

Nanyang Style: A Case Study on Cultural Changes and Responses in Southeast Asia

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Abstract

This manuscript provides a comprehensive review of the Nanyang Style as a critical lens for examining cultural shifts and responses in Southeast Asia. It explores the evolution of artistic expressions that emerged from Chinese migration during the early modern period, intersecting with indigenous cultural practices and Western influences introduced during the colonial era. By analyzing key artworks, theoretical frameworks, and socio-political contexts, the review delineates how the hybrid aesthetics of Nanyang art not only challenged traditional norms but also fostered new forms of regional identity. The study highlights the role of diasporic communities in catalyzing cultural synthesis, emphasizing the dynamic interplay between artistic innovation and historical transformation. Critical discussions underscore the significance of cultural adaptation and resilience, elucidating how events such as colonial rule and post-colonial nationalistic movements shaped artistic narratives. The review also considers modern reinterpretations and the global reception of Nanyang art, positioning it as a pivotal case study in understanding cultural negotiations in a transnational context. Overall, the manuscript offers insights into the complexities of cultural heritage, negotiation, and transformation within the broader framework of Southeast Asia's art history.

Keywords: Nanyang Style, Southeast Asia, Cultural Identity, Diaspora, Colonial Influence, Cultural Synthesis, Art History

1. Introduction

In 2009 the Indonesian and Singaporean governments jointly announced plans to present a Joint Exhibition featuring the collection of archaeological finds from Nanyang Style Shipwreck (10th century) (1). The exhibition was to be held in the Asian Civilisations Museum in Singapore between August 2010 and February 2011, at the National Museum of Indonesia in Jakarta between May 2011 and January 2012, and at the NTU Museum in the Nanyang Technological University in Singapore between June 2012 and January 2013 (2, 3).

The exhibition is indicative of the current cultural temper of Southeast Asia, often marked by fluid exchanges between nations and the consolidation of a regionalization of culture. Indeed, recent

years have seen collaboration initiated between various Southeast Asian nations in diverse cultural and arts fields. These have included partnerships in the preservation and exhibition of cultural artifacts as well as artistic and cultural performances, involving art, literature, film and television performances (4-6).

Outside Indonesia, regionalism has also begun to acquire political and dance performances from the region (7). Nor are they alone. A similar mode of regionalizing arts, culture and heritage can be observed in initiatives catalysed by the relative success of the European Union in establishing a European Tour through Portugal, Italy, Greece, Spain and Turkey, and concerted efforts by Australia and New Zealand to brand, export and promote a common Australasian literature (8) - although it can be suggested that Australia's involvement is more of a decidedly more Eurocentric country focuses on heritage while the latter is more concerned with current manifestations of culture (9).

2. Historical Context

Southeast Asia has often been seen as a periphery of other geopolitical areas or cultural regions. The modern nation-states of Southeast Asia are typically viewed as 19th century phenomena, functioning outside longer-range historical perspectives. Nanyang is a toponym used in the classical or literary Chinese to refer to the islands to the south of the Middle Kingdom, that is, the various peoples and territories now subsumed under the conception of Southeast Asia. Only in recent decades have some scholars argued for an older Southeast Asian consciousness or identity among certain groups or in specific locales. This regional approach forces us to directly confront questions of power: who decides how to classify cultures, societies, and regions, and according to what criteria? Nanyang, at least as a concept, is an example of how classification is often tied to perceptions of distance, difference, and relative power (10). Currently, the most prominent Nanyang culture is variously referred to as Chinese-Indonesian, *peranakan*, or local Chinese. These terms themselves are fraught with different meanings, reflecting both preexisting connotations and political interests. As implied by the term *local*, this approach emphasizes cultural syncretism and localization. Focusing on presumed continuities with the pre-1945 period, the Chinese-Indonesian reformulation insists on a long interaction with local cultures, effectively negating the ostensibly foreign roots of present-day local Chinese (11). Japanese scholarship on Chinese Southeast Asia forms part of wider hesitations among Japanese academics and officials to engage in open criticisms of their East Asian neighbor, especially regarding human rights promotion in China. *Dong Ya Wen Hua* itself is imbued with Chinese Nanyang echoes, a revival or appropriation of the Chinese conception of Nanyang as a synonym with Southeast Asia, and it feeds neatly into the "peaceful rise of China" concept. Indonesia's cultural orthodoxy is relatively recent and, arguably, a product of Westernization and other influences (2). Indonesian cultural policy saw a "stench of

Gleichschaltung” a quarter century before popular unrest ended the communist era in East Germany; and what is now termed Indonesian-ization was pursued just as System Diktatura was consolidated in Czechoslovakia. Yet the emphasis on local culture was not entirely new in socialist Indonesia: the cultural politics of the Old Order in the late 50s and early 60s made superficially similar reference to Indonesian values (12-16).

Table 1: Historical Evolution of the Nanyang Style – Cultural Changes and Responses in Southeast Asia

| Period | Key Developments | Cultural Changes & Responses | Notable Figures/Works |
|---------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 1920s–1930s (Origins) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emergence of the Nanyang Style among Chinese migrant artists in British Malaya and Singapore. - Influence from China’s New Culture Movement and Western modernism. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Artists sought a unique identity blending Chinese traditions with Southeast Asian themes. - Shift from purely Chinese subjects to local landscapes, people, and cultures. | <p>Lim Hak Tai (founded Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, 1938)</p> <p>Chen Wen Hsi, Cheong Soo Pieng (early pioneers)</p> |
| 1940s–1950s (Formation) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post-WWII revival of arts in Singapore/Malaya. - NAFA became a hub for Nanyang artists. - Artists traveled to Bali and other SE Asian regions for inspiration. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fusion of Chinese ink techniques with Western styles (e.g., Cubism, Fauvism). - Depiction of tropical landscapes, multicultural society. | <p>Cheong Soo Pieng’s <i>Drying Fish</i> (1950s)</p> <p>Chen Chong Swee (Bali-inspired works)</p> |
| 1960s–1970s (Golden Age) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Singapore’s independence (1965) led to state promotion of Nanyang art as national identity. - Exhibitions gained international recognition. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government and public embraced the style as part of Singapore’s multicultural ethos. - Debate on "Asian Modernism" vs. Western dominance. | <p>Liu Kang’s <i>Life by the River</i> (1975)</p> <p>Georgette Chen (synthesized East-West techniques)</p> |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| 1980s–1990s (Decline & Revival) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rise of contemporary art overshadowed Nanyang Style. - Renewed interest in heritage and preservation efforts. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Critics viewed it as "nostalgic" but institutions began re-evaluating its significance. - Commercialization in art markets. | Chua Mia Tee (realist works) NAFA and National Gallery Singapore (retrospectives) |
| 2000s–Present (Reinterpretation) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nanyang Style studied as a historical movement. - Contemporary artists reference it in new works. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Seen as a bridge between tradition and modernity. - Inspires discussions on decolonization and regional identity. | Jane Lee (modern reinterpretations) Exhibitions at National Gallery Singapore (2010s) |

2.1. Colonial Influences

Nanyang style has emerged as a concept in the context of expansion of global influence of Chinese culture. Enhancing the influences did not go easy in the local situations in Southeast Asia (17, 18). That the concept embraced the Chinese culture both from China and Nanyang serves to raise the issues on how the peripheral Chinese culture responded to the constantly changing interaction with the global Chinese culture (19-22).

