I began my research for this chapter with a question at once radical and old fashioned: Is there such a thing as Hakka culture? Can we now (or could we ever) identify a distinctive set of cultural characteristics shared by a majority of Chinese who consider themselves Hakka? Certainly Hakka in different times and places have argued for patterns of cultural distinctiveness vis-à-vis other groups, even as they sought wider social recognition in the status hierarchies of Chinese or overseas Chinese society. But can we distinguish core behavioral or attitudinal patterns—beyond matters of detail in dress, food, or ritual observances—that set Hakka apart repeatedly not only in China, but in the communities they established in Southeast Asia and elsewhere in the world? And can these differences help us to better understand the similar socioeconomic positions that Hakka seem to share in many places?

I recognize, as I ask this question, that it would be easier to respond simply in the negative, and to go on to explore quite different and unique formations of Hakka culture and identity as they have developed in response to specific situations and relations with other groups. And I recognize that other researchers, facing a similar question, have argued against such an interpretation (cf. Pasternak 1972). Yet there are certain
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features of Hakka cultural adaptations in Malaysia that have continued to puzzle me and seem to call for a more thoroughgoing investigation of patterns and possibilities. This chapter is thus an attempt to explore the question of Hakka culture, focusing on Hakka Malaysians but going wider afield as necessary.

HAKKA PATTERNS IN PULAI: 1978

When I arrived in the Hakka Malaysian community of Pulai to begin anthropological research in early 1978, I had just spent sixteen months in Taiwan, where I had studied the Hakka dialect in Taizhong; visited Hakka areas in central and southern Taiwan; attended Hakka weddings, temple festivals, and folk-singing competitions; interviewed Catholic nuns who had worked in Hakka areas in mainland China; and elicited stereotypes about Hakka from my mostly Taiwanese Hokkien students and friends. Keenly interested in "things Hakka," I carried to Malaysia tapes of Hakka folk songs recorded in Taiwan (which I assumed would be greatly appreciated by the Pulai villagers) and a set of questions to ask them about their Hakka culture.

What I found was a group of people who spoke a version of Hakka quite different from the one I had studied, who claimed not to understand the Hakka folk songs on my tapes, and who seemed to have very little to say about distinctive differences between Hakka and other dialect groups in Malaysia, no matter how hard I probed. Unlike the Hakka of Shung Him Tong described by Nicole Constable (this volume), the Hakka component of Pulai cultural identity was relatively unimportant compared to people's attachments to the Pulai community (as a historic, geographic, and cultural entity) and a sense of themselves as rural, poor Chinese in a state increasingly controlled by and preferential to its Malay population. A few old people were able to sing some Hakka mountain songs, and certain wedding and funeral customs were identified as Hakka, yet when the old Hakka gentleman who was knowledgeable in these ritual practices died during my time there, several Pulai people commented in an unemotional way that they would now

1. In keeping with terms commonly used in the general literature, I have chosen for the purposes of this paper to refer to Hakka language as a dialect and to dialect groups as both linguistic and sociological categories. While the extent to which linguistic divisions were used as the basis for actual group formation have clearly varied, the term "dialect group" remains a convenient shorthand for Chinese who speak the same language.
have to rely on the Cantonese expert in the nearby town to direct these rituals.

The Pulai villagers were descendants of Hakka Chinese miners who had traveled to Kelantan in search of gold beginning in the seventeenth or early eighteenth century. As the gold supplies diminished, the less successful of these miners did not return to China, but began to engage in subsistence rice farming while they continued to dig for gold on the side. Many took local Orang Asli (aborigine) and Siamese women for wives, creating a settled Chinese community in the fertile Galas River valley a hundred miles south of Kota Baharu, the capital of Kelantan. Pulai Hakka continued to identify strongly with their Chinese heritage as they built temples, employed teachers to educate their children both in the Confucian classics and in the martial arts, and communicated in Hakka rather than Malay or other local languages. Non-Chinese women were incorporated into the community, given Chinese names, and worshiped like other Pulai women after their death along with their spouses at family ancestral altars. The isolation of the area was shattered by the Japanese occupation in the 1940s, followed by the communist-led insurrection known as the Emergency, which drew on the resources and support of rural Chinese such as the Pulai villagers. In 1950, in the wake of several incidents, including the murder by communists of the local headman, all Pulai families were removed from the area and resettled in New Villages (controlled, involuntary, relocation settlements) in Terengganu, Johore, and nearby Gua Musang. A decade later they were allowed to return to their ancestral lands and gradually rebuild the community where I was privileged to reside in 1978.

Although Pulai people were not inclined to identify their cultural patterns and practices as specifically Hakka, certain distinctive features seemed to set them apart from other Chinese Malaysians. First, Pulai people seemed rather conservative in their economic orientation, preferring to rely on subsistence rice farming as the basis for their family's support, and only slowly clearing land for cash-crop rubber plantings. In nostalgic stories about the past, men and women spoke fondly of living off the land, including gathering fruit and hunting in the nearby jungles, and they compared their communal cooperation in agricultural activities, weddings, funerals, and religious festivals in a favorable way with the cold, impersonal social relations of urban dwellers. Most Pulai men, particularly married men with children, chose not to work for the local Chinese logging concerns, whose jobs offered lucrative wages but also considerable physical risks. Pulai sons and daughters were encour-
aged to learn trades such as sewing, auto mechanics, or electrical wiring, but were not directed toward the business world. In clear contrast with the usual stereotypes of Chinese in Malaysia, and the Hakka of Calcutta described by Ellen Oxfeld in this volume, Pulai people were known to remark that they had "no head for business."

Second, the Pulai area continued to be suspected of harboring communist guerrillas in the nearby jungle. Two years before my arrival about twenty Pulai men, including the Pulai headman, had been arrested and jailed under the Internal Securities Act for allegedly aiding and abetting the guerrillas. The economic conservatism I witnessed was difficult to reconcile with Pulai men's voluntarily involving themselves in such a risky political enterprise, and a part of me continued to disbelieve the government's accusations. However, a Hokkien Special Branch officer claimed that somewhere between 50 and 80 percent of the communist guerrillas living in the jungle were Hakka, with Cantonese as the second largest group. He explained that Hakka and Cantonese were more likely to live in rural areas near the jungle fringes. Accustomed to rural hardships, they adapted more easily than (urban) Hokkien to being jungle guerrillas. Although the officer did not remark on Hakka political orientations, he complained repeatedly about the uncooperative attitudes of Pulai Hakka in assisting the government with information on suspicious activities. Given the circumstances, I obviously could not ask Pulai people directly about their attitudes toward or support of leftist politics, but it was clear that the internal political and economic organization of the Pulai community had a decidedly egalitarian orientation. The recurrent leadership crises that plagued the community appeared to be influenced, if not caused, by a pronounced distrust of both specific leaders and powerful people in general. Economic differences between individuals or families were generally denied or minimized, and all adult males were encouraged to participate in community meetings and to serve on various committees with elective membership.

