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Resurfacing Hong Kong in Southeast Asia: Circulations of Photography from the 1930s to the Handover

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In October 1949, the British-backed Singapore Art Society (SAS) was established as an umbrella institution that included the different cultural organisations in the colony. Its inaugural exhibition was the First Open Photographic Exhibition, which took place from 29 January to 5 February 1950.[1] However, by 1952, some Malayan photographers had started complaining that photographers from "America, England and other distant countries" were the main medal winners of that annual competition-exhibition.[2] Perhaps in response to their displeasure, the Singapore Camera Club (SCC) organised the First Pan-Malayan Photographic Exhibition in 1953, welcoming submissions from Singapore, Malaya, Sarawak, Brunei and North Borneo. The SCC was founded in 1950 under the SAS umbrella, with police inspector Yee Joon Toh serving as its president.[3] In 1956, the club was renamed the Photographic Society of Singapore (PSS).[4]

Amongst the jury members was Major Raymond Thomas, British army officer and member of the Royal Photographic Society (RPS) of Great Britain. From 1950 to 1953, he was the chief engineer of the Far East Land Forces in Singapore. In his spare time, Thomas spoke on different aspects of photography on Radio Malaya. His talks were so popular that he began writing regular articles on photography for *Straits Times*.[5] In his catalogue essay for the First Pan-Malayan Photographic Exhibition, Thomas ended his commentary with a striking statement: "There is a band of workers who have been internationally recognised as 'The Hong Kong School', may the day come soon when we can speak also of 'The Malayan School'."[6]

In SCC's early attempt to mould a Malayan practice of photography, Hong Kong (HK) was held up as reference; its photographers heralded as role models for those in the British territories of the "Malay" world. Perhaps it was a sleight of hand by the army man in Thomas who viewed the Far East through the vantage of British colonialism: Malaya would make for an easy comparison with HK. However, by citing the "Hong Kong School" as an aspiration for the "Malayan School" of photography, it also absolved local salon photographers and their patrons from defining what was truly Malayan about the kind of photography that they hoped to germinate.

Nearly half a century later in 2001, the Leisure & Cultural Services Department in HK published a four-volume tome titled *Vision Beyond: Hong Kong Art Photography 1900-2000*. As its title declared, HK art photography had, by then, existed for a century. However, the editorial team did not justify why 1900 was selected as the year when HK art photography suddenly burst into life. The publication did establish, without doubt, the orthodoxy of Pictorialism in defining the art of HK photography since its inception.

In the preface written by esteemed photographer Leo K. K. Wong 黃貴權, chairman of the organising committee of the *Vision Beyond* project, he noted that HK photography shifted from being "realistic in style" to the "pictorial style" under the influence of the London Salon of Photography, established in 1910. He cited the founding of the Photographic Society of Hong Kong (PSHK) in 1937 as the inauguration of "a period of active participation in international salon exhibitions on the part of Hong Kong photographers, culminating in the peak of activity in the 1950s and 1960s".[7] Following Wong's logic, one could say that the 1930s marked the emergence of HK art photography and its beginnings were seeded by earlier developments at the metropole (London Salon). Wong added emphatically: "A review of Hong Kong's arts in the 20th century shows that art photography was the form of expression in which Hong Kong gained the greatest international acclaim."[8] That visibility was what Major Raymond Thomas alluded to.

In Europe and America, the influence of Pictorialism was most strongly felt from the 1880s to the 1910s. Its adherents sought to elevate the art in photography, differentiating themselves from the casual snap-shooters and those who worked for advertising and mass media.[9] Its imprint was quickly felt in Asia through the setting up of photo clubs, which organised competitions (salons) that led to exhibition opportunities. In many cases across Southeast Asia, its imprint lasted well beyond the 1910s to the present day. Amongst its adherents across the region, the term *salon photography* is commonly used to signify their practice of art photography. According to veteran Singaporean photographer Lee Sow Lim 李少林 (b. 1930, Seremban), the transliterated Mandarin term of *shalong* 沙龍 (salon) might have been first popularised by photographers in HK, with Singapore-based practitioners quickly adopting the term.[10] Made in a 1961 Rediffusion broadcast, Lee's account also recognised the imprint of HK photography on photographers in Singapore. In my writings, I use *salon photography* to mark the embedding (transfer and refraction) of Pictorialism when it arrived and evolved in parts of Asia. I also use the term in recognition of the role that Chinese-speaking photographers played in sustaining that long outmoded practice in Asia.

In volume one of *Vision Beyond*, the editorial team provided an exhaustive timeline of HK art photography. Revisiting the timeline today, it is striking to me that salons, exhibitions and exchanges in and from Southeast Asia are also included in this ambitious attempt at historicisation. The timeline also tracks the exchanges between photographers from China and HK, which is to be expected. But what was the relevance of Southeast Asia in HK art photography? Why did the organising committee not relinquish Southeast Asia from this post-handover endeavour to historicise HK art photography? Did Southeast Asia also leave an imprint on HK photography?

This preliminary report addresses some of these questions. It attempts to resurface HK in Southeast Asia through the circulations of photography. During the cold war era, the British colony had slipped in and out of the emerging Southeast Asia. To be sure, Southeast Asia emerged as an externally imposed sense of a region when Louis Mountbatten's Southeast Asia Command was created during World War II (WWII). After the war, the idea of the region was further consolidated through the United States' (US) ambition to dominate the entire region between India and China. To do so,

American scholarship had to follow suit and produce the knowledge to frame the region.[11] But that did not mean that the idea (and boundaries) of the region became cut and dry. The people and political entities in and around the region had different desires and needs for Southeast Asia. In 1971, HK governor David Trench appeared at the East-West Center in Honolulu to deliver a lecture ostensibly titled "Hong Kong and Its Position in the Southeast Asia Region". However, the lecture was mostly a justification of British colonialism in HK. Trench had a lot more to say about China, especially the congenial relationship that UK had developed with the communist nation, than HK's position within Southeast Asia. The only time when Southeast Asia was mentioned came towards the end of the lecture as a plea against the imposition of import duty in Western markets on Southeast Asian products, which, Trench remarked, would be a tax on the poor by the rich.[12] It was for the maintenance of export trade that Trench would fleetingly make clear HK's connection with Southeast Asia (and, by implication, the free world). That was probably why the HK governor chose to demarcate the British colony from communist China in his lecture title when its content had little to do with Southeast Asia.

In terms of the circulations of photography, HK was at times positioned within the framing of Southeast Asia. By "circulations", I refer to the multi-directional flows of people, visuals, ideas, periodicals and technology related (directly or indirectly) to photography across national borders and regional boundaries. These circulations helped to foster the national and international imaginations of photography across the region. This report aims to detail the logic of these flows and how they intersected with the forces of nationalism, cold war and Chineseness.

This report is divided into two sections. The first section provides an overview of how HK had served as a reference point for photographers across Nanyang and Southeast Asia, at least since the end of WWII.[13] I pay attention to specific initiatives, which I find useful in making visible the politics of exchange and inter-referencing between HK and different parts of the region. I appropriate the term *inter-referencing* from Aihwa Ong who uses it to characterise one of the three styles in which Asian cities have tried to become global by measuring themselves against other more impressive centres in Asia. In this sense, inter-referencing "refers more broadly to practices of citation, allusion, aspiration, comparison, and competition".[14] This listing of practices provides the vocabulary to help me envision, in concrete terms, how these circulations of photography operated across HK and Southeast Asia. In this section, I confine myself largely to source materials produced in Southeast Asia, including the archive of newspapers provided by the National Library Board (NLB) of Singapore,[15] and its expansive collection of books and catalogues. This inevitably places a slight premium on the perspectives emanating from Singapore, which I have tried to temper, in a limited way, in the first section of this report. A fuller consideration of the "HK factor" on Myanma photography, for instance, would have to be taken up in a future essay.

The second section uses HK periodicals as source to resurface Southeast Asia and its photographic practices. In this report, I demarcate the photo (photographic) periodical, which I define as a recurring publication focusing on photographic practices, from the pictorial periodical (*huabao* or 畫報), which is a recurring publication delivering content

using photographs (and/or other illustrative means). In the historiography of photography in Southeast Asia, Chinese language materials have been somewhat under-utilised. Such oversight is surprising, given that a significant number of photographers active in Southeast Asia, both before and after WWII, were Chinese-speaking pioneers. In Singapore, at least since the 1940s, Chinese newspapers had published more in-depth reports on photography than the English papers. These materials remain relatively untapped and I have tried to utilise them more extensively in the first section. HK periodicals provide an additional source, since 1950, to resurface Chinese-speaking photographers who helped shape the photographic practices in a national and/or regional context across Southeast Asia. Before the Internet, the circulation of periodicals played a decisive role in disseminating ideas, visuals and knowhow regarding photography. To this end, I activate materials in HK from the collections of the Heritage Museum and the Asia Art Archive (AAA). Such an approach may seem to privilege HK's vantage on Southeast Asia. But it is a bit of a misnomer to think of periodicals published out of HK strictly as HK periodicals. After the founding of New China, HK periodicals would not have survived for long without readership support from Southeast Asia. To cater to them, these periodicals had to carry materials concerning Southeast Asia. The readership had a direct editorial imprint on these HK periodicals. As we shall see later in the second section, the editors of photo periodicals from HK often spoke to, and on behalf of, Southeast Asia as a means to consolidate their readership. Of course, we might say that their relationship towards Southeast Asia was opportunistic and market driven. However, it would be difficult, if not unproductive, to segregate HK and Southeast Asia as though the demarcation then was so clear-cut. We can certainly think of HK as being part of Southeast Asia in the sense that it had been an important cultural node in the production of our popular cinema, entertainment and periodicals, at least since 1949 until the pushback of nationalism in different parts of the region.

A secondary concern of this report is to examine some of these photographic inter-referencing between Southeast Asia and HK through the lens of Chineseness. In trying to define Chineseness, Wang Gungwu calls attention to the "relationship between the concrete experience of being Chinese and the abstract qualities of Chineseness".[16] In other words, the issue of Chineseness can be approached on tangible, experiential and even theoretical terms. In relation to identity politics, Chineseness is contingent and fluid, "a category whose meanings are not fixed and pregiven, but constantly renegotiated and rearticulated, both inside and outside China".[17] The problem is that, for many Chinese intellectuals, Chineseness can also be reactive, asserts Rey Chow. This inclination stems from the historical humiliation of China by the Western powers since the mid-19th century, which has become a "paranoid tendency to cast doubt on everything Western and to insist on qualifying it with the word *Chinese*". Such obsession with Chineseness lapses into Sinocentrism. Chow adds:

> Everything Chinese, it follows, is fantasised as somehow better—longer in existence, more intelligent, more scientific, more valuable, and ultimately beyond comparison. The historically conditioned paranoid reaction to the West, then, easily flips over and turns into a narcissistic, megalomaniac affirmation of China; past victimisation under Western

> imperialism and the need for national "self-strengthening" in an earlier era, likewise, flip over and turn into fascistic arrogance and self-aggrandizement.[18]

Following Chow, in resurfacing HK in Southeast Asia through the circulations of photography, I pay attention to the workings of Chineseness while maintaining critical distance to its spectre. It prompts me to unpack its imprint in photography and how it also had to contend with the forces of nationalism and the binarism of Cold War politics since the end of WWII.

A quick note on translation and transliteration: In this report, I have used a lot of Chinese-language sources. In most of these sources, the names of photographers, writers, artists, photo clubs and other institutions were understandably given in Chinese. In this report, I have tried to search for their English names. But this is not easy, as some of the cited sources date from the 1950s. Some of the practitioners simply did not use English names then. Others might have faded from public attention through the displacement of political upheavals or the tide of time. Often, the English names of ethnic Chinese photographers in Vietnam or Malaya, for instance, were rendered according to local norms, their dialect group and/or the whims of bureaucracy. As and when I am unable to find their English names, I would transliterate the Chinese names in hanyu pinyin. For organisations that I cannot find their English names, I would indicate their Chinese names and, if possible, offer a suggestion of what I think that organisation might be. In terms of the Chinese title of images and articles, I would use the given English translation, if available. I would do so even if the given translation reads rather awkwardly. Similarly, in citing from Chinese articles, I would use the given English translation, if available. If there was no English translation in the original, I would use my translation in this report.

Section 1: Resurfacing Hong Kong in Southeast Asia

1.1 Feverishly Infatuated: For the Love of HK Salon Photography

Sunny Giam was a PSS member and a frequent writer of photography in the English newspapers of Singapore from the 1950s to the 1960s. In 1959, after returning from a vacation in HK, Giam was inundated with questions from the Singapore-based salon photographers who wanted to know everything (including the gossip) about its current development in photography. It prompted Giam to proclaim, in one English paper, that Singapore photographers were "feverishly infatuated" with their peers in HK.[19]

In the 1950s, Hong Kong photographers were already expected to win most of the awards in the international salons.[20] Hong Kong produced perennial winners in these contests. Each year, the Photographic Society of America (PSA) would publish a "Who's Who in Photography" in its journal, ranking photographers based on the number of prints accepted in salon contests that the society recognised worldwide. HK photographers would dominate the list year after year.[21] According to the ranking for 1959, for instance, Ho Fan was the unofficial world champion, followed by O. Szeto and K. H. Wu. All

three of them were from HK. The top-ranking photographer from Malaya that year was Singapore's Kwan Sam Hoi 關山海, coming in 19th on the list.[22]

Organised by the PSHK, the Hong Kong Salon was also one of the toughest competitions around. It was not easy to have a print accepted because the local photographers were of high standards.[23] As one writer noted on *Nanyang Siang Pau* 南洋商報 in Singapore, HK was the place where the fight for salon honours was the most intense amongst its photographers. For those who were active in the salon contest circuit, it would not be difficult to identify the works of HK photographers because of their quality and style.[24]

By the 1960s, HK had acquired the accolade of 沙龍王國 "kingdom of salon".[25] In 1960, K. Huang 黃克 wrote an extensive overview of photography in Southeast Asia for *Nanyang Siang Pau*. Born in Singapore, Huang had worn many hats throughout his life. He picked up photography in the early 1950s and mounted his first solo exhibition at the Victoria Memorial Hall in 1959. Titled *Our Peoples' Life*, the exhibition featured 200 photographs focusing on the lives of people in Singapore and the Federation of Malaya.[26] His photographs and writings on photography started appearing in the Chinese papers since the 1950s. In 1968, Huang joined a contingent of painters and photographers from Singapore, including Shui Tit Sing 許鐵生 (b. 1914, Kaiping, China—d. 1997, Singapore), other members from the Ten Men Art Group, former Nan Tah Book Store owner Zhang Langhui 張浪輝 and Liu Kang (1911-2004) on a trip to Sabah and Sarawak to seek artistic inspiration. Huang was also a drama lecturer and, prior to his retirement, worked as an editor for a Chinese newspaper. It is fair to say that Huang was fully embedded in the cultural milieu of the decolonising and newly independent Singapore.