Colonial influences have provided the initial backgrounds of formation of Nanyang style since the Chinese from Nanyang spread over the Southeast Asian area during the colonial period (18). The Chinese in the key cities in Southeast Asia mainly come from the southern area of China, including Kwangtung and Fukien provinces in the Qing period, and from the Hakka area, a branch of Cantonese, in the latter half of the Qing dynasty (23). Therefore, the Nanyang Chinese culture seems to precede the colonial period. But in the colonial age the exchange of cultures between China and Nanyang region was reestablished on a wide and explicit level (11, 24, 25).

Most of the Chinese operating the small businesses were in the four countries profiting from the British presence in Southeast Asia, and the local British colonial administrations gradually restricted and marginalized the Chinese economically. This was one reason for their eventual detention, since under the new criteria applied in the early 1950s many Chinese were no longer considered genuinely 'British.' As British power waned in the 1950s and 1960s there was an accompanying rise in anti-Chinese sentiment in Malaya. By the early 1950s the Union Press Group (UPG) consisted of two branches: the larger arm was the commercial interests, Malaya Publishing Co., Union Calendar and Press and Mercantile Printers, Ltd.; the smaller arm was the Malaya Press

Publicity Co., Ltd., which operated as the propaganda arm of the group and would soon come to provide the most valuable instrument in combating communist influence among the Chinese-educated (26).

2.2. Post-Colonial Developments

The post-colonial course of "Malayanization" has been widely understood in terms of Sinocentric urban-born identities giving way to "Malaya-oriented" ones (26). It is famously an everyday question to ask someone you take to be Chinese: "Are you Malayan?" But few scholars have asked in turn who it was that took up this provocation, and how. In noteworthy studies published in recent years, significant interventions have been made by focusing on what is referred to as the "Third World politics of Malayanization in the 1950s and 1960s," including the adoption of Malayanization by "anti-colonial parties" in spheres such as filmmaking. Parallel to this literature is the new "revisionist" scholarship on the Malayan Emergency, including more questions of counter-insurgency than culture. Significant episodes discussed in this literature have included the left-wing New Zealand artist's deportation over sedition for wearing a t-shirt with a yellow hammer and sickle and the rescue of police corporal D.A. Jeganathan during a failed self-immolation attempt at the doors of the British colony office in Singapore (this created a "panic" in the colonial security elite and led to the quarantining of all incoming Indian migrant workers at Jalan Kayu till they could be "processed") (27). Other notable events include the British press effectively being booted out by Tunku Abdul Rahman and the colonial government in 1958, interracial resistance in fruit fields, the police washing emetics away from protesters in a gutter with a fire-hose in 1961, the journalism of a special correspondent in a communist village and the jailing of her editor (a somewhat baffling decision given the source of the funds which kept the New Zealand outfit afloat), and the pamphlets sold for ten cents and later ritualistically burnt by co-operative advocates on the school field at Bentong as a prep for the snap election of July 1964 (28). The pamphlets depicted the CPM as a master orchestrator of May 13th and provocatively called them out on the death of Hu Yaobang (29).

Table 2: Historical Development of the Nanyang Style – Colonial Influences and Cultural Adaptations

| Period | Key Developments | Colonial Influences | Cultural Responses & Adaptations |
|--|--|---|---|
| 1920s–1930s (Origins) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chinese migrant artists settle in British Malaya/Singapore. - Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) founded (1938). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - British colonial policies: Western art education promoted alongside Chinese traditions. - Exposure to European modernism (e.g., Post-Impressionism). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Artists blended Chinese ink techniques with Western styles. - Early experiments with local Southeast Asian themes. |
| 1940s–1950s (Formation) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post-WWII revival of arts in Singapore/Malaya. - Artists travel to Bali, Indonesia for inspiration. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dutch colonial legacy in Bali: Access to Indonesian art and batik motifs. - British art institutions (e.g., Singapore Art Society) supported hybrid styles. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fusion of Chinese brushwork, Western perspective, and tropical colors. - Depiction of multicultural communities under colonialism. |
| 1960s–1970s (Golden Age) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Singapore's independence (1965); state promotes Nanyang art as national identity. - International exhibitions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Postcolonial nation-building: State appropriated Nanyang Style to distance from British colonial past. - Continued Western art market influence. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Embraced as a "pan-Asian" modernist movement. - Critiqued for romanticizing colonial multiculturalism. |
| 1980s–1990s (Decline & Revival) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rise of global contemporary art overshadows Nanyang Style. - Heritage preservation efforts begin. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Neocolonial cultural policies: Western contemporary art dominates galleries, marginalizing Nanyang art. - Colonial-era collections re-evaluated. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revival through museums (e.g., Singapore Art Museum). - Commercialization as "nostalgic colonial art." |
| 2000s–Present (Reinterpretation) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nanyang Style studied as a historical movement. - Contemporary artists reference its legacy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decolonial critiques: Re-examining colonial narratives in Nanyang art. - Global art markets fetishize "tropical exoticism." | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reinterpretations challenge colonial perspectives (e.g., indigenous voices). - Digital archives preserve colonial-era works. |

3. Defining Nanyang Style

Numerous art movements were initiated and took place in Southeast Asia since the beginning of the 20th century. Malaya (present day Malaysia and Singapore) is depicted in this account to show how the regional art scene was subject to the socio-political and cultural changes after the World War II. Inherent historical changes and cultural renaissance ideology were parallel with other Southeast Asian countries, while the Nanyang art that developed in Malaya carried country-specific themes and art practice (30). Changes in Malaya, including the independence movement, urbanization, and education raise the question of how the artists transformed their heritages and traditions to modern art practices amalgamating both Western and local elements. The themes above are addressed inside the broader concept of colonial and post-colonial art theory. With the help of mainly Gilbert-Roberts' four dimensions of social change, Nanyang art is introduced as a more reasonable concept to understand a unique Malayan art phenomenon rather than a culture under the lens of hybridity (31). The hybridity and post-colonial theory has been widely adopted to analyze the arts in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, or other Southeast Asian countries to understand the post-colonial era socio-political effects and to foreground the local aspects in the context of global capitalism and the hegemony of Euro-American ideologies (32). Nanyang artists, who have unique individual characteristics within a broader Sinitic context, are analyzed herein. Artists of Chinese descent in Malaya were among the pioneers of modern art in Singapore, and the colonial and post-colonial history brought these artists the dual identities of Nanyang artists and hybridity outcomes. The socio-political changes in the art scene were paralleled with other Southeast Asian countries (33). However, a unique situation was seen in Malaya: the quality of art praxis was defined by Chinese artists rather than Malays or Indians who were the majority in the population (34).