A third distinctive feature related to gender divisions and gender roles. Pulai women routinely engaged in agricultural work, both in rice cultivation and in rubber planting and tapping. Although men usually performed the heavy labor of plowing or felling trees to clear land, women could and did manage such tasks in the absence of available men. The heavy agricultural labor of Pulai women was identified as typical of the Hakka. I was also told, mostly by non-Hakka, that Hakka women were known not only for their strong backs, but also their strong wills. Yet the shared labor in family enterprises did not translate
into shared positions in community affairs beyond the family. That Pulai men and women recognized clear divisions of space and task in public activities was visible in the coffee shops on a daily basis, and in community meetings and temple rituals, where men were considered the proper spokesmen for their families in matters of community issues and representations to the gods. And yet, even here there was a notable exception: a woman’s ritual organization known as the funü hui collected money from local women and sponsored its own worship of the gods during the Pulai temple festival honoring Guan Yin, the goddess of mercy.

HAKKA PATTERNS BEYOND PULAI

The disinclination to emphasize dialect-group differences among Pulai people in the 1970s appeared to be common among Chinese Malaysians in general during this period. Although comments on dialect-group differences sometimes arose in casual conversations, such remarks seemed to represent more of a shared discourse about being Chinese than an attempt to classify and act upon significant social distinctions (Carstens 1983:91–92; Strauch 1981:83–84). Hakka informants from Ipoh, Raub, and Kuala Krai who were quizzed directly about the distinctive characteristics of Hakka culture and asked whether they could differentiate Hakka from other Chinese in terms of anything other than language usage usually said they could not. One Hakka leader in the Kuala Krai Hakka Association observed that Hakka and Cantonese from Ipoh probably shared more in common than Hakka from Ipoh and Hakka from Kuala Krai. He said that even in China Hakka had been a diverse group, and that one’s place of residence in Malaysia was now more influential in shaping a person’s character than the place of one’s ancestral origins in China.2

Yet even while the evidence of the 1970s pointed to a growing breakdown in the salience of dialect-group identity in the wider social relations of Malaysian Chinese life, a number of more general features of these groups were still discernible. Among the most obvious were patterns of occupational specialization and urban or rural residence. According to the 1970 Malaysian census, Hakka were the second-largest Chinese dialect group in peninsular Malaysia, and the largest group in both Sarawak

2. See Newell (1962:4–5) for a similar observation about Chaozhou (Teochew) in Province Wellesley in 1935.
and Sabah. In peninsular Malaysia Hakka were more likely to live in rural areas (57.1 percent) than Cantonese (39.9 percent) or Hokkien (51 percent), but less likely than Chaozhou (Teochew) (61.1 percent). Furthermore, the largest concentrations of Hakka were generally found in the most interior districts of the states, in areas adjacent to the north-south chain of jungle highlands. Although a larger number of Hokkien (542,318) than Hakka (394,261) were rural, occupational divisions made it more likely that rural Hokkien were shopkeepers or petty merchants, while Hakka worked as manual laborers in tin mines or on rubber plantations. Hakka were a minority in all of the oldest, largest, and wealthiest cities, such as Kuala Lumpur, Penang, and Melaka. Even in Ipoh, where I was told that Hakka made up about 50 percent of the Chinese population, Cantonese was said to be the lingua franca on the street. Hokkien and Cantonese were identified consistently as the wealthiest and most influential merchants, and their domination of business was used to explain their political and social domination as well. In contrast, urban Hakka were typically employed in artisan-type activities, in drugstores, and in pawnbroking (Cheng 1969:59, 1985:96; Lee Poh Ping 1985:144). Given their

3. In peninsular Malaysia Hakka comprised 22.1 percent of the Chinese population, compared with Hokkien at 34.1 percent, Cantonese at 19.8 percent and, Chaozhou at 12.5 percent. The other speech groups enumerated were: Hainanese (4.7 percent), Kwongsai (2.5 percent), Hokchiu (1.9 percent), Henghua (3 percent), and other (1.6 percent). In Sabah Hakka made up 57 percent of the Chinese population, while in Sarawak, with 31 percent of the total, they slightly outnumbered Chinese from Fuzhou (Foochow) (See various tables, Malaysia 1972).

4. See population figures detailed by state, district, and community group (Malaysia 1972).

5. Much of my evidence for this statement comes from consistent reports by both Western social scientists and Chinese observers. See, for example, Cheng (1976:54), Newell (1962:4), Nyce (1971:114), and Strauch (1981:54-57). For evidence of similar patterns in Sarawak and Sabah see Tien (1953) and Han Sin Fong (1975:76).

6. This is not to maintain that there were no wealthy Hakka, or no successful Hakka merchants, but that these were considered the exception rather than the rule. Nyce (1973:146) reported that in Chinese New Villages in the 1960s, Hakka were stereotyped as workers and “natural” supporters of the Socialist Front, while Hokkien were identified with the “businessmen’s party,” the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA). He argued that this was a class division, rather than one of dialect group, for wealthier Hakka would also join the MCA. Nevertheless, he also admitted that the general division between “socialist” Hakka workers and “entrepreneur” Hokkien held true.

Further proof of the underrepresentation of Hakka in the MCA was evidenced by their minority position on the Central Working Committee of the Party (1949-57), where they were given only six seats out of thirty-two, with Hokkien holding twelve, Cantonese eleven, Hainanese two, and Chaozhou one (Heng 1988:67).
numerical strength, how did one account for the relative economic and political weakness of the Hakka in Malaysia?

