Chinese Overseas
Comparative Cultural Issues

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"At first glance, Square Word Calligraphy appears to be nothing more unusual than Chinese characters, but in fact it is a new way of rendering English words in the format of a square so they resemble Chinese characters. Chinese viewers expect to be able to read Square Word Calligraphy but cannot. Western viewers, however are surprised to find they can read it. Delight erupts when meaning is unexpectedly revealed."

— Britta Erickson, *The Art of Xu Bing*

Contents

Acknowledgements vii

Note on Transcription x

Introduction 1

1. Chinese Ethnological Field: Anthropological Studies of Chinese Communities Worldwide 9

2. Acculturation, Ethnicity and Ethnic Chinese 31

3. Chinese Migration, Localization and the Production of Baba Culture 69

4. Chinese Identities in Malaysia 91

5. Ethnic Chinese: Language, Nationality and Identity 111

6. Ethnic Chinese and Ethnic Relations: Some Economic Explanations 135

7. Culture and Economic Performance with Special Reference to the Chinese in Southeast Asia 173

Notes 215

Bibliography 223

Index 255

1

Chinese Ethnological Field: Anthropological Studies of Chinese Communities Worldwide

INTRODUCTION

Anthropological studies of Chinese communities began in China. The beginning of anthropological and ethnological studies there can be traced to the 1920s, developing considerably in the 1930s and 1940s (cf. Guldin 1994; Wang Jianmin 1997). After 1949, for well-known reasons, these studies came to be defined narrowly as the study of minorities and were restricted by the dominant Marxist ideology. The development of anthropology in China became rather hindered, as the discipline was deprived of the chance of catching up with development outside mainland China. Foreign anthropologists had no access to fieldwork in China. They thus turned to studying Chinese cultures and societies in Taiwan and Hong Kong as well as ethnic Chinese overseas, especially in Southeast Asia.

There are now significant numbers of studies on Chinese in diaspora. As is obvious in the survey by Wang Gungwu (1998) and Wickberg (2000), these are useful for comparative study. I propose that studies on the Chinese in diaspora and in China can be more comprehensively compared and studied in an ethnological field that may be called the Chinese ethnological field. This is particularly useful for the anthropological study of such issues as cultural persistence, cultural transformation, Chinese symbolism, Chinese religion, culture and economic activities, as well as cultural and ethnic identities and so on.

The logic behind the Chinese ethnological field is that the ancestors of the Chinese in diaspora migrated from China, and ethnic Chinese generally have some interest in the larger Chinese civilization. Most descendants of these ancestors still see themselves as Chinese in one way or another. What strikes observers most about the Chinese overseas is their diversity, not just of ancestral origin in China (which is understood) but the diversity resulting from localization and cultural change in general that has made the Chinese appear different from their counterparts in China and from Chinese in other countries. There are even Chinese who do not speak any Chinese language. Nevertheless, Chinese immigrants carried with them aspects of Han Chinese culture, which have become an important part of ethnic Chinese cultural life in interaction with non-Chinese cultures. Thus in the Chinese ethnological field, we can find interesting aspects of cultural continuity and transformation, which are part and parcel of the localization experience of ethnic Chinese. Cultural continuity here means continuity in transformation, as localization transforms the nature of continuity in cultural expression as well as incorporates new cultural elements.

The ethnological field calls attention to comparison and the need for multi-site research. Multi-site research within the Chinese ethnological field gives us a more comprehensive perspective of the dynamics of cultural change and socio-cultural adaptation. The end of the Cold War has made it convenient for academic exchange between scholars of various nationalities, as well as research in countries of different political ideologies. Of equal significance is the opening up of China since the end of the 1970s, which allows scholars to carry out on-site research. At the same time, an increasing number of students and scholars from mainland China are now also able to go overseas to study and do research. The limited number of mainland researchers doing research outside China is mainly due to a lack of funding.

One kind of comparative study and multi-site research in the Chinese ethnological field is the study of two or more Chinese societies outside China. This would include such research as that on the Chinese associations in the Philippines and Canada studied by Wickberg (1988) and the assimilation of the Chinese in New York City and Lima, Peru studied by Wong (1978). There is also the comparative study of Chinese in diaspora and Chinese in China. Of course, multi-site research involving China is only possible since the opening up of China in the late 1970s. The comparative study of emigrant villages in China and related Chinese communities overseas is of particular interest, as this will allow us to see the dynamics of Chinese cultures and identities as well as transnational practices.

Over the years, I have been interested in relating my study in Malaysia to similar studies in other regions, as reflected in the papers selected for publication here. As the idea of the Chinese ethnological field has influenced my writing, in this chapter I discuss the relevance of the ethnological field as well as some of the themes studied.

CHINESE FIELD OF ETHNOLOGICAL STUDY

Most anthropological studies have focussed on regions or countries as geographical units of study. The area studies in the West, such as Southeast Asian Studies, Latin America Studies, Middle Eastern Studies and so on, have also divided the studies in various parts of the world by geographical region. The field of ethnological study as an ethnological rather than merely geographical area of study was first proposed by the Dutch anthropologist, J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong (hereafter J.P.B.) in 1935. He proposed the idea of 'fields of ethnological study'. By this he means 'certain areas of the earth's surface with a population whose culture appears to be sufficiently homogeneous and unique to form a separate object of ethnological study, and which at the same time apparently reveals sufficient local shades of differences to make internal comparative research worth while' (J.P.B. de Josselin de Jong 1983, 167–8).

J.P.B. used this idea to study the Malay Archipelago as a field of ethnological study. According to him, although differences exist between peoples in different parts of present-day Indonesia, they have structural similarities, making up the structural core of this field of ethnological study, such as the double descent system and socio-cosmic dualism (cf. P.E. de Josselin de Jong 1984a, 2). J.P.B.'s approach influences structural anthropology in the Netherlands, and many anthropologists writing on Indonesia have adopted his idea of fields of ethnological study (cf. P.E. de Josselin de Jong 1984b). In this chapter, we are interested in the concept of the field of ethnological study, not his structural analysis of cultures in the Malay Archipelago.

It is relevant and useful to study Chinese people worldwide within a field of ethnological study, the Chinese ethnological field of study. A particular country or geography does not determine this, nor is China treated as the center of this study. Different political systems and geographical factors may influence Chinese people all over the world, but they do have certain similar cultural symbols that originated in China. Of course, culture is ever changing, and ethnic Chinese have also developed distinct cultural expressions. Nevertheless, they share some similarities in Chinese 'culture'. The idea of a Chinese ethnological field facilitates our comparison of cultural expressions in different countries, as well as those between Chinese overseas and Chinese in China. Similarities and diversities exist in Chinese cultural continuity and cultural transformation, as well as in expression of cultural identities.

The Chinese ethnological field is not just useful for comparing cultural continuity in the context of change. It is also useful for comparing variations. For example, one can compare the factors that have brought about acculturation and the diverse expressions of cultural identities. The Malay-speaking Baba of Malaysia (Tan 1988a), who identify themselves as Chinese, can be compared to the 'creolized' Chinese communities elsewhere (cf. Skinner 1996; Hall 1998). One can compare the loss of Chinese language and the implication on Chinese cultural identity. The local development of Chinese food in different parts of the world is another exciting field of study.

Within China, Chinese cultural expressions are also constantly changing, as the state, market forces, local politics and so on, are influencing them. Some cultural features, having developed from a similar Chinese civilization, continue to be comparable to those of

Chinese overseas; thus, anthropological studies of cultural life in China remain relevant to the study of Chinese cultures overseas and vice versa. For example, Fei Xiaotong's *Peasant Life in China* (1939) describes peasant life in Kaixiangong in Wujiang of Jiangsu. However, the work is also relevant to the study of the cultural life of the Chinese in Southeast Asia, even though their ancestors mostly originated in Fujian and Guangdong. The 'pseudo-adoption' (87–9) and 'financial aid society' (267–74) described by Fei can also be found among the Chinese in Southeast Asia. Wu (1974), in his study on the Chinese in Papua New Guinea, for example, has also described the rotating credit society, i.e., Fei's 'financial aid society'. Thus Fei's work is relevant for the larger Chinese ethnological field, not just for the study of China.