In his 1960 article, Huang noted that the metropolis of HK was the standard bearer for Southeast Asian photographic art. He based his judgement on the dominance of HK photographers in salon contests worldwide. HK was able to attain its superiority because of the impact of foreign cultures and arts. Its economic progress also provided the foundation for the proliferation of photographic art. By 1960 when Huang contributed the article, HK photography had gone through three shifts. The imprint of Eastern aesthetics marked its first period of development. Some photographers would rely on darkroom wizardry to create ink painting-like imageries. Others would model their photographs on the oriental beauties that were seen in Chinese traditional prints. The imprint of Euro-American aestheticism marked the second phase of HK photographic art. In terms of subject matter, photographers started working on landscape photography, still life and the scenic views of fisher folk. The third phase was marked by the recent shift towards realism. Photographers had started to step out of their studios to hit the streets and dockyards, tuning their camera lens on fishermen and village kids in a bid to seek inspiration from human life. Huang also name-checked the periodicals and newspaper supplements on photography that circulated out of HK.[27] Huang was by no means alone in writing HK into Southeast Asia.[28]

From the vantage of Sabah, its attempt at organising a photo club and promoting salon photography were also influenced by the experiences in HK. In February 1956, *World Photography* 世界攝影, a photo periodical published out of HK, printed a report, filed

from Sandakan, on the founding of Sandakan Photographic Society 山打根攝影學會 in 1955 (for a detailed analysis of *World Photography*, please refer to the second section of this report). The fact that its founding was reported in HK was already indicative of the historical connection between Sandakan and HK. When North Borneo Chartered Company was formed in 1881 to exploit the resources of the territory, North Borneo was still sparsely populated. The company sponsored and welcomed emigration from China and HK. By the 1930s, Sandakan was already known as "Little Hong Kong", with regular sailings connecting the two port-cities. From Sandakan, the nearest major city was HK because it was faster to sail there than to Singapore.[29] In the early 1960s, even though the capital had been moved to Jesselton (present-day Kota Kinabalu or KK) in 1946, Sandakan remained the largest town and the principal trading centre of Sabah. It had the highest Chinese concentration and was the chief point of contact with HK.[30] The timber extraction business gave it great wealth.[31] According to *World Photography*, the former chairman of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce Sandakan 劉枚臣 Liu Meichen returned to HK for a business trip during the winter of 1954. His trip coincided with the Ninth Hong Kong International Salon, organised by the PSHK. Upon his return to Sandakan, local photographers inundated him with questions about the state of HK photography. That germinated the founding of Sandakan Photographic Society. Its founding members included Liu, Chu Gah-Soon 朱家淳, Kwan Yau Mui 關友梅 and Kwan Chew Ming 關昭明, amongst others.[32] The club was reregistered as Sabah Photographic Society in 1963, even though it remained centred at Sandakan.[33]

Steve Chong Yun Ming 張運民 (b. 1949, Sandakan) joined the Sabah Photographic Society in 1972 and has since served two terms as its president. He was treasurer of the salon committee when they organised the 1st Sabah International Exhibition of Photography 1985. According to Chong, the founding members referenced the constitution and regulations of the Photographic Society of Hong Kong (PSHK) during the registration for Sandakan Photographic Society. The district officer representing the Chartered Company was invited to be its advisor. Most of the first-generation members were Cantonese, followed by the Hakka. Some of them were businessmen whose friends in HK enjoyed collecting cameras. They were not that interested in art photography. For the member exhibitions that the society organised in the 1950s and 1960s, their prints were sent to HK and judged by HK salon photographers. Somewhat surprisingly, Sandakan Photographic Society (and, later on, the Sabah Photographic Society) had very little contact with the photo clubs in the Federation of Malaya (and, later on, West Malaysia) because apparently, the photographers there were not that interested in their peers from Sabah. In comparison, they enjoyed a closer relationship with Singapore-based salon photographers like Ang Chwee Chai (1910-95) and Tong Koon Hung 董貫行 (b. 1918, Nanhai, China—d. 1993, Singapore). Their connection with West Malaysia improved when they met Song Jin Tek 宋仁德 (d. 2015) from Penang who helped them with the international exhibition in 1985 and served as its jury member.[34]

Chong's account fleshes out the circulations of experiences and ideas from HK (and Singapore) to Sabah. But it also shows that, for a somewhat underpopulated place like Sabah, it would be irresponsible to blindly emulate HK on everything related to salon photography. While HK would host a few international salons each year, Sabah lacked its

connectivity (in terms of air and sea traffic), the critical pool of photographers and the technical support to do that on an annual basis. Chong found out the hard way when his team tried to organise the international exhibition in 1985. Even for the production of the catalogue, they had to print in Singapore. Song also had to help them reproduce the winning submissions so that they could do slideshow presentations of the images, apart from the physical exhibitions that they held at Sandakan and KK.[35] In short, local photographers often have to embed ideas and experiences circulating from elsewhere into practices that are feasible in localised terms. This process often leads to new ways of understanding and practising photography at different places.

1.2 Circulations: People, Exhibitions, Trends and Technology

The circulations of people, exhibitions and periodicals helped to bring trends and ideas from HK to the rest of Southeast Asia. The salon photographers across the region were particularly receptive to these circulations because of the dominance of HK photographers in salon contests. Of course, there were also circulations towards HK from the rest of the region. Photographers routinely submitted their works to HK periodicals as a way to gain visibility. The more accomplished ones would dream of mounting exhibitions there to further circulate their name. Perhaps it was a testament of his achievements that Sarawakian photographer K. F. Wong 黃傑夫 (b. 1916, Sungei Merah, Sibu—d. 1998, China) was already invited by the Chinese Photographic Association of Hong Kong 香港中華攝影學會 (CPA) in 1959 to mount a solo exhibition.

The temporary movement and permanent emigration of photographers, including those of ethnic Chinese origins, across the region was partly fuelled by the penetration of Western colonialism and the expansion of Japanese imperialism. The indefatigable Tong Koon Hung was a founding member of the Photographic Society of Guangdong 廣東攝影學會 (PSG), which was established by the likes of S. F. Dan 鄧雪峰 (1906-87) and Soman Lo in 1947. In 1949, Tong moved to Singapore, bringing along his contact list of artists and photographers in Guangzhou and HK. In 1958, Tong helped to establish the South East Asia Photographic Society (SEAPS) in Singapore (for a brief account of Tong's career, see the second section on *Photoart*).

As a parallel, Tchan Fou-li 陳復禮 (b. 1916, Chao'an—d. 2018, HK) found opportunities limited at his hometown in China, despite graduating from the Guangdong Provincial Second Normal School 廣東省立第二師範學校. In 1935, he moved to Nakhom Phanom, Siam, to work for his father-in-law. In 1943, because of trade restrictions placed on the Overseas Chinese by the Thai government under pressure from the Japanese forces, Tchan relocated to Hanoi and in 1944, set up Tai Hua Company 泰華行 ("Tai" marked his beginnings in trade at Siam while "Hua" connoted his Chineseness) with his friends. In 1946, he and his friends set up another company at Haiphong involved in the short-distance trading of groceries and daily essentials. Tchan started learning photography on his own after WWII. His first photo teacher was Tchen Fong Ku 陳芳渠, a fellow Teochiu migrant who graduated from Peking University. Apparently, Tchen had learnt photography from eminent China photographer Zhang Yinquan 張印泉. During

the Second Sino-Japanese War, Tchen moved to Vietnam and opened a studio at Saigon. With his businesses in the north, Tchan could only see his teacher whenever he visited Saigon. If not, he would have to mail his prints for Tchen to see. Tchan won his first salon award in 1951. In 1952, Tchan, Tchen and 19 other photographers participated in the historic art photography exhibition at the Hanoi Opera House. It was apparently the first attempt by local practitioners across the colony to mount an art photography exhibition. In 1955, after the liberation of North Vietnam, Tchan voted with his feet by relocating to HK, instead of staying put or moving to Thakhek in Laos where his brother was based. As stated in his biography written by China photo critic Ding Zunxin 丁遵新, Tchan moved to HK because he felt uncomfortable over the need to be eventually naturalised as a Vietnamese citizen, even though there was no immediate pressure to do so, given the relationship between the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).[36] Instead of contributing to the proletariat revolution in the DRV or joining the waves of Overseas Chinese who moved back to New China to help the remaking of their motherland, Tchan moved, by choice, to HK to be a willing subject of British colonialism. He knew full well that neither the CCP nor the Vietnamese communists would tolerate his accumulated wealth for long, whereas in the crown colony of HK, he would be able to start anew. Even though he felt frustrated when he first arrived at HK, having to leave his businesses in Vietnam, Tchan was by no means poor. When he decided to send his three kids back to Guangzhou for education, Tchan was able to open three accounts for them at the Bank of China, putting 20,000 renminbi (RMB) into each account so that they could earn an interest of 160 RMB each per month, which was already enough to sustain their lives in New China.[37] In 1958, Tchan and his peers founded the aforementioned CPA. It did not take long for the CCP to get Tchan on their side. In the first place, he soon realised that some of his friends whom he first met in Thailand and Vietnam were underground members of the CCP.[38] Since 1959, Tchan had been invited countless times as a HK photographer back to China to photograph her majestic scenery. Towards the end of the 1970s, Tchan was already a member of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference 全國政協. In the history of HK photography, there was no other photographer like Tchan who had been showered with opportunities and attention (shooting trips, exhibitions, lectures, numerous accolades and even a seminar dedicated to him at Shantou) by any political regime (in his case, by the CCP). This brief account of Tchan's life shows that his visibility as a photographer, at least in the Chinese-speaking world, resulted from his mobility, initially as an economic migrant, and then, as an accomplished and patriotic trader who was given the chance to circulate his name and work throughout China. Even his early attempt to learn photography from Tchen was partly made possible through the exchange of mails between the two of them (for more on Tchan Fou-li, see the parts on *Photoart*, *Photo Pictorial* and the founding of the Society of Worldwide Ethnic Chinese Photographers in this report).

Since the late colonial era, photo clubs in Singapore facilitated or hosted many opportunities of exchange for HK practitioners. Very often, these exchanges brought new trends and knowhow to the practitioners in Singapore. In that way, HK became an important reference in terms of ideas, visuals and technology for the salon photographers in Singapore. In February 1960, for instance, SEAPS hosted an exhibition for S. Y. Chen

陳錫元, president of the Hong Kong 35mm Photography Society (35mmPS). The organisers hoped that the exhibition would convince local photographers that the 35mm negative was more than capable of producing quality enlargements. To illustrate the point, Chen's negatives were exhibited alongside the prints.[39]

Interestingly, the inaugural show that SEAPS organised was a solo exhibition in January 1959 for HK artist Lou Lo Pang 雷魯萍 (b. 1916, Taishan), which featured not only photographic prints, but also his *guohua* and oil paintings. According to a newspaper report in Singapore, Lou was somewhat of a wonder kid, capable of drawing with both hands when he was young. Picking up photography when he was 15, Lou would eventually work for the Republican-era *Liangyou* (*Young Companion*) pictorial. After the war, he helped to revive the Photographic Society of Guangzhou 廣州攝影學會 and became a prominent member of the Hong Kong Chinese Art Club.[40] Apparently, his solo show in Singapore, which incorporated works in three different mediums, was the first of its kind.[41] It is possible to speculate that SEAPS' decision to feature such a show might be an attempt, on its part, to gain legitimacy as an art organisation. It was also a curatorial attempt to place photography on parity with *guohua* and oil painting, the exemplars of China and Western art.

When the PSS formed a colour section in 1958 to enthuse photographers to try their hands in colour photography, the group was led by chairman Cheah Kim Seng and secretary Richard Tsang, a HK businessman based in Singapore.[42] Previously, negative colour film had to be processed in HK or the US. By 1958, the service had become available in Singapore.[43] In 1960, Raffles Museum hosted a touring exhibition of colour photography shot in Japan by Cheung Yu Chiu, Kan Hing-fook and Lau Wai Kwong, esteemed salon photographers from HK.[44] Despite the attempts to popularise colour photography in Singapore, the technology necessary to propel its development continued to lag behind that of HK. In 1972, some of the colour transparencies that were available for sale in Singapore still could not be processed locally. The Kodakchrome had to be sent to Australia while the Agfa CT18 had to be developed in HK.[45] Even by the late 1980s, Singapore still lacked a premium-quality colour processing and printing service that art photographers could use, unlike the case in HK.[46]

In the Chinese papers of Singapore, news reports on HK salon photography gradually began to taper off in terms of length and frequency since the mid-1960s. However, exchanges within the salon photography milieu continued well into the 1990s. In 1977, the Kreta Ayer Camera Club organised a group exhibition of HK photography at the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce. Members from the 35mmPS, CPA and PSHK were responsible for contributing the exhibited prints.[47] In 1979, to celebrate its 15th anniversary, the Photo-Art Association of Singapore organised a group exhibition featuring the works of its members, alongside the prints of esteemed HK photographers Tam Ning 譚寧 and Lee Geor-ming 李佐明 (since the mid-70s, Lee had been responsible for selling ads for *Photo Pictorial* until 1980 when he joined the reinstated *Photoart* as manager), and members of the Mongkok Photographic Club. Lee also delivered a talk on action photography.[48] In 1986, Photo-Art hosted an exhibition for veteran HK photographer Soman Lo who was already famous in the salon circuit during the 1950s.

He was known, since the late 70s, for his obsession with Huangshan in China. Apart from gracing his exhibition in Singapore, Lo also led a series of three lectures on negative retouching and the use of lights in portraiture.[49] In 1984, SEAPS hosted a solo exhibition for Jackie Wan Ho Ming, showcasing his travel photography.[50]

After 1949, HK served as an important bridging point between China and the outside world. In the Second Open Photographic Exhibition organised by the SAS in 1951, submissions from Guangzhou continued to be showcased in Singapore.[51] The submission for the second edition of that exhibition started in September 1950.[52] By the Third Open Photographic Exhibition in 1952, the submissions had come from 13 countries, including North Borneo, HK, Haiti and China, amongst others. The introductory text to the catalogue indicated that the submissions from Guangzhou had arrived via HK, mostly likely with the help of Kaan Se-Leuk 簡子略, the salon secretary of PSHK. It enabled the likes of Wong Yung-Kwong, representing the Kwangtung Photographic Society (most likely the aforementioned PSG; address given in the catalogue as 60 Sup Paak Po Road, Canton, China), to participate in the competition.[53] Submissions from South China (most likely Guangzhou only) continued to arrive in that manner, via HK, for the Fourth Open Photographic Exhibition in 1953. In fact, they were labelled as submissions from Hong Kong in the listing of exhibited works, unlike the second and third editions of the exhibitions in which a distinction was made between submissions from HK and Guangzhou in the catalogues.[54] By the Fifth Open Photographic Exhibition in 1954, Kaan had already stepped down. While acknowledging Kaan's contribution, the catalogue of the Fifth Open Photographic Exhibition in Singapore also made clear the previous arrangement with HK in greater detail. In 1953, for instance, Kaan sent most of the entries that PSHK received for its HK exhibition in November 1952 for the Fourth Open Photographic Exhibition in Singapore.[55] That might have been the route through which the Guangzhou submissions arrived in Singapore for the 1952 and 1953 exhibitions. The successor of Kaan decided not to continue with that arrangement. I suspect the decision made it extremely difficult for Guangzhou photographers to participate in the Fifth Open Photographic Exhibition, which continued to feature HK submissions. Even though China (and Russia) were invited to participate in the ninth Singapore International Salon of Photography in 1958 organised by the PSS, neither responded.[56]

In terms of the trading of photographic supplies and equipment, HK probably served as the testbed for Chinese products before they were exported elsewhere. Chinese-made cameras, for instance, were introduced to HK a year and a half before Light Instruments in Singapore imported them to Malaysia. Because of its price point, the Shanghai-4 twin-lens reflex camera was well received by the Chinese community there, especially amongst the students, undercutting the Japanese camera brands.[57] However, the import of Chinese cameras to Singapore was dwarfed by the popularity of Japanese photographic equipment. In 1969, for instance, Japan exported over 56,000 cameras to Singapore, worth over S$8 million. West Germany could only manage 1,517, worth S$358,107. Japanese numbers continued to climb in 1970 and 1971, sustained partly by the rise of tourism in the Far East, including HK and Singapore. By then, the two cities were vying to be the top destination for tourists to buy cheap cameras, but it seemed that HK suffered a temporary blow because of its reputation of selling fake imitations.[58] According to the

general agent of Nikon in Singapore, some sellers in HK would even sell Japan-imported second-hand cameras as brand new sets to their customers.[59] One month after the Tiananmen massacre in 1989, the sales volume of photographic equipment in HK also dropped by an average of 40 percent due to the decline in tourist numbers. Retailers in Mongkok and Tsim Sha Tsui suffered a drop of nearly 50 percent.[60] Needless to say, HK was also the conduit through new technology entered China. In 1979, Kodak's HK branch office finally received its first contract to export colour film into China.[61] Interestingly, it was reported in 1988 that some of the China importers of Kodak and Fuji film had resold the products to HK in order to "exchange" their Renminbi for HK dollars.[62]

During the decades when it was difficult for people from certain places within Southeast Asia to visit China legally, the HK photographers played a significant role in bringing imageries from within the "isolated" nation to the world beyond. During the Singapore Festival of Arts 1986, for instance, Guangzhou-born HK photographer Jacky Yip was invited to present his photographs of the Tibetan people and culture. Explaining the rationale of his work, Yip said: "I am Chinese and I want to know more about the country."[63] The photo periodicals that mushroomed in HK since 1950 also played a similar role in circulating these imageries of China to the outside world. I would return to this circulation of images in the second section of this report.