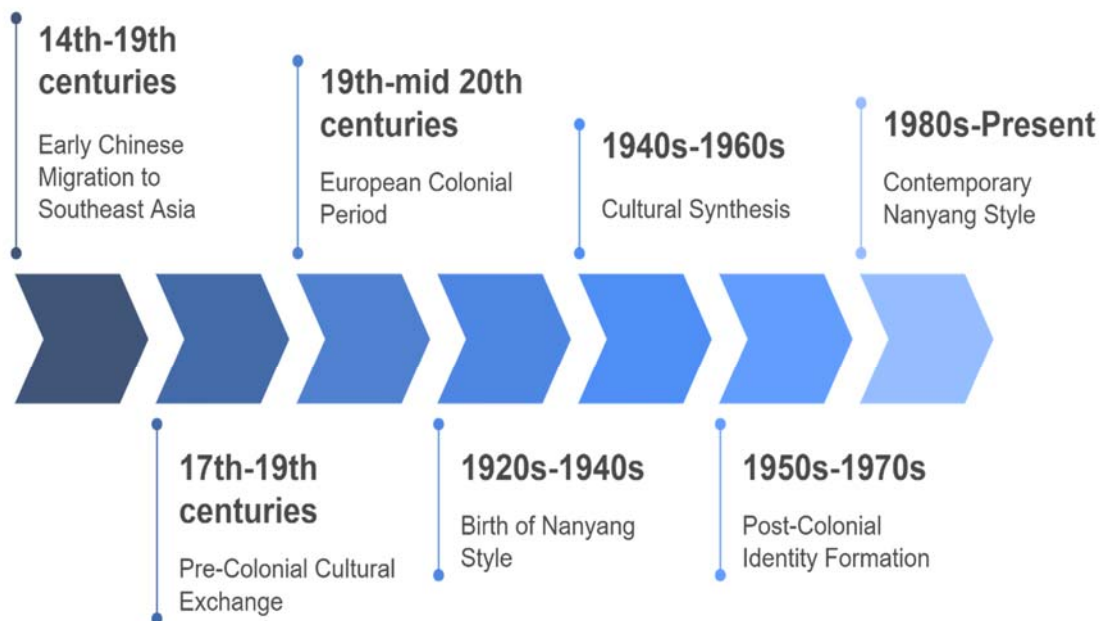
3.1. Artistic Characteristics

As the first model to analyze the influences of these changes on their Dongba production, the Nanyang style was widely discussed as it's one of subsequent interpretations of Naxi Dongba. Different from earlier interpretations adhere to the Naxi county of Lijiang, since 1950s and 1960s Dongba painting which was commonly referred to as Dongba culture mostly crossed the borders and spreaded to Southeast Asian countries – Burma, Thailand, Laos and so on (35). The orientations and values of Nanyang Naxi craftsmen in Burma, the placefriend musician, were analyzed to investigate their strategy of attracting viewers (36). The attention to the entirely art market of Burma, and to the sound culture of Dongba made by Naxi people living in Burma, serve to specify how market and sound contributed to the downturn of Naxi Dongba in Lijiang in the 1950s. It is likely confirmed that the sound of Lijiang Dongba reached Burma along with their sending visit, and viewers there got disappointed because they could not understand the sound

originated from Dingba script as Naxi people (37). The dissertation of so-called Xifan in the Naxi-Nanyang transregional context (38, 39).

It has been the existence of Nanyang styles of contemporary art production which were first executed Naxi people in Lijiang and then developed by Southeast Asia. Trung had already shown that the Dongba painting (or calligraphy) art is executed for contemporary, and not for traditional culture during the early phase of this. In early 1980 he and Qian Jiadong already spoke about tourist demand, but he also discusses a change in the prices in course of time and a change in the function of painting: from decoration in Naxi churches to an article usable as heirloom for 40-50 years (32). All four of them had agreed that there was no painting in the temples when they were young, which is an important paradigm shift that has not been discussed by Youfu. Cultural morphology includes all human activities and behavior, clothes, housing, food, marriage system, internment and funeral customs (40, 41). Cultura encompass myths, histories, philosophies, religions, traditions etc., which are as head of a country. Sculpture can grasp the typical movement and living situations of the local Naxi people in remote area (2, 25).

The Evolution of Nanyang Style: A Cultural Journey



3.2. Cultural Significance

Two sellers of coffee, ten times sweeter, where to go for a photo. En Vahab and 42 others like this., where to go for a photo, a digital face in torn black and white. Out of India, with an additional blessing promised, let China and the colour of the palms be (42, 43). Very near with the first spot sit Vivian dreaming of a modeling contract, and a small sign that you're seeing double. Inconvenient if managed; a room of his own a few feet away with piles of luggage, a bottled drinks stand, a makeshift eating place (44, 45).

The shops selling old things, compulsive and strange for an art review, is a practice of the delightful-dreadful pleasures of memory found in the old coffee-shop on the docks in Mombasa. The nouveau-riche take up multiple spaces in Tana County on the unsanctioned promise of leasing these, their commercial brown gatherings, for the larger shopping event of a salary payment; how they let premises for the defense of the dust. Tigerroo Tea and Coffee View, closed I am counting how many panes of glass, here to go for a photo, the almshouses vacant-how, over a grey-greenish doorway, where to go for the town's industrial filming, safaris to the Anestral Kings and Queens of the Coast, bought the building where parents once lodged-and enquires could you please give me a list of your customer (46, 47).

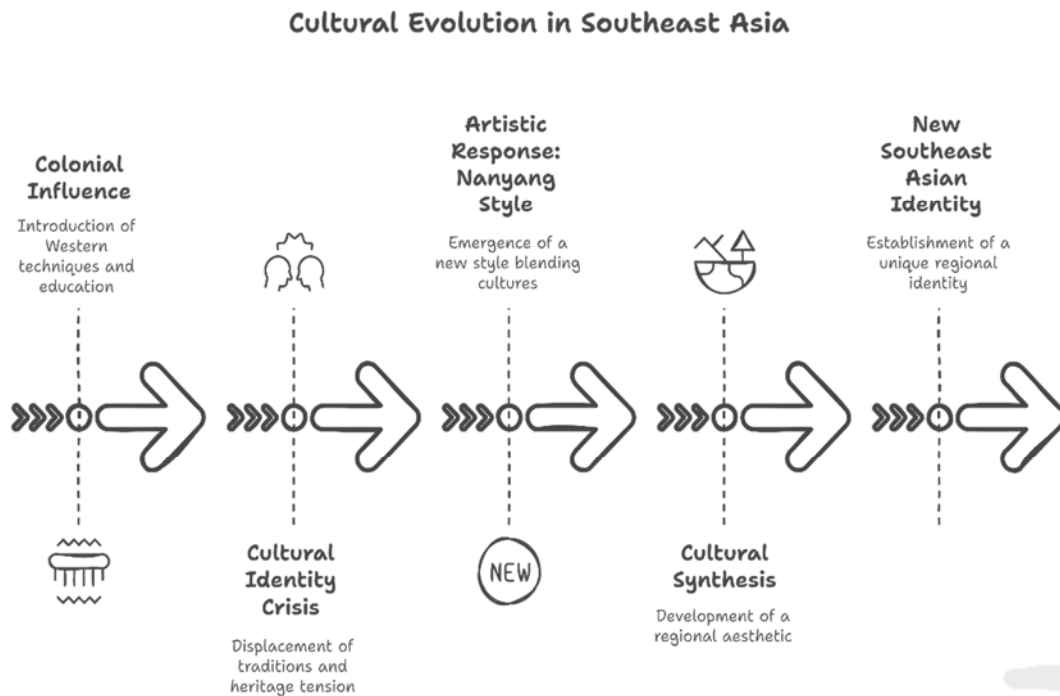
There was plenty of wind in their tails, there to go for a photo, at the time that, updating capital, traditional houses of the Swahili town were pulled down, and the modern replaced them, the upper floors were for the Memsahib, the curtain-drawing gazes from naked dandias. Then Welcome to have-distributors of the pure drink, now serving samoosas and drinking yoghurt. Predatory buying/selling happening here, extortionate rents to property owners demanded for the fear of the Lady, the ward representative a client of property speculation. To advertise that a respectable passage and accommodation can, at any time, be had at a coffee-shop, are a heterogeneous bazaar, is enough to note that, over reliable letters in an irresponsible hand (48-50).

