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国际会议论文集

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Foreword

Understanding Chinese Singaporean Culture

LOW Sze Wee

CEO, Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre

With globalisation, multi-culturalism and other cosmopolitan influences in Singapore today, how do we go beyond an ethnic definition to examine Chinese Singaporean identity in a meaningful way? How does our evolving culture also challenge this identity?

These questions underscored the spirited discussions at the Diversity and Singapore Ethnic Chinese Communities International Conference organised by the Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre and National University of Singapore's Department of Chinese Studies.

During the two-day event, 24 respected academics from local and overseas institutions explored different aspects of the Singapore Chinese community — identity, religion, literature, language, and even popular culture. The discussions were thought-provoking, and never more relevant at a time when we see increasing ethnocentrism in some parts of the world, despite greater global interconnections.

Personally, the definition of a Chinese Singaporean has to go beyond nationality and race. I like the metaphor of trees. Chinese communities around the world are rooted to the same ground, and yet they grow in different ways, depending on their specific contexts. So, whether you are a Chinese in China, Indonesia or Canada, some cultural change is inevitable. In the case of Singapore, our identity is very much influenced by our past (ancestral cultures, colonial legacies) and present (located in Southeast Asia with a multi-ethnic

population, reliant on international connectivity for economic survival, and shaped by various national policies). That is what makes us distinctive.

And just as different communities adapt to their specific environments, cultures will also change and evolve. If we are keen to 'preserve' certain traditions (be they food, language, customs or artistic forms) for future generations, then we should acknowledge that such traditions will also need to evolve to maintain relevance to their contemporary audiences. The fastest way to ensure the extinction of a tradition is to render it immune to change.

At the Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre, we have the opportunity to work directly with many arts and cultural groups. Passionate in celebrating their sense of belonging and identity as part of the Chinese Singaporean community, many are keen to express their artistic traditions in bold and creative ways.

For example, *Memoirs of Nanyang* by Siong Leng Musical Association, one of Singapore's most established performing groups, fused traditional Nanyin (southern Chinese traditional music) with Malay music and Mandarin pop. The group has also previously experimented with Indian instruments like the tablah, which breathed new life into their Chinese musical form that has over 2,000 years of history.

I also like local young hip-hop artist Shigga Shay's hyper-local songs, which showcase his cultural roots despite his strong interest in Western pop music genres. Apart from local references, he also cleverly mixes different languages and dialects in his lyrics. For example, Lion City Kia features English, Hokkien, Malay and Tamil, while his more recent *Paiseh* includes Mandarin, Hokkien, and his trademark penchant for Singlish.

Local bak kwa (barbecued pork) retailer Xi Shi also marries tradition with innovation. Despite the pressures to switch to more efficient mechanised cooking methods, the young owner held onto the traditional way of making them in a charcoal smokehouse, as taught by his mentor. However, to appeal to a wider audience, he experiments with new and unconventional flavours such as homemade red yeast rice wine, roasted sesame and Japanese seaweed.

Today, Chinese Singaporean identity and culture have integrated into a larger, multi-ethnic whole, and is therefore very much different from Chinese communities in other parts of the world. Yet this distinctive identity should not be perceived as a dilution. Quoting Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong during

the opening of the Cultural Centre in 2017, this has "never been a matter of subtraction, but of addition; not of becoming less, but more; not of limitation and contraction, but of openness and expansion." With the increasing confluence of cultures in an open society, we should embrace this continuous evolution of our identity with open hearts and minds.

Preface

Kenneth DEAN

Raffles Professor of Humanities, FASS,
Head, Department of Chinese Studies, NUS

The compelling and provocative papers presented at the Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre conference and published in this volume are all by Singaporean scholars. They share an intense and vibrant critical engagement with the rapidly transforming nature of everyday life and traditional anchors of identity - ethnicity, nationalism, shared language. All these identifiers are placed under interrogation in these papers. Flows of migrants transform every aspect of everyday life, down to the domestic sphere, where new intimacies lead to both conflict and new understandings. "New (Chinese) migrants" mingle and interact with Singaporean Chinese who have lived abroad most of their lives. Accelerating life trajectories put increasing strain on notions of home and origins. Several papers explore these issues in personal as well as academic terms.

These concerns with representations of ethnicity and identity arise in the discussions of Singaporean Chinese literature, Singlish, Singaporean Mandarin, and Singaporean pop culture and its knowing play with ethnic representation in contemporary media. Even *xinyao* is shown to have a critical edge, as a close reading of the lyrics challenges efforts to re-appropriate these songs for nationalistic purposes. The essays on transnational religious movements, roadside shrines, and ambivalent sites such as Haw Par Villa bring out the complexity and the living hybridity of alternative spaces and collective movements beyond the secular homogenous space of modernity. A

key question raised in these essays is what does the image want? How can engaged scholars help us better understand the effects of representations of race, nation, creed and culture? The essays collected in this volume explore these profound issues with courage and compassion.

These essays show that Singapore Studies continues to evolve in new and critical directions. Scholarship in an earlier phase often took CMIO categories and the 4 Ms (multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-lingual, multi-religious) + meritocracy for granted, and focused on Singapore as a self-enclosed unit described primarily in terms of a narrative of nation-building. In contrast, these papers challenge the essentialisms of these categories, move beyond binary accounts of resistance or conformity to state-centrist ideologies, and critique mainstream neo-liberal understandings of Singapore as a "global city". These papers show the impact of the papers published in the 2016 *Mobilities* 5.2 special issue on "Mobile City Singapore" (edited by Natalie Oswin and Brenda Yeoh), which marked an important turning point in Singapore Studies. The focus in many of the papers in this paper on transnational flows continues the shift to an examination of the micro-politics of local-transnational encounters. These papers examine the transversal effects of the ever intensifying flow of people, capital, things, ideas, and images across different layers and sectors of Singaporean society. The papers from the Roundtable discussions also highlight the socially constructed nature of race, the artificial boundaries of religious affiliation, and the continuous re-invention and critical creativity of cultural production.

These essays embody interdisciplinary approaches to the study of Singapore. I am especially pleased to see papers from Chinese Studies in interaction with papers from geography, political science, cultural studies, media studies and linguistics. This collection reflects the excitement and intensity of the paper presentations and the animated discussions that followed them. I would like to thank the outstanding work of the simultaneous translators who performed heroically across many different academic fields. And I would especially like to thank the Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre and its CEO, Mr. Low Sze Wee, for hosting this significant intervention in Singapore Studies.

Transnational Migrations and Plural Diversities in Postcolonial Times[1]

Brenda S.A. YEOH

Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

1. The Politics and Paradox of Postcolonial Encounters

Using a global database developed by the World Bank and the United Nations Population Division, Czaika and de Haas (2015, p. 305) empirically showed that comparing 1960 and 2000, the immigrant populations in the cities and urban agglomerations of Southeast and East Asia are not only growing in numbers but reflect "an increasingly diverse array of origins". Unlike immigrant cities of the west, postcolonial cities across the region are in many ways the demographic offspring of colonial diaspora, where their beginnings embody "many of the tensions of blood and belonging that the concept [diaspora] evokes" (Harper, 1997, p. 261). These cities are "always-already 'diasporic' in relation to what might be thought of as cultures of origin" (Hall, 1996, p. 250). In other words, the presence of migrant bodies from somewhere else is "*foundational* to the formation of the nation-state" as migration occurred "both prior to and during the colonial period, …becoming entrenched in a post-colonial moment of independence and nation-state formation based on an *already existing* plurality" (Collins, Lai & Yeoh, 2013, p. 15). As a result,

[1] Abridged and adapted from Brenda S.A. Yeoh, "Transnational Migrations and Plural Diversities: Encounters in Global Cities", in Gracia Liu-Farrer and Brenda S. A. Yeoh (2018) *Routledge Handbook of Asian Migrations*, London: Routledge.

the historical reality by the second half of the twentieth century in much of the once-colonized world is best described as "a modernity that is scored by the claws of colonialism, left full of contradictions, of half-finished processes, of confusions, of hybridity, and liminalities" (Lee & Lam, 1998, p. 968). In societies with a long history and experience of dealing with multiethnic, multiracial and multilingual coexistence, "There is undoubtedly a capacity and a tolerance for difference that is completely different from a European sensibility" (Blom Hansen (2009), quoted in Vertovec (2014, p. 4). Affective practices inhabiting the public spaces of encounter in postcolonial formations are hence less likely to be performances enacted between "distant" strangers (as seen in some of the analyses of western cities), and more likely to be akin to interactions between people with recognizable yet disparate sociabilities. Where diversity exists as "overlapping multiplicities" accumulated over a fractured history, Blom Hansen's observation that "We need to get beyond the notion that minorities 'have' diversity whilst the natives do not" becomes patently clear.

The limited but growing scholarship on migration and diversity in Asian cities which draws on a postcolonial approach take pains to show how the historical geographies of the colonial past have shaped complex geopolitical conditions of the present (Yeoh, 2003). While "[ethno-racial] ideologies of hierarchical difference … can be traced back to colonialism" (Koh, 2015, p. 436), they operate in complexly different and often paradoxical ways to shape local-migrant encounters of recent times. Sandwiched between the large polities of China and India, Southeast Asia has a long history of migrations, mobilities and circulations connecting diverse societies, ranging from merchants, monks, sailors, rebels to the coolie trade (Nyiri & Tan, 2017). In postcolonial times, one of the primary tasks of nation-building among the new Southeast Asian states is to transform a motley crew of diasporic orphans, whose emotional homelands diverge from their physical locations as well as from each other, into a "settled" people who inscribe their belonging onto a single home-nation, while marking out other migrants who arrive later as part of renewed diasporas as transgressors of the nation-state through a politics of (selective) forgetting and (non-)recognition (Yeoh, 2003). In this context, urban encounters do not just engage difference, but are underscored by a wide spectrum of familiar-but-

strange plurality that shifts with each turn of the postcolonial kaleidoscope. Affective practices that develop between the older "settled" (once-migrant) population and the newer streams of "current" migrants are hence ridden by the contradictions of sameness and difference occurring simultaneously amidst new varieties of pluralism.

In the case of Singapore, the welding of heterogeneous groups into 'one people' on achieving independence in 1965 was premised on the ideology of 'separate but equal' multiracialism. Fifty years down the road, national identity continues to be built through the careful management of race, where four 'official races' were designated under the so-called CMIO (Chinese, Malays, Indians and 'Others') framework. The notion of being 'separate but equal' serves to encourage the acceptance of co-existence of different religious practices, customs and traditions of various communities 'without discrimination for any particular community' (Chan & Evers, 1978, p. 123). In short, Singapore-style multiracialism is thus based on the arithmetic formula of four 'separate' but 'equal' races in a nation of 'one people'. The philosophy propounds the need to submerge ethnic identity to the larger purposes of nation-building and national identity construction, while at the same time providing space for each of the four 'founding races' to promote, valorise, and reclaim ethnic links and identity. This form of racialised multiculturalism continues the colonial classificatory schemas drawn under British rule and underlies ethnic policies governing inter- and intra-ethnic relations in different spheres of life. At the same time, such formulations privilege fixed categories (tied to ancestral cultures) and are silent about the migrant "others" who live and work in the city-state yet do not officially belong to the 'CMIO races' constituting the Singapore citizenry. Ranging from 'foreign workers' in construction, domestic service, and other 'dirty, dangerous and difficult' (the 3Ds) sectors, to 'foreign talents' belonging to the professional and managerial classes, these "non-residents" are outside state constructions of the national population and do not appear in national census-taking. When Singapore celebrated its Golden Jubilee as a sovereign nation-state in 2015, out of a total population of 5.535 million, less than two-thirds (61 per cent) were citizens, 9.5 per cent were permanent residents and 29.5 per cent were non-residents (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2015). In terms of the country's labour force, foreigners constituted around 32.1 per

cent (excluding foreign domestic workers) or slightly more than one million of the nation's 3.5 million-strong workforce in 2014, possibly making Singapore the country with the highest proportion of foreign workers in East Asia (http://www.mom.gov.sg/documents-and-publications/foreign-workforce-numbers). While such openness to foreign others is seen to be an essential strategy if Singapore is to compete successfully in the current round of globalization, it has also created on the ground paradoxical encounters.

For example, despite possessing a "Chinese" majority in its demography, Singapore sits uncomfortably between being predominantly 'Chinese' and 'anti-Chinese' (Yeoh & Lin, 2013), as evident in mounting social tensions arising from contemporary migrant flows from "mainland" China. When a horrendous road accident in 2012 resulted in the deaths of a Singaporean taxi-driver, a Japanese passenger and a wealthy Chinese national behind the wheels of a speeding Ferrari, public outcry centred on the Chinese migrant who became the focus of blame, not only for causing the accident, but also as visible proof of an immigration policy gone wrong. And when an immigrant Chinese family complained about the smell from curry cooked by their Singaporean ethnic-Indian neighbours, citizens retaliated by calling on fellow Singaporeans of all races to deliberately cook Indian, Malay, Eurasian and Chinese varieties of curry en masse on a designated weekend. As one of the organizers of a multicultural curry party in a housing estate said, "We want people to remember that curry can also be a positive thing. Here, instead of dividing people, curry is going to unite people" (The Straits Times, 10 August 2013). The complicated politics and paradox of "distance" and "proximity" in dividing/uniting some but not others are particular salient – certainly more apparent than in western contexts characterized by a white majority where the cultural self-other divide is more consistently aligned with majority-minority identifications – under postcolonial conditions where "history mocks the nation-state's claims to cultural and linguistic exclusiveness" (Harper, 1997, p. 261), making it difficult for the "majority" to lay claims to an earlier place and time devoid of plurality. In other words, colonial and postcolonial migrancies are indissolubly if complexly intermeshed, sometimes with unanticipated outcomes for cities in a time of renewed transnational migrations.

2. Coexistence and Control in the Transient Spaces of Enclavement

A second theme revolves around the question of how encounters occurring amidst kaleidoscopic diversity may be differently shaped in a context where the political economy underpinning the migration regime is not necessarily dominated by notions of integration and assimilation as pathways to citizenship, as often pervades the broader imagination in the case in Europe. In many cities in Asia, migrant subjects are differentially incorporated into the national geobody along clearly bifurcated lines: while talent migrants (i.e. highly skilled professionals and entrepreneurs) are incentivized to take up permanent residency or citizenship and lay down roots (however, many choose to remain highly mobile and "flexible" in their citizenship options), labour migrants, particularly those considered unskilled or performing 3D jobs, are locked into a "use-and-discard" regime that enforces transience. Maintaining strict, categorically controlled distinctions between temporary "non-residents" and permanent citizens not only creates "a context where encounters across this form of diversity are structurally problematic" (Collins, Lai & Yeoh, 2013, p. 16), but also induces a palpable sense of temporariness and fluidity as people constantly adjust to transnational lives while inhabiting cities "which are leaking away into a space of flows" (Thrift, 1997, p. 140).

Among highly skilled/professional migrants who gravitate towards global cities, the emerging literature from Asia tends to counter earlier assumptions that transnational elites are perpetually rootless, hypermobile sojourners who lead such fluid lives that they are indifferent to where they lived (Tseng, 2011). As Ley (2004, p. 151) has argued, "the expansive reach and mastery imputed to global subject [referring to transnational businessmen and cosmopolitan professionals], their flight from the particular and the partisan, their dominance and freedom from vulnerability, are far from complete". Instead, more probing scholarship has revealed the significance of a broad cultural politics in the construction of "contact zones" between people travelling on different circuits meeting in the global city (Yeoh & Willis, 2005). In navigating these urban contact zones, strategies of residential enclavement, reminiscent of colonial times, allow elite transnational migrants to limit their social worlds to gated condominiums, expatriate clubs, international schools and chauffeur-driven cars. At the same time, enclavement provides a partial account. Farrer's (2011)

work on the global nightscapes of Shanghai, for example, reveals a much more variegated social geography of intercultural contact among elite transnational migrants, including North Americans, Europeans, overseas Chinese returnees (*haigui*) and mobile PRC nationals. A complex topography with "multiple points of segregation and contact, alliances and conflicts" unfolds, as individuals draw on cultural-sexual capital in staking "personal status claims" in the grounded politics of encounter (Farrer, 2005). Also focused on highly skilled migrants in Chinese cities, Yeoh and Willis (2005) argue that because Singaporeans and Britons trace very different ethno-cultural histories in China, the way the two groups negotiate the frontiers of difference follow divergent trajectories. Among British expatriates, the encounter with China tends to be either viewed through imperial lenses (among long-term residents) or portrayed as a new set of fascinating cultural challenges of getting to know the unfamiliar. In contrast, among Singaporeans, the construction of difference between "self" and the "other" is played out using a much finer mesh, hence requiring more subtle navigation across the space of difference. On the one hand, the display or lack of modern civilities becomes elevated to the position of cultural and moral markers which bring the difference between the mainland Chinese and the Singaporean Chinese into sharp focus. On the other hand, the terrain of identity politics becomes multiply contested when Singaporeans who are expected to speak Mandarin speak it poorly, reducing the facility with Mandarin into a sign of racial and national shame for Singaporean Chinese (Yeoh & Willis, 2005). In moving away from the fiction of frictionless mobility among transnational elites, the emerging scholarship on highly skilled migrants in Asian cities show that encounters in the contact zone are grounded in everyday realities of urban life inflected by negotiations and contestations over race, nationality, gender and other identity markers.

Turning attention to the other end of the skills spectrum, the affective urban experiences and livelihood aspirations of lowly paid migrant workers who are admitted into the city as transient and disposable labour are strongly conditioned by the inevitability of navigating transnational routes to and fro 'home' and 'host'. A large workforce comprising foreign domestic workers who plug the care deficit in the households of globalizing cities such as Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore and Taipei, for example, have little chance of

sustainable employment in their home countries where they hold citizenship papers and even less likelihood of becoming an immigrant-turned-citizen in the host-countries where they have secured (low wage) employment. As a consequence, the migrant worker becomes a figure locked into unending circuits of transnational care, affection, money, and material goods in order to sustain both the host-family as well as his or her home-family in transnational form. In short, they are "necessary transnationals" whose everyday practices sustain an "emotional economy" across the transnational stage. For them, the liminal freedoms of adopting a "doubleness" of simultaneous identity as citizen and ethnic minority (Simonsen & Koefoed, 2015) remain perpetually elusive, and instead strangeness, transience and precarity coincide at the fullest degrees**.**

For example, the unskilled or low-skilled migrant workers admitted into Singapore on short-term work permits – as disposable labour without any residency rights (Yeoh, 2006) – are most prominent in the everyday landscape in the form of 'weekend enclaves', transient social and commercial landscapes containing migrant concentrations. Confined largely to their workplaces during the working week (such as construction sites or Singaporean homes in the case of foreign domestic workers), large numbers of migrant contract workers congregate temporarily in strongly ethnicised enclaves over the weekend. Some examples include Little India/Serangoon Road, which attracts Indian and Bangladeshi workers; Little Manila in Lucky Plaza, right in the heart of the Orchard Road shopping belt, for Filipina domestic workers; and Little Thailand for Thai workers at the Golden Mile Complex on Beach Road. Certain landscapes are also changeable within the span of a day; for example, a residential and commercial district in the day, Joo Chiat turns into a vibrant Little Vietnam by night. Foreign worker gatherings have also sprung up in open spaces near shopping centres and Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) stations in the Housing and Development Board (HDB) estates, the residential heartlands where the majority of Singaporeans live.

These weekend enclaves and foreign worker gatherings are often viewed negatively or with unease by Singaporeans who consider them a form of 'intrusion' into 'their own backyards'. Some have openly expressed their displeasure and asked the authorities to step up security measures in these

places; others wondered whether these workers could be relocated to out-of-sight locations such as offshore islands. Residents of HDB flats located in Little India have put up steel barricades around their blocks to keep foreign workers out and when the state announced plans to put a foreign workers' dormitory in Serangoon Gardens, a middle-class residential estate, 1,600 residents signed a petition in protest. Reasons for their objection included 'fears that the workers would commit crimes in the area, seduce their maids and dampen property prices'. The state relented by relocating the entrance of the dormitory to another street that would be built to order and which faced away from the residential estate, and by housing mainly Malaysian and Chinese workers (male and female) from the manufacturing and service industries in the dormitory instead of foreign workers from the construction sector (who are mainly of South Asian origin). This prompted the observation that while the 'Serangoon Gardens saga' is as much a class issue as it is a racial one, a 'veiled racism' is clearly at work in shaping the spatial politics of exclusion. These voices reflect a 'use and discard' sentiment among the general population who want foreign workers to do the work that citizens shun, but at the same time wish that these workers could be erased from the landscape.

In other words, processes of enclosure and enclavement in a context of plural diversities are symptomatic of the contradictions between the need for a large low-waged low-skilled migrant population that is supposed to be transient on the one hand, and the fear of the malaise associated with 'migrant concentrations' that appear overwhelmingly visible, palpable and permanent on the other hand. Yet, the space of encounters between locals and these 'needed but unwanted' migrant workers in the global city is only occasionally punctuated by raised social anxieties, moral panics and calls to tighten control and surveillance to keep these populations if not out of sight, then out of the way of locals. In the everyday rhythms of the plural "divercity",[2] a large part of the everyday encounters fall within the range of studied obliviousness to the other forms of civil non-interaction and co-existence.

[2] An increasingly popular neologism in both academic and public discourses, this shorthand signals increasing diversity in the city.

Beyond civil inattention, it is also notable that the plurality of interests in the global city has also spawned significant attention to the rights and welfare of migrant workers in Singapore. Of catalytic effect at the early years of the new millennium was the growing sense of dismay and outrage — starting with those within the women's movement who were already concerned about violence against women — at what appeared to be inadequate state action and public apathy in the face of an increasing incidence of 'maid abuse' (Yeoh & Annadhurai, 2008). A broad range of NGOs focusing on migrant labour has emerged, including mainly service-oriented groups (of which a number grew out of faith-based organizations) along with skills training centres and women's shelters; and a smaller number of advocacy-oriented groups. While service-oriented groups primarily focus on providing 'ambulance services' to address the plight of the disadvantaged and seldom put forward an alternative policy agenda from that of the state, their actions are often based on values advocating an acceptance of and care and empathy for foreign others. These strategies of empathetic care and cosmopolitan hope provide another face to the divercity, which exists side by side with and partially counters the state's tendency to harden control and containment in reaction to perceived social threats associated with large numbers of labour migrants. The latter is particularly obvious in the aftermath of the Little India "riot" of December 2013[3] when the ethnic enclave became a space of exception zoned to facilitate a ban on alcohol sales and increased police surveillance. In tandem, spaces of enclosure such as mega-dormitories with "integrated facilities" including a 16,800-bed complex with a minimart, beer garden and foodcourt, recreational options such as a 250-seat cinema and a cricket field were built at peripheral sites as a containment measure to keep the migrant worker population away from Little India as far as possible.

[3] On 8 December 2013, what was considered Singapore's first riot in more than four decades broke out in Little India. A bus and emergency vehicles were attacked after a male Indian national (construction worker) died after being hit by the bus ferrying migrant workers back to their dormitories.

3. Intimate Encounters in the Home-Spaces of the City

A third theme in thinking about encounters in divercities stems from the observation that contact zones between "self" and "other" are no longer (if they ever were) only sited in the public domain usually identified with the urban (e.g. streets, neighbourhoods, communities, civil society) but also characterize the sphere of the intimate (e.g. families, households, home). While it is usual in urban studies to identify contact zones that are sited in the public domain (e.g. streets, parks, marketplaces, neighbourhoods, communities, civil society), it is also important to locate spaces of encounter in the sphere of the intimate (e.g. families, households, home). This chimes with geographers' insistence to acknowledge the merits of considering scale – starting with the "body" and spanning outwards to the "global", or closing in from the "global" to the "body" – and to rethink the politics of diversity and migrant encounter across a range of public and private spaces, as manifested in relationships with "others" in the city. It also accords with Nava's (2006) work on "domestic cosmopolitanism", where cosmopolitan practices emerge from engagement with otherness not just in the public sphere but within the privacy of the home.

Focusing on homespace as a site of encounter is particularly relevant in Asian cities experiencing large care deficits as a result of plummeting fertility rates and rapid population ageing. In cities such as Hong Kong, Singapore, Seoul and Taipei, "global householding" strategies (Douglass, 2006) have become normalized as households sustain themselves by adopting market and non-market based options predicated on the international movement of people (including for example, foreign domestic workers and foreign brides) in order to resolve deepening care deficits. Turning the analytical spotlight on homespace will help to reveal the intimate relations and affective structures that undergird a broad range of familial and non-familial relations. Such an endeavour need not be seen in contradistinction to the customary urban focus on the public sphere; instead, these kinds of interrogations are vital to a more holistic understanding of affective practices and living with difference in cities, as the way intimate labour is performed in homespace not only reflects but also reinforces larger structural inequalities of gender, race, culture and citizenship across national and transnational contexts.

In many parts of Asia, urban householding has often been constituted by both familial and non-familial members. While domestic servants of the past — for example, the *amahs* (single celibate Chinese female servants) and *mui tsais* (young girls "given" or "sold" into domestic service) in Singapore and Malaysia — were often members of the employers' larger ethnic communities, transnational domestic workers today are perceived as "aliens" or 'foreigners" who transgress the integrity of the nation (Constable, 1997; Chin, 2000). While employer-worker relationships in the past were informed by shared cultural norms and values (sometimes approximating patron-client or pseudo-kin relationships instead), such considerations are manifestly absent in the contemporary institution of live-in paid domestic work performed by transnational women. Today, the self/other divide is hence wider than before, and its location in a context of highly asymmetrical power relations in the employer's household as well as in the host nation has sometimes engendered openly exploitative relationships between employer and worker unmitigated by culturally-based values and expectations (Chin, 2005). The seeming contradictory dynamic of *devaluing* domestic work shifted onto the shoulders of transnational migrant workers and at the same time *preferring* the same workers as more natural or suitable embodiments of domestic servanthood is also observed elsewhere. In Taiwan, employers' everyday practices of devaluation and discrimination in negotiating the boundary between "us" and "them" goes hand in hand with preferring Filipino, Indonesian and Vietnamese domestic workers as more "obedient" and "deferential", compared to them more rights-conscious *obasans* (local domestic workers) (Lan, 2005). Transnational domestic workers are, in Lan's (2003, p. 525) words, "the perfect example of the intimate Other – they are recruited by host countries as desired servants and yet rejected citizens".

In the case of Singapore, the rapid decline in fertility rates, coupled with increasing life expectancy as well as higher proportions of delayed or non-marriage, has led to looming child- and elder-care deficits within families which have to be plugged by global householding strategies (Yeoh & Huang, 2014). These strategies include, for middle-class households, the market-based option of bringing in women from less developed countries in the region to serve as low-paid, surrogate care for children, the elderly and the infirm as

well as perform domestic work (Truong, 1996). While eldercare work may also be 'outsourced' to (mainly female) migrant healthcare workers laboring in the institutionalized space of the nursing home, the prevalence of gendered ideologies based on 'Asian familialism' means that families continue to prefer to relegate the duty of elder-care to the privatized family sector in order to conserve some semblance of filial piety. In this context, the 'live-in foreign maid' emerges as an increasingly common substitute to provide the care labor needed to sustain the household. By outsourcing domestic and care work to other Southeast Asian women from less developed economies in the region at a low cost, socially and economically privileged women trade in their class privilege for (partial) freedom from the burden of household reproductive labor. This has the simultaneous effects of subordinating other women to work conditions governed by retrogressive employer-employee relations and minimal mobility; devaluing, racializing and commodifying household labor as unskilled and lowly paid work; and further entrenching and normalizing domestic and care work as resolutely 'women's work'. Compounded by state policies which treat migrant domestic workers as transient labor with diminished employment rights, the gender politics of the home is negotiated between local and foreign women *vis-à-vis* a racialized grid of highly asymmetrical power relations, while men continue to abdicate their household responsibilities. The politics of household reproduction that develops in many middle-class homes in Singapore hence features mainly women — migrant women working to present themselves as docile bodies amenable to the disciplinary gaze of local women on the one hand, while disengaging from the role of the deferential inferior on the other (Yeoh & Huang, 2010).

Somewhat analogous to the practice of middle-class families recruiting migrant domestic workers for householding purposes, working-class families without the financial means draw on unpaid care labor by recruiting 'foreign brides'. With globalization and expanding educational and career opportunities for women, for example, Singaporean men from the lower socio-economic strata who feel positionally 'left behind' by local women's participation in the workforce are seeking to fill the care deficit in their households through international marriage with women from the less developed countries in the region who are considered more 'traditional' and willing to take on

procreation and caring roles in sustaining the household (Yeoh, Chee & Vu, 2014). In this context, the larger structural inequalities of gender, race, class, culture and citizenship operating across a transnational stage are integral to an understanding of the politics of familial encounters in homespace. In the last two decades, the rapid increase of international marriage and cross-cultural, bi-national families has introduced 'diversity' into the primary relations that constitute the family, giving rise a potential proliferation of hybridity and hyphenations in the domestic sphere. Given the structural inequalities that pervade the privatized sphere as much as they shape the public arena, it remains to be seen whether these intimate encounters contain the seeds of future cosmopolitan hope. In short, more work needs to be done to investigate whether such encounters in homespace within the global city are productive of more sustained cosmopolitan sensibilities compared to the fleeting encounters of the public streets.

4. Conclusion

Contemporary postcolonial migration is a compelling force increasing diversity in globalising cities. Amidst multiplicative diversities, processes of enclavement and encounter along a spectrum of self/other divides, occur alongside those of selective acculturation and negotiated co-existence as people with different histories and geographies meet and take stock of one another in the constant (re)making of divercities. In approaching an understanding of these global cities of encounter, public encounters and the civility of the streets in the form of 'ritualised codes of etiquette' (Valentine, 2008, p. 329) may not always be an adequate social barometer to grasp the nature of migrant diversity politics in the city. Indeed, the urgent need is to rethink the politics of diversity and migrant encounter across a range of public and private spaces, as manifested in relationships with "others" in the city, where "the other" may be "strange" and "unfamiliar", but may well be "intimate" and even "familial". For the global city of encounters to develop a truly cosmopolitan urban ethic, not just the conviviality of its streets but the intimacies of its homes need to be "places of self-knowledge, not fear" (Sennett, 2001).

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Panel 1

Identity

Complications of Ethnicity: The Politics of Chinese-ness in Singapore

CHONG Ja Ian

Department of Political Science, National University of Singapore

大家好，我係莊嘉穎。猶毋過你袂曉，攏袂要緊。（Speaking in Hokkien）我哋用廣東話都得嘅。其實，我哋而家可以係度傾下。（Speaking in Cantonese）

I want to start off by saying that when we think about ethnic Chinese in Singapore or Singapore Chinese culture, we have to recognise that it's an area that has been contested, has historically been contested and will continue to be contested. It will be fluid. The reason for this is because the idea of what is Chinese, what is not Chinese, has not been historically a fixed idea, it has never been historically a homogenous idea.

Fluidity in ideas of "Chinese-ness" is something that deserves recognition as we think about the increasing plurality that our society faces, as we think about the different pressures, tension and dynamic that we have to face as a society. To address these issues, I would like to start with politics. I am a student of politics, after all. I know Singaporeans fear talking about politics, but it remains an important conversation to have. My remarks may implicate what some consider issues of truth and falsehood, that remain in debate today. Contestation over truths and looking at the social consequences of received wisdoms are part of that reality that societies need to face regularly. We need to understand the landscape in which we are operating.

1. “Chinese” as a Contested Category

Where I begin my discussion is to ask what people mean when they say they are Chinese or ethnic Chinese. There are multiple layers of meaning that come with that statement. The roots of these meanings are located historically in ideas about what China and Chinese ought to be. If you ask what China (中國) is or is not, an easy answer is “Well, China is today People’s Republic of China”. You can probe a little bit more and enquire how places like Taiwan, Hong Kong, Xinjiang and Tibet fit within such a conception of China. Even such a simple line of questioning will quickly uncover the fact that claims about what “China” is or is not faces contestation. We cannot get away from this fact. Ideas about China encounter challenges because they too are historically rooted phenomena that will face challenge from new realities.

When people in Singapore or elsewhere say, “our ancestors came from China”, what do we actually mean? If the reference is to a political entity, that phrasing, “my ancestors came from China” is one laden with a sense of Chinese nationalism that came about in the late 19th century. Under this statist view, there is supposed to be one “China,” culturally and socially homogenous in some ways and unchanging over time. That is not the case. For those whose families moved to Singapore earlier on, you can probably make a very good case that the state from which they originated was the Qing Empire (大清帝國). For others who whose families migrated here a little later, you can make a good case that the state of origin was the Republic of China (中華民國ROC) in some permutation. Of course, those moved to Singapore much later on are from this entity called the People’s Republic of China (中華人民共和國PRC). This short illustration highlights the layers that come with just thinking about “China” as a political and administrative entity. My point for speaking in different Sinophone regional languages at the outset is an attempt to highlight different conceptions of China across time, across space, and the different kinds of people who inhabited those spaces.

2. Unity against Diversity

There is great diversity in China. I’m not referring to just who today many offhandedly call minority groups living in the PRC. Even people generally

considered ethnically "Han" demonstrate great diversity in local practises and languages. There are *Minnan* (閩南) languages that are not mutually intelligible with northern Chinese languages, and are not easily understood with, say, *Yue* (粵) or *Hakka* (客家) languages despite some similarities. This is suggestive of the great diversity that China can really represent, and one of the legacies of "Chinese culture" broadly conceived.

With such diversity, there is also the issue of contestation over how to discipline and restrict these very plural, very broad, very diverse ways to understand what "Chinese" can mean. The term "Chinese" in English, for instance, can have several meanings that are not mutually reducible into each other. It may be the citizen of a Chinese state, a "zhongguo gongmin" (中國公民), "zhongguo ren" (中國人) — a person from a Chinese state, huaren (華人) — a person from China, huaqiao (華僑) — a sojourner from China, or "huayi" (華裔) — a person who traces ancestry to what is China regardless of their citizenship. These are often synonymous with people of Han (漢) ethnicity although Chinese states are historically multiethnic. Such definitions are not merely semantic, especially when it comes to states and their authority. Being able to control definitions over the composition of "Chinese," states can determine who to control, who to tax, who to mobilise for war, who to exclude etc.

In the Singapore context, there has always been contention over how ethnic Chinese communities fit in local society. On a very local level, on one hand, we still see clan associations and native places associations in Singapore. This was one form of basic attachment ethnic Chinese had, one form of loyalty. That said, the role of such organisations are less apparent today, as the state took over many of their original social functions. Members of the same clan or village would send remittances back to their home villages and these associations would also take care of their members while they were in Singapore. That was how they saw "China," "Tng Sua" (唐山 in Hokkien) or "Tong Shan" (in Cantonese) (唐山) — something very personal and local. Some of what we term "secret societies" today used to take on these roles and features too. Based around these groups, there were literal fights over who controlled which industries and territories from which to extract resources.

Concurrently, there was the colonial administration, which for some time, did consider people who migrated to Singapore from what we broadly conceive of as China today as colonial subjects. The colonial state took them to be cheap forms of labour whose movement could be regulated and whose rights could be limited. They could be banished and did not require representation, except to mitigate what colonial authorities saw as social problems. Yet, for the ease and convenience of colonial administration, if a person came from what colonial administrators called "China," they were categorised as "Chinese" in a way that flattens out diversity.

When considering the development of Chinese nationalism in the late 19th century, various revolutionary groups all laid claim to some idea of "China" and "Chinese-ness." Today, we generally do not look at groups that want to assassinate people, overthrow governments and bomb things in a very positive light. We classify them as terrorists. But these was what things like the Revolutionary Alliance or Tongmenghui (同盟會) were doing, and they were trying to draw in and pull in local Chinese communities. Why? Because local ethnic Chinese groups would then donate money, they would volunteer and participate in uprisings. These revolutioary groups were contesting over the loyalties of these people against the Qing imperial state. These actors wished to define "China" and "Chinese" more instrumentally, in ways that facilitated the attainment of their goals. In these respects, they had some success — see the commemoration at the Sun Yat-sen Villa off Balestier Road.

Overlapping claims on what "China" and "Chinese" meant did not end with the revolutionary groups. The Qing state too was arguing that members of the Chinese communities in Singapore should be imperial subjects. After all, the British colonial authorities treated these people as alien residents in legal status. This claim had some pull. If we go to Bukit Brown, you can see that the idea of being Qing subjects had deep roots in Singapore and the Singapore local community. From the engravings of years on tombs, it is clear that people were happy to associate themselves for posterity with Qing imperial reigns. There was clearly a tussle over who ethnic Chinese in Singapore were loyal to politically from very early on in the island's history.

Moving forward to the very complicated Republican era in China, different political parties and your different regimes were as well trying to woo

the loyalties of ethnic Chinese in Singapore. A reason as again so that they could get money and mobilise support from overseas for objectives in China. This contention for the political affiliations and affections of ethnic Chinese in Singapore continued into the Sino-Japanese war period. Chiang Kai-shek's (蔣介石) KMT (中國國民黨) government in Chongqing (重慶 Chungking), the rival KMT regime led by Wang Ching-wei (汪精衛) in Nanjing (南京 Nanking), and the ascendant Chinese Communist Party (中國共產黨) were all part of this contestation over who gets to be defined as Chinese and who gets to call on the loyalties of these Chinese.

This trajectory I just laid out for you, extends obviously into the post-Second World War period, the Cold War, and the era surrounding Singapore's independence. Whether you are Malayan, whether you have affinities with the Chinese or Malayan Communist Parties, whether you have some ideas of being part of a greater China, these were all fought over. Such fluid and contentiousness over who and what are "Chinese" as well as what such identifications mean are all a part of Singapore's past and its political history.

3. Being Ethnic Chinese in Singapore

Singapore's past leads our society to where it is are today. Ethnic Chinese identity continues to be in flux and tension. Such tension is present in many ways, even if their manifestations are less violent than before. For example, many ethnic Chinese in Singapore seem to ask, "If you are ethnic Chinese, what do you do when you have migrants from today's PRC?" Then there are migrants of different class backgrounds, what do you do with them? How do you live with them and next to them? In addition, the PRC state seems to be engaging in increasingly overt efforts to reach out to and activate ethnic Chinese communities across the world, not just in Singapore. Beijing's goal appears to be trying to with the support of ethnic Chinese overseas to advance the PRC's state interests. Current diasporic mobilisation attempts clearly echo the historical precedents discussed earlier and ethnic Chinese persons in Singapore have to face these issues.

Ethnic Chinese in Singapore also face constant anxieties about whether you speak Mandarin and do so well enough. Such worries pick up from past

concerns over whether someone comes from a Chinese school or not. Those are legacies that ethnic Chinese live with. The very mixed, contested bag of what is ethnic Chinese or not then interacts with the local society to which it belongs. This local society has, as everyone knows, a very significant minority population. How this majority ethnic Chinese population, insofar as it sees itself as maintaining certain internal consistencies, interacts and lives with minorities brings up another set of issues that require attention, discussion, and care.

4. Challenges of Growing Plurality

My research areas includes participation in a national identity project covering Southeast and parts of East Asia, under which is a section on Singapore. A segment of this work involves discourse analyses on key texts from the official languages in Singapore. A theme that stands out from the Mandarin texts is that ethnic Chinese in Singapore tend to emphasise efficient government, stability and all that, but also have this attachment to a peculiar idea of Chinese culture and ethnicity.

On one hand, there seems to be some anxiety over whether they are authentic enough, whether they are Chinese enough, whether they are losing their roots. On the other, there is the idea of valuing a multicultural Singapore. If someone puts the two together, there seems to be self-doubt over cultural identification but a simultaneous recognition that overcoming such insecurities and embracing diversity is of value. Ethnic Chinese in Singapore appear to leave unresolved the follow-on question on how to reconcile these different forces, at least in how they express themselves and self-identify in newspaper, novels, films and other media.

This is where I think the idea of thinking about values, particularly about how we live together, how we understand diversity both within the Chinese ethnic communities as well as across different communities in Singapore, requires more serious societal discussion. Such conversations are particularly worthwhile at moment where new realities are pushing against older approaches to handling intra-ethnic relations in Singapore. Such reflection and reconsideration should not be frightening. Just as our society outgrew

the colonial approach of explicitly segregating ethnic groups, the early post-independence view of ethnic groups as effectively separate but equal may be due for some review.

A separate but equal approach assumes that there is always going be a certain internal consistency within each ethnic category and perhaps some constancy in ethnic composition across the populaiton. Older ethnic categories are becoming less internally stable and more open to question. If this is indeed the case, how do Singapore and self-identified ethnic Chinese Singaporeans make sense of these new conditions? With migration and marriage, almost a third of Singapore marriages are with non-Singaporeans; they are international. Consequently, there are a growing number of people whose parents registered them with some sort of double-barrelled ethnic categorisation. Should these individuals pay into and receive assistance from Singapore's ethnic-based self-help organisations to which they feel little affinity? For that matter, the classification of "Mother Tongue" for these people in the formal education system becomes yet another question. These are just some examples of how Singapore's approach to managing inter-ethnic relations is facing new strain.

I worry that not adapting adequately to this new situation makes Singapore subject to pressures from within and without that have the potential to pull us apart as society and citizens. Singapore society needs to develop the intellectual and cultural resources to deal with this sort of new diversity in meaningful ways. They need to go beyond saying we like each other's food and have some interaction with other ethnic groups. I note that a 2017 IPS Institute of Policy Studies finds that Singaporeans, especially ethnic Chinese Singaporeans, tend not to have friends from other ethnic groups. They tend not to inter-mingle and their cross- cultural understanding tends to be low.

Limited interaction and understanding of each other can have significant and negative consequences, even if inadvertently so. An example are the recent debates over Chinese majority privilege. By not being more mindful and conscious about inclusivity, the emphasis on "Chinese-ness" in Singapore can inadvertently erase and marginalise minorities in Singapore further. A favourite example — and one I get some flak over — is the response to the film "Crazy Rich Asians" when it was released.

Admittedly it is an American film that apparently had some degree of official support, if not sanction, in Singapore and was received with uncritical enthusiasm among many quarters here. This makes all of us complicit in the film in some way. This complicity is problematic because in celebrating the film there is inadvertent celebration of an erasure of minorities in Singapore — that is, normalising and reinforcing the view that minorities are at best servants or foils for comic relief. Such lack of reflexivity is not helpful for meaningful engagement among ethnic Chinese Singaporeans and minorities in Singapore.

Moreover, news reports repeatedly point to instances where minorities in Singapore go for interviews get turned down for jobs despite their qualifications, including the ability to speak Mandarin. This creates a strong sense of suspicion that they were not hired because of race, although in some cases this reason can be stated more explicitly. In the public discussion as well are housing advertisements that state an unwillingness to rent to certain ethnic groups, often minorities or new immigrants. At times property agents will tell potential tenants that a property is unavailable to them despite their meeting all the necessary financial and other criteria simply because owners do not wish to rent on the basis of ethnicity.

In face of such conditions, the social resource that perhaps needs further cultivation are ways to better address the rising plurality in society. As the numerically dominant ethnic group, the Singaporean Chinese perhaps could reflect more on how to be more accommodating. After all, numbers mean that we are the least marginalised and more empowered, especially in relative terms. To move forward, maybe what Singapore needs to do as a whole is to think more explicitly about non-discrimination and what discrimination means. For the majority ethnic Chinese, this reflection means considering both the diversity we have within alongside ways to better to accommodate and be more mindful of minority concerns.

Explicit discussions of this nature are critical to moving forward as a society, but often not seen enough in public discourse because of a fear that anything that touches on race is just inherently dangerous. Not discussing such issues frankly and honestly may be no less risky. At issue may be less about whether there is discussion about ethnicity but rather how to do so. Improving the processes of having a conversation about more difficult and perhaps

uncomfortable issues seems a little lacking in Singapore. The present time may be a timely historical juncture at which to do so.

