

The Effect of Tranforming from a Colony to a Nation-State on
Chinese Diaspora Identity in Southeast Asia : Case Study of the
Chinese Emigration from the Malay Peninsula, 1945-1979

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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น.ส.สุ่ยเหวน เซียส

วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต
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ในช่วงระหว่างปี ค.ศ. 1945 – 1979 เป็นช่วงที่เกิดความวุ่นวายทางสังคมขึ้นมากมายบนคาบสมุทรมลายู ทั้งการล่มสลายของจักรวรรดินิยม การปะทะกันทางอุดมการณ์ทางการเมือง และความขัดแย้งระหว่างกลุ่มชาติพันธุ์ต่างๆ ล้วนเกิดขึ้นในระหว่างช่วงเวลาดังกล่าว งานวิจัยชิ้นนี้ใช้วิธีวิทยาการศึกษาหลักฐานเอกสารเป็นหลัก โดยวิเคราะห์ว่าความวุ่นวายของสถานการณ์ทางสังคมในคาบสมุทรมลายูนั้นมีผลกระทบอย่างไรต่อชุมชนชาวจีนในพื้นที่ดังกล่าวและคนเชื้อสายจีนบนคาบสมุทรมลายูต้องเผชิญกับปัญหาอะไรบ้าง และปัญหาเหล่านั้นมีผลต่อการอพยพย้ายถิ่นฐานของคนเชื้อสายจีนออกจากคาบสมุทรมลายูในเวลาต่อมาอย่างไรบ้าง ในยุคต่อต้านอาณานิคมนั้นคนจีนบนคาบสมุทรมลายูส่วนหนึ่งยังคงรักษาอัตลักษณ์ความเป็นจีนไว้และมีอุดมการณ์ทางการเมืองที่สนับสนุนฝ่ายคอมมิวนิสต์จีน ดังนั้นสาธารณรัฐประชาชนจีนจึงเป็นที่หมายหลักสำหรับการอพยพในยุคนี้ ต่อมาในยุคหลังอาณานิคมคนจีนในมาเลเซียบางส่วนไม่พอใจกับสภาพความไม่เท่าเทียมกันระหว่างชาติพันธุ์ต่างๆ ในรัฐชาติมาเลเซีย ดังนั้นพวกเขาจึงมักอพยพย้ายถิ่นไปยังประเทศที่สามารถขอสัญชาติได้ง่ายและได้รับการคุ้มครองสิทธิตามกฎหมายอย่างเท่าเทียมกันทุกชาติพันธุ์ การวิจัยนี้พบว่าแนวคิดเรื่อง “บ้าน” สำหรับคนเชื้อสายจีนผู้อพยพออกจากคาบสมุทรมลายูนั้นเกี่ยวข้องกับบรรยากาศทางการเมืองที่เป็นมิตร การได้สัญชาติ และการได้รับการคุ้มครองภายใต้กฎหมายอย่างเท่าเทียมกันโดยไม่จำกัดชาติพันธุ์



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Huiwen Xue : The Effect of Transforming from a Colony to a Nation-State on Chinese Diaspora Identity in Southeast Asia : Case Study of the Chinese Emigration from the Malay Peninsula, 1945-1979. Advisor: Asst. Prof. WASANA WONGSURAWAT, Ph.D.

During the period between 1945 and 1979, the Malay Peninsula was under a chaotic and turbulent social situation. Decolonization, ideological confrontation, and ethnic conflict all happened in this period. This research adopts the documentary research method to analyze how the turbulent social situation affected Chinese society in Malaya/Malaysia and how the problems that the ethnic Chinese of the Malay Peninsula faced affected the Chinese emigration from the Malay Peninsula. During the anti-colonial period, part of the ethnic Chinese of Malaya identified with China and sympathized with the Chinese Communist Party. Hence, China was the most important destination for them. Afterward, during the post-colonial period, some of the ethnic Chinese were unsatisfied with ethnic inequalities in various aspects of life in the Malaysian nation-state. Consequently, these ethnic Chinese tended to emigrate to foreign countries where they could acquire citizenship and equal protection under the law regardless of their ethnicity. This research finds that the notion of „home“ for the ethnic Chinese who migrated from the Malay Peninsula between 1945 and 1979 includes friendly political atmosphere, citizenship and equal opportunity and protection under the law regardless of ethnicity.

Field of Study:	Southeast Asian Studies	Student's Signature
	
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Chapter I: Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Introduction to the Ethnic Chinese in the Malay Peninsula Before 1945

The history of the Chinese Diaspora in Southeast Asia can be traced back to the Tang Dynasty (Feng, 2005, pp. 68-69,85-86,227-232). The population of the ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia were thinly scattered in each state. According to Lee's study (2015, p. 126), from 1640 to 1860, the ethnic Chinese population in Malacca could be counted for about 14 percent of the total number. From the 19th Century, massive Chinese immigrants came to the Malay Peninsula as the aftermath of the Opium War between Qing China and Britain. Most of them were indentured laborers (coolies) who worked for the tin and plantation industry.

Due to the arrival times and the reasons for migration being different, the ethnic Chinese of the Malay Peninsula could be divided into two groups, Baba Nyonya (Peranakan Chinese) and Singkhek (New immigrants). "Baba Nyonya" is the term for the descendants of Malay-Chinese intermarriages. This kind of mixed marriage had begun centuries ago. Baba Nyonya speaks Malay dialects and yet are often known for their stubborn maintenance of Chinese traditions. From the 17th century to the mid-19th century, most Peranakan Chinese actively engaged in business, some of them

acquired political status in local society, such as a "Kapitan Cina" (Captain China) called Wenzhou Xue(薛文舟) in Malacca, or an ethnic Chinese assistant called Koh Lay-Huan (辜礼欢), who helped British judges to deal with ethnic Chinese affairs (Wong, 1965, pp. 1–7). In general, the Peranakan Chinese built ties between the colonial administration and the indigenous people. On the other hand, those ethnic Chinese connected the Chinese market with British companies, such as the British East India Company.

Unlike Peranakan Chinese, the large numbers of Singkhek were in debt when they arrived in the Malay Peninsula. Before their departure, they had signed contracts with employers in exchange for travel expenses. After the arrival, they would spend years to pay off the debt. “猪仔贩卖” (Zhu Zai Fan Mai) was the way how the Chinese indentured laborers came to the Malay Peninsula. At first, the Chinese indentured laborers were shipped like livestock in overloaded ships. After their arrival, the indentured laborers were traded like livestock to different plantations and mines. Therefore, Chinese immigrants at that time had a nickname as “猪仔” (Zhu Zai) (which means "piglets"). Even though some Chinese immigrants did not have the same debt as others, they might also be forced to work in mines or plantations as indentured laborers under the threat of the local secret societies.

The differences in living conditions and social status between Peranakan Chinese and Sinkhek led to their disagreements on politics. The bond between Peranakans and

China was weak because Peranakans had settled in the Malay Peninsula for generations. It is reasonable that the Peranakan Chinese were careless about China's politics and society, and had a strong sense of adoration to Britain or the Netherland. On the contrary, Singkhek paid more attention to China and had apparent hatred towards the colonial and imperial powers (E. H. Lee, 2015, p. 133).

Leaving aside the division among the ethnic Chinese of the Malay Peninsula, the population of the ethnic Chinese in the Malay Peninsula ranks the second largest ethnic Chinese community among overseas Chinese in the world. The large ethnic Chinese population presented in its percentage of the country's total population; The 1931 census of Malaya (Tufo, 1949, pp. 40, 84-45) showed that around 39.2 percent of the total population were Chinese (1,704,452), and about 37.9 percent were Malays (1,645,516). The ethnic Chinese outnumbered the indigenous Malays before the Second World War. Moreover, "the population of Malaya had increased in the 16 years since the census in 1931 by more than 65 percent to approximately 940,000, of whom 729,000 were Chinese." The population of the ethnic Chinese increased faster than the Malays and the Indians from 1931 to 1947 (Vlieland, 1949, p. 59). The preponderance of the ethnic Chinese was not only reflected in the population but also economic life. According to the 1931 census in Malaya, the urban population of both the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States (FMS)¹ were the ethnic

¹ The British colony in the Malay Peninsula could be divided into three political units: the Straits Settlements colony which includes Singapore,

Chinese. In the Unfederated Malay State (UMS), the ethnic Chinese of Johor lived in urban areas, and in Kedah (UMS), the ethnic Chinese were also "the largest single component" of the urban population (Cheah, 2013, p. 4). Before the Japanese Occupation in 1941, the ethnic Chinese were the largest population in Straits Settlements and the FMS, the Malays predominantly based in the UMS, and the Indians mainly lived in the FMS². During WWII, the ethnic Chinese population increased, the ratio of sexes "had approached very near to numerical equality, and the rate of natural increase was not greatly different from that of indigenous people." (Purcell, 1965, p. 191)

1.1.2 Introduction to the Ethnic Chinese Emigration in Southeast Asia

After the Second World War, the political and cultural situation in Southeast Asia became increasingly complicated. The spread of nationalism and anti-colonialism led to the establishment of independent countries one after another. At the same time, the communist revolutions and the anti-communist movements also occurred in Southeast

Malacca and Penang, the Federated Malay States (FMS), and the Unfederated Malay States (UMS). The three administrative units were under different governments. The Straits Settlements were Crown Colony and under the direct administration of the British government. The other two units were British protectorates. Although both the FMS and the UMS preserved Sultans, the 'British Residents' actually controlled the administration of the FMS.

² see details data on *Malaya and its Civil Administration Prior to Japanese Occupation*, Table 4, cited by Paul H. Kratoska in *the Japanese Occupation of Malaya: A Social and Economic History*, p. 19

Asia. Those social contradictions and historical events deeply affected the destiny of Southeast Asia's ethnic Chinese. The appearance of the ethnic Chinese emigration was inevitable when society lost stability.

The emigrated ethnic Chinese of Southeast Asia could be roughly classified into four groups: technical emigrants, refugees, laborers, and political emigrants. The technical emigrants include students studying abroad, high-quality educators, high-skilled workers, administrative workers, and investor emigrants. Refugees generally include people who are under the threat of wars, massacres and social conflicts. Laborers indicate people who emigrate for seeking jobs. Political emigrants refer to people who emigrate to seek similar political ideas or political ambitions. The four groups of the ethnic Chinese emigrants might coexist sometimes, but one or two groups might constitute the majority in a specific period.

According to Kang's opinion (2015, p. 31), the emigration of the ethnic Chinese of Southeast Asia covered three stages. The period between 1945 and 1970 is the first stage, the period between the 1970s and the 1990s is the second stage, and after the 21st century, there is another stage. Kang proposed that the emigrated Southeast Asia's ethnic Chinese did not attain a particular scale before the 1970s. The emigration trend was not active before the 1970s because of the lack of immigrating conditions, such as adequate economic support and convenient transportation. However, after the 1970s, the emigration achieved a climax because of the development of technology.

The division might be rational according to the emigrated population of ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia. However, if considering the motivation and globalization, it would be more reasonable that the first stage includes the 1970s. In the 1980s, many Southeast Asian nations entered into a high-speed developing stage, such as Thailand and Malaysia; the ethnic Chinese might emigrate for seeking individual development instead of escaping from the harsh living environment. The second stage could be between the 1980s and the 1990s, and the third stage started in the 21st century. When compared with the scale of the emigrated Southeast Asia's ethnic Chinese after the 1980s, the scale was comparatively small but impossible to neglect before the 1980s. For example, from 1959 to 1960, the Chinese government had sent ships to transport about a hundred thousand Indonesian ethnic Chinese refugees back to China (Fitzgerald, 1972, p. 146). However, because the ethnic Chinese belonging issue did not settle in many Southeast Asian countries before the 1960s and some governments did not publish the result of the censuses before the 1970s, credible and accurate demographic statistics before the 1970s were difficult to find.

The motivations of the ethnic Chinese emigration from Southeast Asia included the passive one and the active one. During the period between 1945 and 1980, most emigrated ethnic Chinese had no choice but to emigrate. Since the 1980s, the ethnic Chinese of Southeast Asia tended to emigrate voluntarily. The selections of destinations had three directions; western countries, Chinese majority communities

and Southeast Asian countries.

1.2 Research Purpose

The ethnic Chinese played a considerable role in the history of modern Southeast Asia. Besides the noticeable contributions of the ethnic Chinese, the ups and downs destiny of the ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia has received considerable attention from scholars in different fields. Concerning the scale and the influence, studying the Chinese immigrants of Southeast Asia has significant academic value. The related topics are around the national and cultural identity of the ethnic Chinese and the ethnic integration in Southeast Asia. However, the ethnic Chinese who emigrated from Southeast Asia also deserve attention. In many societies across Southeast Asia, the ethnic Chinese stood in an embarrassing and delicate position when facing diverse pressure from the internal and external environment. There are only two options in front of the ethnic Chinese, adapting or fleeing. Both choices include academic value that can provide enlightenment to other academic fields. Only the ethnic Chinese who remained in Southeast Asia has been well discussed; the ethnic Chinese who emigrated out from Southeast Asia still has not caused wide attention.

Unlike the ethnic Chinese who remained in Southeast Asia, the number of emigrated ethnic Chinese only accounted for a small proportion of the whole population of the ethnic Chinese of Southeast Asia. However, considering the trend of Chinese brain

drain in Southeast Asia has become increasingly significant at the present, it is meaningful to study the emigrated ethnic Chinese of Southeast Asia. Studying the motivations of ethnic Chinese emigration is not only for a better understanding of the character of the ethnic Chinese behind their selections, but also for a referential significance to analyzing current emigration tide in Southeast Asia. Moreover, the analysis of the emigration behavior might provide people with a dimension to think about the meaning of "home" and the meaning for the Chinese diaspora.

1.3 Research Objective

1. To investigate the effects of the transformation of the Malay Peninsula from a British colony (British Malaya) to a modern nation-state (Malaysia) upon the emigration of the ethnic Chinese from the Malay Peninsula to elsewhere during the period between 1945 and 1979.
2. To identify and analyze the motivations of the ethnic Chinese to emigrate from the Malay Peninsula to different destinations during the period between 1945 and 1979.
3. To interpret "home" in Malayan/Malaysian Chinese point of view when they represented the minority of the society during the period between 1945 and 1979.

1.4 Hypothesis

1. The ethnic Chinese emigrated from British Malaya during the post-Second World War period due to the anti-Communist policies of the British Colonial Government and the lack of legal nationality.

2. The ethnic Chinese emigrated from Malaysia (between 1963 - 1979) due to the Malaysian authorities adopted Bumiputera preferential policies and the radical ethnic contradiction threatened the security of Malaysia society

3. The selections of destination were in a historical, cultural and economic context. The emigrated ethnic Chinese had specific selections in specific historical periods. Some places with Chinese culture or the communist background attracted people who accepted Chinese education or had a communist background; some British Commonwealth member countries attracted people who had British education, and some Malaysia's neighbor countries with the safer and more active economic environments attracted people who need a place to make a living.

1.5 Methodology

This study adopts documentary analysis. Literature resources come from libraries of Chulalongkorn University, Singapore National Library, and the Internet. Chapter 3

emphasizes on individual data from documentaries, films, bibliographies, and oral histories. Chapter 4 focuses on both individual data and general data. The individual data mostly stems from literature, and the general data comes from international organizations, such as the World Bank or the official publications of different countries. Both the primary resources and secondary resources are used in this study.

1.6 Resources

In this thesis, diverse primary resources are included to provide a personal perspective to different events. Those personal statements could provide an understanding of the effects that different historical and political events caused in the microcosmic perspective. The resources could be generally divided into four types, memoirs, songs, documentaries, and officially published resources.

- **Memoirs**

This thesis covered three memoirs, the memoir of Robert Kuok, *Robert Kuok: A Memoir*; the memoir of Lee Kuan Yew, *风雨独立路: 李光耀回忆录* (the first volume of *Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew* in Chinese) and the memoir of Zhu Liangliang, *追虹* (*Chasing Rainbows*).

Robert Kuok's memoir that this thesis cited is based on the early experience of Robert Kuok, especially the part that relates to his second older brother in chapter four of part one (pp. 48–57). His memoir provides an ordinary people's perspective to view the

conflict between the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) and the British. As a relative of a member of the MCP, Kuok did not hear from his beloved older brother since his brother joined the guerillas. The Kuok family only discovered his death from a secret photo. It is beneficial to understand the difficulties the ethnic Chinese business community faced during the anti-colonial period.

As the first Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew was witness to Singapore's separation from the Federation of Malaysia. He is a representative of the ethnic Chinese and an ethnic Chinese politician in the Malay Peninsula. His memoir could provide a unique perspective of his feeling towards the establishment of Malaysia and the independence of Singapore. Lee expressed his sadness about Singapore's separation many times and analyzed the political manipulation behind Singapore's separation in his memoir. Lee's words could explain how eagerly the Malaysian government wanted to dilute the ethnic Chinese population by expelling Singapore from Malaysia.

Zhu Liangliang's memoir provides a personal perspective to the Malayan Emergency. Zhu wrote to her and her family's experiences in detail and provided a clear picture of how her communist-suspect family was deported from Malaya. Some interesting details deserve to be noticed, such as Zhu's uncle was also sent by her grandfather to China for education. She explained that her grandparents heard the newly liberated China was in good social condition because the government of the People's Republic

of China prohibited gambling and drugs in the late 1940s. Her grandfather wished those strict social regulations could help her uncle to quit bad habits. Personal details that recorded in Zhu's memoir could help people to understand the returning intentions of the overseas Chinese to China during the anti-colonial period.

- **Song**

The song *Goodbye, Malaya* (告别马来亚) was written by Yang Li and Yang Guo. It was a popular song among Malayan communists. The song was written to encourage Malayan Chinese youth to join the Sino-Japanese war in China during the wartime and then was used to expressed nostalgia of those deported MCP members during the anti-Colonial period. The lyrics, such as "美丽的马来亚，我们第二的故乡" (Beautiful Malaya, our second motherland) and "你胶园广阔，锡矿煤炭山众多....."(you have wide-range of rubber plantations, you have sufficient tin mines), aim at extolling Malaya and expressing the strong emotion towards Malaya from the deep hearts of those returned Chinese. Lyrics, such as "马来亚哟，马来亚，我们还要回来，要回来" (Malaya, Malaya, we will come back, come back), contains the strong willingness to return to Malaya after their leaving. The song was popular among the returned Malayan Chinese because its lyrics illustrate that those returned Chinese had a deep love for Malaya even the place was not regarded as motherland by them at all. This song could help people to understand Malayan Chinese complicated feelings towards Malaya and the meaning of Malaya to them.

