

## GUEST EDITORS' PREFACE

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This special issue contains the proceedings of the workshop on overseas Chinese in ASEAN countries, which was sponsored jointly by Ford Foundation and De La Salle University. It was held from 24th to 28th June, 1974 at the Magellan Conference Room of Bayview Hotel. The purpose of the workshop was to contribute to efforts towards encouraging Chinese communities in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand to give their constructive share in nation-building, and towards reducing ethnic tensions between them and the host peoples. (The participation of Singapore was essential in providing the view-point of its Chinese majority.) Participants were asked to present either an annotated bibliography on completed or ongoing research on overseas Chinese in their country, or a paper that elaborates on the methods, data, and findings of particular research projects which they have conducted. They also exchanged notes on prospective joint projects.

It was the request of Ford Foundation that the workshop be limited to the participants, in order to allow freer and more intensive exchange of research findings and ideas. At the most, six observers from institutions already represented by the delegates were invited.

### *Participants*

Professor Benito Lim of the Philippine Centre for Advanced Studies read a paper on the contemporary Philippine-Chinese, Ms. Teresita Ang of the Philippine Centre for Advanced Studies reviewed the local literature on the subject. For Thailand, Dr. Boonsanong Punyodyana of Thammasat University (he later became head of Thailand's Socialist Party) read a paper and Parichart Sukhum's bibliography. Indonesia was represented by Dr. Hari Poerwanto of Gadjah Madah University. Dr. Png Poh-seng of Singapore University discussed Malay-Chinese relations in the country and the racial policies of his government. Dr. Lau Teik Soon of Singapore University's Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, and now Minister of Parliament analyzed the implications of the recognition of China on the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia.

Professor Yew Yeok Kim of the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia was taken ill and could not come, but he sent a copy of his paper to the workshop.

Observers whom Ford Foundation invited to the workshop were Professor Chinben See of the Academia Sinica; Dr. Raymond Apthorpe of United Nations Development Program; Dr. Peter Rose, consultant of Fulbright-Hays Foundation; Dr. Edilberto de Jesus of Asian Institute of Management; and Minister Chanchai Ungpakorn of the Thai Embassy. An invitation was also extended to Ambassador Rosario Manalo of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Unfortunately, she was out of the country during the workshop.

### *Topics*

Among the particular subjects discussed were the following:

1. Particular challenges for the researcher on the Southeast Asian Chinese communities: the questionnaire, the interviews, their personal qualifications and preparation in techniques, safeguards on the use of information, ways in which trust can be won and maintained.

2. Indigenous images of the overseas Chinese: current changes in stereotypes, reasons for the changes, structures and means for bringing about a more representative image.

3. Demographic characteristics of the overseas Chinese: statistical discrepancies, definitions and classification, urban (and ghetto) concentration, birth-rate, the myth of high Chinese fertility, emigration, brain drain.

4. Economic commitment of the Nanyang Chinese: his role as economic man, the needs and dangers of this role, his contribution as entrepreneur and financier; his record as middleman for Western and Japanese investors; his capital and family remittances.

5. The assimilability of the Chinese: aspirations for cultural pluralism and limits to those aspirations which the host people deem necessary; the options of the Nanyang Chinese; current trends in the speaking, reading, and writing of Chinese languages; the present picture of formal Chinese schooling, of China Studies programs, of Chinese communal institutions and associations, and their role in the reduction or aggravation of tensions.

6. Overseas Chinese in host-country political life: direct participation through party structures, indirect participation through economic influence; "corruption" of local agencies; legal disabilities in principle and in practice.

7. International implications of the Nanyang Chinese communities, in terms of the host country's sovereignty, internal security, national defense, and of regional long-term peace.

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