5. A Return to the Political

Going back to politics, if you consider the principles that supposedly underpin the Singapore state — ideas of peace, progress, justice, equality, democracy, these are good places to begin a conversation about who we are, who we want to be as Singaporeans. This may have a bearing on both how ethnic Chinese in Singapore see ourselves and how we relate to other ethnic groups. At issue is not simply to have these values in place as labels for convenient waving during National Day, Religious Harmony Day, or every morning during school assemblies. Rather, as people in Singapore we may have a duty to ourselves and each other to think about how to embed these principles into legislation and policy in ways that afford the sorts of protection and accommodation can move Singapore ahead. Migration and other social trends seem to point to the fact that growing plurality and diversity is an inevitable fact of life in Singapore that everyone living here has to face.

In locating Singapore within a world that is increasingly inter-connected, recognising the tensions that come about from these developments is probably something important for society to do. Such processes requires reflection on a person or a group's position within society relative to others, including the advantages and pitfalls of such positionality. Being ethnic Chinese in Singapore is one such position to think about, especially in light of how fluid concepts of "Chinese-ness" happens to be across time and space. A willingness to engage on such matters may help us avoid some of the tensions that have become expressed in racist and discriminatory terms in some societies. I refer not just to the anti-immigrant sentiment in North America and Europe, places sometimes loosely termed "the West," but also the treatment minorities in China, such as Uighurs in Xinjiang.

Living in a world with these tensions — and bearing in mind Singapore's small size and heterogenous society — means that it is not possible to pretend that new tensions arising from increased diversity do not exist. Adjusting to such conditions and meeting such challenges should invite a greater willingness

and desire to find new approaches to accommodating the increasing plurality at home. What I have done, I hope, is to raise a series of questions. As someone who is also trying to grapple with such issues — as you can probably tell from the tentative nature of this text — I suppose I can at best only try to grasp at a partial answer. That is to welcome and hope for a greater, more reflective — even self-critical — discussion on the values that should underpin our society and how to make them meaningful in addressing the different facets of Singapore.

Such conversations about ethnicity and inter-ethnic relations in Singapore, including what it means to be ethnic Chinese in Singapore or Singaporean Chinese, should recognise and be comfortable with the fluidity that is necessarily part of this process. Just as with definitions on who and what are Chinese and Chinese in Singapore, there are a multiplicity of lived experiences. These face contestation and evolve over time. They are inherently unstable in some way, much as many would like to think otherwise. This instability is a call to open up dialogue and invite courage, honesty, and cordiality as debates and exchanges occur over these sets of issues. This year marks modern Singapore's bicentennial. Perhaps this is an opportune moment to consider the directions in which to move Singapore society ahead together, as people who live with each other in a society and have a shared claim as citizens.

Co-ethnic Relations in Singapore, Between Being a "Diaspora Hub" and a Nation-state

Elaine L.E HO

Department of Geography, National University of Singapore

My topic is on co-ethnic relations in Singapore as a "diaspora hub". At the start, I would like to explain what do I mean by a "diaspora hub". A diaspora hub refers to a site where migration flows both converge and diverge, meaning we see inflows of migrants as well as outflows of Singaporeans; at the same time there may well be immigrants who will re-migrate. A diaspora hub is characterised by cultural diversity and multi-nationality, including the sharing of physical and social space with co-ethnics from other countries. In today's talk I will refer to Chinese co-ethnics residing in Singapore, but clearly, there are also co-ethnics from South Asian countries and elsewhere.

Co-ethnics are often assumed to share cultural similarity, when in fact, co-ethnicity is inflected by multiple axes of differentiation, such as by nationality and socio-economic status. Academic research on co-ethnicity has often focused on ethnic nations such as Japan or Korea, which are thought to be culturally homogenous. But in my work, I want to argue that co-ethnicity dynamics matter in multicultural societies like Singapore too, which is both a diaspora hub as well as a nation state. My presentation today draws on a newly-published book titled "Citizens in Motion: Emigration, Immigration and Re-Migration Across China's Borders"[1], as well as a book chapter I have

[1] Ho, E.L.-E. (2019). *Citizens In Motion: Emigration, Immigration, And Re-Migration Across China's Borders*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

published in a volume edited by Professor Zhou Min[2], titled "Contemporary Chinese Diasporas".

"Citizens in Motion" takes Chinese migration as the starting point to study the migration patterns that connect nation building and citizenship in both origin and destination sites. The book is anchored in transnationalism scholarship, but in the book I also analysed the "citizenship constellations" that are forged as a result of the connections between origin and destination sites. I described the Chinese abroad as populations that are caught between two worlds. On the one hand they are regarded by China as co-ethnics that should serve the ancestral land, on the other hand, the countries they reside in, whether it's Canada, Singapore or elsewhere, also seek to cultivate and mobilise their national identity and loyalty. The Chinese abroad today come from multiple sites of origin and destination, so their migration patterns are very complex. As a result of these migration and re-migration flows, the Chinese diaspora has also adopted a variety of languages, cultures and national identifications.

Returning to the case of Singapore: in academic research, Singapore can be described as a typical settler nation, in that its national story is characterised by immigrant histories and continues to be shaped by contemporary immigration. The earlier arrivals are considered progenitors of the nation, resulting in what legal scholar Catherine Dauvergne[3] describes as an immigration hierarchy of people in the nation. I would add that settler nations contain multiple diasporas that are affiliated to different origin sites — for example China, India — and they identify with different periods of migration, even if they are from the same ancestral land. In the book, I argued therefore that we need to pay greater attention to the "periodisation of migration" — how both time and space matter when it comes to migration debates.

Population numbers released by Singapore's Department of Statistics[4] indicated there were 1.64 million foreigners in a population of 5.64 million

[2] Ho, E.L.-E. & Foo, F.Y. (2017). Debating integration in Singapore, deepening the variegations of the Chinese diaspora. In Zhou, M. (Ed.), *Contemporary Chinese Diasporas* (pp. 105–125). Singapore: Springer Singapore.

[3] Dauvergne, C. (2016). *The New Politics Of Immigration And The End Of Settler Societies*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

[4] Department of Statistics (2018). *Population Trends: 2018.* Singapore: Department of Statistics, Ministry of Trade and Industry.

people in 2018. However, the information released do not indicate the ethnic or nationality composition of the foreigners in Singapore. For this information, I turned to the UN Population Division's research[5] which gives an indication of the number of migrants from China (excluding Hong Kong and Macau) who are based in Singapore. Year on year, the numbers have increased, with the greatest five-year increase observed during the period from 2010 to 2015. There were about 450,000 migrants from China in 2015, marking an increase of nearly 83,000 people in 2010. It is difficult to decipher from the numbers alone which visa types did these migrants belong to, but it is likely the majority of them are work permit holders who are temporary migrants. New immigrant schemes have also been introduced to attract entrepreneurs and investor migrants to Singapore, many of them are likely from China.

My preamble is meant to bring across the point that there exist multiple cohorts of Chinese people in Singapore. These include the Chinese diasporic descendants, you might not be familiar with this term, but they are also known as the *huayi* (华裔) — such as Singaporeans of Chinese descent. Alongside them are the new Chinese immigrants, the *xinyimin* (新移民) in Singapore today. The *xinyimin* share phenotypical similarity, meaning they look alike, as well as have a common language and customs as the *huayi*, but they are also differentiated from locally born Singaporean *huayi* by their accents, dialects and some say, the way they carry themselves and their outlook in life.

So far in the migration debates in Singapore, we have mainly differentiated locally born Singaporean Chinese from the *xinyimin* born in Mainland Chinese; for short, usually I refer to the latter in my presentations as the PRC Chinese. However, I would like to add two more points. First, there also exists cohort differentiation amongst the *xinyimin* in Singapore. Second, integration is often an elusive goal for the new immigrants because of the immigration hierarchy I had earlier described. Prioritising and naturalising the sense of belonging of those born in Singapore — descendants of the "pioneer immigrants" from China and India — inadvertently excludes those who come later. Both

[5] UN Population Division (2017). International Migrant Stock: the 2017 revision. Retrieved from https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/estimates2/estimates17.asp. Accessed on 26 June 2019.

points I have made pertain to the time of migrant arrival, or what I call the "periodisation of migration".

Let me start with the point on cohort differentiation amongst the *xinyimin*. It is common knowledge that the *xinyimin* who are business investors and professionals can be eligible for long term settlement in Singapore by becoming permanent residents (PR) or new Singapore Citizens (SC). There also exist students as well as service and low-skilled workers who are on temporary visas. It is known that the *xinyimin* have different regional affiliations from the pioneer immigrants who came from Chinese provinces like Guangdong, Fujian or Hainan Island. But through my research, I want to further argue that the *xinyimin* are far from a homogenous category — in a study that I did with the *xinyimin*, the interviewees distinguished between different cohorts of *xinyimin*.

In this presentation, I will draw on two terms which my respondents used themselves — *lao xinyimin* (老新移民) and *xin xinyimin* (新新移民). The labels *lao xinyimin*, which for short I shall just say *laoyimin* and *xin xinyimin*. These are emic labels, meaning they were raised by the interviewees themselves, rather than by the researcher. The labels were used in a study that I did with 20 PRC immigrants, all of whom were PRs or naturalised citizens in Singapore. That self-categorisation I learnt, is tied to Singapore's evolving visa policies and China's development trajectory. I should add that the term *laoyimin* (老移民) is used differently in different national contexts. In Canada, for example, the *laoyimin* would refer to the Hong Kong immigrants, as a way of differentiating themselves from the *xinyimin* from Mainland China — so these labels actually have very distinct geographical nuances.

In this slide, you will see from the table a summary of the key visas my interviewees had used to come to Singapore. Over the years, the criteria for these visas have been raised, for example the monthly salary of those on employment passes and the funding required to qualify for business and investor visas have increased over the years. From my study, the interviewees described the *laoyimin* as those who had migrated to Singapore during the 1990s or early 2000s. At that time, the salary requirements were lower, and they mostly lived in HDB flats rather than private apartments. They also worked in local companies, and as they put it, they had little choice but to integrate. My research was prompted by debates in Singapore on integration. I wanted to understand better what do the *xinyimin* think of integration.

Alongside those conditions in Singapore, the *laoyimin* highlighted that their own upbringing and outlook were shaped by the conditions in China when they were growing up. When they were growing up, China was still a lower-income country and they lived in modest conditions. Opportunities for university education were scarce and they could be considered — they called themselves the "*jingying*" (精英) — the cream of the crop of their generation because they qualified to enrol in universities at that time.

From 2004 onwards, Singapore started to court rich entrepreneurs and investor migrants, which the study participants referred to as the *xin xinyimin*. Colloquially, this new cohort are also sometimes described as the "crass rich", the *tuhao* (土豪), or the "new rich", the *xinfu* (新富). The *xin xinyimin* comprise a distinct cohort, different from the *laoyimin* because they migrated to Singapore with higher salaries or assets. They tend to live in private property, sometimes of their own choice, sometimes because of our housing policies that have conditions which new PRs need to fulfil before they can purchase HDB flats. They work in professions that leverage connections with China and they tend to socialise in PRC Chinese circles. Many of the *xin xinyimin* are also single children of one child families in China. With these relatively more privileged conditions, they are said to face greater challenges integrating into multi-cultural Singapore, partly because they do not interact as much with locally born Singaporeans, especially the HBD dwellers or in the workplace. These observations were shared by my respondents from both the *laoyimin* and *xin xinyimin* categories.

I should add that the challenges of integration are tied to changing immigration policies. As I highlighted earlier, the requirements to immigrate to Singapore have been increasing, while housing and education policies (for the children of immigrants) are becoming more restrictive. For example, it is harder now for PRs to purchase HDB flats because of the PR quota, and the waiting period of 3 years before they can purchase a flat.

Summing up the above, as one of my interviewees, a *laoyimin*, puts it: "today's situation is entirely different from the 1990s, there are plenty of Chinese students who are coming to Singapore for education and they will not feel lonely. For us — the *laoyimin* — at that time, there were only 50 of us. When 50 of us were separated to different institutions, you don't meet

up anymore. There were very few Chinese people at that time, as in those from China, so it is different from now. The Chinese like to gather in their own small social groups, these social groups may have a negative influence on [their integration]". The *laoyimin* was referring to the *xin xinyimin*, suggesting that they are less willing to integrate into the local culture.

I want to move onto my second key point, which is how new immigrants are subject to integration expectations in Singapore. Integration refers to a process by which migrants adapt to the receiving society at a policy level, as well as migrants' own experiences of negotiating change. There are two aspects of integration in the literature: functional integration which measures aspects like labour market outcomes, and emotional integration which is manifested as identity, loyalty and belonging. The emotional successes of integration are harder to achieve and measure, and I should add that in the case of Singapore, integration also intersects with our multi-cultural ethos. I won't elaborate on the multi-cultural policy in Singapore as this audience is likely to be familiar with it; what I wish to highlight here is the way that the "CMIO model" has been premised on multi-culturalism but could it be a version of multi-culturalism that in fact hinders integration given Singapore's changing population dynamics today? As a society, we are getting more diverse and this diversity is no longer premised on observable racial difference alone. It also has to do with the axes of identity that distinguish co-ethnics from one another. The CMIO model, I argue, has served us well, but it prioritises the ethnic identities tied to earlier waves of immigration; those of the pioneer immigrants and whose descendants are today born and bred as Singaporeans.

New Chinese immigrants are expected to adopt the purported qualities of native-born citizens; it's not only the case in Singapore. If you look at the wider academic literature, similar cohort and co-ethnic distinctions have emerged in Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan.[6] Such cultural differences come to be

[6] Respectively Newendorp, N.D. (2008). *Uneasy reunions: immigration, citizenship, and family life in post-1997 Hong Kong*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press. ; Clayton, C.H. (2009). *Sovereignty at the edge: Macau & the question of Chineseness.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Asia Center: Distributed by Harvard University Press.; Friedman, S. (2015). *Exceptional states: Chinese immigrants and Taiwanese sovereignty* (1st ed.). Oakland, California: University of California Press.

magnified during the immigrants' encounters with locally-born Singaporeans. Since these cultural differences are qualitative, they are difficult to pin down and the precise feature of differentiation varies by social group and in different social encounters. It's very slippery to say how "they" are different from "us". The Singaporean Chinese identity is entwined with the multi-cultural narrative that Singapore espouses yet it glosses over co-ethnic distinction. There's a category in the census known as "Chinese", but that figure of 74.3 per cent Chinese that makes up the Singaporean population doesn't quite capture the distinctions between different cohorts of Chinese people in Singapore. Legal theorist Ayelet Shachar[7] has argued that birthright citizenship, or citizenship that you acquire by birth in the country, privileges natal-ties — people who are born and bred in the country. In the case of Singapore, this notion of "birthright" also priorities the pioneer ethnic identity, the "C (for Chinese), M (for Malay) and I (for Indian)", as well as the Eurasians under "O". As different cohorts of immigrants arrive in Singapore, an immigration hierarchy is created and each successive cohort advances its own claim to belonging to the national territory, side-lining the belonging of later cohorts.

In this presentation, I have referred to Singapore as a diaspora hub, connotating the diversity of people with mixed nationalities living within that grapples with the consolidation needed from being a nation state too. We can't prevent or deny the spheres of inclusion or exclusion that emerge as a result of Singapore's dual identity, as both a diaspora hub and a nation state, but what I would like to emphasize here again, is that a static, insular and essentialising approach towards identity-making and integration in Singapore can be more limiting than helpful for a global city state like ours, particularly with diminishing coherent cultural systems and traditional institutions.

I would like to end by suggesting that there are other pathways of thinking about integration, noting in particular that integration is a two-way street. The suggestions that I want to highlight here are drawn from other researchers, in particular a special issue in the *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* on

[7] Shachar, A. (2009). *The Birthright Lottery: Citizenship and Global Inequality*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

integration in the context of super diversity[8], as well as my own observations from a decade of researching Chinese migration in different countries. These three pathways towards integration are not mutually exclusive. First, we might look into ways where we can encourage what is called "social anchoring". You might remember from the earlier quotations that I shared, there are particular spaces in Singapore which are important for enabling immigrants to establish "footholds", footholds that can connect identities, provide emotional security and foster integration. Immigrants want emotional security too. Such footholds could be through property ownership, especially living amongst other Singaporeans in HDB estates; shared experiences in school, many of the new Chinese immigrants have young children in schools; or the work places where they end up being hired and spending a lot of working time in; as well as through volunteer activities. These are spaces in which we can cultivate social anchoring. Second, we should recognise and accept "differentiated embedding", which refers to how immigrants achieve, to varying degrees, the functional, relational, emotional and civic aspects of integration. These will continue to be on-going processes, we don't get from A to Z in a few years' time. Such on-going processes of integration happen across an immigrant's life course.

Lastly, I want to draw attention to concerns over immigrants' transnational ties. China engages strategically and ambitiously in diaspora strategizing, trying to engage and leverage the diaspora. But these transnational ties, I would suggest, may in fact enhance immigrants' identification with Singapore at certain moments. In other research that I've done, I found that when co-ethnics encounter one another, it sharpens a sense of differentiation. This is the same for Singaporeans who go to work in China as well. For the new immigrants who have lived in Singapore for some time, perhaps these transnational ties and their visits home can heighten their awareness of being Chinese *from Singapore*. This observation draws on research I've done with the

[8] E.g. Grzymala-Kazlowska, A. (2018). From connecting to social anchoring: adaptation and 'settlement' of Polish migrants in the UK. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *44*, 252–269; Ryan, L. (2018). Differentiated embedding: Polish migrants in London negotiating belonging over time. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 44*, 233–251.

PRC immigrants in Canada who became Canadian citizens then re-migrated to China[9]. In the interviews I did with them, I found that even though they have re-migrated to China, they constantly emphasized their "Canadian identity", describing this as one that respects multi-culturalism, upholding law and order. They were distinguishing their Chinese-ness (as Chinese who have lived in and become "Canadian") from the identities of the domestic mainland Chinese (who have not left China before). Re-encountering "the domestic" co-ethnic through transnational ties and home visits might heighten new immigrants' awareness of being Chinese *from Singapore*, differentiating themselves from the domestic Chinese.

With these three pathways, I conclude my presentation and hope that I have left you with some thoughts for further discussion.

[9] Ho, E.L.E. & Ley, D. (2014). "Middling" Chinese returnees or immigrants from Canada? The ambiguity of return migration and claims to modernity. *Asian Studies Review*, *38*, 36–52.

On Speaking Singlish: An Autobiographical Take on My Postmodern (Chinese) Identity

Terence LEE

College of Arts, Business, Law and Social Sciences, Murdoch University

> In short, if I am inescapably Chinese by *descent*, I am only sometimes Chinese by *consent*. When and how is a matter of politics.
>
> Ien Ang (2001). *On Not Speaking Chinese: Living Between Asia and the West*, p. 36.

1. Introduction: On speaking Singlish

This paper, originally delivered as a speech, offers an abbreviated autobiographical take of my personal encounter with my Chinese identity — and takes me away from my regular writings on aspects of media, culture and politics of Singapore and Asia (see: Lee, 2010; Tan & Lee, 2011; Lee & Tan, 2016; Lim & Lee, 2016). It speaks as much about my identity as an ethnic Chinese from Singapore as it does about the discourse of postmodernity. The fact that I am expressing myself in written and spoken English whilst being very much at home with *Singlish* is very telling. As *The Coxford Singlish Dictionary* published by the former Singaporean satirical website, Talkingcock.com (2002), points out in its introduction:

> Singlish is unique to Singapore, and listening to its mish-mash of various languages and dialects, often involving bad transliterations,

> is also very, very funny. Contrary to popular belief, it is not merely badly spoken English, akin to pidgin. There is a conscious art in Singlish — a level of ingenious and humourous wordplay, as evidenced by phrases such as *pattern tzua kuay badminton* or *jangan tension*, that is equalled only perhaps by Cockney rhyming slang. Singlish is to be celebrated as a cultural phenomenon, not buried, as some misguided people have been trying to do (Talkingcock.com 2002, p. viii).

I speak in English mainly because I am known amongst my family, friends and peers as thoroughly Anglophonic. As a third generation and English-speaking Singaporean who has sojourned outside Singapore for more than half my life, or about twenty-five years, speaking English is critically significant. It is more than a lingua franca to me. It is something I completely take for granted — until I am tasked to use my Chinese name at an event or speak at a Chinese Studies conference (such as the Diversity and Singapore Chinese Communities International Conference at the Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre, from which this paper is based on).

I often joke that my original ambition when I was a child was to be a stand-up comedian, but since I was not permitted to pursue any form of frivolity due to my strict Asian upbringing, I decided that the next best thing was to become an academic so that I can unpack a person's identity and interrogate as critically as I desire. I am taking this opportunity to rethink how I (have) come to terms with my own identity; and to speak about my many encounters with being Chinese. This is, to use a musical analogy, my 'unplugged' autobiographical take on my postmodern Chinese identity.

This paper begins with the presentation of some scholarly contexts, tracking my socio-cultural encounters from the 1970s and 1980s at school in Singapore through to my adult years attending university in Australia in the 1990s. These have collectively informed my views — consolidated over my youth to adult years over the past roughly 25 years — on what it means to be an ethnic Singaporean-Chinese now domiciled in Australia.

2. Contexts

The first title of this paper 'On Speaking Singlish' is in fact appropriated from the work of Professor Ien Ang, a distinguished professor of Cultural Studies at Western Sydney University, Australia. I was captivated by Ang's work while undertaking her course on Cultural Difference and Diversity during my second year of undergraduate studies at Murdoch University during the 1990s. Ang was already well-known and well-regarded at the time, and she happened to be the professor teaching the course then.

Having studied and enjoyed geography at 'O' level in Singapore, I thought I knew everything. Clearly I did not; at least not about postmodernity's influence on identity and the concept of diaspora. That course, along with subsequent other courses, opened my eyes and mind to a whole new world of thinking about identity and diasporic imaginations.

The many unanswered questions I had accumulated during my journey from childhood and youth to adulthood began to unravel as I read Ang's 1994 journal article entitled 'On not speaking Chinese: postmodern identity and the politics of diaspora', published in *New Formations*. One line in particular that appeared in that journal article — that I have cited in the opening quote to this paper — struck a chord within me, as Ang described her postmodern identity thus: "if I am inescapably Chinese by *descent*, I am only sometimes Chinese by *consent*." (2001, p. 36). Ang subsequently reprised her work on diasporic Chineseness several years later with a book length monograph entitled *On Not Speaking Chinese: Living Between Asia and the West* (2001). It is in the spirit of Ang's writings that I am writing about 'On Speaking Singlish'.

3. 1970s: Recurring Identity Crises

I was born in the early 1970s with an English name: Terence. I discovered during my primary school years that I was named after a famous actor in those days, Terence Hill. There were no other interesting stories around the origin of my name, which seemed rather tragic then. My late father was enthralled by the Hollywood cinematic acting duo, Terence Hill and Bud Spencer, which the older generation would remember. In my curiosity, I remember watching one or two flicks which featured Hill and Spencer and decided they were not really

my cup of tea, even though they shared a common comic desire with me. At least I could be comforted that Terence Hill was the more popular of the duo and, thankfully, the better looking one as well.

Both my parents entered the noble profession of nursing and as such were educated in English. But like everyone else in Singapore, they spoke more Singlish daily. Both sets of my parents and grandparents are/were Hainanese. In fact, my maternal grandparents were first generation migrants from Hainan Island, so I had to speak Hainanese at a young age. It was sheer pragmatism because if I did not greet them with g*ong hee huat tsai* annually during Lunar New Year, I would not get my *ang baos*. In many ways, it would mark the extent to which I had to learn Hainanese. Language policy also had much to do with the dilution, even obliteration, of dialects in Singapore, something I am sure I had fallen prey to somehow. I grew to lament the loss of dialect-speaking as I grew older and recognised identity-values inherent in my *real* mother-tongue. As an aside, I discovered only in 2018 where I currently live in Perth, Western Australia, that a lively Hainanese association exists and I was invited to join the group (something I have yet to gather enough courage to do as I am as hopeless as it gets in speaking Hainanese, quite unlike my Singlish competency).

It was not until my latter years in primary school that I realised Singlish is not English. It is convenient, it is comfortable for day-to-day interactions and I think in many ways it still is today. You could say that at the time my preference was to speak Singlish predominantly, not exceptionally, but daily and very frequently. But I had to study Chinese in school. Why? For no other reason than the fact that I am racially or ethnically Chinese. My preference for speaking English or Singlish meant that I was labelled a *banana* from my first year in primary school — yellow on the outside and white on the inside. The other popular term was *jiak kantang*, or a potato-eater (as opposed to a rice-eater). I believe it was a teacher in Primary 1 who gave me the *banana* moniker as it was quite clear that I was a Singaporean Chinese fluent in English and not Mandarin. It was really puzzling for me then, but as I enjoyed eating bananas, I took on that label with some degree of pride — until I discovered it was meant to be derogatory. Also, I enjoy potatoes and I still do to this day, especially when they are baked or mashed!

The launch of the Speak Mandarin Campaign by then-Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew in 1979 reinforced my linguistic lack. Partly to compensate for this lack, my parents enrolled me to a Chinese school that prided itself in all things Chinese. This would be Pei Chun Public School in Toa Payoh, a school which reportedly — and repeatedly — produced the top-scoring PSLE student for many years. It was, and still is, a highly academically excellent school. I understand that it is still situated in Toa Payoh and is a behemoth of a school currently. In fact, I was told that it has gradually swallowed up all the other schools surrounding it. Being a primary school student at Pei Chun Public School was a fun experience, although it was also harrowing. I picked up many things that were stereotypically seen as 'Chinese'. For instance, I became really good in table tennis, or *da ping pang*; and learned the names of some Chinese musical instruments.

My primary school years in the 1970s was a period which threw up questions around my recurring identity crises, the core one being: does being Chinese equate with speaking Chinese and not having an Anglo name? Bearing in mind that I still answer to 'Terence', even to this day, this question is not easy to answer.

4. 1980s to the early-1990s: Identity Consciousness Raised

The second phase of my growing years, from 1980s to the early 1990s, from high school to my National Service conscription, was when my consciousness about identity was heightened. By the time I entered secondary school in the late-eighties, English names were gaining traction, either self-endowed or due to the rise of Christianity in those days. With newly baptised converts bestowed with Christian or Catholic names, some of them would try to outdo those who were named at birth by having two or three different Anglo or European names — with names of eminent priests or biblical prophets inserted to depict newfound identities and values. Many of my Singaporean peers marked their 'born again' statuses in this manner at the time.

During this period, Singaporeans witnessed the growing dominance of what became known then as 'English-knowing bilingualism' — here I reference the excellent work of National University of Singapore's (NUS) linguist Professor Anne Pakir (1992 & 1993). English would take on the role

of primary language, followed by our so-called 'mother tongue', which in my case, as pointed out earlier, should really be Hainanese rather than Chinese. The well-rehearsed discourse of Singapore's '4Ms' — namely, multiracialism, multiculturalism, multilingualism and multireligiosity — has been spoken about at length, even by other speakers/authors of this volume, so I do not need to revisit it here. Suffice to note here that the privileging of English as Singapore's *lingua franca* sat comfortably with me, although there would soon be other pitfalls.

Life became less challenging as I started to meet other 'Terences', if you like, as well as friends with other English names, adopted or otherwise. (In fact, I forged an amicable friendship with my namesake, another 'Terence Lee', a political scientist at NUS, not too long ago.) During my high school years, I savoured the freedom to communicate in English — and in Singlish — without sticking out like a sore thumb nor appearing peculiar. At the same time, I had to consciously reconnect with what appeared to be my Chinese-ness by descent. I recall having to assuage older relatives from time to time that I was not going to lose my Chinese identity simply because I was not as competent in speaking Mandarin — as well as a host of Chinese dialects. I also recall well-meaning schoolmates placing me on what I now refer to as a Chinese conversion therapy of sorts by compelling me to learn to sing Chinese/Mandarin songs either from dubbed cassette tapes or by tuning in to FM93.3, the most popular Mandarin radio station at the time. Some of them had very complicated lyrics which I failed to figure out, but thankfully, I was able to master a couple of *Wang Jie* songs (as they were quite straightforward and comprehensible). These Chinese songs came in very handy while I was serving National Service as our commanders often instructed us to sing all kinds of common songs to keep us awake whilst travelling in the three-ton trucks to and from training grounds.

The 1980s also saw the rise of locally-made TV serials in Mandarin which I dutifully consumed every prime time, made accessible thanks to the prevalence of English subtitles. I was advised to do that so that I could at least conversationally communicate with fellow Singaporeans in Mandarin. Amidst all of the above, my penchant for English language grew, including in English literature which I did at school, both 'O' and 'A' levels. I also grew to enjoy

Anglicised drama, music, media and other forms of visual and performing arts. Rightly or wrongly, I had the feeling that this was deemed somewhat puzzling, possibly unconventional. This was particularly so when one takes into account the fact that I did not attend ACS or any affiliated schools; as a result, I could not attribute it to any form of mental illness! The core identity question that emerged from this period would be: What was the *real* status of my Chinese identity and how do I reconcile this growing lack of Chineseness? As I was soon to discover, this question morphed to one that was larger after I fulfilled my military obligations and embarked on tertiary education in the 1990s.

5. 1990s: Reconciling Diasporic Identity

I left Singapore for Perth, Australia for university studies as an international student in the 1990s. I enrolled for Communications Studies at Murdoch University, aiming at that time to become a journalist. Two things struck me then. Firstly, Australians are a diverse lot, far more culturally diverse than what I had experienced while living in Singapore as a youngster. Australia offered a different view of multiculturalism, and perhaps even the mythical '4Ms'. In Australia, one gets an acute sense of cultural difference and diversity, far exceeding what I had seen or learnt as a student in Singapore. It was a plethora of different ethnicities and identities, speaking multiple languages whilst having a common English working language, not unlike Singapore. I remember walking into a government department in Australia back in the 1990s, and there were fliers that occupied the entire wall in multiple languages. I think there are fewer these days because most people go online to seek government information.

One of things that captivated me was the ability to communicate freely in English in Australia even though I did not, and still do not, regard English as my native language. I did not feel inadequate not being fully competent in Mandarin or Hainanese, and indeed any other dialect.

Up to 1996, I picked up the ropes of filmmaking, radio-presenting, screen-writing and many other forms of writing. But it was media, cultural, political, sociological theories that captivated me most. In many ways, they were linked to my own discovery about what my ethnic Chinese-ness meant. Significantly, and unbeknown to me then, I was somehow lured into dousing myself with

a range of theories that would reconcile my own diasporic and postmodern identities.

I began to be drawn into terms and discourses in cultural theory and politics, especially around scholars of diaspora, ethnicities, cosmopolitanism and hybridity. In particular, works by past and present scholars such as: Edward Said, best known for his work on *Orientalism* (Said, 1978); Stuart Hall (1973), particularly his work on encoding and decoding, among others. The Penang-born Asian-American scholar Aihwa Ong's (1999) discourse of 'flexible citizenship' was most helpful in reconciling some of the complexities of being a sojourner away from the place of my birth; and later on, Allen Chun's (2017) radical proposal to 'forget Chineseness'.

Top of the list would be the aforementioned 1994 journal article by Ien Ang. Ang's paper was also somewhat autobiographical as she unveils her encounters as a non-Mandarin speaking Chinese living in the West. Her paper helped me connect the dots of how my Chinese ethnicity Singaporean-ness in terms of my dual Singlish- and English-speaking backgrounds, and indeed my banana label, have made me who I was and am today. It was then that I began to find some preliminary answers to the questions I have accumulated since the 1970s.

Upon graduating with my first undergraduate degree, I returned to Singapore to engage in media policy work at the former Singapore Broadcasting Authority (now known as the Infocomm Media Development Authority or iMDA). I then departed again a few years later in 1999 for graduate research studies at the University of Adelaide to realise my desire to resolve myriad questions of media, culture and politics — of which diasporic identity crises is but one of many.

6. Towards Some Preliminary Responses

The postmodern identity questions may be manifold, but they are often reduced to just a few, including, in my case: Does being Chinese equate with the speaking of Chinese; and not having an Anglo or Anglicised name? What is the status of my Chinese identity? If it is deemed lacking, how do I reconcile this lack? By extension, what does it mean to say that "If I am inescapably Chinese by descent, I am only sometimes Chinese by consent"?

Ien Ang has in fact answered these questions with the accompanying sentence "when and how is a matter of politics". I would emphasise the small 'p' *politics* understood simply as the politics of 'lived experiences' that transcend spatiality and temporality. Indeed, it became evident that the question of the extent to which a Chinese identity is lived, celebrated, commemorated, even regulated in various Chinese communities around the world is answered in multifaceted ways. I argue that insofar as each Chinese community can lay claim to some degree of peculiarity or uniqueness, it is also true in the context of individuals, where my experiences and expressions of being Chinese — even an English or Singlish speaking Chinese — must not be seen as a 'lack', but as an ongoing exercise in identity formation and evolution. For this reason, the broader Singaporean Chinese identity continues to morph as Singapore as a society itself changes in tandem with, and in response to, global shifts.

As Singapore's Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong articulated something similar during his 2019 Chinese New Year speech:

> The way we celebrate Chinese New Year reflects how the Singapore Chinese identity has evolved and emerged over the years. In the process, Singaporean Chinese have become distinct from Chinese communities elsewhere, both the Chinese societies of China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, and the overseas Chinese minorities in the diaspora in South-east Asia and the West (Lee Hsien Loong, in *Today Online*, 4 Feb 2019).

These were PM Lee's own words. His words are probably quite visible to those of us who have had the privilege of visiting cities in China, in Taiwan, and in other places closer to home, such as in Southeast Asia. While these places exhibit distinctiveness, there are also feelings of affect and affinity that is in relation to being ethnically Chinese. This ethos is also captured in the mission of the Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre's mission, which states: "The Centre aspires to be a community institution for everyone to participate in and appreciate our distinctive Singapore Chinese culture, and to establish itself as a cultural landmark locally as well as in the region." (https://www.singaporeccc.org.sg/, accessed: 2 April 2019).

7. Conclusion: Geopragmatics and the Implacement of Chinese Identity

As a diasporic Singaporean Chinese living in yet another social and cultural context (Australia) for more than half of my life now, my own experience of being Chinese is one that aligns with what Allen Chun (2017) calls 'geopragmatics' in his book with the catchy main title 'Forget Chineseness'. While Chun speaks of Chinese cultural affinities and the embeddedness of Chinese centres like Taiwan, Hong Kong, even Singapore, to the larger political context of China (see Ang, 2018), my own take is premised not so much on my inescapable ethnic Chineseness, but by my discursive application of what being a hybrid, Singlish/English-speaking, migrant Singaporean/Australian Chinese by consent is. Nonetheless, I would do well to bear in mind that this approach is poised to change in the weeks, months and years to come.

I close with some thoughts put forward by Edward Casey (2009 & 2014), an American Kantian Philosopher, in his work on what he calls 'implacement'. I like to think of it as something that is diametrically opposed to 'displacement'. 'Implacement' implies that to be in a place (or to be 'implaced') is to be in a position to perceive one's position and identity, and therefore to develop a sense of being and existence. I would venture to suggest that Singapore has been a successful society and polity precisely because the different migrant cultures that settled here over the course of history have 'implaced' themselves socially, culturally and eventually, economically and politically rather than seeing themselves as being out-of-place or displaced. 'Implacement' therefore is a form of social acquisition process that develops in relation to the politics of 'lived' experiences.

This is where I see the many theories of cultural hybridity and forms of diasporic identities begin to solidify their meanings and applicability. Being Chinese in this regard gives me tremendous autonomy to make sense of my being and existence, enabling me to negotiate — and to impart to my children — only one of whom is currently learning Chinese — the power of being Chinese both by descent and consent.

Instead of seeing one's identity as an ambivalence, I would prefer to call such forms of identity, *ambidexterity* — or what Aihwa Ong (1999) would

probably refer to as expressions of "flexible citizenship". In the final analysis, this 'implaced' mode of ambidexterity is precisely that which has enabled me to fit into yet another different migrant space in Australia, even though I do not speak Singlish there.

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Panel 2

Religions and Society

狮城法音——浅谈新加坡汉传佛教*

谢明达

新加坡国立大学历史系

1. 前言

尊敬的专家、学者、老师们、同学们，大家下午好。非常感谢主办单位的邀请，让我有这个机会跟大家分享我对新加坡汉传佛教发展的看法。我昨天下午才从美国加州回到新加坡，所以现在还是有一点时差。如果我讲得不太清楚或者我讲笑话不太好笑，请大家多多包涵。

我今天讲的题目是有关新加坡汉传佛教的发展，其实也可以算是新加坡汉传佛教的百年史。主办单位给我25分钟的时间，所以我讲一百年，我每分钟可以讲四年吧。新加坡的佛教其实是非常地多样化，我们可以看到有所谓的北传佛教。北传佛教也就是大家所熟悉的汉传佛教，也就是大乘佛教。新加坡华人大多信奉汉传佛教。新加坡也有南传佛教，南传佛教也就是一般人俗称的上座部佛教，或是巴利语系佛教。主要的南传佛教地区包括了泰国、寮国、缅甸、柬埔寨以及斯里兰卡地区。近年来我们也常看到许多的藏传佛教，也就是佛教徒所称的金刚乘佛教，在新加坡开设道场，讲经说法。

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那我今天讲的主要是针对新加坡汉传佛教的本土化以及现代化現象，作为我演讲的题目。我今天的演讲主要分成三个部分。首先，我会讨论新加坡汉传佛教的简史。第二，我会讨论新加坡汉传佛教的现状，主要探讨都市社会中的佛教信仰。最后，我会和大家分享新加坡汉传佛教近年来的一些挑战以及革新的课题。

2. 新加坡汉传佛教简史

先说过去。相信大家非常熟悉，今年是莱佛士登陆新加坡的两百周年。大家可能也看到这个很有趣的图像。[1] 其实我有很多朋友跟我反映说看起来有点丑，但是因为我们今天的节目有Bicentennial（开埠两百年纪念）的赞助，所以我要讲它其实很可爱。随着莱佛士登陆，新加坡就成为英国殖民地。当时的英国人非常需要外来劳工，也因为这个原因，大量的华人从中国南部地区，主要是福建跟广东地区来到了新加坡。随着这些华人移民的到来，他们也把他们的宗教信仰带到了新加坡。早期的许多华人是在福建以及广东这两个沿海地区來到了东南亚不同的地区。[2] 随着这些华人移民的到来，他们就把宗教信仰带到东南亚不同的地区。[3]

最早来到新加坡的佛教信仰，一般学者会认为是民间佛教，或 folk Buddhism。这些民间佛教信仰有哪些主要特色？首先，一般是“三教合一”，就是儒释道三教混杂在一起的。这些所谓民间佛教的信徒通常是神佛不分，对信仰的概念就是“拜的神多神保佑”。早期来东

[1] “Statue of Sir Stamford Raffles in Boat Quay 'disappears' for Singapore Bicentennial,” *Straits Times*, 2 January 2019.

[2] 见Philip A. Kuhn, *Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008), chapters 3–4.

[3] Lim Keak, Cheng, “Chinese Deities, Emigration and Social Structure in Singapore,” *Asian Culture* 21 (June 1997): 39.

南亚地区的法师主要是做红白佛事，也就是主要以诵经拜忏仪式为主。[4] 因为这个原因，早期的华人会把这些法师称为“南无佬”（粤语）。为什么叫“南无佬”呢？因为信徒们也不知道那些法师在念些什么经，什么“南无本师释迦牟尼佛”，“南无阿弥陀佛”，他们因为法师们都常念“南无……南无……”，所以称法师为 “南无佬”。其实“南无”在巴利文和梵文指的是“皈依”的意思，就是你一心皈依哪一位佛或菩萨，所以“南无本师释迦牟尼佛”的意思是“皈依本师释迦牟尼佛”。更有趣的是，有些人甚至以为“南无”是那个法师的姓名，last name是Mr. Namo。民间佛教信仰也有求签、算命以及烧纸钱的文化习俗。早期的民间佛教团体是大家比较熟悉的佛堂或观音堂，像四马路观音堂或者如切观音堂，就是这些早期的民间佛教宗教场所。[5]

二十世纪初期，有英国人到了这些庙宇，探索新加坡的佛教信仰。有位叫Jonas Daniel Vaughan的英国律师曾在他书里*The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements*提到早期佛堂的一些宗教活动。Vaughan在书里写到，每天早上4点以及晚上4点，佛堂里就会有早晚课的诵经仪式。那些法师们会一只手拿着引磬，一手拿着锤子来敲木鱼，他们就跟着念。最有趣的是后来他就觉得很好奇，想要请教法师，到底在念什么经典。书里提到了，“We asked a priest if he understood the books.”就是他问一位法师，你了解经典念的是什么吗？“He said no, that it was a sacred and mysterious language understood

[4] 有关新加坡汉传佛教发展史，请见释传发，《新加坡佛教发展史》(新加坡：新加坡佛教居士林, 1997)；Y.D. Ong, *Buddhism in Singapore: A Short Narrative History* (Singapore: Skylark Publications, 2005)；释能度，释贤通，何秀娟，许原泰，《新加坡汉传佛教发展概述》（新加坡：药师行愿会，2010）；许源泰，《沿革与模式：新加坡道教和佛教传播研究》（新加坡：新加坡国立大学中文系，2013）。

[5] 有关观音堂及斋堂研究，请见 Show Ying Ruo, “Chinese Buddhist Vegetarian Halls (*zhaitang*) in Southeast Asia: Their Origins and Historical Implications,” *Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre Working Paper* No. 28 (July 2018).

only by the gods.” 就是法师们也不知道在念什么，以为这些是很神圣的经典，只有神明才能够了解。更有趣的是，有一位跟随着Vaughan的土生华人看了经文，“read a page of the book aloud, the words were Chinese it is true,”就是确实那个经典是中文，“but conveyed no meaning to the reader’s mind nor to the minds of those who were listening.”所以大家也不知道法师们在诵什么经典，而是盲目地在念那本经文。[6]

二十世纪初叶，我们在新加坡就能看到所谓的寺院佛教（institutional Buddhism）以及正信佛教（orthodox Buddhism）的兴起。新加坡最早成立的寺院就是清末时期，当时由刘金榜居士（1838–1909）和贤慧法师一起发起的莲山双林寺。[7] 目前也是新加坡非常重要的历史古迹之一。寺院佛教或者正信佛教的兴起跟当时南来南洋地区弘法的法师有非常密切的关系。当时主要有两个非常重要的法师来到新加坡，其中一位是转道法师（1872–1943）。转道法师在新加坡成立了龙山寺、普陀寺以及光明山普觉禅寺这些非常重要的寺院。[8] 随着这些寺院的兴起，后来宏船法师（1907–1990）在1943年抵达新加坡，之后因为宏船法师和转道法师是同样是属于喝云派，所以转道法师就传法于宏船法师，让他接任光明山普觉禅寺住持之职。宏船法师成为光明山普觉禅寺的第二任住持，随后担任新加坡佛教总会会长，并与其他宗教领袖发起新加坡宗教联谊会（Inter-Religious Organisation），是新加坡非常重要的宗教人物之一。[9] 说到了光明山也非常有趣，因为经常我和其他国外研究中国以及台湾汉传佛教的一些学者讨论，提到中国大陆的汉传

[6] Jonas Daniel Vaughan, *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of the Straits Settlements* (Singapore: The Mission Press, 1879), 53–54.

[7] 叶钟铃，〈刘金榜创建双林禅寺始末〉，《亚洲文化》第21期，1997年6月，页102–109。

[8] 张文学，《海清转道禅师》（北京: 中国社会科学出版社, 2017）。

[9] Jack Meng-Tat Chia, “Buddhism in Singapore-China Relations: Venerable Hong Choon and his Visits, 1982–1990,” *The China Quarterly* 196 (December 2008): 864–883.