One possible explanation might be associated with the types of distinctive characteristics identified for Pulai villagers, including their economic conservatism, their egalitarian political attitudes, and their special gender roles. Such patterns may have not only set Hakka apart from other Chinese, but also hindered the development of a more stratified, capitalist-oriented group whose wealthier members could compete on an equal footing with other Chinese. One needs to ask, however, if these were peculiarly Hakka features, or if they might be more simply explained by the rural socioeconomic environment in which Pulai Chinese found themselves. One way of testing this hypothesis would be to compare the features identified for Pulai with other Hakka and non-Hakka rural Chinese Malaysian communities. Unfortunately, we lack the necessary comparative ethnographic evidence to do so.7

Ju K'ang T'ien's work in Sarawak in 1948 provides the only other detailed ethnographic description of Malaysian Hakka (T'ien 1953).8 It is noteworthy that his observations concerning Hakka socioeconomic positions coincide with those made in Nicole Constable's chapter (this volume): Hakka in Sarawak accounted for a majority of Sarawak Chinese, yet they were largely rural, mostly rubber farmers, and were dominated at the upper socioeconomic and political levels by urban Hokkien and Chaozhou businessmen. T'ien claimed that occupational divisions between dialect groups had originated, at least in part, in China, where Hakka were mainly rural farmers, while Hokkien and Chaozhou were more likely to have been urban merchants (ibid.:35–36). Yet since most immigrants from all dialect groups had come from rural backgrounds, T'ien maintained that it was the urban/rural split in both Sarawak and China, rather than dialect-group differences or origins per se, that accounted for the main variations in social organization and socioeconomic power (ibid.:38). T'ien was not interested in probing the possible distinctiveness of dialect-group cultures, but he did note an intense concern with education in the rural areas that were largely Hakka (ibid.:72–73), as well as a Hakka tradition of keeping clan secrets con-

7. Ethnographies of other rural Chinese Malaysian communities certainly exist, but they focus on different issues and do not provide comparable data on the socioeconomic patterns and attitudes observed in Pulai.

8. Two student exercises (Cheah 1965, Chee 1971) provide information on Hakka population concentrations and associations in Singapore and Malaysia, but lack the depth and sociological sophistication of T’ien’s study.
cerning pugilistic techniques (ibid.:26). Furthermore, his Hakka informants themselves attributed the economic divisions in Sarawak to the different economic experiences of dialect groups. T'ien wrote that “various Hakka informants complained ruefully that they knew there was no possibility of their attaining financial power or even commercial success. The Teochew [Chaozhou] and Fukienes [Fujianese], they said, had all the experience of urban life and commercial enterprise, while the rural Hakka had none.” He even admitted that there may have been something to this argument, as he himself observed the chaos of Hakka shops and the business sense of Fujianese and Chaozhou shopkeepers, which Hakka lacked (ibid.:58–59).

T’ien was not alone in associating Chinese cultural adaptations in Malaysia with the distinctive backgrounds of the various dialect groups in China. Observations about different types of Chinese holding particular occupational niches in Malaya and the Straits Settlements were repeatedly made by early Chinese and European writers, some of whom even perceived differing physical and personal propensities for Chinese from different areas of China (cf. Newbold 1971:12–13; Pickering 1876:440; Tweedie 1953:217; Vaughan 1854:3). These sorts of interpretations suggest another avenue of investigation: the possibility that cultural patterns and socioeconomic experiences associated with Hakka or other dialect groups had first developed in China, and subsequently shaped their adaptations to Southeast Asia. In order to pursue this line of questioning, it is useful to briefly review the distinctive features of Hakka culture in China, and then ask whether these features enable us to better understand the particular adaptations that Hakka made historically in their work and residence in Malaysia and elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

HAKKA IN CHINA

Most discussions of Hakka in China commence with descriptions of their successive migrations from Central to South China, around the fourth century C.E. from Henan to central Jiangxi, and spreading during the Tang and the Song periods first to southwestern Fujian and then to northeastern parts of Guangdong (Cohen, this volume). By the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, certain areas of northeastern Guangdong were purely Hakka, and many more Hakka had spread across the central part of the province, settling as tenant farmers in Cantonese areas and pushing on into Guangxi, areas of Sichuan, and Taiwan (Cohen, this volume; Moser 1985:236–42). In the areas of Guangdong
where they settled, they became known as “Guest People” (pronounced “Hakka” in Cantonese), and they also came to refer to themselves as “Guest People” (“Hak Ngin” in Hakka) (Eitel 1891–92:265).

In linguistic and cultural terms, the Hakka were clearly Han Chinese, yet they did not tend to assimilate with other Han populations in the areas of Fujian, Guangdong, and Guangxi where they settled. Hakka spoke a distinctive Sinitic language and exhibited a set of distinctive cultural features that tended to set them apart from the other local populations. While many of these cultural traits could be found among other Han populations as well, their unique combination and frequency of occurrence were seen to describe the special nature of the Hakka character. Certain of these features were related to the relatively poor geographic regions where Hakka had settled, and the need to supplement agricultural income with other forms of employment. Thus, Hakka women took responsibility for many agricultural tasks that in other areas of South China would have been left to men. One might argue that the preference for unbound feet in Hakka women, which made agricultural work possible, and a rather different gendered division of labor were among the most unique features of Hakka culture. Hakka men sought alternative employment in a number of fields, including mining, handicrafts, trade, and scholarship (Wong Tai Peng 1977:4–9). They also served as professional soldiers (Eitel 1873–74:162; Moser 1985:240). Hakka from Jiaying Zhou were particularly renowned for their scholarly propensities, which enabled many to pass the civil service exams; those who did not receive government employment usually became teachers or looked for other forms of nonmanual work.

9. Assimilation did occur with some Hakka who migrated to Sichuan. Han Suyin’s Hakka ancestors, for example, became landed gentry in Sichuan, married women with bound feet, and, by her father’s generation, no longer spoke the Hakka dialect (1965:28–35). For a more novelistic view of Hakka history and culture see this same work (pp. 22–28).

10. Although its incidence varied somewhat from region to region in China, foot-binding was an accepted practice for Chinese families who aspired to higher social standing in Fujian and Guangdong during the Qing period (Levy 1966:53–54). The Hakka preference for unbound feet was unique in that it was tied to dialect-group culture rather than social class. Of course, according to the standards of Cantonese culture, this made all big-footed Hakka women low class by definition.

11. A Maryknoll sister now living in Miaoli in Taiwan who worked in Meixian during the 1940s told me that while most Hakka men worked in Hong Kong or Southeast Asia, those who did stay home would never work manually except in dire circumstances. They would sit around at home or work as teachers, civil servants, or businessmen if they had the chance. Meanwhile their wives did the heavy agricultural labor.
However, a willingness to perform hard physical labor in occupations such as mining was another remarked-upon Hakka feature (Wong Tai Peng 1977:54–59). Hakka were known for their physical stamina in pioneering situations, and these situations also seem to have promoted a tendency among them to stick together and fight when necessary to support their neighbors. Even their style of fighting was said to be distinctive. In the battles that erupted between the Cantonese and the Hakka in central areas of Guangdong in the mid-nineteenth century, Hakka employed more egalitarian fighting styles, with every man, including gentry, taking the field, whereas Cantonese villages were more inclined to hire mercenaries (Cohen, this volume).

It is important to emphasize that none of these “Hakka” traits were totally unique to the Hakka, and that variations among Hakka of different classes living in diverse circumstances were not unknown (Piton 1873–74:225). Nevertheless, it would be fair to say that Hakka as a group were generally poorer than other Chinese in the areas where they lived, and that in acknowledging traits that kept them unique and apart from others, they developed an ethnic consciousness that affected their modes of adaptation when they, like others, began to travel overseas.  

