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Pheng Cheah

*Chinese Cosmopolitanism in Two Senses
and Postcolonial National Memory*



University of California, Berkeley
2000

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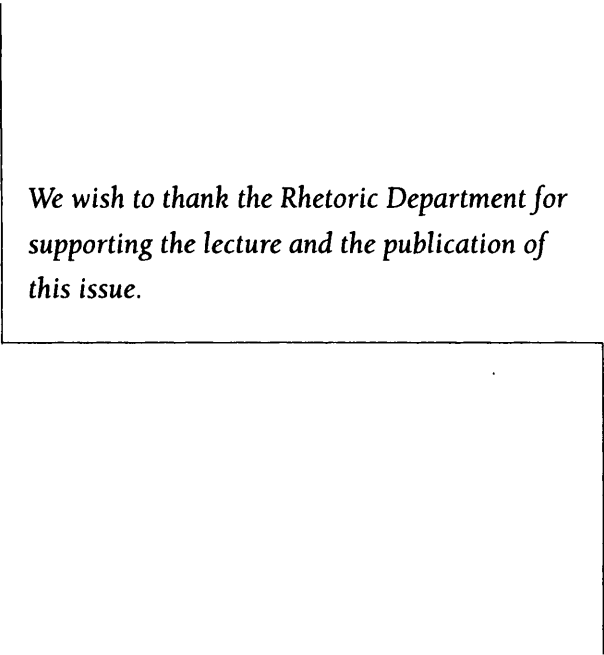
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PREFACE

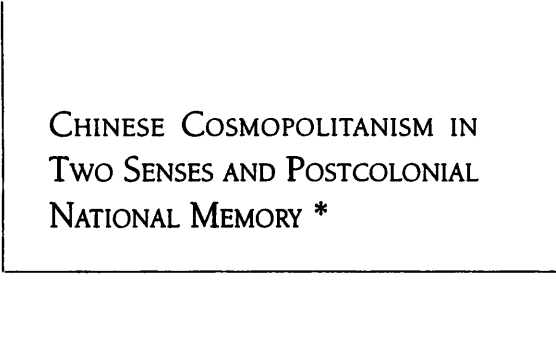
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CHINESE COSMOPOLITANISM IN
TWO SENSES AND POSTCOLONIAL
NATIONAL MEMORY *






The Chinese were economically successful in South-East Asia not simply because they were energetic immigrants, but more fundamentally because in their quest for riches they knew how to handle money and organize men in relation to money.

Maurice Freedman,
“The Handling of Money: A Note on the Background to
the Economic Sophistication of the Overseas Chinese”

This essay is not about the territorial-political entity the People’s Republic of China (PRC) or any of the other existing Chinese states. Nor is it *directly* about the Chinese nation, however broadly defined. It is about two opposed representations of the cosmopolitanism of the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asian postcolonial national memory. Diaspora studies has become such a fashionable topic that in the past decade or so there has been growing support, even within the staid field of China studies, for the suggestion that the study of Chinese culture ought to shift its focus from mainland China in favor of a broader, more cosmopolitan definition of Chinese-ness that would include not only the different Chinese states or territories of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore, but also the many overseas Chinese communities scattered around the globe. In his influential essay, “Cultural China: The Periphery as the Center,” Tu Wei-ming, the director of the august Yen-ching Institute at Harvard University and a leading voice for the revival of Confucianism in contemporary social ethics, makes the even bolder claim that these various Chinas beyond the mainland proper, what he calls “the periphery,”¹ are beginning to displace the PRC as the dynamic cultural center for the articulation of Chinese-ness and “will come to set the economic and cultural agenda for the center, thereby undermining its political effectiveness.”²

Tu's argument is premised on the dawning of a new era of capitalist accumulation centered in the Pacific Rim. The Pacific Century, Tu suggests, is heralded by the rise of the four East Asian dragons—South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore—in the wake of Japanese economic success.³ Its significance is twofold. First, it allows him to dismiss both Communist China and Western capitalism in favor of a Confucian Chinese modernity that he detects in the East Asian economic miracle.⁴ He suggests that *guanxi* or networks/connections capitalism, a form of capitalism that is underwritten by a Confucian humanism and that implies a degree of communitarianism, is superior to Western capitalism because it can alleviate the atomistic individualism and instrumental rationality of the Western Enlightenment.⁵ Chinese mercantile culture and its Confucian basis are therefore to be regarded as modular or normatively cosmopolitan. But second, and more importantly, Tu's focus on Pacific Rim development leads him to privilege the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia as the best example of this alternative model of modernity. It carries the burden of maintaining the Pacific Century, he argues, because it is a crucial terminal for the transmission of the Chinese *guanxi*-capitalist ethos in its part of the world:

A recent economic phenomenon with far-reaching political and cultural implications is the great increase in intraregional trade in the Asian-Pacific region. The annual volume of \$200 billion already exceeds trans-Pacific trade (which is now significantly larger than trans-Atlantic trade). Since the Four Dragons are providing 31 percent of all foreign investments in the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), notably Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thai-



land, the participation of “diaspora” Chinese is vitally important; they are responsible for the largest transfer of capital in this region, exceeding that of both Japan and the United States. A predictable result is the evolving image of the Chinese. . . . [T]he image of Chinese as economic animals is likely to be further magnified in Southeast Asia, changing perhaps from that of trader to that of financier. The Chinese merchant culture underlying Chinese behavior as trader, banker, and entrepreneur adds vibrant color to the impressive reality that the Chinese constitute not only the largest peasantry in the world, but also the most mobile merchant class.⁶


In other words, the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia—cosmopolitans in the colloquial sense of rootless merchant sojourners—has become the best exemplar of Chinese cosmopolitanism in the normative sense.

In light of the current Asian financial crisis, we cannot speak with such confidence of a Pacific Century. Indeed, the fall-out from the Asian crisis provides us with a less benign perspective on Chinese cosmopolitanism in Southeast Asia: The popular unrest in Indonesia on May 14-16, 1998 that led to the resignation of President Suharto was marked by a spate of anti-Chinese riots. The organized looting and burning of stores beginning in and radiating outwards from Jakarta’s Chinatown district, which saw 1,200 Indonesian Chinese killed, has been compared to the Nazi *Kristellnacht*. The systematic gang-rape of 180 Chinese women has reinforced the impression of deliberate ethnic cleansing.⁷ These inhumane atrocities are all the more shocking because the uprising is widely regarded as a progressive popular-nationalist revolution against a neocolonial regime and its right-wing dictator.⁸ Significantly, transnational Chinese solidarity condemning this

anti-Chinese violence has been registered from the mainland Communist state, human rights and women's groups in Taiwan and Hong Kong, and other overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia.⁹

What makes this tragic picture of the Indonesian Chinese the flip-side of Tu's vision of Chinese cosmopolitanism is the shared identification of the overseas Chinese, or more precisely, their culture, with global capitalism. But whereas Tu regards Chinese capitalism as the embodiment of a new cosmopolitan ethos, the Indonesian rioters regard it as neocolonial exploitation.¹⁰ This violence against the overseas Chinese is not confined to Indonesia. The widespread personification of cosmopolitan capital as "ethnic Chinese" in the various (national) public spheres of Southeast Asia has a rich history. In Thailand, then known as Siam, a pamphlet entitled *The Jews of the East*, the authorship of which is generally attributed to King Vachiravut, appeared in 1914. The contemporary persistence of this conflation of capital and "ethnic Chinese" is best seen in the following anecdote from the Philippines: From the late eighties to the present, wealthy Philippines Chinese have been the victims of kidnappings-for-ransom. When a graduate student from the University of the Philippines was asked if she was disturbed by the spate of kidnappings, she replied, "No, because I am not Chinese and I am not rich."¹¹

But is this identification of the cosmopolitanism of the Chinese diaspora with neocolonial capital entirely accurate? If it is, does this then make the diasporic Chinese the proper targets of popular-national revolutionary action? Does nationalist revolution necessarily involve fanaticist violence against ethnic minorities? There are no simple answers to these questions, no clear-cut line separating



the virtuous from the evil to be found. What I want to do in this paper is to trace, in as analytical a way as possible, how cosmopolitan capital has become personified as the Chinese diaspora as a result of both historical and contemporary globalization, and the policies of colonial and postcolonial regimes in Southeast Asia. I will then look at a more positive representation of revolutionary Chinese cosmopolitanism in Southeast Asian postcolonial national memory by turning to the activist narrative fiction of Ninotchka Rosca and Pramoedya Ananta Toer. Although I will attempt to reconstruct for a generalist readership some of the necessary background for assessing the ethical complexities raised by the “overseas Chinese” and the violence directed against them, I will not be able to explore the question of ethical responsibility in any detail. For even though colonial and postcolonial regimes are partly responsible for the historical conflation of the Chinese diaspora with cosmopolitan capital and for instigating anti-Chinese violence in the resurgent national awakening, one ought to explore how it is that both the Chinese and the national awakening/postcolonial nation-people are susceptible to this contamination by the state. For present purposes, suffice it to say that “the Chinese question” in postcolonial Southeast Asia cannot be solved by simple finger-pointing.