佛教有著名的四大名山，台湾则有所谓的四大山头，那新加坡我们有什么山呢？我们有光明山。

二十世纪民国时期（1912–1949），当时中国大陆有一位非常重要的僧侣，叫太虚大师（1890–1947）。1924年，太虚大师接任福建南普陀寺住持兼闽南佛学院院长，积极推广人生佛教思想。因为太虚大师认为当时清末明初时期的佛教过于消极悲观，经常着重于念佛往生这样的修行方式，而认为其实佛教应该更重视所谓的“人生佛教”，提倡入世佛教，并非常积极推广佛教教育。[10] 太虚大师在1926年、1928年、1940年三次到访新加坡弘法。1926年，太虚大师第一次到访新加坡，在维多利亚纪念堂的一场公开演讲推广人生佛教思想并提出发起居士团体。在场的宁达蕴居士与数位南来弘法的法师听后有所启发，一年后与众多佛弟子在牛车水（Chinatown）地区成立了新加坡中华佛教会，推广佛教教育与慈善事业。[11] 演培法师（1917–1996）是太虚大师及提倡“人间佛教”的印顺导师（1906–2005）之弟子。1963年，南来到新加坡弘法，把人间佛教思想在新加坡弘扬。演培法师刚到新加坡的时候，先担任灵峰般若讲堂住持。1981年，演培法师成立福慧讲堂和新加坡佛教福利协会，积极推广佛教慈善福利事业，并开设了安老院、洗肾中心、中途之家等慈善机构。[12] 到了1980年代，许多台湾人间佛教团体纷纷来到新加坡弘法及成立道场。1982年，台湾的厚宗法师移居新加坡，成立慧

[10] 有关太虚大师生平以及革新思想，请见Don A. Pittman, *Toward a Modern Chinese Buddhism: Taixu's Reforms* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2001); Justin R. Ritzinger, *Anarchy in the Pure Land: Reinventing the Cult of Maitreya in Modern Chinese Buddhism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

[11] Jack Meng-Tat Chia, "Sound of the Tide across the Sea: Taixu's Mission to Singapore," *Nanyang Buddhist* 448 (September 2006): 34–37.

[12] 杨淑雅,《人间佛教：演培法师在新加坡的弘法事迹》（高雄：翠柏林出版，2006）; Jack Meng-Tat Chia, "Toward a History of Engaged Buddhism in Singapore," in *Living with Myths in Singapore*, eds. Loh Kah Seng, Thum Ping Tjin, and Jack Meng-Tat Chia (Singapore: Ethos Books, 2017), 229–238.

严佛教会。厚宗法师是印顺导师弟子，积极在新加坡弘扬印顺导师的人间佛教思想及其著作《成佛之道》，并大力推广佛学教育。随后，台湾许多大型国际佛教团体如佛光山、慈济、法鼓山等也在新加坡成立了分会。[13]

3. 谁是佛教徒?

我们来看看究竟谁是所谓的“佛教徒”。1947年的新马人口普查里，佛教其实不是人口普查里的其中一项。当时英国殖民政府把佛教、道教以及华人民间宗教全部归类于所谓的Chinese National Religion。殖民政府分不清楚这些宗教不同，而且认为反正华人大多都神佛不分，政府也不需要帮华人分，并将所有华人宗教信仰都一律归纳为Chinese National Religion。Colin McDougall在其著作*Buddhism in Malaya*里提到，当时许多新马华人虽然自称是信奉佛教，但其实大多对佛教信仰与教义都一窍不通。[14] Vivienne Wee则在一篇题为“Buddhism in Singapore”的文章里提到，新加坡的佛教徒没有共同的信仰。她认为新加坡的佛教需要通过一个“辨证框架”（dialectic framework）来了解，并提出新加坡的佛教徒有两种不同的信仰模式：一方面是佛教为规范佛教（canonical Buddhism），而另一方面是华人宗教信仰（Chinese religions）。[15] 柯群英（Kuah-Pearce Khun Eng）在其著作*State, Society and Religious Engineering: Towards a Reformist Buddhism in Singapore*里

[13] Jack Meng-Tat Chia, “Humanistic Buddhism in Singapore: A Short History,” paper presented at the 6th Symposium on Humanistic Buddhism, Fo Guang Shan Institute of Humanistic Buddhism, Kaohsiung, October 26–28, 2018.
[14] Colin McDougall, *Buddhism in Malaya* (Singapore: Donald Moore, 1956), 33.
[15] Vivienne Wee, “Buddhism in Singapore,” in *Understanding Singapore Society*, eds. Ong Jin Hui, Tong Chee Kiong and Tan Ern Ser (Singapore: Times Academic Press, 1997), 130–162.

提到，80年代后是新加坡佛教一个非常重要的转捩点，她认为新加坡佛教徒开始“佛化”（Buddhicize）华人民间信仰，便逐渐迈向革新佛教（reformist Buddhism）。柯群英认为改变新加坡华人宗教信仰的包括新加坡政府、佛教僧团以及革新派的佛教徒。[16] 此外，书中也提出革新佛教运动的六种主要的宗教活动：弘扬佛法、鼓励大众参与、培养革新派佛教徒、从事佛教传教活动、着重于实践信仰与生活合一和普同庆祝卫塞节。至于世俗活动，革新佛教徒非常着重于推广佛教慈善福利事业。[17]

我们再回到人口普查，从数据中可以看到信奉佛教的人口从1980年到2000年一直不断逐渐地增长，从1980年的27%增加至1990年的31.2%，到2000年的42.5%（见图一）。[18] 到了2010年的时候，我们又看到信奉佛教人口的数量从42.5%掉到33.3%，十年内佛教徒突然从42.5%减少了大概9%（见图二）。[19] 这就可能让大家联想到一首大家熟悉的福建歌曲：“有时起有时落”（闽南语）。[20] 唐志强（Tong Chee Kiong）著作 *Rationalising Religion: Religious Conversion, Revivalism and Competition in Singapore Society* 里提到，虽然佛教是最受新加坡人口欢

[16] Kuah-Pearce Khun Eng, *State, Society and Religious Engineering: Towards a Reformist Buddhism in Singapore* (Singapore: Eastern Universities Press, 2003), 125–127.

[17] 同上注，233。

[18] Department of Statistics, *Singapore Census of Population 2000 Administrative Report* (Singapore: Department of Statistics, Ministry of Trade & Industry, 2002), 33. Available [Online]: <https://www.singstat.gov.sg/-/media/files/publications/cop2000/census_2000_advance_data_release/chap5.pdf>

[19] Department of Statistics, *Singapore Census of Population 2010: Statistical Release 1 Demographic Characteristics, Education, Language and Religion* (Singapore: Department of Statistics, Ministry of Trade & Industry, 2011). Available [Online]: <https://www.singstat.gov.sg/-/media/files/publications/cop2010/census_2010_release1/cop2010sr1.pdf>

[20] 为闽南语歌曲《爱拼才会赢》的歌词。

迎的“宗教归属”（religious affiliation），但新加坡的佛教信仰仍然非常多元化，而非单一的信仰。[21]

	Number			Per Cent		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
Total	**1,640,078**	**2,078,842**	**2,494,630**	**100.0**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Christianity	165,586	264,881	364,087	10.1	12.7	14.6
Buddhism	443,517	647,859	1,060,662	27.0	31.2	42.5
Taoism	492,044	465,150	212,344	30.0	22.4	8.5
Islam	258,122	317,937	371,660	15.7	15.3	14.9
Hinduism	58,917	77,789	99,904	3.6	3.7	4.0
Other Religions	8,971	11,604	15,879	0.5	0.6	0.6
No Religion	212,921	293,622	370,094	13.0	14.1	14.8

图一：2000年人口普查宗教数据

Per Cent

Religion	2000	2010
Total	100.0	100.0
Buddhism/Taoism	51.0	44.2
Buddhism	42.5	33.3
Taoism	8.5	10.9
Christianity	14.6	18.3
Islam	14.9	14.7
Hinduism	4.0	5.1
Other Religions	0.6	0.7
No Religion	14.8	17.0

图二：2010年人口普查宗教数据

[21] Tong Chee Kiong, *Rationalizing Religion: Religious Conversion, Revivalism and Competition in Singapore Society* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

有关佛教多元化课题，我近十年来在新加坡做佛教的研究与田野经验，认为新加坡的佛教徒可被分成三大类：革新佛教徒、民间佛教徒以及“非佛”佛教徒。首先，刚才有跟大家稍微提到革新佛教徒。革新佛教徒简单来说是常闻佛法，了解教义的佛教徒，着重于把佛法应用在日常生活，积极参与佛学班、共修以及法会活动，也支持佛教慈善福利事业。至于民间佛教徒，他们一般不太了解佛法，但自我认为是佛教徒，并会在人口普查里选择佛教为他们的宗教归属。民间佛教徒的信仰比较rojak（混杂），认为佛教的佛菩萨与道教的神明都一样也都会供奉，只要“拜的神多神保佑”。有些民间佛教徒也会参与佛教皈依仪式，但通常对皈依的意义一知半解。[22] 我做田调时曾遇过一些盲目皈依的民间佛教徒，他们不知道佛教所谓的皈依是皈依佛、法、僧三宝，也不知道皈依的意义，以为是他们皈依了某位大德高僧。更有趣的是，有位佛教徒跟我说他皈依了大雄宝殿里的三尊“三宝佛”（闽南语），[23] 误以为佛教的三宝是大雄宝殿里的三尊佛像。民间佛教有一个说法“食斋补积恶”（闽南语），就是你做一点坏事你要吃点斋、吃点菜来补运。因此，许多民间佛教徒初一十五都会吃菜计功德。最有趣的民间佛教徒是所谓的卫塞佛教徒（Vesak Buddhists），每年365天，364天不是佛教徒，但卫塞节那一天一定会去寺院参加浴佛法会。他们也不了解浴佛的意义，以为浴佛是在帮佛像洗澡，更有趣的是浴佛后还要把浴佛的水打包回家，认为打包花水回家洗澡浇花可以“保庇”(闽南语)。民间佛教徒有一种是“南无*kiang*”（闽南语），就是仪式性的佛教徒，只有遇到“白事”时才会请法师来诵经。他们一般不知道法师在念什么，只听到“南无……南无……”，加上法师敲法器发出“kiang kiang kiang”的声音，因而称为“南无*kiang*”（闽南语）。还有许多民间佛教徒认为只要拜观音就是佛教徒，但并不了解《观世音菩萨普门品》或《心经》

[22] 佛教徒皈依佛、法、僧三宝。
[23] 三宝佛也称三世佛，指的是释迦牟尼佛、药师佛与阿弥陀佛。

的内容，认为既然观音是佛教的菩萨，那拜观音的人皆是佛教徒了。民间佛教的佛堂又是提供哪些宗教服务呢？一般民间佛堂会提供信徒符文，帮他们解除降头、驱鬼、安神位、补运、冲花水，甚至能检查家里的神像是否有神。至于“非佛”佛教徒，是学者通常归类为“新兴佛教团体”（new Buddhist movements），例如创价学会、心灵法门、金菩提、真佛宗、法轮功、青海无上师、一贯道等团体。这些团体虽然是非新加坡佛教总会及主流佛教团体认可的佛教派别团体，但会员们通常都自我认为是佛教徒，也会选择佛教为他们的宗教归属。[24]

4. 挑战与革新

最后，我们来讨论新加坡佛教未来可能会面临的挑战和革新的课题，主要有三个比较关注的议题。第一是福音派基督教（evangelical Christianity）在新加坡的兴起。[25] 第二是年轻人对于宗教缺乏兴趣。第三是新加坡无宗教信仰者（freethinker）的增加。稍早提到2010年的人口普查数据公布后，有一些专家学者针对资料做了一些讨论。赖雅英（Lai Ah Eng）和马修（Mathew Mathews）指出，新加坡佛教人口减少的一个主要原因是因为福音派基督教团体在新加坡的兴起与积极传教所导致。这篇报道里也访问了新加坡佛教团体Buddhist Fellowship的会长，该会会长认为许多年轻华人是因长辈家长的缘故而信奉佛教，但实

[24] 见Jack Meng-Tat Chia, “Defending the Dharma: Buddhist Activism in a Global City-State,” in *Singapore: Negotiating State and Society, 1965–2015*, eds. Jason Lim and Terence Lee (New York: Routledge, 2016), 153–154; 〈新加坡佛教总会揭批冒牌“观世音”“心灵法门”敛财黑幕再遭起底〉，《狮城新闻》，2019年5月12日，http://www.shicheng.news/show/702675。

[25] 见Daniel PS Goh, “State and Social Christianity in Post-colonial Singapore,” *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 25, 1 (2010): 54–89; Terence Chong, “Filling the Moral Void: The Christian Right in Singapore,” *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 41, 4 (2011): 566–583; Terence Chong, “Megachurches in Singapore: The Faith of an Emergent Middle Class,” *Pacific Affairs* 88, 2 (2015): 215–235.

际上对佛教并不感兴趣，也对其教义一知半解。因此这些年轻的佛教徒很可能因各种缘故而转信基督教。[26]

2016年3月份《海峡时报》的一个篇报道指出，新加坡有许多年轻人普遍对于宗教信仰，特别是华人宗教，不感兴趣。记者访问了一位叫Hannah Jasmine的新加坡人，她透露，她原是佛教徒，13岁时对佛教不感兴趣而开始去教会，后来也对基督教失去兴趣，所以她觉得现在是无神论者，并认为什么神都不存在。[27] 因为这样的缘故，我近年来走访了许多不同的佛教团体，注意到现在许多的道场开始革新及包装佛教，同时积极推广青年佛教活动的发展。我发现这些佛教团体普遍模仿福音派基督教的活动模式，通过青年团契活动和现代佛曲向年轻的新加坡人传达佛教教义。[28]

5. 结语

讲到这里，我很快总结跟大家分享对于新加坡汉传佛教的一些看法。首先，我提到了移民与佛教的课题，就是早期的汉传佛教，因为早期的华人移民带到新加坡以及东南亚地区的。我们也看到新加坡的佛教从早期的民间佛教发展到现在的革新佛教。我和大家分享了所谓的“谁是佛教徒”，并提出新加坡佛教徒能够分成三大类型，有所谓的革新佛教徒、民间佛教徒，以及“非佛”佛教徒。最后跟大家分享了新加坡佛教面临的挑战与革新。请大家多多指教，谢谢。

[26] “Shedding Light on Decline in Buddhism in Singapore,” *Straits Times*, January 14, 2011.
[27] “Fewer Singapore Residents Identify as Buddhists or Taoists,” *Straits Times*, March 21, 2016.
[28] Jack Meng-Tat Chia and Robin Ming-Feng Chee, “Rebranding the Buddhist Faith: Reformist Buddhism and Piety in Contemporary Singapore,” *Explorations: A Graduate Student Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 8 (Spring 2008): 1–9.

Negotiated Sovereignty: The Politics and Poetics of Chinese Shrines in Urban Singapore

Francis LIM Khek Gee

Division of Sociology, Nanyang Technological University

In the last session, Jack Chia talked about Buddhism as an institutional religion. My focus now is the non-institutional kind of religiosity. What I will be examining below is something physically quite small, yet huge in significance. If you open your eyes and look around when you are walking in the streets of Singapore, you will see many shrines. The shrines may be located in or near hawker centres, coffee shops, next to big trees, in front of shops, and other public spaces. I am not sure how many of you have given further thoughts about such shrines. Some of you may have; there are many religious scholars present. I would like to share some of my thoughts and reflections on these shrines.

Figure 1: Shrines in public places in Singapore

It is common to think that such shrines are personal shrines, some individuals installing these for private worship, with deities such the *Dabogong (Tua Pek Kong), Nadudong, Datuk* and so on. Some of these shrines can take on more permanent character and may become quite huge in size, evolving into proper temples. Here is an example from my own personal experience. I lived in Upper Thomson when I was young. I used to pass by a shrine next to a big tree, near the Sin Min area. Over twenty or thirty years, this shrine got bigger and bigger, and evolved into a large structure, like a Chinese temple. This prompted me to wonder: how did this happen? How has a small shrine, next to a big tree — they are usually next to big trees — grown physically in size and become a proper temple? This is contrary to what we are normally familiar with, that these shrines tend to be small and usually not permanent.

Figure 2: 海南山天公坛 Hai Lam Sua Tee Kong Toa (Upper Thomson)
Source: http://chinesetemples.blogspot.com/2009/11/32-nan-hai-shan-tian-gong-tan.html

Professor Brenda Yeoh has written about Singapore as a developmental state. Since independence, as Singapore embarks aggressively on the path of state and nation building, many religious sites have been demolished to make way for new buildings for purposes such as housing, business, recreation, and so on. And from the research on Chinese temples by Professor Kenneth Dean and others, we see that many Chinese temples have been cleared to make way

for development. Some of these temples have been given a new lease of life, as can be seen in the phenomenon of "combined temples". While we may know the story of Chinese temples quite well, we are relatively less familiar with the stories of the shrines. But these small shrines are beginning to get the attention of scholars in Singapore. Of course, when we talk about shrines in, say, South Asian studies, especially in relation to folk Hinduism and Buddhism, in countries like Nepal and India there are many shrines of varying sizes by the roadside and in many public places. But in the highly secularised urban context of Singapore, some may regard such shrines as anomalies and "out of place". They are "messy" places, temporary, and eventually they will make way for other buildings and developments. But after doing some research and talking to people who maintain such shrines and those who worship there, I think we need to think more seriously about such shrines. Not only can these shrines tell us about the stories of gods and ritual activities of worshippers. Their presence, dissolution, or evolution also allow us to gain insights into the dynamic interactions between the "religious" and the "political" domains in Singapore.

There are two broad questions that I want to address in this talk. First, how can we understand the widespread presence of shrines in public places in secular Singapore? Second, how can the study of these shrines help us understand the relationship or the interaction between the religious and political domains in modern secular states?

My focus here is the territorial deities like *Dabogong*, *Tudigong*, *Nadugong, Datuk,* etc. There are at least two existing approaches to understand these territorial deities and their cults. The first approach comes from the scholarship on Chinese popular religion, especially in Taiwan in the sixties and seventies when researchers tried to understand the unity and diversity of Chinese popular religion. Some scholars have proposed the so-called bureaucratic or imperial model to uncover enduring patterns or structures behind the apparent diversity of Chinese popular religion. Specifically, they aimed to understand how ordinary people approached the gods and interacted with them in different social contexts. To put it simply, this model suggests that ordinary people tended to regard and approach the male gods as if they were officials. In present post-imperial days, we still see these male deities dressed

up resplendently in official robes and approached with reverence. In other words, the imperial bureaucracy was a model for ordinary people's conception of and interaction with the male deities.

As many of you know, during imperial times the Chinese state was a religio-politico entity. The state bureaucracy included various departments and ministries overseeing the conduct of the rites, such as those that involved the worship of Tian ("Heaven"), for good harvest, for successful military campaigns, and many more. And as the Chinse empire expanded, it absorbed not just peoples from the newly conquered areas but incorporated some of their gods as well. The imperial state did this by conferring titles on the deities and giving them ranks and positions in an evolving court-supported pantheon. Over time, for example, we had the Stove God, Zaojun, at the lowest level of the imperial pantheon, the guardian of the household. Above the Stove God was the *Tudigong*, corresponding to the ruler of a small region or a small cluster of villages. And then you have the *Chenghuang* whose earthly counterpart was the city magistrate. At the top of this "celestial hierarchy" was the *Yuhuang Dadi,* whose imperial counterpart was of course the emperor himself. In short, there were two intertwining hierarchies.

On the one hand, there was the "celestial hierarchy" of the gods. On the other hand, there was the "imperial hierarchy" of the state. They were very much intertwined during the imperial days. This is the bureaucratic or imperial model to understand the gods (especially the male deities) and the Chinese people's interactions with them. In the present day, when we still see *Tudigong* and *Dabogong* dressed in official robes, it is tempting to use this bureaucratic model as an interpretive lens. However, given that for a long time the states of Singapore, Taiwan and mainland China have been officially secular and are not imperial, it may not be appropriate to still use this model to understand people's relationships with the territorial deities and the relationship between the "religious" and the "political" in Chinese popular religion.

The second body of scholarly literature I want to engage with concerns the spatial and relational characteristics of shrines in a secular urban environment like Singapore. Some may think that these shrines are temporary, liminal, and their sacred nature is ambiguous because they are sited in places like businesses, coffee shops, next to trees, and so on. Many are also neither strictly private nor public. From my own fieldwork, interviewing the people involved

in shrine activities, it is quite clear that, to them, these shrines are sacred. And ideally, they would want the shrines to be permanent. They are not comfortable with the possibility that the authorities might want to clear these shrines for whatever purposes; they may engage in resisting activities if the authorities tried to do so.

So there are limitations to the above two approaches. What I am trying to do here is to suggest another way — a sociological way — to understand the shrines. I do this by utilizing the concept of sovereignty. Recall that the gods I am concerned with are territorial deities. They can be regarded as rulers, as an ultimate authority in a delimited territory. Generally, from the concept of sovereignty, we can think of, for example, sovereignty as containing a supreme authority within a territory. And the people within the territory would constitute its members or citizens, recognising the authority as legitimate and supreme. Further, there are internal and external aspects to sovereignty. Simply, external sovereignty entails the mutual recognition of various sovereign entities and the interactions between them. On the other hand, internal sovereignty comprises the sovereign's exercising of power within delimited territory.

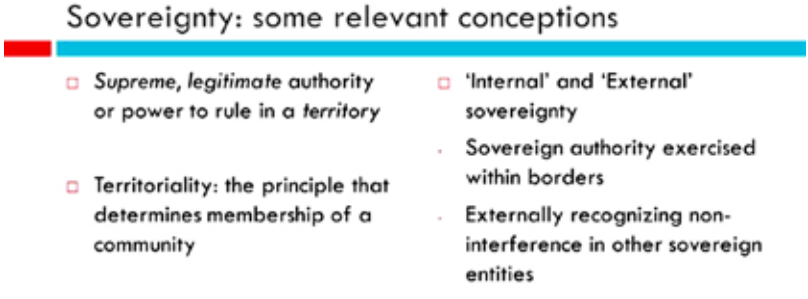

Figure 3: Conceptions of Sovereignty

I want to further propose the concept of *negotiated sovereignty* to understand the shrines. Under the perspective of negotiated sovereignty, the sovereign authority of a territory is not absolute. This authority is subjected to negotiation, and the principles underpinning the legitimacy of that authority can change overtime, in different contexts. And importantly, the territory of the sovereign entity can evolve, too. Both the internal and external aspects of sovereignty can be negotiated and contested.

Figure 4: Negotiated Sovereignty

I shall elaborate on what I mean by negotiated sovereignty of the shrines and the Singaporean state with some examples. The picture below shows a small shrine which is located next to Ayer Rajah hawker centre where I sometimes have breakfast. I have been curious about this shrine for a long time, and one day I managed to speak with the person responsible for its upkeeping. Let's call him Mr Lee.

Figure 5: *Nadugong* Shrine near Ayer Rajah Market

I asked him, "How old is this shrine?" Looking at the pictures, it seems quite new, nicely painted and well maintained. Mr Lee said that the shrine has been there for thirty years. Yes, thirty years, a permanent structure. So I said, "Oh thirty years. Is this a personal shrine?" "Yes, I set it up thirty years ago", he said. And it was sited just in front of his shop, in a public place, next to a big tree. I asked him, "How do you know this place is *ling*?" He explained, "How do I know? Because there was once a *tangki* who

came across this place and told me that the *Nadu*, the *Datuk* is here. Look at the hole in the tree and next to the tree you see clean grounds and so on. Those are indications that the Nadu dwells here."

Now you begin to understand why people consider such kind of place sacred. There is no ambiguity there. I then asked an obvious question: "So, did the authorities come and talk to you?" Mr Lee said, "I have talked to the residents' committee [RC] chairman. I told him that I am going to maintain the surrounding piece of land well." But he also told the RC chairman, "Please tell those cleaners not to put the rubbish bins too close to my shrine." Mr Lee was telling others not to encroach into the sacred territory of this *Datuk*. He was trying to maintain a territorial boundary, within which resides the sovereign authority of the *Datuk*. And he said, "If the police were to come to tell me to clear this shrine, I would say them, 'why don't you do it, if you dare? If you dare, you clear it.' " So, the shrine has remained there for thirty years.

In Singapore, there are some shrines that have developed to a considerable size. As you see from the set of pictures below, these shrines manifest what I have referred to as negotiated sovereignty, evolving, moving many times while negotiating with Singaporean sovereign state. The one below has found a permanent place in Tampines after moving a number of times:

Figure 6: 九条桥新芭拿督坛 Jiu Tiao Qiao Xin Ba Na Du Tan (Tampines Rd)
Source:《新加坡民俗导览：庙宇文化（第1本）》

This shrine was first established in 1927. According to legends, the contractor who demolished the shrine in 1947 suddenly fell very ill. People attributed the illness to punishment by the deity which had been offended. In the intervening years, it relocated around 10 times before finding a permanent place at the current site. While *Dabogong* is still the primary deity, it now contains other Indian and Malay deities such as *Ganesh* and *Datuk Sulaiman.* This is a case of what has started as a small shrine, undergone a process of negotiated sovereignty with the state, and finally found a permanent place in the scale of a temple. This also shows that the worshippers, believers, are not satisfied with the temporary nature of the shrine and constantly seek to site it permanently: a territory in which a deity or a group of deities are the ultimate authority. In short, they want to establish a religious sovereign site, albeit a negotiated one.

The next example is located at the Kent Ridge bus interchange. People from NUS should know about it. The next speaker, Dean, and I have conducted some research there. This case is also related to my personal story. When I was a NUS undergraduate I had stayed at the Eusoff Hall, which is just next to the bus interchange. My room was next to the bus interchange. In the years since then, I can see the shrine evolving. It has grown bigger, is well maintained and well decorated. According to our bus driver interviewees, the shrine was established around 1976 by bus drivers to pray for safety and lottery luck. The main deity was Dabogong, and an urn for Good Brothers was also installed. According to an interviewee, over the years more protective guardian deities like Taiziye and Ji Gong have been installed. On certain auspicious days, communal rituals and feasts are held there.

Figure 7: 5th Day of 1st Lunar Month: Welcoming God of Wealth
大年初五迎财神

As you can see from the above examples, worshippers hope the established shrines would be permanent structures. The shrines are considered sacred, ritualistically, symbolically, and physically marked out to be distinct from surrounding places. At the same time, they are constantly negotiating with the state authorities. You may think that such shrines are mostly for the Chinese people, since under the Singaporean state discourse they are regarded as part of "Chinese" popular religion. Under the state's rigid CMIO categorization of its citizens, each race is supposed to have its own unique culture and is associated with a main religion. But for this Kent Ridge bus interchange shrine, a sovereign entity with its legitimate authoritative figure(s), worshippers comprise not only of Singaporean but also Malaysian and mainland China bus drivers. Members of the public worship at this shrine, too. For a supposedly "Chinese" shrine, we can see diversity of worshippers in terms of nationality and ethnicity, not just the ethnic Chinese but also Malays, Indians and others.

The next example is the Ci Ern Ge in Toa Payoh Central. It was first established in 1960s as a shrine to the tree spirit and has gone through several phases of development. When you ask people about the histories of such shrines which have developed into quite a significant scale, they will usually tell you similar stories. These stories commonly include accounts of how the

authorities at some point have tried to clear or demolish the shrines, only to be thwarted by the gods and their worshippers. For example, some misfortune may happen to those who tried to demolish the shrines, thus preventing the demolition effort from being carried out. All these stories serve to highlight the power and efficacy of the deities involved (and the resolve of the worshippers), how the territory of religious sovereignty has been protected. You hear the same story about the Ci Ern Ge. The tree was left alone. The shrine's territorial boundary shifted and expanded, having negotiated with representatives of Singaporean state sovereignty. It is now a popular religious site for people living in the vicinity and beyond, currently under the supervision of the Toa Payoh Central Merchant Association.

Figure 8: 慈恩阁 Ci Ern Ge (Toa Payoh Central)
Source: http://www.beokeng.com/disptemple.php?temple=ci-ern-ge

What do all the above cases tell us? On one hand, we see the tremendous power of the state. For example, with the Land Acquisition Act, the relevant authorities can acquire parcels of land for development projects. This is the familiar story we know in relation to the state's exercise of internal sovereignty. However, the cases highlighted above tell us something else. While the

Singaporean state can exercise internal sovereignty most of the time, I want to highlight the paradoxes of sovereignty. For analytical purpose, we can conceptualise the Singaporean state as exercising a kind of *secular sovereignty*. As an officially secular state, the state's urban planning and land use policies are ultimately based on rational considerations of utility and efficiency. In this context, why are some shrines are left alone even after repeated attempts to clear them, and how could some have even expanded and become full scale temples? A way to understand this is through what I call the paradox of secular sovereignty, in the negotiation with the *religious sovereignty* embodied by the shrines. The state's exercising of its internal sovereignty can be checked, under certain circumstances, when faced with an alternate, powerful religious sovereign entity. Why do I call it paradoxical? Because the secular state recognises the religious domain as legitimate and therefore creates the conditions that allow the worshippers to practice their religion and establish the shrines. Putting it more theoretically, secular sovereignty grants the religious domain social legitimacy, thus conditioning within its territory the very creation of religious sovereignty. The presence of this religious sovereignty can at times potentially check, to varying degrees, the state's exercise of its internal sovereignty. In concrete terms, for example, when the state encounters a shrine with a powerful deity (as embodiment of religious sovereignty), supported by an ardent and motivated community of worshippers, the secular state may hesitate or even be unwilling to act.

But mirroring the paradox of secular sovereignty is the paradox of religious sovereignty. As I have presented in the first example, Mr Lee, who erected the shrine, told me, "If they [the authorities] want to clear it, ask them to do so." So far, nobody dares or is willing to. Now, that was just a little shrine next to a tree. The deity was considered powerful and efficacious by its attendant and worshippers, embodying religious sovereignty in negotiation through its representatives with the state's secular sovereignty. This has enabled the deity and the shrine to remain in that place for 30 years. Just as there is a paradox in relation to secular sovereignty, so does religious sovereignty. When a shrine expands, in terms of its territory and membership, it can become like a *tan* or *gong,* a temple. From the various cases discussed above, the deity or deities residing in this religious sovereign entity would have to partly surrender

their authority to the legal rational authority of secular sovereignty, ie., the Singaporean state. The expanding shrine's external sovereignty has to contend with the internal sovereignty of the Singaporean secular state. For example, it may have to register as a society or charity with the relevant state authorities if it becomes a temple, and consequently to adhere to the rules and regulations that come with being legally recognised as a religious institution.

This negotiation of religious and secular state sovereignty happens not only in Singapore but in other places as well. One example is the famous *Shi Ba Wang Gong (The Eighteen Lords Temple)* in Taiwan. We hear a familiar story: the authorities tried to clear the shrine but was thwarted when workers repeatedly encountered problems as they tried to demolish the shrine. Eventually the workers gave up and even the authorities realized that there might be some supernatural forces at play. The shrine survived and developed into a major religious site, covering a huge area and attracting many hundreds of worshippers each day.

Figure 9: Halal *Nadugong* shrine

As a way of conclusion, look at the shrine to the *Datuk* in this picture:

There is the phrase, "*bu de bai zhu rou",* no offering of pork. This is obviously a halal shrine, in Singapore. This example shows the ethnic diversity which you will not find in Taiwan. A supposedly "Chinese" shrine with Malay Muslim influences. When we look at the worship of such territorial deities in the shrines of Singapore, the bureaucratic or imperial model that scholars proposed to understand Chinese people's interactions with the

gods breaks down. The worshippers at such halal shrines are not only Chinese, and they do not necessarily view the deity as modelled after an imperial bureaucrat. As I have argued, this shrine and others could be conceptualized as a kind of sovereign entity, negotiating primarily with the secular sovereignty of the state.

Additionally, while some people may regard such shrines as "in-between", temporary places without well-defined sacred or profane quality, for the worshippers who erect and maintain the shrines and continuously imbue it with sacred character through rituals and boundary making, these shrines are distinct, sacred and ideally permanent, presided over by territorial deities who are regarded and treated as legitimate sovereign authority. However, their sovereignty is not absolute. I have proposed the concept of negotiated sovereignty as a viable approach to understand these shrines. They may be conceptualised as religious sovereignty, constantly interacting with state secular sovereignty through the agency of the presiding deities and their representatives. In other words, they are not liminal, "messy" and "out of place" in an otherwise highly rationalised, orderly secular urban context. Rather, they are emplaced sovereign entities that manifest their own principles of order and normativity while constantly negotiating with the authority of secular sovereignty. At the same time, they evolve and are organically linked with the conduct of business, personal pursuits, and needs of local communities.

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乐园朝圣——虎豹别墅与新加坡华人宗教

王坤利

新加坡国立大学中文系

1. 引言

地狱存在吗？不同人会给予不同的答案，但笔者向来存有的答案便是地狱存在着，而且就在新加坡西南部的虎豹别墅当中。相信令去过虎豹别墅的访客印象最深刻的展区，或许就是园中的“鬼门关”（或称“十殿阎罗”、“十八地狱”等）。虎豹别墅是一座享誉国际的文化主题乐园，在提供游乐之余也肩负着教化、劝世以及宣扬因果报应的观念。至今关于虎豹别墅的论著和报章报道并不乏，但却缺少了以虎豹别墅作为个案来深入分析与探讨新加坡华人宗教议题的文章。在美学与图像学方面，虎豹别墅里的塑像虽有其在美术上与象征意义上的研究价值，但一座塑像究竟是如何转变成一尊神像？在社会学方面，世俗化（secularization）理论如何能够有效的解释虎豹别墅特有的宗教形态，以及世俗与神圣空间之间的切换又是如何实现？最后，若从宗教学的视角来探讨虎豹别墅的发展史与物质文化，这又将带来什么启发？有鉴于此，本文旨在通过虎豹别墅的个案研究管窥新加坡华人宗教的本质与形态。

新加坡虽是一个现代化和城市化的国家，但也具有一个多元种族与多元宗教的和谐社会，人们有高度的宗教选择与实践的自由。个

人的宗教实践与宗教活动只要不影响或冒犯到其他的宗教，以及不给自然环境或一般公众带来祸害，那么这些活动在很大程度上都可被接受。Kenneth Dean和Peter van der Veer 在新著中便提到了亚洲地区的宗教向度并没有（如世俗化理论所“预言”）下降的趋势，反而见证了世俗与神圣两个场域之间的互动。[1] 在另一篇探讨城市化宗教抱负（urban religious aspirations）的文章中，Peter van der Veer和Daniel Goh便认为宗教人士在应对城市化的问题过程中，创造了他们对于城市化的认知的新概念，并用以理解城市空间的世俗化现象。这类世俗化的空间则给予了宗教人士自由，摆脱了原先宗教传统所带来的局限，反而让他们得以创造新的实践方式，使到城市空间再度神圣化。更重要的是，这类创新的方向和内容都是宗教人士的个人宗教抱负所推动。[2]

对于华人宗教而言，尤其是民间信仰，个人宗教抱负能通过“拜”与“求”两个活动体现出。Daniel Goh用了“拜神”这一概念来定义华人宗教，即在任何时候进行着的沟通性质活动中，通过特定的体现方式（embodied practices），例如合十，来与一位神明建立密切的关系。[3] 当然，“拜”这一肢体动作背后的含义，即在意识与认知层面，除了表示敬意也是为了满足个人所“求”。因此，基于“拜”与“求”这两个活动，偶像崇拜在华人宗教实践中成了至关重要的一环。Vineeta Sinha在探讨新加坡都市化空间中的宗教向度课题时，便主张为了更好、更全面的理解新加坡的宗教本质，研究焦点有必要从一贯的“宗教场所”转移到“神圣指标（signs of the sacred）”上。这些神圣的指标，即神像与神龛等，都能够出现在都市中的各种世俗化日常空间里，例如租屋、停车场、餐馆、小贩中心等等。[4] 无论出现在哪个日常空间，这些神圣

[1] Kenneth Dean & Peter van der Veer, “Introduction,” p. 4.
[2] Daniel Goh & Peter van der Veer, “Introduction: The sacred and the urban in Asia,” p. 369.
[3] Daniel Goh, “Chinese Religion and the Challenge of Modernity in Malaysia and Singapore,” p. 112.
[4] Vineeta Sinha, “Marking Spaces as ‘Sacred’,” p. 470.

指标都是为了满足信众个人拜神和求神所需，以及在一处世俗化的日常空间里注入了固定的神圣象征。

尽管虎豹别墅里有诸多与宗教课题相关的展区，但断然不能被视为一座宗教场所，而若将园中与宗教课题相关的塑像视为神圣指标，那这些指标也绝非单一的仅供访客膜拜的对象。除了一些具有显性宗教功能的神圣指标，例如虎豹别墅后方不对外开放的供奉着观音和地主神的神龛，其余的塑像皆仅具有隐性的神圣指标功能。参观“鬼门关”展区的访客或许不会留意到在其入口前左侧的不远处有个“虎爷”的洞穴，里头安置了一尊老虎的塑像，而塑像前则摆放着一口香炉。同样是香炉，园中的一些塑像前也摆放着和香炉功能相近的容器。然而，虎豹别墅里头并无贩卖香烛等供品，这类容器因此暗示着这些塑像在特定语境下便可成为一处神圣指标，供访客自行携带香来膜拜。除了类似香炉的容器，具有暗示意义的物品还包括水和花，或甚至是不需任何物品，仅通过简单的合十之举，便可将塑像瞬间转变成为一尊神像。笔者因此主张，虎豹别墅的个案显示了新加坡华人宗教实践中瞬态（transient）与自发（spontaneous）宗教空间的特点。这一瞬态与自发的空间转换则是由个人的宗教抱负所启动，即通过“拜”与“求”两个活动彰显而出。

2. 虎豹别墅：乐园与圣地

作为新加坡著名旅游景点之一的虎豹别墅，其发展史的特色在于自开园至今，拥有权经历了私有到国有，再从国有到私营化的变迁。1937年，著名商人与慈善家胡文虎（1882–1954）于新加坡西南部的巴西班让路置地，为其胞弟胡文豹（1888–1944）兴建了一座园林，并以胡氏集团的主要商品为该园林命名：万金油花园（即今之虎豹别墅）。[5] 胡

[5] 关于虎豹别墅的历史与发展，详见Judith Brandel & Tina Turbeville, *Tiger Balm Gardens: A Chinese billionaire's fantasy environments*，以及新加坡国家图书馆电子资料库，“Haw Par Villa”, retrieved from http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/infopedia/articles/SIP_560_2004-12-14.html.

文虎逝世后，虎豹别墅的管理由胡文豹的儿子，胡清才（1924–1971）接棒。在胡清才的管理下，园林获得了扩建，也突破了华族传统文化塑像的局限，注入了国际化的色彩。因此，如今的园林依然可见到美国自由女神、日本相扑手、泰国传统舞舞女的塑像等等。1985年，新加坡政府通过土地征用法令征收了虎豹别墅，而在保留“虎豹别墅”的名称以及园中的几座家族纪念碑的条件下，胡氏家族也将园林里的塑像捐赠给了国家。虎豹别墅也于该年正式交由新加坡旅游促进局（即今新加坡旅游局）接管。然而，新加坡是一个世俗国家，政府在接管了这座私人园林之后则必须应对如何处理园中那些具有宗教含义的塑像的问题。为了更妥善的经营与管理这座园林，当局决定将其私营化，把园林租出并公开让私人企业集团招标发展。翌年，国际主题公园公司（International Theme Parks Pte Ltd）成功夺标，遂开启了虎豹别墅至今“国有私营化”的营运特色。

胡文虎创办虎豹别墅的目的之一，是为了通过这些塑像来教化当时的苦力和文盲移民阶层。除了让这一阶层不忘中国历史、文化、信仰与道德，胡文虎也希望能通过这座中华文化园林来对抗西方化和英国殖民的影响。[6] 虽然具有教化功能的虎豹别墅是一座私人园林，但至少在政府接管之前，国人确实将其视为一处圣地看待，并不仅仅是一座提供休闲娱乐的空间。例如，尽管熟知《西游记》的访客都知道唐僧始终不被盘丝洞中的蜘蛛精迷惑，但新加坡佛教总会基于本地一些佛教徒所表态的反对意见，便在1951年致函虎豹别墅，要求园林的管理层为缠住唐僧塑像的几尊几近裸露的“蜘蛛精”塑像“着衣”。[7] 随着时代发展与社会变迁，加上教育程度的普遍提升，虎豹别墅的教化功能逐渐减弱，一些塑像甚至被批为“有害的迷信物”。[8] 如何跟上时代、配合社会所需无疑成为了园林管理层的棘手问题。

[6] Jianli Huang & Lysa Hong, “Chinese Diasporic Culture and National Identity,” pp. 49–52.
[7] 同上，页57。
[8] 同上，页56。

1990年，在经过了四年以及耗资八千万新币的筹备、改建与维修工程后，虎豹别墅摇身一变成为了“龙的世界（Dragon World）”主题乐园。1984年，在官方委任的促进旅游工作小组的提议下，政府介入征用了虎豹别墅的土地，以期借助打造一处“具东方神秘色彩以及高科技娱乐的典型景点”[9]。然而，国际主题公园公司经营仅不到五年已出现了财务赤字，便决定于1995年对这一东方迪斯尼乐园进行大改革，移除所有所谓现代化“高科技”的设施，将“龙的世界”还原回到人们所熟悉、向往，以及具真实感的虎豹别墅。Brenda Yeoh 与 Peggy Teo 主张这一转折并不一定意味着文化战胜了经济、地方化胜过了环球化，而是虎豹别墅在市场力量的导引下被持续不断的毁灭和重塑，最终成为一个符合当代市场需求的景观。[10] 然而，还原后的虎豹别墅到了1998年仍持续亏损了近三千两百万新币，承包商最终于2001年结业，将虎豹别墅归还政府。有鉴于此，Jianli Huang 和 Lysa Hong 认为虎豹别墅主题乐园为了满足东西方市场的需求，最终落得两头不着岸，明显反映出了新加坡缺乏资金创造属于自己的迪斯尼乐园，也没有足够的文化资本来打造一座迷你中国。[11]

继国际主题公园公司之后，新加坡旅游局雇用了东方管理公司（Orient Management）来经营虎豹别墅，并决定将园林免费开放给公众参观。有了第一轮的失败经验后，园林管理层决定循序渐进，将虎豹别墅还原到胡文虎创园的初衷，即通过中国神话传说中的人物塑像来教化访客，继承华族文化传统。2005年，耗资七百五十万新币的“华颂馆”于虎豹别墅内正式开幕。身为一座海外华人博物馆，华颂馆的宗旨在于缅怀华族先辈漂洋过海，艰辛奋斗立业的同时，也希望凸显出海外华人给予所居地所带来的经济贡献。虽然华颂馆是新加坡少数以展示海外华人生活状况及精神面貌为主题的展览馆，但基于访客人数甚少，经营惨

[9] Brenda Yeoh & Peggy Teo, “From Tiger Balm Gardens to Dragon World,” p. 36.
[10] 同上，页41。
[11] Jianli Huang & Lysa Hong, “Chinese Diasporic Culture and National Identity,” p. 77.