Another example is Yan's (1966a, 1966b) analysis of *guanxi*. The analysis of *guanxi* has been an important theme in the study of China and Chinese social relations. The nature of *guanxi* in Xiajia Village in Heilongjiang Province is very similar to what I have seen of the Yongchun people in my village in Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia. According to Yan (1966a, 7), 'Xiajia villagers perceive *guanxi* to be a social space divided into several zones by the various degrees of reliability of personal relations that are embodied in everyday gift-giving activities'. The ancestors of the Yongchun people in Malaysia came from Fujian in south China, whereas Yan's study is in northeast China. Nevertheless, the observation of *guanxi* in the two villages is not just specific rural Chinese culture but a type of Chinese culture that has persisted explicitly in various regions, both within and outside China. There is much for us to reflect on in the core underlying principles of Chinese culture.[1]

Here we are dealing with the persistence and spread of Han Chinese cultures. Defining Han cultures is controversial, for the so-called Han cultures are constantly being reproduced through the long-term interaction between Han and non-Han cultures. There is no static pattern or model of Han people or cultures. In this dynamic process of cultural reproduction, certain aspects of Han cultures have become the mainstream Chinese cultural expressions, which influence Han and non-Han Chinese in different provinces, as well as cultural expressions of

Chinese overseas. The dynamic process of the reproduction of dominant Han cultures is closely linked to several issues. These include the political process of the state, the use and spread of language and literature, the promotion and reinterpretation of scholars and ruling élite, the interaction between different groups of people in China, and the daily practices of ordinary people. Aspects of Han cultures thus reproduced are not merely Confucian but also cultural principles found in social organization (such as surname patrilineality), popular religious practices, economic activities, and other cultural practices (such as the use of chopsticks and the classification of hot and cold food). Many ethnic Chinese also observe these main cultural principles.

How do the Chinese in diaspora maintain and perpetuate Chinese cultures? We can discern dual aspects of Chinese cultural traditions - the ancestral tradition and the localized tradition. The ancestral tradition is closely linked to the original cultural tradition in China. In fact, some of the cultural practices that are lost in China can still be found among ethnic Chinese outside China. An example is the old-fashioned wedding ceremony of the Babas in Malaysia. Despite the loss of Chinese language, the Babas continue to observe what they see as traditional Chinese religious practices, and at weddings some still put on the wedding attire that is otherwise nowadays only seen in Chinese operas. The localized Chinese tradition is the Chinese tradition that has become localized, or that is locally created. It incorporates much transformation and reinterpretation of the local Chinese, but its underlying Chinese origin may still be discernible. In fact, most cultural expressions of ethnic Chinese contain these two aspects, the ancestral and the localized, and it is often difficult to distinguish between the two.

When we compare Chinese cultures in China to Chinese cultures overseas, we do not see this as a relationship of the center to the periphery. In the Chinese ethnological field, each Chinese ‘society’ is its own cultural center. The cultural practices in China are also changing, and in each locality, there are also localized traditions, which at the same time reflect common Han cultural principles. In fact, global cultural forces, including Chinese cultures from overseas, also influence local cultures in mainland China. The emigrant communities have long received some cultural influences in Southeast Asia. When I first began my research in Fujian in 1998, I was careful to exclude Southeast Asian elements in my Minnan dialect (known as Hokkien in Southeast Asia). However, I soon found that many older Chinese in Yongchun and Quanzhou do use or are familiar with some Malay loanwords. A common Malay loanword used is *tahan* which means 'bearing a difficulty' or 'tolerating', and *boe ta-han* means 'cannot bear it any longer' or 'cannot tolerate any more', just as it is said by the Hokkien in Malaysia and Singapore. In our conceptualization of the Chinese ethnological field, there is no hegemonic Chinese culture versus a marginalized Chinese culture. In fact, the study of Chinese overseas is a study in its own right, not merely for understanding China-centered Chinese culture, as was the aim during the Cold War period. Studying in a broader Chinese ethnological field helps to understand Chinese cultural practices in a locality in the context of a broader comparative perspective, to understand how similar phenomena are practiced in the Chinese diaspora and in China.

CHINESE RELIGION AND THE CHINESE ETHNOLOGICAL FIELD

Scholars influenced by postmodernism emphasize discontinuity and deterritorialization and tend to dismiss discussion of cultural continuity and tradition as essentialist. This is often misleading. In the study of Chinese cultures globally, I wish to emphasize that there is cultural continuity in transformation. We need to examine both change and continuity in order to understand changing cultural life. This is most obvious in the religious expressions of ethnic Chinese. I use ancestral worship and *pudu* worship (Hungry Ghost Festival) to illustrate the continuity and change in the Chinese ethnological field. The discussion is based on the data from my own research in Malaysia and in China.

Chinese religion here refers to Chinese popular religion. There is continuity in Chinese religious practices among the Chinese in China and outside China. From this perspective, the usefulness of analysis in the larger context of a Chinese ethnological field is evident. Most deities worshipped by the Chinese overseas originated in China. In the Chinese ethnological field, Chinese worshippers have certain common deities (such as Guanyin or the Goddess of Mercy, Guangong, Mazu, Tudi or Earth God, and so on) and common birthdays of deities as well as festivals (such as the Chinese New Year, Qing Ming, Duanwu or Fifth Moon Festival, Zhongyuan or the Hungry Ghost Festival, Zhongqiu or Mid Autumn Festival, and so on). Chinese in different localities also have certain common concepts of deities, ancestors and ghosts as well as major rites, which are features of cultural persistence from the cultural heritage in China. This shows that Chinese of different localities and nationalities do share certain common features of cultural identity. At the same time, when we compare Chinese religious practices in different localities, there are diverse localized traditions.

Ancestor Worship

Most anthropologists who study China or Chinese overseas continue to focus on a particular locality. If we place our study in the larger context of the Chinese ethnological field, then we can see better the expressions of Chinese cultures that are common or variant. In the study of Chinese religion, for example, scholars outside China can better understand its historical context and development by relating to studies in China, whereas scholars in China can also note the related studies outside China. In addition, comparisons of cultural phenomena in different Chinese communities in diaspora provide us with a fuller picture of cultural practices. Thus, comparative studies within the Chinese ethnological field can help to widen one's scope and erase some limitations in theoretical discussion. For example, the study of lineage in China has long been influenced by the functional model of Maurice Freedman (1958a, 1966), which emphasizes common property and land ownership as the basis of the formation and development of lineage. Emily Ahern (1973), in her study of ancestor worship in Taiwan, even points out that ancestor worship is linked to inheritance of property. 'Anyone who hands down land receives a tablet' (246). However, for Chinese overseas, who generally do not have the kind of lineage communities or lineage property found in China, their ancestor worship has little to do with ancestral property or land. It is mostly a matter of cultural heritage. Chen (1985) has criticized Maurice Freedman's and Emily Ahern's functional views of lineage and ancestor worship, and he emphasizes the Chinese patrilineal culture.

From my study of the Chinese in Melaka and elsewhere in Malaysia since 1977, I find that those Chinese who worship Chinese deities generally also worship ancestors in one form or another. Those who do not worship ancestors at home have reasons, such as not owning a house or having to move house frequently or discontinuing the worship at home as the older people think that their sons and daughters-in-law are unlikely to continue the practice after their death. Nevertheless, these people generally do install tablets for their deceased parents in the ancestral hall of a temple, a clan hall, or other Chinese religious organizations (such as Dejiao Hui, a syncretic Chinese religious organization). They visit these places during certain festivals (such as Chinese New Year and Qing Ming) to worship their loved ones. Of course, this kind of ancestor worship is very different from that of the lineage communities in south China. In homes that have set up ancestral altars, tablets, photographs of the deceased, or a red sheet of paper bearing the ancestors' names represent the ancestors. The altars of the ancestors are usually on the stage right of the deities' altar, and these are placed against the wall facing the front entrance in the living room. In principle, one has to offer joss sticks every morning and evening, certainly on the first and fifteenth days of the lunar month, when candles are lit, too. Sacrifices are offered on festival days and anniversaries.