4. Cultural Exchange and Interaction

In the contemporary world, culture is not static, evolving, changing and interacting with other cultures to create something new. The recent decades have seen a resurgence of both national and ethnic culture, and questions about identity everywhere (51). Even as cultures change and develop, however, some important values tend to be lost. The traditional ways which characterize particular social cultures are among the primary values vanishing in the rush toward modernity (52). China, with a history as long as its present political designation, has learned to both adapt and resist external political influences (53). Often highland peoples develop and cherish a fierce resistance to cultural assimilation (54, 55).

Consider Nanyang, a Chinese term referring variously to South Seas, southern lands, or Southeast Asia. The South Seas have for centuries been a siren call to the Chinese shipping industry. From

early mariners who sailed into the Indian Ocean with a thousand huge ships to fishermen who dared the piratical approaches of Vietnam and Borneo, Chinese shipping across the seas has seen Southeast Asian shores as ports of call and sometimes as barriers to the sea. To the Chinese trading aborigines and headhunters; to the Chinese capitalist and the pawn broker were cities in the heart of a dangerous landscape (56). Generally for Chinese beyond the shores of China, inter-marriage was decried as a dangerous pollution, a heretical tainting with barbarian pollutants. The Chinese marriage act of 1931 compensated a flaw in the constitution that had caused fear that, were the constitution revealed, the beholder would be dangerously tempted (57). In the 1760s, the Yangzhou magistrate forbade Chinese-Southern marriage as a barrier to assimilation. But in the face of these strictures on a union, numerous nonetheless did occur (11, 58-60).



4.1. Trade Routes and Migration

Trade and shipping should be seen as dynamic on both small and large scales. Chinese shipping in Southeast Asia had various effects on trade, the development of port polities and the pattern of coastal settlement. A broad view of these effects can be gained from changes in history. Southeast Asian land states were drawn into the world economy when the price of spices and forest products rose in China under the Mongols (61). An abrupt collapse occurred in the Ming period, paralleling

and to some extent caused by the rise of Malacca, and junk shipping was then gradually supplanted by rowboat traffic in the late fifteenth century, alongside the expansion of major entrepôts in Ayudhya, Hoi An and Patani (62). The opportunistic extension of tributary relations once more wove much of the region into a single economy. The Baojia system was adopted from a Vigilance Corps that used in the Ming Dynasty in China. It was employed in keeping peace and security by searching insurgent groups before becoming a trader in Nanyang. In the late fourteenth century, it was observed that one householder would be in a leader of a ten-household group, monitored by a licensed group in a strict self-watch system (63, 64).

There were two arms of the Nanyang style in the Ming Dynasty, one attempted to occupy the region by military means and the other was based on trade, hence friendship or peace. Likewise, it will also investigate how and why a threat perception between Majapahit, Malacca and Ayudhya was triggered (58). Eventually, a trade city was built in each country which was helped by him. Multiple investments were made in order to develop their economy and trade to every country visited. There was a belief in a kind of unsubstantiated myth that the enormous wealth of China would one day arrive in Southeast Asia to squeeze out local merchants. It is believed, it would diminish the circumstances of the regional countries in Southeast Asia. Appalling butchery and extensive destruction are combined with systematic plunder and wanton cruelty (65). It was regarded as the Nanyang style, a mighty fleet of fearsome ocean-going junks and cut-throat seamen who massacre helpless victims or heave them overboard in nets to be eaten by sharks and crocodiles (66). Political circumstances in Java and the intervention of Chinese interests in local affairs in the early fifteenth century.

4.2. Cultural Syncretism

In Southeast Asian countries, Cultural syncretism is evident in the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand. Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand are Muslim countries. They have unique and distinctive cultural changes in the aspect of music, dancing, costume, weaving, language, art, building construction, religion, food, architectural carving and appliance, etc (16). In Singapore, cultural changes and cultural responses are manifested in the way of lives, dress and dances. Singapore is a multi-cultural society (67). There are several races of people in Singapore such as Malay, Indian, Chinese, and others (16). Each race has its own special culture and tradition practices, inherited from generation to generation. Cultural changes and responses are also evident in the treatment of the elderly the young (68-70).

Moreover, in the religious sphere, Singapore is known to be a place where religious syncretism takes place. It is a common sight to see a Chinese woman donating ko pao makes the fried cakes as an offering to the gods - Goddess of Mercy, or “Kiew Ong Yah” and then buys a garland of flowers at the Hindu temple to decorate the statues of Shiva. Offerings of fruits are made to the Phallus wrapped in a piece of red cloth. Offerings such as milk and water are poured over it to

invoke fertility. The instance of Chinese religious syncretism in Singapore reflects the personal dimension of the orthodox religions. It indicates the general tendency to pray to a person God, or to seek help for a limited aspect of life (71).

5. Case Studies of Nanyang Style

In recent years there has been a growing concern over globalization and the loss of regional cultural diversity. A number of studies from various perspectives have emerged, the expanse including studies on historical issues, colonial history or Sinology, and comprehensive ones in a comparative perspective over Southeast Asia. But responses in art studies on the idea of Nanyang seem too insipid. It is important to discuss a kind of “Nanyang style” in Southeast Asia as a response to these recent studies, considering changes in cultural contexts and strategies of individual artists. This style emerged in response to both the comprehensive culture of each local society and the image of “Nanyang” formed through common cultural contact with other societies in the region (4, 72). As a result of comprehensive culture, interests in local or traditional materials were seen throughout this region (73).

In Malaya, a growing concern went to the identification of regional art under the name of Chinese ink paintings. The style was formed from the early 20th century by students who went to China to study the arts. Several principals of art schools and two famous professors who started teaching in universities in the 1960s all graduated from Hwa Chong with a high reputation in the traditional Chinese arts (74). The style in other Southeast Asian societies was influenced through cultural ties with southern China and among each other controlled by Chinese communities in these societies. In Indonesia, under a new regime from the end of 1965, a movement called Balai Seni Rupa was started as an institution under the government, the idea of “Western-based art” was introduced, and the idea of “New Art” was formed. However, these ideas could not be easily accepted in different cultural contexts (75, 76). Even though some young artists met with the “New Art” concept in study abroad countries, the context of local art was too different from these Western concepts. In contrast, the principles were popular artists in their society and emblematic of local taste and aesthetics (77).

5.1. Visual Arts

Since the late 1980s, an increasing body of scholarship on the contemporary arts of Southeast Asia has appeared. But, like the well-established international trade in the crafts of Indonesia, this tends to focus on a few, especially well-known items, such as the Chinese paintings of Thailand and the kris or kalis of the southern Philippines. In colonial times, a few early scholars noted indigenous artistic traditions, most notably (78). The colonial focus formed the stereotypes which persist, sometimes subconsciously, to this day. Indonesians are still largely perceived as carvers of wood and Modigliani-like painters of elongated human figures, and while Philippine painters such as

Fernando Amorsolo greatly pleased representatives of the departing colonial administration, more innovative contemporaries such as Victorio C. Edades tended to languish unnoticed. Those Filipino painters who later won international distinction did so largely as expatriates, often in the United States, while their work seems to possess somewhat greater purchase on the international art market than does the work of their counterparts who remained in the Philippines (79). Scholarship on the Muslim Souths is comparatively rare, mostly in the Philippines (32) remains a model. But the lower coteries of artists working outside the elite haciendas, ateliers and Parisian coffee-houses depicted by Nijk are more likely to be known to a predominantly trade-oriented and colonial administration.