- **Documentaries**

The documentary *My New Village Stories* (我来自新村) played on Malaysian TV channel Astro AEC on 19 April 2009. The documentary interviewed witnesses who experienced the Malayan Emergency and have lived in "new villages". The oral stories from those witnesses could provide a vivid picture of how ordinary ethnic Chinese survived between the MCP and the British. The real experiences of interviewees answered questions that official records and macroscopic history could not answer, like how ethnic Chinese lived at that time. The documents helped to interpret the content about Chinese living dilemmas in the anti-Colonial period in Chapter III.

Documentary, *The Returned Overseas Chinese* (寻找归侨之路), was made by Malaysian Pocketimes (百格) in 2018 for discovering the history of the returned Malayan Chinese whom the Malaysian textbooks have left out. The film named *Absent Without Left* (不即不离 2016) which was made by the young Malaysian director, LAU Kek-Huat (廖克发), was completely banned in Malaysia because its content was related to the MCP. Moreover, the Chinese documentary named *Where I am Coming From*³ (客从何处来) also had one episode (episode 3) that depicted the ethnic Chinese emigration during the Malayan Emergency. The three resources mentioned above provide the perspectives of the returned Chinese during the anti-

³ China Central Television (CCTV) made the documentary for tracing back to family history of Chinese famous people.

Colonial period. Interviewees included communist deportees, returned students, and poor people. These interviews filled the gap between the real life of the returned Chinese and the official records. People can understand their standpoints through their words.

- **Official Published Resources**

The officially published recourses include archives and published reports. The report, *The Population of Malaysia: 1974 World Population Year*⁴ and the report, *Malaysia Economic Monitor: Brain Drain*⁵, provide reliable demographic information about the population of Malaysian Chinese and the Malaysian Chinese immigrants in Singapore. Furthermore, the two official reports could provide one-year statistics to help people to estimate the possible situation of emigration during the period of study.

The website of the National Archives provides some useful details about how the UK government transformed attitudes towards Asian immigrants and what the government did to welcome ethnic Chinese immigrants. The British government's hospitable attitude towards immigrants is in stark contrast to the Malaysian government's indifference to brain drain.

The 16th Chapter of *the Seventh Education Annual Report of the Republic of China* includes contents about the education of overseas Chinese students in Taiwan. In this chapter, the

4 The Population of Malaysia, 1974 World Population Year which was prepared by Dorothy Z. Fernandez, Amos H. Hawley, Silvia Predaza, edited by R. Chander, J. M. Y., (CICRED series) and published by Committee for International Coordination of National Research in Demography.

5 Malaysia Economic Monitor: Brain Drain which was published by the World Bank.

Taiwan government published a precise number of overseas students. The educational certificates that Malaysian students obtained from Taiwan had not been recognized by Malaysian authorities until the 21st Century. However, a large number of Malaysian Chinese students insisted on receiving education in Taiwan. That was because the Taiwan government provided privileges to overseas Chinese students. The welcoming attitude from Taiwan demonstrates why Malaysian Chinese-educated students would like to attain higher education there during the post-Colonial period.

1.7 Thesis Structure

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction of the general arrangement of this thesis and concludes the essential background to the ethnic Chinese emigration, research purpose, research objectives, research hypothesis, and methodology. The current limitation and significance of the study are also included.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This Chapter concludes references related to the studies of the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia and books that are descriptive of the Chinese diaspora in the British Malaya and Malaysia. Moreover, memoirs and other personal records are mentioned here to provide an individual perspective of some essential events in the Malay Peninsula.

Chapter III: The Chinese Emigration from the Malay Peninsula in the Anti-Colonial Period (1945-1957)

This Chapter mainly discusses how the contradiction between the Malayan communists and the British colonial power led to Malayan Chinese emigration. The characteristics of the ethnic Chinese emigration in the anti-colonial period also are analyzed in this chapter.

Chapter IV: The Chinese Emigration from the Malay Peninsula in the Post-Colonial Period (1957-1979)

The post-colonial period is a different era from the anti-colonial period, the contradiction between the British colonizers and the Malayan people was settled, but the contradiction between the ethnic Chinese and Bumiputera was intensified. Therefore, this chapter mainly discusses how the ethnic contradiction caused massive Malaysian Chinese emigration and the main characteristics of the Malaysian Chinese emigration.

Chapter V: Destination and Selection Reasons

The ethnic Chinese of the Malay Peninsula has three directions to emigrate, and the reasons can be very complicated. Generally, Chinese-majority society, neighbor countries in Southeast Asia and western countries are three main destinations. The attitude of exporting countries and importing countries and the regional characteristics of destinations will be discussed here.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

According to the former three chapters' detailed analysis, the conclusion could be made here. Beyond that, this part also will restate the gist of this thesis and the paper's new findings.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

There are some limitations here. The study lacks sufficient first-hand data and resources, so the thesis mainly adopts documentary research. If the study could include more personal oral histories, the concept of "home" in each people's mind will be more concrete. Besides, because the Malaysian government never published the precise numbers of emigrants, all numeral statistics base on estimation. The gap between reality and estimation is inevitable. The study has not covered the whole development of Malayan/ Malaysian Chinese emigration because this thesis only focuses on the period between 1945 and 1979. Besides, this thesis has not analyzed all destinations of the emigrated Malayan/Malaysian Chinese emigrants because other destinations had an insignificant population of Malayan/Malaysian Chinese emigrants when compared with the countries and areas this thesis mentioned. Finally, proficiency in academic writing needs to be significantly improved.

1.9 Significance of the Study

The study compensates the academic gap in this area. The demographic mobility is becoming a hot topic now, but academics focus more on other popular immigration trends, such as the Jews to the U.S. or the Chinese to Southeast Asia. This study could provide a reverse study of Chinese diaspora immigration activity. The emigration trend of Malaysian Chinese from Malaysia triggered people's worry about Malaysia's brain drain. This study could give analytical thinking of the initial stage of the development of the brain drain and help people to understand the meaning of "home" in the social minority point of view as well.

Chapter II: Literature Review

2.1 General Conceptual Introduction

No matter in a general framework or a specific framework, scholars fully discussed Chinese immigration from China to Southeast Asia and the ethnic Chinese society in Southeast Asia. Among the ethnic Chinese societies in Southeast Asia, the ethnic Chinese society in the Malay Peninsula was the unique one that attracted many academics to study. The history of the ethnic Chinese immigration, the social structure of the ethnic Chinese society and the history of the ethnic Chinese in the Malay Peninsula were exhaustively studied by many scholars.

Academic works about the ethnic Chinese of the Malay Peninsula would contain concepts such as “nation-state” and “citizenship” when introducing the historical context. That was because the Malay Peninsula was not a “nation-state” until the independence of the Federation of Malaya in 1957.

The Malay Peninsula was still a British colony before 1957. The British colonial administration in the Malay Peninsula had two phases: the pre-war stage and the post-war stage. Before the Japanese Occupation in 1941, the administrative division of British Malaya includes three units: one British direct administrative Strait Settlement and two British protectorates; the Federated Malay States which was under the actual

controlled of the British, and the Unfederated Malay State which had autonomy. Both the indigenous people and the foreigners enjoyed free entry rights and did not need passports to travel across the three distinctive administrative units. The regulations of immigration were liberal. However, the British administrative strategy, “divide and rule”, stressed separations along ethnic lines. For example, the plan of the town of Singapore was racially segregated, the Europeans, the indigenous people, the Chinese and the Indians should live in different areas. The roles of people were also racially segregated. The Europeans usually served as officials or the owners of plantations, the Chinese were middlemen between the European businessmen and the indigenous farmers or coolies, and the indigenous people often worked as farmers or civil servants. The majority of residents in the Malay Peninsula had no local citizenship or the British nationalities except the British nationals. The residents in the Malay Peninsula did not have local citizenships until 1946. After WWII, the British colonizers proposed the Malayan Union plan in 1946 and the Federation of Malaya in 1948 to grant local citizenships to Malaysians. The British colonial ruling in the Malay Peninsula stopped in 1957⁶. The independence of the Federation of Malaya represented the transfer of the regime of Malaya from the British colonialists (the foreigners) to the Malaysians (the local people).

The bond between Malaya’s inhabitants and the Malay Peninsula was loose before the

⁶ Singapore was granted full internal self-government for all matters except defense and foreign affairs in 1956.

establishment of a nation. The residents of the Malay Peninsula could migrate anywhere they wanted because they had no consciousness of regional or political identities there. The Indian residents and the Chinese residents could return to the respective motherlands of them before 1946 because they identified with their motherlands rather than Malaya. However, the granting of the local “citizenship” meant that the residents in the Malay Peninsula had a collective identity in Malaya, the Malaysians. The local “citizenship” explicitly defined the relationship between the Malaya’s residents and the land where they were living. Since 1946, the residents in the Malay Peninsula started to identify with Malaya where they lived in instead of their ethnic and cultural origins.

The local “citizenship” told people where they belonged. Following this, the appearance of “nation-state” in the Malay Peninsula told the Malaysians that they were the masters of the Malay Peninsula. The independence of the Federation of Malaya furthermore consolidated the affiliation of Malaya’s inhabitants. The local citizenships of the Malay Peninsula converted into the citizenships of the Federation of Malaya. The change of “citizenship” meant that the political status of the Malaysians changed from the colonized peoples to the nationals of the Federation of the Malaya. In other words, the “nation-state” and the “citizenship” in the Malay Peninsula strengthened the sense of belonging and created a common identity for the residents in the Malay Peninsula.

Emigration is the outward migration. The Chinese emigration involves three types of the Chinese: The Chinese sojourners, the Chinese Diasporas, and the Chinese migrants. “The Chinese sojourners” is the collective name of the ethnic Chinese who still identify with China, even though they have left China for years. For example, Singkeks who immigrated to Southeast Asia from the 1840s to the 1930s could be counted as “the Chinese sojourners”. The tie between China and the Chinese sojourners would tend to be strong. The Chinese sojourners might send remittances and their descendants back to China, join the revolutions or wars in China, and spend the rest of their lives and be buried in China. The Chinese sojourners regard the current living places as temporary residences, and they would prefer to return to China once they had chances.

“The Chinese diasporas” refers to the ethnic Chinese who maintain their ties with Chinese traditions and cultures but identify with the residences outside of China. The Malaysian Chinese, the Singaporean Chinese, the Thai Chinese, and the Indonesian Chinese all belong to this group. The Chinese Diasporas preserve Chinese traditions, such as using chopsticks or celebrating traditional Chinese festivals. They agree with Chinese cultural identity rather than political identity, which mean that they are nationals of other nations outside of China.

“The Chinese migrants” mainly consist of the Chinese who migrate to seek jobs, educational chances, living environments or individual developmental potentials. This

term stresses on mobility. Once “the Chinese migrants” is mentioned, the destinations and the departures would also be contained. For example, “the Chinese migrants to Southeast Asia” refers to the group of people who immigrate from China to Southeast Asia.

2.2 Books about General Introduction to Chinese Diaspora in Southeast Asia

Before starting research, the overall grasp of Southeast Asia’s Chinese development and background after WWII in Southeast Asia is necessary. Works of several scholars provide a general and basic introduction of Southeast Asia’s Chinese diaspora. The book, *Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times*, focuses on a comprehensive and chronological introduction to the Chinese diaspora in the world and is written by Philip A. Kuhn. The book concludes the history of Chinese immigration around the world. However, the Chinese immigrant history in Southeast Asia predominates in this book when the author analyzing each chapter. The author pointed out the strategic position of Southeast Asia for the Chinese diaspora and expounded the evolution of the Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia. The period, from the 17th century to the 1990s, generally included all great social reformations in China and the world. The longtime span the author considered provides a comprehensive and clear picture of Southeast Asia’s Chinese immigration. The excellent work

provides a compressed but accurate history of the Chinese diaspora; it would be constructive to help people to have a general idea of the Chinese diaspora. The last chapter of this book provides a new interpretation of Chinese immigration since the 1960s, especially the immigration tide after the “Reform and Open” policy implemented, people from Wenzhou (温州) the eastern city and people from Changle (长乐) the county next to Fuzhou (福州) are discussed in this chapter as the representatives of this new-era immigration tide.

Compared with Philip’s encyclopedic book, En-Han Lee’s work, *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, is more concentrated. If likening Philip’s work to an encyclopedia of the Chinese diaspora, Lee’s work is a regional history book because this book only focuses on the ethnic Chinese of Southeast Asia. Besides, Philip’s work involves lots of theories, but Lee’s work emphasizes on archive materials. In this book, the developments of ethnic Chinese societies in different Southeast Asian countries and areas are analyzed, the political movements that Southeast Asian Chinese took part in are concluded, and the transformations of ethnic Chinese societies after the WWII are also principal research objects. Except for the chronicle, the book analyzes each countries’ ethnic Chinese community beneath different eras, both Indochina and Insular Southeast Asia are mentioned. This book is a textbook to people who wants to study Chinese diaspora in Southeast Asia, except abundant historical data the book concludes, important researches about Southeast Asian Chinese are listed in the

appendix which helps readers to find references to learn.

Both Philip's work and Lee's work construct a foundation for the knowledge of Southeast Asia, especially Lee's work is conducive to build a background in this thesis. If Lee's book provides sufficient and specific data to use for references, the comparative study in Philip's work is helpful to grab the characteristics of the ethnic Chinese society in the Malay Peninsula.

2.3 Books about Chinese Diaspora in Specific Southeast Asian Country

Chinese Diaspora in Southeast Asian countries gradually became a hot subject in the western world since World War II, so there were lots of famous academics contributed influential masterpieces about the subject, for example, American academic G. William Skinner who focused on Chinese community in Thailand wrote *Chinese Society in Thailand: An Analytical History and Leadership and Power in the Chinese Community of Thailand*; Indonesian academic Leo Suryadinata who is the authority of Indonesian Chinese community once wrote famous works like *The Culture of the Chinese Minority in Indonesia*, *Peranakan Chinese Politics in Java, 1917-1942*, *Prominent Indonesian Chinese* and so on.

In Skinner's works, he viewed the Chinese as a segment of the Thailand society instead of an alien society in Thailand. Skinner put a priority on the Thai society as well as the overseas Chinese society. The picture of the ethnic assimilation in Skinner's work offers a reverse angle to discern the ethnic harmony in the Malay

Peninsula. It can be learned from Suryadinata's works that Indonesian ethnic Chinese society had similarity to the ethnic Chinese society in the Malay Peninsula, but the ethnic Chinese in Indonesia was confronted with harsher survival problems than in the Malay Peninsula. Even though the study objects of the Skinner's works and the Suryadinata's works are irrelevant to the thesis, the almost assimilated Thai Chinese society and the oppressed Indonesian Chinese society could demonstrate the comparative independence of the ethnic Chinese society of the Malay Peninsula.

About Malaysian/Malayan Chinese community, most of the related academic are Chinese from the Peninsular Malaya, such as *马来西亚华人新编* (*The New edition of Malaysian Chinese*), edited by Lim Chooi Kwa(林水濠) and Ho Khai Leong(何启良). Almost all famous Malayan Chinese academics contributed to this book, the book itself is the evidence of how the Malaysian Chinese community struggled to preserve the history of ethnic Chinese in Malaysia. Each academic was in charge of writing one period or one specific topic, such as Yen Ching Hwang focused on the historical transformation of Chinese diaspora from 1403 to 1941, Niew Shong Tong was in charge of Chinese population migration in East Malaysia. The book is the synthesizer of Malaysian Chinese studies with a wide variety of content. Apart from the Chinese diaspora who studied their history, British academic Victor Purcell, who once worked for the British colonial government, wrote a book about Malayan Chinese as well. *The Chinese in Malaya* is a masterpiece about Malayan Chinese.

Purcell had been conducting on-the-spot investigations on the history of overseas Chinese and did in-depth research on the issues of overseas Chinese. Therefore, he could engage in the writings of overseas Chinese history with careful observations and objective positions. He held different standpoint from other British colonialists in his book, so his work helped western academics to know Malayan Chinese community more objectively. The ethnic Chinese academics and the British academics have their respective perspectives when conducting research. The different perspectives could enrich the understanding of the ethnic Chinese society of the Malay Peninsula. Besides the exact records this research could use for references, the distinctive perspectives are also beneficial to this study.

2.4 Literature about Chinese Politics in the Malay Peninsula

Considering the political factor might be one of the most crucial reasons caused Chinese remigration, knowing the political status and political engagement of Chinese in Malaya would be inevitable. Wang Gungwu illustrated a famous theory in *Chinese Politics in Malaya* that the Malayan ethnic Chinese community comprised of three political groups and the three groups of people might change their political standpoints in different periods. The transformation also reflected on Chinese identity in Malaya. Whether the ethnic Chinese acquired Malaya's nationality and how many the ethnic Chinese held Malaya's nationality may directly or indirectly affect the Chinese living environment in Malaya. The transformation of the attitude towards

Malaya's politics always connected to Chinese identity in Malaya. Jennifer W. Cushman and Wang Gungwu edited a book named *Changing identities of the Southeast Asian Chinese since World War II*. This book discusses the identities that the ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia had besides Chineseness. Those identities might change overtime, the national identity and cultural identity was important in the 1950s and the 1960s, and then in the 1970s, ethnic identity and class identity received more attention.

Choi Kwai Keong (崔贵强) stressed discussing the Malaya's Chinese national identity transformation in his book, *新马华人国家认同转向1945-1959 (the Turning of national Identity of Chinese in Singapore and the British Malaya, 1945-1959)*. This book analyzed the change of Malaya's Chinese identity from temporary residents to permanent residents. The political transformations in China facilitated Malaya's Chinese accepting of Malaya's identity to some extent; however, granting Malaya's nationality did not change their cultural identity. Moreover, Choi also discussed Chinese political participation in the Malay Peninsula. He thinks that the Strait Chinese and a small group of ethnic Chinese businessmen were the first groups of people who had the local political awakening in the ethnic Chinese society, and other ethnic Chinese turned their heads to the Malayan politics after the nationality problem was solved. Choi's work provided a clear and detailed picture of the progress of the Malayan Chinese political transformation.

This thesis adopts Wang's theory and Choi's data to illustrate the transforming progress of the ethnic Chinese identity. But both Wang and Choi have not mentioned the relationship between the identity transformation and the Chinese emigration from the Malay Peninsula. This thesis would stress the effect of the ethnic identity upon the Chinese emigration from the Malay Peninsula.