Where an ancestral altar is set up at home, the Hokkien in Malaysia call such a worship *hok-sai*. Another common type of ancestor worship at home is the *chhiã* or 'invitation' system. In this case there is no altar, nor are ancestors worshipped regularly at home. An *ad hoc* altar is set up only on the day of worship, whereby a table in the living room or an inner room is used to place the *ad hoc* joss-stick holder and offerings. A worshipper lights some joss sticks and goes to the front of the house (facing the direction of the graveyard if possible) to invite the ancestors to return for the worship. Then he or she goes to the *ad hoc* altar in the house to place the joss sticks into the holder, which can be a glass filled with raw rice. Tea is offered. Offerings are then laid out for the ancestors. At the end of the rite, a pair of divining blocks is used to determine if the meal is over. If the blocks turn out to be one facing up and the other facing down, it is a positive answer, and joss papers are burned outside the house. The offerings are then taken away and the temporary altar dismantled.

The above discussion shows that Chinese ancestor worship undergoes different transformations and manifestations in different places and contexts. In the wider context of the Chinese ethnological field, we can think about the meaning of ancestor worship in Chinese culture and note that it is not necessarily linked to lineage organization or lineage property. We can compare the ancestor worship of the lineage communities in China and the ancestor worship without lineage organization outside China. Where lineage organizations exist outside China, these, too, can be compared with lineage communities in China. Recent studies by Faure (1989), Siu (1990), and Liu (1997) show that the lineage-focussed ancestor worship in the Pearl River Delta was a kind of cultural construction that emerged mainly in the Ming Dynasty. The nature of ancestor worship of the Chinese overseas, by contrast, developed outside the influence of the Chinese state. Yet the developments outside China, such as the transformation of lineage to clan association, the simplification of rituals, and the divorce of ancestor worship from lineage organization, perhaps show a trend of ancestor worship and lineage organization in China.

Pudu Worship in Malaysia and China

Pudu Worship in Malaysia

Besides Chinese New Year, a major Chinese festival in Malaysia is *zhongyuan*, popularly known in English as the Hungry Ghost Festival.

Two major rites are performed. The first is what the Minnan people (of south Fujian origin, known as Hokkien in Southeast Asia) call *choe chhit-goeh poã*, literally doing the mid-seventh moon rite, as it falls on the fifteenth day of the seventh lunar month. On this day of the month, offerings are made in the house for the ancestors and outside for the wandering ghosts. This is a domestic affair. In addition, there is a communal celebration, which the Hokkien call *choe po̱-to̱*, celebrating *po̱-to̱* or *pudu* in Mandarin. For this celebration, each local Chinese community or section of an urban Chinese community, especially the business sector, organizes the communal worship of *Pudugong* and the ghosts under his jurisdiction, offering sacrifices. The date of this communal worship differs from locality to locality. It is said that the ghosts are released from purgatory during the month, and worship is offered to pacify the ghosts and to expel evil, as well as to ritually ensure the community peace, success and prosperity. Chinese people in Southeast Asia generally avoid holding weddings during this month.

A *pudu* celebration in Malaysia is held in a public arena (such as in a temple compound or at an available space in an urban quarter) and usually lasts two or three days, during which Chinese operas may be staged. In addition to the Daoist (Taoist) rites and communal worship as well as a communal feast, which I do not describe, many items are sold by auction during the communal *pudu* celebration. The most prestigious item is a piece of nicely wrapped charcoal, symbolically called *o̱-kim* in Hokkien (*wujin* in Mandarin) or 'black gold'. Depending on communities, the final bid for this usually runs into hundreds or thousands of Malaysian dollars. In addition, a small ceramic tub of raw rice, if made available, is also considered a prestigious item. This is called *mitong* in Mandarin, that is, 'rice tub'. The bidding of these two items is the climax of the whole auction. The successful bidder is allowed to bring the 'black gold' home to keep, symbolizing that this will bring prosperity and peace to the family. The rice brought home can be kept or cooked. The auction is one way for a ritual community to collect funds. In addition to financing the *pudu* worship, the money collected can be used for other religious and charitable purposes. For example, the Chinese in the state of Penang have a *zhongyuan* organization that coordinates *zhongyuan* activities statewide. The money collected was even used to contribute towards building a private hospital (Tan Sooi Beng 1988).

Bid items can differ from community to community. In a rural Yongchun community that I observed in Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia on 17 August 2000, farm products such as pineapples, coconuts, jack fruit and whole bunches of bananas were also included. Then the 'black gold' reached RM$3188 and the rice fetched RM$3000. The contest was between a local businessman and the leader of a Chinese political party. The latter won both, to the cheers of the villagers.

Bidders for the charcoal and the tub of rice are generally business people and the local rich. Why do they bother to bid such a high price for a piece of charcoal or a small tub of rice? This ceremony is in a way comparable to the potlatch of the Kwakiutl Indians in North America, whereby the greatest prestige was conferred on individuals who gave away the greatest quantity of valuable goods (Mauss 1967, 31–7). In the *zhongyuan* auction here, the successful bidder gains prestige, and his status as a person of some wealth or good credit rating is reconfirmed. It is a public display of his wealth and success. It gives symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1977, 179) to business people, local leaders or individuals aspiring to be in such positions. The bid has to be paid before the next ceremony the following year. If, however, by the following year one cannot pay the bid, then one loses face. Here, the study of a religious festival helps us to understand the social structure and business culture of a local Chinese community.

Pudu Worship in China

Under communist rule, *pudu* celebration is seen as superstitious. Thus we do not see the kind of large-scale communal celebration in China. In the historic port city of Quanzhou, Fujian, the local people still practice their unique way of observing the festival, locally referred to as *po̲-si* or *pusi* in Mandarin. *Pusi* should not be confused with the 'mid-seventh month' worship; the latter, as we have seen in Malaysia, involves worshipping ancestors, not *Pudugong*. *Pusi* in Quanzhou is celebrated from the sixth to the eighth lunar month. The long period of celebration is a result of the practice of the *chongpu* system, that is, multiple *pusi* worship.

Historic Quanzhou City in southern Fujian is divided into 36 *pu* or wards (cf. Wang Mingming 1999), each with its own communal temple. During the months of *pusi*, each ward takes its turn to observe the *pusi* worship. Unlike the communal worship in Malaysia, each family in the ward worships *Pudugong* on the same day and around the same time. On the day of worship, each household carries out its worship between 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. Offerings are laid out on a table in front of the house, prayers offered and joss papers burnt. After the worship, the offerings are cooked, and close relatives and friends are invited to the family feast. This practice is different from that in Malaysia, where the worship and feast is communally held at a public place. However, the idea of celebration and worshipping *Pudugong* is similar, and there is the similar function of *pudu* for local communal identity.

The *Pusi* celebration in Quanzhou begins in the sixth lunar month with a small-scale worship called *kia-ki* in Minnan, or *shuqi* in Mandarin. The *pusi* proper is held in the seventh month. A small-scale *pusi* in the eighth month concludes the long celebration. This final *pusi* is called *jiewei yuan*, the final rite.

In rural Minnan, such as in Yongchun District, communal *pusi* worship takes place, but the scale is smaller than observed in Malaysia. In the Half Moon Hill section of Beautiful Jade Village, where I have conducted fieldwork among villagers surnamed Chen, the *pusi* celebration is fixed on the twentieth of the seventh lunar month. I observed the *pusi* worship in 1999. The rite was quite simple. At around 4:00 p.m., a representative from each household in Half Moon Hill carried some dishes of offering to the front yard of the ancestral hall of this branch lineage. The offerings were laid out on the ground. After all the representatives had arrived with their offerings, a senior man burnt joss sticks and invited the *Pudugong* and the wandering ghosts of the area to enjoy the feast. He threw a pair of divining blocks to ascertain that his invitation had been accepted. Having obtained a positive answer, the women and children burned the joss papers that the representative of each household had brought. Letting off firecrackers followed. After a while, the senior person prayed and threw the divining blocks again to ascertain whether the meal had been taken. After receiving a positive answer, the worshippers carried their respective offerings home to cook them for dinner.

By comparing the *zhongyuan* celebration in various sites in and outside of China, one can have a better picture of the *pudu* culture. One can see similar and diverse expressions of the Chinese cultural principle of observing *pudu*. Here I treat both the Minnan people in Malaysia and the Minnan (in south Fujian) in China as belonging to the Chinese ethnological field, which renders a wider perspective of comparison and understanding of 'Chinese culture' as expressed in the celebration of *pudu*. One can see not only cultural continuity and transformation but also the significance of *pudu* for local communal identity. In Quanzhou, the *pudu* celebration expresses *pu* or ward identity, and in the village in Yongchun it expresses the identity of a section of a lineage community. In Malaysia, it expresses the identity of a ritual community, which can be a village, an urban quarter or a business community. In China, the celebration is constrained by the state ideology, and there is no large-scale celebration as seen in Malaysia. Nevertheless, the family-based ward celebration, which developed long before the communist rule, turned out to be very adaptive. Even during the Cultural Revolution, my informants told me that the *pudu* worship was observed, excited children standing on guard at each end of the street to inform of the coming of government inspectors. As the local officials also belonged to the *pudu* culture, some of them would even inform the people of their coming inspection, so that the celebration could be suspended during that time. The celebration in Malaysia also shows us the link between religion and business as well as local leadership. The role of religion is not only symbolic but also social, and this includes a charitable contribution to the community.