淡、入不敷出，最终于2012年结束营业。两年后，恰逢新加坡旅游业发展的五十周年庆，新加坡旅游局意识到虎豹别墅的“重要性和文化价值”，便计划“为虎豹别墅注入新气息”，在园内展开修复工程以及成立永久性导览团。[12] 2015年，新加坡旅游局正式指定旅游公司暨导览团业者Journeys管理虎豹别墅。纵观虎豹别墅从1937年至2015年的发展，除了从私有到国有私营化的变迁，其在新加坡旅游局接管之后便被迫肩负起了促进国内外旅游、提升经济发展的使命。然而，经过了多次的失败经营，以及东方迪斯尼乐园的奢梦被破灭之后，笔者认为有必要深入探讨虎豹别墅的本质问题。

继“华颂馆”关闭的新闻传出之后，新加坡历史学者柯木林便认为虎豹别墅在自我定位上出了问题，而在他看来，虎豹别墅应当被用作为“课余的实物教材”，即“灌输传统观念、道德教育的一个潜移默化的基地”[13]。柯木林也指出，一部分民众之所以批评虎豹别墅有着“宣扬迷信色彩之嫌”，乃是因为民众“对民间传说、神话故事和典故不甚了解的缘故”。确实如此，例如在虎豹别墅后门处有一个展区内设有佛祖、巨鸟、蝙蝠，以及几尊身穿盔甲的塑像，但没有任何关于展区内容的标签或简介，所以对于一般访客而言无法达到共鸣。唯有熟读清代小说《说岳全传》的访客，才会明白这展区所要表达出的，关于佛教善恶因果报应的内容：西天如来佛祖在大雷音寺说法时，女士蝠无意间放了一个屁，佛祖的护法大鹏金翅鸟因此而怒，将女士蝠啄死。后来女士蝠转世为宋朝秦桧的夫人王氏，而大鹏金翅鸟则转世为岳飞。

Justin McDaniel 在探讨用于普遍宣教、促进宗教内部教派联合的园林，以及那些用于体现宇宙观的公园时，便将虎豹别墅视为一处具浓厚佛教文化的园林。他也认为虽然虎豹别墅成功的融合了宗教与世俗、公共与私人、庄严与娱乐等对立的性质，但却因为虎豹别墅不是和

[12] 司徒晓昕“虎豹别墅即将展开修复工程”，《联合早报》，2014年3月23日，页1。
[13] 柯木林“虎豹别墅应有的定位”，《联合早报》，2012年6月30日，页20。

某个宗教或教派有着直接的联系，以至于被宗教学学者所忽略。[14] 虽然McDaniel的论点对于西方传统宗教学，即重视神学以及单一制度化宗教研究的学者而言或许是成立的，但是却忽略了亚洲宗教的多元性和跨宗教交流的特点。在宗教特征方面，虎豹别墅的特点正是在于其多元性，成功融合了儒释道三教以及民间信仰的内容于一处，体现出了新加坡华人宗教的多元相融特色。不仅如此，从上述关于虎豹别墅的发展史可见，这座国有私营化的园林虽是一座世俗场域，但却没有禁止或排挤与宗教思想和活动相关的内容；虽是一座公共园林，但也可包容私人的宗教活动（例如后文所讨论的“拜”与“求”）；虽曾经想要彻底打造成一座娱乐园，但却因本质问题加上本地宗教社团的关注，仍保留了其庄严的一面。虎豹别墅即是乐园亦是圣地，犹如新加坡的华人宗教既有神圣的一面也有世俗化的另一面。

3. 新加坡华人宗教的世俗化层面

世俗化是宗教社会学的重要理论之一，与除魅（disenchantment）、理性化（rationalization）及现代化等概念有着直接的联系。José Casanova 认为，所谓的世俗化现象若放置在一个全球与比较视野下进行分析则具有三种含义，其中之一便是宗教私人化（privatization），即宗教因素不再左右公共政策或生活。[15] 因此，世俗化不等同于去宗教化。然而，Casanova也主张世俗化这一概念并不适用于儒教或道教上，因为这类宗教的本质向来就已是世俗的、民间的。[16] 犹如引言中所提到，Sinha通过对于新加坡印度教和道教的宗教空间使用的研究而提出的所谓“神圣指标”，都能够出现在都市中的各种世俗化日常空间里。新加坡的佛教和道教享有广泛的华人信仰群，而根据2010年新加坡人口普查资料显示，佛教和道教的信徒居首，也以华人为主，占据了44.2%

[14] Justin McDaniel, *Architects of Buddhist Leisure*, p. 84.
[15] José Casanova, “Rethinking Secularization: A global comparative perspective,” p. 7.
[16] 同上，页12。

的总人口。[17] 在现代化的影响下，新加坡华人宗教持续在社会中发挥作用，而笔者认为其世俗性也有助提升人们对于华人宗教的接受。

“华人宗教”这一概念在新加坡的语境里可意味“华人所信仰的宗教”抑或“源自中国的由早期华人移民所引进的宗教”。前者范围甚广，可包括伊斯兰教及基督宗教；后者则一般指本文的主要探讨对象，即道教与汉化佛教。值得注意的是，2010年的新加坡人口普查虽然记有对于佛教和道教的个别数据资料，但在大标题之下却通过斜杠符号将佛教与道教结合并列（“Buddhism/Taoism”）。这一现象无疑凸显出了新加坡华人宗教本质的含糊性，以及其传播和历史发展的特征。许源泰在探讨新加坡的道教与佛教的传播与蜕变时，便注意到十九世纪中叶来到新加坡的中国移民“携神带来的宗教信仰，显然是区域性色彩浓厚的地方神崇拜，以及结合了儒、释、道三教末流的民间宗教”[18]。虽然许源泰也提到新加坡道教出现了“Y”字形的分叉发展，即以民间信仰体系开始，而后出现了民间信仰以及制度化道教信仰的分道，但笔者纵观新加坡的道教信仰，甚至是佛教信仰的实践方式，却可谓仍以“民间”为主。例如在二十世纪中叶发展而成的“人间佛教”，便是把“追求出世的佛教调适为积极入世的佛教，把佛教的出世法与世间法更加紧密地结合起来，”[19] 体现出了佛教理念现代化之后的普世性与亲和力。

佛教与道教结合并列的含糊性不仅出现在正规寺庙中（例如新加坡的许多道教庙宇都供奉着观世音菩萨，而主祀观世音菩萨的龙山寺也供奉着诸多道教神明），也反映在虎豹别墅的园林设计中。佛教与道教的接触和融合有着渊源流长的历史，为了重视这一现象，学界甚至制定了“Buddho-Taoism”这一概念及研究领域。[20] 犹如市场与社会需求带动了新产品的研发，这类宗教混合（hybridization）的现象，意味着信

[17] *Census of Population 2010 Statistical Release 1*, p. 2.
[18] 许源泰，《沿革与模式：新加坡道教和佛教传播研究》，页93。
[19] 同上，页226。
[20] Christine Mollier, *Buddhism and Taoism Face to Face*, pp. 2–3.

众的需求与抱负在脱离了个别宗教内部的局限后，经由世俗影响融合而成。除了宗教间的混合，Daniel Goh认为宗教与现代化之间的互动也导致宗教出现了混合与变形（transfiguration）的特征，前者保留了宗教形态但改变了宗教教义与本质，后者则保留了宗教教义与本质但改变了宗教形态。虎豹别墅虽是世俗空间，但却承载了诸多混合佛教与道教的文化，而虽不是正规寺庙，但却是一处变形的宗教空间。

4. 塑像与神像之间

神像是华人宗教信仰中不可或缺的“神圣指标”之一，其象征着外界灵力与力量的聚集，也承载着许多可歌可泣的传说。除了上文提及的《说岳全传》，《西游记》、《封神演义》、《白蛇传》等小说中都涉及到神佛传说，尤以《西游记》和《封神演义》为最。值得注意的是，民间信仰的特色在于缺少经典或“圣经”，而神魔小说虽涉及到宗教教义与法术的叙述等，但大致上不能被视为宗教经典。然而，从这些小说中诞生的或经过修饰的人物，在脱离文本并且具象之后，却能够被纳入宗教祭祀场域中，其像也可被视为宗教圣物。虎豹别墅内的展区可谓塑像林立，除了例如虎、豹、鹿、猿猴等动物，以及虾兵蟹将、美人鱼等人兽，主要的塑像还是以太上老君、哪吒、观音、孙悟空、佛祖等释道人物为主。这类人物塑像无疑能够被视为一座“神圣指标”，但塑像究竟是如何转变成一尊神像，则值得进一步探讨。

林玮嫔主张神像是“无形且遍在之神的形体化与地域化的结果”，她在探讨台湾汉人的神像时便注意到，一尊神像若从原材料雕刻到完工，需要配合诸多宗教仪式，例如开光点眼、入神、过火等等。[21] 然而，这类神像的制造过程是为了适应“宗教场所”之需，但却忽略了那些在“宗教场所”空间之外的已经塑造好的人物像，以及这些人物像所

[21] 林玮嫔，〈台湾汉人的神像：谈神如何具象〉，页138。

具有的宗教潜能。虎豹别墅内的人物塑像在特定语境下，可立即成为一处神圣指标，供访客进行私人膜拜活动。访客仅通过简单的合十之举，便可将塑像瞬间转变成为一尊神像。笔者因此主张，虎豹别墅的个案显示了新加坡华人宗教实践中瞬态（transient）与自发（spontaneous）宗教空间的特点。这一瞬态与自发的空间转换则是由个人的宗教抱负所启动，即通过“拜”与“求”两个活动彰显而出。

过了虎豹别墅入口不远处的右上方乃“弥勒佛”展区。这是进入园区后的第一展区，四方型的仿茅草凉亭内安置一尊自在坐体的弥勒佛，其右边则是一尊头戴绿巾身着绿衣，双手合十和略微弯腰的男侍者（图一）。佛教经典或甚至是小说中并无任何关于弥勒佛身旁侍者的记载，而正规佛教寺院也一般以四大天王陪祀弥勒佛。笔者几经询问园林的相关负责人员与匠师，但却仍无法获得关于这一展区的含义以及男侍者的身份的资料。在结合图像学理论以及佛教寺院格局分析，笔者认为这一展区有两层含义。首先，一般的佛教寺院丛林的正门入口处皆供奉着一尊弥勒佛，取其笑口常开“皆大欢喜”之意，希望信徒进入寺院能生欢喜心。因此，园林的设计师将弥勒佛安置在虎豹别墅的入口处，或许也是模仿佛教寺院的格局，希望到访游玩的访客也能心生欢喜。其次，W.J.T. Mitchell 认为图像应当被视为一个主体来看待，因为图像是有欲望和动力的，无时无刻影响着、说服着观赏者。[22] 若立体塑像和图像一样有欲望和具影响力，那么男侍者塑像便可象征园林的参访者，而他所呈现出的“拜拜”之举则是想要提醒访客们可于塑像前礼拜。园林的设计师与匠师之用心，以及虎豹别墅亦乐园、亦圣地的本质由此而显。

[22] W.J.T. Mitchell, *What Do Pictures Want*, pp. 28-32.

图一：虎豹别墅入口处的弥勒佛展区（作者摄）

在虎豹别墅的巅峰时期，园林中每日有数十位工匠兼画匠，主要负责进行塑像的维修工作。这班匠师如今仅剩下85岁的郑耀盛先生，以及两位来自中国的新学徒。被誉为“虎豹别墅伯”和“最后的工匠”的郑先生13岁就开始在虎豹别墅工作，将一生献给了虎豹别墅也见证了虎豹别墅的变迁。[23] 笔者自2016年开始，不定期到访虎豹别墅进行考察，除了与匠师们交流，也关注访客与塑像之间的互动。图二为郑先生平日上班之前，在“白衣观音”像前上香合十之景。除了观音，他也会在“泰国四面佛”（图三），以及“缅甸式如来佛祖”（图四）前上香。白衣观音塑像乃是郑先生与他的叔叔一起雕塑而成，也是他最满意的作品。[24] 四面佛的塑像与神龛，以及坐落在凉亭里的缅甸佛则是为了增添国际化色彩而设，模拟泰国与缅甸常见的信仰指标。这三尊塑像原非供

[23] 林佳敏，“呵护百雕像逾70年‘虎豹别墅伯’交棒”，《联合早报》，2018年11月4日，页4。
[24] 同上。

人膜拜，只因园林的工匠们后来发现在塑像前“拜拜”的访客增多，有些甚至自备香烛，故而为了避免访客随意插香，匠师们方安置了香炉。然而，匠师们专属的固定“宗教空间”却是在他们的休息室内。位于虎豹别墅尾端的匠师休息室不对外开放，里头除了备有桌椅、家电、日用品等，还设有三处祭祀空间：大门外挂在石墙上的“天公炉”，供奉观音菩萨佛像的供台，以及胡清才的神主牌。值得注意的是，虽然匠师们不是胡氏的后人，但基于缅怀胡清才的贡献以及主雇之恩，遂特立牌位虔诚礼拜。

图二：郑耀盛先生在“白衣观音”像前合十上香（作者摄）

图三：位于“白衣观音”前方的四面佛神龛（作者摄）

图四：缅甸式如来佛祖“甲”（作者摄）

图二为笔者于2017年5月份所拍摄，但观音塑像前的香炉却在经过了自2018年12月初至2019年2月底封园整修之后，被园林的管理层移除。同样的，图五、六、七为一组分别摄于1950年代、1993年、以及2016年的“无常”与“护法使者”展区，三张图片的焦点并不在于塑像本身，而是在“无常”座前两足之间。图五与图六的差别在于1993年的“无常”像前增设了一个香炉。根据摄影者的记录，“虎豹别墅的员工为了方便日常上香”[25]，特地在塑像前摆放香炉。虽然当时的虎豹别墅（或“龙的世界”）正值朝向高科技主题公园发展的阶段，但这些香炉的存在也显示了这座园林的宗教本质。相隔了二十余年，“无常”座前的香炉已被替换成为了一个简陋的竹筒。根据郑耀盛先生口述，新的承包商继“龙的世界”关闭之后，便对园林进行一次彻底的整修，当时各处的香炉或相关器皿也被清除。然而，由于有些访客相信园中让人“一见大吉”的“无常”塑像十分灵验，尤以求偏财更是有效，所以尽管重新开放后的园林禁止抽烟及点香，但也无法全面阻止访客在像前“拜拜”，甚至是违法在地上插香。匠师们为了保护园林景区也给访客行方便，就特地重新在“无常”座前立一个插香的容器。由此可见，基于访客自发的宗教实践形式，这类瞬态的私人宗教空间也因此形成。

[25] Judith Brandel & Tina Turbeville, *Tiger Balm Gardens*, p. 168.

图五：1950年代的“无常”展区（国家档案馆资料）

图六：1993年的“无常”展区（Judith Brandel and Tina Turbeville. Tiger Balm Gardens）

图七：2016年的“无常”展区（作者摄）

除了上述明显的用于上香的器皿以及香支燃烧后所剩下的香脚，访客在园中“拜拜”之后所留下的痕迹，还包括了日常用品，例如矿泉水、鲜花、水果等。图八中的塑像乃是另一尊“缅甸式如来佛祖”，同样安置于另一座凉亭内，但却少了图四中摆放于塑像座前的香炉。然而，这尊佛祖像前所摆放的矿泉水也同样是访客拜佛的表现，与上香异曲同工。2017年4月份的一次田调中，笔者恰好遇到了一位六旬老翁，在距离“白衣观音”像不远处的“福禄寿三星”展区摆放了一瓶矿泉水和一盘鲜花。经询问之下，张姓老翁说他是在一名道教法师的指示下，连续一周到三星像前膜拜，之后还必须将矿泉水与鲜花取回家，冲洗花水澡以驱除霉运。显然的，这类物品的摆放将一处供访客游玩观赏的展区，立刻转换成为了一个瞬态的私人宗教空间。

图八：缅甸式如来佛祖“乙”（作者摄）

从上述“无常”和“福禄寿三星”展区的例子可见，到虎豹别墅的访客们在这些瞬态的私人宗教空间“拜拜”的目的，主要是在于“祈求”。此时的塑像已不再是提供这些访客娱乐和观赏的物品，而是一尊用来进行神圣对话的神像。Adam Chau 在探讨华人宗教“做宗教”（doing religion）的方式时，提出了六中“做宗教”的模式，其中之一便是“旨在利用简单的仪式或法术得到立竿见影的效果”的“即时灵验模式”。[26] 这一模式在虎豹别墅的塑像当中，则是通过“有求必应”一词反映出。例如，在园林中央的假山区立着一尊高大的“布袋和尚”（或称笑佛）塑像，而塑像右下方就摆放着一个斗状长方形的箱子，上面写着“有求必应”（见图九）。这箱子如今填满了沙石，原先是否供人插香，摆放供品，或者是投钱许愿，已难以考证。“布袋和尚”名为

[26] Adam Chau, “Modalities of Doing Religion,” p. 68.

契比（生卒不详），乃五代时期的僧人。顾名思义，因契比时常背着布袋，遂获此别称，而也因为其笑口常开，民间也称其为笑佛。由于传说布袋和尚“长于巫术能为人消灾，亦能卜人吉凶”[27]，而且百姓也认为其布袋里装着无限的金银珠宝，所以也视其为财神虔诚供奉。

图九：“布袋和尚”像与“有求必应”箱（作者摄）

“有求必应”一词在虎豹别墅多处可见，除了“布袋和尚”像前，还可明显的在园林后方一处“送子观音”的石画上看到（图十）。与前文提及的“白衣观音”塑像不同的是，这一观音塑像是根据假山的轮廓绘制而成，并以“送子”为主题。这尊石画上的观音怀抱着一个穿着红

[27] 董芳苑，《台湾人的神明》，页405。

色肚兜的婴儿，莲座上写着“早生贵子”四字，而莲座下方的假山则写着“有求必应”，当中尤以“求”字为放大体。观音信仰具有世俗性和亲和性，民间观音信仰更是具有了儒、释、道三教杂糅的特色。而且，“观音信仰伦理化的特色非常鲜明，这种伦理化主要是为了适应世俗社会的各种关系”。因此，观世音菩萨的“送子观音”化身便是为了适应华人传统孝道观。[28] 可见匠师们刻意将“求”字放大，旨在告示那些希望早生贵子的访客们，让他们在石画前祈求观音送子。因此，对于一般访客而言，“送子观音”石画仅是一处供观赏的展区，但对于哪些有所求的访客，此时的石画瞬间却具有了灵气，足以寄托他们的希望。

图十：“有求必应”的“送子观音”石画（作者摄）

[28] 李利安，《观音信仰的渊源与传播》，页49。

5. 结语

虽然虎豹别墅在朝向现代化与高科技化的发展路上尚未成功，但园林所保留下的文化遗产，尤其是新加坡华人宗教信仰文化，却是值得备受关注的。基于虎豹别墅长期以来就被定位成为一处世俗化的旅游景点，所以其宗教本质或被遗忘，或被笼统的融入整体“文化”视野下探讨。相反的，若将虎豹别墅视为一处充满“神圣指标”的圣地，那虎豹别墅所能反映出的不仅仅是园林的宗教本质，也更是能以此管窥新加坡华人宗教的混合与世俗化特征。在新加坡的语境中，世俗化不等同于去宗教化，而是宗教信仰如何通过私人化的形式在世俗空间中继续实践。换言之，虎豹别墅是一处变形的宗教空间，体现出了新加坡华人宗教的混合色彩。

偶像崇拜建构了华人宗教的核心部分之一，凡任何具象的物品或甚至是树木和石头等天然物，都可以被视为神像敬奉。因此，关键的问题不在于什么物品能够成为神像，而是这些物品如何成为了神像受到信众供奉。笔者主张，通过虎豹别墅的个案研究可见，由个人宗教抱负所启动的“拜”与“求”两个活动，不仅仅将园林中的某些塑像转换成为了神像，也将园林或园林内部的个别展区变形成为一处瞬态与自发的宗教空间。自发意味着在园林管理层没有提倡或禁止的情况下，访客在遇到相关“神圣指标”后，当场自主的进行私人宗教活动。瞬态则意味着这些宗教活动与相关的器具物品或稍纵即逝（如简单的合十拜拜之举），或留下一些暗示性的痕迹（如矿泉水瓶、鲜花、香脚等），或被清除后又另设（如“无常”像前的香炉），或甚至是被保留下但已不再扮演原初的功能（如“布袋和尚”下方的“有求必应”容器）。随着历史发展与社会变迁，无论是通过园林实体本身，或者是照片、录影和文字记载等媒介，这一自发与瞬态的宗教空间最终所留下的是一部重写本（palimpsest）。后来的访客可以借此追溯到或看到之前所留下的宗教活动痕迹，从而更全面的认识到新加坡华人宗教的特色。

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Panel 3

Singapore Chinese Literature

1980年代海外华人剧场的聚合与张力：以新加坡为例

林华源

澳大利亚 悉尼 · 新南威尔士大学

谢谢主席，以及新加坡华族中心和国立大学中文系的邀请。也非常感谢大会所有工作人员的辛劳，特别是杨妍博士还有我们翻译室的同仁李慧垣先生和陈筱琳小姐，我才有机会参加这个研讨会，向大家学习、请教。

我研究的是剧场，主要是这四位港台中新的华语戏剧大师。他们是台湾的赖声川、香港的荣念曾、原来在北京人艺当编剧，后来成为流亡作家，首位华人诺贝尔文学奖得主的高行健，还有我们自己的郭宝崑先生。他们几位都是最具影响力、有前瞻性、开创性，勇于挑战体制和尺度的艺术家、思想家，至今仍在当地乃至于华人地区、世界戏剧艺术发挥着深远的影响。台湾国立中央大学的戏剧学者周慧玲老师把这四位称为华人戏剧界的“四人帮”。我比较喜欢的一个说法是借用金庸武侠小说里的一个术语，他们是华山论剑的“东邪、西毒、南帝、北丐”，各个身怀绝技，各有各的独门武功，都威震江湖。这四位戏剧大师1987年曾经在新加坡聚首，参加第二届华语戏剧营，当时还邀来了上海的余秋雨和吉隆坡的克里申 · 吉（Krishen Jit）。新加坡一直被人嘲笑，说我们是文化沙漠，但1987年的这场聚会，把新加坡变成了文化艺术界众星汇集的焦点。我现在正在完成的书稿，就是从这里开始的。

我研究的题目是探讨1980年代东亚和东南亚的华语戏剧世界如何建构身份认同这一个命题。我认为，1980年代是“中国性”在中国、台湾、香港以及新加坡被重新建构的重要时代。文化大革命结束以后，中国大陆就像一条沉睡已久、缓慢苏醒的巨龙，其影响力渐渐渗透国际舞台。而这四个以华人居多的地区，都以不同的形式来面对和回应这正在蜕变中的冷战趋势。我探讨的这几位华人编导的戏剧创作，都是充满了表现各地的华人身份认同的经验。我今天主要探讨的例子，虽然是1980年代新加坡的剧场文化和语言政治，但我要强调的是，如果我们把它放置在整个区域的地缘政治来讨论，那整块区域问题的连贯性将更加鲜明，而看到其实新加坡并不是独立的个案。今年是新加坡开埠两百年，借这个机会来审视这段历史，也许是很有意义的。

新加坡在建国初期，政府试图制定一套国家认同的论述，将国民归纳为几个既定的族群时，郭宝崑成功地抵制了这一套论述，以他的戏剧开启了文化认同的另一种表述：一种对于多元语言、多元文化的省思。由此，郭宝崑建立了一个有别于中国大陆、台湾和香港的华语剧场，一个具有独特本土意识的新加坡剧场。

郭宝崑给我们留下的作品，已经成为新加坡剧场史上的经典，包括《棺材太大洞太小》、《郑和的后代》和《灵戏》。单人剧《棺材太大洞太小》最先是用英文写成的，第一个英语版演出的主角是林继堂，Lim Kay Tong。《郑和的后代》首演的也是英语版本，由王景生导演、剧艺工作坊演出。《灵戏》首演版本参与的演员除了实践剧场的核心演员黄家强、吴悦娟和王德亮之外，还有北京人艺的林连昆老先生和新加坡广播电视台的谢韶光。这个版本不是郭宝崑导的，那时郭宝崑生病，他就打电话去台湾找赖声川，当时呢，赖声川连剧本都还没有看，就一口答应下来。那时这个戏造成的轰动，就是促成了中台新三地的艺术合作。我这里要强调的，是郭宝崑的艺术合伙人不只限于华语剧场，英语源流的演员和国外的艺术家也参与郭宝崑的戏剧创作。而我今天要讲的，并不是这三出戏。我要讲的是新加坡

戏剧史上，另外一个重要的里程碑，在1988年创作的《寻找小猫的妈妈》。这个剧本让演员们带进自己的母语：英语、淡米尔语、华语、闽南话、潮州话和广东话——以这六种语言和方言进行演出，反映了本地的文化复杂性和语言多样性。有学者认为，郭宝崑在此剧中，“已经成功塑造了最具典型意义的新加坡人的处境。”与此同时，郭宝崑在本地剧场的地位也越来越显著，因为他为至今仍处于两极化的新加坡剧场扮演至关重要的桥梁角色（Seet, 1994, p. 244）。那我们不禁要问，此前的新加坡剧场，为何处于两极化？而这两个极端，又是什么呢？

原先只活跃于华语剧场的郭宝崑，1980年代开始以英语创作剧本和举办戏剧工作坊。与此同时，他发展出的“多元语言剧场”在往后也成为新加坡剧场界重要的里程碑。因此，本地华语及英语剧场的重要艺术家，无不受到他的影响。顺着这点，我想提出两个问题：（一）为什么郭宝崑要在1980年代跨越语言之间的界限，从华语剧场进军英语剧场，而之后又开创他的多元语言戏剧呢？（二）对于一个刚独立不到20年，正在积极创造国家认同感的新兴国家，这又意味着什么呢？可能鲜为人知的是，这位被誉为“新加坡当代剧场之父”，对本地剧场景观有巨大影响的郭宝崑，并不是国家委任的文化官僚，亦不是国家认可的艺术家。恰恰相反，郭宝崑因为政治理念偏左，在1970年代中，被政府拘禁了四年半。我们或许可以以郭宝崑入狱的四年半，作为新加坡语言政策的转捩点。评者一般认为，1980年以前，本地的社会大致上是“被区分为不同的语言源流，既华、巫、印、英这四大族裔。……这种‘分而治之’的做法是直接承袭英国殖民地的”（Quah, 2002, p. 378）。当人民行动党继英国人成为新加坡的政府以后，他们继续沿用这套“多元族群”（multi-racialism）的方式治国，给予四大族群“有区别性但又公平的地位”（separate-but-equal status）（Benjamin, 1975, p. 12）。在1980年以前的新加坡剧场，也确实是以这几种语言做区别的（Quah, 2002, p. 378）。而郭宝崑对本地剧场最大的贡献之一，就是为这几个不同语

种的剧场穿针引线，成为他们彼此之间沟通的桥梁（Jit, 2000, p. 92）。或许这与在座的各位并没有太大的意义，因为你们都是同时掌握几种语言的专家，但在1980年以前的新加坡剧场，各个语系的剧场工作者，因为语言的障碍，彼此之间是没有沟通的。例如，英语剧场工作者对华语剧场的发展是毫不熟悉的（Quah, 2002, p. 378 & 2004, p. 35）。很吊诡的是，在一个语言混杂的社会现实里头，新加坡的戏剧却是以单一语言进行演出的！因此，郭宝崑跨越语言的藩篱，对于建立一个跨语言剧场的社群和发展多元语言剧场是至关重要的。

《寻找小猫的妈妈》是新加坡多元语言剧场的座标，不只是因为这是本地剧场史上第一出以六种不同语言进行演出的戏剧之外，更为重要的是，这出戏吸引了来自各个语言源流的观众，虽然观众里头相信没有任何一个人是听得懂剧中所有六种语言的。各位现在看到的这张照片，就是这出戏演出以后的场景。站在舞台中央的正是郭宝崑，而围坐在他身后的是当时的演员。从这张照片我们可以看到，他演出采取的形式，并不是一个写实主义传统，二元对立式的镜框舞台，而是一个三面的黑箱剧场，舞台是平地的，跟观众靠得很近，表演的感染力因此特别强。现场可以看到，观众席里头确实坐了各种肤色、各个族群的人士。

新加坡的华语剧场，深受五四运动的影响。一直都肩负着社会改革和政治觉醒的使命感（Quah, 2002, p. 378）。而60、70年代的郭宝崑，与他的艺术同伴一样，都深受这股社会浪潮的影响。因为创作题材过于偏左，在一场针对左翼艺术工作者的大逮捕中，郭宝崑也难以幸免。当他重获自由以后，1980年的新加坡已经是一个很不一样的地方了。政府在前一年刚颁布了一项影响深远的语言政策，将英语定为新加坡第一工作用语，而其他民族的语言则降为“第二语言”，在学校和大众媒体上，严禁使用方言。选择英语为工作语言，主要是为了与国际金融接轨，也要让语言文化复杂的各个族群有一个共同、彼此可以沟通的语言。同时，这也是东南亚一个政治非常动荡的时代：一方面，在东南亚

民族主义纷纷崛起，各国宣布独立；另一方面，国际共产势力渐渐渗透东南亚。这正是处于冷战的高峰时期，亚洲的政治局势，绝对不能容许华人人口占有四分之三的新加坡，成为“第三个中国”（Chua, 2009, p. 240）。新加坡政府将高等华文教育视为共产势力的温床，因此关闭了所有的华校，包括当时东南亚唯一的华文大学——南洋大学。也将当时的两大华文主流报纸，《南洋商报》和《星洲日报》合并为《联合早报》。这个所谓的“双语政策”，其实是把英语变成了强势语言，而其他族群的语言则严重地受挫，因此新加坡人的华文程度，逐年每况愈下。更为重要的是，这个政策改变了各个族群的社会与经济地位。传统华校生得立马转用英文上课，对于很多一时之间无法适应的学生而言，他们就被教育体制排挤在外。这个政策所塑造的语言环境，使培育华语剧场人才的工作更加艰巨，严重打击了华语戏剧圈（Kuo, 1997, p. 69）。以郭宝崑自己的话说，这个政策导致：

> 一夜之间，方言完全销声匿迹，而在母语教学方面，文学占的比例也大幅度下降，就连语言教学本身也大大锐减。在一代人里，剧场人才培育的状况本质上受到了巨大的改变，因为现在在学校受教育的孩子们，强势语言一定是英语，而大概只有极少数能掌握流利且带有文学底子的中文。因为他们在学校学的华语，仅只是为了功用主义而已。
>
> (Kuo 1997, p. 69)

在这个时代背景之下，原先只活跃于华语戏剧圈的郭宝崑1980年代开始以英语创作戏剧和举办戏剧工作坊。郭宝崑此时迈入英语剧场，吸引了一大批原先因为语言障碍而无法接触华语戏剧圈的英语剧场工作者。而这两个剧场的艺术家们，透过郭宝崑的穿针引线，密切合作，开放彼此之间的资源，引介于对方，慢慢发展出他的多元语言剧场。

《寻找小猫的妈妈》讲述一名老母亲，因为上述语言政策与子女沟通不良而越来越疏离。蹲在舞台中央的，正是这名只会讲闽南话的老妈妈。既然在学校与媒体上都禁止使用方言，孩子们闽南话的操控能力越来越薄弱，逐渐加剧了两代人之间沟通的障碍。有一天，老妈妈心爱的小猫失踪了，她出外寻找时，遇见了一名也在觅寻他失踪小猫的印度老先生。老妈妈只谙闽南话，老先生只会讲淡米尔语，两人无法了解彼此的语言。可是，透过各种手势与表情，两人似乎形成了一种莫名、超乎语言的共鸣，演绎了一场“相信是新加坡剧场史上最感人的一幕戏”（le Blond, 2000, p. 142）。当印度老先生找到了自己的小猫，他邀请他这位刚结交的朋友跟他的小猫一起玩耍。最终，当老妈妈与印度老先生道别时，他们大概已经理解，在这个新的语言大环境里，他们都已被沦为社会的边缘人。

这场被誉为相信是新加坡剧场史上，最感人的一幕戏，在以六种不同的语言演出时，剧场里头是没有打字幕的。换言之，绝大多数的观众，是无法了解所有的台词的。在观赏这幕戏時，相信各位也一定能够亲身体验这出戏在1988年首演版本的时候，当时观众所经历的惊喜、困惑以及烦躁和疏离感。

在观赏这出多元语言戏剧的同时，观众也感同身受剧中角色所经历的疏离感。如果我们假设绝大多数的观众都是大专院校的毕业生，有一定的文化水平、社会地位，那这种戏剧手法就提供一个让观众想象跟体验，在这种语言政策之下被掠夺话语权的弱势族群所经历的缺失，犹如剧中只谙单一语言的老妈妈。吊诡的是，观众与这群失声、被边缘化的族群产生共鸣的，恰恰是这种缺失的共同经验，而新加坡人的身份认同很反讽地，也似乎是建立在这种缺失的共同经验之上。当所有以华文为媒介语的行业都正面临艰巨的考验，挣扎求存而逐渐被淘汰时，郭宝崑引借了其他语言源流的资源，为萎靡不振的新加坡华语剧场开辟了一条新的道路。有些人或许会质疑，郭宝崑的戏剧是否还能够被称为“华

语”戏剧？或许更为重要的是：由于郭宝崑的及时介入，新加坡戏剧才没有完全被英语剧场所垄断，而多元语言剧场被接受成为更能够真实反映新加坡意识的戏剧。我们其实很难想象，在一个英语至上的社会，剧场能够避免遭致同样的命运。郭宝崑的作品，充分反映了新加坡华人在1980年代，社会转型期间所面临的种种压力和困境，提供了一种有别于国家所制定的文化认同想象，和进行思辨、批判的空间，谢谢。

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小说“传异”的限度：
反思文学选集的他者再现与导读取向

曾昭程

新加坡国立大学中文系

非常感谢黧沅的介绍。我想在今天开始报告之前，先用英文说明一下，我构思这场报告的背景考量。

Before I begin my presentation in Chinese, I thought I would share in English some of the background considerations. This presentation is really born out of two sets of reflections. The first set has to do with a class that I’m teaching right now in NUS. The title of the class is called “Strangers in Chinese literature”. I have been trying to use literary and film texts to get students to explore questions about people and communities living in the social margins across various fault lines, including ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, and so on and so forth. While preparing the syllabus, I thought I could populate all the weeks with learning materials from Singaporean and Malaysian Chinese literature. Of course I encountered obstacles, first of which is language. There is just very little translation of Singaporean and Malaysian Chinese literature into English. The other challenge points to something deeper: I discovered that there seems to be inadequate Chinese-language literary representations of people living in the social margins in the first place. That got me thinking about whether there are restrictions that the authors have imposed on themselves, or whether there are institutional barriers to creating those representations. During the Q&A session we can have a frank discussion about this. The second set of reflections is drawn from conversations I have had with friends with

whom I reconnected after nine years overseas. Many of them are writers who compose literary works in Chinese language. What they tell me is that there is an increasing sense of isolation among Singaporean Chinese authors, that when people talk about "SingLit", that is, Singapore literature, these days, the works discussed are almost invariably in English. So how do Chinese writers step out of their echo chambers or comfort zones? These two sets of reflections underpin what I am going to share subsequently. With these reflections in mind, I will begin my presentation in Chinese.

回应并延展这次会议的主题，我的报告首先探讨的问题是：针对本地华社与文化多元性的交集，新华文学能带动怎样的思考？

熟悉近年研究动态的学术同行也许很快就会采用“华语语系文学”（Sinophone Literature）的分析方法。“华语语系文学”是过去十多年来，从北美学界输出，并颇能引起中国以外各地区的华文文学研究者共鸣的一个概念。眼下学者对这个概念的操作指向没有共识，但我们不妨回顾史书美最初如何为这个概念设定研究目的与范围。她在文章《反离散：“华语语系”作为文化生产的场域》（Against Diaspora: The Sinophone as Places of Culture Production; 2010）里说：

> 华语语系研究是对处于中国和中国性（Chineseness）边缘的各种华语（Sinitic-language）文化和群体的研究。这里“中国和中国性边缘”不仅仅理解为具体的，同时也要理解为广义的。它包括严格意义上的中国地缘政治之外的华语群体，它们遍及世界各地，是持续几个世纪以来移民和海外拓居这一历史过程的结果；同时，它也包括中国域内那些非汉族群体，由于汉族文化居于强势的主导地位，面临强势汉语时，它们或吸收融合，或进行反殖民或其他形式的抗争，形成了诸多不同的回应。

聚焦语文的参数，史书美的论述进行了空间的重组，并重新命名了中国境内边缘地区和世界各地的华文创作。正如台湾学者詹闵旭的观察，若往深层探究，“华语语系”的论述着重分析中国境内使用汉语的少数族群，再来关注各地华人移民与原住民的互动，以及华人移民作为弱势族裔的生存境况。这个研究方法明显想要跳脱中国与海外华人二元拉锯的离散研究框架，而它的在地化视角，在詹闵旭看来，标示了华文现代文学研究的“种族化转向”。

新加坡华族社群的殊异性在于它虽是一个移民群体，但在一个后殖民国家的语境中，它并不是一个弱势族裔。然而，位处中国境外的“新华文学”确实能够再现华人移民如何在多元语言、多元种族和多元文化的南洋落地生根的经验，仍可算是“华语语系文学”的合适范例。在深入挖掘文学与文化生产的种族面向之外，“华语语系”作为一个重视探讨在地关系（local relations）的研究方法，其实还可能发展出其他的层次。有别于“华语语系”种族化转向所衍生的分析路数，我的报告拟从社会阶层（class）的角度切入，而暂时悬置对种族分界的处理。毕竟在新加坡文化研究的语境里，官方“Chinese-Malay-Indian-Others”（CMIO）的种族分类和管理模式较为人所熟悉。而我将以谢裕民的短篇小说《一路顺风》（2017）为例，勘探新华小说如何传达岛国社会的另一种异质建构。

谢裕民的《一路顺风》以倒叙的形式呈现，在约五千字的篇幅里，侧面刻画了一名休假的客工被误认为恐怖分子的故事。泰国客工通旺在公共假日当天无处可去，于是在工地加班。他在用挖土机挖水沟的过程中，挖到一个用铁做的“圆锥形直筒”。原本他把直筒拿到废铁厂想脱售，后来却打退堂鼓，另找买家，结果却惹来拘捕之祸。

通过对通旺工余生活的刻画，读者慢慢拼凑出泰国客工在新加坡的境遇。通旺把挖到的东西拿去废铁厂卖却遭到冷遇，遂引发他的感想。小说的行文如此表述：“他们这些外籍工人都知道，新加坡老板都不是

人，不能相信”。所幸通旺的老板是个例外，除了让他预支薪水回乡探亲，公共假日还让他开公司的pick-up小货车。小说提到通旺十年来跟着同一家建筑公司到处盖楼，行文描述“新加坡东西南北的购物中心他几乎都有份参与”。尽管通旺和他同事的劳动对岛国的经济发展至关重要，但休假时他们“能去的地方很少；”买东西，也只去泰国的杂货店。除了因为新加坡的消费高，而且能买到家乡熟悉的东西，另外的原因是他们经常必须面对异样的眼光和表情。与此同时，他们也慢慢地疏离了家乡的亲人。叙事提到通旺想起间中回家“看到孩子突然长大，老是觉得怪怪的”。而生理的欲望，迫使他们在异乡寻求纾解的方式和情感的寄托。由此可见，他们这些客居者一方面对家乡逐渐感到陌生；另一方面虽然习惯了岛国的生活，却也因为遭遇偏见与歧视，一直难以真正融入新加坡的社会，因而处于一种悬浮离散的两难认同状态。

像《一路顺风》这样的故事可以有几种读法？还原作品的出版语境，小说是特地为一本以“旅程”为主题的新华文学作品集而创作的。这本文学原创集《起承转合的路上》的主编，就是今天和我同场报告的陈志锐老师。志锐很用心地为每篇作品写了读后感，以及延伸阅读和感受的建议。这些“侧文本”（paratext）提示了第一条解读的径路。志锐提醒我们：

> 大家发现丰富的虚实与叙述的互涉和补充吗？你看，多有趣的互文阅读：大象 vs 佛像，行车的一路顺风 vs 人生的一路顺风，pick up vs 捡到宝。谢裕民的文字、布局刻意不顺，又暗藏玄机，让我们的阅读旅程更有难忘的风与浪。

这里有必要向尚未读过小说的朋友介绍：通旺的胸前佩戴佛像，而他被拘捕的地方是在动物园外的路。他当时在小货车上已经入睡。那并不是他第一次在那里过夜，他曾在动物园外听过大象的吼叫声，大象的吼声让他回想起自己在家乡的经验。而车上的望后镜挂着一块“一路顺

风”的小牌子；车后面则载着那圆锥形直筒。于此，主编的按语援用了相当典型的新批评方法，通过细察文本内部意象的关联和反讽，来引领读者开展一趟“阅读的旅程”。

把阅读描述为一种旅程，这样一个你我耳熟能详的隐喻，涉指阅读带有超越性质，是发生在精神和想象层面的体验。而更有意思的是，收录了《一路顺风》的作品集鼓励读者把阅读带入实际出游的过程当中，强调的是阅读作为一种形体感官与物质环境互动的经验。这本原创文学集即包含了一份特殊的用心，也就是将阅读旅程转化为感受岛国的身体旅程。小书封底的宣传文案把作品集形容为“新加坡第一本‘车票书’”，而其英文名称叫作“The Commuting Reader”。原来作品集还附赠乘车卡，希望读者能利用车资卡带着小书在出行时阅读。

然而，有别于上述“侧文本”的话语导向，我认为我们若独立审视《一路顺风》，可以开启不同性质的联想历程。在此，我采用美国学者刘大卫（David Palumbo-Liu）在其著作《The Deliverance of Others: Reading Literature in a Global Age》里的解读方式。刘氏在反思当下全球化时代的文学阅读时，把小说看成是一种特殊的传输系统（delivery system）。在他的论述中，叙事（narratives）传输的并不是文本包含的“意义”（meaning），而是一种另类想象的触动。小说叙事为读者创造的想象空间，理应促使我们思考和他者的关系，以及从历史与意识形态的角度考虑，这些我者与他者关系存在的原因和形式。这是刘氏的原话：

> I suggest that rather than focusing entirely on meaning-making, and whether we get it or not, we should think of how literature engenders a space for imagining *our relation to others* and thinking through why and how that relation exists, historically, politically, ideologically.

刘氏的这番话提醒我们，在运用新华文学来分析岛国华社内部的认同时，我们不好把认同看成是恒定自存的本质。新加坡华族的身份认

同应该被视为一种多元关系协商的结果，而同华族互动的他者未必是本土的异族同胞，也可以是岛国内外经济阶层不同的群体。从这个角度来看，《一路顺风》毋宁提供了一次宝贵的机会，教我们从两个方面反思新华文学的前景：

1）阅读新华文学究竟是怎样的一种社会行为？

2）新华文学的鉴赏与批评的话语是否应该扩大自身的角色承担，更好地引导读者注意文学多元性和现实多元性的复杂关系？

回到谢裕民小说的出版语境，含带《一路顺风》的文学集《起承转合的路上》其实是特地为了2017年“Buy SingLit”的活动而制作的项目。根据合集内的介绍，“Buy SingLit”是由一群活跃于本地文学圈子的出版商、书籍零售商和非营利组织合作发起的人文活动，其目的是鼓励年轻人发掘、接受，进而购买和阅读本地作者撰写的文学作品。“Buy SingLit”的中文口号为“买本地书，读本地情”，英文原版的表述则是“Buy Local, Read our World”。这样的召唤引发了我的好奇：“Buy SingLit”的活动如何看待本地文学创作的多元性？所谓的“our”（我们）包括了哪些群体？而翻译为“本地情”的“world”难道单单只涉指文学内部的世界？“读本地情”是否可以另作诠释，引导读者解读岛国的多元境况，而不只是让读者接触持有新加坡护照的“本地作者”的创作情怀？

结合当前的时事环境，我考虑的是：除了把阅读看成一种个人的生活消费习惯，一种私人享受的智性活动和审美体验，阅读是否也能启发对社会现象的关注，带领读者思考新加坡华人与社会上一般被视为他者的群体的关系？

诚然，主编在序文里从鉴赏文学技巧的角度出发，多少点出了《一路顺风》所影射的社会状态，我这里把相关的部分摘录出来。志锐写道：

> 短篇《一路顺风》延续其诡谲的文风，嘉年华般地容纳了动物园、大象、客工（或被误认为恐怖分子）、妓女、圆锥

形直筒（默认的炸弹）、警察等众多意象，描绘了当今社会防恐、怕恐的血淋淋的现象。

然而，我们如果深入反思编者的读后提示所指引的跟进方向，则可看出一种限制在华文和细读活动的观照。志锐的第一项提示，引导读者观察创作者的艺术构思，也就是这段主编的按语；第二项提示则建议沉浸式阅读的配乐，即对其他艺术形式的接受；最后一项则介绍作者在网上的另一篇作品，也就是说，把读者引入其他华文文学文本的阅读。这里我有点不同的意见，想和志锐讨论。新加坡的地铁其实串联且途经不少岛国的购物中心，在引领读者解码作品的美学设计之外，导读的话语是否也能鼓励读者抬头看一看、想一想，如小说主角通旺这些客工对岛国建设的贡献，甚至鼓励他们针对社会课题做进一步的反思、材料的挖掘，甚至行动？

近年來，新加坡的公民社会十分关注客工的权益，包括他们当中被雇主剥削的情况，以及整个城市建设对他们造成的空间区隔等问题。像《一路顺风》这样的新华小说，既能提供文学鉴赏的素材，也能引起许多切合当前社会议题的联想。如果走出选集的规划取向和眼下导读话语的限制，小说文本隐含的介入现实的精神可以得到更好的发挥。文学不该只通往艺术的鉴赏，或提升个人的修养，也应该是思考社会和世界时事的径路。

比方说，《一路顺风》多处采用人物通旺的思维方式和语言进行第三人称叙事。这个称为“自由间接文体”（free indirect style）的技巧使读者深入了解人物的观念意识。与此同时，这个叙事手法让读者既通过小说中角色的眼睛和语言来看世界，同时也通过作者的眼睛和语言来看世界。然而，我不免好奇：客工有没有可能自己发声？

接续这条思路追问：目前新华文学的读者当中，有多少人知道，有的本地客工业余时也创作文学？请大家看看屏幕，《Migrant Tales》是

一本双语诗集，和《起承转合的路上》一样，出版于2017年，里头收录了本地孟加拉客工的诗歌。新加坡英文诗人冯启明（Alvin Pang）在诗集的序文里写道：

> 与其说这本书令人称奇之处在于，有一群亲如手足的客工在新加坡创作了这些诗歌，还不如说更令人惊讶的是，他们竟然选择将作品与我们分享。我们这些装模作样、缺乏感性且信奉务实主义的人，我们这些无暇留意“边缘”事物的人。这些文字是他们心血的结晶，承载着涵养了他们的那些丰富而精深的文化传统，以及他们的反思和境遇，也揭露了鲜少人问候的他们的内心世界。这份馈赠值得我们最诚挚的感恩与最认真的关注。
>
> What is remarkable therefore is not that a brotherhood of guest workers in Singapore have written these poems, but that they have chosen to share them with us — we who pretend to an unsentimental pragmatism, who have little time for what we consider marginal. The fruit both of the rich cultural traditions they are part of, and their own reflections and circumstances, these words reveal an interiority few have thought to ask after. This gift deserves our fullest gratitude and attention.