Ethnic Chinese political engagement in the Malay Peninsula could be regarded as the result of Malayan modernization, therefore knowing what happened during WWII might be conducive to understand the ethnic Chinese living environment in Malaya. In *Red Star Over Malaya: Resistance and Social Conflict During and After the Japanese Occupation of Malaya, 1941-46*, the author Cheah Boon Kheng elaborates how ethnic contradictions fermented during the Japanese Occupation period in Malaya. The book also provides a progressive introduction to the development of the tension between the Malayan Communist Party and the British. James Tuck-Hong Tang's *Britain's Encounter with Revolutionary China, 1949-54* gives a perspective from the British colonizers to view the ideological differences between the Beijing government and the UK. Interestingly, the UK admitted the new government of China, but the British colonial government adopted a delicately hostile attitude towards China. Diane K. Mauzy analyzed how Malay nationalism originated and developed in his work, *From Malay Nationalism to a Malaysian Nation*. And James P. Ongkili explained how Malay Nationalism operated to help the Malays in gaining

their special status from the British colonial government in *The British and Malayan Nationalism, 1946-1957*. This article provides a unique angle to see the Malays' and the British activities when the ethnic Chinese was busy with China's affairs. J.k Stockwell illustrated what ramifications the British colonial history left to the newly independent Malaysia in *Malaysia: The Making of a Neo-Colony?* Karl Hack focused on three techniques to treat the ethnic Chinese during the Malayan Emergency in *Detention, Deportation and Resettlement: British Counterinsurgency and Malaya's Rural Chinese, 1948-60*.

The resources which are mentioned above include different point of views to the decolonization of the Malay Peninsula and the nation-building of the Malay Peninsula. These works are conducive to establish a factual background to the Chinese emigration in the anti-colonial period, and to some extent, the factual background enlightens the successive in-depth analysis of the complicated relationships among the British, the Malays and the Chinese in this thesis.

2.5 Literature about Chinese Emigration from the Malay Peninsula

After knowing the existing contradictions in Malaya among different ethnic groups and social transformation in Malaya, the discussion of the aftermath of Malaya's Chinese emigration is necessary. The emigrated ethnic Chinese did not cause concern as widespread as the stayed ethnic Chinese did. Therefore, there is no systematic and rational book focus on Malaya's Chinese emigration yet. But some scholars still

noticed the trend of mobility in Southeast Asia. Kang Xiaoli wrote *Emigration of Ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asian Countries After the Second World War*. This book systematically analyzes Southeast Asian Chinese emigration activity. Through the book, people could have a general idea about the Chinese emigration of Southeast Asia after WWII. The author focuses more on data statistics, and she speculates the scale of emigration in her work. However, the book just talks in general terms and does not provide a depth analysis. Kang thinks the ethnic Chinese emigration before the 1970s is not as extensive and significant as the ethnic Chinese emigration after the 1970s, therefore she concentrates more on the Chinese emigration after the 1970s. This thesis would like to fill the gap that the Kang's work ignored.

Chinese academic Li Minghuan conducted a study about the Chinese emigration from Southeast Asia to Europe. Her work, *Emotion that Spans the Ocean: The Ethnic Chinese Migration from Southeast Asia to Europe*, gave a distinct introduction to how emigrated ethnic Chinese settled in European countries. She mentioned that Chinese diaspora preferred the former colonial powers, such as Indonesian Chinese preferred to immigrate to Netherland, and Malaysian and Singaporean Chinese tended to go to the UK. Besides, the development of Chinese career in Europe also is mentioned in this article. This part of the analysis serves as a reference to this thesis when analyzing the characteristic of the ethnic Chinese emigrants in Europe.

When talking about emigration from a specific region, especially from the Malay

Peninsula, there were some scholars noticed the trend. The American scholar Charles Hirschman paid earlier attention to the emigration from Malaya in the 20th century. He investigated the Malaysian emigration and emigrating reasons in *Demographic Trends in Peninsular Malaysia, 1974-1975* and *Net External Migration from Peninsular Malaysia, 1957 to 1970*. Pillai Patrick concluded the history of Malaysian immigration after the 1960s generously in *People on the Move: An Overview of Recent Immigration and Emigration in Malaysia* and *Malaysia: Trends and Recent Developments in International Migration*. And Singaporean scholar Saw Swee-Hock's works⁷ could also provide precise statistics about Malay's population. But those pieces of literature lack a systematic analysis of the phenomena, the ethnic Chinese emigrated from the Malay Peninsula. Those works only mentioned the phenomena in some necessary situations. The resources, as mentioned above, focus more on a macroscopic analysis of the Chinese emigration by collecting the demographic data and estimating the demographic scale. This thesis would add microscopic details by concluding the individual experiences to analyze the Chinese emigration.

As for the studies of destination, there are Jock Collins and Carol Reid's *Chinese in Australia 1945-1994: Changing Patterns of Migration, Racialisation and*

⁷ Saw Swee-Hock's books like *The Population of Singapore*, *The Population of Malaysia* and *The Population of Peninsular Malaysia* have detailed census data.

Opportunity, Graeme Hugo's *Malaysian Migration to Australia*, Choo Chin Low's *the Malaysian Chinese diaspora in Melbourne: Citizenship and belongingness*, Yi-Jian Ho's *Malaysian Migration to Singapore: Pathways, Mechanisms and Status*, and Tan Chee-Beng's *The evolution of Taiwan's policies toward the political participation of citizens abroad in homeland governance*. But considering that the Chinese immigration to western countries increased since those countries adopted multicultural policies, the research foci of most of the works are on Chinese immigration after the 1970s, not before 1979. That is why there are few useful resources about Malaysian Chinese immigration to other countries before the 1970s. This thesis would pay more attention to the previous ethnic Chinese immigration to fill the academic gap.

Literature about returned overseas Chinese is easy to find. Chinese academic Shagguan Xiaohong's(上官小红) *建国后归国侨生安置工作探析 (Resettlement of Returned Students in the 1950s and the 1960s)*, Michael R. Godley's *The Sojourners: Returned Overseas Chinese in the People's Republic of China*, and Stephen Fitzgerald's *Chinese and the Overseas Chinese, A Study of Peking's Changing Policy, 1949-1970* provide some valuable angles to discuss the emigration phenomena. Considering China was a popular destination to the Chinese emigrants of Southeast Asia in between the 1940s and the 1950s, Fitzgerald's work is conducive to provide a comprehensive understanding of the changing progress of China's attitude towards

overseas Chinese which includes Malayan Chinese. However, the four scholars mentioned before emphatically analyze the governments' policies towards the returned overseas Chinese but neglect to study the returned overseas Chinese individuals. Thus, this thesis would like to provide a more comprehensive analysis that bases individual data on the governments' policies.

2.6 Memoirs

In this thesis, taking advantage of the memoir is a very effective way to learn about facts, especially facts about individuals' daily lives under a big historical context. The above resources provide a macro perspective to study the ethnic Chinese emigration, but biography provides an individual perspective to study the phenomena.

Robert Kuok: A Memoir provides a Chinese businessman's perspective. Kuok mentioned his point of view as a relative of the MCP during the Malayan Emergency. He also illustrated the effort he made to merge the gap between the Chinese and the Malays when radical ethnic conflicts happened in Malaysia. Moreover, he explained the motivation to transfer all his business to other counties outside Malaysia in the 1970s. Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, witnessed the segregation of Singapore and memorized the historical event in his memoir, *Memoirs of Lee Kuan Yew*. Through his perspective (as an ethnic Chinese and a politician), readers can have a better understanding of the importance of the Singaporean Chinese to the Malaysian

Chinese community. As a common person, Zhu Liangliang wrote her memoir, *追虹* (*Chasing Rainbows*), to picture a real scene of the life of the returned Chinese. She provides details about her family's deportation from the British colony and her life after her returning to China. The memoir is really helpful to academics who want to know what exactly happened at that time. The individual's perspective could make up the vacancy between the truth and the official statement.

2.7 Contribution

The books mentioned above, and articles cover a wide range of studies of Chinese Diaspora in Southeast Asia. Some scholars focus on the comprehensive history of Chinese Diaspora in Southeast Asia, some emphasize on the Chinese diaspora in specific countries, and some concentrate on Chinese migration especially the immigration. Recently, the Malaysian government noticed the significant trend that the Malaysian Chinese brain drain is becoming more noticeable and more serious. Therefore, the thesis could provide an analysis of the origin of the demographic loss of the ethnic Chinese population. Besides, during the period between 1945 and 1979, the Chinese emigration mostly was caused by the difficulties that the ethnic Chinese faced at that time, so this thesis also provides a discussion about the content: once the great social transformations happened or the social contradictions were intensified. The response of the ethnic Chinese society could be different. In fact, emigration is

one of the ethnic Chinese responses to the social environment at that time. This thesis mainly focuses on the Chinese emigration from the Malay Peninsula and provides an analysis of the emigrating phenomena from different angles. Both the push factors and the pull factors are mentioned.

One paramount contribution that the thesis makes is to conduct a study about secondary migration. The Chinese immigration from China to Southeast Asia had a wide range of studies, but scholars have not made a subsequent study to the Chinese migration in Southeast Asia. Chinese immigration was the maiden migration for the ethnic Chinese. After decades or generations, the ethnic Chinese might conduct the secondary migration which might be called, re-migration. The secondary migration of the ethnic Chinese stressed that the departure of the ethnic Chinese was not China. The first-time migration and the second-time migration not only have different departure points, but also different migrating characters and the migrating reasons. For example, the Chinese immigrated to Southeast Asia in the 19th Century might because they wanted to own land or to make money, but the descendants of the immigrated ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia emigrate to other countries or areas outsidess Southeast Asia might be escaping political persecution or ameliorating their living conditions. The differences could also appear in the imagination of “home”. The Chinese immigrants to Southeast Asia might connect the notion of “home” with land or money, but the ethnic Chinese emigrants from Southeast Asia might link the

concept of “home” with good social order, friendly political environment, equal rights and opportunities under the law, citizenships and personal development space.



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Chapter III: The Chinese Emigration from the Malay peninsula in the Anti-Colonial Period (1945-1957)

3.1 Historical Context (From Colony to Independence)

The Japanese occupation promoted the growth of Malay nationalism in some way. The British failure in WWII damaged the British colonial invincible image in its Southeast Asian colonies, and “the Japanese promoted the anti-colonial theme of „Asia for the Asians“ which found a receptive chord among Malays”(Mauzy, 2006, p. 48). At the same time, the Malayan Communist Party also developed. So not all people from the Malay Peninsula accepted British colonial return submissively after WWII, the call for being independent of British administration in the peninsula was inevitable

It was difficult to ask Britain to renounce its colony because Malaya was an important dollar-earner and raw-material supplier for the UK (Tang, 1992, p. 171). The British colonial government proposed the Malayan Union Plan in 1946 in order to consolidate its ruling in Malaya. The plan attempted to weaken Sultan’s power, to unify the Malay Peninsula (except Singapore) under a single government for convenient administration, and to isolate Singapore from Malaya as Crown Colony. Besides, the plan authorized equal civil rights to each ethnic group to gain public

support. However, the Malays opposed to this plan strongly, because they regarded other ethnic groups as foreigners, and they wanted to keep their priority. The opposition led by Onn Ja'afar and established the United Malays National Organization (UMNO), the biggest Malay political party, which united the Malays from different classes to protest the plan. When the Malays were busy opposing the Malayan Union Plan, Indians and Chinese were respectively concentrating on India's and China's affairs. Compared with the two races' apathetic attitude towards Malayan politics, the Malays' protest seemed more radical and more acute in harassing British rule. The British finally conceded to the opposition. The plan was replaced by the Federation of Malaya which recognized the Malay's prioritized position. Such a compromise prolonged British rule in the Malay Peninsula. However, the development of the MCP harassed British authorities seriously because the communists were the strongest anti-colonial group. In 1948, the British announced the Malayan Emergency to restrict communist development and to eliminate the communists in the Malay Peninsula. Even there were several anti-colonial movements in the Malay Peninsula, British administration still continued for another 12 years after its return. The Federation of Malaya existed around 15 years from 1st January 1948 to 16th September 1963 and gained its independence in 1957. The period from the end of WWII to Malaya's independence (1945-1957), could be concluded as the anti-Colonial period due to political concerns. It was the period that the Malay

Peninsula transformed from a colony to an independent country.

The decolonization in the Malay Peninsula was distinguished from in other British colonies of South Asia and other Southeast Asian places. The independence progress of India and Burma were comparatively lengthy and arduous when compared with the independence progress of Malaya. The independence of Indonesia was the result of the war between the Indonesian guerrilla and the Dutch army. North Vietnam experienced the revolution, and South Vietnam experienced the First Indochina War before their independence. Unlike the Independence of other states⁸ with a long period of armed struggling, the Independence of Malaya was a result of negotiation between the British colonizers and the Malayan to some extent. That is why the decolonization in Malaya was relatively peaceful.

Besides, the anti-colonial period was included in the Cold War period. During the Cold War, there were three major hot wars in Asia. 1) China had the Chinese Civil War during the period between 1946 and 1949. The Chinese Civil War happened between the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) (with the support of the Soviet Union) and the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) (with the support of the United States). After the war, the CCP controlled mainland China and established the communist regime there. The KMT retreated to Taiwan. 2) The Korean War started in 1950 and

⁸ Burma was independent in 1948 , Indonesia was independent in 1949, India was independent in 1950, North Vietnam was independent in 1945 and South Vietnam was independent in 1955.

ended in 1953. This war happened between North Korea (with the support of China and the Soviet Union) and South Korea (with the support of the United States). The aftermath of the war was that the Korean Demilitarized Zone separated North Korea and South Korea. 3) The Vietnam War was another product of the Cold War in Asia. The war was between North Vietnam (with the support of communist allies) and South Vietnam (with the support of anti-communist allies) and lasted from 1955 to 1975. The reunification of Vietnam was the aftermath of the Vietnam War. The ideological confrontation in the Cold War period also affected the Malay Peninsula. Considering the British government needed to rely on the financial assistance from the U.S.,⁹ and Great Britain itself was a veteran capitalist country, it is reasonable that the British colonial government was in league with the U.S. and other western European countries. The adoption of the anti-communist policies in the British colonies was following the general trend of the Western world.

3.2 The Conflict between the MCP and the British

3.2.1 The History of the Malayan Communist Party (MCP)

The Malayan Communist Party was a branch of the China Communist Party in Malaya at first. In 1930, the name of the communist organization in Malaya was

⁹ The United States proposed the Marshal Plan to help the west European countries to conduct the post-war reconstruction. The Plan was an economic assistance plan which helped the national economy of the west European countries to recover to the pre-war level.

changed from the Nanyang Communist Party to the Malayan Communist Party (MCP). The changing name action represents the separation of MCP from the China Communist Party. The MCP became an independent party in Malaya.

During WWII (1941-1945)¹⁰, the members of the MCP and Malayan Peoples' Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA), the army which led by the party, strongly resisted Japanese occupation. The MPAJA was the major army to fight against the Japanese. The army was based on guerrillas in Malaya's jungles with poor equipment. Because of its organization, strict discipline, and brave fighting, the army gained support from the masses. MPAJU raised funds for the guerillas, collected clothes, fighting materials, foods, and intelligence to the army, and arranged guides to take MPAJA patrols through unknown territory and formed corps of couriers (Cheah, 2013, p. 67). Due to keeping strong determination against Japanese occupation and accompanying the spread of Chinese patriotism in Malaya, the MCP had developed to reach a peak during WWII. The army enlarged to more than ten thousand soldiers and, at one point, controlled over half of the territory of Malaya. The expansion and excellent performance during the war brought benefit to the development of the MCP after the war, from September 1945 to June 1948 (Short, 1964, p. 151).

However, the British colonial government and the MCP could not coexist peacefully due to the outbreak of the Cold War and the MCP's strong anti-colonial proposition.

¹⁰ The Imperial Japanese army started to invade Malaya in the early morning of December 8, 1941, and surrendered in August 1945.

The “armed struggle” between the MCP and the British government last for 12 years (1948-1960). The MCP and the Malayan government promoted peace talks several times since 1955. Finally, the government of the Federation of Malaya announced the end of Malayan Emergency in 1960. The Malayan communist guerrilla withdrew to the border area between the Malaya and Thailand. Nonetheless, the MCP soon triggered the Communist Insurgency War which was also called as the Second Malayan Emergency in 1968. At last, the MCP which was led by Ching Peng declared its dissolution in 1989 during the last period of the Cold War.

3.2.2 Malayan Emergency

The real scene the returned British colonizers seen in 1945 was the communist guerrilla controlled lots of important cities. Communist occupation in the British colony was intolerant because the British colonial government steadily opposed Communism. Therefore, the confrontation between the two ideological groups was unavoidable.

In the first year after WWII, the conflict was not as acute as in later years. The direct leader of the British Military Administration (BMA), Lord Louis Mountbatten, had a favorable attitude towards the Chinese and the MCP. The policy made by the BMA demonstrated the inclination (Cheah, 2013, p. 241). The BMA allowed full freedom of speech, publication, and association after WWII. Hence, the MCP could propagate its ideas. Moreover, Malayan communists had the freedom to organize and operate

associations.

However, the MCP held the anti-colonial proposition. They believed that “the British replaced the Japanese as rulers of Malaya, so the target of the national liberation struggle was once again the British.” (Cheah, 2013, p. 143) The communists took advantage of free speech and propagated their ideology to the masses. At the same time, Malayan society became unstable, “riots and workers” strike broke out owing to rice shortages, gross inflation, and low wages.” (Cheah, 2013, p. 143) The conflict between the colonialists and the colonized intensified.

In 1948, three British plantation managers were killed by Chinese men. The British soon declared the Malayan Emergency. The ideological opposition between the British capitalist government and the Malay communist guerrilla should not have caused the conflict between the British government and the ethnic Chinese masses. But due to the guerrilla could receive support from the masses and there was an organization named Min Yuen to provide food and intelligence to the MCP, the British besieged the guerrilla constantly and simultaneously implemented the Briggs” Plan to separate the masses and the guerrillas. This plan forcibly gathered about 500,000 Chinese into 500 “New Villages”.

The Malayan Emergency lasted from 1948 to 1960, and prolonged British colonial ruling in the Malay Peninsula to some extent. Both the UK and the colony suffered heavy losses during the war, so both the colonizers and the colonized hoped to

revitalize the economy. The British were struggling to restore the economy of the UK and could not maintain the economy in the colony, so the Malayan economy was in a bad situation in 1948. In addition, the British colonizers were under the threat of the rise of nationalism in the colonies. The Malayan people demand for independence from the British ruling was getting stronger. The contradiction between the British and the Malayan was becoming more and more radical. But at the same time, the Malayan people feared the expansion of communism in Malaya. There were no other unified armies in Malaya except the colonial army that could help the Malays to confront the communists. Then the British colonizers transferred the contradiction between the colonizers and the colonized to the contradiction between non-communists and communists by declaring the Malayan Emergency to reduce administrative pressure. The official-declared contradiction distracted people's attention from the British colonial authorities to the communists and postponed the pace of Malaya's independence.