In the above examples, we see that it is useful to study Chinese religion in the larger context of a Chinese ethnological field that is not limited by national boundaries. It also highlights the significance of multi-site research. The comparison enables us to have a better perspective of issues, such as the link between religion and business. The active involvement of the Chinese in Southeast Asia, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao in religious practices does not hinder business success. In fact, one can argue that such involvement gives psychological support and encouragement to business people. This is good for reflection in mainland China, where religion is officially regarded as 'superstition'. Labeling a religion superstition prevents one from seeing the symbolic and social significance of religion, including its important contribution to charity, as we have seen in the celebration of the Hungry Ghost Festival in Malaysia. Overall, studying Chinese religion in the larger Chinese ethnological field enables us to compare and see the dynamics of religion, the effects of state policy, the role of business people, the dynamics of local politics, the significance of identity and so on. All this cannot be fully grasped if we do not compare a study to relevant practices elsewhere in the ethnological field.

LOCALIZATION OF ETHNIC CHINESE

Having understood the nature of cultural continuity, it is easier for us to have a more comprehensive understanding of change, which is a major focus in this book. The cultural change that ethnic Chinese have experienced may be described by the term 'localization'. My usage here differs from that of globalization theorists, who posit localization as a local process versus globalization. By localization I mean 'the process of becoming local, which involves cultural adjustment to a local geographical and social environment, and identifying with the locality. The cultural adaptation involved is not merely a passive process of being influenced by local forces but also one of active participation and innovation' (Tan 1997c, 103). There is the cultural dimension of localization, which may be referred to as cultural localization, and there is localization of consciousness, of becoming part of the local and identifying with it.

Most people live in a particular locality, although they may have wide transnational networks. Local-born Chinese, especially if they are more than one generation in settlement, generally identify with a particular locality as 'home'. In fact, it is increasingly common for people who live transnationally to identify with more than one home, such as a home where one regularly resides and one where one originally migrated from and where one's immediate family members still live. In astronaut families, this often involves the men working in Hong Kong, for instance, while their wives and children live in another country such as in Australia (cf. Pe-Pua et al. 1998). Flexible citizenship (Ong 1993, 1999) may allow individuals to live in different countries without having to embrace a regular identity; actually, such Chinese are still in the minority. In works that emphasize the diaspora-ness, ethnic Chinese are often described as de-territorialized, but such popular views are actually expressed by a small group of, in the words of Chun (2000, 10), 'diasporic intellectuals in the ivory tower'. Most ethnic Chinese live locally and identify to different degrees with the local, often as Chinese Americans, Chinese Malaysians, etc., or just merely Chinese if they live transnationally and do not wish to emphasize any particular 'home' as more important. Citizenship should not be measured by loyalty or strong identification to a state. In the globalizing world, more and more people are free from the ideology of state loyalty, and citizenship is more a matter of belonging, to claiming rights and performing obligations in return. In this sense, ethnic Chinese are like other citizens in a state, and they are not unique in using flexible citizenship.

The transnational experience and previous localization experience, including not speaking Chinese, allow transnational migrants much room for negotiating identities. Nevertheless, wherever they locate their children, they will be localized in their residential national context. People are generally localized in national states, where the majority people and state policies including national education have a strong influence on children. Thus it is common to hear of Chinese being Canadianized, Americanized, Australianized, and so on. Localization occurs in nation-states, but it should not be confused with state identification, which is a separate matter. Whatever it is, cultural localization is relevant to identity negotiation.

Cultural localization greatly affects ethnic Chinese cultural life, so much that even after they have migrated from a locality they may retain their original localized experience. Chinese Indonesians who speak Indonesian continue to speak the language and attach to certain aspects of Indonesian Chinese cultural life after they have migrated to Europe or elsewhere. In Hong Kong, there is a population of Indonesian Chinese re-migrants. Godley and Coppell (1990a), and my students who interviewed some of the older ones, report that some of them still speak Indonesian at home. Similarly, Chinese-Thai transmigrants in the US still exhibit their Thai-ness (cf. Bao 1999, 107). We also find this phenomenon in Chinese Malaysian migrants in Australia. We can find Chinese-Malaysian restaurants in Melbourne, for instance, and the popular Ipoh *hor-fun* (Malaysian-style fried flat noodles associated with the Malaysian city Ipoh) is available.

Anthropologists and sociologists have long discussed the issue of acculturation and assimilation. A major part of localization is actually acculturation, although scholars nowadays seldom use this term. By acculturation, I mean 'the kind of cultural change of one ethnic group or certain population of an ethnic group (A) in relation to another ethnic group (B) such that certain cultural features of A become similar or bear some resemblance to those of B' (Tan 1988a, 2). This kind of cultural change is a result of the process of direct contact between members of the two ethnic groups. It can be a two-way process, although it usually involves greater socio-cultural adjustment on the part of the minority to that of the majority group. In any event, the ethnic identities of both groups are not lost.

Many sociologists, journalists and laypeople use the term 'assimilation' to refer to both acculturation and socio-cultural change accompanied by the loss of the original ethnic identity. I distinguish acculturation from assimilation, which involves a change in reference group and out-group acceptance (Teske and Nelson 1974, 365). In other words, assimilation involves not only socio-cultural change but also ethnic change such that when we say members of group A are assimilated into group B, we mean that they have been ethnically merged into group B and thus have lost their original ethnic identity. If we take note of the agency theory and do not assume that individuals are passively being changed, then the concept of acculturation is still a convenient concept to use. As shown in Chapter 3, acculturation occurs when individuals select and incorporate non-indigenous cultural principles rather than passively being changed as a result of interethnic contact.

Assimilation does not mean that individuals become exactly the same as the majority people. Our distinction of acculturation and assimilation is that in assimilation there is a change in ethnic membership. Here it is relevant to make a distinction between cultural identity and ethnic identity. Ethnic identity refers to ethnic identification with a particular ethnic category; cultural identity refers to cultural expression. Individuals identifying with the same ethnic category may emphasize different cultural traits in expressing their ethnic identity. An approach to the study of ethnicity is to see how individuals identify themselves ethnically and then study how they express that ethnic identity culturally; in other words, how people use cultural features to express ethnic identity. Acculturation allows Chinese to use not only traditional Chinese cultural features that they still have but also their localized cultural features, to express their Chiness-ness, so to speak. Even not speaking Chinese becomes an important feature of identity negotiation, as Ang (2001) has shown so well in her work.

This book deals a lot with localization and identity. The issue of national identity is also discussed. Identification with national identity differs from country to country and from individual to individual. In some countries in Southeast Asia, the Chinese are often treated as somewhat alien; they tend to emphasize their local roots, and their state-bound identities are generally strong. In the West, where there is a more open view of citizenship and less rhetoric on nation-building, individuals often can take their ethnic and state-bound identity for granted. However, after they have interacted with Chinese in other countries, they may reflect on their own identity, especially after they have been confronted about their 'Chineseness'. In *Cultural Curiosity*, Khu (2001) compiles the experiences of a number of ethnic Chinese after visiting China for the first time. One of them, Lily Wu, a Chinese American, writes, 'Before my trip to China, being "Chinese" meant almost nothing to me, and even being "American" was something that I had simply taken for granted. Ironically, both levels of awareness sharpened at the same time' (Wu 2001, 223–4). Interaction between ethnic Chinese and Chinese of China generally makes the former realize their distinct localized Chinese identity and even helps the more localized ones to accept their 'hybridity', or in the words of Chan (2001, 126), to 'become at ease with my hybridity'. Generally, interaction between Chinese of different nationalities makes them more conscious of their diversity, and speaking different languages, including English of different nations (such as Singapore English and Filipino English), is one marker of diversity.