Let us begin with an obvious question: in what manner of speaking can the Confucian ethos that Tu detects in contemporary Chinese mercantile capitalism be described as a form of normative cosmopolitanism? Now, the relationship between Confucianism and cosmopolitanism in modern intellectual history has always been fraught with tension. In his sociology of religion, Max Weber had argued that the Confucian ethos was antipathetic to the cosmopolitan vocation characterizing a modern personality.

Despite some surface similarities to Protestantism, Confucian rationalism, he suggested, could not give rise to modern economic capitalism because its ultimate goal was adjustment to the world and not salvation from it through rational mastery.

A true prophecy creates and systematically orients conduct toward one internal measure of value. In the face of this the "world" is viewed as material to be fashioned ethically according to the norm. Confucianism in contrast meant adjustment to the outside, to the conditions of the "world." . . . Such a way of life could not allow man an inward aspiration toward a "unified personality," a striving which we associate with the idea of personality. Life remained a series of occurrences. It did not become a whole placed methodically under a transcendental goal.¹²

Consequently, Chinese culture restricted access to universal norms of the utmost generality that characterized a modern conscience. "The great achievement . . . of the ethical and asceticist sects of Protestantism," Weber argued, "was to shatter the fetters of the sib," leading to the establishment of "the superior community of faith and a common ethical way of life in opposition to the community of blood, even to a large extent in opposition to the family."¹³ In contradistinction, Chinese culture remained particularistic and parochial, as evidenced by the traditional domination of sib organizations and the cult of viliage ancestors in everyday life.¹⁴ Thus, Confucianism, to use Benjamin Nelson's felicitous phrase, obstructed the passage from 'tribal brotherhood to universal otherhood'.¹⁵

In his account of cosmopolitanism in modern Chinese intellectual history, Joseph Levenson reinforces this



interpretation of Confucian provincialism. Insofar as Confucianism could no longer meet the intellectual challenges of an encroaching modernity, insofar as it was reduced to the dogma of unreflective peasants, Levenson argued, it became provincial. It was succeeded by the liberal and iconoclastic anti-Confucian nationalism and cosmopolitanism of the May Fourth modernization movement.¹⁶ This was in turn succeeded by Communist cosmopolitanism in the 1950s. Chinese Communism was anti-imperialist. But it was also anti-traditionalist. This made Chinese Communism cosmopolitan for it had a universalistic sense of mission that was similar to the Pauline spirit of Christian universalism, precisely that which Weber regarded as the necessary condition of modernity.¹⁷

Now, if we situate the contemporary revival of Confucianism within this intellectual history, then it should be clear that this neo-traditionalism is both a critique of Western cosmopolitanism and also a new form of cosmopolitanism. In Tu's view, the sociological, political and cultural implications of East Asian capitalism are as follows: "If, indeed, the "Sinic World" or the "Post-Confucian" region has succeeded in adopting a form of life, definitely modern, distinctively East Asian—*by implication Chinese as well*—the sharp dichotomy between tradition and modernity must be rejected as untenable, as useless in analyzing developing countries as in its application to more highly industrialized or postindustrial societies."¹⁸ On the one hand, insofar as the East Asian capitalist model is explicitly non-Western, it is a critique of the rootlessness of (Western) capitalist cosmopolitanism: "aggressive anomie, radical individualism, disintegration of society and vulgarisation of culture."¹⁹ But, on the other hand, this neo-Confucian capitalism is also an alternative cosmopolitanism because it purports to be an alternative universal

model of global capital. It is also a cosmopolitanism because its bearers are the diasporic Chinese, who constitute in Tu's words, "the most mobile merchant class."²⁰

The thesis of neo-Confucian capitalism thus takes as its fundamental premise a narrative that regards the migration of the Chinese to Southeast Asia as crucial to the auto-genesis of global capital in its East Asian form. By this, I do not simply mean that the diasporic Chinese have *historically* emerged as the bearers of East Asian capital. The neo-Confucianists propose a much more direct link between Chinese Confucian culture and global capital: the suggestion is that a superior form of global capitalist development necessarily grows out of Chinese culture once it is freed from the restrictions of the mainland Communist state.²¹ One could even say that they regard capital as ontologically proper to Chinese culture, as co-belonging with it, to use a Heideggerian word. This position is dangerous because, ultimately, it further inflames anti-Chinese feeling in Southeast Asia, since this is aroused by a similar historical conflation of the overseas Chinese with global capital. For if the co-belonging of Chinese culture and capital is ontologically inevitable, then the relationship between the overseas Chinese and the native peoples of Southeast Asia can only ever be one between exploiter and exploited.

At this point, an examination of the history of the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia is instructive because it reveals a more complex relationship to capital that includes the machinations of colonial regimes as well as political forces from mainland China. What I want to suggest is that the irrefutable historical link between the Chinese diaspora and capital is not genetic but instead a spectral process of paradoxical incorporation.

In the first place, the claim that a genetic relationship exists between Confucian values or Chinese-ness and mercantile culture/East Asian development is extremely dubious. As Wang Gungwu has argued, because of the low status accorded to the trader in Confucian China, merchant culture was hard to define within imperial China and only became identifiably Chinese among the overseas Chinese. Moreover, the values of mercantile culture—thrift, honesty, trust, loyalty and industriousness—are not exclusive to Confucianism.²² Indeed, there is nothing exceptionally Chinese about the mercantile culture of the overseas Chinese because allegiance to imperial China was minimal. Wang points out that


[a]s long as the Qing dynasty was weak and unable to protect them and indeed rejected them once they left the shores of China, any loyalty to China [from the overseas Chinese], was itself tenuous. And . . . for most of the time, it was irrelevant since China exercised no influence over any part of Southeast Asia. The only real link with China was to families in their home villages and to that end, good relations had to be maintained with Chinese officials. It was also necessary to maintain the use of Chinese language and such cultural links as would enable them to fit in well when they eventually returned to China or if they should send their children to study in China.²³

Related arguments can be made about the genetic link between Confucian values and East Asian industrialization: the values of the mercantile Chinese in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore that enable them to adapt to modern capitalist ways have more in common with traders outside China than with the Chinese literati.²⁴

I want to suggest that the personification of the mercantilism of the overseas Chinese as “Chinese” can only be explained by referring to the role of colonial regimes in Southeast Asia as instruments or agents of global capital. Before the sixteenth century, overseas Chinese were largely sojourning merchants in foreign ports who traded and returned home. The small minority who married locally and settled were absorbed into native society and being Chinese was not an issue. However, as European naval power expanded, the Chinese were encouraged to stay and perform specific trading and artisan roles in European-controlled ports such as Manila, Malacca, Batavia, Penang and Singapore, leading to the formation of distinctively mestizo- or *peranakan* Chinese communities that were replenished with new immigrants.²⁵

Generally speaking, the colonial regimes in South-east Asia dealt with such communities by means of segregational policies designed to produce what John Furnivall has termed a “plural society,” a society of different ethnic or racial groups segmented by religion, culture, and language, and held together solely by the self-interest of market forces regulated by alien colonial institutions.

[P]robably the first thing that strikes the visitor is the medley of peoples—European, Chinese, Indian and native. It is in the strictest sense a medley, for they mix but do not combine. Each group holds by its own religion, its own culture and language, its own ideas and ways. As individuals, they meet, but only in the market-place, in buying and selling. There is a plural society, with different sections of the community living side by side, but separately, within the same political unit.²⁶



The essential feature of a plural society is that it lacks a general or collective will, either of the native customary variety or the homogeneous unitary society that is conventionally regarded as typical of Europe. Furnivall takes this segregation to be a necessary historical consequence of societies formed by labor migration but it can be argued that plural societies in Southeast Asia were in fact actively fostered by colonial regimes by means of the colonial census.