3.3 Malayan Chinese in the Anti-Colonial Period

3.3.1 Identity Transformation (From Temporary to Permanent)

Before 1929, Chinese migrants could immigrate to any places in the British Malaya including the Straits Settlements without any restrictions. However, the British

colonial government enacted the Immigration Restriction Ordinance in 1930 to restrict the immigration of Chinese adult man except for female migrants and children because the economy of British Malaya was affected by the Great Depression. The restriction was strengthened further in 1933, the Aliens Ordinance allowed only 1000 to 2500 persons to immigrate (Purcell, 1965, pp. 203-205). Hence, it would be fair to say that the reduction of Chinese immigration to the Malay Peninsula started from the 1930s. The British colonial government completely prohibited free Chinese immigration in 1952, only allowing people with special qualification to immigrate. At the same time, the government of the People's Republic of China closed the country; making immigration from China to the Malay Peninsula became very rare. For those reasons, the period (1945-1952) could be counted as the last stage of Chinese immigration to the Malay Peninsula and the immigration gradually stopped since 1952.

b) Chinese gradually had legal citizenship

In the 1940s, Chinese in the Malay Peninsula were indifferent towards local citizenship, even when the Malayan Union White paper, which contained equal civil rights, was published. But due to the Malays strongly opposing this egalitarian plan, the British colonial government then adopted the Federation of Malaya Agreement of 1948 to replace the former one. The agreement confined that only people who admitted "Malays" Malaya" and passed English or Malay test could get citizenship

(Choi, 1990, pp. 158–160). Until 1950, only one-quarter of the total number of ethnic Chinese in the Federation of Malaya acquired legal citizenship.

However, in the 1950s, the ethnic Chinese in Malaya totally realized the importance of local citizenship. Then the ethnic Chinese constantly demanded the government to liberalize the requirement for the ethnic Chinese when acquiring citizenship. Hereafter, Malcolm MacDonald's Scheme 1952 and the Reid Commission Report 1957 expanded the scope ethnic Chinese citizenship furtherly and allowed 2 million Chinese acquired the citizenship of Malaya until 1958. The progress of Singaporean Chinese fighting for citizenship also was hard in the anti-colonial period because almost all Singaporean Chinese came from China. However, owing to constant struggle, Chief Minister David Saul Marshall and his team went to Britain to negotiate Chinese civil right problems in 1956. Finally, about 220,000 Chinese migrants had the qualifications to become Singaporean citizens and the Legislative House adopted a multiple-language system to expand Chinese political participation (Choi, 1990, p. 428).

c) Chinese local-birth rate increased

Chinese male migrants self-regarded as sojourners before massive female migrants came to the land. According to Lim's report (1967, pp. 56–103) and Vieland's report (1932, p. 96), the gender ratio of Chinese society rose to 4:1 in the 1930s and 30 percent of the ethnic Chinese population were females in some places. The

intermarriage was scarce. Either Malay women could not marry Chinese men due to religious difference, or Baba Nyonya women refused to condescend to marry poor coolies. The phenomenon that Chinese male migrants always regarded the British Malaya as a temporary residence was reasonable. They thought their families were still settled in China. That is why even though a steady stream of Chinese male migrants came to the Malay Peninsula, the local birth rate was still very low.

However, this situation changed since massive Chinese women immigrated. Massive Chinese female immigrants came to the Malay Peninsula because China's great social transformation happened since the 1910s and the British government encouraged female immigration. The growth of local birth benefited from the sharp increase in Chinese female immigration. According to the Malayan Census Report of 1947, the Malaya-born Chinese was about 65 percent of the total Chinese population, and the Singapore-born Chinese was about 59.9 percent of the Singaporean Chinese population. The ratio kept rising. The Chinese society in British Malaya transited from a floating society to a settling society, due to the gender ratio in Malaya was about 1000: 815 in 1947 and increased to 1000: 926 in 1957 (Goh, 1978, p.20; Choi, 1990, p.57; Malayan Census Report 1947, 1949, p.57).

According to three reasons mentioned before, there was a trend among the Chinese diaspora in the Malay Peninsula to be naturalized. It would be fair to conclude that the Chinese accepted their Malayan identity in the objective aspect. That is why the

ethnic Chinese constantly fought for legal citizenship and the equal civil right during the anti-colonial period. However, from a subjective perspective, especially in the psychological and cultural aspect, not all Chinese could completely abandon their Chinese characters and embrace Malayan characters.

3.3.2 Chinese Dilemma¹¹

The Malayan Chinese in the anti-colonial period faced many problems. The commercial growth could not elevate the political status of the upper and middle class of ethnic Chinese in Malaya. On the contrary, the colonial government adopted policies to restrain the development of ethnic Chinese in Malaya. For rural ethnic Chinese, they were not only poor, but they also faced political limitations. Furthermore, the British–Communist conflict also led the rural ethnic Chinese to an embarrassing intermediate position. For the whole group of ethnic Chinese in Malaya, during the first four years after WWII, the confusion about identity was a big problem. Then after 1949, how to fight for an ideal political status in Malaya was another critical problem.

3.3.2.1 Dual Nationality Problem

¹¹ In this thesis, the Chinese dilemma is used to generalize all those difficulties the Chinese in the Malay Peninsula might face during 1945-1979, each specific dilemma that the Chinese society might face would be discussed in chapters, and the dilemmas include economic shortage, political persecution, social inequality and so on.

The difficulties of identity for Chinese in Malaya during the anti-colonial period could be divided into two stages; the first stage: 1945-1949, China-oriented stage; and the second stage: 1949-1957, naturalization stage.

a) China-oriented stage (1945-1949)

The Nationality Law of 1929 issued by the Kuomintang government regulated that people who had Chinese blood from the paternal line automatically acquired Chinese nationality. Hence, before the establishment of the People's Republic of China, most Chinese in the Malay Peninsula had Chinese nationality. The ethnic Chinese at this period still cared about China's affairs. The link between China and the Malayan Chinese had not been cut off.

Hoping to keep dual nationality was once a very popular idea among Chinese in Malaya and Singapore. The Chinese-oriented emotion was not only reflected the ethnic Chinese strong will to preserve Chinese tradition and culture through generations but also could be found in overseas Chinese political participation in China's affairs. The ethnic Chinese had polarized attitudes towards China's and Malaya's politics. Compared with the ethnic Chinese indifferent attitude towards the Malayan Union plan, ethnic Chinese attitude towards the Chinese Civil War and nation-building appeared to be too positive. The polarization of Chinese attitude towards China's and Malaya's politics was because the active participation in activities of anti-Japanese invasion united the Chinese community in the world,

especially the Malayan Chinese community. Chinese nationalism reached a peak at that time. The Malayan Chinese paid close attention to China's modern political development and even participated in China's political development since the 1911 Revolution. The Kuomintang even set up a branch in Malaya. The founder of Kuomintang, Sun Yat-Sen relied on overseas Chinese's largesse to promote China's revolution. The Malayan Chinese contribution to China's political development was reckoned. It is not hard to understand Malayan Chinese enthusiasm in China's affairs when concerning the combination of the preservation of Chinese culture and tradition, the participation in China's politics and the climax of Chinese nationalism.

From 1945 to 1949, the Chinese in Malaya had an indifferent attitude towards Malayan politics. But considering the actual situation in which Malayan Chinese were in, (they were living in Malaya and could not return China in the short term), the Malayan Chinese hoped to hold dual nationality. Malayan citizenship enabled them to live conveniently in Malaya, and Chinese nationality allowed them to return to and resettle in China. The White Paper promised that the British citizens who had acquired Malayan citizenship would not lose the British nationality, so the Chinese in Malaya thought that they could also have dual citizenship like British citizens who had Malayan citizenship. According to the result of a poll in Nam Kew Poo¹², 22,951

12 Nam Kew Poo 《南侨报》 published a poll on March, 1947, the aims of the poll were to know Chinese opinion about Malayan future political system, questions from this poll included Malayan independence, the coalescence of Malaya and Singapore, the building of Malayan nation and

respondents agreed to be Malaya's citizens but only if they could preserve their Chinese nationality. The number accounted for 95.6 percent of the total respondents (Choi, 1990, pp. 184–186). The result of the poll showed Chinese willingness to have dual nationality. However, neither the BMA nor the Kuomintang government allowed dual nationality. When the Federation of Malaya Agreement of 1948 was published, the British government defined that citizenship was not equal to nationality. Qualified Chinese could become citizens of the Federation of Malaya, but they do not have British nationality. The limitation was ascertainable in the 1948 Singaporean general election. Only British nationals could be registered to be voters, but most Singaporean adult Chinese were migrants without qualification to vote (Ratnam, 1965, p. 77). The British government worried that allowing the Chinese to vote might turn Singapore into other country's territory. The Chinese Nationalist government also did not encourage dual nationality. It adopted the Principle of *jus sanguinis* to absorb overseas Chinese and encouraged overseas Chinese to engage in China's affairs and even encouraged Malayan Chinese to abandon British nationality.

The ethnic Chinese capitalists were the first group of people to realize the importance of citizenship. The Singapore Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Malaya Chamber of Commerce and Industry had to persuade qualified Chinese to vote during the Chinese politics-indifferent period. However, the good political sensitivity did not

Chinese identity.

bring advantage to this group due to their moderate and conservative reaction to unjust policies. Once the colonial government had a tough attitude, those capitalists compromised. The Straits Chinese was also sensitive about politics. This group of people was highly loyal towards the British government and wanted to preserve their privilege when the British government planned to establish the Federation of Malaya. Yet, the British government cared more about Malays' needs instead of the needs of the Straits Chinese. The benefits of this small group of people were damaged. Moreover, the two small groups of Chinese were struggling fruitlessly to take part in Malaya's politics. Most Chinese continued to keep an eye on China's affairs before 1949.

b) Naturalization stage (1949-1957)

The establishment of the People's Republic of China was no doubt the watershed of Malayan Chinese identity. The majority of the ethnic Chinese in Malaya directly or indirectly engaged in business. "They were working within a capitalist framework and had to keep on good terms with it." (Purcell, 1965, p. 197) That must be against the PRC's political standpoint. The population of local-born Chinese surpassed the China-born Chinese and the Chinese immigration stopped for years. Thus, the Chinese in Malaya naturalized spontaneously. The constant modification of the civil law in the 1950s that involved more and more Chinese becoming citizens also provided a catalyst to Malayan Chinese naturalization.

Another crucial reason for Malayan Chinese naturalization was the PRC's attitude towards the overseas Chinese. The PRC was a communist country and its policies were incompatible with Malayan Chinese businesspeople. Besides, the Chinese communist government focused more on interior transformation. Prime Minister Zhou Enlai proposed to cancel overseas Chinese dual nationality and abandoned the principle of *jus sanguinis* in the first Chinese People's Congress in 1954. The proposal indicated that the PRC would take a non-interference standpoint towards overseas Chinese affairs. Hence, Malayan Chinese who used to stand by China's communist party during the Chinese civil war turned their interest in local issues. The uncertain destiny of the Kuomintang disappointed its Malayan members. Some of them, such as Lau Pak Khuan (刘伯群), gradually engaged actively in Malaya's politics instead of China's politics. Their political aims turned to fight for equal citizenship and to build an independent and democratic Malayan nation.

The ethnic Chinese reached an agreement to strive for legal and equal citizenship in the 1950s. However, the unity of the Malayan Chinese was too late to influence the British government's decision. The British government ignored the efforts Chinese to build an equal Malaya.

3.3.2.2 Embarrassing position between the British and the MCP

According to Victor Purcell's opinion (1965, p. 190), the ethnic Chinese in Malaya were not the majority. Therefore, it was impossible for the Chinese to take over

Malaya. Nonetheless, the British colonial government and the Malays thought differently. The special link between the Chinese diaspora and China and communism alarmed the British capitalist government and made them keep an eye on the Chinese in the Malay Peninsula. The Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS), Gerald Walter Robert Templer, once gave a public speech in a rotary club to express his dissatisfaction with the ethnic Chinese. The founder of UMNO, Onn Ja'afar', also gave several anti-Chinese speeches in public. He doubted the loyalty of the ethnic Chinese to Malaya and warned the Malays to be cautious of the ethnic Chinese China-oriented attitude. Those politicians believed that the majority of the Chinese in Malaya showed compassion towards the MCP.

However, even though the overwhelming number of members of the MCP was Chinese, the number of Chinese communists was an absolute minority. The ethnic Chinese, especially those who were living in remote areas close to the base of guerrillas, had to avoid harassment from the MCP by providing intelligence and living necessities. They kept secret for guerrillas in order to avoid revenge from them. Sometimes, they kept silence to protect their guerrilla relatives. Robert Kuok mentioned this in his autobiography (Kuok, 2017, p. 57). The whole family kept silence about William's anti-British sentiment, and William also cut off the connection with the family in order to protect the entire family. Choi (1990, p. 421) pointed out that the Chinese community kept silence about the MCP because the

ethnic Chinese received unequal treatment in Malaya. The British government stated that the ethnic Chinese presented obligations but refused to liberalize limitations to Chinese citizenship and forbade the Chinese from obtaining equal civil rights.

For the ethnic Chinese who neither supported the MCP nor stood by the authorities, their neutral standpoint brought unpredictable troubles for them. Earlier before the adoption of the Brigg's Plan in 1950, villages were burned down when the forced resettlement had been implemented, such as the village of Kachau which had hundreds of residents and seventy households; the villages of Jalong and Lintang on the Sungai Siput in Perak which had five hundred households; and a village near Batu Arang had 80 households were burned respectively (Hack, 2015, p. 617). According to episode 1 of the documentary "My New Village Stories¹³", a villager from Suangai Batu named Huang Qingqiang (黄庆强) remembered that the British government only gave them 15 minutes to pack luggage before the army burned the villages.

"The British Army drove to our plantations where we cultivated cassava and sweet potatoes. They only gave us fifteen minutes to pack.

Regardless of whether we were ready or not, once the fifteen minutes had passed,

the British army set fire to our village and then drove us to Pantai.

At first, we worried that the British army would throw us into the sea because we never heard of Pantai before."¹⁴

13 Documentary My New Village Stories played on Malaysian TV channel Astro AEC on 19 April 2009.

14 Huang Qingqiang recalled his experience to move to the first new village of Malaya, the interview has been recorded in the documentary *My New Village Stories*.

The new village was not comfortable. “We had to start our lives in a barren land, live under cloth shed which was constructed by the government and ate in the communal pot,” recounted Chen Zhuobin (陈卓彬), another villager in Sungai Batu. All those villagers got was just small barren lands (about 40-foot by 80-foot) when they resettled. Villagers should build a cottage by themselves. Besides, each person could only get 1.5 kilograms” rice per week to eat. The living environment of “new villages” was always terrible, “Chinese residents of Shanding Village in Muar District of Johor State were forcibly resettled under a clearance program.” (Hara, 1997, p. 61)

The limitation not only presented in hard living condition, but the ethnic Chinese villagers were also only allowed to work for cultivation outside the village from 6.am to 3.pm. A villager called Zhang Yunji (张韵基) disclosed, “villagers should return to the village before the access control. Such a short period was not enough to farm. Villagers had a too short time to harvest so they could only let food rot in the ground.” If villagers returned later, then they would be suspected as the MCP and be executed. 24 Chinese workers were killed on the British plantation in the village of Batang Kali due to the British military suspected they were helping the MCP on 12th Dec 1948. (Hara, 1997, p. 61) Not only the individual ethnic Chinese might be suspected, but also a whole village of the ethnic Chinese would be suspected to shield the MCP. All 2300 people from a Village in Pahang were detained in Ipoh Detention Camp because the British government blamed the villagers for the death of Sir Henry

Gurney in 1951. The village was close to the place where the MCP killed Sir Henry Gurney. Even though the British government promised to compensate their immovable property after their detention, they got nothing after they were released in 1957. “For many Chinese, such collective action looked horribly like the wartime Japanese approach of deliberately „involving innocents.” Karl Hack (2015, p. 618) commented on the collective detention during the Malayan Emergency period like this.

Both the MCP and the British government put pressure on the rural ethnic Chinese, and no one dared to refuse to cooperate. Therefore, the ordinary ethnic Chinese were living so hard between the two opposite sides. Even the MCP did not count as a large population of Malayan population, and the British army did not count as so many either, about 500,000 Chinese (one out of three of Chinese the total population) suffered from the confrontation between two sides.

3.4 The Chinese Emigration in the Anti-Colonial Period

It could be saying that the population of Chinese who sent back to China during the Anti-Colonial period is far more significant than the population of Chinese who emigrated to other countries like Australia. According to records, 309 students were pursuing Bachelor’s Degree in Australia in 1956, and “the most successful national group was Malayan, with a 93 percent pass rate.” (Oakman, 2010, p. 186) However, there were about 3000 Chinese deported to China from Malaya in only one month

(1950.12-1951.1) (Tang, 1992, p. 181). China was the major receiving country to overseas Chinese who came not only from Malaya but also other countries such as Indonesia¹⁵. This chapter will mainly focus on the returned Malayan Chinese in China in this period.

3.4.1 The General Introduction to Returned Malayan Chinese

Peterson estimated that “at least 500,000 and perhaps as many as 600,000 ethnic Chinese migrate to the People’s Republic between 1949 and 1961” (2011, pp. 3–4), Lee (2015, p. 582) conjectures that about 300,000 Chinese went back to China forcedly or voluntarily during the period between 1949 and 1959, and China provided jobs for 200,000 people among them. Teoh’s work (2018, p. 121) mentions the number of re-migrants could be half-million from 1949 to 1970. Stephen Fitzgerald (1972, p. 4) pointed out that “there were approximately 400,000 to 500,000 returned Overseas Chinese and 60,000 to 70,000 returned Overseas students.” But the certain population of the returned Malayan Chinese and their dependents was puzzled. Such a large difference in academics“ works could be understood. 1) The British colonial government only controlled immigration in the anti-colonial period. 2) Chinese in Malaya still had Chinese nationality. 3) The society in China was still very chaotic

15 Famous returned Chinese from Indonesia in the Anti-Colonial Period like the swimmer Wu Chuanyu (吴传玉) who was born in Salatiga, Indonesia and represented the Republic of China to take part in the London Olympic Game 1948.

during the second Civil War.

The diversity of emigrating reasons divided the returned Malayan Chinese into four groups: 1) the deported members/suspects of the MCP and their dependents; 2) the returned Chinese students; 3) the returned Malayan Chinese who wanted to join the construction of the new country; and 4) the returned Chinese who went back to China for making a living. They may be as old as Tan Kah Kee (about seventy-five years old) or as young as Zhu Liangliang¹⁶(about three years old). But considering the occupations and returning-motivations, most of them were about 20 or 30 years old.