CONCLUSION

From our discussion above, it is obvious that the idea of the Chinese field of ethnological study is useful for studying Chinese cultures worldwide. It gives a broader perspective to the comparative study of Chinese cultural persistence and transformation, allowing us to understand Chinese cultures in wider spatial and temporal contexts. Other than the examples described, Chinese cultural expressions, such as the lion dance and the practice of *qigong* (a breathing exercise), are popular elements of Chinese culture that are increasingly emphasized by ethnic Chinese. Scholars can study these in specific Chinese localities, but if we place them in the context of a Chinese ethnological field, we will then see the nature of their persistence and transformation in different localities as well as their significance to cultural identities. We can also see their roles in the cultural politics of the Chinese in different localities.

The study of China and the study of Chinese overseas have been rather separated, each going its own way. Most scholars on China do not feel the need to pay attention to works on Chinese overseas and vice versa. Although country-specific studies are still important and many issues need to be studied in this context, it is also useful and important, as this chapter has shown, to relate the study in China to the study of Chinese overseas. The Chinese ethnological field will help to promote this, not just the linkage between the study of China and Chinese overseas but also between Chinese societies in different countries.

In this increasingly globalized world, many issues are relevant to study in the Chinese ethnological field. For example, the effect of mass media on cultures is an important phenomenon, and the effect of Chinese mass media on different Chinese communities is an important issue. Yang (1997) has analyzed the effect of mass media in Shanghai. In the globalized world, especially with the use of the Internet and other modern technology, people are not limited by national boundaries. The Chinese in one locality are exposed to the influence of Chinese mass media elsewhere and increasingly they share 'common sets of programs', allowing them to construct 'transnational Chinese imaginary' (Yang 1997, 300, 309). For example, the Chinese in Malaysia are exposed to the influence of mass media from Taiwan and Hong Kong. Many Chinese Malaysians learn Cantonese from watching Cantonese serials made in Hong Kong. Similarly, in recent years, mass media (especially in the form of videos) from Hong Kong and Taiwan have influenced audiences in mainland China. At the same time, mass media and publications from mainland China, especially documentary programs on Chinese arts and civilization as well as famous sites in China, are popular overseas. It is relevant to study the effects of Chinese mass media on ethnic Chinese cultural identities in different parts of the world.

Since most of the papers selected for this book were written, a number of works on ethnic Chinese since the 1990s have adopted various kinds of transnational and globalized network theoretical analyses (e.g., McKeown 2001; Ong and Nonini 1997). The papers selected for publication here were not originally written in that theoretical framework, which is no doubt an important mode of analysis. As explained, they were written in the ethnological field framework, which emphasizes comparison of ethnic Chinese between societies. The Chinese ethnological field is not itself a transnational theoretical model, but it can incorporate a transnationalism perspective, even though it emphasizes culture rather than networks. The study of ethnic Chinese can benefit from different kinds of approach and theoretical analysis. The current transnationalism theoretical framework is important, but it cannot replace the comparative study of ethnic Chinese in different localities. I trust the papers selected here contribute in a small way to the understanding of Chinese communities and Chinese cultures.

Notes

Chapter 1

1. A number of anthropologists have discussed the unity of Chinese culture. Ward's (1965, 1985, 41–60) discussion of varieties of the conscious model is well known. This approach has, for example, influenced Li Yih-yuan (1970, 245–6; Tan 2000, 26–7). Watson has explored the unity of Chinese culture through his analysis of 'standardizing the gods' (1985). He also argues that 'orthopraxy (correct practice) reigned over orthodoxy (correct belief) as the principal means of attaining and maintaining cultural unity' in late imperial China (1993, 84).

Chapter 2

1. In the languages of the various speech-groups originally from southern China, the historical label 'People of Tang' is still commonly used. For instance, in *Minnanhua* or the Hokkien speech in use in Malaysia and Singapore, the term for Chinese is *Teng-lang.* In Cantonese, it is *Tohngyahn.*
2. For a description of intermarriage and the formation of Chinese Peranakan identity, see Tan (1988a).
3. For a discussion on the identification of the acculturated Chinese in Kelantan, see my article (Tan 1982, 28–31) and Teo (2003). See Tan (2002a) for a description of the Peranakan-type Chinese in Terengganu.
4. In the case of the Chinese in Cambodia, Willmott (1967, 43) mentions that 'intermarriage has led to assimilation either to Khmer or to Chinese society and nowhere has a separate Sino-Khmer community emerged'.
5. This is reflected in Violet L. Lai's book (1985, 37):

   > Emma was the envy of her girl friends who were adjusting her new wedding *holoku* (a princess-style gown with a ruffled train). 'You are so smart to marry a *Pake* (Chinese) who works and brings home *kala* (money) for

you to spend.' Someone made a remark about the stinginess of the *Pakes*, and agreed that the Hawaiian husband was more generous, but he only had land (sometimes) and little money.

6. For a discussion of missionary activities and the acculturation of the Chinese in 19th-century California, see Barth (1964, 157–73).
7. In her account of Aloiau (Wang Lo Yau), a Chinese immigrant to Hawaii, Violet L. Lai (1985) deals with this attitude of ensuring that Chinese remain Chinese. The following description of Lai (1985, 48) is illuminating:

> Although outwardly happy, Emma confided in 1910 when Rose was married to En Sue Kong, a Chinese, that she had hoped at least one daughter would have married a Hawaiian. Aloiau thought differently. He urged his daughters to marry their own kind — Chinese. When they pointed out that he had married Emma, a Hawaiian-German, he explained, 'That's different. When Emma married me, she took my name and became Chinese. Now, when you girls marry foreign devil, you take his name and become a foreign devil, yourself.'
>
> A story is told of Aloiau's pacing up and down the living room when one of Rose's part-Hawaiian suitors came calling all the way from Hilo. To her embarrassment, Aloiau kept saying in Chinese, 'When is he going home, anyway?'
>
> While he disapproved of interracial marriages for his children, he reacted favorably to his Hakka sons-in-law, although he was a Punti because they were at least Chinese.

8. Stewart (1951, 129, 225) also mentions marriage between Chinese coolies and Peruvian women.
9. *Tok* is a Malay word, and *Pek* (i.e., *peh* or *a-peh*) is a Hokkien term that literally means 'father's elder brother'. Both are terms of address for old people or people (male) of one's father's generation. Historically, the local people (both the Malays and the local-born Chinese) used *Pek* or *A-Pek* to address the older immigrants. In time, this term came to imply not only inferior immigrant status but also behavior associated with immigrants who had not yet culturally adjusted to the local environment.
10. For a discussion on the terms *Cina* and *Tionghoa* in Indonesia, see Coppel and Suryadinata (1978).
11. There are also Chinese who now migrate 'back' to the 'Chinese land', especially to the more prosperous Taiwan in the 1980s [cf. 'Migration: Taiwan's Open Door', *Far Eastern Economic Review* 28 (April 1988): 22] and to the economically stronger mainland China since the late 1990s (cf. 'Opportunities in China Entice Overseas Chinese Tech Professionals Returning to China', *The San Francisco Chronicle*, Wednesday, 2 January 2002).
12. The Chinese in India are distributed mainly in West Bengal and Maharashtra (Oxfeld 1993; Schermerhorn 1978, 292).

Chapter 3

1. For works on the Chinese Peranakan in Indonesia, see, for example, Oetomo (1984), Salmon (1981), Mely Tan (1963), Skinner (1960), Suryadinata (1976), and Willmott (1960).
2. For academic studies on the Baba of Singapore, see, for example, Clammer (1980), Pakir (1986), Rudolph (1998), and Tan (1993).
3. For works on the Baba of Penang, see, for example, Ho (1985), Ooi (1967), and Tan (1993).
4. In my first article on the Peranakan-type Chinese in Kelantan, I used the term Peranakan (Tan 1982). This influenced the local leaders who decided to use the label Peranakan to describe their own community, and their association formed in 1987 was called Persatuan Peranakan Cina Kelantan. Before the formal establishment of the association, the first president discussed with me the use of the term 'Peranakan'.