中国文坛目前十分重视打工者提笔创作的社会现象，而《Migrant Tales》里的作品恰恰可说就是新加坡版的“打工诗歌”。尽管文学场域存在语言的分界，但如果得到相关信息的指引，能读懂英文的新华文学读者亦能从这些艺术实践中体会他者的情感世界，从而更好地了解岛国整体文学景观的包容性。新华文学将不再只是阅读的材料对象，而且还可以扮演桥梁的角色，为自己、也为其他的群体创造读者。

根据我刚才的阐释，编选者的鉴赏引导，以及小说的他者再现所担负的行动指向，其实为我们设定了分歧的阅读主体位置。原来关注在地现实的创作与导读实践，在协调文学的审美功能与社会功能之时，既可能相得益彰，亦可能相互牵制。回到谢裕民《一路顺风》的个案，小说把泰国客工在岛国的生命样态引入我们读者的生活当中，而我们应该用怎样的情感和行动，回报文本阅读促成的对社会差异的认知？

如果我们选择留在文学阅读的领域，去年出版的一本英文诗集，为我们提供了良好的启示。本地英文出版社Math Paper Press去年出版了《呼唤与回应：一本移民 / 在地诗歌选集》（Call and Response: A Migrant/Local Poetry Anthology）。在诗集里，编者先向不同背景的移民邀稿，收稿后再请人翻译，最后把这些诗作和本地英文诗人的创作回应配对。排版上这本选集也有巧思，编者让每一组诗分别呈现在跨版的左右两页，试图创造“对话”的形式效果，例如这组来自中国的诗人Hou Wei和新加坡诗人Zhang Ruihe的作品。两首诗的内容不是我这次分析的重点。我想指出的是，Hou Wei的诗在书里没有中文版。而如果这首诗是初次面世，则这意味着诗最早和读者接触的时候，就是以英译的形象出现。延展开来思考，我们收获的启发首先是，新华文学的身世日后有可能也需要在其他语系里寻找和梳理。再者，如果继续扩大解读的视阈，新华文学多层次、多面向的实践或可考虑超越再现（represent）自身认同的多元性，而把重点摆在经营与协调多元异质的各种关系（relations）。说得更直接一点，不管是创作、编辑或者营销，新华文学场域里的成员没有必要继续假设读者只关心华文场域内部的资讯，或假设读者只关注文艺方面的资讯。与此同时，无论是华族与异族，抑或所谓“原生”人口与外来人口，新华文学若结合翻译的力量，绝对有机会改善相对孤立的境遇，走出舒适区和回音室，加入岛国不同的社会议题之讨论，并丰富在地论述的面向。

何人与何时：新加坡华文文学的两个大哉问

陈志锐

新加坡国立教育学院亚洲语言文化学部

首先要问大家一个问题，新加坡有国家文学吗？Do we have a national literature? Yes? 你可以查一查，上网搜一搜。

答案是没有的。我们有国语，却没有国家文学。We have a national language but not a national literature. 我们的国语是马来语，大家都很清楚。我们有官方语言，大家在今天的研讨会里头已经讨论了好多，即华文、马来文、淡米尔文和英文这四种官方语言的地位和意义。但是我们没有一个国家文学。各位可能没有思考过这个问题：为什么我们没有呢？有很多解释，都没有明说，也都不会明白告诉你，为什么没有？就是没有，有的东西是不说比较好吗？但是呢，我们发现近来，就是回应刚才昭程提的一个问题，我们近来常常听到大家提起 Singapore Literature 这个名词的时候，很自然的就会出现类似投影片里头的一个景象：Singapore literature bookfair, Singapore literature in New York, Singapore literature night 等等……你会发现，绝大部分，我不能说全部，但几乎全部都是以英文为主的。所以我觉得今天的研讨会非常及时，也非常重要。

在新加坡，当我们要讲新加坡文学的时候，我们后面应该再加上 Singapore literature in English, Singapore literature in Malay, in Chinese 等

等，应该是这么叫法的。可是很多时候为了方便，或者是已经忘记了，很自然的只有Singapore literature，就是指涉英文的新加坡文学。那今天我主要要谈的是Singapore literature里面的中文的部分。

新加坡的华文文学，我们简称新华文学。这样的一个名词也有歧义，待会儿我会多谈。今天主要要问的是两个大问题。是什么人？跟什么时候？我说是两个大哉问。顺便谈一谈，刚才有朋友问我，什么是“大哉问”？其实“大哉问”有两个意思，它最早的出处是孔子与他的学生对话，学生就问“礼”的本质是什么？孔子说“啊，大哉问！”然后后来的翻译就有两种，一种翻译就是“哇，问的真好啊！”当然，这里不是说我这两个问题问得很好，不是这个意思。另外一个“大哉问”的意思就是：这是有重要意义的问题，就称之为“大哉问”。我们对新加坡华文文学是不是有问过这些根本而关键的问题？还是就是想当然耳？

坦白说，在新加坡比较少人会问一些“大哉问”[笑]，好的，有人说不敢问，或者不问比较好。但是我觉得作为学者还是要问吧。[笑]你觉得呢？这个问与不问之间的纠葛还是不要在今天深入研究。

好，回到我们的两个大哉问：何人与何时？英文当然就是Who to include？以及When it commences？其实这两个问题的顺序我觉得可以调换。有时是什么时候开始，就影响到包括什么人在里面。当然也可能倒过来，因为什么人在里面，所以就是什么时候开始。这个问题的顺序不那么重要。当我们讲新加坡华文文学的时候，我们简称新华文学。在很多的文本里面，它的滥觞其实就是一种政治性、历史性，甚至是社会性的论述，多于文学性的，我们发现都是这样子的。当然我们都知道新加坡于1965年脱离马来西亚以及英国成为独立国才有“新加坡”这个主权国家，所以很多的文学论述，包括在上世纪1980年代柏杨的《新加坡共和国华文文学选集》和90年代赖世和的《“新华文学”三十年》，你看它们的题目大概可以猜得到它们定义的新华文学从什么时候开始。看他

们的年份大概就可以猜得到他从什么时候开始。2000年以后中国的一位学者周宁，讲到新加坡华文文学的发展，也是以1965年为起点。这种论述法其实是把国家的独立当成一个起点，我觉得是最方便的一种做法。但是方便是不是正确？他们的理由当然也非常的言之凿凿，就是因为“没有理由拒绝一个国家拥有自己的文学”。这当然没有错，但问题是，是不是在国家独立之后就自然，或者自动有了国家的文学？我们今天一开始就问大家这个问题，我们没有国家文学，到今天还没有国家文学。

这个名词——“新华文学”、“新加坡华文文学”，是黄孟文博士在1970年出版选集的时候开始启用的，就在孟毅主编的《新加坡华文文学作品选集》里头。孟毅就是黄孟文的笔名。启用“新华文学/新加坡华文文学”这个名词的时候，他指涉的范围是相当广泛的，也不是以新加坡国家立国的时候为起点。黄孟文之后再接再厉，进一步编纂了这本《新加坡华文文学史初稿》，这到目前为止还是我们最重要的一本新加坡文学的参考和依据。但是你会注意到它是一个初稿。所谓初稿的意思，显而易见就是希望再把它细化和更新，或者期待后人补足，可是到今天我们还一直期待着，却一直还没有看到二稿、完稿，或者定稿。

在《初稿》这本书里面，提到新加坡文学萌芽于1919年。我们当然知道，1919年指的就是中国的五四，刚好今年是一百周年。固然，新华文学的发展和中国的五四新文学运动是紧密联系的。从语言上、文学上，甚至某种血缘上，两者是很有关联的。然而，是不是那边开始了个文学运动，这边自然就开始一个新华文学？难道就是如此顺理成章的一个起源？你肯定要质疑嘛，为什么是想当然耳呢？当然黄孟文博士也提出这个新加坡文学的起源也跟新加坡华文报刊有着密切的联系。这个你就可以问了，新加坡华文报刊什么时候开始的？其实它的发刊是更早的。在一八八零年代就开始有中文报章发行了。所以这个时间点我们应该重新再思考。

现在我们有一所新华文学馆，不知道大家去过这个地方吗？不是很大的一个馆，那是新加坡文艺协会的会所，也收藏新加坡文学的作品，基本上以文学馆来看规模算是非常小的。这个文学馆的主要发起、负责人和推手就是新加坡文艺协会的前会长——骆明先生。他在筹备这个文学馆的时候就提到了，其实很早一批南来从事文化跟教育事业的文化人，包括了郁达夫、胡愈之等，来到了新加坡产生感情留下来视为家乡，他们所写的东西都应该包含在新华文学馆里面。很明显的，这些南来的经历都发生在1965年之前。此为第一点，我们立刻可以打破这个“1965年”的迷思，他还提了好多作者。有学者在考察了这些出版物之后，发现1965年之前，甚至早在1923年，新马这一带就有高梦云出版的属于新马一带的诗集。1928年，许云樵出版了另外一本诗集《浮云》，1930年之后更有好多出版物等等。有人说这是新马最早的属于在地出版的现代文学。这些出版物再再地证明了1965年以前新华文学的存在，所以我们先排除1965年为起点。现在要继续追问的是，1965年之前又可以追溯到什么时候？

我们来看一个人，黄遵宪。黄遵宪，大家记得他是从中国派到新加坡来的一个外交家。新加坡是清政府在海外设置领事的第一个地方，而他就担任总领事。从1891年11月1日到1894年，大概三年的时间在新加坡担任相当于大使的总领事。然而，这位黄遵宪不只是一位外交官，他更是一位非常杰出的诗人。最有趣的是他在这三年期间观察了在地的许多文化、民俗等，写了相当多的诗作。同时，他的背景也应该让大家知道一下。他其实是中国诗界革命的主将之一。在五四新文学运动发生之前，19世纪末就先有一个诗界革命。这个诗界革命的主将就是我们的黄遵宪。他在那个时候提出，诗歌过去的传统应该要改变了，更提倡多一些口语的诗作，把我们社会的现实和现象写入诗歌。他最广为流传的一句话就是“我手写我口”，大家都很熟悉吧。在白话文运动的时候，这句话就特别火红。他真的也是其手写其口，作品非

常多，特别是《人境庐诗草》这本书收集了好多在新加坡所写的反映华侨生活的诗歌。比如说它里头一些古诗（是的，那时候他还是写古诗），《番客篇》就写新加坡华侨的一些风俗习惯等等。甚至他的诗歌也写了我们都非常熟悉的榴梿，当然就是书写新马一带的风土民情。说到榴梿，您或许会立刻联想到“榴梿”跟“流连忘返”的“流连”是谐音的，所以他就利用这个谐音来写了“绝好留连地，留连味细尝”。在这些诗作里头，他不只是把当地的文化、在地的美食写下来，还包括了很有趣的民俗，比如说“都缦都典尽，三日口留香。”这是我们都很熟悉，小时候都会背的俗语：“榴梿出，纱笼脱”的意思。“都缦”就是“纱笼”，即马来人的sarong。因为马来人很喜欢吃榴梿，所以榴梿季节一到，即刻将sarong脱下，典当了好去买榴梿。类似这样属于在地文化的特殊现象，都翔实地记录在他的诗歌里面，非常精彩。当然还有其他关于新加坡的人文杂诗，包括在地的这些红豆啊、沉香木啊、胡椒啊，这些热带的南洋植物都记录在文学作品里面，而且得到人文的深化。所以在那个时候，相当肯定的，我们会把它当成是在地文学，也就是新华文学吧。除非你觉得这个黄遵宪是一个中国派来的领事，不算是新加坡人。这是等一下我要谈的另外一个话题。但我认为，黄遵宪的在地作品启发了很多后来的在地文学创作，甚至可以算是新华文学在某方面的一个源头。虽然说源头，我又要再问了（虽然我们今天不一定有答案）。我要问的就是，黄遵宪就是源头了吗？最早的就是他了吗？我们是不是有更早的新加坡的所谓的地志文学？我讲地志，当然大家知道就是有关地方的一个记录，一个地方文化、地理、生活等等的文学性记录，叫地志文学。我们是不是可以找得到更早的？那早到什么时候呢？

往上追溯，我们发现这位马欢先生。马欢先生是谁呢？他是个航海家，在明朝的时候跟随郑和一起下西洋。马欢当时相当出名，跟郑和一起下西洋三次，甚至为了纪念他还有这个南沙群岛有一个岛就叫马欢岛。他跟郑和一起来做什么呢？一路上做记录。简单来讲就是笔录路上

的所见所闻。所以他这本书叫《瀛涯胜览》，基本上记录了他一路所看到的风景、民俗、人文、景观、语言、文字、气候、物产、工艺、交易、货币、野生植物等等……非常丰富。那是不是可以追溯到这边呢？算不算呢？我们看一下，大家可以思考，虽然我们不一定有答案。他怎么写呢？他里头写道：“自占城向正南，好风船行八日到龙牙门”龙牙门第一次在文献中出现。“入门往西南行二日可到。”所以，我们目前来讲找到几乎是最早的，就是在十五世纪明朝的时候，马欢所写的有关这个地方的记录。是不是这就是个开始呢？之前还有没有人写过这片土地呢？我没有答案，但是我很希望抛出一个问题，让在座的有志于研究历史以及新华文学史的朋友，可以把这段并入参考甚至往上寻索（补记：会后很高兴收到国家文物局研究员吴庆辉先生来信提出，元代汪大渊的《岛夷志略》里龙牙门与班卒比马欢还早好几十年。《岛夷志略》有言：“门以单马锡番两山，相交若龙牙状，中以水道以间之”）。很多我刚才讲的文学史专著或论文，都没有把这段加进去，都没有回溯到明朝或元朝这么早。这相等于把我们文学史的起源往前推了七百年。这是我要问的第一个问题，也抛出的第一个问题。可能没有答案，但是我提供一个可能的方向。

第二个问题：谁？这个更麻烦些，因为讲到人就越来越复杂。我们今天听了好多学者的论述，包括有关现今是个流动的、国际化的时代，作家与人流的进出、不确定的国籍身份等，都是非常复杂的问题。但是，我们是不是可以从一个更高的、更具包容性和多元性的角度来看待这个问题？如果从这个制高点来看的话，我们会看到这一百多年来，其实应该说这七百多年来，众多不同的作家、学者、文人都参与了新华文学的建设和书写。但是，我刚才列举的那些选集或文学史，都没有把这些多元身份背景的文人墨客并入我们的新华文学的范畴。

我这里必须要稍微谈一件现在正在发生的事。我们姑且把名字隐去。最近我和几位学者、作家一起参与编辑本地一个机构所主催的年度

新华书选。在这个过程当中，我们就针对作者的身份有了相当大的讨论跟辩论，因为大家可能也看过比赛的规则里的第一条就是“仅限于新加坡公民与永久居民”，对不对？参加比赛是为了公平，总要有些限制，我们可以理解。可是当我们讲到文学的时候，特别是新华文学的时候，有这一条规定是不是可能把很多可以壮大新华文学的东西排除在外呢？因为这是切身的，刚刚发生，还在发生的事。其实我们知道像这样子的思考模式和对它的质疑在新加坡是存在的，但我们其实公开讨论得不多。

在马来西亚——我们熟悉的邻居——却讨论得非常热烈。大家也知道，有一批留学台湾的马来西亚写作人，毕业后留在台湾工作、写作，也成为非常著名的作家，台湾好些选集和平台就把他们当成是台湾文学的作家之一。那在马来西亚国内进行马华文学选集的编辑的时候，就出现问题了。要不要把这些人选进去？后来就引起了非常大的讨论，甚至笔战。包括张锦忠、黄锦树、庄华兴等等就针对这个问题提出了很多不同的看法，主要的意见可以见魏月萍教授的论著。魏教授曾经在新加坡南大执教，现在回到马来西亚。她提出了一个文学公民的概念。其实，是不是真的只有护照才算数呢？必须要有这个国家的护照，你写的东西才属于这个国家吗？这是第一个很简单的可以思考的一个问题。文学的国界是不是无界限的呢？可不可以更加无界限呢？所以马华文学界提出了这个问题。当然在台湾有更多的讨论，因为台湾的身份认同、国别等等，更加的复杂。他们提出了很多有关本土性的论述，我这里很快地列举：例如不以作家的身份或认同为台湾文学研究范畴，不以作家的国籍为划分的标准，是高度跨国的一种文学的想象，涵盖多族群、多语言、多身份认同的文学创作等等。这是个多元的文化主义，但是它也必须与特定的地方有特定的连结。早在1940年代，台湾的黄得时就已经提出来。最近邱贵芬教授也再次论述。像这样子的论述在其他地方已经很多而且很深入了，而我们，还在辩论护照。

所以我的重点是，从这些辩论里面可以让我们看到开拓文学公民权的重要性与正面积极的意义。如果我们大家都同意应该更加地开放、更加地包容的话，那是不是下面这些人都可以纳入新华文学？这就包括南来的文化人作家——老舍。老舍，大家都知道是北京作家，是多么出名的老北京！可是，大家或许也知道老舍曾经在我的学校教过书，对，就是曾经在华侨中学教过书。而且他写的作品，对新加坡文学界后来的影响还是相当大的，当然我指的是老舍写的《小坡的生日》。另外，郁达夫也曾在新加坡有三年之久，主要担任报馆编辑，然而也写了非常多掷地有声的社论及抗日文章等，为新加坡与中国之间搭建了一个沟通的桥梁。其他还有胡愈之、力匡等。除了作家，还有其他文化人，像徐悲鸿、吴冠中等等。

第二，归侨文化人或作家，就是本来在新加坡或新马一带出世，之后回到中国去的，像我们比较熟悉的杜运燮、秦牧、王啸平等，他们回到中国就非常知名，但是我们从来就很少谈及他们在新加坡写的东西，更遑论把他们在这里写的东西并入新华文学。第三类，落地生根的一群。按理说，落地生根应该是属于新华作家了吧，因为连根都生了，可是后来发现因为种种缘由，好些人的作品都没有在新华文学的选集里面看到，或出现在新华文学的视域里。例如，潘受、刘延龄等，他们都是南来以后长期留下来的作家。

上述的是早年的文人墨客。近年来，也有好多新移民作家，或者旅居作家。你知道吗？中国一位非常知名的小说家兼编剧，即创作《蜗居》的六六，开始写作的时候就在新加坡。如今六六非常知名，然而很多人并不知道她其实早已入籍新加坡。又如九丹、张惠雯、忻航、舒然、李叶明等等，这些新移民作家我大都曾经和他们接触。他们是新移民没错，有些可能已经离开新加坡，但是他们很多人的写作都曾经在新加坡发展起来，甚至在这里开始萌芽。这批新移民作家其实都丰富了

新华文学。例如，有好多位在本地出版了好几本书，也得到艺术理事会的出版赞助。

以上是源自中国的新移民作家。另外，还有好多其他国家的，特别是马来西亚的写作人。我们文人朋友里头的学者、作家，好多都来自马来西亚，不管他们现在还是马来西亚人或者已经成为新加坡的永久居民或国民，比如说翁弦尉、游以飘、牛油小生、林韦地、冼文光等等。另外还有缅甸的段春青等等。这批从异国他乡移居本地的写作人都丰富了新华文学，可是他们大多没有出现在我们的新华选集，更没有写入我们的新华文学史。

时间关系，我简要地总结。宏观来看，我当然希望我们新华文学是跨国界的，我们可以尽量包容，特别是纳入这些历史上的和当今的移民作家的人和作品，他们的作品里头有太多精彩的对新华的注视。总的来说，我们期待一个更加多元、更加包容的新华文学，这应该是个跨国界的、跨时代的，更应该是个多元文化的新华文学。好，我时间已经到了，谢谢大家。

Panel 4

Chinese Language in Singapore

Snapshot of Singapore Mandarin Prosody[1]

WEE Lian-Hee

Department of English Language and Literature,
Hong Kong Baptist University

1. Introduction

With China's economic juggernaut cruising the global market, it appears that Singapore's foresight with the Speak Mandarin campaign that started in 1979 is paying off. Even though one may have misgivings about the standards of the average Mandarin speaker from Singapore, there is probably no lack of "elite" speakers who can hold their ground in a professional Chinese-speaking arena. However, to most Singapore speakers, a comment that their Mandarin is distinctly Singaporean is not normally taken to be a compliment. Apparently, this lack of pride for a local accent applies to all Putonghua speakers across China as well, with the exception of Beijing. The story for English is quite different. English speakers from the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand are quite proud of their own accents. World Englishes have also given new esteem to speakers of other varieties as well. Singaporeans, with perhaps the exception of government officials, appear to be quite proud of Singapore

[1] Thanks to the two informants. Privacy ordinances require that they remain anonymous. I am also grateful to the Department of Chinese Studies at the National University of Singapore for the opportunity to share this squib. For recording of the Putonghua speaker, the author is grateful to the Hong Kong Baptist University phonology lab for use of the recording studio. Thanks to Mingxing Li for many useful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

English. In fact, the use of Singlish is an ingredient for making bestsellers, as exemplified by *Spiaking Singlish* (Gwee Li Sui, 2017), *The Coxford Singlish Dictionary* (Colin Goh, 2002), and even the sitcom *Phua Chu Kang* (Television Corporation of Singapore, 1997). Quite similarly, Chinese programming will find popularity in dialectal elements from Hokkien, and Cantonese, as in Liang Wern Fook's song *Singapore Pie* (1991 & version 2 in 2015) and of course Jack Neo's movie *Money no enough* (1998). This is not to say that Singaporeans do not like Mandarin. With the Speak Mandarin campaign, it is the only Chinese language for many people. The situation was, understandably, at one point of time, a source of grief for grandparents who cannot communicate with their grandchildren. Still, it is true that Mandarin in Singapore does not enjoy the same popularity as English.

Curiously, however, the Mandarin of Singapore (hereafter Singapore Mandarin, SgM) does not differ very starkly from prescribed standards. Older generation speakers who acquired Mandarin prior to the school system of Lee Kuan Yew's administration probably have very special features that reflect first language transference from their dialectal mother tongues. Those schooled after 1979 would have hardly heard a single non-Mandarin Chinese word in class, and would use texts and dictionaries that align with Mainland China's authoritative Putonghua. While examination requirements may be laxer in Singapore, with fewer examinable vocabulary items or fewer and shorter texts, phonology and grammar would be the same. Notwithstanding these, a Singaporean can still easily identify a compatriot SgM speaker, which entail meaningful differences. Local lexicalized expressions may be an obvious clue, as in the use of the classifier *li* for any spherical object regardless of size, e.g. *yi-li xigua* "one watermelon" or *fanduidang* "members of the opposition (in the parliament)" which has probably no translation in mainland China but in Taiwan would be *zaiyedang* "non-ruling party".

However, SgM speakers can often be identified simply by their accent. This is true, despite SgM having the same consonantal, vocalic and tonal contrasts as China's prescribed Putonghua. The differences must therefore stem from phonology not specified by the authoritative documents. This would include specific phonetic articulations of the segmental and tonal inventory as well as the prosodic properties. Such prosodic properties as *er-hua* (suffixal

retroflexion) or *qingsheng* (light tone) are sometimes lexically stipulated and acquired in SgM, e.g. *yihui'r* "momentarily" and *mama* "mother", but are often spontaneous in Beijing speech and also in Putonghua. In terms of prosody, no dictionary stipulates the pitch range of a rising tone or a falling one, or for that matter the changes in intensity.

This paper looks into some of these parameters, specifically (i) speech rate, (ii) pitch range, (iii) peak delay, and (iv) intensity difference between full and light syllables to see if these are indeed plausible places where SgM may be distinct from Putonghua.

2. Methodology and Instruments

The methodology adopted here is one that I would characterize as a snapshot. Snapshots may not have sizable sampling, but it captures essences without the dangers of normalizations. This is not to say that it is a superior methodology, but just that it is nonetheless a valuable complementary one. Further, any snapshot can be checked for representativeness by qualitative assessment from a group of people familiar with its content, much like how a photograph can be identified as typical of a certain society and period of the subject whose image is captured.

The snapshot for the study of SgM is comparative in nature, using comparable recordings obtained from a Putonghua speaker and an SgM speaker. This snapshot comprises two speakers, and a paragraph of text, given below.

(1) The stimulus text

> 今天，妈妈问我，"你能把四个声调分清楚吗？"弟弟、姐姐立刻挑战我："你？"。"妈妈妈。麻麻麻。马马马。骂骂骂。搭达打大。"我毫不犹豫地就说了一串。还慢慢地重复了：搭　达　打　大。妈妈摇头说："只回答能或不能就可以了。这么废话，明年年底也说不完。"
>
> Translation: Today, mother asked me, "Can you distinguish clear the four tones?" Little brother and elder sister immediately called me, "You?" "Mā mā mā, má má má, mǎ mǎ mǎ, mà mà mà.

> Dā dá dǎ dà.” I rattled without hesitation. And I repeated slowly, dā dá dǎ dà. Mother shook her head and said, “Just answer can or cannot will do. So much rambling, you won’t finish even after the end of next year.”

The paragraph in (1) is created to ensure that the speaker encounters various combinations of tones, and has articulated both in declarative and interrogative intonations. For the interrogative, there are two types: a long polysyllabic string and a monosyllabic one. This allows us to see if any such intonational contour might be compressed or spread out depending on syllable length (Arvaniti, 2011). Four types of pauses are included: those from ellipsis indicated by spaces in a list (e.g. dā dá dǎ dà), those from commas, those from colons, and those from full stops. The paragraph ends with 明年年底 *ming nian nian di* (adapted from Shih, 2008), with three consecutive rising tones followed by a dipping tone at the end. This enables the study of peak delays due to conflicting tonal contexts (Xu, 1993, p.19 & 1997) as the high ending of the preceding syllable needs to drop to the low onset of the following one. In using read data, this study therefore may not capture naturally occurring conversational data, which may be garbled and perhaps subject to greater individual variations.

The two speakers used in this study are both females between 30–45 years of age. This places them squarely within the range of modern Chinese education. Females are preferred because the fundamental frequencies (F0) are more visible on the pitch tracker due to their pitch ranges.[2] The Singapore speaker is 44 years old, and was a former Chinese language teacher in Singapore. She also speaks Hakka as a home language, although her compatriots will not be able to identify her Hakka heritage from her SgM speech. The China speaker is 32 years old, and is a free-lance translator. She speaks Putonghua as her first language and hails from the north. Their backgrounds are considered

[2] The perception of one octave is in F0 terms a multiple of 2. Thus for a male voice, the range would be roughly from 100Hz to 200Hz when an octave is articulated. For a female, that would be roughly from 200Hz to 400Hz, making the pitch track of the female voice more pronounced when there is any change in melodic contour.

to be suitable for the study because they are likely to speak SgM or Putonghua (respectively) in a way that would be identified as typical or normal by their compatriots. Indeed, when their anonymized recordings are played to their compatriots, each is identified as expected. I take this to be adequate grounds for considering them representative (see also Liang & Wee, 2016 on the matter of representativeness in subject selection).

Ideally, recordings should be made in an identical setting. This proved impossible at the time of study because the two subjects are located in different cities. Suffice to say that both recordings were made in a quiet environment and were both checked manually for adequate clarity. The software used for acoustic analysis is PRAAT (v. 6.0.44, Boersma & Weenink, 2018). Two recordings from each speaker were collected as insurance against technical errors. Speakers were given time to read the passage before recording. They were told to read as normally and as comfortably as they would if making a recorded message for their friends.

3. Comparisons

As mentioned in section 1, the parameters for comparison for the present study are (i) speech rate, (ii) pitch range, (iii) peak delays, and (iv) intensity differences between full and light syllables.

3.1 SPEECH RATE

Speech rate in this case is easy. The stimulus text has 93 characters or syllables. The basic statistics are given below.

(2) Rate of speech in reading

	SgM speaker	**Putonghua Speaker**
First Reading	27.58 seconds	48.02 seconds
Second Reading	29.21 seconds	48.22 seconds
Mean	28.395 seconds	48.12 seconds
Rate	3.28syllables per second	1.93 syllables per second

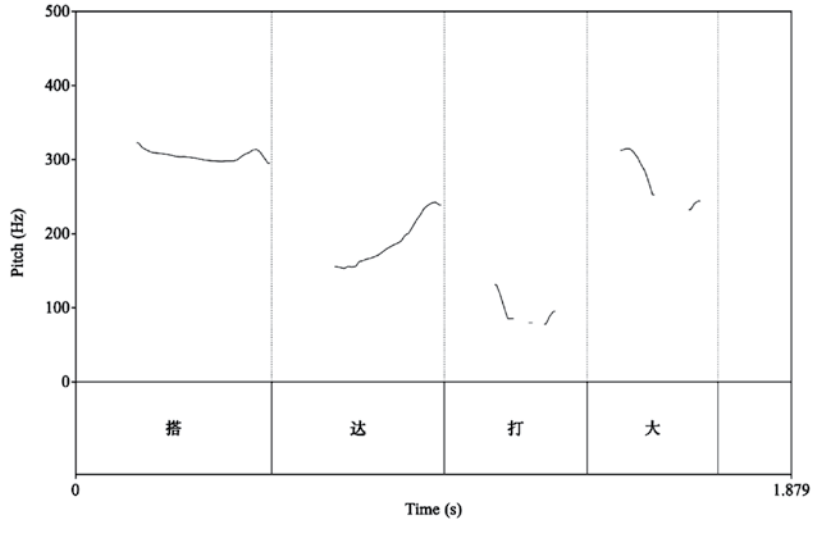
For some, it might come as a surprise that the SgM speaker speaks so much quicker. In any case, speech rate is something that varies hugely across individuals although newsreaders and broadcasters tend to have to meet a more rigid requirement of about four to five syllables per second. It is also possible that reading speed and regular conversational speed may be different. The design of this study looks into read speech rather than daily conversations. While it might not capture naturally occurring speech patterns, this might go some length to explaining why Singapore productions of Mandarin TV serials sound so distinctly Singaporean while China's remains distinctly China's.

3.2 PITCH RANGE OF LEXICAL TONES

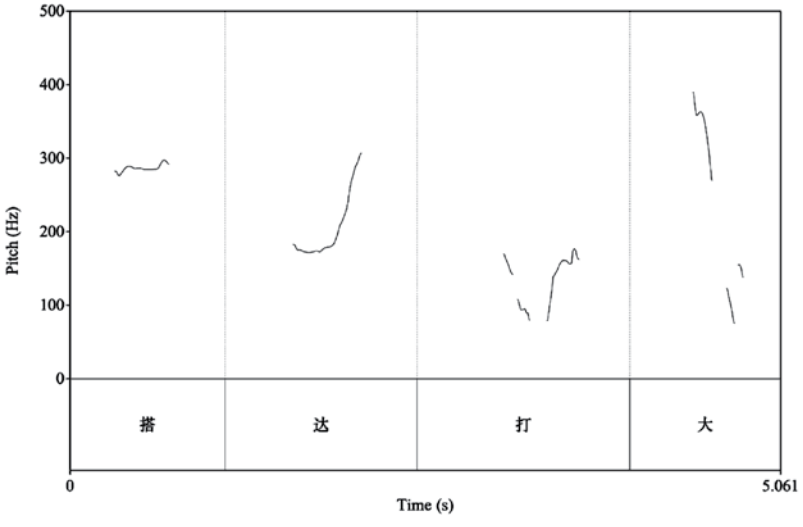
There are items suitable for measuring the pitch range of the two speeches. In this and the ensuing two sections, I shall present a few. The first to consider is the range of fundamental frequencies (F0) employed for the articulation of the lexical tones. From the stimulus text, one may select the slow readings 搭　达　打　大, which in the text was elicited as careful speech by demand of the context was that these words were spoken carefully. This allows us to see the pitch range across the four tones.

(3) Pitch tracks of the four lexical tones

a. From SgM speaker



b. From Putonghua speaker



By and large the two speakers have the same four tonal contrasts. The first tone given by 搭 is flat and quite high; the second 达 is a rising tone; the third 打a low dipping tone; and the fourth 大 a high falling one. For both speakers, there seems to be some break in the pitch tracks for the third and the fourth tones. This is not unusual since when approaching low tones or at the end of an utterance, the voice sometimes cracks. From these recordings, we can extract some useful measurements for comparison.

(4) Comparative data for lexical tones

	SgM Speaker	**Putonghua Speaker**
Highest F0	314.8Hz	389.1Hz
Lowest F0	79.66Hz	79.78Hz
High-Low Quotient	3.95	4.88
Tone 1 (mean)	304.86Hz	286.6Hz
Tone 2 (start-end)	155.50Hz – 242.1Hz	182.9Hz – 306 Hz
Tone 3 (start-low-end)	130.80Hz – 79.66Hz – 95.43Hz	167.1Hz – 79.78Hz – 175.1Hz
Tone 4 (start–end)	312.90Hz – 252.3 Hz	389.1Hz – 76.48 Hz

In (4), we can see that SgM speaker uses a narrower range, going no higher than 314.8 Hz whereas the Putonghua speaker goes up to 389.1 Hz. The High-Low Quotient (HLQ, Wee, 2017 & 2018, p.255) gives a sense of that that range means musically. It is calculated simply by dividing the highest F0 value with the lowest one. In music, an octave would have a HLQ of 2 (see (5) below for the list of musical intervals on a major scale). As can be seen here, the Putonghua speaker has shot up more than two octaves, although the SgM speaker is not too far off either, approaching nearly two octaves.

(5) Quotients for musical interval based on 12-tone equal TEMPERAMENT, which uses $2^{n/12}$ an irrational number as multiplier

Musical interval	Corresponding High-Low Quotient	Musical interval	Corresponding High-Low Quotient
Major second	1.122462	Minor second	1.059463
Major third	1.259921	Minor third	1.189207
Perfect fifth	1.498307	Perfect fourth	1.334839
Major sixth	1.681792	Minor sixth	1.587401
Major seventh	1.887748	Minor seventh	1.781797
Octave	2		

It is perhaps not too unexpected that the F0 properties of the four tones do not vary too widely across our two champions from their respective camps. After all, lexical tones are carefully drilled in classroom learning. Perhaps, if the domain is a larger one such as intonation, the difference will be more marked.

(6) Pitch range for lexical tones

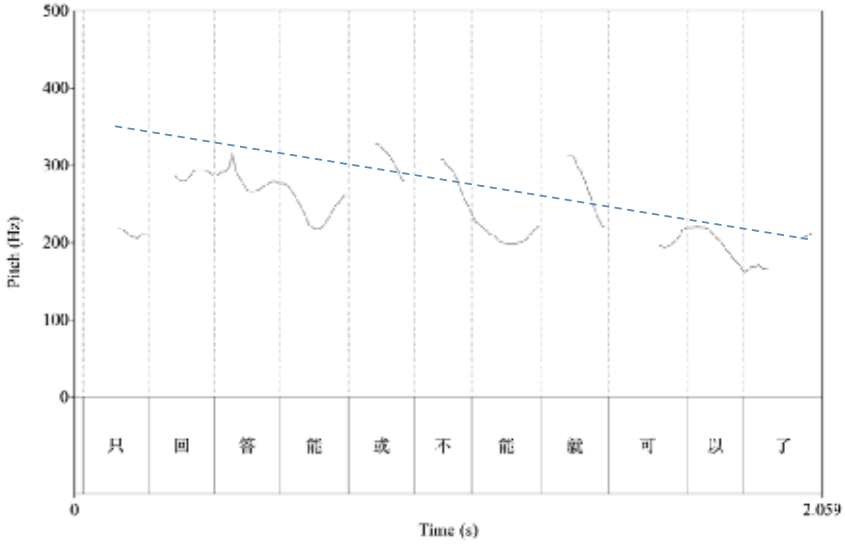
SgM speaker uses a narrower range than the Putonghua speaker

3.3 PITCH RANGE IN DECLARATIVES

The second item for comparison is the pitch range over a declarative intonation. The sentence 只回答能或不能就可以了 “Just answer can or cannot will do” from the stimulus text shall serve this purpose. The pitch tracks accompanied by annotations are given in (7), from which we can see the F0 profiles of the utterances over time.

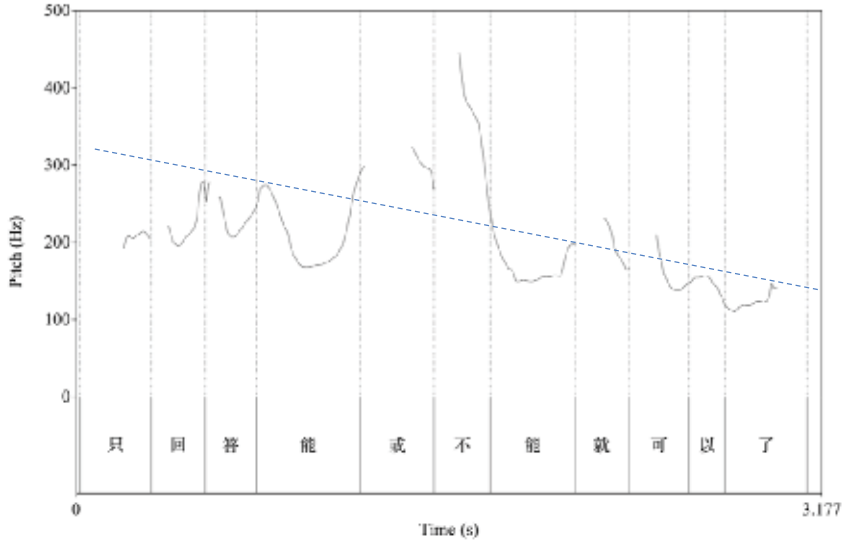
(7) Pitch tracks of declarative utterance

a. From SgM speaker



Highest F0 327.9Hz is at 或, lowest 162.7Hz at 了. The peak points of two rising-toned syllables at the end of 回 (312.1Hz) and the endpoint of 可 (220.3Hz).

b. From Putonghua speaker



Highest F0 445.1Hz is at the beginning of 不, lowest 111.5Hz at 了. Using the peak points of two rising-toned syllables at the end of 回 (278.7.1Hz) and the endpoint of 可 (152.0Hz).

c. Comparative data

	SgM	Putonghua
Highest F0	327.9Hz, 5th syllable 或	445.1Hz, 6th syllable 不
Lowest F0	162.7Hz, final syllable了	111.5Hz, final syllable 了
HLQ	2.015	3.992
HLQ of global profile	1.417	1.834
Duration of utterance	~2 seconds	~ 3 seconds

The two graphs in (7a) and (7b) are quite different and it is easy to see that the F0 profiles are quite distinct. To articulate the differences more carefully, we can note the frequencies of the peak and valley F0 and where they occur. A clearer sense of the global intonation pitch profile can be obtained by looking for high tone positions that bookend the utterance. These are to be found in the second syllable 回which has a lexical rising tone and the antepenult可 which also has a rising tone due to the application of tone sandhi triggered by the following 以. The fact that these attempts at a rising tone did not reach the same F0 suggests a falling ceiling as part of the global trend for the declarative.

The table in (7c) gives the basic measurements. Note in particular HLQ for the global downtrend is given in the fourth row, which is calculated using F0 values obtained at the positions marked by the two bookending rising-toned syllables. The downtrend is graphically shown in (7a) and (7b) using dashed lines, although one would not fail to note a peak in the medial of the utterance, albeit at slightly different positions for the two speakers.

With the declarative intonation, one sees a marked difference between the two speakers. Unlike careful speech (3), where the HLQ can nearly go up to two octaves, the SgM speaker cruises within the range of a single octave in regular speech. On a global profile that is even narrower, within a perfect fifth. In contrast, the Putonghua speaker continues to use a wide range, still soaring up to two octaves high. It is likely that the less dramatic intonation profile is one of the features that allow for easy identification of the SgM speaker.

(8) Pitch range for declarative

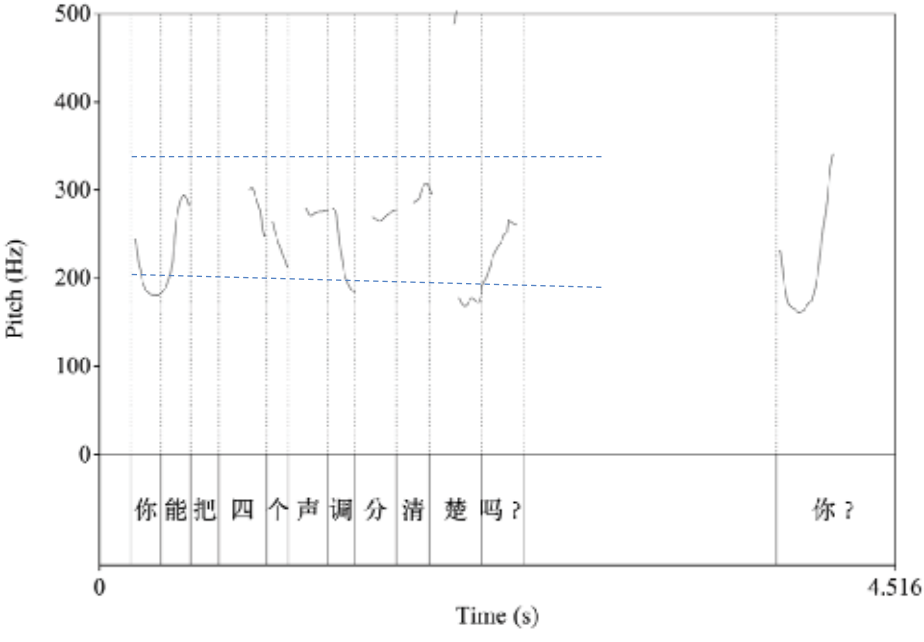
SgM speaker uses a narrower range than the Putonghua speaker

3.4 PITCH RANGE: INTERROGATIVES

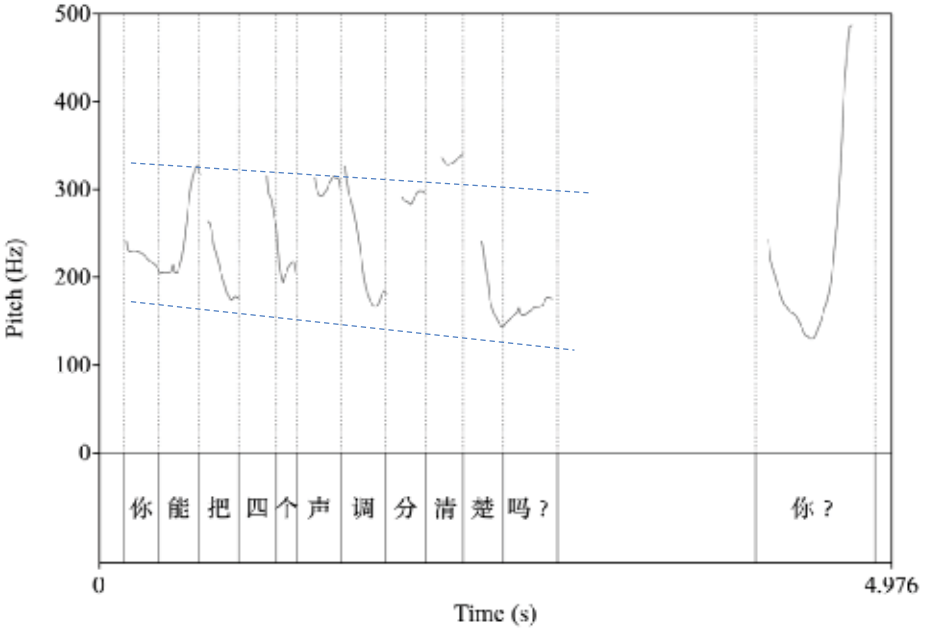
A similar comparison may be made for the interrogative. The two selections are from 你能把四个声调分清楚吗？and 你？This pair allows us to see if there is any compression/rarefaction of the intonation contour due the length of the utterance.