Among deportees, both female and male returned. Their occupations were diverse, including guerrilla, student, journalist, farmers and so on. The returned students also included both genders. The returned Chinese who wanted to make a living in China might be the unemployed, and Chinese who wanted to join the construction might include tycoon, shopkeeper, and student and so on. Besides that, the upper class of Malayan Chinese, who held the enormous amount of property, were less likely to return except responding the Beijing's invitation or having personal reasons. The middle class of Chinese was the majority of the returned Malayan Chinese. That was because they had opportunities to accept patriotic Chinese education in British Malaya and could afford the travel expenses. For the returned Chinese who came

16 Zhu Liangliang(朱亮亮) is the Singaporean author of memoir about her family history. The book named *Chasing Rainbows* (追虹), and the time span of the book covers from late Qing dynasty to 1995. The author memorized her experience in China in 1950s.

from the lower class of Chinese, most of them had no choice but to return for relying on relatives in China.

As for transportation, most of the returned Malayan Chinese was carried by ship. Some prominent people like Tan Kah Kee (陈嘉庚)¹⁷ and Zhuang Xiquan (庄希泉) took by plane.

3.4.2 Case Study of Returned Malayan Chinese

The number of deported members/suspects of the MCP was unascertainable. According to data from the British official file, FO371/92371, almost three thousand people were deported to China from Malaya between November 1950 and mid-January 1951. The former curator of the Guangdong Museum of Chinese Nationals Residing Abroad, Wang Minghui (王明惠), mentioned that the British colonial government deported 38 batches of Malayan Chinese back to China from 1950 to 1957¹⁸. The total number is around 20,000-30,000.

Those Malayan Chinese, as mentioned above, were anti-British people who had

17 the records about Tan Kah Kee took plane could be seen through the interview with his nephew Chen Gongcun (陈共存) who was the former President of Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce.

<http://www.southcn.com.nfsq.ywhc.tbkst.shentan.200511210563.htm>

18 Wang Minghui mentioned in *Absent Without Left* (不即不离 2016). The film was made by Malaysian young director, Lau Kek-Huat (廖克发), and is completely banned in Malaysia due to its content connects with the MCP.

arrested and imprisoned in Malaya before their repatriation. Zhu wrote in her memoir about her father's arrest. Her father Zhu Zhuoqi (朱卓奇) was the director of the advertising department in Nam Kew Poo¹⁹ and was arrested by the British government on 8 March 1950 when the government sealed the newspaper. He was imprisoned in the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on the Cecil Street and then was transferred to a camp on the Saint John Island. Due to the government found letters between Zhu Zhuoqi and the Liu's, his wife's family. The father-in-law of Zhu and the young brother of Zhu's wife were imprisoned in Johor Bahru as well. The leader of the Chinese Central Government Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee (OCAO), Ho Hsiang-Ning, protested the British government arrestment to Zhu Zhuoqi on 8 May 1950 (Zhu, 2010, 150). Deng Meizhao (邓梅昭) also narrated her arresting experience and her days in a detention camp in the documentary *The Returned Overseas Chinese*²⁰. She was arrested by the British Army when the guerrilla was raided, and she was sentenced for five years at Batu Gajah prison.

All detainees realized that their detention might be permanent. The Emergency Regulation (ER) made by the high commissioner power regulated that "ER24(1) allowed a person to be held for up to 24 days while a longer-term detention order

19 A newspaper which was suspected by the British colonial government as -communist sympathetic-.

20 documentaries 《寻找归侨之路》(The Returned Overseas Chinese), made by Malaysian Pocketimes in 2018 to discover the history of the returned Malayan Chinese whom the Malaysian textbooks have left out.

(DO) was prepared under ER17(1). ER17(1) DOs allowed detainees to be held for an initial 18 months, later extended to an initial two years. Upon an order's expiry, another order could be made, and the cycle recommences." (Hack, 2015, p. 617) Therefore, detainees realized that they had two options, repatriation and endless detention. Some detainees decided to be deported. They could not return to Malaya anymore. Zhu (2010, p. 160) memorized that they went back to China by taking a Van Heutsz ship which belonged to Nedlloyd on 5 December 1950. Other interviewees also mentioned that they took ships to China in documentaries. Deportees who were deported before 1949 might be sent to areas under the control of Kuomintang, so their destiny would depend on the British government or the nationalist government²¹. After the establishment of the PRC in 1949, repatriation once stopped because shipping companies refused to send the detained Chinese from Malaya to China. Shantou was the destination to the ethnic Chinese deportees and their dependents (Tang, 1992, p. 181). In the first several months, the population of returned Malayan Chinese could reach up to 2,000 to 5,000 per month (E. H. Lee, 2015, p. 583). The Chinese government arranged jobs for them, such as the Zhus were designated to China News Service²² (Zhu, 2010, p. 185).

21 the former director of the Chinese Central Government Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee, Lu Xinyuan (卢心远) were deported to Shanghai where under the control of the Kuomintang due to the British hoped his death, but he fled by the assistance from other Chinese communists.

22 China News Service was established in 1953, it consists of about 300 workers, most of workers were returned overseas Chinese, the main job of the department is to propagate the RPC to overseas Chinese.

Returned Malayan Chinese students also took ships to go back to China. There were three reasons for students to go back to China: 1) the newly liberated China had good social order; 2) the returned overseas Chinese could have appropriate arrangements in China; and 3) there was no Chinese university in Singapore and Malaya. Liu Youxi (刘佑希) illustrated the reason why Chinese students would like to study in China in *The Returned Overseas Chinese*. The British government refused young students to enter in higher school because they held anti-colonial proposition. Other students, who had accepted the advanced education in Malaya, wanted to study in Chinese universities and joined the construction of China (Zhu, 2010, p. 185).

The Chinese government published welcoming policies towards returned overseas Chinese students. 广东省优待侨生回国生学暂行办法 (the Interim Measures of Guangdong Province preferential treatment to returned overseas students) regulated that all schools should relax the requirement to overseas Chinese students in enrollment. For students who had not been enrolled or had not taken exams, the government specially prepared tuition classes for them to study Chinese. Moreover, the government paid all the expenses, including living expenses, tuition fees, and pocket money. And even during the Three Years of Natural Disasters (1959-1961), the government supplied life necessities and non-staple foods to the returned Malayan Chinese.

“Some returned Chinese came back to China because they worried the British

government's conscription during the Malayan Emergency," Yu Ju'an (余居安) told interviewers in the documentary. Chen Wenxiang (陈文祥) was sent to China in the 1950s because his parents worried the British government would recruit soldiers²³. There were ordinary ethnic Chinese in poor living condition back to China during the anti-colonial period. The mother and uncle of a famous host in China who named A Qiu (阿丘) belonged to this group of returned Chinese. The MCP guerrilla killed A Qiu's grandparents, who were ordinary rubber planters. The great aunt of A Qiu took his mother and young uncles back to China due to young kids could not survive by themselves in Malaya.²⁴ Other important people like Tan Kah Kee (陈嘉庚), Zhuang Mingli (庄明理), Zhuang Xiquan(庄希泉)²⁵ and so on were back to China because they hoped to make contributions.

3.5 Conclusion

Emigration was one of the desirable ways to solve the current dilemma that the ethnic Chinese of Malaya met during the anti-colonial period. The ethnic Chinese expressed

23 records found through Lin Youshun's work, 1949 *改变马来半岛命运轨迹* on website.

<https://www.sginsight.com/xjp/index.php?id=4471>

24 Detailed records could be found through documentary, Where I'm Coming From (客从何处来) episode 3.

<https://v.qq.com/x/cover/tustap78es7jvx8/v0014wntjk.html>

25 Zhuang Mingli (庄明理) was former president of All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese; Zhuang Xiquan(庄希泉) was vice-president of National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

the need of keeping dual nationality because they hoped to balance their Malayan identity and their Chinese identity. At the same time, the ethnic Chinese kept silence during the Malayan Emergency period because the majority of the ethnic Chinese community held an indifferent attitude towards local politics in Malaya. At first, a large number of the ethnic Chinese did not lean to either side, and they wished to avoid direct harm from the conflict between the MCP and the British. However, both the British colonial government and the government of the PRC asked the ethnic Chinese community to choose their nationality, and both the MCP and the British demanded the ethnic Chinese society to cooperate. The two dilemmas changed the indifferent political attitude of Malayan Chinese. After struggling, most of Malayan Chinese stayed. Staying was their choice to stand by the local government and the British colonial power. The rest of the ethnic Chinese also made their decision to leave. Their leaving expressed that they stood by the communist group or the Chinese government.

Even though hundreds of Malayan students studied in Australia through the Colombo Plan in the 1950s, the scale of Colombo Plan students could not compare with the scale of Malayan Chinese who returned to China. The reasons that Malayan Chinese chose to return to China differed according to the diversity of groups of people. Deportees had no choice but to return because of their communist background. Their relatives returned because they wished to keep the family united. The returned

Malayan students went back because of the lack of Chinese university in Malaya. Those returned patriotic Chinese went back because they wanted to join the construction of China. Moreover, the returned poor ethnic Chinese went back because of the lack of living support in Malaya.

Except for Malayan Chinese who returned to China voluntarily for responding to the Beijing government's call and Chinese who returned for family reason, most of the returned Chinese had no choice but to return. The ethnic Chinese who returned voluntarily identified themselves as Chinese nationals from the beginning to the end. As for the ethnic Chinese who were deportees from Malaya, there was transforming progress of their identities. Before deportees left British Malaya, they regarded themselves as Chinese offspring. They did not realize their Malayan settlers' position until they left the peninsula. That was because Chinese education indoctrinated them Chinese nationalism and the lack of local citizenship confused their identity cognition.

Nevertheless, leaving from the familiar Malaya to the strange but ancestral motherland (China) brought a cultural shock to them. For example, China was under great social transformations in the first three decades after their return. The social transformations of China brought undesirable tribulation to the returned overseas Chinese. The returned overseas Chinese were once suspected as "spies" or cataloged as "capitalist rebels". Only after suffered a lot, the returned Malayan Chinese realized

the meaning of Malaya where they were born. The Malaya was the real homeland to them. However, the place where they redefined as “hometown” eliminated their existence and rejected their re-entry. For this group of Chinese who emigrated from Malaya to China during the anti-Colonial period, their mind attribution would be hard to define, but their political attribution was the nationals of China.

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Chapter IV: The Chinese Emigration from the Malay Peninsula in the Post-Colonial Period (1957-1979)

4.1 Historical Context (From the Federation of Malaya to Malaysia)

The independence of Malaya followed the trend of the times. Compared with the time of the independence of other British colonies in Asia²⁶, the independence of Malaya was very late. The Federation of Malaya was still under the British administration in the 1950s.

In British Malaya, the Malays developed the Malay nationalism first. This group of people established the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) to defend their ethnic interests. It was comparative late when other ethnic groups paid attention to their local interests in Malaya. The Indian had Malaysia India Congress (MIC) which once focused on Indian Independent Movement but turned to work for Malayan Independence after India gained independence in 1947. The Chinese established the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) to help the British government manage new villagers since 1949.

The three political ethnic parties united into the Alliance Party in 1951 to fight for

²⁶ Myanmar and India which were independent in the 1940s.

Malayan Independence. The Alliance Party gained the great majority of seats in the first general election for the Federal Legislative Council of the Federation of Malaya in 1955. The situation allowed the Alliance Party to negotiate with the British government about the Independence of Malaya. After the Alliance Party won support from the masses and the leaders of the Alliance Party continuously negotiate with the British, the British government had to allow the Malayan Independence. This political party formed the federal government in 1957 (Stockwell, 1998, pp. 144–145). The independent Federation of Malaya included nine states and the former Straits colonies, Penang and Melaka. Two years later, Singapore transformed from the Crown Colony to a self-government state. The People’s Action Party (PAP) which led by Lee Kuan Yew won in the first general election of Singapore.

In 1961, the plan of “Grand Malaysian Alliance”²⁷ was addressed by the first prime minister of the Federation of Malaya, Tunku Abdul Rahman. The plan tried to unite the former British colonies in the Malay Peninsula and aimed at making Malaysia be a stronger anti-communist country to confront with Indonesia, which led by the left-leaning Sukarno. This plan won the support from both the British government and Lee Kuan Yew. The British worried that once the communist won in election might cause the British to lose its military basement in Singapore (Stockwell, 1998, p. 149). At the

27 The Grand Malaysian Alliance includes Malaya, Singapore, Sarawak, British North Borneo and Brunei, the plan was mooted by Malcolm MacDonald during his term of office in Southeast Asia.

same time, Lee Kuan Yew (1998, p. 10) worried that Singapore could not survive without the support (such as providing natural resources) from the Malaya. That was why they expected Singapore to join Malaysia as a state. Tunku worried that the ethnic Chinese population in Singapore would dilute the proportion of the Malay population, so he wanted to incorporate Sarawak and the North Borneo to include more Bumiputera²⁸ population to preserve the advantage of the Malay population in Malaysia. In other words, the inclusion of East Malaysia was to strengthen Malay nationalism.

The creation of Malaysia triggered the Indonesian-Malaysian Confrontation (1963–1966).²⁹ Brunei revolted against being included in Malaysia in 1962. Moreover, the establishment of Malaysia also caused differences between the UK and the US during the Cold War period³⁰. But no matter what happened before, in 1963, after negotiations and voting, Malaysia was established, comprising the Federation of Malaya (West Malaysia), Singapore, Sarawak and the North Borneo (East Malaysia). However, Malaysia which included Singapore only lasted for two years. Singapore

28 Bumiputera ideology could represent Malay nationalism, the Malay word means -sons of the soil- which refers to the Malays and other

-indigenous- peoples. The Chinese and Indians were regarded as aliens because their migrant ancestors came from outside the Malay Archipelago.

29 A confrontation between Indonesia and Malaysia. The contradictory point is ownership of Borneo, Indonesia the complete anti-colonial country

thought the East Malaysia belongs to Indonesia, and regarded the Malaysia plan as colonial trick , but Malaysia insisted to incorporate.

30 The UK hoped the US could put pressure on Indonesia and make Indonesia give up resistance. However, the US was afraid that adopting tough attitude towards Indonesia might push Indonesia to become a complete communist country.

was voted out by the Malaysian government in 1965 due to an ideological difference between the UMNO and the PAP. The UMNO government insisted on preserving the Malays' priority in Malaysia, but Lee Kuan Yew hoped to build "Malaysian Malaysia"³¹. The federated government continued to worry that the large proportion of ethnic Chinese population might threaten the Malays' priority. Furthermore, there were two serious race riots between the Chinese and the Malays which happened in Singapore in 1964³². To avoid more bloodshed, the federated government of Malaysia decided to expel Singapore from the federation on August 9, 1965. Malaysia then consisted only of West Malaysia and East Malaysia, and Singapore became an independent nation. Because the British colonial power withdrew from the Malay Peninsula in this period, this period was concluded as the post-colonial period.

4.2 The Conflict between the Ethnic Chinese and the Malays

4.2.1 The Aftermath of Colonial History

The British colonial power withdrew and left behind unresolved problems. Serious ethnic contradictions existed and been worsened after Malayan independence. The intrinsic cause of ethnic contradiction was ideological differences, namely, the

31 Lee Kuan Yew insisted that Malaysia should be a country with ethnic equality. The term, "Malaysian Malaysia", emphasized that Malaysia was the country for all Malaysians instead of some specific ethnic groups.

32 The 1964 July racial riot and 2nd September 1964 Race Riots.

different nationalisms. Wang Gungwu proposed that Overseas Chinese nationalism was taught instead of generated spontaneously. Mauzy (2006) also pointed out that Malay nationalism was the result of the Malay elite intentional propagation. The British colonial government deepened each ethnic nationalism concept through census recording, map making and museums to institutionalize and codify the imagined ethnic image to the colonized. As Benedict Anderson had theorized (Anderson, 2016, pp. 163–185), the British colonizers deliberately diluted the features of geographical barriers, such as rivers and mountains and strengthen the concept of ethnicity. The British created the concept of the “the Malays” separated from the “Malay Peninsula,” a name originated from ancient Indian myth. Kam (2018) pointed out that the British tried to group people according to their origins, such behavior was unfair to other contributors. Except for Chinese who came from China and Indians who came from the subcontinent, others, such as Malays from Indonesia or indigenous people were mostly included in “Bumiputera.” The British authorities ignored the fact that there were distinctions within the same ethnic group even when they classified those people into the same race. For example, the ethnic Chinese had different dialect groups, and they did not unite as one race until the dissemination of Chinese nationalism in the 20th Century. The idea of the “sons of the soil”, which came up by the British, had been repeated by the Malay elite to “manipulate Malay fears and raise nationalist feeling for immediate political advantage.” (Mauzy, 2006, p. 45) In fact, the

“Bumiputera” concept denied other ethnic groups’ contributions. Even though the Chinese and Indians had been living and working on this land for generations, the two groups of people were regarded as aliens. They could not have the same sense of belongings as the Malays. The unbridled ethnic barrier was the aftermath of the British “Divide and Rule” policy.

Nonetheless, such a division did help each ethnic group find their sense of belonging as a part of each race. Japanese occupation strengthened the division further. The Japanese military government treated people differently according to different ethnic attitudes. The ethnic Chinese received the worst treatments because the Japanese wanted to punish their anti-Japanese sentiment. The Malays received better treatments because the indigenous people preferred to cooperate with the Japanese (Mauzy, 2006, p. 48). Differential treatments directly led to race riots between the Chinese and Malays after WWII. The MCP once wanted to retaliate and liquidate the Malays whom the Chinese thought were lackeys of the Japanese.

In the late colonial period, the ethnic division had not been erased at all. Fully developed ethnic nationalism during the Japanese Occupation cracked the British egalitarian Malayan Union Plan. The Malays priority status was set since the Federation of Malaya was established. Inequality between the Malays and the Chinese had caused the two races to fail to coexist peacefully.

Moreover, the British confined the two communities in different areas and the barriers

among different areas were hard to across. Far early in the British colonial period, the British colonial government allowed the Malays to own the best land for rice cultivation and the Malay aristocrats were eligible to become colonial bureaucrats.³³ Hence, the Malay elites gripped the political field, and the masses of Malays were tied to the land as peasants. The ethnic Chinese were recruited as laborers. Some of them also managed the business and acted as middlemen between the British authorities and Malay peasants. They gathered large property but could not engage in politics. The fields of engagement hardly changed since the British colonial period. The division of the two communities originated from the unequal position of the two groups in different areas. The ethnic Chinese wanted more political rights, such as freedom of speech. The Malays wanted to be rich while maintaining their priority position in politics. This division had not been resolved even decades after the colonial power left.