THE HISTORY OF HAKKA SETTLEMENTS IN GREATER MALAYA

Compared with Hokkien and Cantonese traders who had done business in Southeast Asia and had settled in small numbers in Southeast Asian ports from at least the sixteenth century, Hakka were relative latecomers to the region. 13 Mining seems to have been what finally attracted them to the Malayan area. During the eighteenth century Hakka miners became active in gold mining in Kelantan and Pahang (Carstens 1980), tin mining on the island of Bangka (Jackson 1969, Heidhues 1992), and gold mining in West Borneo (Jackson 1970). The largest mining populations were found in Bangka and West Borneo, with more than six thousand Chinese in Bangka in the 1780s (Heidhues 1992:29) and thirty thousand in West Borneo by the 1790s (Jackson 1970:23), most of whom were Hakka.


13. Some Penang Hakka claim that their ancestors left China at the end of the Ming dynasty and traveled to Penang via Siam and Kedah (Wen Zi Chuan 1979:719–20). While a few Hakka may have settled in Malaya prior to the eighteenth century, further evidence of their numbers or economic enterprises does not exist.
Mining operations were usually initiated by local Malay royalty, who invited Chinese miners to develop ore deposits, profiting both through Malay control of food and mining supplies, and by taxes on the ore itself. News of these mining developments seems to have spread quickly in Hakka areas of China; aspiring miners entered the mining areas both singly and in small groups, and organized themselves into working units known as *kongsi*. Most newcomers had to work for a year or more to refund the cost of their passage to a mine owner, but their subsequent employment and payment was, for the most part, based on a share system, with profits divided among all mining workers in the *kongsi* according to an agreed-upon scheme. In the West Borneo goldfields, Chinese miners soon freed themselves from Malay control, organizing larger mining unions and *kongsi*, which included not only mining workers but also artisans, traders, and Chinese agriculturalists who supplied food to the mines. Fellow *kongsi* members cooperated in economic enterprises and swore oaths of brotherhood to each other in a ceremony that took place once a year on the feast day of Guandi. Most *kongsi* were organized according to egalitarian principles, with the election of officials by the shareholders, and the union of *kongsi* into larger federations wherein each unit was given representation.\(^\text{14}\)

Hakka miners did not organize themselves into *kongsi* and cooperate in mining unions and federations simply on the basis of being Hakka, but were often subdivided in terms of their area of origin in China, with the principle divisions in West Borneo being Guangdong Hakka from Meixian, Dabu, and the Hakka districts northwest of Shantou (Swatow). *Kongsi* organized along subdialect lines often competed with each other for control of water and mining lands, and larger *kongsi* were capable of swallowing up smaller ones or simply chasing them out of an area (Jack...

\(^{14}\) For evidence on *kongsi* organizations and the share system, see Henry Norman (1904:557) for Kelantan/Pahang, Jackson (1969:50–51) and Heidhues (1992:37–40) for Banka, and Jackson (1970:61–70) and Heidhues (1993) for West Borneo. A considerable literature exists on the Borneo *kongsi* systems, including the classic study of J. J. M. de Groot (1885), who relates the *kongsi* in Borneo to the egalitarian orientation of Chinese village society. The most useful sources of reference for my purposes have been Heidhues (1993), Jackson (1970), Ward (1954), and Wong Tai Peng (1977). Wong is particularly interested in the political structure of “*kongsi* democracy,” whose origins he traces back to thirteenth-century share systems in the Yunnan copper mines and the Fujian sea-merchant kingdoms of the late Ming and early Qing. Once again it is important to note that the *kongsi* arrangements were not unique to the Hakka, but that Hakka use of them seemed consistent with broader patterns of Hakka culture.
son 1970:50–57). This pattern of Hakka fighting against other Hakka was to be repeated in the tin-mining areas of the Malay Peninsula in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, there were, with time, growing inequalities among kongsi workers and shareholders, particularly within the largest kongsi federations (Heidhues 1993).

The wealth earned by Hakka miners in eighteenth-century Bangka and West Borneo was considerable (Jackson 1970:28–30), but when tin and gold deposits began to diminish and other conditions for mining became less favorable, the miners and the profits earned from these mines do not seem to have been transferred to other enterprises within Southeast Asia. There does not appear to have developed at this time a core group of wealthy Hakka entrepreneurs who turned their mining profits to investments in other Southeast Asian endeavors, which might have provided occupational and investment opportunities for future Hakka sojourners. Why this failed to happen is not clear, but some speculations are in order if we hope to better understand Hakka patterns. One possibility is that Hakka may have been more inclined to send their profits home, because of the relatively impoverished conditions in their home areas in China. A further factor may have been the division of profits according to the share system. While leaders certainly earned more than the average worker, the share system more evenly divided the wealth, which may have limited the possibility of large-scale investment for some. It is also possible that the wealthier Hakka miners found it difficult to break into the merchant networks controlled by Hokkien in Southeast Asian port cities. Only with the expansion of the colonial economies in the last half of the nineteenth century did opportunities for investment become more widely available to Chinese from a variety of backgrounds.

15. The period of greatest prosperity in Banka was between 1750 and 1780 (Heidhues 1992; Jackson 1969:35). Borneo’s prosperity lasted into the first half of the nineteenth century. Deposits in the two main mining areas around Montrado and Mandor began to show signs of depletion in the 1820s, but the real end to the industry came with the Dutch abolition of the kongsi in 1850 (Jackson 1970:24). Thus, the transfer of investments might have been expected to occur between the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries.

16. Jackson (1970:30) records that one observer estimated that between one-half and two-thirds of the gold mined in Borneo was sent back to China, while another observer thought it was higher. Leong Kok Kee (1981:47) claims that, compared to Cantonese and Hokkien, Jiaying Hakka sent comparatively larger amounts of their earnings back to China and were more likely to return to China for visits. He uses this as one explanation for Hakka economic backwardness in Penang.
Former Hakka miners in West Borneo and elsewhere who did not return to China generally turned to subsistence farming or the development of cash crops (Carstens 1980, Chew 1990, Heidhues 1992). Many of these men married local women, establishing families for themselves in the new setting. The unions between Hakka men and local women in West Borneo, Bangka, and peninsular Malaya, however, were quite different from those between Hokkien and native women in other parts of Java and Malaya. Hokkien who married non-Chinese women in Java, Melaka, and Terengganu developed hybrid cultures, known as Peranakan in Java and Baba in Melaka, which incorporated selected indigenous patterns of language usage, clothing and food styles, and/or kinship practices (Clammer 1980, Coppel 1973, Gosling 1964, Li Chung Chu 1975). Hakka, in contrast, generally integrated the local women they married into Chinese-style families and continued to educate their children in the language and culture of their Hakka fathers. Hakka remained more clearly Chinese in their identity, even when they adapted in minor ways to local customs (Carstens 1980, Coppel 1973, Purcell 1967:97). It is not clear whether differences in the gendered divisions of labor between Hakka and Hokkien similar to those seen in China were also reproduced, but the marriage patterns and cultural conservatism of these earlier Hakka immigrants were clearly distinctive.