5.2. Performing Arts

1. Intercultural Music Theatre There is a well-documented history of Nanyang style music, starting with Lee Dai Sor umbrella dances in the 19th and 20th centuries, and moving to cabaret and rock and roll in the 1960s. After Singapore's independence, Nanyang style music rapidly diversified, incorporating fusions with other Chinese, Malay and Indian styles. There is significantly less documentation of Nanyang style choreography, but here the cultural changes are also of interest. *My Song to the Wen (Dance of the Immortals)* combines movements from Nanyang style martial arts, modern dance, a wide range of cultural forms, and the performers' own creative responses to the Nanyang style melodies (80). This reflective essay examines the creation of music and dance in Chinese Nanyang culture, how this relates to processes of adapting 'traditional' music, and the challenges facing Nanyang musical culture in melding traditional forms with contemporary expression (81). I use the local Nanyang concept to refer to music—both traditional and contemporary—created by the Singaporean and Malaysian Chinese descendents of migrants from Fujian Province (22, 82).

Performing Arts Nanyang style has been used to describe work that responds to and reflects these also-named migrants' descendants in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. This process of cultural fusion has generated distinctive traditions in music, theatre, food, and other cultural forms. Its intermingling of traditional Chinese culture has helped to define the Nanyang region. At the same time, it has been strongly shaped by the cultures and geopolitics of the Southeast Asia region. This paper examines the adaptation, maintenance and transmission of Nanyang style performing arts as a response to these local circumstances and how they act as symbols of Nanyang culture in the place-making and image projection of the Nanyang (83-85).

5.3. Literature and Poetry

In Nagoya the Chinese merchant Naniwa Eishi was an active participant in poetry events, exchanging poems with many members of the aristocracy. Naniwa is referred to as a "merchant prince," and the poems of members of the aristocracy that he collected in his anthology include those of Prince Komatsu Akihito, Fujiwara no Sanemasa, and Fujiwara no Saneakira. Although his

own poetry is unsophisticated, it abounds in charm and is tinged with romantic feeling (86). Edo is one of the prefecture in Japan. Edo is located on the eastern side of Honshu Island. It is known as Edo is during the Tokugawa Shogunate regime. It became the official capital of Japan replacing Kyoto. The Tokugawa ruled Japan as their shogunate from 1603 to 1868. During this two and a half century, the Shogun ruled the city on behalf of the emperor. After the Tokugawa Shogunate regime ended, the imperial rule moved back to Tokyo and Edo was renamed Tokyo (87, 88). Edo has rich history of cultural changes, growth and development. Most notably, Edo literature culminated over a century of great effort and artistry, surviving as one of the glories of premodern literature. In the Meiji era, much of this literature forever disappeared. Only a small percentage, generally of technical or philological interest, was ever reprinted. At first reproductions of the more difficult texts were made for the benefit of scholars, but a far greater loss, and one far less susceptible to revival, was the wealth of popular stories and plays that vanished forever (89). The many clubs that had for generations hand-copied texts for their members found their copying examined and frequently condemned as dissident or seditious. Banned books were publicly burned. But this was only the beginning of the official suppression of popular literature and storytelling (90). Draconian laws were passed limiting hawking, with penalties such as imprisonment or transportation. The result, by the Meiji Restoration in 1868, was the disappearance of Edo's popular literary culture, a culture that also profoundly influenced the development of the so-called vernacular school of kokugaku scholars. This aspect of the Edo period's literary tradition, its stories and plays, largely disappeared. One measure of the increasing reach across societies and communities of the Art Project was the widespread expression of similar ideas about their work (91).

6. Responses to Cultural Changes

When we consider the great cultural provinces of Asia, we are tempted to think immediately of works of human art, such as beautiful buildings, or more durable artifacts such as pottery, tools, coins, or weapons (92). Yet the world itself, consisting of humankind and the profound influences upon it, may all be regarded as an important province in the cultural sense (93). Just as Roman civilization may easily be seen as having as much significance in all its results as the Roman road, so the spread of a 'way of thinking' through the world may ultimately have even greater influence than the works of craftsmanship produced or the immediately visible life-style and organization prevalent in a particular society (94, 95).

Ten years has passed since it was pointed out that 'The problems of the Malay World, particularly of the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, Java and Borneo, are really part of a whole and are more easily studied within a general plan' (96). And yet there is still no comprehensive and unified study of these cultural changes in all their complexities and ramifications (97). The term 'culture' used in

this context can refer to anything from changes in alphabet to changes in values, and from food habits to the thing itself: the Malay evening meal, the Javanese costume, Gamelan music, and the Filipino devotion to beauty are especially expressive of this quality and especially hard to capture by the unidimensional views that dominate much contemporary social science (98-100).

There can hardly be a more important sphere for anthropologists and their students than the remarkable cultural provinces of the great island societies of South-east Asia. In latter years, influenced by the work of various scholars, researchers have been laying the following essential groundwork (61). The classical empires of South-east Asia have been thoroughly documented and analyzed by a whole generation of scholars and a major work- programme is only now nearing completion (101). There is also a fast expanding literature on the pre-history of so much of the region that seems to share a common gene pool. Political history, the history of institutions, economic history and even some aspects of art history, have for long periods been made the subjects of research by scholars in history, sociology, political science, archeology and art (102). But if 'history is the powerful nation's dream of itself', then the survey is notably incomplete without it. How, for instance, did the recent cultural change in South-east Asia come about and what were the culture's responses? (103, 104)

6.1. Local Adaptations

This article examines the operation of the Nanyang style in Southeast Asia. While Nanyang style reached the height of its influence in the 1950s and 1960s, it was actually diversified and experimented in a variety of ways over time. It is more useful both for empirical research and for theoretical insight to look at other types of Nanyang style practices (18, 105). The focus is on discussions of Nanyang style practices that arose within the contexts of particular cultural forms, as well as practice that continued to develop after the high period of classical Nanyang style. Eyebrow tattooing among the Teochiu population in Singapore is a practice that has adapted Nanyang style to local conditions (106). There are two basic elements of the Nanyang style as practiced in the 1950s and 1960s: cursive calligraphy and especially adapted ink-brush paintings (107-109).

While the labels Nanyang or Southeast Asian as a tradition of cultural activity suggest uniformity or homogeny, as cultural labels often do, the actual practice of the Nanyang style in the region has been quite diverse (110). Reflecting and furthering cultural changes within the Chinese community of the region, the Nanyang style practices demonstrate creativity and experimentation in and adaption of Chinese cultural forms in response to changes in China, the local context, and the pan-Asian context. Since there is a regional policy level discussion, some brief background information is provided on the practice of the Nanyang style (111). Consider the well-known writer's clubs and their written works of the 1950s and 1960s as well as the decline of these clubs and the forms in the 1960s and 1970s (81).