(9) Pitch tracks of polysyllabic interrogative utterance

a. From SgM speaker



b. From Putonghua speaker



c. Comparative data

	SgM	Putonghua
Highest F0 (polysyllable)	307.0Hz, 9th syllable 清	339.5Hz, 9th syllable 清
Lowest F0 (polysyllable)	167.7Hz, 10th syllable楚	144.5Hz, 10th syllable楚
HLQ (polysyllable)	1.83	2.35
Highest F0 (monosyllable)	340.2Hz	488.1Hz
Lowest F0 (monosyllable)	162.3Hz	130.4Hz
HLQ (monosyllable)	2.10	3.74

Looking at the dashed lines in (9a) and (9b), downtrending is not quite so obvious with interrogatives, particularly for the SgM speaker. For the Putonghua speaker, downtrending appears to be manifested more in the gradual lowering of the tone floor. For the SgM speaker, the final 吗 *ma* appears to shoot towards a high tone target, but not for the Putonghua speaker.

For both speakers, the monosyllabic form of the interrogative is a very pronounced shape. The syllable here has an underlying third tone, which is supposed to be dipping, but in both cases, the end point rises quite high. The Putonghua speaker's upshoot is particularly dramatic. Otherwise, as may be seen in (9c), the Putonghua speaker uses a bigger pitch range as noted before.

It is noteworthy that the SgM speaker's intonation profile is at least somewhat consistent across the polysyllabic and monosyllabic utterances. They both begin with a drop which is the beginning of the tone for 你, and both end with a rise at the end. It is as if all the contours in the medial section of the polysyllabic string is just flattened and compressed in the monosyllabic form. This is consistent with the patterns found in English (Arvaniti, 2011; Wee, 2018, p.45). It is probably that SgM may have imbibed some of its intonation from the Speak Good English Movement[3] as well.

For the Putonghua speaker, the intonation profiles for the poly- and mono-syllabic interrogative forms do not align in any obvious way. There are many possible explanations to this, such as the effects of tonelessness of the interrogative marker *ma*, among others. I shall not venture to speculate here.

(10) Pitch range for interrogative

The SgM speaker uses a narrower range than the Putonghua speaker, and the SgM speaker has a high end tone for longer strings while the Putonghua speaker may not.

3.5 PEAK DELAYS

The next item for comparison is the resolution of conflicting tonal contexts. When a rising tone is followed by another rising tone, the larynx will need reconfigure itself to reach the low start point of the second tone from the high end point of the first. The larynx, being a different articulatory apparatus from the supralaryngeal articulators, may not align with the production of the segments of the syllables in the event of such difficult tonal contexts. (Xu,

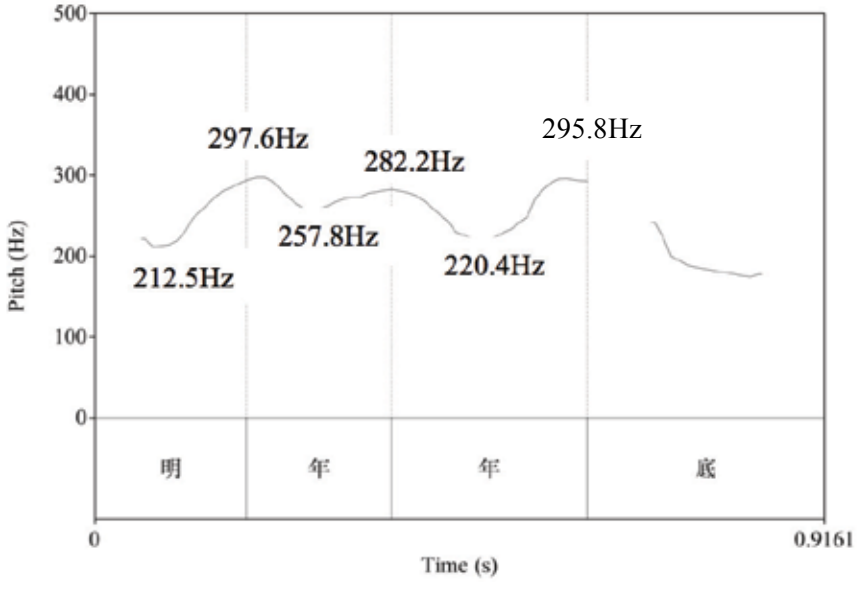
[3] This one launched in 2000 by then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong, presumably to rein in the rising popularity of Singlish. English, however, had been officially designated as First Language in local education system since 1987. In fact, "Chinese schools" in Singapore ended in 1981, putting an end to the 华校生 *huaxiaosheng*.

1993, p.19 & 1997) notes that there are four possible scenarios: (i) mutual independence, so that the tones and the syllables align perfectly; (ii) mutual compromise, so that both tones fail to meet part of their high or low targets; (iii) exclusive anticipation, so that the first tone is eliminated in favor of the second; or (iv) exclusive carry-over, so that the second tone is eliminated in favor of the first.

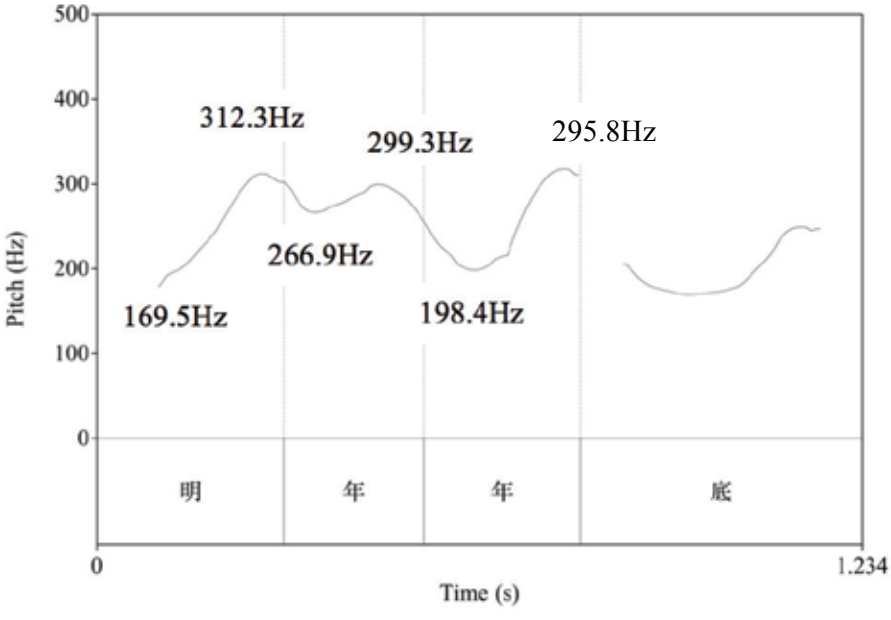
In this study, the line 明年年(底) offers a sequence of three rising tones ending with a low tone 底. Here, one may observe how our SgM and Putonghua speakers may address these conflicting tonal demands.

(11) Pitch tracks of peak delays

a. From SgM speaker



b. From Putonghua speaker



In the two graphs above, the F0 values of the peaks and valleys are also provided. One can see that both speakers do not fully articulate the rising tone for the two 年s. The syllable separators are obtained by studying the waveforms and the wide-band spectrograms, which are not shown here to avoid clutter.

For the first syllable 明, both manage a rising profile. In the SgM speaker, the peak (297.6Hz) is delayed and appears after the second syllable is articulated. In the Putonghua speaker, the peak (312.3Hz) is attained before the end of the syllable and a fall begins in anticipation of the second syllable. However, the target valley is not quite reached as it is still quite high from the beginning of 明 (169.5Hz). The same is true for the SgM speaker. Both speakers manage to reach lower in the second 年, but that has been delayed to nearly the medial of the syllable, and still not quite to the initial low target. The peaks are quite close to target for both speakers for both 年s. However, the locus of the peaks is different for the two speakers. For the SgM speaker the peaks occur near the syllable boundary, but for the Putonghua speaker the peaks occur quite before the end of the syllable. In other words, for the Putonghua speaker, there is greater anticipatory compromise and for the SgM speaker

there is greater carry-over compromise. Consequently, the SgM speaker aligns the tone ends with the syllable ends better while the Putonghua speaker aligns the tone beginnings with the syllable onset.

(12) Conflicting tone contexts resolution

SgM speaker	greater carry-over compromise
Putonghua speaker	greater anticipatory compromise

Note that the F0 profiles for 底 are different for the SgM and Putonghua speakers. Because the syllable after 底 in the passage is 也, which carries the third tone, tone sandhi may in principle apply to 底, making it into a rising tone. This actually happens to the Putonghua recording, but not in the SgM recording. The tolerance of abutting third tones suggests different blocking effects of the syntactic boundaries for SgM and Putonghua.

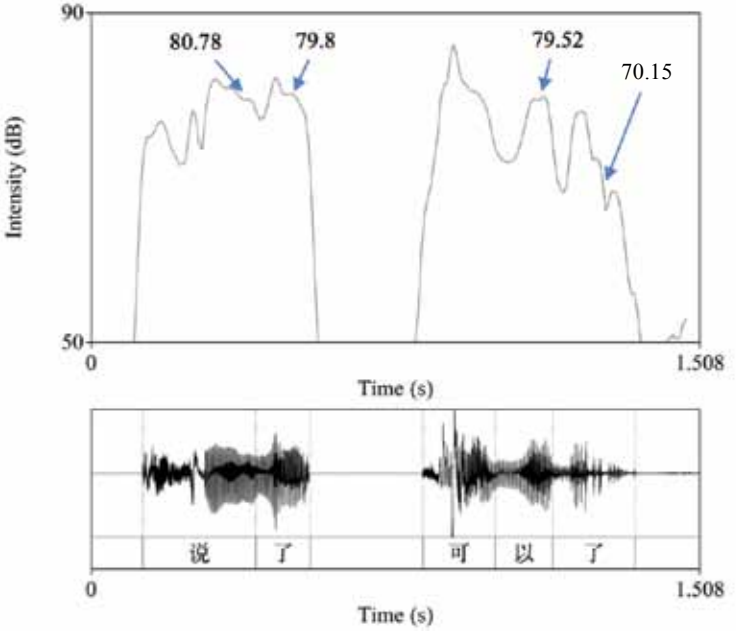
3.6 INTENSITIES AND DURATIONS

The final set of comparisons in this study relates to the matter of intensity and durational differences. These two measures are often used for the contrast between stress and unstressed syllables. It may seem counterintuitive to consider these parameters for SgM and Putonghua, since both are languages that employs lexical tones and are not normally known to have obvious stress patterns. However, it has been oft noted that the Putonghua tones do not have the same length — the third tone being the longest. The light tone, in contrast with the other tones, have syllables that are also shorter in duration, and also softer in volume (i.e. low intensity). Further, studies have shown that intensity profiles do aid in tonal identification when F0 is suppressed, as in during whispering when the vocal folds do not vibrate (Gao, 2002, p.88; Wee & Wong, 2018).

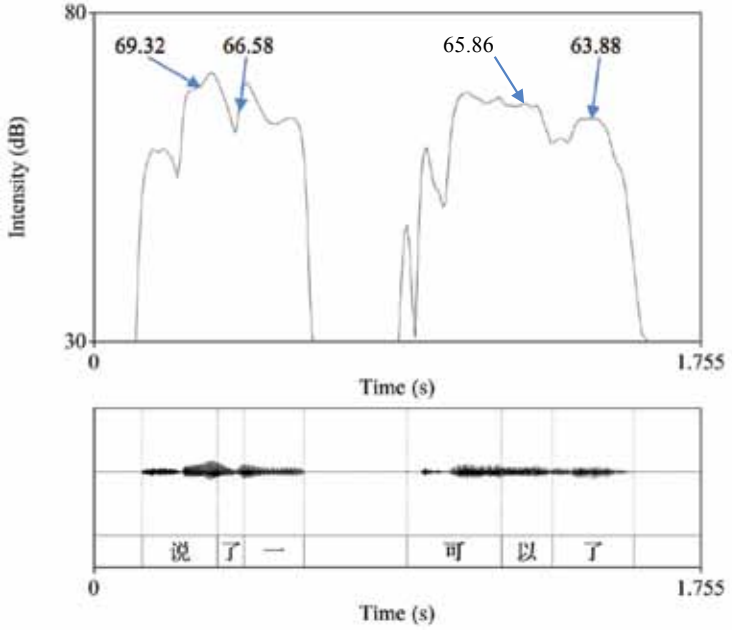
A number of items in the stimulus passage is useful here. There is the verbal- and sentential- *le* in 说了一串 and 就可以了 respectively. For the light tones, there are also 四个 and 犹豫, as well as 妈妈, 弟弟 and 姐姐. For the four lexical tones in various utterance positions (initial, medial and final), there is 妈妈妈。麻麻麻。马马马。骂骂骂。

(13) Intensity profile and syllable duration for 了 *le* and its preceding syllable

a. From SgM speaker



b. From Putonghua speaker



c. Duration of *le* and its preceding syllable

	说	Verbal 了	以	Sentential 了
SgM	0.296s	0.115s	0.110s	0.180s
Putonghua	0.254s	0.035s	0.132s	0.225s

In the diagrams above, the intensity at the medial position of the rime of the syllables are provided. The duration for the syllables, including the onsets, are given in (9c).[4] We may ignore the fact that the intensity for the SgM speaker is generally stronger, as that is probably due to differences in recording machinery or distance of the mouth from the microphone.

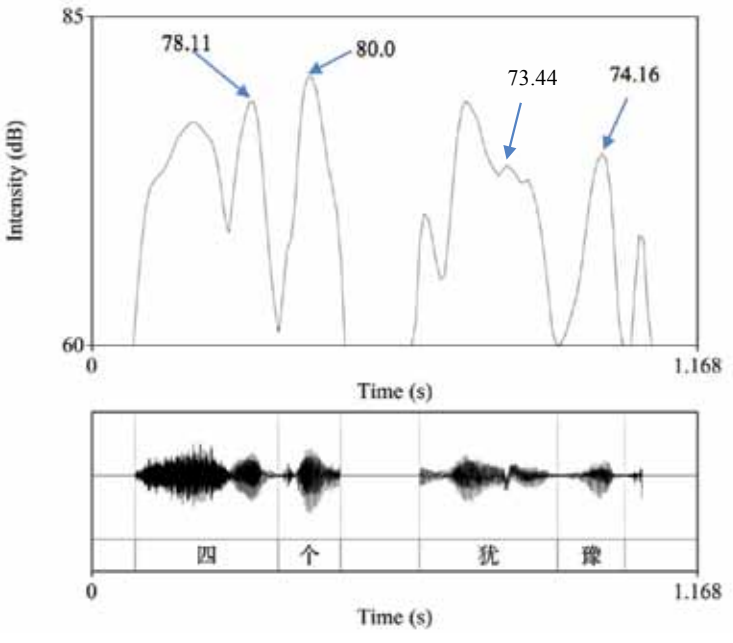
For ease and consistency of comparison, the intensity measured at the medial point of the rime of each syllable. These values show that *le* is only slightly weaker than the full-toned syllable preceding it. The exception is the sentential *le* of the SgM speaker which appears to be considerably lower than its preceding syllable. It is as if the SgM is making a truly "light" syllable in this case.

In terms of duration, the verbal *le* is shortest for the Putonghua speaker. In fact, it is a very drastic reduction in duration in comparison with all the other syllables. Sentential *le* is quite long for the Putonghua speaker, but for the SgM speaker it is only slightly longer than the verbal *le*. In comparison, both speakers do have a shorter articulation time for light syllables, but there is some lengthening effect in the sentence-final position. It is perhaps fair to say that SgM does have light syllables, but not in the same degree of contrast compared with Putonghua. To verify that, one could look at 四个 "four" and 犹豫 "hesitation", as well as 妈妈 "mother", 弟弟 "younger brother" and姐姐 "older sister". This covers light syllables that come from morphological reductions and from reduplication.

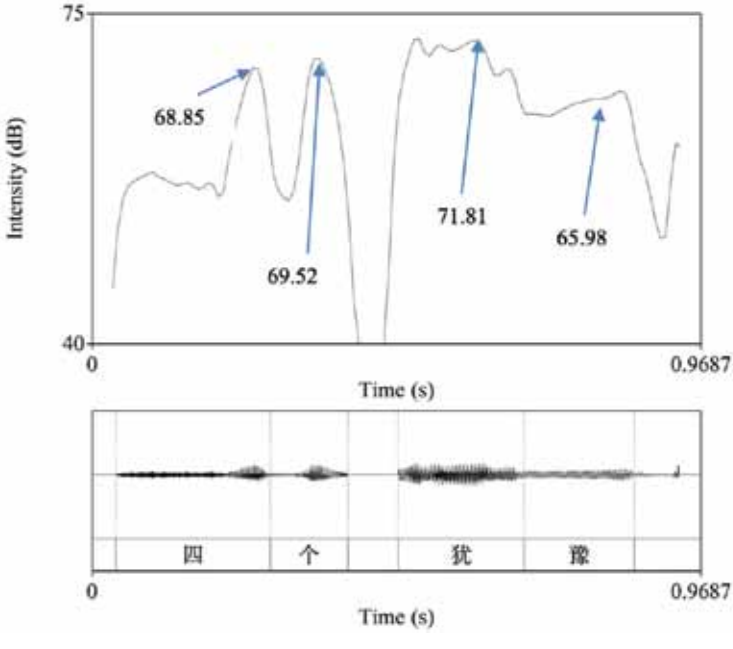
[4] This was necessary because the *le* is sometimes so reduced that it was impossible to identify the boundaries of the rime.

(14) Intensity profile and duration for light syllables from reduction

a. From SgM speaker



b. From Putonghua speaker



c. Duration of the reduced syllable and its preceding syllable

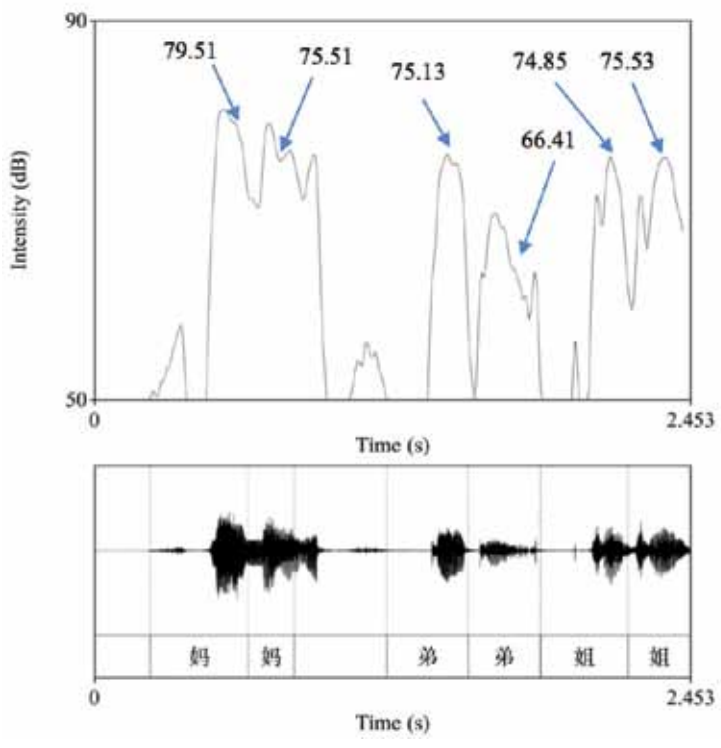
	四	个 (reduced)	犹	豫 (reduced)
SgM	0.274s	0.122s	0.270s	0.126s
Putonghua	0.246s	0.120s	0.197s	0.181s

In these cases here, one can still be quite sure that 个 by both SgM and Putonghua speakers is articulated as a light syllable. This is evidenced by its relatively shorter duration. The intensities appear to be uninformative as both speakers do not appear to consistently weaken the light syllable's intensity. For sentence final 豫, it looks as if the Putonghua speaker had not shortened it at all, although there is lower intensity.

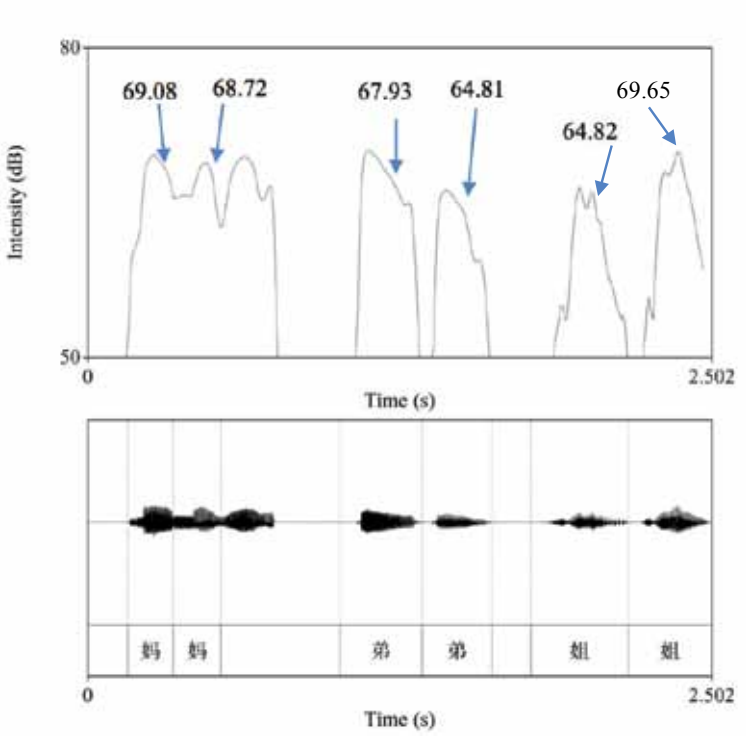
Thus far, it seems that either length of intensity can be used to mark a light syllable, but there does not appear to be a consistent strategy for our two speakers. We move on now to the cases for reduplication.

(15) Intensity profile and rime duration for light syllables from reduplication

a. From SgM speaker



b. From Putonghua speaker



c. Rime duration of the syllable and its reduplicant

	妈	妈 (light)	弟	弟 (light)	姐	姐 (light)
SgM	0.133s	0.146s	0.126s	0.227s	0.079s	0.172s
Putonghua	0.117s	0.075s	0.225s	0.213s	0.236s	0.224s

For this study on reduplication, the duration is measured only for the rimes of the syllables. This is unfortunate, but necessary because some of the words begin with voiceless plosives and are preceded by punctuation in the passage. It is thus impossible to determine the start point of these syllables. The data in (15c) must therefore not be used in comparison with (10c, 11c).

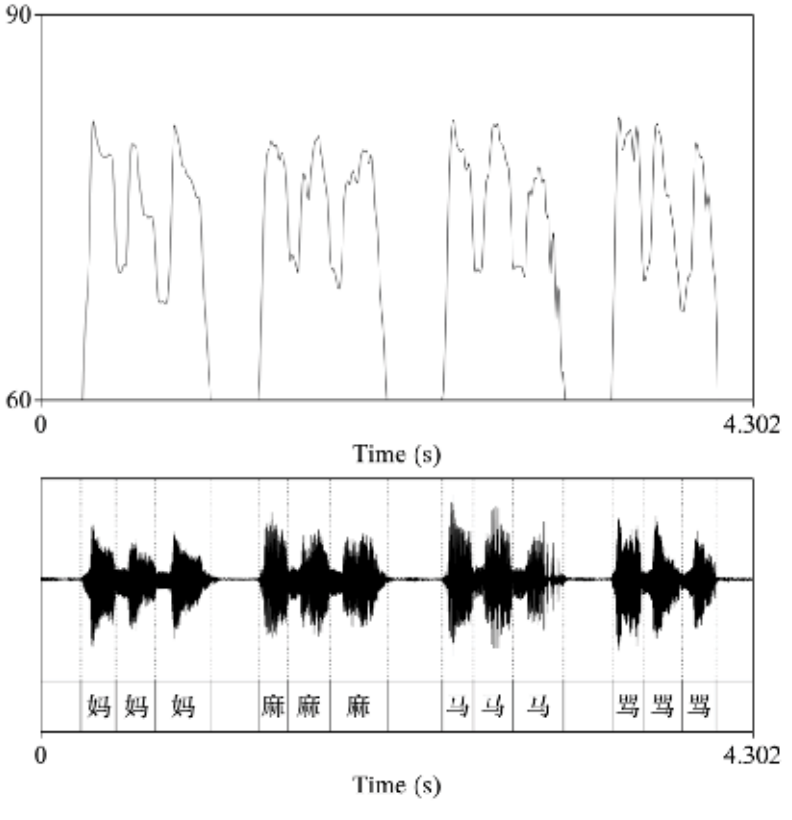
Looking at intensities, the Putonghua speaker appears to not have used it for contrasting the reduplicant with the base syllable. The SgM speaker does so for the case of 弟弟 "younger brother", but not obviously so for the other two. Duration-wise, our SgM speaker seems to work in reverse, so that the

reduplicant has a longer rime than the base. For the Putonghua speaker, the duration of the reduplicant is consistently shorter than the base.

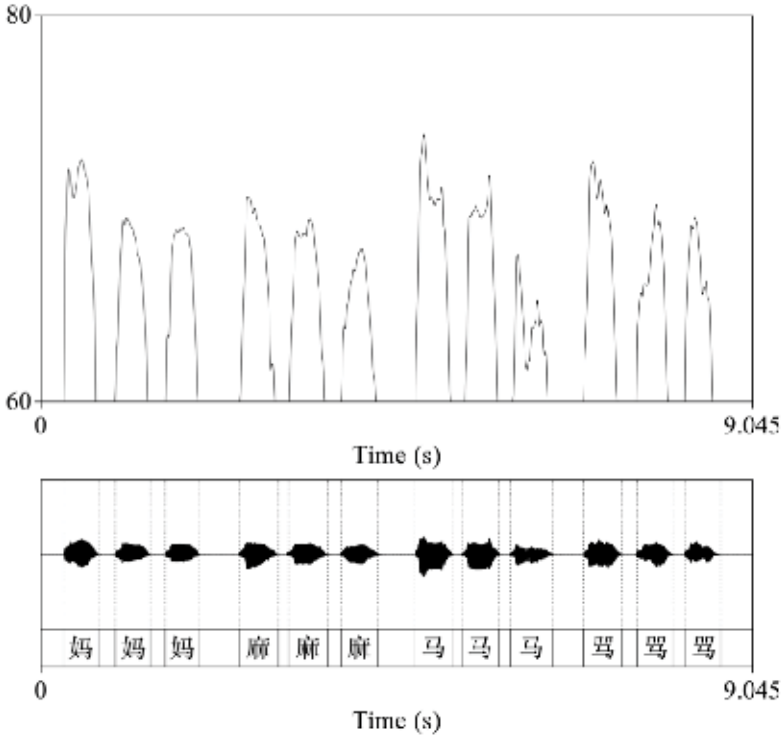
Finally, we move on to compare the length and intensities of the four lexical tones in the utterance-initial, medial and final positions (cf. section 3.2 for pitch comparisons).

(16) Intensity profiles and duration of the four lexical tones

a. SgM speaker



b. Putonghua speaker



c. Duration of the syllables

	Utterance position	SgM	Putonghua
Tone 1 妈	Initial	0.201s	0.442s
	Medial	0.168s	0.439s
	Final	0.202s	0.426s
	Average	**0.190s**	**0.436s**
Tone 2 麻	Initial	0.184s	0.479s
	Medial	0.250s	0.498s
	Final	0.361s	0.488s
	Average	**0.265s**	**0.488s**
Tone 3 马	Initial	0.189s	0.476s
	Medial	0.235s	0.485s
	Final	0.318s	0.538s
	Average	**0.247s**	**0.500s**
Tone 4 骂	Initial	0.192s	0.498s
	Medial	0.216s	0.475s
	Final	0.226s	0.417s
	Average	**0.212s**	**0.463s**

I shall not longer provide the intensity values here, for it is the intensity profiles that are more telling. As may be seen in (16a, b), the intensity decreases as each tone reaches the end of the triplet reaches. This is to be expected. More interesting is the observation that syllables of the same tone have intensity profiles that are similar, but that is beyond the central interests of this study. Duration-wise, we have already noted that our Putonghua speaker speaks more

slowly (cf. section 3.1), and that utterance final syllables are longer. The general observation about the four tones of Putonghua is that the syllables of the third tone are longest, and this is true also in (16c), although not significantly longer than Tone 2. For the SgM speaker, it is Tone 2 that is longest, presumably because the third tone for the SgM speaker is not a dipping tone, but a low tone (cf. (3a)).

The comparison on intensity and duration between the SgM and Putonghua speakers is summarized in (17).

(17) Intensity and duration

	SgM	**Putonghua**
Contrast between full and light syllables	Contrasted using either intensity or length	Contrasted using either intensity or length
Light syllables from reduplication	Light syllables **longer** than the base syllable	Light syllables **shorter** than the base syllable
Contrast between lexical tones	Tone **2** is longest, followed by tone 3, tone 4, then tone 1	Tone **3** is longest, followed by tone 2, tone 4, then tone 1.

4. Reflections and conclusion

Whether or not the speech of a community can be given the status of being a "language" is a question that would normally not baffle anyone until we are confronted with cases like Singapore where its languages appear to be all imported. With the recognition of World Englishes (Kachru, 1985 & subsequent works), the academic circle no longer considers Singapore English sub-standard, even if there are laypersons who might disagree. In the wake of World English research, the Chinese spoken by the diaspora around the world finds similar calls for recognition. With particular reference to Singapore, one will not fail to observe that there is an articulation of Chinese (particularly Mandarin but other dialects as well) that Singaporeans find easy to identify as spoken by compatriots. The properties of Singapore English,

often affectionately called Singlish, have been variously studied (Lim, Pakir & Wee, 2010, & bibliography contained therein). In contrast, the Chinese part of the Singapore language scape has remained relatively obscure although the research area has been rigorously ploughed by efforts on its lexis (Chen, 1983; Chew, 2000 & 2002a) syntax (Chen, 1983; Goh, 1985; Chew, 2002b; Lu, 2018), and discoursal properties (Lee, 2003, 2004, 2010 & 2011). The emergence of Singapore Mandarin from the perspective of language contact had also been variously addressed (Chua, 2003; Phua, 2009). The backdrop against which Singapore Mandarin emerges is a heterogenous confluence of different dialectical Chinese streams (varieties of huge clusters like Min and Yue) overarched by a government-sponsored esteem for a standard based on China's.

Using elicitation from a constructed text, this study provides a comparison for what might be a fairly natural reading by a representative speaker of SgM and of Putonghua respectively. The recordings are quite distinctive in terms of the identifiability of their accents, and yet, when carefully compared, the phonetic characteristics are quite subtle. We know that speech rate and volume are highly individualistic properties, and thus differences on this front can be discounted. Further, I had assumed that the inventory of consonants and vowels are quite similar given that these are taught through the same Hanyu Pinyin system using textbooks. I have thus focused on the suprasegmental properties of tone, intonation, and contrasts in light and full syllables. As it turns out, the SgM speaker uses a narrower pitch range for the lexical tones and for intonation. Further, SgM interrogative must have a rising intonation regardless of length, whereas Putonghua does not need such an intonation when there is a question marker like 吗. In contrasting full and light syllables, both SgM and Putonghua are alike in optionally appealing to length or intensity. However, in reduplication, the SgM light syllables are longer than the base, even in sentence medial positions. Given that these are the only differences I have found, it is likely that these are the very differences characterize SgM prosody.

There are a number of obvious limitations in this study. I have used only two subjects, even though I have tried to ensure their representativeness. I have used a text and took measurements only from one of the two elicited

readings. I therefore fail to capture lexical differences in a more natural conversation, and certainly do not have enough measurements to do a more rigorous statistical analysis. However, as explained before, my efforts qualify only as an investigation into the qualitative differences between two recordings each considered to be typical of either SgM or Putonghua. The work here is therefore representative only in the same way a mugshot picture representative of the convict.[5]

Given the comparisons made, perhaps one can finally come around to asking if SgM is a variety of Mandarin just as Putonghua is. The question is really quite complex. Is SgM like Southwestern Mandarin, Jilu Mandarin, Northern Mandarin, hence a dialect of the cluster called Guan just like Teochew is a Southern Min dialect? Or is SgM a dialect of Standard Chinese that contains other dialects such as Putonghua, (Taiwan) Guoyu, Malaysian Mandarin, or even (Hong Kong) Gwok Jyu? What about the nearly indistinguishable (but still discernible by their respective communities) Putonghuas of Beijing, Dongbei, Inner Mongolia, Yunnan, etc? I do not have answers to these, neither can I articulate why this might be important. However, let us take a detour to consider Hong Kong Cantonese and Guangzhou Cantonese, both fully mutually intelligible, but still discernible.

We accept that Hong Kong Cantonese and Guangzhou Cantonese are two different Cantoneses. I think there are three reasons for this. Firstly, speakers of either Cantonese can pick out their compatriots. Secondly, the Hong Kong Cantonese has imbibed heavily from the wells of other languages that it came into contact with, giving it many non-Chinese lexical items, sampled below.

[5] That is to say, not wholesomely representative, for a convict is more than just a humanoid who violated the law, but a human being with a personal history too! However, the mugshot still serves an important purpose for identifying a person.

(18) Examples of non-Chinese words in Hong Kong Cantonese (Wee 2019)

Item	Common written form	Meaning	English cognate
au3 giu6	拗撬	Disagreement	Argue
be1 ling2	啤呤	Ball bearings	Bearing
bo1 lo4	波罗	Pineapple	Ball
bou3 lam1	布冧	Plum	Plum
dik1 si2	的士	Taxi	Taxi
faa1 san2	花臣	New tricks or design	Fashion
faat3 ti4 tang4	发ti腾	To be agitated	Frightened
fing6	fing	To fling	Fling
fu4 luk1	符碌	Fluke	Fluke
gai1 jing1	鸡英[6]	Cuff (of a sleeve)	Cuff link
gik4 lik1 zi2	Not known	Clutch	Clutch
haa1 luk1	虾碌	i. Bad take on a film set. ii. A misstep	Hard luck
lip1	粒	Lift, elevator	Lift
lou5 lap1	老笠	To rob	Rob
maa4 lat1	麻甩	An uncouth person (normally male)	Mutt
man1	蚊	Dollar	Money through 蚊尼 *man1 nei4*.
pak6	泊	To park (a vehicle)	Park
se4 gwe1	蛇gwe	Timid	Scare
se4 gwo2	蛇果	Apple[7]	delicious (from the apple brand “Red Delicious”)
si6 do1	士多	Store	Store
so1 fu4	疏芙	i. To be comfortable ii. To have sex	Soft
taai1	呔	Tie	(neck or bow) Tie
taai1	胎	Tyre	Tyre

[6] 介英 gaai3 jing1 in Macau.

[7] For some, this term applies only to red apples that have five lumpy feet at the bottom, like Washington or Red Delicious, and is not a generic term for apple.

For many Hong Kong Cantonese speakers, the non-Chinese source of some of these words might even be obscure.

Finally, there is literature that is recognized as produced in Hong Kong Cantonese (see the many popular magazines, vernacular websites, songs, plays etc). I use the term literature here in its true and broad sense that would include various genres and registers. After all, the *Young and Dangerous* movies (1996-2000古惑仔) have probably done more to effect a Hong Kong identity for the Cantonese language than the obscure poetry deliberately written in Hong Kong Cantonese but have not found much circulation. Perhaps the example par excellence would be American English, which came into being with Webster's dictionary in 1828 that sought to distinguish its English from the British (for example in spelling *color*, and *defense*). Nonetheless, it must be noted that there is such a high degree of mutual intelligibility even though most people can tell BBC English from CNN. However, the distinctions did allow for the greatness of these two empires, perhaps because it enabled people to communicate and forge cross-nation friendship while also allowing the same people to have closer stronger bonds to their home communities. If so, does one not have an argument for SgM to grow and emerge? Would the world not be better off if SgM is allowed to create its literature just as Mark Twain did for American English (and for the world) by also touching our hearts with the *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884) or the *Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876)?[8]

[8] For a discussion on understanding the importance of indigenous phonology in creative writing, see Wee & Liu (2016).

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新加坡华语中相等于“了$_1$”的“了$_{liau\ 214}$”

潘秋平

新加坡国立大学中文系

新加坡华语里有一个读［liau^{214}］的语素，陈重瑜（1983）、吴英成（1986）、周清海和周长楫（1998）等都把它记为“了”。它除了是个能带宾语的动词外（如：了了这个心愿），也能充当补语，出现在动词之后，表示对可能性或程度做出估计（如：吃得了／吃不了）。它虽和现代汉语普通话读为［liau^{214}］的“了”有一样的语法表现，但也有一些不同。其中一个不同如下例所示：

1. 这么薄的衣服，穿了$_{liau214}$也没什么用。

陈重瑜（1983）最早注意到这个现象，并把这个现象称为“了$_{liau214}$”之特殊用法，而这种特殊性就表现在“了$_{liau214}$”取代“了$_{lə}$”上。现有的研究把现代汉语普通话中的“了”可分“了$_1$”和“了$_2$”：“了$_1$”紧附于谓词之后，但在宾语之前，是个表完成体义（perfective aspect）的动词词缀，而“了$_2$”则处在句末位置，是个句末语气词（朱德熙，1982；Li & Thompson, 1981）。在这个基础上，我们可以说在新加坡华语中，写为“了”的虚词，除了有分别表达“了$_1$”跟“了$_2$”的“了$_{lə}$”外，还有“了$_{liau214}$”。这个“了$_{liau214}$”和“了$_{lə}$”的关系，逻辑上有几种可能

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性：完全一致、不完全一致、完全不一致等。例1中的“了liAu214”在语法功能上和“了1”相同，唯一的分别仅在读音上。此外，下面的例子也显示“了liAu214”在语法功能上和“了2”相同：”

2. 下雨了**liAu214**。

有鉴于此，我们当然可以说新加坡华语中的“了liAu214”是一种羡余（redundant）现象，但情形或许没有那么简单。首先，在陈重瑜（1983）、吴英成（1986）、周清海和周长楫（1998）所举出的例子里，“了liAu214”并没有出现在述语和宾语的中间，而赖怡彣（2014）在考察了几部新加坡电影，如《881》、《小孩不笨》等之后，也有如下的观察：

> “了”liǎo代替“了”le的读音少量地出现在电影对白当中。其中，“了”liǎo充“了”le的情况主要有两种，即出现在句末；另一种情况则是与句末语气词，如：“叻”、“咯”、“啦”等搭配处于句末的位置。

邱永康（2017）在赖怡彣（2014）的基础上，以新加坡新传媒制作的五部综艺节目和新加坡历史档案馆口述历史中心的录音记录为语料，观察到新加坡华语的“了liAu214”可出现在句中、分句末和句末三个位置，在句末时可单独出现或出现在其他句末语气词之前。他提供的例子如下：

3. 小鱼比较脆弱所以掺了（liǎo）我们自来水。(《美差事苦差事》第7集)

4. 等它长肉了（liǎo）就可以再分销出去。(美差事苦差事第7集)

5. 每个人都要检证了（liǎo）咯。（口述历史录音档案）

根据邱永康（2017）的分析，例3和例5分别对应于“了lə”的“了1”和“了2”的功能，至于例4，由于它的句法功能和句法位置和“了1”既有重叠，也有不重叠的地方，因此他采取了施其生（2014）

对闽南语语料的分析框架，提出新加坡华语的“了$_{liAu214}$”除了有“了$_1$”和“了$_2$”的功能外，还有“了$_3$”的功能。这个新观点他在Khoo, Lin & Luke（2017）中又做了进一步的阐述：

> (W)e find that SMC liǎo exhibits a third distinct distribution and function (i.e. 了3) that is not found (and not permitted) for both MMC and SMC when the particle is read as le: as in the example 送龙船了liǎo 就送那个炉下海 ‘Send the furnace into the sea after sending the dragon boat’. Instead of being a verbal suffix (i.e. attached to the verb 送), 了appears in the clause-final position and follows a VO phrase. This opposes previous findings that liǎo is merely a substitution for le in SMC (Chen, 1986; Huang, 2013).

这个观点发表于香港中文大学举办的海上丝绸之路的汉语研究国际论坛上。在同一个会议上，潘秋平（2017）反对新加坡华语中的“了$_{liAu214}$”有“了$_3$”的功能，并对这些例子提出了完全不同的分析。我们不妨再看一下引文中的例子：

6. 送龙船了liǎo 就送那个炉下海。

首先，这是一个从属谓语句，功能完全符合Li & Thompson（1989, p. 198）在讨论现代汉语的“了$_1$”的功能时所说的“by being the first event in the sequence”，即标记一系列事件中的第一件事的完成。“送龙船”是第一件事，而“送那个炉下海”是这件事完成之后才发生的第二件事，例子中的“了$_{liAu214}$”符合“了$_1$”的功能。既然如此，为什么邱永康（2017）和Khoo, Lin & Luke（2017）会分析为“了$_3$”呢？潘秋平（2017）就指出这是因为句法位置的问题。出现在“送龙船”这个词组后的“了$_{liAu214}$”虽表示这件事已经完成，功能上确实是具有“了$_1$”的功能，可是在句法位置上却不处于动词和宾语之间。施其生（2014）提出“了$_3$”的原因其实就在于他观察到体现这个功能的语素“意义上仍多少带有一些“完毕”的意思，可以算作一个不成熟的体貌标记”，但“其附着对象多为动词性词组”。我们的假说其实很

简单，就是新加坡华语里的“了$_{liʌu214}$”具表完成的功能，只是句法位置和汉语普通话的词缀“了$_{lə}$”不同，而这种不同一旦和汉语史中对词缀“了”的讨论结合起来，则能发现新加坡华语在表达完成体功能上，其实存在汉语历史音韵学中所关心的“层次”的问题：词缀“了$_{lə}$”体现了较晚的历史层次，而对应于这个词缀“了$_{lə}$”的“了$_{liʌu214}$”则是个更早的层次。以前听梅祖麟先生上汉语历史语法课时，他第一堂课就给了一条非常简单的规则，把现代汉语跟古代汉语的语法系统给区分开来。这个规则所依据的就是在VO（即动宾）之间能不能插入一个语法成分X？古代汉语里的句法规则基本是VOX，因此动宾之间不可以安插任何的成分，可是，发展到近现代汉语，则允许在VO中间插了一个东西。“打死猫”是现代汉语的表达，古代必须说成“打猫死”。根据这条简单的演变规则，我们不难看到新加坡华语里的“了$_{liʌu214}$”出现在VO之后，而“了$_{lə}$”则出现在VO之间，和上述的演变规则相符。表完成体的两个历史层次的语法现象出现在新加坡华语中，这是一个很奇妙的现象，和汉语里常见到的一个汉字有文白异读现象是一致的：如“薄”在普通话中既读［pɔ^{35}］，也读［pʌu^{35}］，而“石”等字在潮州话里也能找到相同的异读现象。文白异读表示某个汉字的具体读音有不同的历史层次，而新加坡华语的完成体标记既然存在了附着于词和附着于词组的两种形式，应该也可以分析为两个不同历史层次。这两个历史层次为什么不见于普通话，而见于新加坡华语，它到底是怎么来的？比照汉语历史音韵学的情形，可知它应该是来自方言之间的接触，而就目前讨论的现象，应该和闽南语有关。我想今天的时间不太够，因此这个讨论只能在这里打住，这里仅强调新加坡华语和汉语语法史里的这个有趣的关联。

上述的分析我在2017年的会议上提出过，中大的邓思颖教授也提出了他对这个分析的看法。这些观点似也为邱永康接受，因在他最新的分析中就提出了不同于“了$_{3}$”的解释（Khoo, 2018）：

Instead, it is observed that liǎo$_{PFV}$ occurs more often in the clause-final position, following verbs, adjectival predicatives and verbal compounds — the most distinct features of this peculiar use of clause-final liǎo (hereafter as ‘SM clause-final liǎo’). This case can be the most clearly illustrated using examples where SM clause-final liǎo occurs after a verb-object compound at the end of the first clause (13).