In his description of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon as an architectural figure for the surveillance (or generalized panopticism) that characterizes a society of discipline, Michel Foucault suggests that one of the intended effects of the Panopticon's division into cells is the dissolution of a compact mass into a segregated multiplicity of individuals that can be counted and monitored, and made into objects of information: "The crowd, a compact mass, a locus of multiple exchanges, individualities merging together, a collective effect, is abolished and replaced by a collection of separated individualities. From the point of view of the guardian, it is replaced by a multiplicity that can be numbered and supervised[.]"²⁷ The colonial census can be understood as an apparatus and a technique of colonial surveillance and discipline. By dividing and classifying colonial society in Southeast Asia, the colonial census impeded the assimilation of migrants into the native population and prevented the formation of an undifferentiated colonized mass that would be more difficult to regulate and bend towards colonial interests.


The historical conflation of the overseas Chinese with mercantile capital, the culturalization of these merchants as self-consciously Chinese, is a direct consequence of these colonial "plural society" policies. For instance, Benedict

Anderson observes that under the census category “*chinees*,” the Dutch East Indies Company included

descendants of immigrants who had settled locally and married local women, adapted to local cultures and even religion, and lost the use of Hokkien or Cantonese—in other words, mestizos of a second, non-Eurasian type. Over the years the Company pursued a general policy of attempting to block or reverse the assimilative process by ruthless legal and administrative means: people it decided were ‘*chinees*,’ were compelled to live in restricted residential areas, pay separate taxes, be subject to their ‘own’ authorities, and have their marriage and inheritance practices regulated in distinct institutional niches. Although this administrative segregation collapsed in the first decade of the twentieth century, by which time the steamship and the abandonment of the closed colonial economy had encouraged a substantial new flow of Hokkienese, Cantonese, and Hakka-speaking immigrants, the category of ‘*chinees*’ remained fundamentally in place, even though it ‘fantastically’ covered groups not only speaking the above languages as their mother-tongues, but also Malay, Javanese, Madurese, Balinese and so forth.²⁸

In this way, the Dutch colonial government encouraged Chinese-consciousness by making it clear to these migrant merchants that it was their “Chinese-ness” that gave them a key economic place in colonial society. And by virtue of their adaptability, these merchants affirmed their “Chinese-ness” as an instrument of profit-making.²⁹

One should, of course, exercise appropriate caution against over-generalizing about the position of “the Chinese diaspora” in colonial Southeast Asia. Far from being




a politically homogeneous region, colonial Southeast Asia included British Malaya and Singapore; French Indochina; Siam, a semi-independent buffer state between British Burma and French Indochina; the Dutch East Indies; the Spanish (and later United States) Philippines; and Portuguese East Timor. Different colonial states practiced different forms of census politics that altered in the course of history. Thus, depending on the kind of classificatory scheme, the category “Chinese” had a different social position vis-à-vis other census categories that were used to classify Europeans, natives and other non-indigenous ‘Asiatics.’³⁰ The differences between these policies have different consequences for ethnic or racial politics in the different societies, even after formal independence. Moreover, “the Chinese” were equally heterogeneous. They came from villages in different regions of the Chinese empire and spoke different languages. It seems absurd to have to point out that not all of them were traders or merchants. They engaged in a variety of occupations and assumed varying sociological positions depending on which colony they migrated to and whether they ended up in densely populated areas where they were mainly relegated to trade or less settled regions where they could engage in agriculture or mining.³¹

Nevertheless, it is possible to make four general observations about “the Chinese diaspora” in colonial Southeast Asia. First, even though not all overseas Chinese were traders, it was this occupational identity that took hold and that could adversely affect their position throughout Southeast Asia. Second, the colonial situation was a general impediment to complete assimilation. As Wim Wertheim notes,

Inasmuch as a status of inferiority became attached to the position of 'being a native,' the attraction of complete assimilation within native society decreased accordingly. Though ethnic Chinese, who were considered as more or less foreign elements, suffered from a good deal of discrimination on the part of the colonial authorities, still their position within the colonial setting, which set them apart from native society, was in general more favourable than it would have become after complete assimilation. For ambitious members of the higher strata of local Chinese society the trend became rather to identify themselves with the colonial upper caste.³²

Moreover, the colonial authorities actively prevented any assimilation via the disciplinary techniques of census enumeration that subjectified these migrants as Chinese. Third, insofar as the various colonial regimes needed "the Chinese" to fill different economic functions within their respective economies—traders, but also artisans, lessees of different government monopolies and tax farms etc.—but also feared the power that these settlers began to accrue, the colonial state persistently oscillated between protection and repression of the Chinese.³³ Finally, the casting of "the Chinese" as agents of large-scale European enterprises and the main compradors of European capital often aroused economic envy in the native population, which could be incited to aid the colonial state in its oppression of its Chinese subjects. This is exemplified by the 1603 massacre of the Chinese in Manila and the 1740 pogrom against the Chinese in Batavia. In the postcolonial era, it is the economic competition between the postcolonial indigenous elite and the Chinese that prevents the latter's assimilation.³⁴




What we are witnessing in these twin processes of subjectification and scapegoating of “the Chinese” is precisely the negotiability of “Chinese-ness.” It is a form of mercantile capitalism that becomes “Chinese” via the machinations of the colonial state and not a pre-existing Chinese ethos that engenders mercantile capitalism. A fictive ethnic category of the colonial census has become real. This process has political-institutional and social-psychological consequences that continue up to the present. It lays the ground for neo-Confucianist Chinese cosmopolitanism and anti-Chinese sentiment.

But how should we understand this process of fabulation? This fabulation cannot be explained by theories of ideological mystification in combination with accounts of Orientalist stereotyping. Crudely put, ideology refers to a set of ideas that is foisted upon a subordinate group by a politically dominant social or economic group and is lived by the former as natural reality. An expression of the self-conscious interests of the dominant group, ideology functions to organize the whole of society in a way that prevents the subordinate group from knowing their oppression and the material conditions of that oppression. It thereby obscures the *true* interests of the subordinate group in its social relations with the dominant group.³⁵ Because ideology generally connotes deception, the concept of ideology necessarily presupposes a distinction between truth and falsehood. What is important here is not the distinction between truth and falsehood *per se* but the linking of truth to the ontological trait of active self-determination as opposed to a state of *passivity* in which distorted ideas are *imposed* upon consciousness by external historical processes that are contingent because their significance as a concrete totality remains unthematized.³⁶ It is this dimen-

sion of passive acceptance or internalization of an external imposition that allows the concept of ideology to be spliced onto the idea of stereotypes. (This passivity is also assumed in definitions of ideology as material practice as well as theories of social-discursive construction and performativity.)

In contradistinction, the fabulation of “Chinese-ness” involves a situation in which the ontological distinction between active self-determination and passive internalization of an imposed idea or norm no longer holds. For although “Chinese-ness” was a category of the colonial census, it was not simply an ideological stereotype imposed upon these merchants. Nor were they mystified by it. They actively accepted this idea/identity because it suited their interests: they both desired and needed its attendant material benefits. In ontological terms, the historical co-belonging of Chinese-ness and mercantilism is more appropriately understood, I think, as the *spectralization* of these merchants by colonial capital, in the precise sense that Jacques Derrida gives the term: the incarnation of an ideational or phantomatic form in an aphysical body which is then taken on as the real body of a living and finite being: “The spectrogenic process corresponds therefore to a paradoxical *incorporation*. Once ideas or thoughts [*Gedanke*] are detached from their substratum, one engenders some ghost by giving *them a body*. Not by returning to the living body from which ideas and thoughts have been torn loose, but by incarnating the latter *in another artifactual body, a prosthetic body, a ghost of spirit*[.]”³⁷

A specter is not an ideologem. It is not merely a mystification that is confused with and lived as concrete reality. Whereas an ideologem is an illusion that begins from the living body and ought, in the final instance, to be re-




ferred back to its material historical conditions by immanent political critique, spectral forms are part of a process that is coextensive with the radical finitude of all beings in time. In order for any present being to exist or be present, its *form*—that which makes it actual and allows it to be materialized—must be able to persist through time so that it can be identified as the *same* throughout all its possible repetitions. This differing-deferral (*differance*) of a present being in the living-on of its form, i.e. its spectralization, is neither simply active nor passive. It is a type of automatism. But this automatism, while it is clearly not an effect of *human* reason, society, culture, *techné*, or language, is also not an effect of the mechanism of nature. Instead, it is the trace of the inhuman and unnatural spectral other within the present itself. Spectrality is thus the originary opening up of any present being by and to the other, a radical susceptibility to the outside that constitutes all finite beings. It is precisely this internal vulnerability of any present being to iterability/alterity—its pregnancy with the movement of alter-ing—that allows it to alter, change or transform itself in time. But by the same token, insofar as the spectrality that constitutes any finite being also allows it to be changed, transformed or altered by another in time, the spectral forms that are taken on by any finite living being to protect its own life can also entrap it and endanger its life.