1.3 Francis Wu's Visit to Singapore and Malaya in 1954

No doubt the most high-profile exchange between Malaya and HK during the 1950s occurred with the visit of Francis Wu (1911-89, b. Canton) in 1954.[64] Art patron and Cathay founder Loke Wan Tho (1915–64, b. Kuala Lumpur) invited Wu to serve as a judge for the Fifth Open Photographic Exhibition. SAS also hosted a solo exhibition of Wu's photographs from 7 to 13 January 1954 at the British Council Hall. Gracing the occasion, commissioner general for Southeast Asia (1948-55; governor general of Malaya and Singapore from 1946 to 1948) Malcolm MacDonald (1901-81) called Wu a "supreme artist" and lauded the exhibition a "very notable event on the contemporary artistic history of Singapore".[65] While landscape studies and photomontage were also showcased in the exhibition, the bulk of the show featured his portraits of the powerful (philanthropist Robert Ho Tung and HK Commissioner of Police Duncan MacIntosh, amongst others) and the archetypal (in salon photography, like "peasant girls and fishermen").[66] His famed portraits of Chinese beauties in "traditional" costumes were also on display.[67] Most of the prints were available for sale to aid the Singapore Anti-Tuberculosis Association.[68] The exhibition travelled to the Selangor Chinese Assembly Hall, Kuala Lumpur (KL), in February. The prints were again priced for sale, with proceedings going to the Lady Templer Tuberculosis Hospital Appeal Fund.[69] Selangor Camera Club 雪蘭莪攝影學會 was the host of the exhibition.[70]

Wu was a founding member of PSHK in 1937. At that time, most of its members were foreigners and its membership was restricted only to those who were recommended by other members.[71] Wu's fame was further amplified when he toured the US during the early 50s, where he delivered talks to camera clubs and was featured on American

magazines.[72] He also sold a seascape print in America for US$500, the highest price that he had fetched then.[73] Predictably, the press duly played up his first visit to Singapore. The United States Information Service (USIS) also jumped on the occasion to display a small selection of Wu's photographs at its office, alongside a collection of American photography books. The public screening of a film featuring the practice of Edward Weston was also timed to coincide Wu's visit.[74]

Wu also used his trip to take photographs of anything "outstanding" that he could exhibit in HK. Upon arriving in Singapore, he immediately appealed to the reporters: "If you have nudes, I would like them. In Hong Kong it is not easy to get nudes, because many Chinese are afraid to show too much of themselves."[75]

While it is unclear if any model answered his call in Singapore, Wu managed to photograph several colonial notables and members of the elite, including Malcolm MacDonald, Sarawak governor Anthony Abell, politician Lim Yew Hock, philanthropist Lee Kong Chian and deputy president of the Singapore Legislative Council, Tan Chin Tuan, amongst others.[76] When Singapore governor John Nicoll sat for his portrait at the Government House, Wu asked him to change from his lounge suit to his full ceremonial uniform.[77] Like his portrait of Duncan MacIntosh who was also decked in ceremonial uniform, Wu was clearly unsatisfied with the production of a mere profile of these colonial elites. His portraiture work was a collaborative endeavour to project colonial authority at the surface of appearances (through, for instance, the donning of British uniform). To this end, Wu's portrait of Nicoll appeared on the frontpage of *Singapore Standard* on 10 January 1954 and at the Fifth Open Photographic Exhibition. The photographs that he took in Malaya and Singapore were shown in his second exhibition hosted by the SAS that year (opened on 20 April) at the British Council Hall. In his opening speech, MacDonald heaped praise on Wu's artistry, urging amateur and professional photographers in Singapore to take the HK master as their role model.[78]

During his stay in Singapore, Wu also delivered a series of talks. On 5 January 1954, he presented a talk at the British Council Hall titled "How I Make My Exhibition Pictures", in which he stressed the need to photograph subjects of human or international interest, "otherwise the picture is worthless".[79] On 8 January, Wu delivered a talk, proposing a Chinese viewpoint on pictorial photography. He had delivered a similar lecture in America.[80] According to a news article reporting on his talk in Singapore, Wu told his audience that, as a Chinaman (中國人), his photography should be rooted in the artistic traditions of China, reflecting their love for peace and harmony. However, he also emphasised the need for photographers to create works reflective of the style and character of the different places where they were located.[81] To put words into action, Wu also photographed several "native" women during his visit to Malaya and Singapore, often posing them against coconut or rubber trees.[82] On 21 January, Francis Wu gave a demonstration on portrait lighting to members and friends of the SCC.[83]

Apparently, Wu's tour of Malaya also generated a degree of animosity amongst some Chinese in Penang and Singapore. One reader wrote to the *Straits Times* to point out the potential negative connotation of "China Girl", which appeared as the title of an image

seen in Wu's January exhibition at the British Council Hall.[84] An amateur photographer also wrote an eloquent response to that same show, pointing out the oversight of only supplying English captions when most of the Chinese visitors could not understand the language. Apparently, the problem was already conveyed but Wu did not rectify it. The photographer continued:

> Being a Chinese photographer, he should have catered for the Chinese public as well. It is all very well to say that the aim of his trip and exhibition was to encourage Chinese to be better photographers but it was apparent that he was only saying one thing and doing another. How many Chinese who are anxious to learn something from Mr. Wu can understand his lectures which he will deliver in English only?[85]

This letter was published after Wu's second talk in Singapore.

Here, I have reconstructed Wu's visit to Malaya in 1954 because it is possible to use that encounter to unpack his performance of Chineseness. His portrayal of Chinese women fulfilled his desire to imagine them in an ahistorical past. They are seen performing stereotypical poses of holding a *pipa* or combing her hair, recalling, more than anything else, popular opera scenes. These images were warmly received in salon contests across the world, particularly in America and Europe, because they satisfied the Orientalist (and overwhelmingly male) gaze of their judges. In an article that he penned in 1950 offering advice to photographers interested in salons and contests, Wu noted:

> I always observe the every day life of people rich or poor and try to make my pictures identical to their every day life. I have seen pictures made in China, let us say, a photograph of a China girl in foreign clothes in which the girl herself is not familiar with the style and costume. Pictures of this sort submitted to American salons only reflect ridicules upon the photographer himself.[86]

In other words, in order not to court ridicule, photographers should follow Wu's lead and portray Chinese girls in pseudo traditional garb. Ironically, Wu made that statement at the founding of New China where it would be hard to imagine anyone running about in anything that would suggest a feudal or petite bourgeoisie past. Over time, Wu would evolve his practice to include nude photography, producing what looks like cheap porn today. In any case, it was his command of English, having grown up in Hawaii, which allowed Wu early access to these salon contests after the war, hence cementing his fame. It is worth remembering that his peers who spoke only Shanghainese, Cantonese or Mandarin in HK would require help to even access these competitions. Wu also enjoyed a close proximity to colonial power. His American upbringing probably helped him in that regard. He was the only Chinese photographer who participated in the Japanese surrender ceremony. After the war, Admiral Cecil Harcourt appointed Wu as the official photographer for the Government House. Before the photographic section in the police headquarters was established, Wu also assisted them in crime photography.[87] When we juxtapose his images of colonial officers in ceremonial dress against Malayan women

posing in front of rubber trees, it becomes obvious that his photographs replicated and visualised the colonial hierarchy. At the very least, they helped to project colonial power in visible terms. In this sense, we might think of his Chineseness and his collaboration with colonial power as both sides of the same coin.

1.4 Imagining a Shared Heritage: Society of Worldwide Ethnic Chinese Photographers

In 1988, Tchan Fou-li became a founding member and the inaugural chair of the Federation of Hong Kong-Macau Photographic Association 港澳攝影協會. In 1994, the federation organised, for the second time, a photographic art seminar for ethnic Chinese photographers 第二屆華人華裔攝影家影藝研討會. The event took place at Zhuhui, Guangdong, and received participants from the USA, Canada, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Taiwan, HK, Macau and China. During the occasion, the federation awarded Taipei-based Lang Jingshan 郎靜山 (1892-1995; b. Qing China, d. Taipei), China-based Wu Yinxian 吳印咸 (1900-94) and HK-based Tchan Fou-li the accolade of great masters in recognition of their contributions to Chinese photography.[88]

The choice of the awardees was highly strategic. Lang was the revered pioneer whose art practice started during the Republican era. Even though he worked as a propagandist for the Kuomintang after its retreat to Taiwan, Lang's art photographs continued to mimic and embody the traditions of Chinese ink painting, giving him a claim to eternal China.[89] Wu, on the other hand, enjoyed revolutionary credentials. The cadre made his name photographing party leaders like Mao Zedong while recording the activities of the Eighth Route Army in Yan'an from the late 1930s to the 1940s. Tchan was the businessman with the money to make things work. Having fled North Vietnam after the communist liberation, Tchan decided to live under British colonialism in HK instead of joining the thousands of Overseas Chinese who returned to China to participate in the socialist makeover. It was an opportunistic move because the condition of colonialism in HK helped him rebuild his business and establish his name in salon photography.

While their biographies embodied different, almost contradictory, experiences of the tumultuous 20th century, all of them continued to reference the imaginary of cultural China in their photographic practices. As iconic photographers representing the territories of Taiwan, HK and China, their presence at Zhuhai to receive the accolade allowed the federation to create, in one stroke, the illusion of unity under the rubric of Chineseness. Even though the seminar aimed to incorporate ethnic Chinese photographers of other nationalities into the conversation, none of them was given a similar award. Perhaps Tchan's inclusion already stood for the ethnic Chinese photographers from Southeast Asia. However, it also proved that the centre-periphery schema continued to exist vis-à-vis the idea of Chineseness. In that sense, the ethnic Chinese photographers from Southeast Asia were there to make up the numbers. None of them would imagine that they were better placed to embody Chineseness than the selected straight male photographers from China, Taiwan or HK. They were already contaminated by their decision to leave the warm embrace of the motherland, which China and Taiwan both claimed to represent during the Cold War. However, they were still required to orientate

themselves towards the Middle Kingdom, as and when necessary. As Wu told the China media, upon receiving the award: "I hope that ethnic Chinese photographers would constantly concern themselves with the progress and development of China photographic art. I hope that the ethnic Chinese photographers would participate in this work."[90]

The three masters were also responsible for the founding of the Society of Worldwide Ethnic Chinese Photographers 世界華人攝影學會 (SWECP), which was registered in HK towards the end of 1994. The official inauguration took place on 18 January 1995 and was well attended by the Chinese elites in HK, including business magnate Li Ka-shing (b. 1928, Chao'an), industrialist Ann Tse Kai 安子介 (b. 1912, Shanghai—d. 2000, HK) and Zhu Yucheng 朱育誠 (b. 1938), who was then deputy director of Xinhua's HK office. The inauguration was also accompanied by an exhibition of 200 prints contributed by photographers from 12 countries. The participating photographers from Singapore included Yip Cheong Fun 葉暢芬 (b. 1903, HK—d. 1989, Singapore), Tan Lip Seng 陳立誠 (b. 1942, Singapore), Lee Sow Lim, Lim Kwong Ling 林光霖 (b. 1932, Singapore), Lim Seng Tiong 林誠忠, Tan Keng Seng 陳更生, Seah Liang Bing 謝良明, David Tay 鄭培書 (b. 1945, Singapore) and Yip Hoi Kee 葉海基, amongst others.[91]

SWECP's inaugural president was Yang Shaoming 楊紹明 (b. 1942, Yan'an), son of Yang Shangkun 楊尚昆 (1907-98), who was president of the People's Republic of China and secretary-general of the Central Military Commission 中央軍事委員會 in 1989. Yang Shaoming took up photography as a teenager and worked as a photojournalist-cum-photo editor at Xinhua News Agency from 1979 to 1987. In 1988, he won third prize in the World Press Photo contest with a series of behind-the-scene portraits of paramount leader Deng Xiaoping.

According to Yang Shaoming, SWECP was based in HK, rather than China or Taiwan, because the territory had always been the meeting point between the East and the West, making it well placed for ethnic Chinese photographers from around the world to meet and interact.[92] Given Yang's rationale, Singapore might even be a better base for SWECP. However, by locating SWECP in HK against the looming handover, it hinted that the organisation would be more oriented towards the motherland than the rest of the world.

As a global organisation, SWECP aimed to "unite ethnic Chinese photographers everywhere under a single banner, and to promote the photographic art from a common heritage".[93] In that sense, SWECP aimed to reduce the bewildering range of experiences encountered by ethnic Chinese across the world, some of whom generations removed from China, in pursuit of some essentialised notion of Chineseness. In a bout of wishful thinking, Yang Shaoming noted:

> Its [SWECP's] formation reflects a common desire by ethnic Chinese photographers everywhere to join together in their search for identity. Although we live in different countries and under a wide range of social conditions, our shared cultural heritage transcends our different objectives and different interests in our pursuits…. In our effort to

> record society, we are heavily influenced by the Confucian teachings of compassion and concern for the common people. Our approach is often suggestive, rather than assertive.[94]

The last part of Yang's quote was particularly ominous. By referencing Confucius, Yang suggested that a Chinese photographic approach would be "suggestive, rather than assertive". The suggestive-assertive binary could be easily mapped onto the East-West dichotomy, which Yang liked to use in justifying the Chineseness of SWECP. For instance, while recognising the cosmopolitan character of photography, Yang asserted that it could also imbue Chinese ethnic characteristics. Predictably, he highlighted Tchan's attempt to incorporate elements of Chinese painting in his photography as an exemplary case, conveniently forgetting that the ink tradition is a shared heritage claimed by Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan and other ethnic Chinese artists based around the world. He added: "As Mao Zedong has said, ancient cultures can be of use in the present, Western cultures can be of use to the Chinese, the East and West can be combined."[95] While regurgitating the East-West binary, Yang offered no details as to how the East differentiated decisively from the West in terms of its ideas and ideals. Years later, in response to the criticism that Chinese landscape photography was modular and overly aestheticised, Yang agreed that aspects of it could be deemed conservative. But he quickly reverted to the East-West binary as a way of explaining that both sides had different worldviews and value systems, which would affect their perspectives in appreciation.[96] In other words, Yang usurped the East to imagine a cultural basis for the outmoded practice of Chinese landscape photography.