Chapter 5

1. Here, I am concerned with the Baba of Melaka only. Many Babas from Melaka went to Singapore in the 19th and early 20th centuries and contributed to the emergence of the Baba community there. The Babas also call themselves 'Peranakan', which in Malay means 'local-born'. In Indonesia, the Chinese Peranakans prefer to be called 'Peranakan' although the label 'Baba' is used too.
2. The Chinese in Malaysia had also launched a similar campaign. The slogan was '*duojiang Huayu, shaoshuo fangyan*' or 'speak more Mandarin, less *fangyan*'. *Fangyan* refers to Chinese languages other than the standard Mandarin, such as Hokkien, Cantonese, Hakka and others. The campaign may be seen as an attempt by the Chinese-educated Chinese to define the changing Chinese identity.
3. I have discussed Li Guoliang's paper in Tan (1992).
4. *Tudi de Nahan* (Voice of the Earth) by Jiang Tian (Goh Then Chye) was published in China in 1989. A number of poets and other writers in and out of China have reviewed favorably this collection of poems by a Chinese Malaysian. There is a clear difference between reviewers who review from the perspective of 'China consciousness', and those who review from the perspective of the poet's local consciousness. For the China-centric reviewers, any suggestion of the motherland in the poems is interpreted as the Chinese poet's love of or yearning for China whereas in actual fact, for the poet, his motherland is Malaysia.
5. While there are monthly Chinese publications that provide coverage on Chinese overseas, these cannot match the frequency, coverage and distribution of *Yazhou Zhoukan*. Of the monthly, the Hong Kong based *Depingxian Monthly (Dipingxian Yuekan)* has a regular section that provides analysis of

themes on Chinese overseas, especially Chinese in Indonesia and North America.

6. In 1990, Premier Li Peng of China, while visiting Malaysia, called upon Chinese Malaysians to be good citizens of Malaysia and contribute to the development of the country. This comment would have been appropriate in the 1950s when there were many Chinese who were still China-oriented, but today the Chinese in Malaysia have identified fully with Malaysia. No wonder Chinese Malaysians protested against the Chinese Premier's uncalled-for comment. Consequently, Li Peng made some clarification before leaving Kuala Lumpur (*Yazhou Zhoukan*, 30 December 1990, p.19). In April 1992, at the World Chinese Conference in Mauritius, China's Deputy Minister of Culture was reported to have remarked that the Chinese in Malaysia should be loyal to Malaysia. Again, Chinese Malaysians were angry at this remark (*Xingzhou Ribao*, 28 April 1992, p. 3). Obviously, China's leaders have to learn more about the people of Chinese descent, and to be more sensitive to their feelings, especially on the question of identity and loyalty.

Chapter 6

1. In Southeast Asia, the distinction of the Chinese from the indigenous people is still maintained, although they are both citizens of the same country. For convenience of discussion, I keep this distinction.
2. These are Chinese who have acquired certain Malay cultural characteristics. For example, the young people prefer to speak to each other in the Malay of the Kelantan dialect. Unlike the Baba or Chinese Peranakan in Melaka, the Peranakan-type Chinese in Kelantan still speak a somewhat acculturated Hokkien (southern Fujian) dialect, and many speak the local Thai, too. For a brief description of the Peranakan-type Chinese in Kelantan, see Tan (1982).
3. For an analytical description of the affirmative action policy in Malaysia, see Lim (1985).
4. Because of the 'special position' of the Chinese as a visible minority or 'non-indigenous' group disliked and envied, they can become not only scapegoats for economic problems but also scapegoats in the political competition between different domestic political forces, as shown in the description of Mackie. To give another example, the Liberals and the Conservatives in Western Canada before the 1920s used the Chinese as scapegoats in their competition for votes (cf. Ban 1976, 348).
5. For a description of Sino-Malay relations in Peninsular Malaysia before 1942, see Khoo (1981).
6. See Lee (1990) for a discussion on the role of racial ideologies in colonial Malaya and in present-day Malaysia.
7. I borrow the concept of imagination from Benedict Anderson's 'imagined political community' (Anderson 1983, 15).

8. For a critique of Cox's theory, see Miles (1980).
9. Here I use 'classes' in a very loose sense to refer to social strata, too. Although inaccurate from the strictly Marxian perspective, it eases discussion of a multi-ethnic society like Malaysia, where mobilization along the class line is not distinct.
10. Although Makabe (1981) supports the split labor market theory in her comparison of the Japanese experience in Brazil and Canada, she actually emphasizes general economic competition. The thesis which she arrives at is: 'If there is no economic competition between ethnic groups, no antagonism arises between them, nor does one group move to exclude others' (Makabe 1981, 804).
11. Although the term 'intermediary' is often used nowadays, anthropologists and sociologists still use 'middleman'. I have therefore kept this term in this chapter.
12. This paper was originally written in 1989. Since then, I have read a good paper by Chun (1989). Although not rejecting the 'middleman minority' concept, Chun stresses the need to look at the 'social relations of production'. Although the Chinese 'middleman economy' in Malaya was characterized by liquidity and ephemerality, Chun (1989, 254) writes, 'these characteristics were representative only of its material forces of production, to use the Marxist term, and overlooked the social relations of production underlying its mode of operation, which could not be explained in terms of a theory of the middleman minority economy'. Chun's paper highlights the roles of the established Chinese merchants, the secret societies, the credit system, and the cheap labor; in other words, he highlights the institutional linkages both within and between the various Chinese enterprises in Malaya.
13. Other scholars like Chandra Muzaffar (1987) and Sanusi Osman (1983, 20) have also suggested this approach. This will help to reduce and avoid ethnic tensions. A racial approach to socio-economic policies or the allocation of resources will only create more ethnic polarization. Social justice is the key to reducing ethnic tensions, not free market nor restructuring of society along racial lines.
14. I do not discuss the exchange theory of Barth and the rational choice theory of Banton here. Those who are interested in the rational choice theory may want to see the articles in *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 8 (4) October 1985 for critiques on the theory.

Chapter 7

1. For a good discussion on the debate on Confucianism in relation to the economic performance of the little dragons and Japan, see Wang Gungwu (1991b, 258–72).
2. For example, on 1 August 1985, *The Star's* headline was 'Tontine Swindle: organizers abscond with $1.4 million'. The report mentions that about 400 people in Bukit Mertajam (Penang State) were cheated by a couple that fled with the tontine *(hui)* money. The report also mentioned another case in

Kuala Lumpur where a woman organizer of *hui* cheated 20 tontine members of about $200,000. She was reported to have fled to Hong Kong.

3. Chia (1987) reports on a system in Kelantan in which a Malay who sells rubber sheets and lumps to a Chinese dealer does not collect his money there. Instead, the Malay gets his groceries from a grocery shop that collects the payment from the rubber dealer. The limit on the amount of goods that the Malay can get is agreed on beforehand between the rubber dealer and the shopkeeper. Chia writes about *xinyong* (trust). The types of credit (including credit associations) among the Chinese business people in Kelantan also extend 'controlled' credit to Malay business people, but the credit extended is shorter and more expensive because of 'the relatively weak credit-rating of Malay businessmen'.
4. Other writers who have discussed *xinyong* include Robert H. Silin (1972), Clifton A. Barton (1983), and Thomas Menkhoff (1990).
5. In my village in Batu Pahat, Johor, Malaysia, a Malay shopkeeper of Javanese origin has learned to use the abacus, which he uses in his business.
6. Various writers have written about Chinese social relations; see for example, Fried (1953), Silin (1972), DeGlopper (1972), and King (1991).
7. There are numerous reports in the *Sarawak Gazette* about Chinese traders losing their heads. For example, C.A. Bampfylde (1895) reported that a Chinese called Ah Liang from Belaga in interior Sarawak lost his head to the Lepu Jingan people. Charles Hose (1897a, 74), a resident of Baram reported that a Chinese trader called Ah Pin who was killed at night in his boat at Long Lobang in the Tinjar. Hose (1897b, 147) also reported that another Chinese called Wang Ka who was murdered in Baloit and that his head was in a 'head feast' held in Upper Baloit. For a study on Chinese pioneers in Sarawak, see Daniel Chew (1990).
8. I interviewed Mr Sim Thoon Soon on 10 June 1989. He was the headman in Trusan.
9. Although Hsu studied the Minjia in Yunnan, who identify as Bai today (cf. Wu 1990), his argument was generally relevant to the Han Chinese.
10. Wickberg (1965, 16) reports that the Chinese in the Philippines during the Spanish period accepted baptism as a shrewd business move. The religious policy of the Spanish government encouraged conversion to the Roman Catholic faith, and a Chinese who converted got to enjoy a number of advantages: 'Besides reduced taxes, land grants and freedom to reside almost anywhere, one acquired a Spanish godparent, who could be counted upon as a bondsman, creditor, patron and protector in legal terms.'
11. For anthropological studies on Chinese socialization, see for example, Diamond (1969, 30–45), Ward (1970), and Wolf (1970, 37–62).
12. Chinese banks have appeared since the beginning of the 20th century. For example, Kwong Yik Bank, the first Chinese bank in Singapore, was established in 1903; see Song (1923, 353). In the Dutch East Indies, the legendary Oei Tiong Ham (1865–1924) established his Oei Tiong Ham Bank in 1906 (Suryadinata 1988, 263).