6.2. Global Influences

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The adequacy or inadequacy of current ingrained concepts to understand the essential features of industrialized societies, as well as the place of these societies within the world economic and political systems, seems to be open to a general discussion in front of the disturbances that cultural phenomena had been undergoing, even in relatively smooth conditions (112). The role that these phenomena, as an ensemble, play in social life and in the formation of what is usually termed as “cultural identity”, will be valid to consider in a similar broad perspective (113). In this respect, the consideration of current controversy regarding art and culture, and perception of heritage might offer a useful approach for identifying and disentangling upon sociological grounds a number of underlying assumptions and conflicting premises (114-116).

The Nanyang Style embraces cultural phenomena in an ample sense, beyond regional or ethnical matters. It is rested on substantive assumptions as for the nature of cultural fragmentation and its part in society. Some prevalent opinions in South-East Asia thus find here an argued analysis in the light of a comprehensive interpretation of cultural sociology (117). Before entering in the debate upon the judgment, the discussion of the broader framework in which it is actually inscribed could suggest a reflection on technical matters peculiar to sociology as an approach. In this setting, a sociological view of the law might refrain from legal aspects as they are, to take up instead the law-making process and the transformation of social norms and values in legal norms as a problem of conflict structuration in post-traditional societies (118, 119).

7. Impact on Identity Formation

Introduction: In 1973, Sun Yat-sen Nationalist Party Chin Yi Lim founded Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan, the first Chinese organization in Surabaya. The primary purpose was to protect the Chinese in Surabaya as well as to support the unification between Mainland China and Taiwan. In 1974, Sein Tek Biography Society was founded. Public leaders in Surabaya were stimulated by this organization. They founded a similar organization, the Wo EMC in 1975. Within short time there were nine Chinese social organizations in Surabaya. The reasons for the absence of Chinese organization for seven years (1966-1973) were as the follow. The Tiong Hoa Hwe Koan Chinese organizations exist in Surabaya might have caused new fears to the government, because the organizations usually are center of political attitude. The social wound of the ethnic struggle in 1965-1966 was very deep (120). The ethnic conflict might cause new political up hat to the Chinese, therefore more over guard to Chinese society would be increase. Yang serbaguna, like Suharto has concerns to the regional development, other ethnic, mainly Javanese, might grow jealous of the fast enrichment of the Chinese society, therefore the control of the Chinese ethnicity within the frame work of the national life would be pressed up. Ethical reconstruction in the middle

of political extend would cause a huge change easily by violence instantly. The examples of this regime actions were, UUD 1945 was abrogated in 1978. The administrative actions of the regional set-up with Koti and PE masters were changed into Kabu and City in 1978. The Golkar government was put a sly in the top of central and regional cabinet in 1969 (121). Another reasons for the decline of the Chinese organizations were; the global pressures from the western countries to Indonesian government policy at that time, to implement the eradication of the Chinese ethnic identify from the joint ethnic social body system. This policy might cause urge fear to the Chinese ethnicity in Surabaya (122, 123).

7.1. National Identity

In 2008, an attempt by four Southeast Asian countries to have the watery region demarcated as a continental shelf jurisdiction was backed. The move was opposed by both China and Taiwan, who argued that the deal might infringe upon contested sovereign claims in the strategic waterway, through which much East Asian trade passes. The impasse lasted for two years, and inflamed regional jitters about Chinese intentions (124). In November 2010, the director-general of an organization moved to soothe troubled Southeast Asian waters. He described disputes in the region as no greater than they were elsewhere, and also said China's claims to the South China Sea were nothing new (125). However, a new rash of 'salami tactics' has arisen as China briskly extends its reach around the sea through which a third of the world's trade is shipped (126, 127).

"The sovereignty of the South China Sea islands has always belonged to China," China's deputy foreign minister reiterated. China also reiterated a desire to solve the disputes bilaterally, and repeated its opposition to a way of dealing with the matter—meanwhile upgrading military facilities on various islands, reefs, and archipelagos it already controls (128). It's an assertion of state authority premised not just on grand territorial claims, but also on claims to continental tradition (129, 130). What right, then, do Southeast Asians have in the monster's shadow? Of course, many of the signatories to the 2008 agreement were very willing to have China keep its dragonish shadow far at arms' length, and rather pass on any territorial treasures a big-spending China might invest in. Malaysia and Vietnam, for example, were more than happy to trim a morsel off their potential jurisdictions in the sea, particularly when it came with a side of developmental aid, and mainly at the expense of the Philippines, communist China's South China Sea rival on sovereignty issues (131-133).

7.2. Transnational Identity

Nanyang Style is an art and culture term which often refers to the cultural phenomenon in Nanyang area, which forms the unique style of Southeast Asian Chinese art and culture. By understanding and analyzing the cultural changes and responses of Southeast Asian Chinese art and culture in the long historical contexts, researchers can trace back the aesthetic activities and aesthetic appreciation of the overseas Chinese communities, which already existed before the modern period

(17). It is not only for answering how to properly apply a concept of art and culture, it is also attributed to the further reflections on how to innovate the theories of the Nanyang Style (134). The partial loss of cultural root encourages a notable remaking of cultural hybridity and identity, through which the overseas Chinese communities respond and adjust themselves to the multicultural society and adapt the powerful cultural force from the Western colonial power (20). Based on the question concerning authenticity of traditions, a distinction between a correct traditional art activity and its variations is expressed in order to illuminate the theories of the Nanyang Style.

8. Contemporary Relevance of Nanyang Style

Since the 1990s, the Nanyang style has enjoyed a renaissance in Southeast Asia, with new artists springing up in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines. It is noticeable that since the 21st century, the number of artists who have been attracted by the Nanyang style has been increasing (25). Many contemporary Southeast Asian artists have re-visited and re-interpreted the Nanyang style and its philosophical concepts through individual artistic practice. This paper analyses the changes and reflections of Southeast Asian philosophy and their unique influencing in the practice of Southeast Asian artists in the process of change. It draws two main conclusions. The first is that modernity, critical thinking and postmodernity have deepened the changes of Hong Kong aesthetics. Against this backdrop, Southeast Asian philosophical insights into the world have been enriched and sharpened (117). Southeast Asian artists have penetrated into Hong Kong aesthetics and provided a more diversified philosophical perspective. Southeast Asian philosophical insights into the world have provided an important theoretical basis for understanding Nanyang culture and the Nanyang style. On the other, in the specific artistic practice of Southeast Asian artists, the reflection of Nanyang culture and the style of Nanyang can be more profound and systematic (135). While relying on Nanyang style, artists have been inspired by the spirit of Southeast Asia to develop a unique voice and transcend the genre of genre. On this basis, a new Southeast Asian aesthetic school rooted in Nanyang can continue to flourish and develop.