Having founded SWECP, its first major initiative was to initiate "Singapore Today", a series of shooting trips, talks and exhibitions centred on Singapore. By all accounts, it was a mammoth project that lasted from August 1995 to March 1997, during which SWECP members from 15 countries made 20 trips to photograph the island-nation.[97] The climax occurred during the National Day in 1996 when some 200 photographers descended on Singapore to embark on a "five-day shooting spree".[98] Members from six local photo clubs—PSS, SEAPS, Singapore Colour Photographic Society 新加坡彩色攝影學會 (SCPS), Photo-Art Association of Singapore, SAFRA Photographic Club and Boon Lay Community Centre Photographic Club—served as volunteers and guides while contributing their images to the initiative. The National Arts Council and the Chinese papers of Singapore Press Holdings also co-organised a competition in 1996 for Singaporeans to submit their photographs. The competition aimed to encourage the public to participate in the SWECP project and to use photography to extol the achievements of Singapore.[99] In that way, a transnational project led by a HK-based organisation that aimed to unite the ethnic Chinese photographers worldwide, regardless of nationality, became, without irony, a nation-building opportunity for Singapore. The three preliminary rounds of the competition attracted 2743 submissions, from which 30 prints were selected for the final round. As finalists, each photographer received S$100. The top three winners received S$3000, S$2000 and S$1000 respectively.[100]

That entire photo craze generated more than 60,000 images. In the end, 303 images made the cut for the 310-page hardcover photobook measuring 37.5 x 26 cm, published in 1997

with a retail price of S$120 each. The works of nearly 100 Singaporean photographers were also included in the massive tome.[101]

Why did SWECP pick Singapore (and not HK, Shanghai or Bangkok) for its first major initiative? Over the years, Yang has given slightly different explanations. In the Chinese-language preface of *Singapore Today*, Yang writes: "Singapore is a multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-religious, harmonious and civilised society. Her achievements should be a useful mirror for those ethnic Chinese residing in localised cultural environments across the world (my translation)."[102] In other words, while China photographers also participated in *Singapore Today*, the intention of the initiative was directed towards the ethnic Chinese outside of China. Yang's position only made sense from the vantage of the motherland, from which he could hold Singapore up as an example, not for China or her citizens, but for the ethnic Chinese elsewhere.

In this way, we can begin to understand the ethno-nationalistic tenor of SWECP, especially when Yang, son of a Long March veteran, regurgitated in another interview the national narrative of "evolving from a British colony to a widely acclaimed developed country" as justification for selecting Singapore as the site of its first major project.[103] Because the ethnocentrism of SWECP could be easily portrayed as a covert threat to national sovereignty, it had to compensate by deferring to the nation-building agenda of Singapore. In other words, SWECP's appeal at ethnocentric unity had to be strategic and opportunistic, taking care not to be seen as infringing upon the national interests of its partners.

There was also an element of pragmatism in selecting Singapore. As Yang acknowledged, it would be easier for ethnic Chinese photographers to observe and photograph a country with Chinese as the majority.[104] Here, Yang might be referring to the absence of language barrier, making it easier for the photographers to communicate with most Singaporeans in Mandarin. He could also be imagining a cultural affinity that would resonate, without issues, between Chinese Singaporeans and the ethnic Chinese everywhere else. Not surprisingly, SWECP found an accommodating host for *Singapore Today*, receiving endorsement from a government with an ethnic Chinese majority keen to maintain and highlight its narrative on multiculturalism. Of course, the mammoth project also benefitted from the financial wealth of Singapore, receiving much support from the state and the corporations.[105] In short, the Chineseness of SWECP was built on Chinese capitalism, with Yang pointing out that the emergence of ethnic Chinese photographers in world photography had much to do with their financial might.[106] The trope of "ethnic Chinese being better off" was also brandished by Yang, echoing what the Malaysian and Indonesian politicians would propagate whenever they needed to scapegoat their longstanding Chinese communities.

In justifying the *Singapore Today* project, Yang also mentioned the *A Day in the Life* book series, which became a phenomenon in the 1980s, as reference. By casting the series as a Western endeavour, Yang argued that SWECP should "publish a photography book deeply imbued with Asian cultural characteristics, so that the world could encounter photographic works created through the thinking of people from the East and the

aesthetics of the ethnic Chinese".[107] In that way, the Asian character of the project was held up for the gaze of the West. As he made no attempt to explicate its logic and content, the East in Yang's binary would always exist in the shadows of the West. Without the West as its reference, the East in Yang's dichotomy would cease to be of much relevance.

Singapore Today was officially launched during the World Book Fair of 1997 at the World Trade Centre (WTC), Singapore. It was accompanied by an exhibition of 200 prints from the project. The *Singapore Today* show was poignantly paired with another exhibition, titled *Hong Kong's Return to China* 香港的歷史和發展——香港回歸中國攝影圖片展, co-organised by the Singapore-China Business Association 新加坡中國商會 and the China International Culture Association 中國對外文化交流協會. Timed to coincide with the historic handover, the exhibition showcased 200 photographs tracing HK's evolution since the opium war. It also aimed to reflect upon the close relationship between Singapore and HK.[108]

SWECP also set up a booth at the book fair selling different photobooks shot by Yang, Wu Yinxian, Kan Hing-fook and its other members. As an enticement, buyers of any of the seven photobooks would receive a commemorative image created by Yang, which incorporated the calligraphy of Singaporean poet-calligrapher Pan Shou 潘受 (b. 1911, Fujian—d. 1999, Singapore). The digitally manipulated image was titled *Dawn* 黎明 after Pan's words and marked HK's handover to China. It featured a portrait of Deng Xiaoping, seen with the flag of China in the background and the regional emblem of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region at the bottom right corner. Victoria Harbour and the HK Convention and Exhibition Centre (where the handover ceremony would be held) could also be seen in the background. The gift was limited at an edition of 1997, with 1000 copies reserved for Singapore, 900 for HK and 97 for Malaysia.[109] It was an opportunistic stunt tying the sale of photobooks with the historic handover. On hindsight, it is also striking that Yang believed Singaporeans would have a higher demand for his manipulated image of the handover than the HK people.

With the two exhibitions at WTC, HK and Singapore had come to another fork in the road. One exhibition marked the conclusion of the *Singapore Today* project, in which Yang had emerged as the unmistakeable figurehead of SWECP instead of the HK-based Tchan Fou-li, who was, by then, the only founder still alive. Even though HK had long been the reference point for salon photographers in Singapore since the 1950s, the HK members of the HK-based SWECP seemed somewhat muted in its first major initiative, which was centred on Singapore. They were of course involved in the project. Tchan, for instance, was in town to shoot for the photobook and to give a talk (on 7 August 1996) on the ethnic characteristics of Pictorialism.[110] But the spotlight was firmly on Yang throughout the entire initiative. The Chinese papers in Singapore portrayed him as an energetic organiser-photographer who had a way with politicians and bureaucrats.[111] Perhaps the constant publicity had also emboldened Yang to comment on the photographic art in Singapore. At one particular press conference, Yang remarked that salon photography had established an accomplished tradition in Singapore but global [read: Western] photographic movements elsewhere had already been challenging its orthodoxy. Photo critic Ding Zunxin, part of Yang's China entourage, upped the stakes

and claimed that salon photography in Southeast Asia might be stylistically sophisticated but its tendency towards formalism would make it difficult for photographers to capture societal life and the spirit of humanity.[112] Having mingled with some ethnic Chinese salon photographers from Southeast Asia through the *Singapore Today* project, Ding and Yang clearly felt that they had already known enough to speak to, and on behalf of, Southeast Asia. While their meek critique of salon photography was not inaccurate, their comments were made on the assumption that only ethnic Chinese salon photographers mattered in gauging the photographic arts of the region. Ironically, for Ding and Yang, their antidote for Singapore was to call for the promotion of documentary photography, a form of practice long established amongst local photojournalists and even some salon practitioners who had evolved their work beyond salon photography.[113] Their suggestion only served to reveal their backwardness in photography, which resulted from the subjugation of all cultural forms in service of the Maoist revolution since the founding of New China. A critical or investigative form of documentary photography would find it hard to flourish in that condition.

As for the handover exhibition, even though HK photographers might have taken some of the photographs, the fact that the show was organised by two China-oriented organisations paralleled the muted participation of HK photographers in *Singapore Today*. In both cases, the ability of HK photographers to tell their stories had been taken out of their hands. Singapore-China Business Association was particularly keen to use the handover exhibition to bolster its ranks. At the exhibition opening, its chairman urged those who had business connections with HK to join the warm embrace of the association.[114] George Yeo, then Minister for Information & the Arts in Singapore, officiated the opening. He used the handover exhibition to pitch the resurgence of Asia after its long subjugation under Western colonialism. However, Yeo also warned against the threat of Asia "becoming arrogant and posing a threat to the West" in the next century. In short, his speech was a tacit caution to both HK and China to stick to the one-country-two-systems policy, as he reiterated the official stance of Singapore: "Hong Kong's prosperity is Singapore's prosperity, and Singapore's prosperity is Hong Kong's prosperity." Yeo's closing words were probably more ominous: "A successful benign China means a successful Hong Kong, which is good for all of us in the region."[115]

When its founders established SWECP in HK, the handover was already looming in the horizon. Even for Yang, he recognised the British colony's longstanding role as the meeting place between the East and the West, which would make it a strategic base for SWECP. However, the Chineseness of SWECP was ultimately oriented towards China and predicated upon the command of Mandarin, which compromised its objective of uniting the ethnic Chinese photographers worldwide. In the mid-1990s, for instance, an Indonesian Chinese amateur from Solo named Tomy joined some 20 Indonesian members for a SWECP meeting in HK. As the youngest member of the contingent, Tomy spoke no Mandarin because Chinese education was long prohibited under Suharto's New Order. At the meeting in HK, Tomy felt "like a deaf-mute", unable to communicate.[116] As Indonesian Chinese, he had no chance of being *asli* (original) in Indonesia. In the Chineseness of SWECP, Tomy was also not *asli*. In short, SWECP and Suharto were responsible for the double-marginalisation of someone like Tomy. While there were some

Indonesian Chinese amateurs who joined SWECP, there were many others who declined the invitation for fear of being misconstrued as reasserting their Chineseness.[117] In 1998, some of the Indonesian members of SWECP would establish the Nusantara Photo Club at Surabaya. The waning influence of HK on the practice of salon photography across Southeast Asia would limp on after the handover.

Section 2: Resurfacing Southeast Asia in HK: Periodicals as Method

Since 1950, Chinese-language photo periodicals mushroomed in HK. These periodicals were extremely popular amongst Chinese-reading photographers across Southeast Asia. Their support, in turn, helped to ensure the longevity of some of these photo periodicals.

Born in Ipoh, Hor Kwok Kin 何國堅 (b. 1939) moved to Singapore in 1958 and worked as a restaurant assistant in Bugis. When he started teaching himself photography during the late 1950s, Hor turned to the HK photo periodicals for reference. Today, the periodicals that he bought at that time are still kept in excellent condition.[118] Growing up in Sandakan, Steve Chong Yun Ming also learnt photography in the late 1960s and 1970s by referring to the photo periodicals from HK. Initially, Chong and his friends would buy them through bookstores in Singapore or HK. Gradually, some bookstores in Sabah started carrying them. But the volume remained very low, probably around 20 copies, by his estimation.[119] By the mid-1980s, these periodicals had become available at Kedai Buku South East Asia 東南亞書局 in Sandakan.[120]

In the opinion of one writer in Singapore, the dominance of HK photography was the result of hands-on practice and an understanding of photographic theories. In comparison, the lack of a regular photo periodical in Singapore made it difficult for local practitioners to cultivate their artistic taste.[121]

In this section, I will detail some of these photo periodicals as a way to resurface HK in Southeast Asia. In the discussion of art in Southeast Asia, photography is typically cast as peripheral to the mediums of painting and sculpture. Hence, its histories are often amiss in the catalogues that canonise painting and sculpture. When we speak of the photographic practices in Hong Kong or Southeast Asia, we encounter a double marginalisation: marginalised on a transnational level by the metropole, marginalised "locally" by painting and sculpture. Often, the traces of photographic practices (and their histories) could only be resurfaced in the ephemeral—in exhibition collaterals, old newspapers and the yellowed periodicals. Here, I argue that the HK photo periodicals since 1950 provide an "external" resource to reconstitute the *national* and *regional* histories of photography in Southeast Asia.

2.1 *Chinese Photography* (1950)

The first photo periodical that was published in HK after WWII was 中國影藝. Even though its English title was given as *Chinese Photography*, it could have been named *China Photographic Art*, if the translation were more literal. As a standalone phrase, the term "Zhongguo" 中國 is commonly used to refer to the geographical space of China

whereas the word “Chinese” is much more ambiguous. To be brief, the term “Chinese” can be used to refer to different peoples—longstanding communities (who are removed from China for generations) scattered across the world, Overseas Chinese, mainlanders, Taiwanese and even the Hong Kong-born. It can also be used to connote the similar or contrasting cultures related to these different communities. Those who only understand English often use the term “Chinese” without a critical awareness of the contesting politics that exists amongst the different communities, which the word might refer to.

David Choy 蔡青圃 (or 蔡德光) was the publisher of *Chinese Photography* and contributed two essays in the first issue. Francis Wu was the editor-in-chief and Leung Sum 梁琛 served as its art director.[122] It was printed by Asiatic Litho. Printing Press 亞洲石印局 in HK. Published on January 1950, a few months after the declaration of New China, the inaugural issue still featured an ad (on page 2) from International Photo Supply Trading Company 國際攝影器材公司, which I believe was headquartered at Shanghai, with branches in Nanjing, Taipei, Kunming, Chengdu and HK. The guest introduction of the first issue was penned by esteemed businessman Kwok Chan 郭贊 (1904-67, b. HK), Justice of Peace and unofficial member of the Urban Council of Hong Kong. It is clear that the editorial team sought support from the HK Chinese elite who was closely imbricated within the British colonial system for a periodical that canonised the exemplars of Chinese photography. Before the periodical actually hit the streets, the editorial team also organised a tea party at Hotel Cecil in HK on 20 December 1949 to express their gratitude. Kwok and Lady Grantham, the governor’s wife, graced the occasion, which was attended by over 100 guests, including photographers, media representatives and business associates.[123]

As Wu stated in the editorial note, *Chinese Photography* was established in HK for the “promotion of photography in China; to extend Chinese culture and beauty; and to act as a teaching journal for all interested in photography”. Wu continued:

> I have discovered from the experience of showing in international photographic salons and one-man shows that we in China are respected for our efforts to give our impressions of Chinese art to the western world. I am further convinced that we have something original and unique in our Chinese photographic technique…. In order that Chinese art and culture can touch the heart of the western world through photography an English text must be used…. By introducing western science and art our Chinese enthusiasts will benefit as well. Therefore the combination of both English and Chinese text is used simultaneously whenever necessary.[124]

In other words, the decision to put out a partly bilingual periodical had more to do with ambition than the fact that the HK photographic community then was a mix of Chinese and western practitioners.[125] Publishing articles in English would help *Chinese Photography* reach the “heart of the western world”. In other words, the western world that the editorial team had in mind was an Anglophone one (read: Great Britain and the USA). To penetrate its heart, Wu felt that it was important for China practitioners

(himself included) to cultivate and deliver the Chineseness of their work through the uniqueness of their "Chinese photographic technique", even though he stopped short of elaborating what he meant. He did indicate that the artistic photographs featured on *Chinese Photography* were largely taken by "Chinese photographers with Chinese subjects and atmosphere".[126] Not surprisingly, its ethnocentric focus soon attracted letters from readers asking whether foreign prints would be welcomed at *Chinese Photography*.[127]

In any case, the Chineseness of Wu's work (and that of *Chinese Photography*) was dependent on its recognition by the Anglophone West. It seemed that Wu had actively sent out copies of the periodical to notable editors and photographers in America, especially those who were connected to Pictorialism or the PSA. Their letters of gratitude and commendation, addressed to Wu, were published in the Letters to Editor section (starting from the May 1950 issue). In that way, Wu set up a bipolar photographic world centred on China and the Anglophone West while rendering the remaining majority (rest of Asia, including Southeast Asia, Latin America, Africa, non-Anglophone West) invisible. In practice though, Wu's ideals would have to be moderated by the actual availability of content and other business considerations, including the issue of readership. That was why *Chinese Photography* also featured, in a latter issue, works from Indian photographers who participated in a group exhibition hosted by HKPS. In terms of its distribution, publisher David Choy noted that the inaugural issue was sold to "the major cities in the USA, Britain, France, Belgium, Canada, different parts of Nanyang, Burma and Siam, Taiwan and Hainan, and the major cities in China".[128] It is hard to know whether this listing of territories represented the periodical's priority in terms of distribution because information about its reach remained scant.

