# 晚清民初 南洋华人社群的文化建构 一种文化空间的发现

THE CULTURAL CONSTRUCTION OF
NANYANG CHINESE COMMUNITY
IN LATE QING AND EARLY REPUBLICAN CHINA:
DISCOVERY OF A CULTURAL SPACE



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When I was in the last phase of the dissertation, bad news came from

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Some things do not change, I wish to thank my parents and family for always being there for me.

#### Abstract

This dissertation investigates some critical issues in the formation of the cultural identity of the Nanyang or Southeast Asian Chinese through analyzing cultural space of and in the Nanyang.

First of all, this thesis establishes the late 19th century as the formative era for the cultural identities of the ethnic community. The existing scholarship treats early period of the post-World War II (1950s-1960s) as the formative period of Southeast Asian Chinese identity. Before this period, the identity of Chinese in this region was taken for granted to be Huaqiao, which means overseas Chinese loyal to China and attached to China without their own subjectivity. This assumption leaves out the evidence of a developing sense of subjectivity and diverse natures of many locally formed Chinese communities in the region without reasonable explanation. This dissertation argues that the subjectivity of Nanyang Chinese was formed when they were named and controlled by different agencies during late Qing.

Secondly, the thesis argues that the Chinese travelers (literati, merchants, military officers, political activists, monks, etc) not only perceived and observed but participated in the formation of the cultural identities of the ethnic community, thus made the process more complex since the "Self" was mixed with the "Other" in the development. From the mid-1800s to the 1920s, more and more Chinese emigrated from China to Nanyang. At the same time, numerous Chinese travelers accompanying with this largest mass Chinese immigration wave, came to the Nanyang region for business, religious,

political, educational, journalist and literary purposes. Their perception of the Nanyang was shaped by the literature of various types about the space they read prior to the journey, which they found later quite different from the ground reality. Different from non-Chinese travelers of the time who "gazed" at the local Chinese communities from distance, these Chinese travelers often felt compelled to or simply naturally engaged in socio-political activities of their fellow countrymen in the colony within spaces such as private houses, restaurants, markets, amusement parks, cinemas, mine fields, factories, museums, temples, schools, and rubber plantations. In this process they helped or even took leadership role of the local Chinese communities in their resisting, communicating and sometimes compromising with different powers (such as colonial, indigenous etc.) under different circumstances. It was in this process that the original perception of the Nanyang Chinese as the "Other", constructed before they arriving the place, was tested, reconstructed and mixed with the knowledge and experience derived from their direct engagement in the place. Their own identity as an outside observer was also transformed to or mixed with an active participant of the local affairs. In other words, the "Other" and "Self" entered into each other.

Philip Kuhn's research from economic-history perspective leads to a similar conclusion: Chinese migrants and the creole populations started to form their own separate communities, as the competition between the two also grew (Kuhn 2008). Travelers acted like glue in bringing together not only the cultural elements of themselves and migrants from different parts of China, but also the elements of modern and traditional, Western and the colonial local cultures. The travelers created a common ideology within the

Nanyang Chinese community. Therefore, in this complex process that the unique ethnical-symbols (such as the type of cuisine, clothing, local dialects, associations, rituals and festivals and literature and arts) of Nanyang Chinese that combined the cultural elements of Southern China, Nanyang and the West gradually took form.

As the Chinese society faced different press groups in colonial Nanyang, this research tries to create a multi-poles model to replace the popular two-side interaction research model in Nanyang Chinese studies. This model puts the Nanyang Chinese community in a multi-power field with several types of cultural space and observes also measures the strategies that these Chinese migrants choose for interacting with others. From this, the research tries to reveal the Nanyang Chinese community's own cultural characters. The theory of urban studies such as Lefebvre's space theory was applied to discover and analyze the cultural space in Nanyang society.

My research, from a historically evolutionary perspective, shows that a culturally independent category of such an ethnic group had taken form long before the formation of the political identity. This approach can be applied to studies of the Chinese overseas elsewhere.