Hakka settlements and enterprises in the Straits Settlements and the Malay States during the nineteenth century followed common patterns,

17. In Sarawak former Hakka gold miners settled into agricultural occupations, while Hokkien Chinese developed trading relations with native forest collectors in the interior, reproducing once again the division of Hakka as rural producer and Hokkien as trader (Chew 1990).

18. Skinner (1963:104–105) explains the difference in Hakka and Hokkien patterns of cultural mixing in Indonesia by the areas where the two groups settled, suggesting that Hokkien who settled in Java were more "naturally" attracted to the more complex cultures of this area and thus more susceptible to change, while Hakka who lived in Banka and Borneo would have found nothing they cared to emulate in local indigenous practices. One problem with this interpretation is that the same pattern does not hold true for Malaya, where rural Hokkien in Terengganu and Kelantan acculturated and sometimes assimilated with rural Malay culture, while Hakka did not (Carstens 1980; Gosling 1964; Purcell 1967:97). It also appears that Hakka who resided in Melaka from at least the latter part of the eighteenth century and married local women continued to speak Hakka and identify with Chinese cultural practices. For example, the "Baba Chinese" woman whom Yap Ah Loy married in 1865 was born in Melaka of mixed parentage, but, according to her grandson, spoke Hakka with her children (personal interview, Kuala Lumpur, 1984).

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with smaller groups of Hakka residing in the more urbanized Straits Settlements, where they were employed largely as artisans (Yen 1986:191), while larger concentrations of workers gravitated to the tin-mining districts in the Malayan interior. In the Straits Settlements, Hakka founded many of the earliest huiguan, mutual aid associations with membership based on dialect and area of origin in China.\(^\text{19}\) According to Wu Hua (1980:4), the early organization of Hakka huiguan was due to the smaller numbers of urban Hakka and their relatively weak economic positions via-à-vis other dialect groups. It might also be tempting to infer from this that Hakka demonstrated a particularly strong sense of dialect-group cohesiveness in the overseas environment. However, such explanations conflict with other evidence. In Taiping, Perak, the first huiguan was erected by Hokkien who were in the minority, while in early Kuala Lumpur, where Hakka miners and traders comprised the dominant dialect group, Hakka established the first huiguan.\(^\text{20}\) It is also important to recognize that huiguan were only one possible form of cooperation among Chinese immigrants, who also organized themselves in kongsi, temple associations, and secret societies, with membership based entirely or in part on dialect and subdialect loyalties. Thus, any treatment of cooperative, cohesive "in-group" tendencies would have to consider all of the different categories of mutual-aid groups, a project beyond the scope of this chapter.\(^\text{21}\)

Hakka predominated in the development of tin-mining areas in peninsular Malaya throughout the nineteenth century, making up the majority of mining workers as well as mining organizers and traders in the towns that developed around the major mining centers in Negri Sembilan,

\(-\text{19. The earliest Chinese huiguan in Melaka were organized by Hakka from Huizhou (1805), Dabu (1820), and Jiaying (1821). In Penang the Jiaying huiguan, founded in 1801, is also credited as the earliest, while in Singapore a similar group formed in 1823. For a complete list of Chinese dialect associations in Singapore and Malaya from 1801 to 1870, see Yen (1986:322–31).}

\(-\text{20. Wu Hua (1980:29–30), in fact, contradicts his own previous explanation for early Hakka associations in Melaka and Penang by crediting Yap Ah Loy's establishment of the first Hakka huiguan in Selangor in 1854 to the fact that Hakka were a majority in the area. Although Hokkien shopkeepers and miners were definitely in a numerical minority in the tin-mining areas of Perak during the 1860s and 1870s (Khoo 1972:168–75), the first huiguan in Taiping was the Fujian huiguan in 1859, followed by the Hainanese huiguan in 1869, the Huizhou (Hakka) in 1877, and the Guangdong in 1887 (Xu Yun Qiao 1979:33).}

\(-\text{21. See, for example, Khoo's (1972:75) description of leadership disputes among Jiaying Hakka at Kanching, near Kuala Lumpur, in the 1860s.}\)
Selangor, and Perak. While Hakka obtained mining concessions and recruited the necessary workers, the major financial backing for these enterprises came from Hokkien Baba and European merchants in the Straits Settlements (Khoo 1972:58–67). The system of payment for tin-mining workers in the second and third quarters of the century is not clearly documented, but even later where there was some evidence of share systems, the major profits from the industry accrued to the financial backers, including those who made their money by advancing supplies and opium to the miners (Wong Lin Ken 1965:60–81). In other words, the financial arrangements for the average Hakka tin miner in peninsular Malaya do not appear to have been as favorable as those in the West Borneo goldfields.

As in West Borneo, different Hakka subgroups vied for control of mining areas, with violent clashes between miners organized by kongsi or secret societies a common occurrence during the third quarter of the century. Hakka leaders in the interior were often as well known for their prowess in the martial arts as for their business success, their wealth, or their philanthropy (Carstens 1993). Although these leaders were officially appointed by the Malay rulers in the area, their selection seems to have been based on a combination of election and appointment, and would-be mining leaders who lacked the support of the workers would not be appointed kapitan, no matter how wealthy they were.