Following Wu's editorial note, the inaugural issue of *Chinese Photography* opened with a lengthy text written by the highly revered Lang Jingshan who argued that the age-old aesthetics of Chinese painting remained applicable to photography today.[129] It is interesting to note that his text appeared only in Mandarin, perhaps an indication of the difficulty in translating Lang's perspective of applying Chinese aesthetics on photography. In any case, the lack of an English translation ran counter to the aim of *Chinese Photography* to penetrate the heart of the western world. To that end, the translatability of ideas presented a formidable challenge. Juxtaposed against Lang's piece was an essay penned by Peter Dragon 龍彼得 (1903-62), a Penang-born Chinese who was already an active participant of international salons in Malaya before moving to HK in 1930. An honorary fellow of PSHK, Dragon was widely recognised as a pioneer of photographic education in HK.[130] One biographical account, published much later, posited him as a kind of opposite to Lang Jingshan: while Lang utilised montage to create *guohua*-like imageries, Dragon turned to the same technique, early on, in a European manner. At the same time, Dragon also believed that HK photographers should take advantage and espouse the eastern influence in their photographic endeavours.[131] In the milieu of HK photography, Dragon was seen as a photographer who embodied the imprint of the West.[132] Because of the British-style education that he received in Malaya, he brought to HK his knowledge of Western photographic art and the chemistry of darkroom work.[133] His contribution to the inaugural *Chinese Photography* was a text

titled “The Camera Eye”, which appeared in English and Mandarin, in which he struck a balance in providing practical advice alongside a succinct elucidation on the art of photography, which he contrasted against the practice of a casual snapshooter.[134]

The different sections within each issue of *Chinese Photography* and the topics that it covered offered a template of comparison with subsequent photo periodicals. It catered to beginners by offering practical advice on darkroom processes, night photography, the use of filters and the issue of summertime exposure, amongst others. It also ran a recurring Questions and Answers section. In contrast, the aforementioned essay by Lang targeted a more sophisticated readership. *Chinese Photography* also featured a recurring Salon section in which the works of acclaimed photographers were printed, presumably to serve as models of emulation and reference to its readers. In that way, the periodical helped to make salon photography synonymous with art photography, argued HK artist-educator Lee Wing Ki.[135] The layout of the images was simple and considered, with a willingness to print a horizontal image in a vertical page, leaving the rest of the space unadorned and white in order to focus the readers’ attention on the photograph. It also experimented with print technology, reproducing the images of the March 1950 issue in sepia tone “for a change of taste”.[136] In the February 1950 issue, it had already attempted to reproduce some of the images in colour. The desire to highlight its print modernity could also be seen in a photo spread that appeared at the end of that issue. The photo spread featured the editorial team working closely with the printers to ensure the quality of the periodical.[137]

As a periodical published out of HK, many of its contributing writers and featured photographers were inevitably HK-based. As its editor-in-chief, Wu was also featured in a celebratory profile, ostensibly timed to coincide with his solo exhibition hosted by PSHK, in which the writer lauded him as the “most famous of Chinese photographers”.[138] Fifteen images from his exhibition were reproduced after the profile, turning the April 1950 issue into a mini-portfolio dedicated to Wu. He also shot the cover image. The works of China-based practitioners like Liu Xucang 劉旭滄 (1913-66), Kang Zhengping 康正平 (1913-96), Ao Enhong 敖恩洪 (1909-89) and Zhang Yinquan 張印泉 were also featured, at a lesser frequency, in the various issues of *Chinese Photography*. Zhang was the subject of a profile penned by a certain Zhao Cheng 趙澄 who noted that the acclaimed master had become less visible after the long resistance against the Japanese because the number of photo periodicals in circulation within China had become incomparable to the situation before the war. Even though the profile was published months after the communists had established New China, the writer noted that, when peace would return to China in future, Zhang’s work would surely attain new heights.[139] In other words, the situation in China had not returned to normalcy. It is unclear whether Zhao Cheng was the same person reported by photo historian Edwin Lai in his research—an early HK-based photographer from southern China whose work was already printed on *Young Companion* since the late 1920s.[140] A few issues later, the work of Zhao was sent from Taipei and printed in *Chinese Photography*.[141] In the same issue, the periodical printed a report filed from Shanghai—once the epicentre of cultural life in China—lamenting the dreary state of photography after the communist takeover. *Zhongguo Sheying* 中國攝影, a photo periodical published out of Shanghai from 1946 to

1949 (not to be confused with the latter *Zhongguo Sheying* 中國攝影, which has been published by the China Photographers Association 中國攝影家協會 from Beijing since 1957), had lost its publishing permit. Travelling to the outskirts had also become difficult, severely reducing the opportunities to take pictures.[142] Somewhat expectedly, David Choy penned an afterword in the same issue openly expressing his disappointment at the lukewarm reception that *Chinese Photography* had garnered since its inaugural issue. As a sign of his frustration, Choy even tried to imply that the lack of progress in China photography was somewhat related to the periodical's reception. However, it remained unclear whether he was referring to the sales figures or the tangible and intangible support from the photographers. He did urge the established photographers to take notice of *Chinese Photography* and contribute their knowledge to the emerging practitioners.[143] Even though the communist takeover of China had affected the periodical's readership, it seemed that its repeated claims to serve and represent Chinese photography had also failed to gain much traction in HK.

The reception of *Chinese Photography* in Southeast Asia is hard to gauge. Even though the periodical did not usually indicate the place-of-origin of its contributors unless they came from the Anglophone West, it is probably fair to say that the involvement of photographers and readers from Southeast Asia was negligible. Perhaps to add a taste of Nanyang to its content, *Chinese Photography* reproduced, in a latter issue, a folio of images sent by K. F. Wong from Singapore where he used to own a photo studio with his associates. The two-page spread was titled "Focus on Malaya" but featured scenes from Bali and Mount Bromo.[144] It is hard to know whether Wong or the periodical had associated the scenes of Indonesia erroneously with Malaya. In any case, despite the congratulatory letters from the USA or its stated ambition of traversing the Chinese and Anglophone worlds, *Chinese Photography* died in the same year that it was born.

2.2 *World Photography* (1952-58)

The World of *World Photography*

World Photography 世界攝影 emerged in 1952 from the publishing business of Chou Sing Chu 周星衢 (1905-86, b. Shanghai). In 1934, Chou founded the World Book Company 世界書局 in Singapore to publish and distribute books. In 1936, he established Popular Book Company 大眾書局 to enter the retail market. In 1949, he set up the World Publishing Company 世界出版社 in HK. One of the key strengths of his publishing business was in the field of periodicals. In that regard, he was unrivalled by any other Singaporean publisher at that time, putting out more than 10 different periodicals, one of which was *World Photography*.[145] In its inaugural issue (September 1952), printed by the Asiatic Litho. Printing Press in HK, the editorial team published a short and almost self-effacing text to introduce the photo periodical.[146] It began with a stated reluctance to write the typical inauguration text, even though it quickly proceeded to do so. The text highlighted the name of *World Photography*, which was deemed obvious enough for its targeted readers to understand the rationale behind the periodical. It related the origins of founding the periodical, which seemed rather organic. The editorial committee consisted of photo enthusiasts who lamented the lack of a Chinese photo periodical for *overseas*

readers. The team also presented an egalitarian stance in terms of receiving criticisms, submissions and questions from readers and experts. Finally, the text expressed its hope that *World Photography* would be of modest use for the overseas enthusiasts in photography.[147] The editorial committee was conscious that its readers were mainly located elsewhere, vis-à-vis its publishing office in HK. Indeed, the periodical tapped into the expansive distribution network in Nanyang that World Book Company had cultivated over the decades. As indicated in the inaugural issue, *World Photography* was distributed through World Book Company's bookstores in Singapore, Penang and KL,[148] in Jakarta through Tai Seng Book Company 大成書局 (located at 33 Pancoran in Jakarta's Chinatown), in Surabaya through China Book Company 中國書局 (located at 64 Bongkaran in Surabaya's Chinatown) and in Bangkok through Nan Mee & Company 南美公司 (possibly located at 36 Phat Sai, Bangkok's Chinatown). Of course, it is not surprising for a periodical put out by the World Publishing Company to be called *World Photography*. However, it is still striking, from today's vantage point, to see a Mandarin publication with the bulk of its readers in Southeast Asia make a claim on world photography, even though the editorial committee might not be aware that its title might provide such an impression. Or did the editorial committee choose not to elucidate on its title as a way to downplay its poignancy or ambition, hence implying their awareness of the potential connotation of *World Photography*?

In terms of content, the inaugural issue catered to photo enthusiasts interested in the creative potential of photographing form and pattern, to parents (and photographers) who needed some tips to record the playfulness and innocence of their kids. The issue also reproduced the images of HK masters like Soman Lo, Kan Hing-fook and Chan Chik 陳迹 (1918-2004, b. HK), circulating them as exemplars of world photography to the Nanyang. Their works continued to be printed in subsequent issues of *World Photography*.

On the inner back cover of the inaugural issue, the editorial committee provided submission guidelines for potential writers and photographers. In terms of articles, they preferred photographic travelogues and short discussions on photography. They would pay a modest fee for the printed submissions and the creators would retain the moral rights to their work. In the second issue (October 1952), the editorial committee acknowledged that they had received letters and submissions from HK, Bangkok, Seremban, Hanoi, Cambodia and Manila.[149]

I suspect that was how G. C. Tansiongkun 陳志銘 (or Gregory C. Tan) from Manila got his submission published on the third issue (November 1952) of *World Photography*. His article detailed the common mistakes made by photographers, including back focus, accidental double exposure and slanted horizon, amongst others.[150] In the fifth issue (January 1953) of *World Photography*, another article of Tansiongkun was published in which he discussed the pictorial elements—balance, lines, subject, contrast and foreground, amongst others—that contributed to a good photograph.[151] In the 17th issue (July 1954), Tansiongkun reported on the visit of Lang Jingshan who stayed for 50 days and was involved in two exhibitions. The Philippine Chinese Camera Club 菲律賓華僑

攝影學會 and *Fookien Times* 新閩日報 were the host of his solo exhibition, which apparently received thousands of viewers. The second exhibition featured a selection of scenic views from the motherland, taken by members of the Photographic Society of China, alongside contributions from the Philippine Chinese Camera Club. In total, some 400 to 500 prints were exhibited in that group show. Lang also visited places like Baguio to take pictures.[152] I suspect his trip was part of a cold war manoeuvre to unite the Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia against the communist regime in China. In the report, Tansiongkun recorded a few notable quotes from Lang during his stay. Apparently, Lang said: "Overseas Chinese now have the best opportunity to promote the culture of our motherland, it would be a pity if this opportunity is lost."[153] Perhaps Tansiongkun was using Lang's words to express his views. But why would those who had left the motherland suddenly be bestowed the "best opportunity" to promote China culture when the communists had just taken over in 1949 and proclaimed a New China? Furthermore, would the self-styled defenders of China culture scattered in China and Taiwan truly be interested in what the Overseas Chinese had to say on that matter? If not for the political needs of Taiwan (and China) during the cold war, would the Overseas Chinese be in the ambit of their cultural diplomacy?

In the third issue of *World Photography*, the editorial committee received letters and submissions from more places, including HK, Bangkok (Lim Lip 林立 was one of them), Haiphong, Manila, Singapore, Penang, Kedah, Malacca, Cameron Highlands, Johore, Jesselton, Sibu, Brunei, Jakarta and Medan, reflecting the increased reach of the periodical.[154] Its subscription scheme was launched on the back cover of that issue. Apparently, readers in HK, Malaya and Indonesia would be considered basic subscribers if they signed up for the scheme, granting them 20 percent discount on all publications put out by the World Publishing Company. The ad also stated, somewhat pompously, that *World Photography* was created in response to the countless letters that the publishing company had received, urging it to put out a periodical on photography. As these requests had come from all over the world, it would only be appropriate to call the periodical *World Photography*, so that it could belong forever to its readers around the globe. The ad was reprinted in the fourth issue. To the best of my knowledge, by the sixth issue (February 1953) of *World Photography*, the subscription slip had become an attachment inside the front cover. The subscription info provided further details on how its distribution worked. Readers from the Philippines, Thailand, Burma, India, HK, Macau, Vietnam and neighbouring areas should mail their subscription applications to the World Publishing Company in HK. Readers in Indonesia and neighbouring areas should mail their applications to the aforementioned Tai Seng Book Company and China Book Company. Potential subscribers in the Federation of Malaya, British North Borneo and neighbouring areas should send their applications to the World Book Company in Singapore, Penang and KL.

The fourth issue (December 1952) of *World Photography* featured the reproduction of the selected submissions made by "fellow countrymen" (我國人 or *woguoren*) in the Seventh Hong Kong International Salon (1952) organised by PSHK. The photographs were accompanied by a short report on the salon. The jury comprised of five people, including three *Zhongguoren* (中國人; literally, Chinamen). One of them was the Penang-born

Peter Dragon. The article focused on the achievement of Kan Hing-fook, the first countryman to win bronze in the salon, hence breaking the dominance of foreigners who had won all the top three awards in the past editions.[155] Three photographs of Kan were printed in that issue of *World Photography*, amplifying his fame across Nanyang. In that article of adulation, the terms of *woguoren* and *Zhongguoren* were used to refer to Kan and Dragon, as though they were both Chinese in the exact same manner.

Interestingly, when a HK reader pointed out that the periodical had not featured works by foreign masters (except as illustrations), a member of the editorial committee acknowledged the observation in the 12th issue (November 1953) and suggested that, despite its title, "the works of fellow countrymen [我國人] were not interior to others in world photography". According to the editor, many of the photographs that appeared on *World Photography* were also selected in international salon contests. As an example, the editor noted that the works of Kan Hing-fook and Yan Fook Leun 甄福暖 printed on the periodical had also been selected for the prestigious London Salon of Photography. He also argued rather meekly that the reproduction of images from foreign magazines would not produce good illustrations.[156] The editor's explanation made clear the logic behind the *world* of *World Photography*. When fellow countrymen (including Singapore-based Yan) became successful in international salons, they would have an equal claim on world photography as their peers elsewhere, making it less important to reproduce the works of foreign masters on the periodical. In other words, their claim on world photography was still contingent upon his countrymen being validated by a foreign institution like the London salon. In that way, the editor envisioned a bipolar world of photography between Chinese-speaking practitioners (taking international salons by storm) and foreign (read: Euro-American) masters. The rest of the world did not matter as much.

