" if it was based upon differences of dialect, because there were multiple local dialectics within one region, while some Chinese immigrants could only speak English and Malay.[69]

Colonial rule, for Hu Yuzhi, was established precisely by creating "as many different ethnicities as possible," in order to separate the colonial subjects into identifiable and governable categories. For Chinese anti-colonialists, ethnicity was defined rather by collective forms of human activity and was, moreover, firmly grounded in the pre-colonial history of collective life and human migration. Nevertheless, this ethnic collectivism had been threatened and reshaped by recent colonial history, in which the colonial government employed the diverse tactics of law and order to destroy the ethnic unity that could form

66 Benedict Anderson, *Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance, 1944–1946* (Jakarta: Equinox Publishing, 2006), 82.

67 Frances Gouda, *American Visions of the Netherlands East Indies/Indonesia: US Foreign Policy and Indonesian Nationalism, 1920–1949* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002), 36.

68 Hu Yuzhi, "Shizhong Zhongguoren" 十種中國人 (The Ten Types of Chinese), *Fengxia* 90 (August 30, 1947): 1.

69 Hu Yuzhi, "Shizhong Zhongguoren," 1.

the basis of an anti-colonial united front. For Chinese anti-colonialists, the ongoing Indonesian independence movement provided a template for all the anti-colonial movements in Southeast Asia insofar as, Hu Yuzhi claimed, "the majority of the Indonesians have formed a united national consciousness and they are reluctant to separate themselves off from others as 'the Javanese' or other ethnicities."[70] Ethnic nationalism was understood as essentially anti-colonial in that the shared desire for national independence entailed the refusal of the ethnic identities assigned by the colonial government.

In 1946, the British colonial government was preparing to establish the Malayan Constitutional Federation, which promised to grant citizenship to inhabitants who were either born in or were permanent residents of Malaya. However, Malayans had to recognize Malaya as their "motherland" and assume the civil duties associated with governing. Hu Yuzhi criticized the policy's demonstrable discrimination against Chinese immigrants who identified China as their motherland. For Hu, the policy assumed that Malaya, owned by Britain, was a kind of wealth resource in which immigrants could enjoy certain privileges.[71] While the idea of a "motherland," as a national form, was understood by the colonizers as the political system to which citizens demonstrated their loyalty and their submission, it was also defined by the *huaqiao* as their place of origin and a bearer of their collective consciousness and emotional attachments. The relationship between the colonized motherland—either China or Malaya—and the people, including the *huaqiao* was a dynamic, multidirectional one, and even one in which the *huaqiao* could potentially redefine the national form.

The Chinese exclusion acts in Malaya, Vietnam, the Philippines, Java, and Sumatra in the 1940s, for Hu Yuzhi, clearly brought out the emergent question of the "status of the Chinese in Nanyang," after thousands of Chinese had sacrificed their lives in the anti-fascist war in the region. Hu Yuzhi highlights the contradictory dual status of the Chinese in Nanyang: "While we call ourselves 'people of a great nation' [*daguomin* 大国民] and first-class citizens of a victorious nation, in the colonies, we are foreigners who are not qualified to be citizens, the oriental Jews, or even more, we are 'overseas orphans.'"[72] The colonial concept of citizenship was central to Chinese anti-colonialists' understanding of history and contemporary society. Not all social conflicts could be immediately reduced to the struggle between the colonizers and the

70 Hu Yuzhi, "Shizhong Zhongguoren," 1.
71 Hu Yuzhi, "Guanyu huaqiao diwei de xinrenshi" 關于華僑地位的新認識 (New Understandings of the *Huaqiao*'s Status), *Fengxia* 3 (1945): 45.
72 Hu Yuzhi, "Guanyu huaqiao diwei de xinrenshi," 45.

colonized. Understanding the concept of citizenship was necessary to understand the oppression that colonialism entailed: systematic discrimination by the colonizers determined as one social group against another on the grounds of economic interests or of morality.