The fabulation of the Southeast Asian Chinese diaspora can be understood in the same way. The merchants who are now said to embody the Chinese ethos inhabited a situation where their continuing survival required them to respond by taking on the spectral form, 'Chinese'. It *became* them. These merchants had become and were Chinese in the Dutch, British, Spanish etc. colonial sense. And

their being Chinese, even though it was given to them by their official niche in colonial society and bore little resemblance to the Confucian ethos of their homeland, would henceforth be used to explain, by way of a metalepsis, their daily habits and their institutional roles in colonial society. These habits and roles would in turn repeatedly mark them and reconfirm their Chinese-ness in perpetuity. Their adaptability and political flexibility had made them Chinese, but paradoxically, their identity thereby remained fixed, immutable in its very mutability. The role of the colonial state is decisive in this plural-society type of spectralization. For if we simply assume an auto-genetic relationship between Chinese-ness and mercantile capital, we sanction the historical self-representation of the colonial state as protector to the natives against Chinese mercantile capital, thereby dissimulating the fact that the colonial state itself was the most powerful agent of global capital in the age of imperialism.

In the early twentieth century, however, another type of spectralization of the overseas Chinese took place that ran counter to this plural-society type of spectralization. Between 1895-1911, as China began to modernize in reaction to Western imperialism, the imperial Chinese government began to harness the enterprise and capital of the overseas Chinese to develop its own national resources and industry. Likewise, representatives of the Republican movement and other revolutionary political organizations traveled to Southeast Asia and sought support from the Chinese there by invoking patriotic sentiment.³⁸ What evolved in the first half of this century was another paradigm of “Chinese-ness” that is conventionally described as the *huaqiao* pattern.³⁹ At the end of the nineteenth century, *huaqiao* was used to refer to a Chinese person or a Chinese com-



munity temporarily residing abroad. By the early 1900s, it had become a political term with strong emotional overtones. After 1911, it was generally used to refer to all overseas Chinese.⁴⁰ The central thrust of this type of spectralization was re-Sinicization. Contrary to colonial policy, which saw the overseas Chinese as eternally Chinese, the assumption was that the overseas Chinese were not Chinese enough and had to be re-nationalized through law, education, and renewed contact with China.


In 1909, the Chinese Nationality Law recognized all overseas Chinese as Chinese nationals by adopting the doctrine of dual nationality. As a result of stronger communication links between the Chinese ports and European colonial bases in Southeast Asia—faster and safer shipping; cable and telephone connections—China was brought closer to the overseas Chinese. Political activists from the mainland shared the excitement of a rejuvenating China with the Chinese diaspora. But most important of all was the role of modern Chinese education—the numerous teachers and journalists recruited from China and Chinese schools—in spectralizing the overseas Chinese with a modern Chinese nationalist identity. This identity was consolidated and strengthened by Japanese expansion in China and the subsequent invasion of Southeast Asia.

Now, these two types of spectralization lead to the formation of two quite different types of Chinese cosmopolitanism. As we have seen, the plural-society type engenders a mercantilist cosmopolitanism. *Huaqiao* spectralization, on the other hand, produces a fervent patriotism that is also a revolutionary cosmopolitanism. For although this type of spectralization instilled political loy-

alty towards the Chinese state, this patriotism was not necessarily a form of chauvinism and played a part in the stimulation of indigenous nationalism, and later, communism and socialism in Southeast Asia. Indeed, some of the overseas Chinese identified with indigenous nationalist movements, while others identified with the international struggle against imperialist exploitation.⁴¹ From an intellectual-historical perspective, this is precisely the progressive form of cosmopolitanism that Levenson attributed to Chinese Republicanism and early Chinese Communism.

Huaqiao nationalism, however, was very threatening to the colonial regimes and provoked an intensification of the plural-society type of spectralization. On the one hand, this aggressive Chinese patriotism could be demonized as a threat to the native well-being that the colonial governments claimed to exist to protect. Conversely, the less politically radical Chinese, whose adaptability to colonialism aroused feelings of contempt and resentment amongst the native population, could be frightened into helping the Europeans against recalcitrant natives. Once these Chinese were successfully isolated from the native population, the Europeans could ossify the Chinese in their traditional economic skills and encourage their modernization, while the indigenous peoples were left to stagnate.⁴² What resulted was the entrenchment of a more complacent, even chauvinistic Chinese-ness which, being “largely backward-looking and rarely assertive”, allowed the Chinese to fulfil the economic functions allotted to them in the colonial social machine.⁴³

Relations between the ethnic Chinese and indigenous peoples in postcolonial Southeast Asia have been governed by this plural society politics inherited from the colonial era. The specters of Chinese communism and Chinese



capitalism are routinely conjured up by neocolonial regimes to secure their domination.⁴⁴ This continuing spectralization of the overseas Chinese as the personification of cosmopolitan capital is responsible for anti-Chinese violence in contemporary Indonesia. Contemporary transnationalism has only served to magnify this chauvinistic version of Chinese cosmopolitanism of which the neo-Confucianists are ideologues. The narratives they fabricate within the domains of national and international public discourse obscure the fact that the spectral identity of capitalist merchant-financier does not incorporate many lower-middle and working-class diasporic Chinese.⁴⁵ When explicitly sanctioned by the state to maintain its legitimacy, as in the case of Singapore, these narratives have discriminatory political consequences. As Aihwa Ong notes, “by claiming the superiority of Confucian-based moral economies, these discourses define a hierarchy of moral and economic performances that coincide with racial difference in Southeast Asia.”⁴⁶ But most importantly, these neo-Confucian fables foreclose the fact that the Chinese diaspora have become spectralized by postcolonial global capital even as capital also spectralizes the postcolonial nation-state in such a way that the Chinese can both facilitate the flow between global capital and the postcolonial state and also become the scapegoat for the postcolonial state to the extent that they alone are identified with exploitative cosmopolitan capital by the native population. As Wang Gungwu observes, being an overseas Chinese today for many entrepreneurs and businessmen has

nothing to do with becoming closer to China. It [is] . . . a private and domestic matter only manifested when needed to strengthen a business

contact or to follow an approved public convention. . . . [T]he *one legitimate reason to be Chinese in the ASEAN open economies is that it is useful for a wide range of trading purposes*. Even nationalistic governments accept that traders and entrepreneurs helping in national development may need to act and think like Chinese in order to maximize their effectiveness in certain Chinese-dominated trading areas. . . . *Being Chinese, therefore, may be somewhat disembodied or internalized and is confined to activities of economic benefit to business*. . . . [B]eing Chinese is a legitimate extension of having a profitable . . . enterprise.⁴⁷


I have suggested that the intensified spectrogenic processes that are part of the financialization of the globe have led to the conflation of Chinese diasporic cosmopolitanism with exploitative chauvinism. This conflation has obscured the indelible contributions of revolutionary Chinese cosmopolitanism to the native awakenings of Southeast Asia in postcolonial national memory. In contemporary Southeast Asia, the tight control of many postcolonial states over the economic and political spheres is in part secured by fostering public amnesia through educational policies and media censorship. Within this context, activist literature has become an important agent for reviving postcolonial national memory, for retrieving the history of nationalist revolution that colonial regimes and neocolonial and postcolonial states have tried to obliterate. As the Indonesian writer, Pramoedya Ananta Toer has observed, “The New Order [Indonesian regime] is born from stone, without any history . . . [It] is simply the New Order, victimizing millions of people.”⁴⁸ But if nationalist historical fiction aims to point the nation beyond its neocolonial present by looking back into the revolutionary past, much

of that past involves the overseas Chinese. I want now to look briefly at how Pramoedya and the Filipino author, Ninotcka Rosca, try to undo the collective amnesia of their respective nations about the overseas Chinese by pointing to the importance of *huaqiao* cosmopolitanism.