13. Both the Dutch and the British colonial governments practiced excise farming. In Malaya, the farming system covered opium, gambling, spirits, and pawnbroking. Well-known rich Chinese of the colonial period in Malaya like Khoo Thean Teik, Yap Ah Loy and Loke Yew all benefited from revenue farms (Khoo 1988). Chinese merchants who obtained monopoly farms from the Dutch government in Indonesia also grew rich (The 1989).
14. Most writers on Chinese economic performance in Southeast Asia tend to forget about the role of cheap labor. Chun (1989) is an exception. This factor is important, but it was not the only major factor. Furthermore, it could not explain the Chinese domination in retail trade.
15. In his paper, 'Little Dragons on the Confucian Periphery', Gungwu Wang (1991b) refers to this as state Confucianism, official Confucianism, and imperial Confucianism.
16. *The Malay Mail* (30 September 1991, 21), under the heading 'A lesson in Chinese bureaucracy', reports on the scenario of red tape and inefficiency of Chinese customs, which hinder international trade.
17. For ethnographic studies on kinship and commerce of the people of Chinese descent, see Omohundro (1981) and David Wu (1982, 87–106).
18. In addition, *Southeast Asian Studies*, vol. 27 no. 2 (Japan, September 1989) is on 'Oei Tiong Ham Concern: The First Business Empire of Southeast Asia'. The three major articles are by Yoshihara Kunio, Onghokham, and Charles A. Coppel.
19. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 7 February 1991, 46–9. See also Sia (1993).
20. In Indonesia, Chinese business people who collaborate with members of the Indonesian power élite are called *cukong* (Hokkien for 'master'). A well-known example is Liem Sioe Liong, who was closely linked to President Suharto. He headed Indonesia's (and the world's) largest Chinese-owned conglomerate called Salim Group. However, since the fall of Suharto in 1998, Liem's business interest in Indonesia has been affected badly. *See Far Eastern Economic Review*, 14 March 1991, 46–52; MacKie (1991); and Suryadinata (1988).
21. *See Yazhou Zhoukan, Asiaweek* (Chinese version), 25 August 1991, 38–40; and *Nanyang Shangbao*, 13 August 1991, 1.

Index

acculturation (definition), 3, 25, 41
affirmative action (Malaysia), 140, 218
Alan Budi Kusuma, 126
Ali-Baba business, 140, 211
Ami (aborigine in Taiwan), 44–5, 49
ancestor worship, 3, 15–8, 81, 103, 188–9, 203; invitation system, 17–8
ancestral tradition, 14
Arabia, 123
assimilation (defined), 26, 41
astronaut family, 24

Baba, 1, 4, 12, 14, 34–5, 42, 48–9, 58–60, 62–3, 67, 69–104, 106–9, 113–6, 121, 130, 132
  see also Straits-born Chinese
  as metaphor of acculturation, 49
  Baba defined, 69
  Hokkien Babas, 71
  in Penang, *see* Penang Baba
  in Singapore, 70, 94, 217, *see also* Baba
  Baba Melaka, 71, 94–5, 98, 100–1, 112, 129–30, 132, 159, 217–8, *see also* Baba
  Baba food (Nyonya food), 4, 48, 85–8, 102
Baba Malay, 69, 70, 72, 74–8, 84, 96, 99–100, 102, 112–3, 129
Balinese, 76, 88, 112
Batak, 32
bue sinkheh (buying Chinese immigrants), 96
bumiputera (indigenous people), 141–2

China, 9–16, 18, 27–8, 43, 53, 64–5, 73, 92, 98, 113, 117–9, 121–5, 127–8, 131–4, 146, 161, 169, 174–6, 179, 183, 187–8, 190–1, 199–207, 213–4, 216–8
China-centric, 124, 217
Chinatown, 54, 56–7, 156, 198
Chinese
  in Australia, 25, 55, 66, 106, 165
  in Brazil, 198
  in Britain, 33
  in British Guiana, 48
  in Burma, 161–2
  in Cambodia, 42, 45, 145, 148, 215

in Canada, 10, 46, 55, 62, 66, 90, 164–5, 198, 218
in China, 12, 15
in Cuba, 198
Chinese in Dutch East Indies, *see* Chinese in Indonesia
in Hawaii, 54, 78, 86–7, 215–6
in Hong Kong, 62, 134
in India, 64, 161, 216
in Indonesia, 31 (Yinhua), 34, 40, 42, 53, 59, 65, 114, 119, 126–7, 130, 144, 148, 159, 161, 164, 167, 197, 210, 218
in Malaysia (Chinese Malaysians), 5, 17, 24, 28, 31 (Mahua), 33–4, 42, 49, 51–2, 58–9, 61–2, 91–110, 115–8, 121, 132, Chinese Malaysians explained, 109
in Mexico, 137–8
in New York, 11
in New Zealand, 46, 50, 60
in North America, 7, 155, 171, 197–8, 218
in Papua New Guinea, 13, 47, 176–7, 205
in Peru, 11, 47, 198, 216
in Singapore (Chinese Singaporeans), 6, 52–3, 90, 190, 192
in Southeast Asia, 6–7, 9, 13, 23, 26, 127–8, 155, 157, 160, 169, 173–214
in Sri Lanka, 7, 170
in Taiwan, 134
in Thailand, 37, 40–3, 45, 48, 52, 61, 114, 119–20, 144–5
in the Philippines, 10, 31 (Feihua), 36, 45, 47, 49, 105, 114, 119, 132, 145, 166, 197, 208
in Trinidad, 43–4, 47
in USA (Chinese Americans), 24–5, 27, 31, 49, 53, 57–9, 62–3, 66–7, 90, 107, 114, 116, 120, 122, 126, 131–2, 149–50, 154–5, 164–5, 170
in Vietnam, 60, 64, 161, *see also* Hoa
Chinese associations, 7, 10, 43, 50, 51, 117, 183–6
Chinese banks, 194, 220
Chinese cultural nationalist, 96, 98, 104
Chinese-educated Chinese, 97, 104, 116–8, 121, 132, 217
Chinese education, 52, 54, 57, 93, 97, 104, 117–21, 190–1
Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention, 212
Chinese ethnological field, 1–7, 9–29, 32, 135
Chinese festivals, 16–7
Chinese International Entrepreneurship Convention, 125
Chinese labels, 107
  Chinamen 59, 95, 98
  Chinese in diaspora (use of), 1–2
  Cina, 59, 73, 98, 113, 216
  Cinagə, 59, 95–6
  ethnic Chinese (use of), 1–2
  haiwai huaren (use of), 2
  huaqiao (use of), 1–2
  huaren, 1–2 (use of), 31, 91, 105, 109, 107, 110, 127
  huayi, 31
  overseas Chinese, 1–2 (use of), 31, 105, 134

  people of Chinese descent (use of), 2
  'pure' Chinese (as type), 129–30
  'pure' Chinese (discussed), 115–6
  Sinkheh, 34, 59, 93, 113
  Teng-lang, 40, 91, 95, 114, 215
  Tionghoa, 59, 216
  Tohngyahn, 91, 215
  Totok Chinese, 34, 42, 53, 61, 98, 130
  Zhongguoren, 31, 105, 127
Chinese Malay (language), 36
Chinese-medium schools, 50–1, 56, 117–9
Chinese Mestizo, 33, 36–40
  Mestiza, 37, 39
Chinese Muslims, 47
Chinese New Year, 16–8
Chinese newspapers, 52, 56, 118–9, 125
Chinese Peranakan, 33–43, 45, 47, 53, 60–1, 64, 69, 89, 94, 112
  Chinese Peranakan (Indonesia), 69–70, 98, 130, 217
  Peranakan (defined), 34
  Peranakana Cina, 34
  Peranakan Tionghua, 34
Chinese popular religion, 15, 46, 48–9, 81–2, 103, 203
Chinese racialists, 167
Chinese restaurants, 33, 46
Chinese speech groups (dialect groups), 91–4, 101, 106, 108–9
  Cantonese, 92–3, 101, 115
  Hainanese, 93, 185
  Hakka, 33, 71, 92, 106, 216
  Teochiu, 71, 93, 187
  see also Hokkien
Christianity, 37, 47–9, 189; Chinese Christianity, 49
clan associations, 189
commercial agriculture, 195
communal nationalism, 144
Confucianism, 7, 173–4, 187, 199, 201, 203, 213–4, 219, *see also* State Confucianism
Corazon Cojuangco Aquino, 39, 145
creolized Chinese communities, 3, 12, *see also* Baba, Chinese Peranakan
creolized societies, 39
cultural Chinese, 66
cultural identity and ethnic identification (distinguished), 42, 73, 120, 128
cultural relevance (of China), 122–3, 132
culture (defined), 73–4