In his essay “On New Understandings of the Status of the *Huaqiao*,” Hu Yuzhi defined the *huaqiao* as “the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation” who lived in the Southwest Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean, Madagascar, and South Africa. Within the *huaqiao* community, Hu explained that there were basically four groups, defined on the basis of their life experiences as immigrants. The first group were the Chinese immigrants to Nanyang whose families still lived in China. Members of this group often planned to reside in the region for a short period of time, so they would be called “sojourners” (*qiaomin* 侨民). The second group were permanent residents who regarded Nanyang as the place where they made a living and who had little contact with China. They were no longer true sojourners. The third group were the “Babas,” who had been born in Nanyang and granted British, Dutch, Thai, Filipino, or other citizenships. The fourth group were born locally and had “mixed” with other races, and thus were not genuinely Chinese.[73] Hu Yuzhi claimed that all of these four kinds of *huaqiao* consciously regarded themselves as Chinese and were reluctant to relinquish that idea. Even the Babas never forgot their motherland, China. They continued to register in the regional Chinese embassies and raised the Chinese national flag on “big days” in history.[74] The decisions of the Nanyang *huaqiao* in this respect were not demanded of them by the Chinese government or Chinese law, Hu stressed, but made sense because, before the war, all the regions in Nanyang were colonies where foreigners were excluded from “the rights of democracy and freedom,” while China was, at least formally, “independent and self-determining.”[75] In other words, national consciousness emerged out of the shared experience of oppression and discrimination under colonialism.

Similar to the colonial concept of ethnicity, citizenship was understood by Hu as a political mechanism of the nation-state used to separate people by demanding loyalty from and promising civil rights to the governed. Hu Yuzhi’s adherence to national identity was a matter of social psychology, that is, the collective “consciousness” of a national identity, a consciousness that detached people from the colonial categories—ethnicity and citizenship—produced by the geopolitical separation of territorial nation-states. These national and

73 Hu Yuzhi, “Guanyu huaqiao diwei de xinrenshi,” 46.
74 Hu Yuzhi, “Guanyu huaqiao diwei de xinrenshi,” 46.
75 Hu Yuzhi, “Guanyu huaqiao diwei de xinrenshi,” 46.

state categories led to divisions and conflicts both between nations and within them. While Chinese migratory movements long predated the emergence of the colonial nation-states and the associated geopolitical boundaries, their collective consciousness of national identity made a particular kind of political community possible, one that desired equality and freedom. As the colonial nation-state deprived people of their rights to democracy, equality, and freedom in Nanyang, the Chinese as a single ethnic community of all colonial subjects should, Hu argued, join the anti-colonial movement for self-rule, because only an independent nation would provide the political conditions for democracy.

Meanwhile, Hu Yuzhi also stressed the conditions that allowed the *huaqiao* to join the national independence movement. While all the weaker ethnicities in Nanyang continued to fight for democracy and freedom until national independence was achieved, the *huaqiao* could no longer stay neutral. Further, the Chinese exclusion acts in Nanyang compelled the *huaqiao* to unite with the other anti-colonial ethnic communities. If they didn't, they would be excluded anew by the victorious ethnicities.[76] Only by joining the national liberation movements would the *huaqiao* be able to obtain security of property and life and the rights of democracy and freedom. Thus, Hu asserted that the *huaqiao* "are the hosts, but not the guests of Nanyang," because "national liberation in Nanyang is essentially the self-liberation of the *huaqiao*."[77]

In this sense, the anti-colonial and national independence movements in Nanyang were, for the Chinese leftists living there, essentially the means of achieving democracy, equality, and freedom for the people. On the one hand, the Nanyang Chinese's dual identity as both Chinese immigrants and members of local Chinese ethnic communities determined their dual task in the political movements for peace, democracy, equality, and freedom. That is, as they joined the national independence movement in Nanyang, the Nanyang Chinese should also support China's political movements for democracy, peace, equality, and prosperity—to fight against dictatorship, imperialism, and now, the emerging civil war between the GMD and the CCP.[78] All the colonized people in Nanyang were recognized as political subjectivities whose rights, desires, and voices would be expressed in the anti-imperialist national independence movement—the means of restoring democracy, equality, and freedom to a region that had been ruled by colonizers, imperialists, and dictators.