Rosca's *State of War* (1988) is a novel about memory. Anna Villaverde, the central character, is a mestizo-Chinese who joins the resistance against a Filipino dictatorship that resembles the Marcos regime. As the novel unfolds, the reader is given an insight into her lineage. Insofar as Anna's own recollection of her ancestry takes her back into the history of the Filipino nation and its birth, her personal memory also re-enacts and symbolizes the Filipino people's collective memory of their struggles against Spanish, American and Japanese colonialism. There is much nostalgia and yearning by various characters for a forgotten innocent past, a lost presence uncontaminated by colonial culture, a "morning when the archipelago's song was just beginning, in a still-young world of uncharted seas," "a time when the world was young, the sea was simply the sea, and names were but newly invented[.]"⁴⁹ Rosca characterizes the various colonial regimes as blights upon the archipelago's collective memory. They had introduced alien languages and renamed the landscape until the people became so confused about where they were that they no longer knew who they were and where they were heading. Anna puts it this way: "They monkeyed around with language . . . while we were growing up. Monkeyed around with names. Of people, of places. With dates. And now, I can't remember. No one remembers. And even this . . . even this will be forgotten. They will hide it under another name. No one will remember."⁵⁰ But since there is no going back, the way out of this confusion is to retrace these successive colonial invasions backwards, and more

importantly, the various revolutions against them. If one could at least remember how one got to the befuddled present, then one could go forward.⁵¹

One of the things to be remembered is the role of revolutionary Chinese cosmopolitanism in Philippines history. At a crucial moment of Anna's family history, Anna's part-Chinese grandmother, who has followed Anna's father into the hills to fight against the Japanese after the Philippines has been abandoned by the U.S.A. during the Second World War, comes across three Chinese guerrillas who teach the Filipino soldiers how to fight. When she does not believe in the guarantee given by one of the nameless Chinamen that her son will be safe, he reproaches her: "You have never trusted us. We were trading with you before the Spaniards came. Your ancestors were buried in porcelain kilns in our land. Yet, at the white man's word, you razed our districts and massacred our uncles. . . . We'll never understand you."⁵² When she questions him about why he is fighting a Filipino war, he replies, "Some say [we are fighting the Japanese] because of Manchuria. Some say because any ground where our forefathers are buried is hallowed ground. Can you, with your blood, understand that? The others don't; your people do not. So we say because of Manchuria. This country—it has no continuity. It is only a country of beginnings. No one remembers. Not the burial jars at least."⁵³ This scene is a missed encounter, for there is no mutual understanding. Anna's grandmother does not reassure the Chinaman that she understands him, and he is never mentioned again. But it is a fragment of historical record of a different type of Chinese cosmopolitanism that can be retrieved by the contemporary Filipino reader from underneath the erasures of colonial and postcolonial plural society politics.



In his Buru quartet, a portrayal of the birth of Indies national consciousness in the first three decades of the twentieth century, Pramoedya suggests that *huaqiao* cosmopolitanism and Indies nationalism are genetically connected but that this connection has been effaced by the racial enmity instigated by the Dutch colonial government.⁵⁴ Minke, the protagonist and narrator of the first three novels, is a fictive version of Tirto Adhi Soerjo, the father of the national awakening. As Pramoedya tells it, Minke was deeply influenced by the Chinese Republican movement, especially by the ideas of Sun Yat-sen, the father of modern China. The first chapter of *Glass House*, the final volume of the quartet, evokes the thriving activity of two emergent nationalisms in the Indies, Chinese and native, from the perspective of Pangemanann, a native member of the colonial secret police who is Minke's nemesis. As a *native* representative of the colonial regime, Pangemanann is also a proleptic personification of the neocolonial Indonesian state.

Caught between these two waves of awakening, the colonial state attempts to channel them into a path that is less threatening to it. Although the national awakening cannot be stopped, it can be blunted and attenuated into a less radical, reactionary form. It can be co-opted. Pangemanann spreads rumors which ignite the riots against the Chinese. The colonial state is afraid that Chinese and native organizations will begin to oppose European interests and erode whatever loyalty it commands. By turning these two groups against each other, the state can attract Chinese loyalty by claiming to be the protector of the Chinese community. At the same time, violence against the Chinese will destroy the international esteem that the native awakening has commanded from the foreign press.⁵⁵

The colonial archives only record the enmity between the overseas Chinese and the Indies natives.

The archaeological effort behind the second and third volumes, however, uncovers the direct influence of the Chinese revolutionaries on Minke. They show how he develops a national consciousness first, by emulating Khouw Ah Soe, a Chinese youth movement leader, who has come to the Indies to urge the Indies Chinese to modernize, and, later, by learning from Ang San Mei, the bereaved fiancée of Khouw, who becomes Minke's wife. Khouw exemplifies an anti-imperialist Asian model of modernity. He teaches Minke about European imperialism, Japanese modernization, the Philippines revolution against Spain, and the importance of publishing to the life of a political movement. He also teaches Minke the difference between *huaqiao* cosmopolitanism and mercantile cosmopolitanism. He points out that most of the overseas Chinese work hard to acquire personal wealth and return to China to attract the admiration of others and to rebuild the graves of their ancestors. "They were not like the overseas Japanese, who always returned with some new learning, who humbly set out to learn all they could from the countries where they sought their livelihood, and who took home what they learnt as a contribution to the development of their own nation and people."⁵⁶ It is precisely the geopolitical scenario of the early twentieth century that induces the urgent need for an alternative spectralization of the overseas Chinese as *huaqiao*. "[T]he children of the overseas Chinese must be prepared to receive a modern education" so that they can be instilled with an "awareness of the need for change; and for a new man with a new spirit, ready to work for his people and his country. . . . If not, the country of his ancestors would be


swallowed up by Japan, just as Africa has been swallowed whole by the English.”⁵⁷

By stressing the responsibility that the overseas Chinese ought to have towards their nation at the same time that he stresses the modular nature of the Chinese youth movement and Chinese nationalism, Khouw also teaches Minke that cosmopolitanism and nationalism are not incompatible and can be mutually reinforcing. For the contribution that the *huaqiao* can make to the Indies is precisely to stimulate the native awakening by example. The nationalist awakening of each Asian country has a cosmopolitan or world-historical significance (or at least a significance for all the colonized peoples of Asia), because “every country in Asia which begins to arise and awaken is not just awakening itself, but is helping to awaken every other nation that has been left behind, including China.”⁵⁸ Likewise, Ang San Mei reminds Minke that all the educated natives of Asia have a responsibility to help awaken their peoples (*bangsa*).⁵⁹ The title of the quartet’s second volume, *Child of All Nations [Bangsa]*, expresses the related ideas that the nationalism of each colonized people can contribute something to a more cosmopolitan movement against anti-colonialism, and conversely, that the revolutionary cosmopolitanism of the overseas Chinese has been crucial to the birth of Indies nationalism.

One cannot, of course, measure in any tangible way the success of such literary attempts at revising the position of the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asian postcolonial national memory. Insofar as such activist literary narratives try to penetrate, influence and reshape their respective national public spheres (*Öffentlichkeit*) so that the public sphere can in turn press upon and transform the state by inspiring the latter, activist literature must also be seen

as a form of spectralization that runs counter to and must compete with the spectralization of the postcolonial nation-state by global capital that I have outlined above. The success of activist literature can only be judged in the *longue durée* and even then, only with a lot of reconstructive guesswork. But Rosca and Pramoedya at least help to illustrate the analytical line that I believe needs to be drawn between the two types of cosmopolitanism of the Southeast Asian Chinese. To recapitulate, the type celebrated by neo-Confucianists is continuous with the Chinese-ness generated by the plural society policies of colonial regimes and their neocolonial and postcolonial successor states. It is recidivist, chauvinistic, immutable, and a cause of the ethnic enmity that has shaped most postcolonial societies in Southeast Asia. In contradistinction, the *huaqiao* cosmopolitanism of Ang San Mei, Khouw Ah Soe and Rosca's Chinaman guerrilla is measured by generous action and self-sacrificing political commitment.