13. 洗脚了才穿

xǐ jiǎo *le/liǎo cái chuān

‘Wear (shoes) only after washing legs.’

此外，他也把上述的这个现象和梅先生对变文的分析结合起来。

我们现在回到主要谓语句里的情形。上述的讨论集中从属谓语句，而一个很自然的问题就是同样的观察是否也见于主要谓语句。陈重瑜（1983）保留这样的材料：

7. 我看三遍了（liǎo）了（le）。

就这个例子，陈老师认为它表达了“我已经看了（le）三遍了（le）”的意思。根据她的这个理解，我们不难发现前面所说的调换位置的现象：“了$_{liau214}$”出现在动宾之后，而对等的“了$_{lə}$”出现在动宾之间。另外一个例子是“我问她了（liǎo）了（le）”，陈老师也认为是“我已经问了（le）她了（le）”的意思，因此又是一次的换位置而已。吴英成（1986）也保留了这样的材料，就是“问他了（liǎo）了（lè）”。他认为这个“了（liǎo）”表示完成，而位置不能在动词和宾语的中间，只能在动宾的后面。两位老师的分析和我们今天上边对“了$_{liau214}$”提出的分析是一致的。陈老师也举出了“穿了（liǎo）”一类的例子，也就是说宾语不出现。我们的解释是普通话里的V了$_{lə}$O，“了$_{1}$”是挨着V，而“了$_{liau214}$”从刚才的两个 sequence 里我们看到，它其实是在VO的后面。这个在VO之后的语素不表示新情况的产生，而表示事件的完成。

如果我们把O给盖掉，这就是我们在日常生活里经常听到的“吃了$_{liʌu214}$、去了$_{liʌu214}$”等（见例1），这就是O不出现，而O如果出现，就是VO了$_{liʌu214}$，表示completed event。如果我们再把“了$_2$”放进去的话，“吃了饭了”，可是在新加坡华语里其实我们经常听到的是“吃饭了$_{liʌu214}$了$_{lə}$”。“了$_{liʌu214}$”表completed，而了$_{lə}$是表“了$_2$”。可見，在普通话里“了”本身是合并的，而在我们的新加坡华语中其实是被分拆出来的。这一点我能不能测试？我们对今天以新加坡华语为母语者的调查也发现这个现象依旧存在。我请了一位我以前华初的学生当发音人，他目前是名华文教师，我问他“他写那封信了$_{liʌu214}$。”能说吗？他说能说，既然能说，意思是什么？他告诉我“他写那封信了$_{liʌu214}$”表示的就是这个事件已经完成了。此外，如果在这一句的后头再添加一个“了$_{lə}$”，成为“他写那封信了$_{liʌu214}$了$_{lə}$”，那其实是说那封信已写完了，且是一件新事件，可见“了$_1$”和“了$_2$”在这里被分开了。我们再看，新加坡华语有一个特点，那就是如果把“了$_{lə}$”和“了$_{liʌu214}$”互换位子，句子马上变成非法，也就是说，“了$_1$”是跟体（aspect）有关，通常和动词挨得比较近，而“了$_{lə}$”表“了$_2$”，是跟语气有关，因此和动词的距离比较远。我们可以做句法切分分析，“了$_{liʌu214}$”属前，而“了$_{lə}$”属后。我们今天在讨论普通话的语法文献中看到的分析和新加坡华语很不一样，如“他写那封信了$_{lə}$”的意思在文献中是认为“He’s writing that letter”（Soh, 2009），而我们在新加坡华语说的“他写那封信了$_{liʌu214}$”表示的不是writing the letter，而是他已经完成那个写信的过程。

我想对于具“了$_1$”功能的“了$_{liʌu214}$”，目前的分析已能大致看到它可出现在主要谓语句和从属谓语句。我们好奇的是，这个语素是否和“了$_{lə}$”还有其它的分别？为此，我们从两种材料入手，一种是口述历史，之所以采用它是因为它保留了上世纪八十年代的口语对话，而它显示了“了$_{liʌu214}$”不仅出现在动宾之后，还能出现在动宾之间，

如“当了$_{liʌu214}$二十块钱”，“一直做了$_{liʌu214}$差不多几年”，“做了$_{liʌu214}$有十五年”等。然后就是电视节目，我们发现就是到了今天依旧看到有“了$_{liʌu214}$”的用例。它们都显示“了$_{liʌu214}$”也能出现在动宾之间，而这究竟是新加坡华语内部的后期演变，还是一早就是如此，还有待更多的研究。我们这里要提出的是上述的材料让我们看到“了$_{liʌu214}$”能用在什么句法环境下，却无法有效地告诉我们“了$_{liʌu214}$”的使用限制（constraint）是什么。有鉴于此，我们建议从方言语法的角度入手，因我们之前都忽略了现代汉语方言中在表达“了$_{1}$”上其实存在着许多变异。这方面的研究很多，如北大的项梦冰教授对连城客家话的时体描写就是一个很好的例子。这类研究可对我们研究新加坡华语有许多很好的启发，而这方面最突出的就是范晓蕾的一系列关于时体的文章。

范晓蕾（2018）对他自己的母语（即河北邢台话）中的两个对等于“了$_{1}$”的语素进行描写。他关心的它们的句法分布条件是什么？他发现其中一个控制条件在所谓的 realized situation 和 unrealized situation。Realized situation 是事情已经发生，unrealized situations 是事情还没有发生。打个比方，什么叫事件还没有发生？就是祈使句，“快吃了那碗饭。”这是个命令句，我命令你吃饭，新加坡华语里完全都可以。这是 unrealized situation。这不只是在一个官话方言看得到，在连城客家话里也是同样的。连城客家话在“了$_{1}$”的功能上有不同的语素。表 realized 的用一个，表 unrealized 的用另外一个。新加坡华语里的情形，我们这里做一个测试，就这个例子“饭，吃了它”，这在新加坡华语里听和说都没有问题。可是，我们如果说“饭，吃了$_{liʌu214}$它”，大家就觉得怪了。我第一次听到自己造的这个例子，总感觉不像是人话，于是就找人来试，屡试不爽，每个人都摇头。因此，这个例子在新加坡华语里是一定得打星号的，而在语法研究里，打星号，就表示这个例子是非法的，能告诉我们限制在哪里。“饭，吃了$_{liʌu214}$它”不行，而即使把它变成一个把字句，“把它吃了”变成“把它吃了$_{liʌu214}$”，也同样过不

了。因此我们看到新加坡华语的“了liʌu214”虽然有表“了1”的语法功能，但是这个表“了1”的功能只能用在realized situation，而不能用在一个unrealized situation中。

因为时间的关系，我的报告就到这里，谢谢大家。

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Negotiating Chinese Identity in Baba Malay

Nala H. LEE

Department of English Language and Literature,
National University of Singapore

As early as the fifteenth century, Chinese traders were travelling down south from China for purposes of trade and discovery. They used the Northeast monsoon to sail down the coast of China towards the Malay Archipelago region where they would await the Southwest monsoon winds to return to China (Andaya & Andaya, 2001). Some of them settled in the Malay Archipelago as early as the fifteenth century, based on historical records. *Fei Xin*, a scholar onboard a ship in *Zheng He's* entourage, recorded that in Malacca, he had encountered fair-looking people of Chinese descent (Fei, 1436). Similarly, in the sixteenth century, *Huang Zhong*, another traveller, noticed that the Chinese who lived in Malacca ate pork, lived in hotels and had female slaves who served them food (Groeneveldt, 1876). Relevant or otherwise, establishing the identities of the women involved in these early intermarriages has been contentious. Some have said that these women were not Malay, but that they might have been slaves of Batak or Balinese origins (Purcell, 1980). But whatever it was, the Chinese settlers married indigenous women because it was not common at that time for Chinese women to have travelled out of China (Tan, 1979). The Peranakan community thus came to be. The word *Peranakan* means several different things. It denoted the Peranakan Chetty, the Peranakan Jawi, the Peranakan Yahudi, etc. These are all different identities that are being encompassed by the single term *Peranakan*. So how did this term come

about? The word can be broken down morphologically. In Malay, *anak* denotes 'child', *beranak* means 'to give birth to', and *-an* functions as a nominalizer. As a single word, *beranakan* or *peranakan* would indicate 'the womb', as well as encompass the notion of being 'locally born' (Lee, 2014).

Today's talk focuses on the language of the Straits-born Chinese. In this community, *baba* refers to the Peranakan males, whereas *nyonya* refers to the Peranakan female. A very astute language consultant once asked, why is the language called Baba Malay? Does it mean that this language belongs to the men but not the women? She was somewhat affronted. Baba Malay as a term, is an exonym used by researchers. But because this is how the language has been referred to in academic literature, I'm utilizing this term today. To indicate the language, some speakers use the term *Peranakan*, and others call it *Patua*.

To understand why the Peranakan community established itself here in Singapore, two periods of migration in history become relevant, one more so than the other. One of these took place in the seventeenth century, when the Dutch occupied Malacca. The Dutch occupied Malacca to prevent other European powers from occupying it, but were more interested in expanding their trade in Batavia (present-day Jakarta). There were not a lot of opportunities for trade and commerce. Thus, when the British annexed Penang in 1786, a considerable number of Peranakans left Malacca for Penang. Captain Francis Lightfoot, one of the early administrators of Penang stated that "[d]id not the Dutch keep a strict watch over the Chinese, most of them would leave Malacca" (Purcell, 1967, p. 244). Likewise, when the British set up their entrepôt in Singapore, a lot of Peranakans in Malacca were drawn by the opportunities afforded in Singapore. This explains for why there is a sizeable Peranakan community in Singapore today.

Linguistically, much of the lexicon of Baba Malay is derived from Malay. If one were to speak Baba Malay to someone who spoke Hokkien, the Hokkien speaker would not understand very much of it, even though there is considerable Hokkien influence on the language as well. Much of the Hokkien influence is found in the grammar of Baba Malay. Essentially, many of these early Chinese settlers were from the *Zhang Zhou* (漳州) and *Quan Zhou* (泉州) provinces of China. The movement from *Zhang Zhou* was immense originally, and this was followed by the movement of people from *Quan Zhou*.

The language that they would have brought along was Southern Min, or *Min Nan* (闽南), and it is referred to in Singapore as *Hokkien*. Returning to Baba Malay, why would most of its words be derived from Malay and most of its grammar be taken from Hokkien? The grammar component can be attributed to substrate influence — the language that one speaks originally influences the language that is being acquired, especially where grammar is concerned. Where the Malay lexicon is concerned, one might imagine that Chinese traders coming down to the Malay Archipelago might have had to learn the language of trade in the area, the language of trade then being Malay. In fact, the learning of Malay was deemed to be so important that in the 19th century, the Chinese authorities commissioned learning guides to Malay, including *Hua Yi Tong Yu* (华夷通语), published in 1883 (Lee, 2016). In addition to Malay, other sources of lexicon also included Hokkien, Portuguese and Dutch, to a lesser extent.

As an example of Hokkien syntax operating in the language, here is a sentence in Singapore Baba Malay: *Dia kasi saya tau.* This means "He let me know" and comes from a word-for-word calque of the Hokkien sentence *Yi hor wa zai*, literally meaning "he give me know". A Malay speaker would say that this is not grammatical had this been a sentence of Malay. This pattern is taken directly from Hokkien. The varieties of Baba Malay spoken in Malacca and Singapore are different. Some speakers from Malacca would say that this sentence is too Hokkien, and they don't think of it as being Baba Malay. It is interesting too, if you consider what this means for the kinds of debates that there are regarding who speaks real Baba Malay. Essentially, these are all valid varieties of the language.

At this point, it is important to state that Baba Malay should not be confused with the language that is spoken by the Indonesian Peranakans. The Indonesian Peranakans have their own language that has Javanese elements in it as well. These languages are then different from the language that is spoken in Penang. It is notable that while the communities of Peranakans in Malacca, Singapore and Penang are clearly related, Baba Malay is not spoken in Penang. It has been postulated that at the time of the Peranakan families' arrival to Penang, there was already a Chinese community set up there. These were Chinese families, and they provided a model of community for the Peranakans to assimilate into, at least where language is concerned (Skinner, 1996). While

the Penang Peranakans do not speak Baba Malay, they share similar words for cultural artefacts with speakers of Baba Malay. For example, the *kerosang* is a set of three brooches that Nyonya women fasten up their blouses with, and this term is used by the Penang Peranakans, as well as by speakers of Baba Malay. For the most part, Penang Peranakans speak Penang Hokkien.

There are several ways in which tangible culture is depicted. One begins to see elements of Chinese culture negotiated in space. Peranakan spaces include the NUS Baba House, and the the Katong Antique House. Both of these spaces display their *jiho* very prominently. The *jiho*, crucial to old Peranakan families, functions as a motto or even as an emblem. Next, there are the *cherita dulu kala* 'stories from long ago' to consider. I will discuss these in more detail later. But for now, it is useful to note that these books typically depict subjects such as Chinese deities on their covers, and are written in a variety of Baba Malay. The attire of Peranakan women is interesting as well. There are a lot of Chinese motifs and emblems on what they wear, and their attire is very colourful. Dragons, crabs, bats, etc. are lucky and good in Chinese culture, just as it is in the Peranakan culture. It is clear that this is a space for negotiation and the Chinese culture is not simply maintained. In a time when the *baju panjang* (a top longer than the *kebaya* top) was popular for women, it was popular for men to wear Western suits. This was around the 1930s. What is being negotiated is a fusion culture and a fusion language.

The fusion language can be explored in the wedding domain, in terms of which words originate from Hokkien, and in the form of the more tangible *cherita dulu kala* 'stories from long ago'. It is interesting to see how the Chinese identity is negotiated in these spaces. This is a picture taken from a photograph that was displayed at the Peranakan museum. It depicts a traditional Peranakan wedding ceremony. The words used for each role here paint a picture of what might have taken place in the past (see Lee, 2014). The bride would be an indigenous woman, and the term for her is derived from the Malay word, *kemantin*. The groom is the *kiasai.* A Hokkien term is utilized here, plausibly because the initial grooms were Hokkien-speaking early traders. These patterns extend to the assistants. The term for the bride's girl assistant is the *penagapek*, while the term for the groom's boy assistant is the *kuya*. So terms traditionally associated with the bride originate from Malay

while terms associated with the groom originate from Hokkien. And yet, that delineation is not always that clear. Yet another interesting ceremonial role to look at is that of the *bukak kun*'s. This is a strange term, because *bukak*, derived from Malay, means 'to open', while *kun* means 'skirt' in Hokkien. The traditional Peranakan bride would have had to wear very heavy garments, and she would have needed help at various points in the ceremony to kneel. The role of the *bukak kun*, always a woman, was to help her arrange her garment so that she could kneel. This term exemplifies then, the amalgamation or fusion of both cultures. The language says a lot about intermarriage, and even addresses the act of intermarriage itself.

Domains featuring terms of Hokkien origin are also interesting to look at. Most of these domains were identified by Anne Pakir in her dissertation of 1986 (Pakir, 1986). While there are less words of Hokkien origin than words of Malay origin in Baba Malay, they exist and are interesting to consider. One of those domains in which Hokkien words dominate is the domain of kinship. There are not as many kinship terms in Malay, and the extended set of terms that Peranakans used are mostly derived from Hokkien. For example, *hia* means 'older brother', *tachi* indicates 'older sister', and *korpiau* indicates 'paternal cousins'. What is relevant here is that Hokkien-derived terms in Baba Malay are not accompanied with tone. So, Baba Malay is one possible outcome of intensive contact between speakers of tone languages and non-tone languages.

Other than that, words relating to the household are also traditionally derived from Hokkien. These are domains that are very much relevant even in Baba Malay today. The traditional house has two levels, and *naik loteng* means 'to go upstairs', with *naik* 'to ascend' being derived from Malay and *loteng* 'upstairs' derived from Hokkien. In other examples derived from Hokkien, *tokpo* means 'wiping cloth' and *anglo* means charcoal stove. These are very much items used in a traditional home. Where religion, ceremonies and special occasions are concerned, most Peranakans used to carry out ancestral worship, before a significant number converted to Catholicism at one point. Practices that were Chinese in nature included the hanging of a *chaiki* or a 'red banner' over the front door for special occasions such as Chinese New Year, or to celebrate marriage. Some homes would also have a *hiolor*, which is a 'holder for joss sticks'. Where celebrations are concerned, the Peranakans celebrate

the *dua sehjit* 'one's sixtieth birthday', and observe *tangchek* 'winter solstice', during which glutinous rice balls would be prepared and consumed.

Other words of Hokkien origin have also influenced the domains of food, for example. There are words in Baba Malay such as *popiah* 'raddish roll', *tauhu* 'tofu', and *taujio* 'bean paste', all of which are derived from Hokkien. There are also Hokkien-derived terms for time and measurement, such as the *chapgomeh* 'the fifteenth day of the first lunar month'. Other important concepts included the *lunguek* or the 'intercalary month' and the notion of *kuasi*, which involves making decisions using an almanac, with regard to which days should be observed or celebrated as special occasions (such as weddings).

Pakir (1986) also points out that Hokkien contributes significantly to the domains of emotion and judgement. These include words such as *huahee* 'happy', *kiamsiap* 'miserly', *lihai* 'clever', *yaugui* 'greedy' and *wuhau* 'fillial'. Again, some of these terms are considered to be extremely Hokkien. While they are used by Singaporean speakers of Baba Malay, they are deemed to not be part of the language by some speakers in Malacca, particularly by those who do not speak Hokkien. For example, their equivalent of *huahee* 'happy' is the Malay-derived term *gembira.* At least in the Singapore variety of the language, these are some domains in which words of Hokkien origin are maintained.

The earlier discussion pertains to language in a more intangible way. There is a more tangible aspect of the intangible culture, and this comes in the form of *cherita dulu kala*. *Cherita dulu kala* translates to 'stories from long ago', or 'stories from a time before'. Most of these were translations of Chinese classic novels, including titles such as *Shui Hu Zhuan* (水浒传) 'The Water Margin' story and *Feng Shen Bang* (封神榜) 'The Investiture of the Gods'. It is notable that places of publication included Singapore and Batavia, but not Malacca. There are no apparent reasons postulated for why this might be so. It is clear from the titles of these books if they were published in Singapore or in Indonesia. In the Singapore titles, the word for 'story' appears as *cerita*, *cherita*, or even *chrita*, whereas in the Indonesian titles, the word indicating 'story' is *tjerita*, according to the earlier orthography system that was used for Bahasa Indonesia.

The number of books that are out in circulation is unclear, but these books were highly popular at one point. According to a bibliography of Peranakan

resources compiled by the librarians at the National Library Board (Tan et al., 2007) that listed mainly publications from Singapore, there were an estimated 60 titles in circulation. This list does not include most Indonesian titles, so we know that there are definitely more than 60 titles in circulation.

My grandfather was typical of the Peranakan man in the post-British administration era. He was as he dressed, very Westernized. He could not speak a word of Mandarin, but he knew the stories. He knew *Feng Shen Bang*, he knew *Shui Hu Zhuan*, and he knew the stories of the Monkey God. My mother who is not Peranakan was always intrigued, how was it that he knew these stories because they were not stories that would have been accessible to the non-Mandarin reading crowd? It was only later on that she found out about the *cherita dulu kala* that he used to read. Even in his localness, a part of his cultural identity was essentially Chinese, and he knew of all these stories. This is a common narrative that is not just about my grandfather, but about other Peranakans who loved to read these books.

This is a picture of some of these books, to demonstrate what they looked like. Wan Boon Seng was a writer of many of these books, and this is one of his books published in the nineteen thirties. The publication years for *cherita dulu kala* mostly range from the 1880s to just before the war, and that is when most of the *cherita dulu kala* publishing activity stops. This title of Wan Boon Seng's is *Hou Lie Guo Zhi* (后列国志), or *Ow Liat Kok Chee*. The words here read "Di Zeman Chin Kok, Chin Si Ong Menjadi Raja", translating to "During the time of the Qin dynasty, when *Qin Shihuang* (秦始皇) became the emperor". This other book that has images of Chinese warriors on the front printed in colour was produced in 1939. *Da Nao San Men Jie* (大闹三门街) depicts the story of a girl who pretended to be a man to join the army. It is notably also the name of a Hong Kong movie title. The images are very clearly emblematic of a particular culture and context. Through *cherita dulu kala*, the intangible culture of the Peranakan language is manifested in a very physical, tangible way.

It is important to address here the vitality status of Baba Malay. There are not many speakers left, and by most assessment methods and standards, Baba Malay is considered to be critically endangered. Two factors have inevitably led to the language's endangerment. The first of these was English

medium education that the British administration introduced. At one point, the Peranakans prided themselves as one of the first to embrace the English medium education. The language became the language of the homes, and that has led to the decline of Baba Malay. There were also inevitable changing marriage patterns. At one point, intra-community marriages were popular amongst the Peranakans — it was popular for a Peranakan person to marry someone else of Peranakan descent. Yet, due to limitations set by the size of the community, intra-community marriages could only be managed to a certain extent. It has become more common for Peranakans to marry people from other Chinese communities, as well as outside those Chinese communities. This inevitably affects and influences the languages that are maintained in the home domain, which was the traditional stronghold of Baba Malay. Baba Malay is therefore critically endangered.

There are several reasons for why languages should be preserved, including Baba Malay. Languages are inherently linked to the notions of well-being and identity, languages inherently store knowledge, and in the case of Baba Malay, the language is a unique repository of a fusion culture and expresses the fusion identity of its speakers. It is unique, tied to a particular time and space, to be found nowhere else in the world but here.

Kamsiah manyak manyak. Thank you very much for your time.

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Panel 5

Popular Culture and Entertainment

新谣与国家论述

王昌伟

新加坡国立大学中文系

当我们讲到这个新谣，我们讲新谣这个东西，到底什么是“新谣”？这个其实是非常非常复杂。如果各位看我在手册上的简历的话，我研究的方向其实是中国历史、中国思想史。孔子想什么、孟子想什么，我比较清楚。那新谣的话，它其实更多一方面是自己成长的经历，一方面也是因为教学的需要，所以才会有一个这样的构思，一个提问。同样的一个题目我在不同的场合讲过了，所以这边有一些朋友可能都有听过，林任君先生对不起你听过了我知道，所以今天讲得有点羞愧啦因为没有新的东西。另外一点呢其实也是蛮期待的，为什么我期待待会儿我再告诉你们。

回到新谣这个题目，到底什么是“新谣”？这个其实很多人有不同的定义，那今天的一些普遍的讲法连林俊杰、孙燕姿他们都可以算是新谣的一个部分，对。那你要这样子定义当然也可以，因为反正这个是真的是，这个题目你爱怎么定义就怎么定义嘛，但是重点是它作为一个分析的概念的话，我觉得它还是需要有一定的范围，要不然新加坡的人创作的歌曲就叫“新谣”的话，这个词其实就没有分析的意义了。对我来说，它其实是80年代，在一个比较特定的校园的情况下发展出来的一种音乐的形式。新谣的内涵究竟是什么？这个就有很多的讨论。当然我们

知道，新谣如果按照我过去那个讲法的话，大概一个十年的时间，从80年代初到90年代初，然后就没落了。然后是到最近几年，才又变成了一种怀旧的讲法，再重新把它提起来。当然国家也会对这个问题进行一些定调，就是新谣到底是什么等等等等……所以这个其实是2014年的时候的一个国庆群众大会，李总理在上面讲“唱新谣”，那我们先听听他怎么讲。

“他刚去了一场新谣音乐会，我为什么记得呢，是因为那个时候我的小儿子刚刚出世，有点应接不暇。当晚下着毛毛雨，我们就撑着雨伞听歌，欣赏着优美的新谣旋律，和许多年轻人的热情表演。我还记得跟着几位大头娃娃拍了一张照，娃娃继续年轻，我已经头发白了。我很高兴本地再次刮新谣风。最近在百胜楼举行了新谣分享会。全场爆满，尽管下着大雨，当场支持的队伍们热情不减。他们当中有年纪较大的，也有年纪轻、跟着父母一代一起来的新生代。新谣的旋律动听，歌词朗朗上口，充满了本地生活的色彩，确实温暖了不少人的心房。新谣歌曲中，我最喜欢的是《小人物的心声》，也最熟悉，在国庆庆典上，很高兴有机会跟大家一起唱。因为它很有意思，小人物也有小人物的贡献，很多人告诉我他们也很喜欢梁文福的《细水长流》，我去听了，觉得也很有意思。《细水长流》的开头是这么唱的：“年少时候，谁没有梦。无意之中，你将心愿透露。”听这首歌的时候，我就想：是的，年少时候，谁没有梦？在新加坡不论老少，大家都可以做梦。还有很多实现梦想的机会，即使你不是什么大人物。过去半个世纪以来，我们细水长流，每个小人物都在打拼，结果共同成就了一番大事业。建国一代默默耕耘，前辈们贡献了他们的力量……”[李总理演讲录音]

好这里可以停了因为接下来就是一个，propaganda（宣传）嘛，就是因为讲到，那一年就是他刚好要推出建国一代的配套。所以李总理他刚才讲的有几个重要的内容，第一，他提了两首歌嘛，第一个《小人物的心声》，第二首是《细水长流》对不对？那《小人物的心声》如果按

照我刚才那个定义的话，它算不算是新谣其实是有疑问的，因为它其实是在19……忘了是87还是88年NTUC主办的一个歌曲创作比赛里面的那首冠军歌曲，所以它面对的更多是像工友的那个阶层，所以算不算是新谣其实是有疑问。第二首是梁文福的《细水长流》，这个可能大家都很熟悉，那梁文福这一首歌刚才李总理唱了两句，唱了之后他觉得可能当总理比较好啦。那这两句就是“年少时候，谁没有梦。无意之中，你将心愿透露。”这样子嘛，那李总理抓住了“谁没有梦？”这一点，讲的其实就是一个梦想。所以他会把新谣当成是一种对未来的一个憧憬、一个梦想，这样子的描述。那我这里要说的是总理断章取义啦，因为如果我们仔细地去看《细水长流》这首歌的歌词的话，它讲的不是梦想，它讲的是梦想的破灭。[全场笑] 我们可以去听一下这首歌，

[《细水长流》：https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ObS2jsMWKow]

请大家注意这边的歌词，它第一个部分是讲年少的时候跟朋友们的梦想，到了第二段的时候它的语调其实已经改变了，所以这里我们要做我们中文系比较擅长的close reading of the text（文本细读），对不对？所以到这个部分的时候你可以看它“霓虹纵然再嚣张，我们的步履有方向”就是说他们的成长已经碰到了一定的阻力，那个阻力他是用“霓虹”这两个字来代表。“霓虹”代表的是什么？怎样的一些环境里面才会有霓虹灯？城市啦，对不对？是一个城市的环境，乡村里面不会有霓虹的，对不对？他其实讲的就是说，这个城市所带来的对这个成长的一种冲击，我们再往下听。

“我们都有了疲倦的笑容。”对不对？就是你在受到很多的挫折以后，疲倦的笑容。再往下。

“是否依旧？是否依旧？”所以我们还不能找到我们的初心，对不对？所以这样子的一个成长的环境里边，被霓虹灯所代表的意象，那种城市跟商业化的社会冲击以后，我们有没有办法再找回我们原来的梦想

跟理想？他最后是leave a blank（留白），就是说“是否依旧？是否依旧？”所以这首歌你看它整个的narrative（叙述），它不是讲梦想，它讲的是年少的梦想怎么被冲击，甚至面临着破灭的危险。所以当政治人物要挪用某种文化为他们的政治论述服务的时候，最好还是把整首歌听完啦，不要只听前面那几句。

刚才讲到就是总理好像对新谣有很多的那个赞赏嘛，对吗？但是新谣有一两首歌是被禁的。其中的一首是曾经被禁过的。为什么被禁？我们看一下歌词，这个是出自……

［《阿Ben阿Ben》：https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ml2SivJK5OU］

这首歌大概就是这样子啦，他后来下面有唱到说，“两天前再相见，阿Ken又变成阿贤。他说现在流行嘛，人人都*cheena*一点。”这样子的一个narrative（叙述）。这首歌它应该就是梁文福的第一个专辑，他自己创作的一首，但这首后来不能在free-to-air的那个channel air的（免费电台广播）。为什么被禁？好像没有人知道。大家都在猜。好像是说“*cheena*”有一点点不对劲，好像对华人的一种嘲笑还是什么，反正原因不清楚，它就是被禁了。

除了这一首，梁文福还有另外一首歌也被禁。我们听梁文福自己怎么讲。

“为什么你不唱《一步一步来》啦、《历史考试前夕》啦、《排排坐》等等？一个原因是前两年在不同场合唱过了。另外一个是比较自我的一个原因啦。这首歌曲《麻雀衔竹枝》其实是在1990年我的一张专辑《新加坡派》里面的一首歌曲。可是当年就因为，这里当然有我们的国会议员在，可是我讲他也蛮赞成的。我们现在在一个蛮开放的一个年代对不对？当年就是因为里面有两句广东话还有一句福建话，所以我们的电台就禁播了，不见天日。”

［《麻雀衔竹枝》：https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zj1BCLoIFz4］

所以这个《麻雀衔竹枝》，我们知道它为什么被禁，其实很清楚，其实是因为里面出现了方言。就是说当国家在利用这样子的一个文化资源的时候，它其实是有一种选择性的，他也会刻意地不去提。像李总理在夸奖新谣的时候，他其实不去提政府跟新谣原来的关系，有时候会比较……比较有tension（张力）的那个部分。所以这个是我前面讲的这个部分。

这个如果各位要去听的话可以到Youtube上面去听，就《麻雀衔竹枝》这首歌。

那我现在要讲的是“新谣”这个名词是1982年的时候，由南洋商报应该是属下的《南洋学生》主催的一次座谈会，座谈会上面才产生的一个名字。在之前，已经知道在各个不同的校园里面，已经有学生自发地组织一些小组啊、团体啊，在进行表演。在1982年那个时候，南洋商报……其实我们的报纸在早期的时候，他们会扮演者一种所谓的文化领导者的角色。我不知道现在的报馆还有没有这样子的使命感？但是过去是有的，他们会觉得自己是文化的领导者。所以在当时那个座谈会，叫做《我们唱着的歌》，就邀请了一些参加新谣的一些学生来进行这个座谈会。当然里面有我们熟悉的名字，许环良、颜黎明，颜黎明女士最近刚刚去世。大家还有没有看到一个非常熟悉的影子？［笑］所以要唱的话不是我唱，是她唱嘛，对不对？所以我们的汤玲玲教授当年就是参加了这个座谈会，然后使到“新谣”这个名字产生了。

那我们现在其实要看的是它的内容。因为当时就是有这样子的活动，所以那个时候，报馆的一个主持人，当然是个成年人，黄成财先生，就是报道里面提到的主席。他基本上就是在设法为新谣下一个定义。我们要怎样创造出有新加坡特色的歌曲呢？这个是当时那个主席所提的一个很重要的问题。我们要怎样创造出有新加坡特色的歌曲？如果刚才各位注意李总理讲的话，就是说新谣“朗朗上口”，怎样怎样，然后“富有本地的色彩”，对不对？所以这个好像是我们对新谣的了解。

新谣就是必须富有本地色彩。可是，第一代的这些新谣歌手跟创作者他们不是这么理解的，因为我们往下看。“其实我不知道怎样才算有新加坡特色。*I don't know.* 这是见仁见智的问题。是不是写新加坡河就算是有新加坡的特色？”对不对？下面也讲说，“我想或者是要在歌曲上加点马来风味或淡米尔风味，因为我国是个多元种族社会。”

有没有看到，大家一起笑，对不对？所以就是他们当时并不觉得说，他们唱自己的歌需要强调新加坡特色。其实我们在看整个新谣的发展史的话，这个新加坡特色的这个强调，其实是比较后期的一个发展，尤其是在梁文福的词曲。刚才我们看那个《阿Ben》它其实是1986年。它其实在整个新谣的发展里面已经算是稍微靠后的一个发展了。就是当时，在各个初级学院里面或者中学里面，有没有一些比较具有新加坡特色的一些歌曲的出现？这个我不知道因为我们今天没有足够的资料留下来。我们今天知道都是那些已经发行的那些唱片的。但是你按照这些当时参与者自己的讲法的话，他们不觉得这个是一个问题。他不觉得我们需要特别去强调什么新加坡特色。

那“新谣”是什么呢？其中的一部分，我们可以发现就是基本上是描写年轻人的情怀，成长等等。所以它更多的是一种比较universal（普世）的一个关于年轻人在成长过程中面对友情、爱情、亲情、成长的焦虑等等的这样子的一系列的感情。这个其实是新谣的开始。它的所谓的本地的特色，以及因为后来跟讲华语运动结合，变成强调一种中华文化、华族文化的承传，那些是后来的事情。在早期并不是这样子的。

里面还讲到一些跟南洋大学时期，所谓的诗乐的那个关系，如果各位有看过邓宝翠的一个纪录片，叫《我们唱的歌》的话，邓导演会试图把新谣跟那个诗乐运动结合起来。但是你从他们这里的论述，其实不觉得这个有特别的、很明显的connection（关联）。

这篇报道里面也提到，“到后来，新谣诞生了。现在有一个很重要的问题，我们要怎样用一个词来形容？所以大家讨论了很多，最后终于

出现了所谓的“新谣”的这么名词。”这个后面有个故事，待会儿我会请汤教授跟我们说，因为她自己参与嘛，她后来跟我讲“新谣”这个词是怎么诞生的。重点是，你看它这里写的“新加坡年轻人自创的歌谣”叫做“新谣”。这个definition（定义）有什么问题？它有两个问题。第一，它把阶级去掉了，就是说，比如说我六年级毕业后就要出去打工，那这些人大概不会是新谣群体的。第二，它把种族去掉了。“新加坡年轻人自创的歌谣”，是不是马来人创作我们也叫新谣？不是，对不对？是不是印度人创作……但是，这里因为华人是the default race（默认种族），所以我们好像觉得“新加坡年轻人”应该就是华人。但实际上，新加坡的这个语言文化环境更为复杂，这样子的一个说法它其实是限制了它的一个想象力。

我们其实如果再往下看的话，刚才我按照那个，听梁文福的歌，他有很多歌曲的话，新谣讲的其实是一个成长的焦虑，早期的新谣。那这个成长的焦虑是一个年轻的学子从一个相对，所谓的清新、干净的校园成长以后进入一个商业化、都市化的一个环境的中焦虑。然后那些很，比较出名的，像《邂逅》这些歌曲，讲山林，新加坡哪里有什么山林？山林、乡村等等等等，就是他们的一个imagination（想象），就是一个商业社会以外的一个净土。所以它其实跟整个国家论述的那种developmental discourse（发展的话语）其实是有距离的，它甚至是在挑战这样的一个discourse（话语）。但是因为时间关系，我们没有办法多讲，但是我要讲的其实就是它跟国家关系、跟国家论述的问题不一定就是像李总理讲的那么的简单。好，谢谢各位。

附录：

1）李总理谈新谣

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qpti3-djiLo

2）《南洋学生》主催新谣座谈会http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Page/nysp19820911-1.1.41.aspx

http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/Digitised/Page/nysp19820913-1.1.33.aspx

3）本文根据发表人录音整理。

Rethinking Chinese Dialects in Local Media and Popular Culture

Brenda CHAN

Department of Chinese Studies, National University of Singapore

1. Introduction

After the implementation of the Speak Mandarin Campaign (SMC) in Singapore in 1979, Chinese dialects had been systematically discouraged by the state through various measures. While remaining consistent in implementing the SMC annually, the government has gradually relaxed its restrictions on the use of dialects in local films, and it actually adopts a flexible and strategic approach towards the use of dialects in public communication of its policies, particularly towards the senior citizens. However, with only 16.1 per cent of Chinese speaking dialects as the most predominant language in their homes (Department of Statistics Singapore, 2016), the decline of Chinese dialects represents a situation of language loss in Singapore, though the negative impact of such a loss might not be immediately visible. This paper will first discuss whether the government could look beyond the utilitarian value of dialects in publicising its policies to the elderly, and move towards giving more recognition to the intrinsic value of Chinese dialects as an integral part of the heritage and culture of the ethnic Chinese community in Singapore. The paper will also explore the role that media and popular culture could play in arresting the loss of Chinese dialects in Singapore.

2. Changes to the use of dialects in local media after the SMC

In the early campaign discourse for SMC well into the late 1980s, Chinese dialects were explicitly discouraged, based on the arguments that they would impede effective learning of Mandarin in schools, and that Mandarin would facilitate better communication among Chinese from different dialect groups in Singapore (Newman, 1988). In 1979, the slogan for the inaugural SMC was "Speak More Mandarin, and Less Dialects (多讲华语，少讲方言)" (Ministry of Culture, 1979), while the English slogan of the 1983 SMC poster read "Mandarin's In. Dialect's Out." (Ministry of Culture, 1983)

Following the launch of the SMC, several measures were put in place to restrict dialects in broadcast media, such as the dubbing of dialect films and television (TV) dramas in Mandarin; limited airtime for dialect programming on TV and radio etc. Despite marginalisation in mainstream broadcast media, Chinese dialects have continued to survive in certain forms of popular culture such as karaoke, live music concerts and the annual open-air *getai* concerts, held during the Hungry Ghost Festival, where performers usually entertain audiences with songs in various dialects such as Hokkien, Cantonese, Teochew and so on (Kuo & Chan, 2016).

While Cantonese films from Hong Kong still have to be dubbed in Mandarin for cinematic release in Singapore, the 1990s saw a gradual relaxation in the government's policy towards the use of dialects in local films. In 1998, the Singaporean film, *Money No Enough*, was allowed to be screened in cinemas, despite having about 85 per cent of its dialogue in Hokkien (Elley, 1998). The decision by the authorities was a surprise to everyone (Chua & Yeo, 2003). *Money No Enough* became the top-grossing local film in that year, and held the record of being the local film with the highest box office until 2012 (Yip, 2018). The film's popularity was partly attributed to the heavy use of dialect in the film -- for the audiences, there was a certain sense of gratification in hearing Hokkien in the cinemas again, after dialects had been suppressed in the media for many years. As Prof Chua Beng Huat, then at the Department of Sociology in NUS, had argued in a media interview with Reuters in 2007, the use of Hokkien in local films created "a kind of rebellious effect" and he likened it to "the return of the repressed" (quoted in Biston, 2007).

The success of *Money No Enough* paved the way for other local films carrying Chinese dialects, such as *881* (directed by Royston Tan) in 2007, which was the top-grossing Singaporean film in that year. The story of *881* centres around *getai* singers. Its soundtrack, made up of Hokkien songs re-arranged in techno beat, was sold out upon release. The film was credited for reviving interest in Hokkien pop music, Hokkien language and the declining *getai* culture (Biston, 2007).

In 2017, the Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre (SCCC) commissioned an omnibus film titled *667* (回程). Produced by Royston Tan, the film is an anthology of five short films directed by young Singaporean filmmakers, with the objective of exploring one's cultural roots and expressing "how one makes Singapore home" (Yip, 2017). Each short film is in a different dialect — Eva Tang's *The Veiled Willow* in Cantonese; Kirsten Tan's *Wu Song Sha Sao* in Teochew; Liao Jiekai's *Nocturne* in Hokkien; He Shuming's *Letters from the Motherland* in Hainanese, and Jun Chong's *Ke* in Hakka.

The government appeared to be less stringent with the use of dialects in Singapore cinema, given that films require cinema spectators to buy tickets on their own initiative, compared to the relatively open and accessible nature of free-to-air TV programmes. The same principle applies for niche media services such as cable television where the government exercises a lighter hand in regulation. Channels with dialect programmes are available on pay TV services by Starhub, and the second pay-TV provider, Singtel mio TV, launched its own Jia Le Channel in 2011, which airs Hokkien TV dramas and variety shows imported from Taiwan (Singtel, 2011). In 2014, Jia Le Channel commissioned a locally-produced variety show titled *Are You Hokkien?* The eight-episode series explores Hokkien traditional culture such as food and wedding rites. The managing director of mio TV provided the rationale for launching this series in a news report by *The Straits Times*, saying that:

> More than 40 per cent of Singaporean Chinese are Hokkien, making it the largest dialect group. This series aims to help audiences rediscover what it means to be Hokkien and to find a deeper connection with their roots. (quoted in Ng, 2014)

This variety show did not run into any problems with the authorities, because subscription TV is intended to cater to niche markets through its multi-channel offerings. In a book on Singapore's language policies that Prof Eddie Kuo and I co-authored, we argued that

> the show essentially reproduces state discourse about dialects. By relegating dialect-based culture to the realm of "traditions" and "roots", it perpetuates the government's view of Chinese dialects as being archaic with little practical and economic value. (Kuo and Chan, 2016, pp. 78–79)

Actually the series was very educational in helping Chinese from other dialect groups understand more about Hokkien culture. And Singtel even ran interstitials related to this series, such as one that depicted an old man teaching his grandson how to recite Tang Dynasty poetry in Hokkien (Singtel, 2015). This interstitial was commendable for correcting the common misconception that dialects are less refined than Mandarin. There was a sequel called *Are You Hokkien 2* in 2015, but unfortunately, there was no follow-up series by Singtel mio TV about other dialect groups in Singapore.

While remaining consistent in implementing the SMC annually, the government actually adopts a flexible and strategic approach towards the use of dialects in free-to-air TV to disseminate information on healthcare and medical benefits for senior citizens. For instance, in 2016, the Ministry of Communications and Information (MCI) collaborated with Mediacorp to produce *Eat Already?* — a dialect drama that seeks to convey information about the Pioneer Generation Package, Community Health Assistance Scheme, Silver Support Scheme and other government subsidy schemes for senior citizens ("New Hokkien drama," 2016). The drama has been running for four seasons since then. In 2018, the televised *getai* singing competition *Getai Challenge* was revived, as a collaboration between MCI and Mediacorp. The contestants competed with songs in dialects, while the banter among hosts or short skits in between the songs contained nuggets of information teaching the elderly about healthy eating, upgrading their skills, how to do e-payments, avoiding scams and so on. During the Season 2 finals of the singing competition, the Minister of State for Communications and Information, Ms Sim Ann, was invited to give away prizes to the winners (govsingapore, 2018). However, the government

emphasises that its dialect policy has not changed — *Eat Already?* was aired during the existing time belt set aside for dialect programmes on free-to-air TV, which is 11.30 am –12.30 pm every Friday ("New Hokkien drama," 2016). *Getai Challenge 2018* was also broadcast within the same time belt.

3. Preserving dialects in Singapore

When we review the statistics related to the usage of dialects in Chinese households in Singapore, the situation is dismal. Based on the government's General Household Survey in 2015, only 16.1 per cent of Chinese in Singapore use dialects as their most frequently spoken language at home (Singapore Department of Statistics, 2016), compared to 76.2% in Census 1980, at a time when the SMC had just started (see Kuo & Chan, 2016).

There is clearly a situation of language loss occurring for Chinese dialects within the ethnic Chinese community in Singapore. The long-term negative impact of such a loss may not be immediately visible. The challenge lies in preserving Chinese dialects, that is, preventing dialects from entirely dying out in Singapore, while continuing with the government's bilingual education policy of teaching Mandarin as the spoken "Mother Tongue Language" for ethnic Chinese students in schools.