---

76 Hu Yuzhi, "Guanyu huaqiao diwei de xinrenshi," 47.

77 Hu Yuzhi, "Guanyu huaqiao diwei de xinrenshi," 47.

78 Hu Yuzhi, "Lun huaqiao de erzhong renwu," 論華僑的二重任務 (The Dual Task of the *Huaqiao*), *Fengxia* 18 (1946): 332.

For Chinese leftists, the years immediately following the Second World War in Nanyang were still full of violence, military suppression, and the continuation of competition between the strong imperialist nations, a situation that was made worse by the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the proclamation of the Charter of the United Nations in 1945. While "atomic diplomacy" was considered by these writers as a way for strong imperialist nations to continue to dominate weaker nations and their people, the fact that GMD-controlled Republican China joined the Charter as one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council was seen as a declaration that China wished to join the "imperialist clan." The geopolitics of postwar colonialism, therefore, aimed to establish and maintain the dominance of colonial and powerful nation-states, by eliminating competition from the former fascist countries as well as sovereignty. The national independence movements aimed to establish governments that would be willing to play a role in shaping postwar colonial geopolitics, such as the GMD's alliance with the United States against the CCP in China.

However, alongside the ongoing anti-colonial national independence movements, an anti-colonial culture had to be developed in practice, the principles of which would be democracy, equality, and freedom. In other words, a "national form" (*minzu xingshi* 民族形式) had to be created that would allow equality between the numerous ethnic groups to manifest and develop. On the other hand, such a culture would also transform what the Chinese leftists called "backward cultures"—those associated with colonial and feudal social forms—and produce a democratic culture that would foster relationships of equality among the people.[79] For the Chinese leftists, then, the national form in Nanyang was essentially a new cultural movement that was determined by Nanyang's specific colonized position in the world. Compared to China, Nanyang was still fully colonized. Further, multiple ethnicities lived with each other collectively there, and the Chinese were only one minority among many. This particularity of Nanyang made Nanyang's national form different from China's. Facing a similar situation of developing anti-colonial politics in the postwar era, the most urgent task in Nanyang was the enlightenment of the various ethnic groups and the nurturing of anti-imperialist, anti-feudalist, and democratic consciousness, even while China's New Culture Movement, beginning in 1915, and Mao Zedong's concept of "New Democracy" (*xinminzhu zhuyi* 新民主主義), proposed in 1941, provided important reference points for the colonized in Nanyang. From 1945 to 1947, the exiled Chinese leftists organized

79 Chen Zhongda 陳仲達, "Minzu xingshi de xuanze" 民族形式的選擇 (To Choose a National Form), *Fengxia* 3 (1945): 53.

the New Democratic Culture Services Association and published Mao's "On New Democracy" (Xinminzhuzhuyi lun 新民主主義論).[80]

For them, the unity of national form and the new cultural movement was a part of the anti-colonial political and economic movements against inequality and exploitation, which could only be victorious through a united front of all the ethnicities in Nanyang. To form this cultural united front, the Chinese leftists argued that a new culture should be created. This new culture would not replace the variety of existing ethnic cultures but would rather create a new collective culture that would "develop the best traditions in each ethnic culture, in order to promote cultural communication." Developing the multiple existing cultural forms further would reflect "the content of the new anti-imperialist and anti-feudal culture."[81] Further, the particularity of Nanyang's national form lay in the uneven development of each ethnic culture and in the various complicities that had been produced in the history of the colonial rule of ethnic relations. Jin Ding, a member of the CCP in Nanyang and one of the key contributors to *Below the Wind*, described this particularity of Malaysia's national form, which would determine its methods of creating the contents of a new Malayan culture. According to Jin, the new cultural movement in Malaya, led by the CCP, would not adopt Soviet socialist cultural contents. It would, rather, develop a new collective culture by developing the specificity of each ethnic culture, because Malaya had a multi-ethnic national form that was similar to Soviet Russia's. In other words, while the national form was the basis of anti-colonial unity, the contents of a particular national form had to be determined through the historical materialist method, which was rooted in local and social specificities. National form, in its contents, remained open, changeable, and dialectical in its nature, because it "always developed progressively, by inheriting the excellent cultural traditions of each ethnicity and by critically absorbing the cultural nutrients present in other ethnicities' cultures."[82]