In contemporary globalization, it is clear that *huaqiao* cosmopolitanism has been overshadowed by Chinese mercantilism, to the point that it has almost completely disappeared. The historical decline of *huaqiao* cosmopolitanism occurred because Chinese migration to Southeast Asia ended by 1950. In the 1950s, in response to pressure from the newly postcolonial states of Southeast Asia and also because it was in fact unable to protect the overseas Chinese, the PRC adopted a restrictive definition of *huaqiao* and encouraged the overseas Chinese to settle abroad and become loyal citizens of their adopted countries.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, the question that remains is why the political radicalism of *huaqiao* cosmopolitanism failed to survive on a large scale in the overseas Chinese as patriotic commitment to their adopted nations. In other words, was the general decline of *huaqiao* cosmopolitanism, or at least, its




admirable features, inevitable? Conversely, can this type of cosmopolitanism from a period of anti-imperialist euphoria that is clearly dated be revived in contemporary globalization? The answer to the first question is probably yes; the answer to the second question is probably no.

One must remember that both types of Chinese cosmopolitanism were generated by processes of spectralization at different points in history. They were induced within and by certain conjunctures of capitalist globalization. Historically, the mercantile activity of the overseas Chinese was spectralized as *Chinese* mercantilism by the plural society policies of colonial regimes that stressed the exploitative nature of Chinese business, even as the Chinese were indispensable to colonial capital. In contradistinction, the spectralization that gave rise to *huaqiao* cosmopolitanism was induced by anti-colonial modernization. If these identities are spectral responses to various shapes (*Gestalten*) of the appearance of global capital, then perhaps the analytical line that I have tried to draw was always doomed to break down because one cannot guard absolutely against the spectral inspiring of the *huaqiao* paradigm by (mercantile-financial) capital.⁶¹ Spectrality is not an imposition from the outside but the constitutive openness of any finite body. And finance capital is indeed spectral in nature: national modernization and revolution, after all, need to be financed and those who are able to finance them are the merchant-financiers.

The fiscalization of the globe is part of the era of *postcolonial* capital. I use the phrase to refer to the huge inflows of capital and technology from the two most powerful capitalist economies in the post-Second World War era, Japan and the U.S.A., to Southeast Asia and parts of

East Asia under the general sanction of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund over a sustained period of 40 years, either in the form of foreign direct investment or international subcontracting.⁶² Whereas neocolonial capital is typified by the development of underdevelopment (to use Ander Gunder Frank's phrase) that characterizes Africa and South America,⁶³ postcolonial capital is typified by the development of hyperdevelopment by authoritarian regimes in East and Southeast Asia through global financialization. The governments of hyperdeveloping East and Southeast Asia are not merely comprador states in the strict Marxist sense of the word. They are often vocal in their policy disagreements with and ideological opposition to Northern or Western governments. But this hyperdevelopment does not really indicate the emergence of an Asian Pacific hegemony as the neo-Confucianists claim. The thematic distinction and occasional doctrinal skirmish between crony capitalism and visions of world trade liberalization (multinational capitalism) remain part of the configuration of postcolonial capital, a structure that ultimately rests on and is sustained by the exploitation of the masses of Asian Pacific nations in the names of free trade and development. As the Asian financial crisis clearly indicates, the U.S.A. remains the hegemonic economic power in this configuration. The high economic performance of these East and Southeast Asian nation-states is largely induced by the spectrality of finance capital, and after the abandonment of the gold standard and the deregulation of the international currency markets, the U.S. dollar has become the universal equivalent for all other currencies; the money of all other regionally or nationally-marked monies, even though it can weaken against other currencies in the short term.



The contemporary rise of Chinese mercantile cosmopolitanism must be situated within this larger force field. The Southeast Asian Chinese diaspora is a crucial conduit of finance capital in larger East Asia. Thus, in the era of postcolonial capital, the Chinese mercantilism of the colonial era has been respectralized as *guanxi* capitalism and celebrated by a new overseas Chinese literati in collaboration with the official policies of various East Asian states as a Confucian revival and the beginning of a new Pacific era. This can only serve to exacerbate popular anti-Chinese feeling in those parts of Southeast Asia with Chinese minorities despite the fact some indigenous ASEAN leaders are now referring to their countries as “East Asian.”⁶⁴ Ironically, the PRC is now appealing to the *huaqiao* paradigm again to attract foreign capital and expertise from the Chinese overseas to facilitate its own development, but this time, development in the image of Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan.⁶⁵ Thus, it would seem that what was initially a spectral identity that arose in order to allow China to defend itself against Western imperialism now finds itself possessed by the opposite type of spectralization. The revived *huaqiao* paradigm is now a means for China to open itself up to capitalist globalization with all its attendant contradictions. In Special Economic Zones such as Xiamen and Shenzhen, where the new *huaqiao* managers and businessmen mistreat mainland workers, especially women workers, the chauvinism of mercantilist Chinese cosmopolitanism is felt in full force in the ancestral homeland.⁶⁶ Such phenomena exemplify and attest to the spectral power of finance capital to conjure up concrete forms of Chinese cosmopolitanism that can monstrously supplement and usurp even the putative geographical origin of Chinese-ness.

*It was Caroline Hau's provocative essay on the Chinese diaspora in the Philippines, "Kidnapping, Citizenship, and the Chinese," that inspired me to think of the personification of the Southeast Asian Chinese diaspora as cosmopolitan capital in terms of spectralization. Her research on the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia is far more penetrating than my scattered and situational reflections on the topic. This essay is dedicated to her in friendship. I have also benefited from reading Aihwa Ong's recent book, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*, which was published during the revision of my essay.

FOOTNOTES

1. "External China" and "Greater China" are other names for these Chinas outside China. For "External China" (*Waihua Zhengce*), see Wang Gungwu, "External China as a New Policy Area," in Wang Gungwu, *China and The Chinese Overseas* (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1991) 222-39. The concept of "Greater China" is discussed in a special issue of *China Quarterly*, no. 136 (December 1993). In his contribution ("The Concept of "Greater China": Themes, Variations and Reservations," 660-86), Harry Harding offers a concise summary of the three distinct themes subsumed under the rubric, "Greater China": the rise of a transnational Chinese economy, the rise of global Chinese culture, and the project of a reunified Chinese state. He points out that these three domains are not perfectly correlated. He also points out that although the term was originally coined with benign economic intent, it may also evoke more aggressive connotations in the manner of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere envisioned by Tokyo in the Second World War.

2. "Cultural China: The Periphery as the Center," in *The Living Tree. The Changing Meaning of Being Chinese Today*, ed. Tu Wei-ming (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1994) 13.

3. For Tu, as for many others, the Pacific Century is markedly Chinese. Cf. David Shambaugh, "Introduction: The Emergence of "Greater China," *China Quarterly*, no. 136 (December 1993) 653: "It is not unimaginable or unrealistic to assume that early in the 21st century the combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Greater China will surpass those of the European Community and United States; it will be the world's leading trader and in possession of the world's largest foreign exchange reserves; . . . it

will be the world's largest consumer . . . [.] Greater China will also overtake Japan as the dominant regional power, with Shanghai and Hong Kong the financial nexus of East Asian economic dynamism.”

4. For Tu, most mainland Chinese intellectuals are in crisis because they regard the Confucian heritage of traditional Chinese culture as incompatible with modernity and modernization. The emergence of the Asian dragons are such a godsend because they indicate that Confucianism is not only compatible with capitalist modernization but can in fact lead to a better path of capitalist development. In Tu's text, however, the link between Confucianism and East Asian capitalism remains ambiguous. There is a weaker thesis that East Asian capitalism indicates that Confucianism does not impede capitalist development. But there is also a stronger thesis that Confucianism is a necessary and sufficient condition of East Asian capitalist success.

5. Tu, “Cultural China,” 32-33.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 8, my emphasis. From the historical fact that the Southeast Asian Chinese diaspora are the facilitators of intra-regional trade in the Asia Pacific, Tu spuriously infers that they are the best example of the ethos of Chinese mercantilism. He also conflates the Confucian ethos with Chinese mercantilism. For a similar argument about the Chinese diaspora and the Pacific Century, see Ronald Skeldon, “Migrants on a Global Stage,” in *Pacific Rim Development: Integration and Globalisation in the Asia-Pacific Economy*, ed. Peter J. Rimmer (St. Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1997) 222-39.