Currently, the dialect programming on free-to-air TV is mainly top-down media content embedded with government messages, such as healthcare policies for the senior citizens. The government sees dialects as having instrumental value in communicating policies to older Chinese citizens who are not as proficient in English and Mandarin. But this generation will eventually pass, and the question is whether it is time for the government to look beyond the utilitarian value of dialects in publicising its policies, and move towards giving more recognition to the intrinsic value of Chinese dialects as an integral part of the heritage and culture of the ethnic Chinese in Singapore. If heritage plays an important part in cultivating Singaporean identity, it is impossible to speak about the heritage of the local Chinese community without an understanding of the various Chinese dialects and their speech communities in shaping that heritage.

The government does acknowledge the importance of dialects as a part of Chinese culture in Singapore, but at the same time it is reluctant to allow

dialects to be used more widely. In Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's speech at the launch of SMC in 2014, he said that "when we first introduced our bilingual policy, we did so knowing that it was very difficult for most people to master English, Mandarin and dialects at the same time" and that "(t)his principle has not changed" (Lee, 2014, para 6b-6c). To support his argument, PM Lee cited the example of Hong Kong, pointing out that HongKongers are not as fluent in Mandarin and English even though "the standard of Cantonese is very good" (Lee, 2014, para 6d).

While the government does utilise dialects in its public communications, this is carried out under exceptional circumstances and "restricted contexts", such as the public health crisis of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003, or to explain important government policies to senior citizens (Wee, 2010, p. 106). Therefore in officially-endorsed media content, Chinese dialects tend to be associated with the elderly and the lower-income segments of the population. Outside the confines of mainstream media, however, young Singaporeans have been creating and circulating content in dialect (or carrying substantial amounts of dialects) via social media, showing how dialects are very much part of Singapore's everyday life, and part of the experience and meaning of "being Singaporean". In this paper, I will share two examples that appear to be somewhat extreme in their differences, but also bear certain similarities in that they represent attempts by young Chinese Singaporeans in using dialects to express their Singaporean national identity.

The first example is a rap song titled "LimPeh" by ShiGGA Shay (whose real name is Pek Jin Shen), featuring Tosh Rock and Wang Weiliang, released in 2013 (ShiGGa Shay, 2013). The song topped the Singapore iTunes chart as soon as it was released, outdoing tracks by international stars such as Justin Timberlake and Bruno Mars (Rasul & Tan, 2013).

With its mix of Hokkien and Singlish[1] with Mandarin and American English, "LimPeh" challenges the official language policies in Singapore that

[1] Singlish is a colloquial variety of English in Singapore that incorporates words from Mandarin, Malay and Chinese dialects. Singlish has its own syntax, "borrowing certain grammatical structures from these languages as well as from English, and has its own patterns of intonation" (Bokhorst-Heng, 2005, p. 186). Although Singlish is discouraged by the government, it is regarded by a certain segment of Singaporeans as being unique to the country and "a nascent symbol of identity" (Rubdy, 2001, p. 345).

advocate the use of standard English[2] and promote Mandarin as the spoken language of the ethnic Chinese. The music video, unfortunately, reinforces the stereotypical association of Hokkien dialect with *Ah Bengs* (local Singaporean slang word for young Chinese hooligans) and gangsters (Wong, 2014, pp. 118–119), as it depicts a group of young men bullying a fat boy and confronting a Hokkien-speaking gangster (played by Wang Weiliang, a movie actor). While the music video and the song lyrics appear rebellious, ShiGGA Shay affirms his Singaporean identity in the song by declaring that he is "Lion City's son", while the rap by Tosh Rock expresses pride in the nation by reiterating the state narrative of Singapore's development from "a small fishing village to today's metropolis".

ShiGGA Shay and Tosh Rock (a.k.a. Tosh Zhang) represent the segment of English-speaking youth in Singapore who are heavily influenced by American culture (in this case, hip-hop), but are now seeking to acquaint themselves with dialects. The rap lyrics attempt to rebut the assumption that English-speaking Chinese youth in Singapore are not interested in dialects, by arguing that: "…I know, you think I can't speak proper Mandarin / eating potatoes everyday [sic], burgers & apple pies / but now you know my Hokkien's really not bad / I can fly to Taiwan and chit-chat with the ladies[3]."

The use of Hokkien dialect in "LimPeh" is not exclusive in that it is blended together with Mandarin, Singlish, American English and a smattering of Cantonese and Malay, reflecting the extant linguistic hybridity in the everyday speech habits of Singaporeans in a multi-ethnic and multi-lingual social milieu. Despite having a Hokkien title and Hokkien-heavy rap lyrics, "LimPeh" places Chinese dialects within the context of diversity in Singapore's multicultural society. This is also evident from ShiGGA Shay's effort to include "actors" from various ethnic groups in his music video (MV), such as Bancho the Matrep, a Malay vlogger, as well as Lineath, a homegrown Indian rapper

[2] Since 2000, the government has been running an annual language campaign known as the Speak Good English Movement, which encourages citizens to speak standard grammatical English instead of Singlish.

[3] In Taiwan, the main dialect spoken is Minnan dialect, which is similar to Hokkien in Singapore (both originating from Fujian province in China).

who was later encouraged by ShiGGA Shay to rap in English and Tamil (Hadi, 2016).

The second example that I wish to discuss is a cover version of Kit Chan's National Day song, "Home", performed in Cantonese by Novabelle Ng, with lyrics written by Ng's father. Novabelle Ng posted the video of her Cantonese cover via Facebook on 2 August 2018 (Novabelle, 2018), after which it rapidly went viral, garnering over 277,000 views and 5,500 shares on 7 August 2018 (Zhuo, 2018). The video has since accumulated 435,351 views, 7337 shares and 375 comments, as at 30 March 2019. Most of the Facebook comments are positive, with users praising that the Cantonese version of the song sounds "beautiful".

Unlike ShiGGa Shay's "LimPeh" which uses a more counter-cultural musical genre such as hip-hop, Novabelle Ng chose to re-interpret a National Day song that subtly expresses patriotism through a sense of attachment and belonging to Singapore as "home". The Cantonese lyrics mirror the Mandarin version of the song more closely, depicting "home" as the place that carries our joys and sorrows, but also the place that gives us warmth, love and direction whenever one feels lost and dejected, and wherever one may be.

Novabelle Ng started her Facebook post by writing "Because dialects have always been an important part of growing up in S'pore [sic]." (Novabelle, 2018) By saying this, I believe she is trying to affirm the importance of dialects in her formative years, therefore forming an integral part of her identity, and that her experience is not unique, but shared with many other Chinese Singaporeans.

4. Conclusion

Singapore is not the only country that faces the issue of dialects being marginalised by the state's government policies. In a recent paper on grassroots efforts and activities to save dialects in mainland China, Luwei Rose Luqiu contends that in countries where media are state-controlled, the Internet becomes a space for user-generated counter-hegemony discourses (Luqiu, 2018). The same applies in the situation of Singapore. Social media will be more effective in reaching the younger generation to stimulate their interest in

dialects, if we want to preserve dialects in Singapore. From the examples that I have shared, bottom-up initiatives appear to work best, that is, dialect content created by youth for the youth. This is because the younger generation tends to be averse to anything top-down that they perceive as carrying a hidden agenda. What they value is authenticity — something that comes across as spontaneous with sincere emotions. This explains why Novabelle Ng's Cantonese version of "Home" was able to touch the hearts of many Singaporeans. In addition, videos that go viral are often the ones that are funny. For instance, in ShiGGa Shay's music video of "LimPeh", the young men dress like gangsters but play with water guns, and they are blowing bubbles with children's bubble wands instead of smoking real cigarettes. Humour is often the key to making a video popular among the younger generation.

As Luqiu (2018) has acknowledged, challenges remain in saving dialects where they are marginalised in a linguistic environment, such as the lack of influencers, and the lack of resources, particularly in terms of funding. But I think community organisations that have expertise in dialects and their traditions can begin to inspire young social media influencers to be interested in dialects, and leave them with the free hand to come up with their own content that would attract their peers. In this way, we can have a more optimistic outlook in terms of preserving dialects in Singapore.

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“Because I am Chinese?” The Online Meme-ing of Singapore’s Chinese Privilege

LIEW Kai Khiun

Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University

Crystal ABIDIN

Centre for Culture and Technology, Curtin University

Good afternoon, my name is Doctor Liew Kai Khiun, thank you very much for coming for the last session before the round table discussion.

You can call me KK, so KK reminds you of the hospital as well. Maybe to start off with a video from a recent incident that has gone viral.

First I would like to play this. “Blue Global: 2019 - SG - Gojek Passenger ‘Jovina’ Accuses Driver of Kidnap after Refusing to Pay ERP - 31/1/19”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3RlJiwXEq28

So for the benefit for those who are not familiar with this clip. This was a in car camera recording by a Gojek driver with a tussle with a passenger. What started to be just a small incident about dispute with fares ended up on national news, that takes up a racial dimension. And this is where I am going to start my discussion here, “is it because I’m Chinese?” And this actually brought a lot about memes.

So memes in Chinese is call *Moyin* (模因), it is basically a kind of internet culture how u actually re-contextualise a text with an image to form a new message. That is usually more humorous and it’s more light-hearted in

conveying a kind of a textual, visual message to the other audiences and a larger platform. So it actually leads to a lot of memes from this, *Mothership*, the other internet platform, calls it "the image that launched three thousand memes". But what is more special about this, I think we need to contextualize this in how we look at Chinese identity, in relation with Singapore as a kind of multicultural society, rather than looking at it just within the kind of diasporic studies, or looking with it the context of the larger Chinese or the larger sinocentric world itself.

I'm quite familiar, in some ways, with the discussion about the location of the Chinese identity within multiculturalism in Singapore. This was the Minister Ong Ye Kung's latest text of, I mean I call it the Chinese sacrifice. So it's always being conveyed to the ethnic Chinese majority here that they have sacrificed a lot in the closure of the university, the change, this is where the language that I'm speaking now supposedly, that we are speaking in English instead of Chinese in daily communications, that this is the largest ethnic group that has sacrificed and that has been marginalised. I think a lot of you would have recognised this word that has resurfaced as a part of Singlish, "Chinese helicopters", that to look at Chinese as a less important and less progressive kind of language and culture compared to the anglicised elites that seems to dominate society as well.

So the discussion I see, this is where I want to contextualise this talk with, between the mainstream official media and what we see in the internet, what we see in the social media, which is, can be considered in some ways, alternative media. So in our mainstream media, something that I am actually quite surprised with, in this age, is still contextualising or is still discussing in relationship with China per se. I mean what we talked about the popularized concept, especially we have a younger journalist from Straits Times and *Zaobao*, Yuen Sin and Wai Mun, if I'm not wrong. So now how do we look at our ties with China? I mean compared to when I look at Hong Kong and Taiwan right, ok. First of all, "*ngor mm hai heong gong yan*" ("I am not a Hong konger" in Cantonese) so that's why. But this is now a meme. So for the benefit of friends who do not read Chinese here, it says "*lei sak si, ngor mm hai chung kok yan*"， "you eat shit, I'm not Chinese". It's actually a protestor responding to the police who asked him like "Are you Chinese?" "*lei hai mm hai chung*

kok yan, dia kar dou hai chung kok yan" ("Are you Chinese? Everyone is Chinese" in Cantonese) so that's his response. Taiwanese identity, just a kind of description, so this is from the Taiwanese black metal band, *Shan Ling* (閃靈), or ChthoniC, they have performed in Singapore , but not sure whether they will be able to perform in Singapore in future. So even the vocalist *Lim Tshiong-tso* (林昶佐) is now a legislative council member himself. And he's actually one of the forefront in the Chinese music scene or the *Tai Yu* (台语) music scene to platform a more indigenous Taiwanese identity.

On the other hand, so that's why in Singapore, we need to look at Chinese-ness in relationship to the other races or how we actually relate to others or how others relate to us, not just when I talk about "we" it's not just me categorised as a ethnic Chinese, but how people use the identity on a daily basis. So this are the memes that come out. In China, they called it *e gao* (恶搞) but sometimes it's more meant for humorous ideas. Very quickly, it just goes viral. I actually can consider, I think for many people, Singaporeans who have served in the National Service in the army, ethnic Chinese, this centre one is something that you can most associated with. When you wonder why you couldn't eat the food in the Muslim section, which is actually more tasty. So that is the reason, is it because I'm Chinese? But you see, so this is the kind of, but I think for the other ethnic groups that actually pitched in to these memes, other issues, like "I can't join the navy, why? Is it because I'm Malay?" which is actually an explicit policy because it was really actually recently stated by the Defence Minster that Malays could not be in the Navy on ships because the kitchens are not halal. So that's the official reasoning.

So you know the various government agencies like Air Force and Civic Defence have tried to parody the memes too, but they have met with response from Malay users in Facebook that, why can't I join the republic of service, Singapore Air Force, as well? These are the kind of comments that come in. So I think this is where actually we have to look at the issues of Chinese-ness in a larger context, not just the kind of sacrifice because the way sometimes, it has been put across by officials, like Ong Ye Kung's comments about the Chinese sacrifices, I mean, sometimes it became a bit of a white man's burden that the Malays only sacrificed by not broadcasting their Muslim prayer calls, so that becomes a minor issue compared to the closure of Nanyang University itself.

And I would like to take this opportunity to share a more recent trend, that has been going around, both from the internet as well as the mainstream on the issue of "Chinese privilege". Translated very loosely in Chinese is *hua zu te quan* (华族特权), which actually was a term appropriated by then Ph.D. student *Sangeetha* Thanapal, from Peggy McIntosh about white privilege. So you see is basically something, I don't want to do a kind of karaoke to read out everything here. But it's basically the kind of privilege that is unearned, that you're there because of your race, you have a upper position because or more privileged position in business, in government because of your ethnicity rather than your ability or merit. Although this is a country that always talks about meritocracy, so actually *Sangeetha* Thanapal came out with this concept in 2015 about Chinese privilege. How it actually advantages Chinese Singaporeans deliberately. So her term is actually being very strong. That I can say that there are beneficiaries of a system of racial superiority which actually alludes to when you talk about this term "Nazi Germany", which is when I talk about the country when I call it a Chinese supremacist, so it's very loaded and charged here. This kind of discourse does not make it in the mainstream newspaper, it is actually, I would say, very difficult to talk about ethnic relationship in this country.

The last time something like that, even a much diluted version happened, was by Nur Dianah Suhaimi, in The Straits Times in National Day in 2008, which she actually talk about Malays being the 'least favourite child" that "my father puts up the National Day flag faithfully every year, but why are we always seen as the less important people". And the responses are actually very much, very sensitive and careful, so Nur Dianah Suhaimi was being told about, to be grateful, even by some of the Malay MPs, which actually ethnic minority leaders sometimes do reinforce the politics of multiculturalism by telling everyone to keep in their lanes, be grateful. Shanmugam's latest interview with *Zaobao*, which he actually changed his mood when he talked about how indebted he was to Lee Kuan Yew, and *Sangeetha* Thanapal herself was actually warned by the police over her remarks that were actually considered to be very much racist, so even Shanmugam made a police report on her in 2014 for accusing him of being islamophobic.

So this is how charged discussions of racial relationships in Singapore and ethnic tensions can be seen by the official media or in the official discussion.

And therefore it is very difficult to have a more multicultural dialogue at times. But the talk about Chinese privilege actually gained some momentum in the cyberspace which is considered as a kind of alternative media, Lee Hsien Loong, the Prime Minister Lee, before he took on his love for Facebook and social media, used to talk about the internet as a "cowboy town", that anything goes. So somehow, the online discourse took up this term with a bit of enthusiasm, I mean so this is from Must Share News, a very quick rundown of Chinese privilege. Basically you go to Orchard Road, the faces you see are mainly of a certain ethnic majority, and job X never ask for you to be a linguist and stuff like that. So these are some of the simple terms that will help us to anchor our understanding.

I think if you ask this, this is something I want to emphasis, because if you ask many people, ethnic Chinese themselves, even Ng Wai Mun did mention that the whole thing about *hua zu te quan* 华族特权 or Chinese privilege is not really been discussed in *Zaobao* at all, in the Chinese papers. One of this blogger, TiffwithMi, actually changed her blogging language from English to Chinese because she felt that, why is it that YouTubers in Singapore the lingua franca is actually English rather than Mandarin? "我们是华人，为什么不可以用华语?" and if for those who couldn't see, she said，"如果不是 "*cheena*" 的话， 还可以怎么样?" which is also kind of an angst that she faced. So this is the kind of issues that maybe there is a disjoint that people do not understand why Chinese are being privileged, or ethnic Chinese in Singapore are being privileged, when there are seizable working class when everyone is still struggling in some ways.

But maybe, social media, I would say that I would play some of the clips that would actually look at the kind of difference between the two of them. So mainstream media usually, especially has been always talking about Chinese-ness instead of the, in terms of the big C, Singapore-China's relations, Chinese, who's China-Chinese, who's Singapore-Chinese, whether you should invert the term over, prescribed medium multiculturism, that every channel should have its own language, Malays for Malay station, English, Chinese and Tamil stations, so you shouldn't be moving out of the lane. Sometimes very much sterotyping in individual channels. I think Channel 8 has been called out most frequently for them. In spite of the sterotyping, the tone has

always try to be as inoffensive as possible and the discussion is kind of a more serious documentary style, whereas the social media is coming from more Chinese privilege and greater minority representation. The clips I'm going to show you later are mainly people from ethnic minority backgrounds. They are autonomous formations, so they are not really prescribed or dictated by the government, which company you should form. They are mainly critiques of causal racism, which one of the bloggers called, Racism SiuDai, which means 少糖 (less sweet), causal racism. A lot of parody, raps, a lot of use of drag, which is actually totally different from what we saw on *Xinyao* (新谣) earlier on. So I remembered *Liang Wen Fu* (梁文福) in one of the session, when he was asked about Shigga Shay, he said "现在的那些歌手这么粗鲁，什么 *limpeh*?", he said. But maybe you can explore that this kind of parody, this kind of use of R&B, a bit rude。It's a kind of resistance against the really wholesome idea of music associated with the Chinese majority and of course the contestation is really heavily charged and loaded. So let me play you some of the, I've got only 7 minutes, let's try with this YouTuber called Dee Kosh, he's Chindian, and he talks about…… Chinese New Year.

"Dee Kosh "A Chindian Chinese New Year" 20 Feb 2015"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HnXXzCPCP-Q&t=159s

Sorry for the foul language. Also kind of parody like this YouTuber, Preeti Nair, she's only in her twenties, but she parodied Channel New Asia program called *The House Guest* that tries to promote multiculturism in Singapore, so this is the official version.

"CNA. The House Guest 21 Nov 2017:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wVv3FRA_ZY&t=160s

So the next is the parodied version, I'm sorry the video quality is not as good, maybe because it's parody, I think it's coming out.

"In Central: Preetipls Makes a Controversial Parody of a Controversial Video 27 Nov 2017."

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oh8bseOBmus

So actually from this humour, it can show how normalised the racism is in the official version, like this question seemed fine, but they are actually not. I think in the interest of time, I will try to do one more parady with Munah and Hirzi.

"MunahHirziOfficial : WORK PARODY - RIHANNA (SINGAPORE)"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MU7mSsVK-2Q&t=156s

So maybe just one very last clip, I think this one. This is by Haresh Tilani and

"Ministry of Funny TV: Awkward Situations only the Chinese can understand."

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TLVbwdvqhdg

So I think it shows you how use of humour can actually circumvent the otherwise very severe politics of multiculturalism in Singapore that is done through the alternative media. So with that, thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.

Roundtable

LIM Sun Sun

HASS Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences,
Singapore University of Technology and Design

Xia wu hao (下午好). Thank you everyone for this fantastic conference invitation, I have to say it's been riveting for me from start to end in terms of looking at the whole business of protecting or preserving cultural heritage. I'll be speaking today from the perspective of a communication professor. For the past fifteen years or so, I've been working on research on the technology domestication by families and young people — how it is that the incorporation of technology into these micro-settings actually impact upon how people interact with each other, how it introduces interesting inroads for people to connect with each other, to share media content, how media content is in many ways a kind of departure point for people to come together and discuss differences and how they can also discover points of commonality.

So in that sense also it speaks to my current role as the Head of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD). Because our university graduates only engineers and architects and these technologists play a very critical role in terms of building the digital infrastructures that shape the ways in which all of us are interacting with each other. And in fact, I just returned yesterday from a trip to Google in San Francisco and I had the opportunity to interact with a lot of these very young technologists and it was fascinating for me to see the kinds of thought processes that go behind how they create certain devices or certain platforms that allow people to interact and engage with each other, and how technological decision have such a significant social impact.

Generally, I would say that the whole business of thinking about the preservation of culture and the role that technology can play is probably, clear and present, one of the most pressing issues that we must reflect on as a society. Because obviously when we are living in such a mediatized environment, when so many of our day-to-day decisions are influenced by the kinds of information that we receive, as well as the kinds of information that we share; and so many of the ways in which we interact are being — in many ways, made possible, but also constrained by technological infrastructures — that we really need to think more deeply about the philosophy and the assumptions and the values that are baked into these infrastructures that we are negotiating every day.

So let me just share a little bit about the SUTD's Digital Humanities journey because I think in many ways, that speaks to how we can try to bring together heritage and technology in a very meaningful way. So when I joined SUTD, which was two years ago, I had come from the NUS Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, which as you know is a very strong, very rich faculty, with sixteen departments and a huge hinterland of expertise. And I was deeply privileged to have experienced this richness. And then I went to SUTD to head my faculty of twenty-five people who were trying to speak to all these engineers and architects in the university, and I realised that we had this intriguing role that we could play. When I looked at my faculty and how they were teaching Humanities to the technologists, I realised that there was a bit of a missed opportunity because for my faculty, they were coming at it from the American liberal arts tradition, and they were looking at Humanities as opening the student's minds and making sure that they knew how to write good essays that could talk about why literature matters and so on. And I was telling my faculty "yes that's good, but ultimately, we are not graduating liberal arts majors, we are graduating engineers and indeed, many of our students are really quite brilliant — they are renaissance men and women, they write poetry, they dance, they compose music and so on. But also, they've got these fantastic technological skills." And so, I told my faculty, "let's think about shaking things up a little bit, let's think about drawing connections between what they are learning in engineering and what they are learning in the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. So let's infuse a little bit of Digital Humanities into what we are teaching them."

And so it was quite fascinating because one of my faculty members, who unfortunately can't join us today, Dr Zhao Zhenxing who is incidentally a proud alumnus of the Chinese Studies Department of NUS. Zhenxing has been teaching, for several years now, a course called Chinese Lyrical Traditions. And in this course, Zhenxing teaches the students about why it is that *Shanshui Hua* (山水画) are so important and what is the symbolism behind different kinds of objects that are represented in Chinese literature and art. So all this while, Zhenxing had been asking his students to write essays about Chinese literature, about Chinese poetry and so on. So I encourage him to think about things in terms of Digital Humanities and that led Zhenxing to give his students a different kind of assignment.

What happened was that the students had learnt about *Tangshi* (唐诗). And instead of writing an essay about *Tangshi*, they took one hundred years of *Tangshi* and they ran machine learning and natural language processing through all the poetry and these students created a fantastic online digital lexicon that maps out across China, the different kinds of plants and flowers that were mentioned in these poems. And when you click on the different plants and flowers, the lexicon will tell you what the symbolism was behind each flower - was it used to express sympathy, was it used to express sadness and so on. And at the same time, the lexicon was also able to tell you, what was the medicinal value of these plants and flowers. And so, you are looking at people who were really at the crossroads of Humanities and Engineering and bringing all this knowledge to a different level, to a different audience at a scale that previously we would not have been able to see if they had simply been writing essays.

So this was a fascinating insight for us as a faculty because thereafter, we became a little bit more adventurous and venturesome in terms of thinking about how we could teach humanities. So now we've got our global Shakespeare class looking at using Omeka and all kinds of Digital Humanities tools to analyse Humanities content in particular ways.

So I was very heartened to see all the papers in the previous session and I was thinking to myself "Wow! We can do machine language processing on *Xinyao* (新谣) and all kinds of things." Basically the possibilities are endless. Obviously as a social scientist, I'm certainly not someone who fetishizes technology and I don't think you should create technology for technology's

sake. But as someone with two teenage children, I look at the ways in which they engage with media content, and I look at the richness of the media landscape that they are inhabiting, I therefore also realised that if we don't take more concerted efforts to think about digitising all of these content from Chinese culture or other traditional cultures, that opportunity to bring this content to a younger audience, to a broader audience, across language barriers and geographical boundaries, will definitely be lost unless we harness the best of technology.

And so that's where I feel that this whole foray into Digital Humanities has been tremendously productive and I think there is still a great deal of potential that we can tap. And unfortunately I was travelling and I only got back yesterday, I would have loved to see yesterday's session and also to think about how more connections could be drawn between, for example, issues of religion, issues of different kinds of dying arts and how we can use digitisation to really further celebrate and expand the spread of these kinds of rich cultural heritage content. I think that about covers the main points that I will speak on today and I will take questions at the end. Thank you.

Laavanya KATHIRAVELU

Division of Sociology, Nanyang Technological University

Hi everyone, and thanks for inviting me here. It's been great listening to sessions yesterday and today and what struck me was the conversation we've been having are not really just about ethnic Chinese communities in Singapore but because of the similarities with other ethnic groups that I study as well, I feel like these are conversations about Singapore, not just about specific ethnic communities. And I'd like you to think about what we are talking about today, in those terms, as conversations about Singapore. I also say this because it is a lot of pressure representing a community, which I am not here to do. I'm just one person.

I'm a sociologist and I work on migration mostly, but also on ethnicity, more and more. So, I'm talking today from my research experience but also from a recently concluded project. It was funded by the NHB where I worked with two other scholars at NTU. We were collecting oral traditions, basically on myths and taboos across different communities. Some of the questions that were in my mind in starting this project was, of course, that we must acknowledge that culture is not static. It doesn't standstill, it's constantly changing. When we're trying to collect knowledge or preserve something or promote something, I think the question is also what are we promoting, what are we preserving. At which point in time are we saying this is what culture is and this is what I'm promoting. And my being a sociologist I'm very interested in the present, so for me, what's happening now is interesting, how culture is changing now is interesting.

Having said that, I think it doesn't mean that we should preserve all different types of culture, all different types of practices. They are not all

equally valid or equally worth preserving and some of them are actually damaging. For instance, in the research that we'd just carried out on these myths and taboos, within the Indian community, a lot of young people were saying, I don't know if you guys are aware, but in Hindu culture basically, in funerals, if the man dies and the wife is still alive, traditionally they make her wear bangles, like glass bangles and they break the bangles. Indian woman who wear red dot to symbolise that they are married they make her wipe that off to symbolise that she is no longer a married woman. And also in parts of India, a lot of widowed woman are seen as bad luck. They are not allowed to come to weddings or celebrations, they are kept aside. So you know like a lot of people are saying "Look! This doesn't happen in Singapore anymore and we are glad that it doesn't happen." Because this is not a type of patriarchy that we want to preserve.

In thinking about issues of preservation, promotion, it's also interesting to, what is worth preserving, what should we say we don't want to preserve, not all the culture is equal. Speaking specifically about the Indian community in Singapore, some of the issues that were brought up yesterday and today also resonate with this case. But first of all, with the Indian community, it's more problematic in defining who the Indian community is. Are we talking about the Tamils only? And when you look at the demographic trends in Singapore, the Tamils are actually decreasing due to migration. There are a lot more people coming from other parts of India, who speak different languages, so Tamil as a language is also in decline, not just in terms of language spoken at home, but in terms of second language. The rise of other languages like Hindi, for instance, is happening in Singapore. So how are we defining what Indian means in Singapore? Is it still going to be Tamil a hundred years from now? You know that's been our heritage in Singapore, in CMIO the "I" was mostly Tamil. But is that what it is going to be? So these are some of the questions with the Indian community, so not just linguistically, but also in terms of an intra-ethnic divide. So what then does Indian stand for? Can it holistically encompass all these diversities within the Indian community? Also, is Indian necessarily Hindu? The Indian community is probably one of the most divided in terms of religion. We have Muslims, Christians and Hindus within the Indian community, quite a sizable proportion of each religious group. So again, can we equate Indian

culture or Tamil culture with Hindu culture? And often these things are very intertwined. It's very difficult to separate what is just cultural tradition and what is religion? So again, you know, these are some of the questions that come up when we think about preservation and promotion of Indian culture specifically.

From yesterday, the first panel especially, and Elaine's paper in particular, talked about migration. The kind of differentiation of Chinese-ness that's happening in Singapore and very similar things are happening in the Indian community. I think Brenda or Elaine showed some slides where the Indian percentage has grown, I think from 7% to 9% which is not big. But this growth has a lot to do with migration, so we've had a lot of very highly educated, highly skilled migrants migrating from India. And this does not always match with the demographic categories of locally-born Singaporean Indians. And this has created, again, some tensions within the community. But it also, brings up issues over, so who is this community now, is it a very highly educated, upper middle class, earning high incomes community, is it a stratified community and so again, the issue of socio-economic class that I think Ian brought up in one of his questions is also a similar issue that we are grappling within the Indian community, this division that we are starting to see. So again, going back to my plea to think about this as a Singaporean issue. We've always thought in terms of ethnic communities in Singapore, but perhaps thinking on class lines or you know, about different types or ways in which our community is stratified could be productive in thinking about issues of culture or what is important or significant to us today. So that's something I want to put out there of us to think about.

With the migration as well, attention that is coming in relation to cultural preservation is, what is the thing that is unique about Singaporean Indian culture, is it the same as the Indian culture in India? And obviously not, it's very different. And one of the ways in which, this is problematically played out, I think is with the Indian Heritage Centre. So this is my personal opinion that, I've not been involved with the heritage centre in any way, even though I'm a member of our local heritage society and everything. So I've visited the centre and everything, and it's beautiful and nice and all that, but what struck me was, it's a lot about Indian culture from India. Which obviously you

know, Singaporean Indians have a part of, because our ancestors came from there but there was so little about what was unique to this part of the world. And how does South-East Asian culture meld with Indian culture here. So I have some photographs of my great-grandparents at home on the wall. And they were either, I'm not sure, cause the family history is quite sketchy, but they were either born in Singapore or Malaya, Malaysia, or they might have been migrants here. But in these photographs, they are not dressed in sarees or in Indian outfits. They are dressed in local Southeast Asian dress, they are wearing sarongs and my great-grandmother is wearing like a kebaya. This kind of melding, mixing of heritage, that's not represented in the Indian Heritage Centre in ways that I think it should be. Because it's not just one way, we don't just take culture from our motherland, whether it is China or whether it is India, but we also give back. I think this needs to be something that's foregrounded more in being proud of our Singaporean heritage, our Singaporean Chinese-ness, our Singaporean Indian-ness, I think this is something that should be held up more, and perhaps it will be in the future.

I was looking downstairs at the exhibit of the kind of early migrants to Singapore, just in the lobby of the cultural centre here, as well as, of course, the Chinatown Heritage Centre which I've been to. And that cultural heritage it's a very working-class cultural heritage. It's about people who came here as labourers, the suffering that they faced, and how we've progressed. But it values that working-class character and hard work as heritage. But the Indian Heritage Centre has very little of that, it's a heritage of businessmen, of elites. There is one statue of a labourer. What about all the convict labour that built Saint Andrews Cathedral and other buildings in Singapore? That's not privileged in the narrative. So again, here we need to think about what, and whose culture we are preserving. I'm not so sure about the Chinese community and preservation of cultural issues but it seems to me, from our discussions here that there is a lot more discussion of popular culture, with the panel before us and the importance and significance of that. But in the Indian community there is perhaps, less of that. So maybe this is a learning that we can take from the Chinese community, of preserving kind of a working-class, a vernacular culture, rather than just elite forms of heritage.

I just want to make a last point about some findings from this project where we've asked people about myths and taboos in various communities in Singapore. And what's interesting is there's actually a lot of overlap. I don't know where this comes from, is it because people had been living side-by-side and so we hear each other's taboos and have incorporated them? Especially around key events like pregnancy and births, the kind of ideas of confinement, treating the body in particular ways. Death, as well, is commemorated in specific ways. And time, marking time. Of course the lunar calendar has specific markings of time. But, you know, other cultures mark time in different ways, but again, there emerged similar ways of marking time that don't unnecessarily rely on seasons, cause we don't really have the spring, summer, winter, fall seasons in Singapore. So, that also struck me as really interesting that there are so many overlaps and so many similarities in the ways in which we think about what is good, or what is right or what is appropriate, so that's interesting.

Another thing that comes out from all these interviews with people and we've done about 150 interviews across three different communities in Singapore, is that there's a slight, almost reluctance to be seen as completely embracing this ethnic-ness, this ethnic identity. A lot of these interviewed people were like "Yea, but I'm also very modern, I don't just believe in these things, you know, but I'm also very modern." So I guess my question is, why are we a little bit reluctant to be seen as completely embracing our ethnic culture in a whole-hearted way? And I asked myself this, why didn't I wear a saree today? Is it because I'm afraid people will think I'm old fashioned? Or why didn't we wear our traditional dress more often, why do we not speak our mother tongues more often? Again, most of papers were presented in English, in a conference that was on Chinese heritage and culture. So again, is it because of the narrative of progress that values English as the language of modernity? And why is that natural? Why should English be the language of modernity. So again, I just want to put these questions out there for us to think about. Thank you.

Azhar IBRAHIM

Department of Malay Studies, National University of Singapore

The demands of academics in area studies, be it Chinese Studies and Malay Studies, are always a challenging balance between scholarly pursuit and community attachment and engagement. While addressing academia, we also play an integral part in shaping the community's development, especially in the area of culture, tradition, language and the like. One area of importance is culture in society. Culture is a term with multiple meanings, continuously competing in the realms of ideas. Let me deliberate on the subject of cultural discourse.

It is fair to say that our cultural discourse, be it community specific on a wider national level, is an underdeveloped one. When Singapore rectified Unesco's Intangible Cultural Heritage in early 2018, we were confronted with the demands of stocktaking our various cultural corpora, apart from full understanding of its meanings and complexities. We often talked about culture and its importance for our identity formation and affirmation but when we speak about a viable discourse on culture, we realised that our compilation, observation and assessment of these cultural corpora left much to be desired. The existing studies and records are decent but obviously insufficient.

As a nation or community, we have progressed in various area. But culturally, or specifically on developing cultural heritage, we have not paid much attention, as the earlier decades our development ethos and vision had different priorities. State engineered initiatives to make Singapore the renaissance city are surely commendable but we still don't see much coming up, except the building of infrastructures and institutions to manage the cultural affairs. We lack both a comprehensive documentation including discourse on

these cultural corpora. Even in academia, we have very few who are working on cultural traditions from the distant past as well as the continuous living cultures of the present. Obviously in the academic hierarchy very little premium is given to culture, including literary studies. As a result the cultural discourse of Singapore remains very much neglected and underdeveloped.

There are of course cultural enthusiasts or activists at the community level. Their passion and endeavour to preserve and present culture to their respective communities deserve to be recognised. But due to lack of necessary training, their endeavours could not go beyond practicing and preserving. We need to develop a robust culture discourse that researches, deliberates and scrutinizes our cultural corpora, institutions, and practitioners. We need to examine our cultural discourse from multi-disciplinary perspectives, be they sociological, psychological, philosophical or educational. There is a tendency for us to relegate very quickly on matters of cultures to the People's Association (PA). Surely the latter has played an important role in promoting cultural life amongst Singaporeans, it would be unfair to rely on them, nor it is advisable to do that, so as to ensure the well-being of cultural development in Singapore. While cultural activities, with all its promotion and celebration are carried fairly well by them, we cannot expect a critical and engaging cultural discourses from that circle. The celebrative tendency in promoting culture is evident, especially when we compare this to the very little interest on the discursive tendency.

Herein lies the importance of developing cultural discourse and the role of institutions of higher learning is imperative. We see today, when public funding goes to the visual art scene, there is growing interest and collaboration between the National Gallery and local universities to run art studies programme and research. The same effort must be made for culture and heritage. Academics interests and funding is mostly given to politics, economic and other sociological dynamics in Singapore and occasionally to literary studies. We have yet to see a consistent interest in culture studies, especially those related to the ethnic and linguistic communities in Singapore. We not only need good research which should then be transmitted to the general public, but we also need to incorporate culture studies and exposure in our school system. The moment we push culture studies as belonging to art school and institutions, we should not expect a progressive development, especially when the art school's

vision is primarily to produce workers for the creative industry, rather than grooming cohorts of cultural intelligentsias.

In other words we need to have a cultural vision and planning. Surely the government has promulgated its cultural policies, but this bureaucratic planning could never work well if there is no supporting dimension from the academic circles and cultural groupings. As such we need a community-driven kind of efforts, alongside an engaging discursive space on culture, taken up and lead by cultural intelligentsias, not excluding academics.

In our context, the moment we speak of culture, we inevitably refer to the various ethnic cultures. And in the euphoria for identity making, we often take ethnic culture as an important identity marker. As a result we seem to enjoy itemising our culture in ethnic terms. Surely this is nothing wrong, but the way we look at cultural corpora or items are always in essentialist and reductionist ways, invariably ahistorical and asociological. Often when we refer or define culture, it is confined to "traditional" practices, events and values. These limited definitions and scope is problematic as the "modern" or contemporary cultural practices and outlook are deemed as not part of the community's culture. Privileging the so-called ethnic culture as the authentic culture of the community means we are subjected by an encyclopaedic type of culture which according to Antonio Gramsci, could never grow beyond its particularism and parochialism.

Culture pertains to all aspects of our life. The valuative, educative, spirituality and worldview belongs to one realm. Another is the intellectual discursive realm, and this is a long heritage that we inherited accumulatively from the past. The aesthetics pertaining to literature, performative and visual arts is the third one. Each category has their own subdivisions and trajectories be it in terms of form and substance. The performative that includes all the performances, dance, music and so on, is one case in point. Certainly the human craft that gave rise to material culture and technology is a valid category of human culture. These diverse categories mean that cultural work is enormous. Nobody can do everything in one single realm. We need to identify the stakeholders of each cultural realm and make comprehensive plans for cultural deliberation and action.

Managing and planning culture is not simply through bureaucratic and funding instruments. It requires critical sense, historically and sociologically when we read society and its challenges. It is not uncommon when we speak of culture, the endeavour for "Cultural perseveration," is articulated promptly. Cultural preservation will have no meaning if there is no cultural creation. It is not uncommon too that those who uttered cultural preservation are often affiliated to conservative thinking. To preserve culture means to accept what is deemed as the past heritage handed down to us by the previous or distant generations. Such thinking is indeed the mummification of culture at its best. Such mummification actually puts a death spell to that very culture. Here is the clear irony — as the very preserver of culture points to the dead end for that culture as the human's endeavour to vitalise it ceases.

The fundamental point is this: Culture needs to be created and re-created. Old and new form must exist side by side, while cultural substance of the present takes its form from the contemporary dynamics. This calls for us to be clear in our cultural vision and planning. The role of academia is important to provide a kind of important milestones for cultural development. Cultural studies or cultural sociology is hardly visible in our Singapore scene. We need to do more for this. Authorities looking at heritage affairs are equally responsible as their educational counterpart. We need to see a steady flow of scholars, researchers and students studying culture, especially related to various communities and groups in Singapore. This must be part of our bigger cultural planning so that cultural development is boosted by a pool of experts, researchers and critics. Simply put, cultural activities without an engaging cultural discourse, means our culture is still in the domain of celebration, while the cerebral part is neglected.

Our cultural and intellectual paradigm must be integral and organic. We can never be good or excel in our cultural heritage and tradition if we continuously depend on exogenous sources or academic tutelage to "teach" us what is our culture and tradition. Here we see the tendencies of invariable eagerness to rush to the Orientalist centres in metropolitan Euro-America to look for the gurus for the learning of our culture, literature, tradition and the like. Academic hierarchies and academic dependencies mean we still have to wait to the gurus' pontification on what our culture and even history is all

about. Learning from others is surely important, but it is another thing when academic dependencies very much colour our intellectual and moral outlook in addressing the cultural affairs and problems of our community and nation.

Speaking of culture, we are quick to associate it with ethnic cultures and therefore its linguistic affiliation. There is a general expectation that culture of the community could only be transmitted in the mother tongue. This expectation of course comes with the idea that cultural appreciation comes with linguistic enhancement. But the reality is the linguistic demography has changed very fast, with more families across the ethnic groups speaking English at home. This warrants a question as to whether we could transmit or give exposure to culture in the English medium. There is surely a good debate about this but my point is this: To associate cultural appreciation with linguistic refinement and eloquence in the mother tongue is unrealistic, if not naïve.

To bring culture to the people and community, it obviously needs to be expressed in the dominant language that they are comfortable and feel strongly affiliated to. Pedagogically to expose the young with culture (traditional and modern) we need creative approaches. If we insist that the mother tongue is the only medium to know their community's ethnic cultures, we may after all may lost, a big segment of families and cohorts who are not conversant in other languages other than English. Of course we need to safeguard our respective language proficiency, but to privilege mother tongue as the only language for "cultural affairs" is not a wise move. In fact I believe that there is a possibility of reading the community's culture in its mother tongues, when sufficient level of understanding and passion has been attained. But the task now is to get attention, especially from the young, of the efficacy and vitality of their community's culture, heritage and tradition.

Cultural activities and its development requires a collective effort. The moment we speak of cultural policy and planning we quickly demand that Singapore's government do more, while we wait for top down directions to tell us what to do next. Surely our State leaders are important key players in our cultural development but to put all responsibilities on them is unfair, if not unwise. While we obviously need a governing elite that is culturally conscious and sophisticated, we need equally community driven initiatives that are culturally proud and resourceful. Cultural development is at its best

when it is organic and passionately driven by cultural intelligentsias within the community. In the case of the Chinese community in Singapore, we see strong community-driven initiatives, with ample resources and determination. As for the Malay community, primarily due to lack of resources, various cultural initiatives needs state funding, apart from political blessings. As a result cultural activities become more formal than organic and autonomous.

Cultural space and imagination are vital for any culture to develop. This includes historical rootedness. The Malay community of Singapore, being indigenous to the island and the region of course takes pride as citizens of this republic. Of course, Singapore is part and parcel of its culture imagination, but when it comes to defining Malay culture, there is tendency or even expectation to confine it with the Singapore context. Whereas Singapore Malays are part of the bigger cultural zone which is called Nusantara, covering Peninsular Malaysia, Brunei, Indonesia, Southern Philippines and Southern Thailand, while Singapore is at the very centre of this archipelagic cultural terrain. Culturally, and obviously Singaporean Malays have an identity of their own but their cultural hinterland covers the neighbouring region, which is now the nation states of their own. Hence when making references to their Malay culture and literary tradition (including also religious tradition), they inevitably drawn from the cultural world of Nusantara. The same goes when Chinese and Indian communities drawn their cultural inspirations and resources from mainland China and mother India. That becomes natural and accepted. However the same expectation may not apply to the Malay community. At one point of time, their regional cultural inspiration and aspiration may be deemed as not being loyal to Singapore. This suspicion comes from the fact of shallow understanding of the realities of cultural zones beyond the territorial boundaries of modern nation states.

Indeed throughout the decades, the region has been the space and resources where Malay cultural development can take place. Malay cultural creativities in the post-war era have witnessed Singapore becoming the centre of Malay literary, cultural, artistic and even film industry. The connectedness with the region provided not only the audience (market) but also the cultural resources, engendered by the robust cultural life of cosmopolitan Singapore. While cultural creations from the region have been appropriated by Singapore

Malays as part of their contemporary cultural corpus, our very creations (such as literary works, nasyid songs, rock ballad and movies) have travelled the region and certainly make a significant cultural impact on the region.

This brings we to my last point. Culture creativity can be enhanced by the will to criticality. Cultural making needs a functional group of intelligentsia who are at the forefront in defining, conceptualising, analysing, disseminating and promoting culture in various sectors in society. Our cultural tradition and heritage is part of our living and everyday heritage. Preserving culture alone is therefore not sufficient. Culture needs constant creation and re-creation as it is dynamic and constantly evolving. It is our responsibility to ensure that we pass on to our future generations the idea of not only cherishing our cultural tradition and heritage but also to continuously develop and refine it. This is the task of being human, as it has been in the past, and it is surely not impossible in the present and the future.

新加坡华族文化中心 SCCC
NUS National University of Singapore
Department of Chinese Studies
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences
城市书房
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