Daoism, 203, 214
Dejiao, 17, 184–5, 193
Depingxian Monthly (Chinese monthly), 217
discrimination, 54, 56

earth god, 16
economic nationalism, 51, 139–40, 144, 210–1, 213
emigrant villages, 11, 15
English, 52–3, 61, 69, 90, 97, 100–2, 113, 116, 118–20, 124–5, 129–32, 145, 190
English-educated Chinese, 117, 121–3, 125, 130–1
English-speaking Chinese, 97
ersatz capitalists, 210
ethnic enclave, 153, 155–6
European-Chinese, 60

fields of ethnological study, 11–2
funeral, 205

Gateway (Christian group), 103
generalized Chinese identity, 106
Guangong, 16
guanxi, 13, 186, 205–7
Guanyin, 16

headhunting, 187–8, 194, 220
Hebei people (in Malaysia), 93
'high-level equilibrium trap' theory, 200, 207
Hoa (Chinese in Vietnam), 145–6, 161
Hokkien (language), 15, 35, 43, 49, 59, 69, 75, 94–5, 98, 100, 109, 114–5, 129, 188, 215–6, 218
Hokkien (people), 15, 59, 69, 71, 83–4, 92, 94, 101, 113–4, 186–7
Hong Kong, 28, 66, 106, 117–8, 124, 127, 170, 179, 182, 196, 203, 207, 211–2
hui (Chinese credit societies), 13, 175–8, 205, 219–20
Hungry Ghost Festival, 3, 23, *see also pudu*

Iban, 40, 97, 100, 114
Indian, 100
indigenous nationalism, 158
Indonesia, 6–7, 139, 166, 210–2
Indonesian (language), 119, 127
integration (defined), 64, 122
intermarriage, 34, 44–7, 49, 55, 57, 60–1, 66, 76, 88–9, 100, 112, 162, 216
Islam, 46–8, 117, 143

Java-born Chinese, 179
Javanese, 36, 92
Javanese (language), 119, 127
Jose Rizal, 38

Kadazan, 100
kangchu (Chinese headman of a river valley), 196, 206
Kayan (language), 114
kebaya, 34
Kelantan, 33, 35, 40, 59, 84, 94–5, 106, 114, 215

Lee Kong Chian, 209
Lee Kuan Yew, 52, 119
Lee Wen Ho, 54
Li Peng, 218
Liem Sioe Liong, 221
lineage (Chinese), 16–8
lion dance, 27
local-born vs. China-born, 77–8
localization (defined), 3, 23, 94
localized tradition, 14, 16
Lun Bawang, 187–8

Macao, 118, 124
Malay dictionary (Chinese publication), 75
Malay-educated Chinese, 97
Malay (language), 34–6, 52, 90, 93–4, 96–7, 114–5, 118, 121, 130–1, 151, 190
    Bahasa Malaysia, 69
    Kelantan Malay, 101, 114, 129, 131
Malay-medium schools, 117–8
Malay nationalism, 144, 167
Malaya, 139
Malays, 33, 41, 51, 71, 75–6, 78–87, 92–3, 100, 102, 104, 108, 113–5,

136–7, 139–42, 144, 147, 151, 157–9, 181, 216, 220
Malaysia, 15, 91–2, 111–34 *ff,* 136, 140, 144, 147–9, 151, 154, 157, 159–61, 166–7, 170–1, 184, 190–4, 210–1, 218–9
Mandarin (*putonghua, huayu*), 43, 93, 102, 114–9, 124–5, 128, 130–2, 190, 217
Maori, 46
Maori-Chinese, 60
Marriage
  Baba wedding, 14, 80, 82–3, 113
  mixed marriage, 99
matrilocal marriage, 44, 76–7, 79, 96
matrilocal residence, 78–80
Mazu, 16
Melaka, 35, 96, 99–101, 195
Michael Chang, 126
middlemen minority, 153–5, 219
Minnan people, 19, 22, 49
Minnanhua (Minnan language), *see* Hokkien (language)
model minority, 7, 155
Muslims, 123, 136, 166

New Economic Policy (NEP), 141–2, 147, 211
non-Baba Chinese, 72–3, 77, 82, 85, 96, 98–9, 102, 115, 121
nyonya, 76–8, 85, 89, 96

Oei Tiong Ham, 209, 220–1
opium farm, 196, 221
Organization of Chinese Americans, 170

Penang, 20, 35
Penang Baba, 70, 94, 97, 217
Penang Chinese, 114
Penang Chinese food, 97
Penang Hokkien, 70, 97, 101, 114
Peranakan Chinese, *see* Chinese Peranakan
Peranakan-type Chinese, 35, 59, 61–2, 84, 94–5, 98, 101, 129, 131, 136, 159, 215, 218
Philippines, 139, 210
pudu, 15
  in China, 20–3
  in Malaysia, 18–20
Pudugong, 19, 21
'pure' Chinese contrasted to acculturated Chinese, 61–3, 130
pusi, 20–1, *see pudu*

qigong, 27
Quanzhou, 15, 20–2

'racial' Chinese, 126
racial riots (Malaysia, 1969), 140–1, 148
  anti-Chinese riots, 143, 161, 210
rational choice, 166–7
rational choice theory, 219
Robert Kuok, 209
rotating credit society, *see hui*

Sarawak, 187
sarong, 34
scapegoat (Chinese as), 54, 139, 160, 169, 218
Second Malaysia Plan, 141
Siamese, 112
Singapore, 35, 39, 42, 85, 117–20, 179, 196, 203, 211–2, 217
Sino-India War, 64, 161
Sino-Vietnam conflict, 64, 146, 161

situational ethnicity, 60
socialization, 45, 66, 80, 89, 92, 99–108, 142, 191
split labor market hypothesis, 149–53, 219
State Chinese (Penang) Association, 70
State Confucianism, 201–3, 213, 221
Straits-born Chinese, 34, 59, 71, 77, 89, 154, 195
Straits Chinese, *see* Straits-born Chinese
Straits Chinese British Association, 70
Straits settlements, 93, 95–6, 196
Suharto, 53, 144, 164, 210, 221
Sundanese, 32, 36
Surabaya, 7, 43
Susi Susanti, 126

Tagalog, 114
Taiwan, 28, 44, 48–9, 58, 116–8, 125, 128, 184, 190, 203, 207, 216
Taiwanese, 115–6
Tan Cheng Lock, 75
Tan Lark Sye, 209
Teng-lang (Chinese), 40, 91, 95, 114, 215
Terengganu, 35, 40, 84, 94–5, 215
Thailand, 59, 61
Thai (language), 94–5, 114, 129, 218
Thai (people), 35
trading minority, 135, 137, 155
tradition (defined), 73
transnational Chinese, 65
transnationalism, 105
tusheng huaren (local-born Chinese), 130

visibility, multiple (of Chinese), 139
visibility theory, 171
visible minority, 218

Weberian thesis, 199–207
World Chinese Conference (in Mauritius), 218

Xingzhou Ribao, 218
xinyong (trust), 178, 181–2, 193, 220

Yap Ah Loy, 221
Yazhou Zhoukan (Chinese weekly), 125–6, 218
Yongchun people in Malaysia, 13, 20

Zhongyuan, 16, 18, 20, *see pudu*