4.2.2 The 13 May 1969 Racial Riots

Ethnic equilibrium never existed in Malaysia. The ethnic Chinese angered about unfair treatment and the Malays fear of losing their privileged position often triggered racial discord. The Malays in Peninsular Malaysia were wary about Singapore's "Chineseness" because almost 75 percent of the island's population was Chinese. If

³³ Details about Malays' performance and attitude towards the British colonial power could be seen in J. De Vere Allen. "Malayan Civil Service,

1874-1941: Colonial Bureaucracy/Malayan Elite." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 12, no. 2 (1970): 149-78.

Singapore remained part of Malaysia, the Malays would only account for 39.4% of the population. The ethnic Chinese would then account for 42.3%, and the Chinese population would surpass the Malay population. In addition, the Malays regarded the PAP as an ethnic Chinese party which came into power in Singapore, and leaders of the Alliance government, especially the UMNO leaders, worried that the PAP could challenge their political supremacy (Comber, 1983, p. 58). The existence of Singapore made “the Malays realized that they were no longer in majority in Malaysia as they had been previously in the Federation of Malaya.” (Comber, 1983, p. 60) At the same time, racial riots broke up in Singapore frequently after the establishment of Malaysia. The federated government which was mostly comprised of Malays decided to expel Singapore to maintain social stability in Peninsular Malaysia, and to dilute the ethnic Chinese population in Malaysia.

The segregation of Singapore was not the absolute solution for Malays-Chinese ethnic conflict. It was only the expedient way to tackle the badly strained Sino-Malay problems. Ethnic conflicts would erupt in other ways because the federated government never solved the division between ethnic Chinese and Malays. The direct interpretation of the division was in economic imbalance (Comber, 1983, p. 57). Hence, after fifteen years of Malaysian independence, “Malay and Chinese emotions were rubbed raw and came dangerously close to breaking point.” (Comber, 1983, p. 62) Even if both ethnic Chinese political elite and Malay political elite agreed on

Malay advantage in politics and allowed the Malays to improve their economic position through their political advantage, their political advantages could not bring rapid economic growth to the Malay community. Lee Kuan Yew had predicted that Malay privilege would only help a small group of Malays(bourgeoisie) to gather capital, but it could not benefit the majority of Malay peasants (Fletcher, 1969, p. 59). From 1957 to 1969, the government's economic support for Malays focused on rural development. The Malays lived in rural areas and “the major concentration of Malays was in the traditional rural sector of the economy, which consisted of subsistence agriculture.” (Comber, 1983, p. 57) However, the government’s investment in rural areas and agriculture did not bring significant change to the life of the Malays. Most of the Malay population continued to live in rural areas according to the 1970 Census. Approximately 85.12 percent of the Malay population in West Malaysia was rural population. The ratio in East Malaysia was around 63.4 percent of the Malay population (Lin & Luo, 1984, p. 454). On the one hand, these policies did not only not benefit the Malays, they increased Malay poverty rate. On the other hand, the majority of urban dwellers were Chinese. They controlled modern urban sectors of the economy and had a lower unemployment and poverty rate.

Finally, the tension broke up in 1969. The first telling sign was that the Alliance barely won the Opposition party in the 1969 General Election. The supporters of the two parties (the Alliance and the Opposition) took to the street to demonstrate and

caused racial riots on 13 May. The 13 May riot spread out from Kuala Lumpur to other states, lasted for half the month and caused thousands of deaths.

Malaysian authorities and academics thought the economic imbalance was the main cause of the riots. Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad, who later became Prime Minister of Malaysia, wrote *the Malay Dilemma* to discuss this issue after the riot in the 1970s.

The government's public acknowledgment stated that the riots were the aftermath of "ethnic polarization and animosity" (Means, 1976, p. 408). Comber (1983, p. 75) suggested that the public statement acknowledged the existence of racial disharmony.

The Alliance government's armored harmony in Malaysia was smashed. The country entered into the Second Emergency. The National Operations Council (NOC) took over the country, the MCA withdrew from the government, which meant the Malays were in complete control of the national politics.

The "Malay first" basic context was defined. According to the definition, "the Malay is, first of all, a Malay, then Muslim and then a Malayan; and the Chinese first of all a Chinese then a Buddhist or Christian if he is religious and then possibly a Malayan ..." (Wang, 1992, p. 192) Not surprisingly, only the ethnic Chinese were blamed for the racial riots. Tan commented that the "so-called consociationalism of Malaysia had become increasingly more communal in the implementation of national policies, and there was no equal sharing in decision making as UMNO leaders had dominated the coalition and Malaysian politics since 1969." (Tan, 2012, p. 5) Thus,

Malaysian democracy at that time was not really a consociational democracy³⁴ which was defined as “government by a grand coalition of the political leaders of all significant segments of the plural society” (Lijphart, 1977, p. 25). Lijphart (1977, p. 153) commented that democracy and consociationalism were weak or fake due to the “limitation of the freedom of expression and the increasing political and economic discrimination in favor of the Malays.” The lesson the ethnic Chinese learned from these racial riots was that the Chinese could not deny the truth that the Malays had an advantage in the Political frame of Malaysia and that the military and police force stood by the Malays. Hence, the Chinese could only lower their political demands to accept their subordinate political status in Malaysia. Moreover, the implementation of the New Economic Policy which aimed to help the Malays to develop economically after the riots threatened the Chinese advantage in the Malaysian economy.

34 Consociational democracy can be found in countries where are deeply divided by unstable elements like race, religion or regional segment.

There were two significant characteristics of consociationalism, grand coalition and segmental autonomy. The first and most important element is government by a grand coalition of the political leaders of all significant segments of the plural society. The other two characteristics could be mutual veto and proportionality which aims to make sure the minority would not be blocked by the majority and to guarantee the plural social equality.

4.3 Malaysian Chinese in the Post-Colonial Period

4.3.1 Identity Cognition

Since the independence of Malaya in 1957, most of the ethnic Chinese in the Malay Peninsula acquired legal citizenship—approximately 86 percent of the total Chinese population (Lin, He, He, & Lai, 1998, p. 151). The ethnic Chinese in the Malay Peninsula should not have had serious identity problems since their acquisition of Malaysian nationality (there were 120,000 Chinese without nationality when China and Malaysia established diplomatic relationship in 1974). The ethnic Chinese in the Malay Peninsula generally naturalized in the independent country. People who did not identify as Malaysian emigrated out. The Straits Chinese who used to self-identify as the “Queen’s Chinese” also accepted their Malaysian identity.

This identity, however, was only limited to the political arena. The ethnic Chinese in the Malay Peninsula continued to have problems in identity cognition through the 1960s. Chinese-educated orientation led to identity cognition problems. Even when there were ethnic Chinese politicians like Lee Kuan Yew or ethnic Chinese politicians in the Federation of Malaya/Malaysia who expressed their support for further assimilation of the ethnic Chinese population into the indigenous environment and society, such as learning Malay language or English, the majority of the ethnic Chinese could not abandon their Chinese character. They developed Chinese



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Confucianism and Taoism, preserved Chinese clan houses and fought for Chinese education. In other words, permission to get legal identity and citizenship was a public acknowledgment of the Chinese as a part of Malaysian society. In the terms of the political identity, those ethnic Chinese agreed to be Malaysians or Malaysians, but they insisted on retaining their Chinese cultural identities.

4.3.2 Chinese Dilemma

The living dilemma that Malaysian Chinese faced in the post-Colonial period differed from the pressures they faced in the anti-Colonial period. During the post-Colonial period, the Chinese accepted their political identity and they were even active in engaging with local political affairs. Considering the different political parties led by Chinese that had been successfully established and the Opposition Party which concluded the Democratic Action Party (DAP) and Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia (Malaysian People's Movement Party), two Chinese majority party, almost won the general election in 1969. It was clear that the ethnic Chinese in Malaysia did try to merge into the new country and tried to participate in the political field. However, the assimilation or naturalization happened only in the political arena was insufficient. The Malay and Bumiputera preferential government expressed a demand that the Chinese should assimilate in other areas, including accepting Malays education, cooperating with Malays economically, etc.

The direct dilemma the Chinese faced was that they had to submit to the Malays“

superior status in different areas. Ethnic inequality troubled the Chinese community. Inequality forced the Chinese (the second largest ethnic group) to make concessions to the Malays in different areas. Chinese reacted by struggling, and once they could no longer stand it, some of them emigrated.

a) Political Dilemma

Before 1969, the Malayan Chinese/Malaysian Chinese were active in politics. They established different Chinese majority parties to express their political aspirations. For the ethnic Chinese, their political aspiration in the Malay Peninsula was to build an egalitarian democratic country where each ethnic community could have equal civil rights. This political dream was destroyed following the segregation of Singapore. The kind of democracy they aspired for became impossible in Malaysia. The ethnic Chinese then lowered their hope to seek for a consociational democracy. The ethnic Chinese representatives constituted a very small number of elected seats in the Federation of Malaysia, albeit the Alliance government consists of three ethnic party (Xie, 1984, pp. 65–78). The MCA did not help the Chinese to fight for better political conditions. On the contrary, the Chinese party conceded to UMNO in different aspects to preserve its status as one of the ruling parties. For instance, the MCA admitted the Malay privileged position, agreed to Islam as the state religion, and promised that Malay would be the only official language in Malaya and Malaysia. The concessions that the MCA made again and again caused dissatisfaction among

the ethnic Chinese community. In the General Election of 1969, the majority of Chinese turned to support the opposition party, Democratic Action Party((DAP), which almost defeated the Alliance.

The ethnic Chinese switching to support the DAP reflected the community's desires to have a society with racial equality and social economic justice. However, the 13 May Riot destroyed this vision. The winning UMNO leader Abdul Razak pointed out directly that the Malaysian government was based on UMNO, and therefore, the government should follow UMNO's lead. The series of policies that benefited the Malays were promulgated, including the New Economic Policy, the National Education Policy and the National Culture policy. The parliament even passed the Constitutional Amendment of 1973 to prevent an ethnic Chinese party from winning too many seats like what happened in the General Election of 1969. According to Rabushka's study (1970, p. 178), "the increased levels of education among Chinese in urban Malaya lead to an awareness that one's vote is meaningless." Hence, the longer one was educated, the less chances of one voting in Malaysia. The ethnic Chinese of Malaysia knew their disadvantage in State and Parliamentary elections, yet the non-Malay opposition political efforts could be eliminated by the Malay dominated government (Rabushka, 1970, p. 178).

Moreover, the Chinese shared a small proportion among civil servants. Most Chinese civil servants served as clerks and technicians. Fewer Chinese could be recruited as

policeman or to directly serve in a governmental department. The Chinese also had less chances for promotion in a governmental department and in the educational system. There was no Chinese president or vice president of Malaysian universities, and the proportion of Chinese lecturers continue to be very low (Liao, 2012, pp. 143–145). All signs indicated that the ethnic Chinese in Malaysia were marginalized and encapsulated. The Chinese were excluded from the Malaysian political operation process, and ethnic Chinese politics were being manipulated by other bigger political powers.

b) Economic Dilemma

Ethnic Chinese economic advantage was damaged after the 13 May Riot because the Malaysian government implemented the New Economic Policy. The policy aimed to eradicate poverty and reorganize society. However, because the Malays were the poorest group and the Malays lacked participation in Business, they became the most important target of government's New Economic Policy. In other words, the policy aimed to create a class of rich Malays.

According to the Industrial Co-ordination Act of 1975 (ICA), any manufacturing company with more than 25 workers and more than 250 thousand in capital should give Bumiputera 30 percent of the company's shares. Bumiputera workers the company hired should account for 50 percent of the company's total workforce. These limitations result in decline in the ethnic Chinese economic growth rate in comparison

with the Malays. Robert Kuok mentioned in his memoirs (2017, p. 236) that before the implementation of the NEP, the Chinese could bid for projects fairly, but after 1969, the Chinese could hardly get projects due to the Malay governmental officials' special relationship with Malay contractors.

Ethnic Chinese business development was greatly restricted in the import and export sectors and manufacturing industries in the 1970s. For example, ethnic Chinese capital used to play an important role in the Malaysian logging industry, but due to the limitations implemented by the state in the 1970s, it was very difficult for the Chinese enterprises to acquire a logging license. The Tin mining industry was traditionally controlled by Chinese since the 19th Century, however, the government implemented policies that restricted the Chinese from developing the mining industry and fostered the Bumiputera to exploit the mines. The Chinese could not acquire mines and mining license as easily as the Bumiputera. Moreover, depletion of the mines and the fall in tin price, resulted in the bankruptcy of many Chinese-operated tin mines (Liao, 2012, p. 150). The ethnic Chinese even lost control in the financial industry. Ethnic Chinese banks, such as Maybank and United Malayan Bank, came to be controlled by the Malays. The Chinese only held a small ratio of shares these former Chinese banks. The ethnic Chinese also lost their leading position in the retail industry. Some academics pointed out that massive influx of the Malay population into urban areas, resulted in them taking the jobs of vulnerable the middle- and lower-

class ethnic Chinese in the cities.

c) Educational Dilemma

Malaysia is the only country in the world with a complete Chinese education system outside of the Mainland, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. In order to insist on and support Chinese education, the whole ethnic Chinese community in the Malay Peninsula donated money through continuous process of fundraising. The existence of Nanyang University was the monument to the Chinese insistence upon Chinese education. A large number of tycoons and capitalist donated considerable money, even the board car pullers who can only live reluctantly donated all their daily wages (E. H. Lee, 2015, p. 440). Moreover, large numbers of Malaysian independent secondary schools were also sponsored by the ethnic Chinese community because the government refused to subsidize those Chinese-educated secondary schools (independent schools). Purcell pointed out that “the educational problem is undoubtedly the key difficulty in Sino-Malaysian relations.” (Purcell, 1965, p. 191) Most of the ethnic Chinese leaders and the ethnic Chinese parents insisted that education should follow the Chinese way and that children should be taught in Chinese. This was because “the Chinese-educated Chinese were afraid that the extension of the number of hours devoted to teaching Malay would render it difficult for a Chinese pupil to obtain a high standard in his own language.” (Purcell, 1965, p. 191) The Chinese language was the most important cultural symbol to identify the

Malaysian Chinese.

Although they faced radical resistance, the Alliance government never gave up naturalizing the ethnic Chinese by implementing Malay education. The government established Malay as the national language. According to the Razak Report³⁵ and the Education Ordinance of 1957, Chinese primary schools could be subsidized by the government in the same way as other national schools. However, Chinese primary school students only received 7 percent of government funding even though the number of Chinese primary students accounted for one quarter of all national students (Liao, 2012, p. 155). Aside from the lack of funding, the number of Chinese primary schools was limited. Furthermore, due to the strict restriction on Chinese teachers, the Chinese primary schools faced the shortage of teachers.

Independent secondary/high schools survived with great difficulty after the 13 May Riots because the government demanded them to change the language of instruction from Chinese to Malay. Because of this, degrees from many of these independent schools that did not pass the requirements of the national educational system were not recognized by the government.

The Malaysian government did not allow Chinese universities at all before the 1990s.

35 The Razak Report is a compromise between the Barnes Report (favored by the Malays) and the Fenn-Wu Report (favored by the Chinese and Indians), it regulated that Malay, English, Chinese and Tamil could be used in primary schools, but the secondary school could only use Malay and English as the tool of teaching, and only Malay-medium school refers to national school and subsidize by the government.

The ethnic Chinese could not enter university in Malaysia if they accepted Chinese education through the primary and secondary levels. Moreover, some people who hold degrees from Nanyang University or other Chinese universities from other countries and areas could not be admitted to the Malaysian government. The Quota system restricted the proportion of Chinese and other non-Malays who could be accepted to institutions of higher education. Only a small number of ethnic Chinese could enter into Malaysian universities even if they accepted Malay education. For example, there were a total of 25,998 Chinese students who applied for Malaysian universities in 1977 and 1978, but only 5,953 Chinese students were admitted. Approximately four out of five ethnic Chinese applicants were rejected (Liao, 2012, p. 159). In order to solve the difficulties related to the ethnic Chinese in higher education, the Chinese community planned to establish independent universities in Malaysia but failed eventually. The restrictions the Chinese faced in education meant their social mobility channels and political potential were also limited. This was a vicious circle for Malaysian Chinese survival, and the Chinese dilemma once again became the main reason that caused the ethnic Chinese to emigrate from Malaysia.

4.4 The Chinese Emigration in the Post-Colonial Period

The ethnic-based quota system promised Bumiputeras greater possibilities in entering into the civil sector, especially at the professional and managerial levels. Students

could have a better educational chance than non-Bumiputeras. In business, Bumiputeras had preferential access to governmental contracts, licenses and permits. The polarized social reality pushed the ethnic Chinese in Malaysia to find solutions. Emigration was one of the most popular choices for Malaysian Chinese.

Ethnic Chinese Emigration in the post-colonial period was different from that of the anti-colonial period. The emigrating motivations were diverse. Some emigrated to survive while others did so to find a better life or to express resentment. Yet, it is unquestionable that Chinese Malaysian emigrants emigrate spontaneously. The harsh internal political environments were the strongest push factors. The relatively relaxed external political and economic environments were the pull factors. They were not deported by the Malaysian government. They made choices based on their own will. The emigration was not always permanent as some emigrants continued to retain their Malaysian citizenship even after they have acquired residential permits or citizenship in other countries.

The destinations of the ethnic Chinese emigrants in the post-colonial period were varied. The ethnic Chinese had many other economic-boom countries/areas to select. However, returning to China had become an unrealistic choice since the Cultural Revolution had ended the possibility of overseas Chinese returning to the Mainland in the 1960s and 1970s. Popular destinations included Singapore, the UK, and Taiwan. Other destinations, such as the US or the Middle East were also selected by some

Malaysian Chinese in the late 1970s.

In addition, according to records of the *1974 WORLD POPULATION YEAR-THE POPULATION OF MALAYSIA*, more than 250,000 Malaysian Chinese (West Malaysia) emigrated out from Malaysia, and approximately 64,000 emigrated to Singapore. Up to 185,000 people chose to move to the UK, the US and other countries (Fernandez, Hawley, & Predaza, 1974, pp. 42–54). Nonetheless, Malaysian officials had never announced the number of national emigrants. All numerical databases are based on estimations. Both male and female emigrants were included among the ethnic Chinese emigrants in the post-colonial period. Male emigrants accounted for approximately 60 percent of the population of the ethnic Chinese emigrants (Kok-Eng & Nai-Peng, 2000). The age range expanded and covered babies to the elderly. The majority of emigrants were between juvenile and middle-age. Such a result could be deduced from the occupational structure since the skilled laborers and students made up the bulk of this emigration wave (Kang, 2012).