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自从 19 世纪中叶大量华工出洋谋生,"南洋"一词就经常出现在中国人的口语和文献中。从清朝末年到民国初年,经过官员的报告、文人雅士的游记、归侨的口耳相传,不同地区和不同身份的中国人对南洋有许多不同的意象:蛮荒之地、遍地黄金之所、椰风蕉雨浪漫之境等,不一而足。有的惊讶于南洋地区群聚如此多的华工和华商,而建议政府委派领事保护侨民兼招商引资;有的迷惑于当地土著和土生华人的奇风异俗而大作惊艳文章;有的佩服华工的吃苦耐劳和爱乡爱国精神而大叹民气可用;有的目睹华侨艰苦办学传承文化而呼吁祖国支持教学和办报。此时,南洋和中国有了实质的联系和频繁的互动。

中国和南洋的关系和互动,早为学界所关注,但至今还是偏重于"从中国看世界"的角度。莉清博士收集大量的中国人所写的南洋游记,不是介绍和比较它们的内容,也不是一般所谓用文本分析来讨论"他者"南洋,而是抽丝剥茧地从实例中探究南洋文化主体性的建构,再配合西学理论的应用,为清末民初南洋华人社群的文化建构,作出学术上的新论。

和许多游记作者一样, 莉清生长于中国。但不同的是, 莉清在新

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加坡教学和进修多年,也广游东南亚各地,将自己置身于历史现场,细心观察东南亚的时代变迁和社会现象,并认真思索学术问题,这种跨地域研究的条件是她的第一个优势。其次,莉清的大学时代在中国接受严格的中国文学教育,来到新加坡后又接受史学和历史人类学研究方法的训练,最后再融合文史,朝向文化研究的学术路径前进,这种跨学术领域研究也是她的另外一个优势。她的学术结晶,可说是跨域研究的成果。

多年来有机会和莉清在学术上切磋,目睹一个有思想和常有独特学术见解的新生代学者的成长,更高兴看到她多年研究的成果出版成书,激发学界的讨论,也为她自己的阶段性学术成果留下完美的句点。可喜可贺,是为序。

黄贤强

新加坡国立大学 原中文系系主任

# 第一章 绪论

## 第一节 研究动机

### 一、从个人困惑到对群体以及区域历史的思考

根据统计,截至2010年6月,华人占新加坡总人口的74%强。<sup>[1]</sup> 当笔者,一个讲普通话和方言的华人初入新加坡时,受到的最大冲击就是语言。语言的冲击问题又首先从华人姓名的识别上体现。一方面,新加坡的许多华人只保留了华人的姓,名字则是英文;另一方面,即使他们保留了华人的姓名,其姓名的拼音拼写法和发音也都根据各自的方言发音执行,这跟普通话的发音和拼写形式有极大的差异。

除了东南亚地区华人糅杂式语言发音带来的差异,另一些差异随着笔者在东南亚、欧洲等地的旅行而逐渐变得明晰。比如本地华人社会对中国大陆的认识与对中国台湾、香港认识的反差,本地社会对宗教信仰的态度,对华人传统文化以及其"华人性"呈现方式等,都让从大陆前来的旅者感到不解,而这种不解是相互的。这些文化上的差

<sup>[1]</sup> Yearbook of Statistic Singapore, 2011. http://www.singstat.gov.sg/stats/themes/people/demo. html (2011年11月25日)。

异,完全打破了笔者来新加坡前对一个"多数人为华人"的社会的文 化想象和认同。

个人遭遇的文化困惑,促使笔者思考族群的认同、族群文化身份以及本地社会尤其是华人族群的文化特征和主体性等问题。而对这些问题的探究又引出了中国与东南亚的关系。Philip A. Kuhn 在 2006年发表的文章《为什么中国历史学者必须研究离散华人,反之亦然》(Why China Historians Should Study the Chinese Diaspora, and Vice-versa)就从方法论和研究对象两方面提出中国历史与离散华人之间相互发现的观点。<sup>[1]</sup>也就是说对东南亚华人社群文化建构及其主体性形成过程的探寻也能为重新发现中国、阐释中国历史或者阐释何谓"中国"提供另一个新鲜的视角,反之亦然。

而中国与东南亚的关系从历史到当下因为整个世界经济、政治、 文化环境的变化而呈现出不同的面貌。换言之,东南亚华人族群文化 认同以及文化主体性的问题,不仅需要用历史纵贯的角度从中国与东 南亚的历史渊源着手探寻,也需要从历史横切面上的世界环境变化中 找寻原因。

基于东南亚华人社群及其文化的重要性,笔者确定了本论文的研究方向:对19世纪末和20世纪初,中国近现代朝代更替时期爆发的大规模南洋移民潮与南洋本土社会华人社群文化的建构关系进行研究。本论文的研究目的是:一方面考察此社群文化本身形成的原因、过程以及表现特征;另一方面则考察其与生活在中国的华人族群之间的关系,同时考察该研究对重新阐释甚至重新书写中国近现代史的意义。

Philip A. Kuhn, "Why China Historians Should Study the Chinese Diaspora, and Vice-versa", Journal of Chinese Overseas, Vol.2, No.2, 2006, pp.163-172.