In their political practice, the Chinese leftists provided the means of creating a new national form through the practices of the new cultural movement. Chen Zhongda, another CCP leader in Malaya, pointed out that the new national form should be created by critically developing and properly employing pre-existing cultural forms. The key to creating a new national form was to

AQ11

AQ12

80 Sha Ping 沙平 [Hu Yuzhi], "Guanyu minzu xingshi" 關於民族形式 (On National Form), *Fengxia* 1 (1945): 15.

81 Sha Ping, "Guanyu minzu xingshi," 15.

82 Jin Ding 金丁, "Guanyu minzu xingshi de jidian jiben lijie" 關於民族形式的幾點基本理解 (A Few Basic Understandings of National Form), *Fengxia* 4 (1945): 72.

go deeply into the very center of the people's lives, "to experience all forms of lives and ways of living . . . to learn their languages, articulate their demands, and accomplish their goals."[83] Consequently, the creation of a national form in Malaya meant employing the old cultural forms of literature and art that had been developed by each ethnicity and promoting Latinization among the disparate groups of the colonized, because the Malayan people had been colonized by the British for over a hundred years and had been deeply influenced by the colonial culture.[84]

For the Chinese leftists, when social conflicts could not immediately be reduced to the struggle between the colonizers and the colonized, or between ethnicities, or between the categories of citizens and immigrants that had been inherited from the colonial system, ethnicity and national form were required to clarify and explain these conflicts. For Chinese leftists in postwar anti-colonial Nanyang, it made no difference whether particular groups of people were colonized and oppressed because of their language, religion, nationhood, or ethnicity; in every case their duty was to defend the colonized and to demonstrate solidarity with them, particularly when they themselves belonged to the dominant linguistic, religious, national, or ethnic group. Ethnicity was, for them, essentially a political concept, and opposed to the colonial concepts of race and citizenship, which emphasized the innate differences between people based on their places of birth. This colonial ideology sought to divide people into accountable categories in order to maintain colonial rule and stimulate competition between the various groups of colonial subjects.

Against this colonial ideology, for Chinese leftists, ethnicity was framed as primarily a political concept, as a political affirmation of a cultural identity. In de-emphasizing supposedly innate differences of language, tradition, and customs between human social groups, ethnicity was framed against divisions and separations and articulated into the discourses of equality, anti-colonialism, anti-feudalism, and democracy. In other words, this use of ethnicity aimed to forge national unity by emphasizing the collective lives and shared lived experiences of different groups under colonialism. While the colonial concepts of race or ethnicity were defined objectively—that is, they were determined by a certain geographical location, birthplace—ethnicity in its leftist sense could be defined subjectively to the extent that one ethnic group had one or more cultural attributes in common with another and, consequently, a shared identity. During the process of colonization, racism had been used to consign members of races who had migrated to the metropolitan centers

83 Chen Zhongda, "Minzu xingshi de xuanze," 53.
84 Chen Zhongda, "Minzu xingshi de xuanze," 53.

either to the reserve army of labor or to the group of workers with the worst pay and working conditions. For instance, the "ten kinds of Chinese" in Hu Yuzhi's account of the population census were allocated specific roles in social life and were encouraged to identify with those roles and to defend them against other groups. For Chinese leftists, however, ethnic identities could be built on existing forms of collective life and on the cultural practices of people in pre-colonial society; sometimes, the identities in question were wholly new, and based primarily on the global division of labor as it was manifested within the new societies that the colonists established. Such was the case with Chinese immigrants, especially those who were born in Nanyang. In this sense, when a given ethnic history pre-dated the racial history of colonization, this justified a people's sovereignty in national terms, and legitimized the ethnic groups' collective ownership of the land.