4.5 Conclusion

The intensifying ethnic tension and the series of Bumiputera preferential policies threaten the livelihood of the Malaysian Chinese. Yet, there were considerable a number of ethnic Chinese who refused to compromise to the social reality but lacked the power to fight for their rights in Malaysia. “Most Chinese naturally prefer an inclusive national identity that embodies the multicultural foundation of Malaysian society. In contrast, most Malays insist that their language, religion, and culture should be granted a privileged position in the common national identity.” (H. G. Lee & Suryadinata, 2012, p. xvi) The ethnic tension had not been eliminated in the past decades but intensified radically by politicians. The ethnic Chinese were in a weak position, so that once they had conditions, they preferred to emigrate.

The ethnic Chinese community was seriously influenced by the implementation of the New Economy policies which was the result of the contradiction between the Malay-preferential Alliance party and the Malaysian-Malaysia Opposition party. For most ordinary ethnic Chinese, politics was so far away from their daily life. Thus, they were used to keeping up with changes in politics. This meant that they could mostly accept their living situation in Malaysia. However, once the Bumiputera preferential policies were implemented, ethnic Chinese benefits were harmed. This was when the Chinese community had to reconsider an old question of whether to remain or leave Malaysia.

The emigrated Malaysian Chinese in the post-colonial period had varied options, including western countries and neighbor countries. Moreover, the emigration in the post-colonial period was a voluntary. The emigration types were also diverse. Students and working age people had greater potential to emigrate because the pro-Bumiputera quota system confined the development of these two groups of people. The middle- and lower-class Malaysian Chinese also preferred to emigrate. However, the selections of destinations were different.

Chapter V: Destination and Selection Reasons

Emigration is an individual activity, but it could be affected by various factors. The Chinese emigration from the Malay Peninsula had distinctive characteristics of the times. The choice of destination may be affected by various reasons from different eras, for example, the Malayan Chinese mainly emigrated to mainland China during the anti-Colonial period, but Malaysian Chinese preferred to emigrate to countries with better economic condition during the post-Colonial period. The attitudes of receiving and exporting countries have become the pull and the push factors that affected Chinese selections.

5.1 The Regional Characteristics of Chinese Emigrants

a) China

Choosing China as the destination had characteristics of the time because the emigration trend from the Malay Peninsula to China was mainly concentrated in the anti-colonial period. The ethnic Chinese emigrants of the Malay Peninsula identified with China to a large extent. Due to the Chinese nationalism that was propagated through the Chinese education in Malaya before and during the anti-colonial period,

Chinese teachers taught the ethnic Chinese students the Chinese nationalism and encouraged them to join the revolution and the construction of New China. Moreover, the propaganda of communism also encouraged young ethnic Chinese of Malaya to resist British rule. For those ethnic Chinese who sympathized with the communists, the establishment of the People's Republic of China invigorated their political ambitions.

The ethnic Chinese who had no distinctive political stance would also prefer to go back to China. The PRC government propagated that the society had low criminal rates and had no corruption. This propaganda attracted some ethnic Chinese to return to China because when compared with the turbulent social situation in the Malay Peninsula such as the British-MCP confrontations, a comparatively safe and peaceful social environment in the newly liberated China was more suitable to live. The Chinese communist government brought a brand-new situation to China, and the new social situation was attractive to some overseas Chinese communities. As a result, China was the prime destination for the ethnic Chinese emigrants of Malaya during

the anti-colonial period. This batch of the ethnic Chinese emigrants included Chinese patriotists, communists, students and the Chinese nationals. They generally insisted on Chinese nationalism and the Chinese identity.

b) Singapore

Singapore is a Chinese-majority country. According to Singaporean census, the Malaysian-born Singaporean residents surged from 44,878 in 1947 to 233,163 in 1980. The numbers in 1980 accounted for about 44.2 percent of all foreign-born Singaporean population (Saw, 2008, p. 72). According to the estimation of the Ministry of Human Resource of Malaysia, up to 1992, the majority of 150,000 emigrants to Singapore were ethnic Chinese (Skeldon, 1992). The yearbook of Statistics of Singapore in 2011 reckons that Malaysian Chinese emigrants accounted for 78.6 percent of Malaysian emigrants among Singapore's non-resident population.³⁶ The population of Malaysian Chinese emigrants in Singapore is really great which can be deduced from formerly mentioned data. The trend is expanding with time. In the 1970s, around 59.1percent of Malaysian-born residents in Singapore were ethnic Chinese in the 1970s. This expanded to 68.9%, 77.3%, and 85.1% in the 1980s, the 1990s, and the 2000s respectively.³⁷

³⁶ Department of Statistic Singapore, Yearbook of Statistic Singapore 2011, www.Singstat.gov.sg

³⁷ Details could be seen through Figure 1 in *How and Why Race Matters: Malaysian.Chinese Transnational migrants interpreting and Practising*

According to Sin's interview with Meiting (2015), Singapore permanent residents who came from Malaysia could provide a clear understanding of why Malaysian Chinese select Singapore as their destination. For skilled and semi-skilled workers, just as Meiting mentioned, there are three attractive reasons to select Singapore; the close geographical proximity, the historical and economic ties, and the relatively high wages (Patrick, 1992, pp. 24-25). Before Singaporean independence, people can live and travel between Malaya and Singapore without too many barriers and the two places shared the same British colonial history. In the 1960s to the 1970s, there were relatively smaller differences between the two places than in later decades. Moreover, Malaysian Chinese shared similar cultural customs. Malaysian Chinese could easily assimilate into Singaporean life, and Singaporean enterprises could afford higher wages due to Singapore's rapid economic growth in the 1970s. Another important motivation was Singapore's adoption of ethnic egalitarian policies. For Malaysian Chinese who suffered from unequal treatment in the job market, having a job in Singapore could be the most effective and economical choice if considering the costs of travel and time.

Nanyang University was the main destination for Malaysian Chinese students in the first decade of the post-colonial period. Both Singaporean Chinese and Malayan Chinese communities united as one to promote the establishment and maintenance of

Bumiputera-differentiated Citizenship, P.537, data from Department of Statistics Singapore (DOSS).

Nanyang University. Nanyang University was the first overseas Chinese university in the world. The university only existed about 25 years from 1955 (the first batch of students started to study in the university) to 1980 (the university merged with the National University of Singapore), but the existence of Nanyang University was like a monument for the overseas Chinese who insisted upon adhering to Chinese education. The history of Nanyang University epitomized the struggling history of the ethnic Chinese community in the Malay Peninsula.³⁸ The university recruited great numbers of Malaysian Chinese students after Singaporean independence. The admission of Malaysian Chinese students provided a way-out for thousands of Malaysian Chinese students from independent Chinese schools. Before Nanyang University stopped enrollment from Malaysia in 1973,³⁹ Malaysia was always the largest source of the student of Nanyang University. More than half of its students came from Malaysia in the 1960s (Ko, 2016, p. 252). Aside from Nanyang University, Malaysian Chinese parents also sent their children to obtain bilingual education in Singapore after 1965 (Ko, 2016, p. 254). Not all parents could afford long-distance expenses to support their children's higher education, but Chinese parents still tried their best to give

38 The bloody and sorrow history of Nanyang University could be learned from Van Der Kroef, Justus M. "Nanyang University and the Dilemmas of Overseas Chinese Education". *The China Quarterly*, No.20 (Oct.-Dec., 1964), pp.96-127 and Lee, En-Han. Section 5 of Chapter 16 in *The Chinese in Southeast Asia*, pp.437-451.

39 The Singapore government commanded Nanyang University to unify enrollment with University of Singapore, and to adopt English education, the university gradually became a Singapore national university instead of Chinese university. <http://www.nandazhan.com/lishijiyindA5.htm>

children a better educational environment. Hence, Singapore was an economic choice. Since the statutory exchange rate was 1:1 in the 1960s, the living costs in the two countries were almost the same. Singapore was the most popular destination for the Malaysian Chinese masses to pursue higher education in the 1960s before Singaporean economic grew rapidly in the 1970s. However, since the Malaysian government did not accept degrees from Nanyang University, many graduates chose to pursue other degrees in other countries after graduation. Most of the Malaysian Chinese graduates engaged in business if they chose to return to Malaysia since their degree was unaccepted for employment in the civil sector and professional areas.

Singapore attracted massive Malaysian Chinese students during 1965-1970. However, with the industrial transformation in the 1970s, the exchange rate changed. Singaporean dollars became valuable and Singapore became more attractive to skilled workers rather than students.

c) the UK

The overseas Malaysian Chinese students' community in the UK mostly consisted of middle-class Malaysian Chinese. According to Sin's interview data (2009), all non-Bumiputera paid their own school fees in Britain, but the Malays get scholarships from the Malaysian government. Considering the high living expenses and international tuition in the UK, it was usually available only to people of higher economic classes. Brown (1995) described "educational parentocracy" as the need for

financial support from parents that led to children's education ultimately lay in the hands of their parents. For parents who experienced the colonial period, they admired the British education system, beliefs and values. They believed that British education was an elite education (I. L. Sin, 2009).

Sin (2009) mentioned that "taking up western higher education abroad can be a strategy for status maintenance and upward mobility among middle-class individuals and families." The great capitalists, such as Robert Kuok, who had a business empire in Malaysia, must have a good relationship with the Bumiputera government so that they could even influence the country in some way. Hence, they did not lose too much due to the NEP. They might even find opportunities to expand their business during a special period. For the lower-class Malaysian Chinese, on the other hand, the big social transformation must bring side-effect to them. Nonetheless, their losses would not be as large as the middle-class Chinese. Compared with the other two classes of Malaysian Chinese, the middle-class Chinese had the heaviest sense of crisis. That was why the middle-class Malaysian Chinese were more committed to emigrating since the 13 May Riots.

The emigrating tendency towards the UK was popular in the colonial period. The preference continued after the independence of Malaya. Choosing the UK was based on historical consideration to a large extent. The British colonial government not only left the tricky ethnic division in its colony but also gave people from its former colony

convenience to study and live in Britain. “Malaysians who are citizens of the UK and colonies and who qualify under birth naturalization or residential requirements enjoy the right of abode (ROA)⁴⁰in the UK.” (Y. K. Sin, 2015) The ROA means that qualified Malaysian Chinese have freedom from the UK immigration control, and Malaysian Chinese can live and work freely in the UK. Even the children of qualified people enjoyed the ROA. The relatively loose immigration law in Britain provided convenience for Malaysian emigrants.

Aside from the ROA migrants, there were three types of Malayan/Malaysian Chinese immigrants in the UK: 1) labor immigrants who were the main workforce of Chinese restaurants in Britain in the 1950s; 2) professional immigrants who accepted English education and came from wealthy Malayan/Malaysian families; 3) Nurses who were recruited by British hospitals. There were also three legal popular immigrating routes to Malayan/Malaysian Chinese: British secondary and tertiary education, working holiday and indefinite leave to remain (ILR) status.

d) Australia

Since Australia abolished the “White Australia Policy” in the 1960s and adopted a policy of multiculturalism in the 1970s, it became a very popular emigration destination too. According to Hugo’s study, Malaysian Chinese emigration to Australia increased rapidly since the 1970s. Those Malaysian Chinese emigrants who

⁴⁰ The Right of abode was introduced by the Immigration Act 1971 of the UK. The law was implemented in 1973 and last for ten years.

spoke Chinese at home but could also speak good English. They were well-educated and had higher skill levels. Most of them were of working age and approximately 56% worked at the management level (Hugo, 2011). Collins and Reid also concluded that the Malaysian-born Chinese had a good proficiency in English. They were over-represented in the para-professional occupation with a lower rate of unemployment. Most of them have a median income (Collins & Reid, 1995, pp. 9–10). The representative of Australian Malaysian-born Chinese is Wang Gungwu who worked as the Director of the Far Eastern History Department of the Australian National University and the Dean of the Pacific Institute in 1968.

In 1958, the dictation test was abandoned, and the entry restrictions were relaxed. There continued to be massive Malaysian Chinese migration to Australia. However, in the 1970s, there was an increase in Malaysian students due to the abolition of the White Australia Policy. Universities in Australia encouraged Asian students to enroll. At the same time, the implement of the Australian-Chinese Family Reunion Agreement in 1976 attracted massive Chinese migration, including Malaysian Chinese families. It was clear that Malaysian Chinese entered into Australia through education and family reunion. One of the most famous official emigration routes for the Malaysian Chinese was the Colombo Plan. Nonetheless, the Chinese could hardly study abroad in Australia through the Colombo Plan due to the Bumiputera preferential policy. The Malays occupied the majority of places in this plan.

Malaysian Chinese who studied in Australia had to rely on family support and the family of Malaysian Chinese students could reunion after students settled in Australia.

e) Taiwan

Taiwan suddenly became a popular destination for Malaysian Chinese students in the 1970s. The independent Chinese school movement spread over Malaysia in the 1970s. Malaysian Chinese communities established the principle of Chinese education. Yet, on the one hand, the Malaysian authorities did not allow the existence of independent Chinese universities. On the other hand, Nanyang University was also under pressure from the Singaporean government and finally stopped accepting enrollment from Malaysia. Chinese students who accepted English education or bilingual education could go to western countries, but Chinese-educated students needed a place to finish their higher Chinese education. China closed the door, and China's harsh political environment was not suitable for Malaysian Chinese students. Hence, Taiwan was the best choice for Chinese-educated students in the 1970s.

The Taiwan government continued to adhere to the *jus sanguinis* concept from the Nationalist government and allowed dual nationality. Therefore, all Malaysian-born Chinese could be considered citizens of Taiwan. No matter which financial condition they had, Malaysian Chinese-educated students could acquire higher education in Taiwan. There was one influential association of Taiwan alumni in Malaysia named as The Federation of Alumni Associations of Taiwan Universities, Malaysia

(FAATUM).⁴¹ More than a hundred thousand Malaysian Chinese went to Taiwan for education. Unfortunately, degrees from Taiwan were not recognized by Malaysian authorities either.

5.2 The Selection Reasons for Destinations

5.2.1 Political Reasons

Chinese political groups in the Malay Peninsula could be divided into three groups according to Wang Gungwu's theory (1970). Group A were those who kept a direct and indirect connection with China. They always concerned their common destiny with China. Group B were those who focused more on trade and social community. They maintained the image of the apolitical Chinese. Group C were those who were loyal to local authorities and had been naturalized to some extent. They cared more about local affairs. The ethnic Chinese might be mobile among the three political groups. The scale of each group might be changed at different times.

a) Anti-Colonial Period

Group A was the strongest one in the anti-Colonial period as the consequence of the development of Chinese nationalism. Before 1950, Chinese identity included both "Historical identity" and "Chinese nationalist identity." "Historical identity"

41 The general introduction and history could be traced from <https://www.faatum.com.my/about/about-faatum/>

emphasized traditional family values, primitive elements such as the origin of the clan and the loyalty of the ethnic branch. It was an emotional core that was derived from the Chinese family system and the origin of the family. The "Chinese nationalist identity" of the ethnic Chinese was inspired by nationalism from China in the 1920s and 1930s. Chinese nationalist identity was trained instead of self-developed. Chinese education and Chinese propaganda consolidated their identity. Since this "historical identity" was backward, there were very few claims. Local colonial officials and upper-class aborigines could tolerate ethnic Chinese in this way of maintaining Chinese attributes. But the "Chinese nationalist identity" was political. The Sino-Japanese War and Japan's invasion of Southeast Asia have made this identity even stronger and more emotional (Wang, 2013, pp. 294–313). The "Chinese nationalist identity" among Chinese communities in the Malay Peninsula was like a bomb that could explode at any time. It caused concerns among both the British colonial government and the Malays.

The ideological differences and "Chinese nationalist identity" caused the tendency of Chinese emigration from the Malay Peninsula during the anti-Colonial Period. The destination was largely singular for the same reason. Aside from members of the MCP who were deported by the British colonial government, the ethnic Chinese who were called by the Beijing government as patriotic democrats also returned to China during the anti-Colonial period. Choi listed 18 of 24 leaders of the China Democratic

League in the Malay Peninsula returned to China between 1948 and 1950s (Choi, 1990, pp. 88–91). The political divisions between Malayan Chinese and the British colonial government could trigger such a large scale of emigration mainly because group A people engaged the most active in politics and were affected most directly.

b) Post-Colonial Period

In the post-Colonial period, the identity cognition problem was partially resolved. Most of the ethnic Chinese transferred from group A to group C. At first, the result of the general election of 1969 was proof of how Malaysian Chinese struggled to take part in Malaysia politics. The ethnic Chinese-led parties, Democratic Action Party and Malaysian People's Movement Party won half the seats. However, Chinese enthusiasm for Malaysian politics was reduced after the 13 May Riots. The ethnic riots destroyed the Chinese imagination of the possibility of building an egalitarian community. The ethnic Chinese lost their political passion after the riot. A large number of ethnic Chinese were then transformed from group C into group B.

Chinese civic ambition was smashed after a series of pro-Bumiputera policies were implemented since the 1960s. The Chinese community discerned the standpoint of Malaysia government and lamented Chinese political status as “second-class citizen” in Malaysia. The preferential policies towards the Bumiputera were responses to the 13 May Riots and resulted in Chinese negative perception towards the government. The governmental solutions in some ways admitted the existence of radical ethnic

tension in Malaysia. The historical lesson taught the Chinese community that this kind of riots could happen at any times. Disheartened Malaysian Chinese from both group B and group C emigrated from Malaysia due to their concerns about social insecurity and their distrust towards the Malaysia government.

5.2.2 Cultural Reasons

For Chinese diaspora who had emigrated from China for generations, their ability to accept and digest different cultures was strong. The adaptation of the strange environment and culture promised most ethnic Chinese in the Malay Peninsula could settle and thrive for generations. Unlike Chinese immigrants to the Malay Peninsula before 1945 who migrated to survive, Chinese emigrants from the Malay Peninsula after 1945 mostly wanted to search for a more suitable environment. The education which Chinese accepted might influence their selection.

a) Anti-Colonial Period

The popularization of Chinese education in the 1920s and 1930s paved the way for Chinese emigrants from the Malay Peninsula after WWII because Chinese nationalism and communism had spread through Chinese education. Many patriotic overseas Chinese returned to China to join the construction of the new country. Chinese education became the bond between the Malayan Chinese and China. The special bond provided the Malayan Chinese a sense of belonging when they faced

obstacles to acquiring legal citizenship in the Malay Peninsula.

b) Post-Colonial Period

Education in the post-Colonial period also affected the ethnic Chinese selection of destinations. Chinese-educated migrants tended to go to places that could provide higher Chinese education. English-educated Chinese preferred to complete their study or find jobs in English speaking countries. Both Chinese-educated and English-educated Chinese could live in Singapore because Singapore had comparatively equal Chinese and English environment. Singapore was the main destination country for many Malaysian Chinese emigrants. Non-Malay education allowed the Chinese to have other life options. Each specific non-Malay education influenced their selection of destination.