Some Hakka miners in the interior did become very wealthy, yet their success did not seem to translate into increased power for Hakka as a whole. The clearest example of this is seen in the Kuala Lumpur area, which was settled by Hakka miners and traders beginning in the late 1850s. Much of the economic and commercial development of the area could be credited to the efforts of the Huizhou Hakka and their kapitan, Yap Ah Loy, who by the time of his death in 1885 controlled both a large area of mining land and two-thirds of the real estate east of the Klang River in Kuala Lumpur Town. In 1891 the Hakka made up 64 percent of the Chinese in Selangor (71 percent in Kuala Lumpur), but by 1901 they had fallen to only 34 percent of Selangor’s Chinese population, with Cantonese 29 percent and Hokkien 28 percent (Jackson 1964:52–53). According to Jackson, Cantonese, with their business skills and their capital, often took control of tin mining when the industry “increased in scale, and financial and commercial organization became more intricate” (ibid.:52). A similar tendency was mirrored in a Chinese saying quoted in an article on the history of Hakka in Penang:
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Hakka build a city [kaibu]
Cantonese prosper from the city [wangbu]
Chaozhou and Hokkien control the city [zhanbu].
(Wen Zi Chuan 1979:718)

What, then, of the Hakka miners and merchants who did succeed? Were their patterns of attaining success or responses to this success noticeably different from Chinese of other dialect groups? For the most part, the wealthiest Hakka entrepreneurs of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were self-made men who came from poor or modest family backgrounds. Some had family connections in Southeast Asia going back to their grandfather or father, but others arrived in their teens and managed to work their way up very quickly. Having achieved financial success, they sought to legitimize their social standing by contributing to social causes, both in Southeast Asia and back in China. Contributions to the building of huiguan, temples, hospitals, schools, and other institutions were a common means by which wealthy overseas Chinese merchants earned honor and respect in the wider Chinese community. Wealthy Hakka followed similar patterns but were disproportionately involved in certain areas. Almost all of the biographies of successful Hakka emphasize the founding of schools, including not only the typical dialect-oriented schools in Malaya and China, but also the first modern Chinese middle school in Penang in 1904 and some of the first schools for girls (Wen Zi Chuan 1979, Xu Yun Qiao 1979). Hu Zi Chuan, known as the tin-mining king, is credited with founding nine different schools in Penang, Ipoh, and his home county of Yongding in Fujian (Wen Zi Chuan 1979:720). Individual Hakka also were especially attracted to attaining official recognition from the Chinese authorities, in the buying of official degrees, in holding office at Chinese consulates in Singapore

22. See the biographies of famous Hakka in Xu Yun Qiao (1979) and Wen Zi Chuan (1979). See also Yen Ching-hwang’s (1987) article on class structure and social mobility in the Chinese community of nineteenth-century Singapore and Malaya. Of the five figures used to illustrate social mobility, one is Hokkien, one Chaozhou, and three are Hakka, including Zhang Bi Shi, Yap Ah Loy, and Yao De Sheng.

23. Hakka, of course, were not alone in their purchase of honorary degrees and titles from the late Qing government. However, my own impression, based on the lists of figures in Yen Ching-hwang’s (1970) article, is that wealthy and successful Hakka merchants and miners in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were somewhat more likely to purchase these honors than were successful Chinese of other dialect groups.
and Penang, and in involvement with economic development projects back in China. The group of successful Hakka businessmen who formed the core contributors to Penang's Zhonghua Middle School and the elaborate Buddhist monastery and temple complex, Kek Lok Si, included Hakka from such diverse geographic regions in China as Yongding, Meixian, Zengcheng, and Dabu (Wen Zi Chuan 1979, C. S. Wong 1963). Cooperating on the basis of a shared Hakka identity, they chose to sponsor projects that clearly transcended this identity. Hakka, when given the opportunity, seemed especially interested in investing themselves with the credentials of proper Confucian gentlemen and displaying their loyalty to general symbols of Chinese high culture. Their distinctive marriage practices with native women, which incorporated these women and their children into the Chinese cultural world, showed similar evidence of conservative cultural tendencies.

The involvement of overseas Chinese in programs and causes back in China raises the issue of political leanings. Famous Hakka such as Zhang Bi Shi and some of his compatriots were known for their support of the more conservative reformists in the late Qing government. In contrast, the leaders of the Confucian Revival movement and the Nationalist and Reformist movements in Singapore and Malaya were mainly Hokkien merchants (Yen 1976a, 1976b, 1982a). Yet factors other than dialect group may have been more powerful predictors of choices in political involvement. Chinese leaders who supported the more revolutionary causes leading to the 1911 revolution were generally younger, and did not hold Qing titles or have investments back in China, leading Yen Ching-hwang to emphasize the class differences between radicals and conservatives (1976b:264–86). In fact, the one example of a revolutionary martyr cited by Yen (1976b) was Wen Sheng Cai, a Hakka from

24. Leong Kok Kee (1981:47) remarks that while three out of the five Qing consuls in Penang were Jiaying Hakka, this did not reflect the relative strength of Penang Hakka as a group. "In fact, Chia-ying Hakka had never played leading roles in the Chinese society of Penang. For example, since its formation in 1903, none of the presidents or vice-presidents of the Penang Chinese Chamber of Commerce were Chia-ying Hakka although some of them sat in the committee. Similarly since 1920 when the post was created until 1941, the presidents of the Penang Kwangtung and Tengchew Association were not Chia-ying Hakka."

25. Four of the six major figures identified by Godley (1981) as "mandarin-capitalists" involved in development projects in late Qing China were Hakka. See also Yen Ching-hwang (1982b).
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Perak, memorialized in another collection as a famous Hakka figure (Xu Yun Qiao 1979). 26

Information on specifically Hakka activities during the twentieth century is generally difficult to locate. During the early decades Hakka women, along with other Chinese women, began to arrive in Malaysia in increasing numbers (Lim 1967). There is some indication that Hakka women were more inclined to work outside their homes, in tin mining and rubber tapping, than women from other dialect groups, with the possible exception of certain categories of Cantonese women. 27 The continuation of such distinctive gender roles probably reinforced general attitudes toward Hakka from both within and without their group.

The other intriguing observation often made about Malaysian Hakka concerns their involvement in leftist politics during the Emergency and afterward (Miller 1955:20, Purcell 1967:214). 28 Unfortunately, aside from anecdotal comments of the type made by the Special Branch officer cited previously, information on the dialect composition of Malaysian Chinese communists does not seem to exist. It is interesting, in this context, that Hakka in 1960s Indonesia were identified as rightist in political orientation. According to Skinner (1963:116), the relatively poor and marginal status of Indonesian Hakka led them to support the then revolutionary Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT, Guomindang) during the early twentieth century. But as Chinese politics shifted in later

26. Leong Kok Kee (1981:43) similarly notes more conservative and more radical divisions among Penang Jiaying Hakka in their political stands during this period.

27. See Siew (1953:14-17) and Lai (1986:56). Both Hakka and Cantonese women worked as dulang (pan) washers in tin-mining areas. Lai identifies the Cantonese female laborers as those who had refused marriage, and mentions their formation of all-female work collectives. Hakka women, in contrast, were more likely to be married and to contribute their labor and wages to the household income. When queried about Hakka employment patterns a middle-aged Hakka woman, raised in Melaka, told me in 1978 that during her youth, Hakka would send their wives and daughters out to work, while Hokkien and men from other dialect groups discouraged this practice. But now, she said, there really was no difference, for all Malaysian Chinese women worked as necessary outside their homes.