7. Anti-Chinese violence was not confined to the capital but also occurred in other towns on Java. For more details on the role played by the Indonesian army in instigating

anti-Chinese violence, see John McBeth, "Shadow Play," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 23, 1998, 23-27, and I. Sandyawan Sumardi, "Mass Rape in the Recent Riots: The Climax of an Uncivilized Act in the Nation's Life," Report by Tim Relawan untuk Kemanusiaan (Volunteers for Humanity), Jakarta, July 13, 1998, and "Condition of Our Shared Life: The May 1998 Tragedy in Indonesia," Report by Tim Relawan untuk Kemanusiaan (Volunteers for Humanity), Jakarta, July 28, 1998. My thanks to Douglas Kammen for giving me access to the Jakarta sources.

8. The uprising has been described as "a national reawakening" and "another independence day" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, June 4, 1998, 21) and also as "Indonesia's May Revolution" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 28, 1998, cover).

9. The Chinese Foreign Minister, Tang Jiaxuan, has expressed official concern about the situation of Indonesian Chinese and called upon the Indonesian government to punish the rioters. He placed emphasis on the indelible contributions of the Chinese Indonesians to Indonesia's economic development and social progress. See "Indonesia called on to punish rioters," *China Daily*, August 5, 1998, 1.

10. Ethnic Chinese make up 3.5% of the Indonesian population. Yet, they own nine of the top ten business groups and control more than 80% of the assets in the top 300 groups. 13 of the top 15 taxpayers in Indonesia are ethnic Chinese. Even the less prosperous Chinese are a target of resentment because they control most of the local economic activity. See Salil Tripathi and Ben Dolven, "Shattered Confidence: Ethnic-Chinese hold the key to economic revival," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 28, 1998,

20-23, and Margot Cohen, "Turning Point: Indonesia's Chinese face a hard choice," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 30, 1998, 12-18.

11. Jacqueline Co, "'Democracy' At Work in Crime," *Tulay*, December 4, 1995, cited in Caroline S. Hau, "Kidnapping, Citizenship, and the Chinese," *Public Policy*, Vol. 1, no. 1, 1997, 62. Hau's article is a brilliant analysis of the conflation of the Chinese and capital in contemporary Philippines.

12. Max Weber, *The Religion of China. Confucianism and Taoism*, trans. Hans H. Gerth (Illinois: The Free Press, 1951) 235. For a fuller discussion of Weber's position on Confucianism and its place within his sociology of religion, see Wolfgang Schlucter, "World Adjustment: Max Weber on Confucianism and Taoism," in *The Triadic Chord. Confucian Ethics, Industrial East Asia and Max Weber*, ed. Tu Wei-ming (Singapore: Institute of East Asian Philosophies, 1991) 3-52.

13. Weber, *The Religion of China*, 237.

14. Weber suggests that Chinese religion as a whole, whether represented by the personalist principle of Taoist mysticism or the impersonal rationalization of Confucian bureaucracy repeatedly ties the individual to the sib and prevents the rationalizing of religious-practical ethics. *Ibid.*, 236-37.

15. See, for instance, Benjamin Nelson, "Civilizational Complexes and Intercivilizational Encounters," in *On the Roads to Modernity: Conscience, Science and Civilizations. Selected Writings by Benjamin Nelson*, ed. Toby Huff (New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield: 1981) 80-106. In its initial formulation in comparative sociology, the issue of Confucian rationalism is tied to the question of modern

science *qua* universal world science. The un-cosmopolitan, bounded or parochial nature of Chinese culture is used to explain why a universal science only developed in the West. Later, this cultural explanation is inserted into the discursive domain of political economy and used to secure theories of underdevelopment. Capitalist modernization is then explicitly coded as Westernization.

16. See Joseph R. Levenson, *Revolution and Cosmopolitanism. The Western Stage and the Chinese Stages* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971) 2-5. Cf. Myron Cohen, "Being Chinese: The Peripheralization of Traditional Identity," in Tu (ed.), *The Living Tree*, 101-2: "For increasing numbers of people Chinese culture simply did not work: as a self-centered definition of the cosmos rooted in its own history, it had little relevance to the unprecedented conditions created by Western domination and the large-scale introduction of new technology, institutions, and ideas. For those most immediately involved in these novel circumstances, such as students in the new schools, treaty port merchants and workers, and many others, the cultural crisis was most acute. . . . Among these intellectuals and some other segments of the population . . . emerged and continues to thrive an important connection precisely between nationalism and, at times almost ferociously iconoclastic antitraditionalism. . . . [N]ationalistic antitraditionalism received its first forceful expression during the May Fourth Movement that exploded in 1919."

17. See Levenson, *Revolution and Cosmopolitanism*, 24-25: "From the point of normative Confucianism, wedded to culture and history, and anti-messianic to the core, the barbarians are always with us. From the point of view of normative Christianity, transcending culture and history. . . the pagans are not always with us: they can be sought

out and converted. . . . Though Chinese left home in great numbers, no one had any Confucian pretensions to be bearing out a Word. Now, however, the new China was a Word for the world, beginning with all its Bolivias. China commends itself as a model of revolution. The model applies, allegedly, because all “peoples” (i.e., all victims of imperialists) are brothers.” Nelson makes a similar comment about the Cultural Revolution and Maoist thought, which he regards as crucial to the spreading of the new universalities of nation and peoplehood that will undermine traditional particularisms. *On the Roads to Modernity*, 91.

18. Tu, “Cultural China,” 7, emphasis added. Note that in the above passage, the different nations of East Asia are homogenized into “the Post-Confucian region,” which is then conflated with Chineseness.

19. Wu Teh Yao, “Opening Remarks,” in Tu (ed.), *The Triadic Chord*, xviii. As the prefatory remarks to the Proceedings of the 1987 Singapore Conference on Confucian Ethics and the Modernisation of Industrial East Asia, these words have the weighty tone of a manifesto. See also Wu, “The Confucian Concept and Attributes of Man and the Modernisation of Industrial Asia,” in the same volume, 397-413.

20. Tu, “Cultural China,” 8.

21. The literature on this topic is voluminous and comes from numerous conferences sponsored by U.S. think-tanks and East and Southeast Asian states since the mid-1980s. See, for instance, Peter L. Berger and Hsin-Huang Michael Hsiao (eds.), *In Search of an East Asian Development Model* (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1988) and Hung-chao Tai (ed.), *Confucianism and Development: An Oriental*

Alternative? (Washington: Washington Institute Press, 1989). For critical views of this argument that are attentive to the text of global capital, see Arif Dirlik, "Confucius in the Borderlands: Global Capitalism and the Reinvention of Confucianism," *boundary 2*, Vol. 22, no. 3 (Fall 1995) 229-73, and Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

22. See Wang Gungwu, "The Culture of Chinese Merchants," in Wang, *China and the Chinese Overseas* (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1991) 181-197.

23. Wang Gungwu, "The Chinese as Immigrants and Settlers: Singapore," *China and the Chinese Overseas*, 172.

24. See Wang Gungwu, "Little Dragons on the Confucian Periphery," *China and the Chinese Overseas*, 312.

25. See Wang Gungwu, "Among Non-Chinese," *The Living Tree*, 129.

26. J. S. Furnivall, *Colonial Policy and Practice—A Comparative Study of Burma and Netherlands India* (New York: New York University Press, 1956) 304. Cf. 303: "Man is a social animal, but economic forces tend to convert human society into a business concern. In tropical dependencies the outward and visible sign of this is the evolution of a plural society."

27. *Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1979) 201.

28. "Recensement et politique en Asie du Sud-est," *Genèses*, 26 (April 1997) 68-69. The "translation" is from Anderson's original English manuscript.

29. Cf. James Rush, "Placing the Chinese in Java on the Eve of the Twentieth Century," *Indonesia* (1991), special issue on the Role of the Indonesian Chinese in Shaping Modern Indonesian Life, 17-19: "It was the intensity and variety of this quest for livelihood that most thoroughly marked the Chinese, for they were everywhere "material man." . . . [W]here the economy was concerned, the Chinese were ubiquitous and essential. . . . From top to bottom, commerce marked the Chinese. . . . As revenue farmers, Chinese merchants were a critical part of the state apparatus."