5.2.3 Economic Reasons

Considering the cost of travel, long-distance emigration was not an economic selection for many Chinese. Not all emigrated Chinese had the ability to afford expensive traveling expenses (by ship), not to mention to afford plane tickets. Travel expenses to the destination country also affected the ethnic Chinese decision for emigration.

a) Anti-Colonial Period

China was not a destination too far to arrive, but it took a few days by boat from

Malaya. According to Zhu Liangliang's memoir, She and her family boarded the ship on December 5, 1950, and arrived in Shantou through Hong Kong in mid-December (2010, pp. 160–162). Almost all deported Chinese and returned Chinese should take ships to Shantou then move to other Chinese cities. This traveling route was the most common one for Malayan Chinese emigrants. Only some important persons were picked up by the Beijing government's plane. Traveling to China could be expensive, which was why some families had to be dispersed between the two places (Malaya and China). The economic condition limited Chinese ability to travel including the distance of travel and the transportation methods.

b) Post-Colonial Period

The Chinese emigrants in the post-Colonial period could be divided into two groups. Those who were in good economic condition preferred to study or work in the UK, Australia and other developed countries, the traveling expenses would not bring much trouble to them. Those who were in poorer economic condition tended more to go to Singapore because they did not need to suffer a long-distance journey and there were varied transportation ways to choose. Not surprisingly, the majority of emigrated Chinese in the post-Colonial period went to Singapore.

Except for emigration expenses, whether the ethnic Chinese could develop their business in the destination was another aspect the group of emigrated ethnic Chinese needed to concern. The ethnic Chinese capitalists and businessmen would not like to

transfer their capitals to communist China. Other capitalist countries and area might be a smarter choice.

5.3 The Attitude of the Receiving Countries and the Exporting Country

5.3.1 The Attitude of China and British Malaya in Anti-Colonial Period

Not all Chinese who went abroad from the Malay Peninsula in the anti-Colonial period could return to the Malay Peninsula. For people who emigrate to other places aside from China, they had the possibility of keeping their Malayan citizenship in case they wanted to come back. However, people who emigrated to China, the emigration was automatically permanent once they left the peninsula. All interviewees from the documentary *寻找归侨之路* (*The Returned Overseas Chinese*) mentioned that they could not return to the Malay Peninsula if their birthplace was written as Malaya. Yu Juan (余居安) who returned to China for education pointed out that when they left Malaya, their Malayan IDs were nullified. Such a nullification meant that all those returned Chinese then became citizens of China. British Malaya gained independence after those returned Chinese“ left in 1957. Malaysia established the diplomatic relation with the PRC in 1974. Those returned Malayan Chinese could not revisit the peninsula where they were born before 1974. Even in the 1980s when the two countries allowed nationals to travel freely, those

who were Chinese nationals but used to be citizens of Malaya still could not visit Malaysia. According to interviews, those interviewees could only meet their Malayan relatives in Singapore during the 1980s. Those Chinese who had left Malaya for more than 40 years could step into the territory of Malaysia in the 1990s only when they revised their birthplace from Malaya to China.

All interviewees mentioned that they never thought that they would not be able to come back to Malaya once they left. They sang a song which expressed their desire to come back called 告别马来亚 (*Goodbye, Malaya*)⁴² when they were shipped to China. However, the British government and the later Malaysian government did not think that way.

“今夜别离你, 奔向艰苦搏斗的中原(I have to leave for China to join the war)

我们默默在怀念, 美丽的马来亚(We miss the beautiful Malaya silently)

我们第二的故乡(Our second hometown)

...

马来亚哟, 马来亚哟 (Malaya, Malaya)

我们还要回来, 要回来(We will come back, come back)

在那晨鸡报晓的时候(In the morning when the rooster is crowing)”⁴³

The departure of the ethnic Chinese from the Malay Peninsula during the anti-

42 the song 《告别马来亚》(Goodbye, Malaya) was written by Yang Li and Yang Guo, and it was a popular song among the Malayan communists.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6yH29wJ5U0>

43 Partial lyrics of the song, *Goodbye, Malaya*.

Colonial period was regarded by the government as permanent leaving. The government encouraged such emigration to China. The British colonial government and the latter Malaysian government adopted the same attitude towards the MCP so as to eliminate them. The British government worried that the existence of the MCP might threaten the stability of the government's rule in Malaya. Therefore, the colonial government considered repatriating those radical and left-leaning people would be a good method to eliminate the diffusion of communism. The scare of communism could be observed in the British colonial government's attitude towards the Beijing government. Although the British government had admitted the legality of the Beijing government, the British colonial administration kept a conservative attitude towards the Beijing government. Such a reservation was reflected in the British colonial administration refusal to allow PRC diplomatic representative to Malaya and Singapore. The British colonialists were worried that the Malayan people would misinterpret the colonial government's intentions. Agreeing with the appointment of diplomatic representatives might give common people the illusion that the government allowed or even supported the communist insurgency in the colony. In order to avoid such a misunderstanding that might jeopardize British interests in the colony, the British colonial administration postponed the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Beijing government as long as possible (Tang, 1992, pp. 172-174). Furthermore, nullifying the returned Chinese ID after repatriation was

another indication of British anti-communist standpoint. The later Malaysian government adopted similar methods to express the anti-communist proposition towards the returned Chinese by refusing their re-entry.

An interviewee named Xu Yujiao(徐玉娇) recalled her experience in the documentary *The Returned Overseas Chinese*:

“I studied in the university in Kunming. My mother wanted to see me, so she applied for a permit for me at the immigration department.

I was also applying for my passport here so that I could go back to Malaysia to visit my family. The Chinese government had approved, but the Malaysian authorities rejected me.”

China as the receiving country encouraged overseas Chinese to protect themselves. Ho Hsiang-Ning announced through New Year broadcast that overseas Chinese must strengthen their unity to oppose the imperialists’ persecution (Fitzgerald, 1972, p. 86). The attitude expressed by the Beijing government encouraged the Chinese in Malaya to struggle for their proper rights and interests might have caused the British colonial government’s suspicion of whether or not the Beijing government intended for the ethnic Chinese in Malaya to join the communist struggle or if the Beijing government were secretly supporting the MCP (Fitzgerald, 1972, p. 94). At the same time, deportees were permitted to return to China. Such an attitude was equivocal to both Chinese in Malaya and the British colonial government. So soon the Beijing government adopted a steadier attitude towards the Chinese in the Malayan

insurgency. That is, to simply call on them to protect themselves in 1951.

En-Han Lee suggested that the Beijing government had already realized that the overseas Chinese might be a big obstacle in building diplomatic relationships with Southeast Asian countries. This consciousness meant the overseas Chinese affairs had become a burden to China's diplomacy. The new country started to think that diplomatic interests should take priority over overseas Chinese interests. Consequently, the Beijing government stopped allowing dual nationality and abandoned the principle of *jus sanguinis*. Fitzgerald (1972, p. 106) commented that such behavior was not just a compromise to the country where overseas Chinese had settled but also meant that China admitted the bond between overseas Chinese and the host country was stronger the ties between China and overseas Chinese. That was why the People's Republic of China encouraged overseas Chinese to fight for local citizenship and engage in local affairs. Alienation from the overseas Chinese reduced the newborn country's diplomatic pressure. The encouragement of localization or naturalization was also in order to decrease the Kuomintang government's influence on overseas Chinese. Zhou Enlai once indicated that the Chinese in Malaya and Singapore had better acquire the local citizenship for Malaya and Singapore. If someone wished to preserve his Chinese nationality, then he had better not intervene in local political affairs.

5.2.2 The Attitude of the Destinations and the Federation of Malaya/Malaysia in the Post-Colonial Period

The Federation of Malaya and Malaysia government kept silent about the loss of the Chinese population. Specifically, the government had never published the accrued data of this lost population. The Chinese brain drain is becoming a more significant trend in Malaysia today. Kang pointed out that the Chinese brain drain is not only conspicuous in Malaysia; the loss of Chinese capital from this county has also been quite significant. Such a huge scale of loss of ethnic Chinese in Malaysia impeded Malaysia's economic growth and the country's development (Kang, 2015, pp. 224-225). But the pro-Bumiputera government has not taken effective methods to stop the loss of ethnic Chinese population and Chinese capital. On the contrary, according to the Malaysian Economic Monitor report of 2010, the brain drain from Malaysia has been considerably serious. There is a constant loss of high-skilled Malaysian population and the ethnic Chinese accounted for the largest proportion. Yet, the Malaysian government accepted massive low-skilled immigrants from Indonesia instead of retaining the loss of high-skilled emigrants⁴⁴. There is a significant gap between high-skilled emigrants and low-skilled immigrants. The gap alluded to the

44 The World Bank, Malaysia Economic Monitor: Brain Drain, April 2011. <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMALAYSIA/Resources/324392->

fact that the Malaysia government's work towards retaining talents has been futile. Although the number of ethnic Chinese emigrants remains comparatively small compared to the whole Malaysian Chinese population, "a small exodus of such personnel from Malaysia can create a big impact because of the limited pool of experienced professionals in key industries" (Patrick, 1992, p. 28).

The Malaysian government insistent on Bumiputera preferential policies was the main cause of talent loss in Malaysia. However, there has been no sign to indicate the government's willingness to abolish those policies. Instead, the Malaysian media reported that "emigration would be equated to an act of disloyalty." The Prime Minister of Malaysia once publicly expressed that emigrants who gave up their citizenship will not be able to get it back (Y. K. Sin, 2015). The renunciation of Malaysian citizenship is an irreversible act in Malaysia. The Malaysian government adopted a tough attitude towards emigration, and that caused the thrust to make the emigration become permanent.

As a recipient, each immigrant country has adopted a welcome attitude towards immigrants from Malaysia. For emigrants especially professionals, they wanted a good environment to live in which includes better wages and working condition, and fairer opportunity structure for them and their children. The capability to enjoy high earning that was not satisfied in Malaysia due to the lack of egalitarian policies and the lack of economic development. However, those developed countries had the

capacity and willingness to absorb such a large number of middle-class people from Malaysia and to provide a higher quality of life, personal liberties and good education system (Gunasekaran & Sullivan, 1990, p. 50). The Singapore job market also faced the gap between high-skilled and low-skilled workers. Nonetheless, its egalitarian political environment and high-speed economic growth, especially since Singapore transformation into the developed industrialized country since the 1970s, attracted massive immigration from Malaysia to make up the gap. Australia abolished the “White Australia Policy” in the 1960s and adopted multicultural immigration policy in the 1970s to welcome multicultural immigrants from Asian countries. The UK, the former colonial government encouraged immigration from former colonies since the implementation of the British Nationality Act of 1948 gave all Commonwealth citizens free entry into Britain. And in order to welcome Asian immigrants, the British had “developed a substantial body of race relations legislation, Various Race Relations Acts to provide a salutary basis for stamping out racial discrimination”⁴⁵. The Taiwan government also promulgated a series of pro-overseas Chinese educational acts to help Malaysian Chinese students receive Chinese education in Taiwan since the 1960s⁴⁶.

45 Details could be seen through The National Archive, Exhibitions, Citizenship, Brand new world, postwar immigration.

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/pathways/citizenship/brave_new_world/immigration.htm

46 Details could be found through the 16th Chapter of *the Seventh Education Annual Report of the Republic of China*

https://www.naer.edu.tw/ezfiles/0/1000/attach/32/pta_5465_3341027_23799.pdf

Chapter VI: Conclusion

During the period between 1945 and 1979, the Malay Peninsula was under a chaotic and turbulent social condition. Major social transformations such as the Malayan Emergency, Malaya's independence, Singapore's independence, and the 13 May Riots all happened during this period. The social contradictions in the Malayan/Malaysian society also posed major problems. The ethnic Chinese community which was a part of local society in the Malaya Peninsular was unavoidably affected. Because different social contradictions were becoming radical, the Chinese neutral position or uninvolved attitude was untenable. The social transformation progressed and entangled the ethnic Chinese into worrying whether or not they could be safe and survive. The acute social contradictions demanded the ethnic Chinese to select a side to stand. The people who decided to stay has been well studied, but those who decided to leave also deserve to be studied.

American economist Charles Tiebout once brought up the idea "foot voting" to help explain people's migration (Tiebout, 1956). People can choose any place to live voluntarily, and each place's pros and cons reflect on people's choice. For the ethnic Chinese who emigrated from the Malay Peninsula, their emigration reflected not only their disagreements with the authorities and the living conditions in the Malay Peninsula, but also illustrated that they were helpless and had no choice but to emigrate. In some way, their emigration was originated from the damage to their neutral position. Once the neutral position of the Chinese became untenable, the ethnic Chinese community had to make a choice. Emigration was one kind of selection.

At first, the local authorities were careless or even happy about the Chinese emigration. Nonetheless, due to the emigration trend that kept expanding for decades, the Malaysian media alarmed the society about the expanding trend and the government finally is alerted to promulgate related policies to retain Malaysian talents today. However, comparing with the scaled of brain drain, the number of returning Malaysian is too small to mention.



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Those emigrated Chinese no matter in anti-colonial period or in post-colonial period expressed their love for the Malay Peninsula where they lived for many years. Those Chinese expressed their nostalgia towards Malaya/Malaysia through public media including newspapers, television interviews, documentaries and books. Interviewees confessed their nostalgia in the interviews of the documentary *The Returned Overseas Chinese*.

Deng Meizhao (邓梅昭) was crying:

“What did my mother come to do when she was visiting me in prison? Nothing but scolding. „It’s so difficult to raise you, and you just dumped your family like this!“ I cried and confessed my sin to her. I really regretted.”

I was told those deportees would never come back to Malaya again. Then I said to my mother, „I’ll be deported, and you just assume that I’m dead.“ (chokes with sobs) ... the most regretful thing I did in my life is I said this sentence to my mother. She must have felt very hurt. (she shook her head and wiped her tears)”

Zhang Ping (张平)⁴⁷ said firmly:

“I didn’t want to leave. I was crying along. I know I have a sensitive identity, but I must come back... In the daytime, I’m in China, but I assume that I’m in Malaya at night. I have been dreaming about my old days in Malaya.”

The existence of this paradox is because “Malaysia” or “Malaya” was not a nation or country concept for those emigrated Chinese. Instead, the tie between the emigrated Chinese and Malaysia/Malaya the place they left could not be easily cut off because their family and their childhood still remained there. The “experience of growing up, personal and familial social networks and similar values and characteristics shared by an imagined ethnonational community,” (Y. K. Sin, 2015) those sentiments comprised people’s characters, tempers and memories, those metal components could not be erased as easily as when their nationality was nullified.

Although cutting off the bond between individuals and Malaysia/Malaya was almost impossible, those Chinese individuals still insisted to emigrate. The motivations behind their emigration have been discussed in former chapters. It is not difficult to find that the generally harsh environment should be responsible for their emigration. When the Chinese are in a minority too weak to insist the group’s proposition, some of the Chinese could tolerate and stay, but some of them, normally the most aggressive or those with the most potential choose to leave. One emigrated Chinese

47 Another one interviewee in the documentary *The Returned Overseas Chinese*, she was one of the Malayan communists and was deported to China when she was around 23.

named Menghong claimed himself as “refugee” in Sin’s interview to express his or the whole Chinese diaspora community’s predicament when they lived in Malaysia as “second-class” citizens. Bumiputera differentiation was a real and structuring factor that affected all aspects of life. It did not defeat them totally, but the resigned acceptance that things will not change brought despair to this ethnic community. The hopelessness was the true motivation to “force” more and more ethnic Chinese to emigrate out of Malaysia. Menghong may be the representative of Malaysian Chinese. He suggested that the harmony between the ethnic Chinese and the Malays could only be achieved in other countries. In Malaysia, ethnic harmony could not be achieved at all. Ethnicity or race should not have caused any trouble in people’s lives, but the intention to differentiate people according to their “race” does bring harm to people’s living.

The ancestors of the emigrated Chinese from the Malay Peninsula once came to the peninsula in order to have a better life. Yet, the dream was shattered in this place. The descendants of those Chinese immigrants searched for another place to have a better life. The concept of “better life” means relatively small difficulty in survival or the maintaining of a standard of living. Over the decades, ethnic Chinese in the Malay Peninsula kept struggling for equal and full citizenship rights. Nonetheless, they have been continually denied access to it. Whether their emigration or their settlement in other countries is temporary or permanent depends on whether the destination satisfies their demands or not.

The emigrated Chinese of the Malay Peninsula had diverse interpretations of the concept of “home” in the anti-colonial period and the post-colonial period. One critical element that the emigrated Chinese of Malaya connected with “home” was “citizenship”. The absence of local citizenship in Malaya had a distinctive effect on the ethnic Chinese emigration from Malaya. The local citizenship was an official acknowledgment from the Malayan government. Its existence represented that the local government admitted the legal status of the ethnic Chinese and provided protection to the ethnic Chinese. However, the restrict local citizenship law harmed the ethnic Chinese belongingness to Malaya. Those ethnic Chinese who did not have citizenship were not under the direct protection of the Malayan government. The lack of citizenship led to the sense of unease. The emigrated Chinese of Malaya related

“home” to a place where they could have legal citizenship in the anti-colonial period. The notion of “home” in the post-colonial period was different from in the anti-colonial period. The emigrated Chinese of Malaysia linked “home” with equality to the greatest extent. Ethnic equality includes equal civil rights and equal opportunities. The Malaysian government’s Bumiputera preferential policies suppressed the development space of the ethnic Chinese. Good educational opportunities and good employment opportunities were given to the Malays to a great extent. Yet, the ethnic Chinese and the Malays were less likely to compete equally. The Malays enjoyed priority in different aspects of life in Malaysian society. This made the Chinese uneasy about their subordinate position. That was why the emigrated Chinese of Malaysia thought highly of equality in relations to the concept of “home”.

Considering the similar elements when interpreting “home” in the anti-colonial period and in the post-colonial period, it could be concluded as “the sense of safety.” Both the lack of citizenship and the lack of social equality brought about the absence of a sense of safety in the ethnic Chinese society of the Malay Peninsula. Moreover, social instability that those radical social contradictions caused, such as the British-MCP confrontation and the 13 May Riots, was also major concerns of the ethnic Chinese. As a result, the emigrated Chinese of the Malay Peninsula would prefer to find a “home” where there was good social order.

In general, the interpretation of “home” must combine the three elements, citizenship equality and social stability.

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