28. According to Purcell, “The Hailams, who provided most of the domestic servants in Malaya, are a race somewhat different from the mainland Chinese and are said to have a good deal of aboriginal blood in their veins. They were the first to take the left line in politics, partly, perhaps, to increase their prestige with other Chinese by drawing attention to themselves. Later the Khehs (Hakkas) also showed a disposition to leftist politics. They, too are a type of Chinese distinctly apart from the remainder and with a reputation for impatience of authority and independent views” (1967:214).
decades, traditional Hakka support for the Nationalists, then representing the Republic of China on Taiwan, placed them in a rightist position vis-à-vis the Hokkien merchants, who by the 1960s were more closely associated through trade with the People’s Republic of China.

One pattern that does seem discernible in the activities of both wealthy and poorer Malayan Hakka is an insistence on being respected as true (Han) Chinese and a determination to preserve Chinese cultural traditions. From the late nineteenth century on a series of publications issued by both European missionaries and other Chinese authors associated Hakka with non-Han groups in China. Hakka responded by organizing mass meetings in Guangzhou in 1921 and in Singapore in 1936 demanding retraction of such statements. They also publicized their own versions of Hakka history, which focused on their origins in North China (Char 1969:6-7, Ye Zhong Ling 1986). The attraction of wealthy Malayan Hakka in the early twentieth century to investments in education, official degrees, and official offices can partially be understood in this light, as can the special way in which Hakka incorporated non-Chinese women into Hakka families. Part of the attraction of communism to Hakka in Malaysia and to Chinese Nationalists in Indonesia might draw upon a related explanation: both groups encouraged a nationalist orientation that eliminated dialect distinctions in favor of Mandarin and a common Chinese identity.

FORM AND CONTENT IN HAKKA MALAYSIAN CULTURE

Having explored the general information available on Malaysian Hakka, let us return to the questions posed at the beginning of this chapter. In asking about Hakka culture, I noted that my approach was at once old fashioned and radical, and I would like to begin my concluding discussion by clarifying this statement. I would argue that “old fashioned views of culture” of the pre–World War II variety conceptualized cultures as the historical products of peoples united by language, geography, and a distinctive set of customs (cf. Benedict 1934). One could define the core features of these cultures and identify individuals as group members whose behavior conformed to these basic features. This notion of discrete sociocultural units was seriously challenged in Leach’s (1954) pioneering study of highland Burma, where fluidity over time better described the relations between social groups and cultural practices. The subsequent interest in questions of ethnic groups and boundaries (cf. Barth 1969), and the possibility of situational maneuvering by individuals claiming
different cultural statuses (cf. Nagata 1974), suggested a very different concept of cultural identity based more on form and political maneuvering than on any specific content.

If one were to apply this notion of cultural identity to Hakka, we would focus on the cultural features Hakka in specific circumstances chose to emphasize as they identified themselves in opposition to other Chinese dialect groups. We would assume that their self-definition would vary in relationship to the groups with which they chose to contrast themselves, leading to similar variation in cultural content. The problem with this view of culture is that it tends to ignore the inescapable historical depth of cultural patterns, and to give conscious ethnic definitions too much weight in the overall understanding people come to have of themselves as cultural beings.

My own approach to the question of cultural definition attempts to combine understandings gained from both the earlier and later approaches. As the historically based product of a complex mix of socioeconomic adaptations, the cultural patterns by which people come to understand themselves and live their lives are not always consciously understood (as in Bourdieu's [1977] notion of "habitus"), yet these patterns nevertheless exert a continuing influence on the structures individuals impose on their lives. In this sense, cultural patterns are viewed both as structural and structuring. While individuals and the circumstances they encounter may cause change in these patterns, the most basic understandings and patterns are usually reinforced in numerous ways in the various domains of life and do not change easily or quickly. In fact, the comments made by Ju K'ang Tien's Hakka informants in Sarawak cited above reverberate with this sort of understanding.

Applied to the Hakka in China, this notion of culture would pay close attention to the manner in which specific socioeconomic environments shaped cultural patterns, most notably the treatment of women, modes of cohesiveness and egalitarianism, and emphasis on physical stamina and martial arts. The patterns exhibited generally fell within the range of Chinese cultural variation. Apart from the emphasis Jiaying Hakka seemed to place on education, most Hakka traits would be familiar to other lower-class, rural Chinese. Yet the fact that Hakka spoke a different dialect and kept themselves separate from other Chinese groups must have made these characteristics seem special.

In migrating to work in Southeast Asia, the cultural patterns developed in China seem to have continued for Hakka in general. This does not mean that Hakka automatically identified themselves as distinct
from other Chinese because they were Hakka, or that being Hakka made them automatically cooperate with others who were similarly identified. There was clearly considerable variation in the consciousness by which Hakka claimed to be distinctive and different from Chinese of other dialect groups. Yet I would argue that a conscious awareness of patterns followed in China that were now, in the new setting, recognized as distinctively Hakka was not necessary for these very patterns to continue. Simply by living and working among others who thought and lived as they did, Hakka would tend to reproduce the cultural patterns developed by their ancestors. Thus in identifying Hakka cultural patterns, I would speak of tendencies for Hakka to follow certain occupations or organize themselves in certain ways based on their historical cultural background. Chinese from other dialect groups, particularly those who came from family backgrounds resembling those of the rural Hakka, may also have followed some of these patterns. Still, I would argue that there is something distinctive about Hakka culture in general in that one could not argue that the same set of features is generally typical for any other Chinese dialect group.

The most self-conscious statements of Hakka identity among Chinese in Malaysia and Singapore are found in the special volumes issued by huiguan, and it is interesting to note the extent to which the statements they make about Hakka culture correspond to the patterns discussed here. Like the huiguan volumes issued by Chinese of other dialect groups, the Hakka publications feature articles on the history of these associations and provide biographies of past and current illustrious members. Many of the volumes include information about the home area back in China, often culled from Chinese gazetteers, sometimes complete with maps and color photos of local homeland scenery. In Hakka volumes interest in the Chinese past is expressed in articles about the Hakka migrations from Central China to the South and translations of (positive) Western missionary views of the Hakka. Very little is written in these volumes about the history of the Hakka in Southeast Asia. There are, instead, more general articles about Hakka

29. A quick survey of the titles of articles listed in the Index to Chinese Periodical Literature on Southeast Asia, 1901–1966 (Nanyang Index 1968) suggests that articles discussing the customs of specific dialect groups such as the Hakka were not common in Chinese periodicals, but were restricted to the specialized huiguan volumes.