HK as Reference: Salon Photography in Southeast Asia

The fifth issue (January 1953) of *World Photography* carried the first short introduction on the development of photography in Southeast Asia. The focus of that article was on Vietnam. The author began by noting the fact that much of the photographic equipment available in Vietnam had come from France. Popular products included Kodak film, Lumière paper and chemicals from Rhône-Poulenc, which attracted bulk purchases by businessmen from HK and Thailand. French publications like *Photo Ciné Revue* and *Photo Almanach Prisma* were also available for sale. After that, the author quickly proceeded to namecheck the notable photographers in Vietnam and, surprisingly, Cambodia. They included Tchen Fong Ku and Lý Lan Siêu 李蘭秀 (or Lee Lang Sieu) from Saigon-Cholon, Tchan Fou-li from Hanoi, 柯國清 Ke Guoqing, 陳繼述 Chen Jishu and 黃桂書 Huang Guishu from Cambodia. As they were all ethnic Chinese photographers, the author clearly felt that there were no Vietnamese or Khmer photographers worth mentioning in the text. Finally, the author lamented the absence of a photographic society in Vietnam, making it difficult to locate photographers and to surface masterful works.[157]

In the 13th issue (January 1954), the periodical even printed a report on the photographic development in Perlis, a small state in Malaya that would rarely surface, even today, in

any account of Malaysian photography. The writer divided the burgeoning community of photographers in Perlis based on the kinds of cameras that they used, attributing their expertise and artistry accordingly.[158] The 19th issue (November 1954) of *World Photography* reported on the activities of the Penang Pictorialists 檳城影藝學會, a club that was founded in 1954. When they organised the 1st International Exhibition of Photography 1955, *World Photography* reported on its judging process in its 25th issue (October 1955). Selected submissions were reproduced in the 26th issue (November 1955). The coverage was made possible through the help of Yan Fook Leun, an ardent supporter of *World Photography* from the start, who air-mailed over ten images from the exhibition to the editorial office in HK for its consideration for publication.[159] Of course, being a frequent winner in these exhibitions, Yan's generosity was also strategic because being published in a periodical like *World Photography* would help to circulate his name into the world of Chinese amateurs across Southeast Asia and beyond. In the same issue, *World Photography* published a report on the photo club (founded in 1948) of the Jakarta-based Sin Ming Hui, a self-help organisation set up to protect the rights of the Chinese. The report provided a brief overview of that historic club, which would be renamed Lembaga Fotografi Candra Naya after 1962, and offered a snapshot of the amateur photographic practice in Jakarta. At that time, the club had some 90 members—most of the leaders were Peranakans while the bulk of its members still held Chinese citizenship. Swiss photographer Frank Bodmer served as its technical advisor and was helpful in answering questions that the members might have, in relation to the study of photography. These Chinese amateurs preferred portraiture instead of landscape photography. That posed a problem because it was impossible to find professional models in Jakarta. They would have to convince a young woman or ask for a favour from someone's wife—and these "models" would not look natural under the watchful eyes of so many photographers. More recently, some members had suggested that they should expand their thematic focus into something more real and tangible—photographing local landscapes, lifestyles and customs, or the social life of Overseas Chinese there. These readily available subjects would make for meaningful images.[160]

In the seventh issue (March 1953), a selection of four images from the Fourth Open Photographic Exhibition organised by the SAS was reproduced in *World Photography*. Even though Singapore-based salon photographer Yan Fook Leun was only a minor winner, three of his submissions were printed in that issue. His exposure might have resulted from his decision to gift the exhibition catalogue to the editorial office of *World Photography*.[161] This is not to denigrate his artistry; another of his images was already printed in the third issue. In any case, exposure in a periodical published elsewhere (in Yan's case, beyond Singapore) was—and remains—one of the most important means of circulating a photographer's reputation. A selection from the First Pan-Malayan Photographic Exhibition organised by the SCC was also reproduced in the 11th issue (October 1953) of *World Photography*. Yan contributed a short report on Singapore photography, touching on the inaugural exhibition and the third-anniversary dinner of SCC.[162] In the 17th issue, *World Photography* spotlighted the Second Pan-Malayan Photographic Exhibition 1954, reproducing selected submissions by Yan, Yip Teng Poh 葉廷保, Loke Loo Seng 陸露勝 and Lee Lim 李林, amongst others. In the 20th issue (December 1954), the periodical reproduced selected submissions from the Klang (Pan-

Malayan) Photographic Exhibition, which was organised in aid of the Lady Templer Tuberculosis Hospital Fund. The exhibition took place at the Great World Amusement Park, Klang, from 13 to 15 August 1954. Most of the images printed on *World Photography* were shot by Singapore-based practitioners, with the exception of an image contributed by Klang-based Ch'ng Seng Poh 莊成寶, who served as a jury member. The works of Singapore-based photographers that were selected for the London Salon of Photography were printed on the 28th issue (January 1956).

Given that its editorial office was in HK and that HK was often dubbed the kingdom of salon, it was inevitable that HK photography would dominate the pages of the periodical. In the eighth issue (April 1953) of *World Photography*, for instance, there was a detailed account of the history of PSHK.[163] In the 13th issue (January 1954), selected entries from the Eighth Hong Kong International Salon were given due prominence. David Choy also wrote a report on the salon.[164] From the 14th issue (March 1954) onwards, the periodical established a recurring section, which spotlighted the works of famous photographers. Not surprisingly, the featured practitioners were all based in HK, with Kan Hing-fook first to be highlighted. Singapore-based Yan Fook Leun became the first outside of HK to be featured in that section (in the 20th issue of *World Photography*). It was only in the 30th issue (March 1956) when Ch'ng Seng Poh became the second photographer outside of HK to be featured. Interestingly, the article portrayed Klang, where Ch'ng was based, as a cultural desert, making it impossible for him to find a mentor in the late 1940s. His "isolation" made it imperative for him to purchase reference books from overseas in order to study photography.[165] In other parts of Malaya, Chinese-speaking photographers also looked to HK for reference. Penang-based reader Lam Sai Hoong 林世雄 contributed a submission in the 30th issue making clear the imprint of Yip Luk-yu 葉六如 on his interest in photography. In 1935, Yip, Lou Lo Pang and other practitioners formed the Red Window Club 紅窗社 in Guangzhou to study about photography. In 1946, the club was reorganised as the Photographic Society of Guangzhou.[166] In 1953, Lam reconnected with his old classmate Yip who was already in HK then. In their correspondence, Lam seized the opportunity to ask Yip about photography. Yip introduced him to *World Photography* and asked him to study the works of famed photographers. Yip also encouraged Lam to send his photographs out so that he could receive useful comments from famous pioneers.[167]

In the 27th issue (December 1955), *World Photography* reproduced the translation of a lengthy speech made in September by Robert A. Bates, a prominent member of PSHK, which ran for four pages without a single illustration. As a civil servant of the colonial government and a photographer who was often invited by PSHK to be a jury member, Bates spoke about the criteria in selecting winning images and touched on the recent changes to the judging process of its salon contests.[168] For a 32-page entry-level periodical like *World Photography* to commit the editorial space for such an article signalled the importance that it attributed to Bates, his comments and the PSHK in general. Recognising that many of its readers were not PSHK members, the editorial committee of *World Photography* included a short note at the start of the translation suggesting that it would still be useful for them to know about the development of PSHK

and how it judged photographs. All in all, these editorial decisions helped to create (and cement) the eminence of HK salon photography in Southeast Asia.

The next place that received such sustained focus on *World Photography* was Singapore (as part of Malaya), hence surfacing the competitive camaraderie between the city and HK in the field of salon photography. In the foreword of the 23rd issue (August 1955), which reproduced selected submissions (mostly from Singapore) of the Third Pan-Malayan Photographic Exhibition 1955 organised by the SCC, the editorial committee declared: "In recent years, our countrymen who reside in Malaya have made rapid strides in their photographic achievements, which should be apparent in the small selection of works printed here—this fact is undeniable."[169]

In a report on the vibrancy of Singapore photography, published on the 32nd issue (July 1956), the writer observed the increasing number of amateurs learning the medium. The calendar year was packed with exhibitions and contests. Reports and features on photography appeared regularly on newspapers and periodicals. The writer felt that the proliferation of activities was perhaps influenced by the milieu of HK photography. He then spotlighted the 20-men pictorial photography exhibition hosted by the camera club of Gan Eng Seng School. According to participating photographers Yan Fook Leun and Tan Hoo-Watt 陳瑚法 (d. 1986), they joined the exhibition not to win medals but to create the opportunity for local viewers to enjoy the works of local photographers.[170] The desire of local audience to see local works hinted at their burgeoning sense of place. In other words, the emergence of a localised practice in Singapore was seeded by inter-referencing that of HK.

Francis Wu's trite portrayal of Chinese women in traditional garb finally made an appearance on the eighth issue of *World Photography*. Interestingly, in the Questions and Answers 答問 section of that issue, there were a few notable exchanges. A reader from Penang wrote an English response to *World Photography* questioning whether some of the winning images in its previous contest fitted the theme of portraiture. As a Mandarin periodical, the term that they used as the theme of that contest was *renxiang* 人像 (literally, human likeness). Replying to the reader, the unnamed writer (representing the editorial committee) acknowledged that the term *renxiang* should not be taken as the perfect equivalent to portraiture and that there was no consensus on how a word like "portraiture" should be translated in Chinese.[171] That short exchange hinted at the ongoing challenge of embedding (and translating) photographic terms and ideas from English (and other European languages) into localised contexts across the region.

In the same issue, there were two other letters that asked about China. A certain Yang Li Min from Taiping asked if *World Photography* was being distributed in China. The writer (representing the editorial committee) replied that it was not, but some readers had, on their own accord, mailed the periodical back to the motherland. It seemed that the copies had reached their intended recipients.[172] Another reader from Singapore who was planning to go to China via HK queried about the current development of photography in the motherland. The writer admitted that he was not sure. However, when the writer visited the scenic sites and gardens of several major cities in the motherland two years

back, he still noticed young people taking pictures with their cameras. Negative film, chemicals and photo papers were still available.[173] In its 37th issue (August 1957), *World Photography* also reviewed the launch of *Zhongguo Sheying* 中國攝影 (its English title, *Chinese Photography*, probably appeared later), which was published out of Beijing, initially as a quarterly. Apparently, there was no discussion on the technical aspects of photography in its inaugural issue. Its submission call welcomed critiques, studies into China photography history and discussions on the creation of photographic works. Interestingly, the reviewer also previewed that the second issue of *Zhongguo Sheying* would feature the works of many HK photographers.[174] In these instances, it is clear that HK served as a conduit for Overseas Chinese in Nanyang who were eager for any updates about their motherland. Images of China continued to appear, albeit intermittently, through the published submissions of readers to *World Photography*.

World Photography celebrated its one-year anniversary with the tenth issue (August 1953), having missed the monthly publication schedule on two occasions. That issue featured a bumper selection of photographic submissions from its readers, which was already hyped up as a selling point in the ninth issue (July 1953). In the August issue, the periodical reproduced submissions from readers hailing from HK, Bangkok, Bandung, Penang (Tan Seng Huat 陳成發 and others), Manila (G. C. Tansiongkun and others), Jakarta, Phnom Penh, Malacca, Brunei, Singapore (Yan Fook Leun and others), Johore, Kuching, Tarakan, Medan, Danang, Cholon, Kedah, KL, Sibu (Soon Lee Guan 孫麗源), Australia and New York City, amongst others. The monthly contest featured winning submissions from some of the aforementioned places and from Cebu, Negeri Sembilan and Pontianak. These listings should give us a partial gauge of the geographical reach of *World Photography* after a year of publication.

To mark its 30th issue (March 1956), *World Photography* ran an open call for text and photographic submissions from its readers, acknowledging the role that they had played in its longevity. The published photographs came from HK, Beijing, Guangzhou, Penang (Lam Sai Hoong and others), Singapore (Chu Chup Ming 朱澤民, Loh Peng Hon 羅炳翰, Lee Sow Lim and others), Phnom Penh, Saigon, Manila (Pedro Ong 王守逸 and others), Burma, Johore, Indonesia, Bangkok (Chang Chee 張祺 and others), Bandung, Jakarta and Sibu, amongst others. From 6 to 10 April 1956, Philippine Chinese Camera Club organised its fourth members' exhibition, featuring 151 prints contributed by 41 members. The 31st issue (May 1956) of *World Photography* reproduced some of the exhibited works by Tansiongkun, Pedro Ong and Yu Hui Yan 楊輝燕, amongst others. In a report for the periodical, Tansiongkun noted that an Overseas Chinese community was often geared towards business and that its cultural or artistic standard would not be high. In that sense, he felt proud that the photographers could showcase their modest works in public at Manila's Chinese quarter.[175]

As a way to conclude this section, allow me to juxtapose two articles published on *World Photography*. During Francis Wu's aforementioned trip to Singapore and Malaya in 1954, he also spent some time scouting for photographic talents. The person who impressed him the most was Lim Soo Hwa 林樹華, a rickshaw driver in Penang who was also an

amateur photographer whose prints had won him awards and recognition in various competitions and salons. In the 15th issue (April 1954), Wu published a celebratory profile of Lim. The globetrotting Wu began the profile with the proclamation that photography was a globalised art and a global language that people of any nationality, regardless of occupation, could develop an interest in it. Writing about Lim, Wu noted his struggles to make a living in order to feed his interest in photography. Finally, Wu announced that photography was Lim's hobby and mission.[176] While there was no explicit reference to Lim's class and ethnicity, the profile dovetailed fairly nicely with the prototypical story of a Chinese man making good in what he strived to achieve. In contrast, in the 24th issue (September 1955), someone by the penname of "Chinese Man" 華人 submitted a report of a photo-hunting trip to North Borneo, which, he felt, might generate comments and exchanges amongst the readers of *World Photography*. The writer began by noting that most visitors (especially photography enthusiasts) who arrived at Api (Kota Kinabalu) would often use the opportunity to visit Kota Belud where they could admire Mount Kinabalu and the "tribes decked in various exotic costumes" ("着各種奇異裝束的土番"). The annual agricultural fair was the best time to visit when the tribal people from distant villages would "come out to enjoy the spectacle". In that trip, they travelled in a group of eight photographers armed with their Leica, Ikonta, Rolleicord and Rolleiflex cameras. Arriving at Kota Belud, the first thing to do, as recommended by the writer, was to bathe in the river. As they were doing so, the photographers saw an approaching group of Dusun ladies. They jumped out of the river and "used their awkward command of tribal language" ("用生硬的番話") to convince the ladies to allow them to take photographs. After taking some photographs, someone in the group offered five dollars in an attempt to convince the ladies to allow them to take half-naked portraits. The offer was declined. On the following day, the day of the fair, the writer noted that their aim was not the agricultural produce but the ladies who sold them. While the ladies shied from the camera lens, they would never scold the photographers. In order to get their shots, the photographers had to corner her, "attacking from the front and back" ("前後夾攻"). The Bajau men, on the hand, were happier to be photographed.[177] This article offered a snapshot of the amateur photographic practice amongst Chinese-speaking practitioners in Nanyang. It made visible their photographic modernity (justified partly through their ownership of German cameras), which was contrasted against the tribal people and the natural landscape of North Borneo. In other words, their Chineseness was aligned with their photographic modernity, which would come into focus through the objects of that hunting trip.