30. For an extremely insightful and detailed discussion of the various censuses of the Spanish Philippines and the Dutch East Indies, see Anderson, "Recensement et politique en Asie du Sud-est." For instance, in the Spanish Philippines, the offspring of Spanish-mixed-with-native occupied the juridical category, "mestizo." In contradistinction, there is no such category for Eurasians in the Indies and Eurasian children became legally European if they were acknowledged by their father and native if they were not. Anderson also notes that in the Philippines, the word used to refer to those whom the English called 'Chinese,' the French, '*chinois*,' and the Dutch, '*chinees*,' was the non-racial term, '*sangley*,' which comes from the Hokkien word, '*sengli*' meaning 'trader.' (p 62, note 8)

31. See W. F. Wertheim, "The Trading Minorities in South-east Asia," *East-West Parallels: Sociological Approaches to Modern Asia* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1965) 39-82.

32. *Ibid.*, 47.

33. *Ibid.*, 54-55.

34. Ibid., 76, 78. Cf. Allen Chun, "Pariah Capitalism and the Overseas Chinese of Southeast Asia: Problems in the Definition of the Problem," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 12, no. 2 (April 1989) 254.

35. The classical formulation comes from Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1976) 42: "Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc., that is, real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these. . . [But i]n all ideology men and their relations appear upside-down as in a *camera obscura*[".]"

36. This becomes clear in Lukacs' suggestion that the "falseness" of ideology *qua* bourgeois class consciousness is not simply empirical or veridical in nature but "implies a class-conditioned *unconsciousness* of one's own socio-historical and economic condition." Georg Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971) 52. Lukacs adds that classes unable to organize society in accordance with their interests "are normally condemned to passivity[".]" (52)

37. Jacques Derrida, *Specters of Marx: The State of the Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Routledge, 1994) 126.

38. See, for instance, Prasenjit Duara, "Nationalists Among Transnationals: Overseas Chinese and the Idea of China, 1900-1911," in *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism*, eds. Aihwa Ong and Donald Nonini (New York: Routledge, 1997) 39-60.

39. See Wang Gungwu, "The Origins of Hua-Ch'iao," in Wang, *Community and Nation: China, Southeast Asia and*

Australia (St. Leonards: Allen and Unwin, 1992) 1-10; "Patterns of Chinese Migration in Historical Perspective," and "Southeast Asian Huaqiao in Chinese History-writing," *China and the Chinese Overseas*, 1-21 and 22-40 respectively. Wang notes that Sun Yat-sen claimed that "the *Huaqiao* were the mother of the revolution." (*China and the Chinese Overseas*, 246)


40. See Wang, *China and the Chinese Overseas*, 176: "The term *Huaqiao* became closely linked with the expanding emotions about the Chinese nation and the new republican state which all patriotic Chinese were called upon to support."

41. See Wang, "The Study of Chinese Identities in South-east Asia," *China and the Chinese Overseas*, 200-201.

42. Wang, *China and the Chinese Overseas*, 138.

43. *Ibid.*, 199.

44. For instance, in 1966, the Indonesian government prohibited use of the Chinese language. Chinese schools were shut, Chinese characters were forbidden and Chinese newspapers were banned following accusations that the Beijing-supported Indonesian Communist Party was behind the October coup. All ethnic Chinese became suspect. Suharto's aim was to de-politicize the ethnic Chinese so that they can devote themselves to money-making. For a more thorough discussion, see Benedict Anderson's suggestion in "Old State, New Society: Indonesia's New Order in Comparative Historical Perspective," *Language and Power: Exploring Political Cultures in Indonesia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990) that this ghettoization of the Chinese "increases the economic resources available to the state without the need for any cession of political



power. The more pariah “the Chinese” become, the more they are dependent on the apparatus” (116). See also James Mackie, “Towkays and Tycoons: The Chinese in Indonesian Economic Life in the 1920s and 1980s,” *Indonesia* (1991): 83-96.

45. For a discussion of the heterogeneity of the diasporic Chinese in Malaysia, see Donald Nonini, “Shifting Identities, Positioned Imaginaries: Transnational Traversals and Reversals by Malaysian Chinese,” in *Ungrounded Empires: The Cultural Politics of Modern Chinese Transnationalism*, 203-227.

46. Ong, *Flexible Citizenship*, 72.

47. Wang, “Among Non-Chinese,” *The Living Tree*, 131-32, emphasis added.

48. Chris GoGwilt, “Pramoedya’s Fiction and History: An Interview with Pramoedya Ananta Toer,” *Kabar Seberang*, 24/25, Essays to Honour Pramoedya Ananta Toer’s 70th Year (1995) 14.

49. Ninotchka Rosca, *State of War* (New York: Norton, 1988), 336-37, 192.

50. *Ibid.*, 149.

51. Anna’s great grandmother puts it this way: “Soon we will forget everything . . . and if we forget, how are we to proceed?” (*Ibid.*, 186)

52. *Ibid.*, 291.

53. *Ibid.*, 292.

54. The third and fourth volumes give an account of the anti-Chinese boycotts and riots of 1912 and the enmity between the Chinese and the Sarekat Islam, the most im-

portant organization within the native awakening. For a brief account of the events that culminate in the suspension of the Sarekat's activities on August 10, 1912, see Takashi Shiraishi, *An Age in Motion. Popular Radicalism in Java, 1912-1916* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990) 45-48.

55. See *Rumah Kaca* (Kuala Lumpur: Wira Karya, 1990) 124-25; *House of Glass*, trans. Max Lane (Victoria, Australia: Penguin, 1992) 117.

56. Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *Child of All Nations*, trans. Max Lane (New York: Penguin, 1996) 85.


57. *Ibid.*, 87.

58. *Ibid.*, 87. Khouw also describes the Filipinos as "great teachers for the other conquered peoples of Asia. They were the founders of the first Asian republic." (88)

59. Pramoedya Ananta Toer, *Footsteps*, trans. Max Lane (Victoria, Australia: Penguin, 1990) 52.

60. The PRC became more wary of the term *huaqiao* after Bandung in 1955 and has distinguished between foreign Chinese and overseas Chinese i.e., foreign nationals of Chinese descent and the small number of Chinese nationals who live abroad. Taiwan, however, has retained the broad sense of *huaqiao*. See Wang, *China and the Chinese Overseas*, 223, 287-90. For a schematic account of the relationship between the PRC government and the Chinese overseas until the present period, see Wang Gungwu, "Greater China and the Chinese Overseas," *China Quarterly*, no. 136 (December 1993) 938-39.

61. This is my gloss on Wang Gungwu's interesting argument that mercantilism has always been the fundamental feature



of Chinese emigration, and that *huaqiao* cosmopolitanism was only a temporary blurring of this basic pattern that reemerged as dominant with the decline of the latter. See *China and the Chinese Overseas*, 10-12. For an account of the spectacular contemporary use of Overseas Chinese Voluntary Associations to create and maintain transnational business networks as well as strengthening the ties of the Southeast Asian Chinese diaspora with their ancestral hometowns, which are the sites of foreign investment, see Hong Liu, "Old Linkages, New Networks: The Globalization of Overseas Chinese Voluntary Associations and its Implications," *China Quarterly*, no. 155 (September 1998) 582-609.

62. For a succinct general description of these inflows to Southeast Asia and its contribution to the financial crisis of the late 1990s, see Benedict Anderson, "Sauve Qui Peut," in *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World* (London: Verso, 1998) 299-317.

63. Andre Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969).

64. It is interesting to observe that Chinese mobilization in post-Suharto Indonesia seeks to reverse the previous three decades of depoliticization and discrimination. The Partai Reformasi Tionghua Indonesia takes pains to distance itself from ethnic Chinese tycoons and conglomerates who lived off the largesse of Suharto. "The party's economic proposals include establishing cooperatives and holding companies involving both Chinese and pribumis. These would be vehicles for transferring business skills to pribumis, for example through apprenticeship and mentoring programmes." (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, July 30, 1998, 14). Is this a partial revival of the generosity of *huaqiao* cosmopolitanism?

65. In his famous visit to South China in January 1992, Deng Xiaoping had called for the construction of a few Hong Kongs. After 1992, overseas Chinese investment, which had earlier been concentrated in the South China Economic Periphery, expanded into the interior provinces of Hubei and Sichuan and the north-east beyond Beijing. See Wang, "Greater China and the Chinese Overseas," 930-31.

66. Aihwa Ong notes this and other contradictory views of the overseas Chinese held by mainlanders in *Flexible Citizenship*, 46-48.

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