30. Among the few exceptions are Wen Zi Chuan’s (1979) article on the history of the Hakka in Penang. See also Leong Kok Kee’s (1981) more scholarly paper on the Jiaying Hakka in Penang.
folk songs, Hakka women, or distinctive Hakka customs. The issue of what makes Hakka distinctive, from a Hakka point of view, is dealt with in a particularly interesting manner in an article published in two Hakka commemorative volumes in 1965. The following translated segment demonstrates a conscious awareness of core Hakka values, which I would maintain have been repeatedly reproduced in both general and specific ways in Hakka communities in the wider Malayan region.

According to Chun An,

"The Hakka gentleman has an abundance of natural character. Even if he is so poor as to have nothing to return to, he will not be made a fool of. If anyone treats him with contempt, or acts toward him in an impolite manner, he will swear to oppose him to the death. Or his independent character will be aroused, going from weakness to strength and turning defeat into gain."

"In treatment of people he greatly loves "face/dignity." This face includes ceremonies, solemnity, moral character, position, etiquette, reputation. . . . Normally he loves social intercourse and is diligent in entertaining with courtesy and warmth. If he happens upon a ceremony for capping, marriage, or death, he is able to honor the rules according to old forms, to preserve traditional ceremonies. If one has merely wealth and does not have the qualifications for face, even people in remote places will scorn him. Apart from this, [the Hakka gentleman] highly values the literary aspects of social intercourse. One who is able to write essays on ethics and morality is respected by the masses as though he were divine nobility as was customary in preceding generations."

Most Hakka are educated; during the Qing the number of males who were literate approached 70 percent, but most females were illiterate, as this was the custom of the time. After

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31. See, for example, Shen (1951), Yang Qiu Hong (1965), Chun An (1965), Zhang Fu Ling (1971), Wen Ji Cheng (1979).

the Republic was founded people who attended school increased and the educational system of that period was more developed, so that illiteracy was gradually done away with.

The Hakka gentleman has a great spirit of adventure. No matter whether old or young, he considers that as long as he is alive, with this spirit it is hard to slow down even a little, as [friends] lead one another along. Many [a Hakka] goes overseas for development [fazhan]. Even if he has no background in an enterprise, even if he must struggle with privation and hardship in the beginning, he is prepared to work for a living, as willing as if it were for sweetmeats, until he gradually has savings. Then he will set up a small stall, which will expand into a shop, and he will build his fortune as before, until finally he becomes a wealthy person. . . . When he has accumulated enough to rely on, he could change from acting as a partner in business to being a shareholder in the manner of most towkays [toujia], but not he, for his spirit of adventure would not allow this to happen. Today in overseas Chinese society Hakka who have risen in this way are numerous. If such achievements are great, how could it be by chance?

Hakka like to learn martial arts and fighting skills because of their former environment, in which the aborigines often fought with the Hakka. The aborigines planted and tilled with sword and fire. The most fierce in character of all of the southern barbarians would rely on their power over terrains of strategic importance in order to hold the Hakka hostage. For this reason most Hakka liked to be skilled in fighting as a means of self-defense; they suffered with other native peoples of Guangdong and Guangxi during the invasions of the southern barbarians from Zhejiang, living together in an inferior environment. There were, in truth, multiple reasons for the [Hakka] spirit of adventure. Fifty years ago in Hakka areas those who studied martial arts stood at about 70 percent. Whether one's occupation was farming, wage labor, or business it was all the same—during their vacations the youthful students would practice boxing, which served as a kind of extracurricular activity, both as a form of exercise and as defense against foreign aggression. . . .

The rights and obligations of Hakka males and females are uniformly equal. Already it is fashionable to favor women, and in the village and large family systems there is no custom of men
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working while women do not. The work of plowing and planting is done by women or by one or two men who might be living at home. When there is no agricultural work they do common auxiliary jobs at home, such as spinning and weaving, sewing, weaving bamboo curtains, making paper, and other skilled handicraft work. From early times Hakka women had natural feet, and for this reason they were, compared to women from other groups, more healthy and beautiful; this is the most often remarked-upon feature in the Chinese folk histories. (1965:64–66)

CONCLUSION

What, then, does the future hold for Hakka Malaysians? Under what circumstances might we expect the old patterns to continue? Alternatively, how might certain of these very characteristics encourage transformations of other cultural patterns that have been associated with Hakka?

Let me begin by observing that, although Chinese Malaysians do not generally emphasize cultural differences between members of different dialect groups, dialect and subdialect loyalties continue to be employed in exclusivistic ways for certain purposes. Huiguan, based on dialect group and one's ancestor's place of origin in China, have not disappeared from the Malaysian scene. Moreover, there are recent examples of such organizations expanding their activities in economic spheres by forming limited capital-holding companies for the exclusive benefit of their members.33

Given new systems of electoral politics, it is possible that the larger numbers of Hakka voters could put more of their kinfolk into positions of power and authority. This was Ju K'ang T'ien's (1983) interpretation of political changes in the Sarawak Chinese community between 1948 and the 1980s. Yet the pattern is clearly not uniform, for in Sabah, where Hakka form the majority dialect group, Edwin Lee (1968:323) observed that Hakka leaders in the 1960s, in direct contrast with leaders in other dialect groups, did not sponsor exclusive Hakka associations capable of supporting generalized Hakka interests. Lee suggested that dispersed

33. The Chinese-language news magazine Yazhou zhoukan [Asia weekly] featured an article on this topic (Yazhou zhoukan 1991). Thanks to Chin Siew Ben for sharing this with me.
settlement patterns among the largely rural Hakka, as well as the Hakka propensity for stubborn self-reliance, were the most important factors in explaining this pattern.

Hakka emphasis on education could result in other types of change. Those who pursue higher education in the English or Malayan stream could find their Hakka values subtly and not-so-subtly altered. This appears to be the case with many of the children and grandchildren of the Hakka farmers of Kudat, Sabah, who now work as urban professionals and service workers (Hill and Voo 1990). Anecdotal evidence from Hakka I have met in the United States and Malaysia suggests that Hakka are more inclined than other Chinese to use education (rather than business) as a means of socioeconomic mobility, and that this has resulted in larger numbers of Hakka who are English-educated professionals. These people add that Hakka are also more inclined to educate daughters as well as sons, and it might prove interesting to study female Chinese professionals on this score.

Other features of Hakka culture would seem to have a decreasing relevance in current Malaysian society. A fondness for martial arts and preference for egalitarian modes of organization might fit well with isolated agriculturalists (or leftist jungle guerrillas), but such lifestyles are clearly becoming a thing of the past. Finally, we must note that current marriage patterns, with increasing rates of intermarriage between members of different dialect groups, will affect the cultural patterns of the next generation. In short, I would postulate that clear distinctions between the cultural patterns of Hakka and non-Hakka will continue to erode, and that a shoring up of such patterns in the future would require much more conscious efforts to retain cultural distinctness.