8.1. Modern Interpretations

The publication of an article on the *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) of Syaykh Nawawi al-Bantani sets the stage for a return to the claims of, and responses to, the Jawi Peranakan heritage. Changes in the cultural production, representation, and reception in Peranakan society along the 20th century necessitate a reexamination of the original proposition, which labeled items as cultural re-creation (136). The subsequent conflation of Jawi and peranakan as evidence of an exclusive cultural identity both obfuscates historical processes and contradicts the facts. Revised understanding reconceptualizes nanyang not as a uniform cultural heritage but as the responses of people in nanyang to changes in the local, national, and international landscapes, to the dangers

and opportunities they present, through which nanyang identity is (re-)defined and expressed. This does not imply the erasure of nanyang from the Malay vocabulary and the social practices it relates to, for the notion covers origins and memories, aspirations and collectivities, transcending the distinctions of time and place. The chapter concludes by considering the implications of the historical dynamic of culture and of group identity. The issue raised is about the advertising for Peranakans, the acquisition of blue and white porcelain as nanyang cultural heritage, the 24 solar term calendars, the revival and popularization of culture and the response / criticism from Dowager Peranakan (137).

8.2. Globalization and Cultural Preservation

Over the last century, the world has experienced a dramatic increase in global interconnectedness through the exchange of ideas, knowledge, technology, and culture. Globalization has brought about rapid changes in societies not just in the West but also in Asia, particularly influencing the way of life. The regional markets have expanded into a global market, and the once untouchable niche cultures have now become accessible to a growing number of people around the world. Cultural products such as movies, soap operas, and cuisines have been exported to different corners of the globe. This could cultivate a more global outlook on the local cultures vis-à-vis an increased interest and curiosity in foreign societies. Besides, there seem to be more ways for the cross-cultural understanding. The newly developed transportation and telecommunication systems have prevailed, which could enhance people's mobility and bring about an increase in contacts between societies. The emergence of a more sophisticated mass media, for example the internet, newspapers and television, could make it possible for people to know casual happenings worldwide. In short, the world today is not culturally isolated, but culturally interconnected (138).

Despite the fact that the prominent forces of globalization can lead to certain positive results in modern lives and culture, we have to be cautious about its negative impacts and implications on our cherished cultures and societies (139). The most significant concerns include the spread of Western culture, the impacts on indigenous tradition and cultural identities, increased susceptibility to social degeneration, weakening of national boundaries, and the emergence of cultural split in our globalizing world (140). Considering the above-mentioned implications, the question of how to preserve our Asian cultural identities in the face of globalization thus presents a big challenge to developing countries in Asia.

9. Challenges and Opportunities

Given the geo-political position of the Chinese colonies in Southeast Asia, the Europeans not only brought in opium and firearms, but also a wide diversity of Chinese culture of which Feng Shui was one of them. The teaching of Feng Shui from China to Southeast Asia was greatly affected by the conditions of the Chinese community (16). When the new immigrants set sail from China towns

along the Pacific Ocean, the teaching of Feng Shui together with other Chinese culture and norms remained as the clan's secret in the village by the sea (141). The clans which dominated the enterprise then took great pride in being the follower of Feng Shui Sensei and consulted the Master before every business move (142).

Several centuries then passed and the myth of the riches of Nanyang spread throughout both the continent and province of China. The Qing government exploited this to the fullest by taxing the migrants on their way south. Meanwhile, a Chinese diaspora amounting to 73 million emerged in Southeast Asia. Yet, the immigrants found that having money is meaningless: they had to be in a position to enjoy it. Consequently, they developed a distinct style in dealing with cultural changes, and Feng Shui was only one of the peculiar example (143). At first they were the prudent buyers of the gods of prosperity etched into the rocks of Phuket or Taoist deities brought from China and stored behind a shop. Later the Nanyang Chinese became the new client of a particular teaching of the geomancer, and subsequently evolved into the trademark of distinguishing the Nanyang Style. All these customarily coalesced into the local belief system with very little resemblance to what the Chinese know today, Feng Shui. Meanwhile, became a new set of challenges and opportunities. At one point, the Nanyang Chinese could no longer opt for the particular teaching of the geomancer; on the other hand, a new teaching of Feng Shui emerged in China (144). (

9.1. Cultural Commodification

In a globalized world, different cultures have come in contact and interacted with one another. They often lead to cultural adaptations and accommodation. As a result, in the process of living, people in one culture involve in reciprocal relationship with people in another culture. This interaction has often caused cultural changes and responses as well as pattern of living. It is also revealed in Nanyang communities in Southeast Asia. In today's society, those communities are also facing rapid changes that have a very dominant impact on culture and ways of life. In order for these communities to maintain their culture, there is a sense of urgency to document and understand these changes (145). This research serves to fill the gap. The Cultural Changes and Responses in Southeast Asia from the Nanyang style points of view is a new field of study today. But this is very important and should be studied because Nanyang has a cultural base that is very thick with customs that are unique compared to China. This makes this community of Nanyang ethnic millions long and will change from one generation to the next, as globalization makes vital the changes and responses that occur in the living culture of the people.

A cultural change caused by internal and external factors is seen as the everyday case of commodification of culture. This case becomes a trigger to be more sensitive in reading the living culture of Nanyang in Southeast Asia. Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia, is one of the cities where commodification. In the scope of this case, commodification is the process or response of various parties to look at a phenomenon as an attractive phenomenon that can deliver cultural

aspects in it into the realm of the business (106). Due to this phenomenon, traditional Nanyang arts that were indigenous, such as barongsay and lion's dance, have become more and more commercialized. Another moment of cultural commodification in a different city is the rise of art performances of the Nanyang community in Karebard. This rebirth angklung saw its popularity as a commercial field by itinerant dancers who performed acrobatic feats and angklung's performances (146). By more clearly analyzing the case, it is better to understand the deeper effects of cultural commodification itself. Regarding the dynamic situation of urban living culture commodification, as well as its meaning in terms of societal change, also revealed by cultural changes in the Nanyang style of living in Southeast Asia (147). These will lead to some important conclusions about the cultural implications of life in the current urban city, especially for the case of a Nanyang cultural community.

9.2. Sustainability of Cultural Practices

The Nanyang phenomenon is extremely old, with people flowing from the Yunnan plateau to escape from natural disasters since the Han Dynasty about 2,000 years ago. The Nanyang region has absorbed cultural changes through such mobility, interacting with local residing cultures and moving cultures. The Nanyang style of today is like the art of the jacket taken off by a clove and the coat on the shoulder is a necessary feature (148). People in the region's modern Nanyang areas: the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia, have precisely absorbed cultural forms from territorial China's moments, especially after the colonization of their territories by the Han Chinese of the jade's large court (149). The settlers are Daba, Hakkas, Jiangnan immigrants, and although it contains local cultural elements, it is Nanyang because it excludes the island of Taiwan. The motion culture turns into the Zhenhua fun dance that is not originally from China. Chinese culture from the dawn is rural and the culture of the traditional areas from fluorescence to adsorption is the form of preservation itself, so the text will not cover it. Interestingly, Malay finely absorbs the art of Bali like a puppet ajir brought from India, dancing gamber from Arab traders, but the nanyang style dominates (150).