Because it was defined subjectively, ethnicity was framed within the discourse of anti-colonial nationalism and ethnic identities were used to describe the groups who belonged equally to the nation. On the one hand, while differences in language, tradition, religion, and customs certainly existed, ethnic groups were primarily differentiated by their relative degrees of "enlightenment"—that is, their consciousness of democracy, anti-colonialism, and anti-feudalism. The dominant Chinese ethnic group in Nanyang, therefore, was identified as advanced due to its longer involvement in the process of enlightenment, beginning with the May Fourth Movement and continuing with the New Democracy movement after the defeat of fascist Japan. On the other hand, and again because it was defined subjectively, ethnicity was essentially historical and transformable in the sense that different ethnic cultural forms were appropriated for the articulation of anti-colonial and anti-feudal contents, with the aim of fostering a collective consciousness of democracy and national independence, and of creating a new national form based on equality and solidarity.

Conclusion

When "Exile to the Equator" was published in Singapore in 1946, *Below the Wind* became the largest communicative forum for mobilizing the overseas Chinese.[85] Far from initiating an anti-state and anti-party form of politics, the Chinese cultural workers in exile proposed that the survival of the people, the majority of the world population, should be regarded as the basic criterion

85 Zhang Chukun, epilogue, 128.

and barometer for everyone—state, party, and organizations—in determining whether peace had been truly achieved with the end of the Second World War. Shared colonial experiences in Southeast Asia and the independence movement in Indonesia beginning in 1946 served as reference points for China's democratic movement in its emerging civil war. While documenting indigenous people's exploited lives and the specialization of production in the region under the Dutch, British, and Japanese colonial governments, the Chinese exiled anti-colonialists conceptualized the "South Seas" and the "equator" as the center and the frontier of the global anti-colonial alliance, which served as the determinant factor for anti-colonialism in Asia and in China. The geopolitical conceptualization of Southeast Asia that was undertaken by the Chinese anti-colonial activists suggests a new form and a different history of Chinese anti-colonialism. Linking the region of Southeast Asia along the equator and its people—both the indigenous and immigrants—with foreign capital accumulation and the global division of labor, colonialism was thus understood as the destruction of peace in order to extract resources and labor. This led the majority of the world population into poverty to satisfy the small set of colonial nations and their struggles over power. While the well-being and happiness of the majority was justified, the nation was redefined as the ownership of the land by the majority and their shared historical experience of collective production, social life, culture, and tradition. Thus, the national independence movement was essentially a democratic movement against all forms of dominance over the majority of the working population, either at a global scale or within a given nation, either by colonizers or by a native ruling class.

Describing Chinese anti-colonialism and nationalism properly requires a transnational conceptualization and an ethnographic approach. Stories that occur "behind the scenes" or off the main stage enhance our ability to decode key words and describe the complexities of concrete economic and political conflicts from multiple sources that involve migration, ethnicities, and capitalism. To achieve a better understanding of the internal workings and dynamics of nationalism, I argue, we must pay close attention to the visions and strategies of overseas nationalists, and the difference they made. Bringing their historical activities out to light would change the picture of Chinese anti-colonialism and nationalism that has been constructed by state-party narratives in their framing of the history of the Second World War. The press and print culture—their ability to establish transnational networks and flows of information—creating a contested and conflictual space that allowed this anti-colonial internationalism to be articulated as the shared desires and experiences of all colonized people, which overlapped with but was also opposed to global colonialism and state-party nationalism.

This paper has discussed and compared the ideas of the Chinese leftists in exile, as those were expressed in their publications and their journals from their inception in 1939 to 1946. However, I have done this not to explain the biographical development of their ideas, but to determine how their political interventions in the anti-colonial movement shaped the collective political discourse that defined the wartime politics of leftism and nationalism in China and in Southeast Asia. Analyses of the many postwar anti-colonial wars of national liberation, in noting the almost total absence of the working class in such struggles, have questioned the idea that these struggles were "socialist," as much of the Western Left claimed. Adopting a theory of deflected permanent revolution, research on global leftism during and after the Second World War has acknowledged the leading role of bourgeois-nationalist liberals and radical junior officers and technocrats, rather than radicalized peasants and revolutionary workers, in the wars of liberation in China, Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America.[86]