2.3 *Photoart* (1960-63)

Photoart 攝影藝術 was in existence for two periods—from 1960 to 1963, and from 1980 to 1997. Here, I discuss the first period of its existence, from which it is still remembered today as a serious salon photography publication that was perhaps more esoteric and elitist than what readers and advertisers then had the appetite for. The decision to utilise copperplate printing also made its production cost higher.[178] Many of the acclaimed photographers involved (or featured) in *Chinese Photography* and *World Photography* formed the 14-men advisory team for *Photoart*. They included the likes of Robert A. Bates, Peter Dragon, Kan Hing-fook, Soman Lo, Francis Wu and Kaan Se-Leuk, amongst

others. Its executive editor was the esteemed educator S. F. Dan. The involvement of businessman-photographer Tchan Fou-li as its publisher and editor was crucial because he brought his contacts and knowhow of Indochina and Thailand onto the table. The work of his mentor, Saigon-based Tchen Fong Ku, was reproduced in the inaugural issue. Mak Fung 麥烽 (1918-2009, b. HK) served as its editor but his name was only listed from the 21st issue (February 1963) onwards.

The structure of *Photoart* did not differ that much from the editorial template of *Chinese Photography*. The submission call in the inaugural issue made clear that *Photoart* was a "purely artistic photo periodical". Submissions that utilised Eastern aesthetics to discuss photography or photographic works that were created with that perspective would be especially welcomed.[179] Inaugurating the periodical, Tchan pointed out the imprint of painting on photography since its invention, which led to the "natural" acceptance of pictorial photography as the exemplar of art photography. He did not mention China either as a reference or a source of readership. Instead, he spoke to, and on behalf of, HK and Southeast Asia. While acknowledging the usefulness of European and American publications, Tchan pointed out that the experiences and aesthetic perspectives that they conveyed were not necessarily relevant to the photographers in HK and Southeast Asia whose practices were influenced by their cultural and geographical conditions. As Tchan proclaimed, it had become indispensable to publish a Chinese periodical like *Photoart* for HK and Southeast Asia.[180] By the end of the inaugural issue, in an editorial penned by Dan, HK had slipped back into the region, as he proclaimed *Photoart* to be the "one and only omnibus photographic magazine published in Southeast Asia at present". Echoing Tchan's viewpoint, Dan noted that each issue of *Photoart* would strive to publish a fresh set of photographs of local flavour. They would not be simple records. That would not suffice. They had to be artistic and technically faultless, "which could be viewed as examples for amateurs, and also to serve as guides for photographers and tourists alike if they should be about to go to those places for travelling".[181]

Even though Dan tried to include tourists as the periodical's potential audience, some of the articles that it carried, while important and interesting, probably remained beyond their interest. Starting with the inaugural issue, for instance, CPA founding member C. F. Hsu 徐慶峰 contributed a series of recurring articles outlining the history of photography. The first essay cited the likes of philosopher Mozi 墨子 (c. 400s-300s BCE) and *Records of the Historian* 史記 (completed c. 90 BCE) in recognition of the Chinese contribution to optics and the camera obscura.[182] On the other hand, Dan's promise to feature practitioners from Southeast Asia quickly materialised in the second issue (September 1960) with a three-page contribution by Sarawak photographer K. F. Wong. Out of the 12 masterpiece photographs printed in the same issue, three were contributed by practitioners from Southeast Asia—Nguyễn Cao Đàm 阮高談 (1916-2001) from Saigon, Kwan Sam Hoi and P. L. Chan 曾寶齡 from Singapore. Interestingly, in a listing of participants from Nanyang whose prints were selected for the 1st CPA International Salon of Photography, those from Macau and HK were also categorised within the region.[183] A few issues later, in a listing of practitioners from HK, Macau and Nanyang whose works were selected for the Fifteenth Hong Kong International Salon (1960), these territories were segregated again, with Taiwan added to the list to generate further confusion.[184]

It is hard to gauge the distribution and reach of *Photoart*, as the publication did not reveal much information in that regard. However, it is possible to make an educated guess. First of all, *Photoart* was partly bilingual, with a translation or at least an English summary provided for most articles. To mark its inauguration, *Photoart* organised a photo contest, inviting submissions from its readers. The contest was announced and publicised regularly since the first issue. The results and the winning prints were published on the seventh issue (March 1961). Apparently, they received over a thousand prints coming from the following places: Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, Canada, Fiji Islands, France, Greece, HK, Indonesia, Italy, Laos, Macau, Malaya, North Borneo, Philippines, Shanghai, Sarawak, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, US and South Vietnam. The top five sources of submissions in descending order were HK, Malaya, Singapore, Thailand and South Vietnam.[185] Because the standard of submission was so high, other than selecting 50 prints for the gold, silver and bronze medals, the team at *Photoart* decided to pick another 250 prints to mount a group exhibition at St. John's Cathedral, HK. The list of winners and selected participants featured many established and emerging figures. They included, amongst others, Nguyễn Mạnh Đan (1925-2019, b. Nam Dinh Province), Đinh Bá Trung 丁伯仲, Triệu Văn 趙文 (all from South Vietnam), Ng See Yong 黃世勇, Lee Lim, Wu Peng Seng 吳秉誠, Yip Cheong Fun, Kwan Sam Hoi, Lee Sow Lim, K. Huang (all from Singapore), Chitt Chongmankhong 钟文集 (1922–2009, b. Bangkok), Chow Chongmankhong 鐘文就 (or Chao Chongmankhong, d. 1995), Sorasin Tantimedh 陳達瑜, Banchong Tantaswasdi 陳文俊 (Tan Ban Chong), Chang Chee, Lim Lip (all from Thailand), Ong Tjhoeng Pauw 俞昌行 (Indonesia), C. C. Too 杜志超, Wan Ye Jing 溫以敬 (both from Malaya), To Gui-Sing 杜毅星 (Philippines), Soon Lee Guan (Sarawak), Chan Chik 陳迹, James Chung Man-lurk 鍾文略 and P. G. Chang 張寶璣 (all from HK). These details should give us a partial sense of its reach and the profile of readers following *Photoart*. Interestingly, Tchan noted that most of the submissions were exemplars of Pictorialism. Other styles were less seen amongst the entries. In terms of the variety of photographic styles, Tchan felt that Southeast Asia could not compare to that of Europe. While he acknowledged that Pictorialism was a key focus for *Photoart* and that the art of photography should be approached from multiple directions, Tchan seemed to absolve the periodical from any role in entrenching salon photography's orthodoxy. Instead, he merely urged practitioners in different places to acknowledge the issue.[186] In short, most readers of *Photoart* were adherents of salon photography located across Southeast Asia, with HK slipping in and out of that geographical framing. By the 16th issue (March/April 1962), it became clear that *Photoart* had enlisted the service of World Book Company, which used to put out the aforementioned *World Photography* through its HK publishing arm, as its distributor to Singapore and Malaya (and possibly elsewhere across Southeast Asia).

Spotlighting Southeast Asia

The involvement of Tchan in *Photoart* brought a degree of visibility to Vietnam and her photographers. The works of Lê Anh Tài 黎英才, Chen Hsien Hueh 陳先鈱 (or Trần Việt) and Lee Lang Sieu were published in the Selected Prints section of the third

(October 1960) and fourth (November 1960) issues. The cover of the fourth issue was shot by Tchan and featured a Vietnamese girl donning the nón lá (conical hat) and her áo dài, an iconography that had become a recurring trope of the nation. The fifth issue of *Photoart* (January 1961) printed a feature article penned by Nguyễn Cao Đàm on the sand dunes that many Vietnam-based photographers had photographed, bringing them fame in international salons around the world. He noted that the photographic community in Singapore went as far as characterising the subject matters of "sand, sea and salt" as the style of Vietnamese photography. In other words, he utilised the opinion of foreigners (Singapore-based photographers) to validate the national character of Vietnamese photography. Apparently, some HK and Nanyang photographers had already tried to locate these sand dunes. Perhaps to satisfy that demand, Nguyễn Cao Đàm introduced the sand dunes at Phan Ri 藩里 and Duc Long 朱冷.[187] The piece was illustrated by the photographs of Đinh Bá Trung, Triệu Văn, Nguyễn Mạnh Đan, Chen Hsien Hueh and Lee Lang Sieu.[188] In the same issue, there was also coverage given to the 1st International Salon of Pictorial Photography, which opened in October 1960 at the Saigon Information Hall. In the 12th issue (September 1961), the work of Tchen Fong Ku was given a two-page feature. Again, the writer cited the observation of practitioners in Singapore and Malaya who noted that the photographs taken by Vietnamese photographers had become quite distinctive, characterised by a strong sense of local flavour and an inclination towards realism. In that regard, the practice of Tchen was a good example.[189]

It is worth pointing out that the Vietnam, which readers would encounter in *Photoart*, was the one centred at Saigon, governed by the Republic of Vietnam (RV) administration and demonised by the DRV as puppets of America. There was of course a movement of photographers who left the north after the communist takeover in 1954. Nguyễn Mạnh Đan was one of the most famous photographers who made the move. Before that, his path had already crossed with that of Tchan when both of them participated in the 2nd Vietnam art photography exhibition at the Hanoi Opera House in 1953. By the time Tchan was involved in *Photoart*, his access to the practitioners in the DRV would have become difficult. It would not be surprising if the Vietnam-based photographers whom he featured in *Photoart* were mainly based in the RV. The periodical helped to circulate their works (and build their fame) via HK to the Chinese-reading practitioners across Southeast Asia and, to a lesser extent, other parts of the world.

Apart from Vietnam, *Photoart* also reported on the photographic events and featured the works of photographers from Thailand and the rest of Indochina. In the tenth issue (June/July 1961), for instance, the work of Lim Lip was featured in a two-page spread, which noted his struggles to learn photography while juggling his work as a baker.[190] In the 23rd issue (April 1963), *Photoart* reported on the 2nd National Photography Exhibition, which was organised by the Royal Photographic Society of Thailand (RPST).[191] Selected images from the exhibition, which took place at the end of 1962, were printed together with the report and in the Selected Prints section. Many of the practitioners whose images were printed in that issue are still recognised today as the exemplars of Thai salon photography. They included, amongst others, Rattana Pestonji, Chitt Chongmankhong, Chang Chee, Surong Aknisirichai, Banchong Tantaswasdi and Phaichit Opaswongkarn 胡錫麟. In the opposite direction, RPST published a translation of an article from the 15th

issue (January/February 1962) of *Photoart* for its *Member's Bulletin*.[192] In March and April 1963, Tchan made a visit to Thailand and Laos, ostensibly to seek advice from the practitioners there for the future issues of *Photoart*. Apparently, he was warmly received by members of the RPST and 泰國影藝協會.[193] The papers reported on his stay in Bangkok on a daily basis. Local photographers also invited Tchan to Ayutthaya for a photo-hunting trip.[194] In the 25th issue (November 1963) of *Photoart*, the last in its first period of existence, Tchan wrote a celebratory text, in part, to express his gratitude towards the photographers in Thailand. He noted that in 1958, during his previous trip to Thailand, the photographic development in Bangkok was still at its germination phase. There were not many active photographers then. When he revisited in 1963, Tchan was surprised by its progress, citing the existence of two photo societies and two photographic supplements in the newspapers as supporting evidence. In other words, the proliferation of salon photography was taken as the barometer of progress. Not surprisingly, he offered HK as a role model for Thai photography. He noted that there were four or five substantial photo societies in HK, which continued to exist in harmony. Tchan urged the photographers in Thailand not to quibble over personal and petty issues. Instead, they should keep their focus on the greater goal. In time to come, Tchan strongly believed that "the photographic friends in Thailand would be able to catch up, in terms of their achievements, with HK".[195]

On a few occasions, *Photoart* also published simple photo stories about Southeast Asia, contributed by local photographers. In the 22nd issue (March 1963), for instance, *Photoart* published a one-page photo story of the Independence Monument in Phnom Penh, which was opened in 1962. The story was shot by Na Trach 何澤汪.[196] In the 12th issue, Ngo Khanh 吳詩慶 contributed a two-page travel piece on Angkor and the pagodas around Phnom Penh.[197] In the eighth issue (April 1961), the periodical published a photo spread of Laos, which was ambiguously credited to the periodical's resource room. The images remained uncredited, except for one, an iconic photograph taken by Tchan featuring two ladies by the Mekong. The rest of the photographs revealed the sights and lifestyle of the country—in the fashion of travel reportage. The accompanying article portrayed Laos as an untouched paradise with no modern industry. However, midway through the text, it turned into a brief lament for Laos, which had not been able to avert the threats of war.[198] Even though *Photoart* did not directly reference the Second Indochina War, its decision to publish the photo spread was a curious one. Photo periodicals of that ilk and era, like *Photoart*, would always avoid any overt mention of politics. While the article only advocated for peace, why did the editorial team stick its neck out to stake such a claim? Was it informed by Tchan's personal connection to the region? It is worth remembering that genuine neutrality for Laos was, for one historian, already out of reach vis-à-vis the Indochina conflict even before the signing of the Geneva Accords of 1954.[199] In short, to advocate for peace was to allow itself to be misconstrued by both sides of the cold war as a cop-out or a colluder.

In the third issue (October 1960), Tong Koon Hung contributed a two-page spread on the religious life in Singapore. Even though his contribution looked like a photo story, Tong was only superficially interested in the religious mosaic of Singapore. Even if we ignore his erroneous claim that the Indians were mostly Muslims in Singapore, it is clear that he

did not do sustained research on the story. He was more attracted by the possibility of using the religious mix to make pictorial photographs. In an almost self-congratulatory manner, the accompanying text detailed his technical approach in making the snaps.[200] However, when the work appeared on *Photoart*, it certainly brought a taste of Nanyang to the readers. A quick word on Tong: he was a founding member of the Photographic Society of Guangdong 廣東攝影學會, which was established in 1947 by the likes of S. F. Dan and Soman Lo, amongst others. In 1949, Tong moved to Singapore and in 1958, he became a founding member of SEAPS. Because of his prior connections with his Guangzhou peers, many of whom had moved to HK after the communist takeover, Tong played, for many years, the go-between amongst photographers in Singapore and HK. He was, for instance, the organiser of Lou Lo Pang's aforementioned 1959 exhibition in Singapore. Tong also organised the exhibition in 1960 for S. Y. Chen. Using the platform of *Photoart*, he circulated the works of younger practitioners from Singapore (especially those associated with SEAPS) to their peers in HK and Southeast Asia. In the 16th issue (March/April 1962), for example, Tong wrote about Chin Pei Choo 岑培楚, Wong Teck Nam 王德南 and Wong Peng Wah 黃炳華, all of whom had just become associates of the RPS the year before.[201] In the 24th issue (June 1963), Tong wrote a brief intro to the work of "new blood" Lee Ching Far 李晉華.[202] Tong's attempt to "use still life photography to create the *guohua* style", casting miniature figures in crafted sets to illustrate Tang-dynasty poetry, was featured in the same issue.[203] I believe Tong's cultural connections, alongside his accomplishments as a photographer (made possible by the circulation of his work through HK), brought him visibility in his newly adopted home of Singapore. In 1964, he was appointed advisor to the photographic section of the Central Cultural Bureau (CCB) of the People's Action Party (PAP). On July 1965, when the CCB announced that it would organise a photo exhibition to propagate its "Malaysia for Malaysians" stance, Tong became a member of its organising committee and served on its jury.[204]