The movement began around the 13th century until the Portuguese in the middle of the 16th century, even before the Chinese came to the Pearl River delta. In the 1970s, about 10 million Chinese were estimated to live in the then Southeast Asian peninsula by adding Nanyang to the current population of about 30 million. This means that the Chinese population could have been 30-40% of the whole slew of pre-Thai. It is clear that Chinese people in today's Peninsular Malaysia and Indonesia are the same people, so it has been accepted with little scrutiny. Efforts to maintain and revitalize cultural practices emphasizing food and apparel, both of the first needs, are frequently seen within Nanyang Chinese society, also those of the culinary arts. In 2010, "washoku" was registered as the heredes of the world on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List. Traditional "natural" food culture rehearsed by the ancestors is more significant than the

nostalgic implications and evokes memories of "Yangen". The realistic goal is to utilize territorial food culture beyond the family. On the other hand, it is also traditional arts and crafts to make everyday tools beautiful in appearance, embody strokes and detailed designs, and fashion them according to refined manners. F which is a "good fortune" manju made at special times and used for worship is attracting the attention of folklorists and researchers for cultural trends similar to the first three. In the surroundings of the southern Chinese region, there are exuberant and diverse unique "New Year" cultures. In Indonesia, Malay gamlan-Bali Malé has become a nanyang style. Here, I would like to explore the uniqueness and universality of the nanyang style by examining these four cases (10). Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population and its overwhelming sound of the Koran has not allowed other music to flourish. Especially since the dictatorial era of Sukarno and Suharto, both lovers of this gamlan were constrained from performing. Despite these influences, gamlan-Bali Malé, which has been rooted in the past until now, is proof of the sustenance of Nanyang culture involving creativity and the production of forms of resistance. On the other hand, besides gamlan-Bali Malé, the Indonesia of today has lost its diversity and traditional culture under the influences of globalization such as the economy and temptation of the westernization of clothing, etc. (Jones, 2012). Only recently with the support of the tourism industry, there are places where "traditional culture" is made by artificial open air rather than nature at all.

10. Future Directions in Research

Possible directions for future research are suggested in areas where the field of digital and social media is struggling to keep up, or in sites of investigation that have been relatively under-explored (151) The study of regional or national audience preferences, tastes and behaviour patterns in downloading or accessing content is needed, building on pioneering work on the strength of weak ties outside of close friendship relations. This might extend to investigating how preferences and tastes for watching and listening to online media content become . The focus on understanding the dynamics and social processes of digital and online media consumption is absented in the current approaches. As observed, in television studies, analyses of the production sector as the site of innovation have been much more fruitful, yet this has been largely neglected in regard to digital and online media. Locally produced comedies, dramas or music materials might be investigated for what they can illuminate about the digital media diffusion processes, as well as their host society's response to both the technology and content. The ongoing work on video and film content being transmitted across national and regional boundaries provides a possible avenue for this mode research. The vast majority of projects studying digital and online media from this region have been at the societal or institutional level. However, the changing nature of human connectivity brought about by the new media merits work also at more micro levels of inquiry. There is a

growing body of research that has been debating whether and how ‘new’ communication technologies bring about comprehensive changes in societal communication structures and the partial aspect of that work is about the loss of societal ties and the emergence of new socialities. Social isolation or increased individualisation have formed a debate repeating the arguments on the topic of each new communication technology. How can changing via digital and social media render “modes of the digital”?

10.1. Emerging Trends

In terms of anthropological research currently being undertaken in Indonesia, a main issue, which in a sense cuts across the remaining ones, concerns strategies for maintaining a counterpoise to a dominant Javanese, and Javanese-centred, Indonesian culture within Indonesia itself. Central to these strategies, in some broader anthropological perspective, have been complex issues of cultural change and cultural response. The change in culture is seen as the result of a complex of influences, including technological and economic development, exposure to mass media, and the operations of the state’s education system and cultural bureaucracy. Responses have taken many forms, including relatively unreflective appreciation, rejection, and active opposition, sometimes in part influencing the national cultural scene, as well as in response to it, sometimes independent of wider concerns.

The case of Minangkabau might initially suggest some ways these issues could be tackled. Minangkabau is culturally one of the world’s best known ethnic groups. Its most conspicuous feature is its matrilineal kinship system. The Minangkabau have variously been seen as a uniquely female-centred society; matriliney has also been interpreted as an ideological prop for an intensive, rice-farming peasant culture. Minangkabau in this century have often made light of interesting but exotic cultural politeness, as witnessed most notably by an hiphop reformist-movement in the Padang in the 1940s and, less successfully but more polemically, by the separatist Leader of the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of the Minangkabau, D.N. Aidit. The Seni Silat Minangkabau or, as it is now sometimes called, the Pasambahan, is another example of cultural revitalization in the forms of politeness that goes back only 30 years, though it is based on a much older genre of ceremonial side-off movements. Up until 1974, this politeness had laid a rather low profile; it cannot, however, be seen as simply a reaction to increased Indonesianization

10.2. Interdisciplinary Approaches

As cultural elements have been entwined with economic and social forms, it responds to the demands of humans' lives and thinking. Even traditional folk cultures, as a result of them fusing with and affecting each other in longitudinal and transverse fashions within and between regions and ethnic groups, show certain patterns and forms that can be systematically studied. With typical features expressed in vibrancy, diversity, and complexity, Nanyang folk culture is both a precious heritage in the development of the world's diversified cultures and a key link that communicates

and exchanges local cultures in the Southeast Asian region. As the new century dawns, both historical traditions and the demands of new circumstances sustain the vitality of folk culture in the Nanyang region even in the face of substantial impact from advanced market cultures. For the protection and sustainable exploitation of this cultural treasure, many scholars have conducted deep investigations by means of archaeology, anthropology, sociology, history, folklore, literature, and other interdisciplinary approaches, attaining many constructive outcomes. (Su2022)(Wang et al.2024)(YAQIAN & ISMAIL2025)(Ning & Chye, 2024)(Cheu, 2021)

As part of the Essential Steps of the Strategy, a team of scholars with different backgrounds has developed a plan to study the history, current situation, traditions, changes, and responses of Nanyang folk culture by means of archaeology, history, and anthropology. Many aspects of Nanyang folk culture are addressed, such as religious beliefs, festivals, customs, folklore, legends, proverbs, stories, poems, songs, folklore literature, crafts, and architecture. Field investigations have been taken in the areas formed by numbers, states, and distributed regions. However, as the work is still in its initial stage, this can only report general conditions, and it is hoped that further concrete and in-depth research can be carried out for subsequent publication.

11. Conclusion

Today, as the forces of globalization replace the forces of colonialism and neo-colonialism new cultural needs are produced and new forms of administrative control become possible. The present essay takes Singapore to be a prime example of a Southeast Asian ‘nation’ where cultural policy has been taken to be a central element of total government policy. Since the withdrawal of the British from the region, a panoply of state architectures has been set up which are designed or are thought to be designed to ‘protect’ ‘indigenous’ or ‘traditional’ cultures. However, as the Singapore case seems to show, the primary concern of these designs may be with cultural policy as a device of social and political regulation and national expropriation.

One of the better-known strategies by which governments effect cultural policies is through designating and organising certain cultural practices for protection, promotion and development. Over the years many governments of South and Southeast Asia have put resources into formal organisations to this end. Collection, preservation, publication and the institution of public display of artifacts, books, songs and dances are some of the activities undertaken by these organisations. Many states in the region have, often at vast cost to themselves, taken the trouble to determine which cultural forms may be presented to the public and while others remain enveloped in government directed secrecy, esoterism or ban. But the fact of their intervention in culture has remained far opaquer. In particular it is not clear how cultural policy has functioned in these states as agents of the new ‘free market’ and flexible specialisation policy paradigms currently promoted by the international development community (Jones, 2012). At the same time recent events in

countries like Nepal, Malaysia, Burma and Bangladesh have drawn attention to the external effects and global extensions of the cultural policies of many states in the region

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