My research on the leftist Chinese exiles argues that the class nature of the anti-colonial internationalism that was forged during and after the war was deeply embedded in the "liberal" discourses of freedom, democracy, equality, liberty, and women's emancipation. At the same time, their anti-colonialism was also deeply rooted in the mass politics of anti-capitalism, which was simultaneously global in scope and fine-grained, local, and rooted in everyday life. Instead of seeing the colonizers and the colonized as, respectively, the center and periphery, as the socialists and communists envisioned, the Chinese leftists' geopolitical configuration of the "Nations Below the Wind" and "the equator" enabled the perception of a proto-global South—South alliance as a world-historical force, with the dual goals of overturning unequal development and achieving an integrated path of development. Their focus was on the nexus of anti-colonialism and anti-capitalism—on the dynamic interactions between scales (from local to global) and systems (atmospheric, technological, economic, political, social, cultural, and so on) that produce the experience of colonialism and capitalism at the local level and in everyday life.

AQ13
AQ14

86 The theory of "deflected permanent revolution" was later greatly enriched by Nigel Harris, whose finest work on the subject is undoubtedly his account in Nigel Harris and John Palmer, eds., *World Crisis: Essays in Revolutionary Socialism* (London: Hutchinson, 1971) and *The Mandate of Heaven: Marx and Mao in Modern China* (London: Quartet Books, 1978).

References

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1991.

Anderson, Benedict. *Java in a Time of Revolution: Occupation and Resistance, 1944–1946*. Jakarta: Equinox Publishing, 2006.

Belogurova, Anna. *Networks, Parties, and the "Oppressed Nations": The Comintern and Chinese Communists Overseas, 1926–1935*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020.

Barnett, Patricia G. "The Chinese in Sout[illegible]t Asia and the Philippines." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences* 226 (1943): 32–49.

Benton, Gregor. *Chinese Migrants and Internationalism: Forgotten Histories, 1917–1945*. London: Routledge, 2007.

Brown, Graham. "The Formation and Management of Political Identities: Indonesia ~~and Malaysia Compared." CRISE: Centre for Research on Inequality, Human Security and Ethnicity Working Paper 10, University of Oxford, February 2005.~~

AQ2

Chen Rongli 陈荣力. *Dadao zhixing: Hu Yuzhi zhi zhuan* 大道之行: 胡愈之传 (On a Wide Road: A Biography of Hu Yuzhi). Hangzhou: Zhengjiang renmin chubanshe, 2005.

Chui, Kwei-Chiang. "Political attitudes and organisations, c. 1900–1941." In *A History of Singapore*, edited by Ernest C.T. Chew and Edwin Lee, 66–91. Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Dong Bian 董边, ed. *Nüjie wenhua nüzhanshi: Shen Zijiu* 女界文化女战士: 沈兹九 (Cultural Fighter in Women's Circle: Shen Zijiu). Beijing: Zhongguo funü chubanshe, 1991.

AQ3

Duara, Prasenjit. "Nationalists among Transnationalists: Overseas Chinese and the Idea of China, 1900–1911." In *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism*, edited by Donald Nonini and Aihwa Ong, 39–60. New York: Routledge, 1997.

Fatt, Yong Ching. "A Preliminary Study of Chinese Leadership in Singapore, 1900–1941." *Journal of Southeast Asian History* 9, no. 2 (1968): 258–85.

Fatt, Yong Ching. "Leadership and Power in the Chinese Community of Singapore during the 1930s." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 8, no. 2 (1977): 195–209.

AQ4

Fengxia 風下 (Below the Wind). Edited by Sha Ping 沙平 [Hu Yuzhi]. Singapore: Xinnanyang chubanshe. 132 issues, 1945–1948.

Gouda, Frances. *American Visions of the Netherlands East Indies/Indonesia: US Foreign Policy and Indonesian Nationalism, 1920–1949*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002.

Harding, Harry. "The Concept of 'Greater China': Themes, Variations and Reservations." *China Quarterly* 136 (1993): 660–86.

AQ1(after Kuhn, Philip): Lin Zhiwen 林之文, "Xian jieduan de yinni jushi" 現階段的 印尼局勢 (The Current Situation in Indonesia), Fengxia 17 (1946): 315–17.

Karl, Rebecca E. *Staging the World: Chinese Nationalism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002.

Kuhn, Philip A. *Chinese among Others: Emigration in Modern Times*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008.

Ong, Soon Keong. "Chinese, but Not Quite: Huaqiao and the Marginalization of the Overseas Chinese." *Journal of Chinese Overseas* 9, no. 1 (2013): 1–32.

Shen Zijiu 沈兹九 and Hu Yuzhi 胡愈之. *Liuwang zai chidaoxian shang* 流亡在赤道在线 (Exile to the Equator). Edited by Zhou Jianqiang 周建强. Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 1985.

Tsu, Jing. "Extinction and Adventures on the Chinese Diasporic Frontier." *Journal of Chinese Overseas* 2, no. 2 (2006): 247–68.

Unger, Leonard. "The Chinese in Southeast Asia." *Geographical Review* 34, no. 2 (1944): 196–217.

AQ5

Vandenbosch, Amry. "The Chinese in Southeast Asia." *The Journal of Politics* 9, no.1 (Feb. 1947): 80–95.

Yan Bo 煙波. "Mr. Hu Yuzhi in Nanyang" (Hu Yuzhi xianshengzainanyang, 胡愈之先生在南洋). *Dushu yu chuban* 讀書與出版 (Reading and Publishing), October 1946: 9–11.

AQ6

Yen, Ching Hwang. *A Social History of the Chinese in Singapore and Malaya, 1800–1911*. Singapore: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Yen, Ching Hwang. *Community and Politics: The Chinese in Colonial Singapore and Malaysia* Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1995.

Wang, Gungwu. 1981. "A Note on the Origins of Hua-ch'iao." In *Community and Nation: Essays on Southeast Asia and the Chinese*, 118–27. Kuala Lumpur: Heinemann Educational Books.

AQ7

Zhou, Taomo. *Migration in the Time of Revolution: China, Indonesia, and the Cold War*. New York: Cornell University Press, 2019.

AUTHOR QUERIES

AUTHOR PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUERIES

AQ1—Lin Zhiwen (1946)is cited in text but not provided in the list. Please provide complete publication details to insert in the list.

AQ2—Brown (2005) is listed in the reference list but not cited in the text. Please cite in the text.

No change is made. Brown is cited in p.134 footnote 64.

AQ3—Dong (1991) is listed in the reference list but not cited in the text. Please cite in the text.

no changes are made. Dong is cited in p. 116 footnote 6 and in p.119, footnotes 17 and 18.

AQ4—Fengxia is listed in the reference list but not cited in the text. Please cite in the text.

No changes are made. Fengxia is cited in 18 places in the text.

AQ5—Unger (1944) is listed in the reference list but not cited in the text. Please cite in the text.

AQ6—Yan Bo (1946) is listed in the reference list but not cited in the text. Please cite in the text.

AQ7—Wang (1981) is listed in the reference list but not cited in the text. Please cite in the text.

AQ8—Lin Zhiwen (1946) is cited in text but not provided in the list. Please provide complete publication details to insert in the list.

AQ9—Zi Jiu (1946) is cited in text but not provided in the list. Please provide complete publication details to insert in the list.

AQ10—Zi Jiu (1947) is cited in text but not provided in the list. Please provide complete publication details to insert in the list.

AQ11—Sha Ping (1945) is cited in text but not provided in the list. Please provide complete publication details to insert in the list.

AQ12—Jin Ding (1945) is cited in text but not provided in the list. Please provide complete publication details to insert in the list.

AQ13—Nigel Harrisis (1971) cited in text but not provided in the list. Please provide complete publication details to insert in the list.

AQ14—Nigel Harris (1978) is cited in text but not provided in the list. Please provide complete publication details to insert in the list.