Even though they reproduced submissions from Southeast Asia, photo periodicals published in HK since the WWII helped to create and circulate the reputation of HK photographers. In *Photoart*, HK-based practitioners were responsible for writing most of the lengthier essays offering practical advice or theoretical analysis. Contributions from Southeast Asia were shorter and dealt typically with simpler topics. One exception was veteran photographer Wan Ye Jing who contributed several extensive articles on the history and development of Malayan photography. In the 13th issue (October/November 1961), for instance, Wan tracked the advance of photographic arts in Malaya after WWII by acknowledging the imprint of HK, which first catalysed the development of Singapore photography before spreading its influence to Malaya.[205] The dissemination of photographic arts from HK was made possible through greater connectivity in traffic and longstanding cultural connections with the region. According to Wan, Penang was the first in Malaya to see an increase in photographic activities in Malaya after the war. The situation was comparable to that of Singapore. These early amateurs photographed the natural scenes of Penang and helped to propagate, through the circulation of their images, the beauty of the island elsewhere. Like their peers in HK, the photographers in Penang were influenced initially by western paintings and *guohua*. Their subject matters became the focus of reference (and replication) by the photographers. In 1954, the Penang

Pictorialists was formed. Led by Chan Eng Hock, the club focused solely on the photographic arts. In 1955, it organised the 1st International Exhibition of Photography. After that, Wan highlighted the emergence of photo societies in other parts of Malaya, in places that typically received little coverage in terms of modern art. In 1957, the Perak Photographic Research Society 霹靂攝影研究社 in Ipoh organised the Perak 1st Salon of Photography. There were also photo clubs formed in Malacca, Negeri Sembilan and Kedah but many of these initiatives were short-lived. Wan believed that the paucity of leadership figures led to the brief existence of these organisations. In comparison, the situation on the east coast of Malaya was different, partly because of the presence of Sultan Ismail Nasiruddin Shah (1907–79, b. Kuala Terengganu), the first Malay to be made an Associate of RPS in 1958. In the same year, he helped to establish the Trengganu Camera Club 丁加奴攝影學會 (or 丁加奴州攝影學會). In April 1959, the club organised an exhibition, which showcased the works of its members and Terengganu-based photographers. When Wan wrote that report for *Photoart* in 1961, the Terengganu show had been organised on three occasions, occurring annually. Over time, the club became the meeting point for established and emerging practitioners like W. S. Phua 潘輝山, Tay Leong Guan 戴隆源, Mustaffa bin Embong and C. K. Lee 李俊卿, amongst others. In KL, the Selangor Photographic Research Society 雪蘭莪攝影研究社 was established in 1950 while the Selangor Camera Club was founded in 1951. In 1955, the latter organised the Fifth Malayan International Photographic Exhibition. The previous four exhibitions that it hosted were Malayan-centric and not international. By 1957, the club was superseded by the Photographic Society of the Federation of Malaya.[206] Its patrons included Foong Tuen Seng 馮端成, Sultan Ismail, Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra and the Selangor sultan. According to Wan, the photographic scene in Malaya was also fuelled in recent years by the proliferation of foreign exhibitions. These included solo and group exhibitions for K. F. Wong, S. Y. Chen, Eddie Ching 程子然 and various photographers from RV. Photographs from the Hong Kong Festival of the Arts also travelled to Malaya. RPS' Autumn Nature Exhibition for 1958 toured the Far East during the early part of 1959, opening in Singapore, Malaya and HK.[207] In the last part of his essay, Wan covered the proliferation of photo clubs in schools. The trend started in Penang with Chung Ling High School establishing its photo club in 1952. The schools in KL, the likes of Methodist Boys' School, Victoria Institution and University of Malaya, eventually followed suit. Because of their finances and background, English-medium schools were more likely to have photo clubs. The student salons organised by the photographic societies of Nanyang University in Singapore and the University of Hong Kong attracted many participants from Malaya. Even though the focus was on Malayan photography, Wan quite clearly acknowledged the importance of HK as a reference point (of photographic practices, especially salon photography) and a testing ground (through the competitions it hosted) for Malaya-based practitioners.

The Chineseness of *Photoart*

As a way to conclude this analysis of *Photoart*, I would like to turn our attention to its 20th issue (December 1962). In a way, it was a Tchan Fou-li special issue (in a periodical in which he was already the most visible figurehead) where he contributed an essay

espousing the relevance of Chinese ink painting on landscape photography. According to Tchan, as photography was invented in the West and that its application had also started there, it was natural for its aesthetics to be framed by Western Pictorialism. In salon photography, the judging criteria still followed the aesthetic perspective of Western painting. When photography arrived in China, there were some practitioners who tried to apply Chinese pictorial conventions in their photographic works. According to Tchan, most of the pictorialists remained unconvinced by these attempts. He then tried to argue that photography already shared many similarities with Chinese painting. Not surprisingly, he used the technical limits of photography (being more suited, at that time, in producing black-and-white images) as a way to connect with the tradition of ink painting. He also argued that, while the composition of Western painting was informed by linear perspective, that was not necessarily the case for photography. He felt that it was possible to create photographic works informed by 散點透視 (multiple vanishing points or multi-point perspective), which would bring them closer to the aesthetic framework of Chinese painting. In relation to landscape photography, a photographer could create such images simply by using a wide-angle lens, standing halfway up a mountain while photographing the mountainous view. The resulting image would incorporate the level perspective, and the perspectives directed upwards and downwards. It could also be created through the darkroom wizardry of cropping and montage.[208] To illustrate that article, seven of Tchan's images were reproduced in the Selected Prints section. A writer was tasked to comment and heap praise on Tchan's work.

At the end of that issue, an editorial piece credited to the *Photoart* team was published. It was a terse response to the widely circulated American photo periodical, *Popular Photography*. Apparently, the latter had, in its August 1962 issue, ran a report on HK, which alleged that some doctors who were also amateur photographers had spent money to buy photographs so that they could submit to salon contests. It also pointed out the competitiveness amongst HK photo club members at trying to win awards in foreign salons. Similar accusations had already impacted HK photography previously. In 1959, for instance, Sunny Giam reported on *Singapore Free Press* that the RPS had temporarily suspended HK applicants from its accreditation because some of them did not actually take, process, enlarge and print their pictures. Apparently, the explanation had come from O. Szeto, then the president of PSHK. To redress the situation, RPS would only accept submissions certified by Francis Wu. But Wu was not a popular figure amongst upcoming photographers, hence creating the impasse. Giam also noted that HK photographers would not respect a visiting photographer who was not an Associate or Fellow of a salon club.[209] Their obsession with the accreditation structure of salon photography was clear and obvious.

Instead of investigating or reflecting upon the claims made by *Popular Photography*, the *Photoart* editorial team (headed by Tchan) jumped to the defence of HK photography and dismissed the report. The editorial was its attempt to defend the dignity of HK photography. It did so by pointing out, without any sense of irony, the countless number of awards that local photographers had claimed at international salons. It also mentioned PSA's annual ranking of photographers, noting that "each year China photographers would occupy at least six or seven spots" in the top ten list. While the editorial team of

Photoart portrayed itself as one that would stridently avoid gossip and personal attacks, it ended the piece by taking cheap shots at the editor of *Popular Photography* who published a travelogue of HK in the September issue. Instead of showing interest in the Eastern heritage of HK, he was only interested in the rickshaws, wooden-hut areas and the Suzie Wong-like characters. The editorial ended with the claim: "What more could we say about 'tourists' of such taste?"[210]

Reading these two articles together, I feel that they made clear the thinking behind publishing *Photoart*. In relation to the art of photography, *Photoart* operated from the orthodoxy of salon photography. Its judgments of taste and aesthetics were made from that starting point. When Tchan urged his readers to draw from Chinese painting, it clearly articulated his intense desire to formulate a Chinese perspective to salon photography. While his view might be productive, I imagine it would also sideline the few non-Chinese (and even some ethnic Chinese) readers of *Photoart* who had no interest in any claims of Chineseness. Instead of arguing for the autonomy of photographic art vis-à-vis painting, Tchan's perspective only served to replace Western painting with Chinese painting as the aesthetic framework of salon photography. In other words, without the foundation of painting, photography would lose its aesthetic framework and its claim on art. That line of thought remained remarkably consistent in Tchan's photographic career.

Regarding the editorial piece, even though the editorial team of *Photoart* could only represent the HK photographers, they felt the necessity to conjure the spectre of China in its defence against *Popular Photography*. That was despite the fact that *Photoart* made repeated claims to represent Southeast Asia. In its defensive position, however, the editorial team felt that only their motherland (instead of cultural Southeast Asia) could measure up against an American photo periodical like *Popular Photography*. In that way, *Photoart* inevitably set up a hierarchy of cultures, putting China ahead of Southeast Asia. In their defensive stance, *Photoart* unwittingly revealed that their claim on Southeast Asia was driven more by the market consideration of readership than a genuine sense-of-belonging within the framing of Southeast Asia. In that sense, their claim of Southeast Asia was opportunistic. Furthermore, Tchan and his team could only muster their achievements in salon contests as the rationale for *Popular Photography* to show respect. In the first place, HK photographers like Tchan were able to establish their names after the founding of communist China because they chose to live under British colonialism. When it became harder (and more inaccessible) for most China practitioners to indulge in salon photography, HK photographers made use of the colony's connectivity to participate in competitions around the world. Having established his name in salons that, in his opinion, were still operating from the aesthetics of Western painting, Tchan acquired the standing to advocate for a sense of Chineseness in landscape photography. In this sense, his Chineseness was predicated upon the condition of British colonialism and a claim of eternal China at the same time. That was why Tchan and his editorial team did not attempt to decouple salon and photography because the validation of the salons was the reason for their fame and existence in the first place. In fact, since the 21st issue of *Photoart*, the editorial team had invited K. C. Chew 趙錦超 to pen a recurring section introducing the different salons across the world. With the exception of the 23rd issue

when he wrote about the Sao Paulo International Salon, all the competitions that Chew highlighted were based in Europe, America and Australia. Despite Tchan's posturing, *Photoart* made no tangible attempt to dismantle the orthodoxy of salon photography (and the prevalence of Western painting aesthetics in it).

2.4 *Photo Pictorial* (1964-2005)

There is no doubt that *Photo Pictorial* 攝影畫報 was the most iconic Chinese-language photo periodical published out of HK. Its longevity was unparalleled amongst periodicals of a similar ilk in HK. Even though it was a periodical rooted in salon photography, *Photo Pictorial* also made space for the aesthetic avant-garde of *Dislocation NuNaHeDuo* 女那禾多 to emerge in 1992. Its inaugural issue appeared on 15 July 1964 and was tagged as a supplement of *Photoart*, even though the latter was discontinued.[211] The team previously involved in *Photoart* continued to run *Photo Pictorial*. Tchan Fou-li served as its publisher and editor-in-chief while Mak Fung was named the managing editor. Sylvia Ng Siu-yee 伍小儀 joined the team in September 1980 as its assistant editor; she became editor-in-chief in 1985. At first, *Photo Pictorial* continued to be published by the Photoart Publishing Company. By its 27th issue (1 May 1967), or even earlier, Photo Pictorial Publishers was named as its publishing company. It also became a Chinese-language periodical, giving up any remaining pretence to be a bilingual publication. However, it did try half-heartedly to cater to readers (Overseas Chinese and foreigners) with limited Mandarin proficiency, introducing English titles and captions to most of the Chinese articles from the 27th issue onwards while promising to publish an English edition, as and when the condition materialised.[212] That promise was never fulfilled.

In the inauguration message, Tchan set *Photo Pictorial* apart from *Photoart*, indicating that the former would be closer to the enjoyment of life, even though its focus remained on photography. *Photo Pictorial* was published for the photographers and the non-photographers alike. Having pitched *Photo Pictorial* as a popular periodical, Tchan decided to elaborate on its potential appeal to non-photographers. He noted that photography was the most modern of art. Most people would agree that photography had become an irreplaceable part of modern life. As a modern person, one should understand modern art. *Photo Pictorial* aimed to be the medium for people from all walks of life to experience modern art. It also hoped to be a bridge, turning people with limited interest in photography into photography lovers, turning non-photographers into photographers.[213] In that short inauguration message, Tchan equated photography with "modern art" 現代藝術 and repeated the term several times. As he was trying to highlight the mass appeal of *Photo Pictorial* in the inauguration message, we might speculate that his use of the term was more like a marketing handle, which might help generate the impression that modern art (taking the form of photography) was accessible and not elitist.

In the fifth issue (15 November 1964) of *Photo Pictorial*, there was another attempt to emphasise the editorial team's desire to produce a real pictorial 畫報, which photographers and lovers of photographs could enjoy.[214] In other words, *Photoart* was a photographic periodical that targeted the photographers, but *Photo Pictorial* (as a

pictorial periodical) would also target those readers who loved to look at photographs as another source of readership.

When it was first published, *Photo Pictorial* measured 21 x 19 cm, saddle stitched. From the 138th issue (January 1977) onwards, it became a periodical that measured 28.6 x 21.6 cm.[215] In terms of print quality, the early issues of *Photo Pictorial* remind me of *World Photography* from the 1950s. Even though it was printed by the historic Chung Hwa Book Company's Hong Kong Printing Works 中華書局香港印刷廠, *Photo Pictorial* marked an obvious step back from the print quality of *Photoart*, or even Francis Wu's *Chinese Photography*.[216] Gone were the lengthy writings that peppered *Photoart*, replaced by concise articles in *Photo Pictorial*, which targeted readers with a basic interest in photography. The most obvious example came in the 4th issue (15 October 1964) in an article penned by Tchan. Its almost juvenile title recalls Tchan's aforementioned article in the 20th issue of *Photoart* where he espoused the relevance of Chinese ink painting on landscape photography. In the *Photo Pictorial* version, Tchan merely stated the obvious: the image of mountains in Chinese ink painting, often shrouded in clouds and mist, was not unreal. He realised that when he started photographing the unique mountain landscape of China.[217] The theoretical pretence of his previous article had dissipated within two years, beaten back by practical market concerns.

The simple photo stories that started appearing in *Photoart* became a feature in *Photo Pictorial*, fulfilling the latter's promise to appeal to readers who loved to see photographs. It also introduced a recurring Special Page on Family Life 家庭生活專頁 section, which offered tips for readers who were only interested in taking family snapshots. In its second issue (15 August 1964), *Photo Pictorial* even proclaimed: "Those who photographed family life are also photographers of one form. Anyone with a camera should be considered our peer in photography!"[218]

Its egalitarian pose was clearly intended to secure for itself as broad a readership as possible. Unlike the case of *Photoart*, Tchan and his editorial team no longer made any pompous declarations (at least in the early stages) for *Photo Pictorial* to speak on behalf of the salon photographers from HK and Southeast Asia. Nor did Tchan attempt to propagate a Chinese vantage to art photography—at least not in writing. In practice, *Photo Pictorial* walked the editorial tightrope of catering to readers with a basic interest in photography while trying to sustain the attention of the salon and street photographers. However, over the decades, its editorial focus would gradually shift back to the photographers, catering more to their needs.

China Connection

The back-story of *Photoart* and *Photo Pictorial* was only made public in 1998 after the handover. Writing in the 396th issue (May 1998) of *Photo Pictorial*, Mak noted that the emergence of the HK publishing industry in the 1950s had much to do with the Overseas Chinese readers in Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia, who provided the demand for print materials.[219] Li Qing 李青 (1907-73), one of the former editors of Shanghai-era

Liangyou, was then the editor-in-chief of *Sin Chung Hwa Pictorial* 新中華畫報, a pictorial periodical that covered the progress of communist China. It was reported that its inaugural issue in 1952 was already widely distributed across Nanyang.[220] Around the mid-1950s, the pictorial started to include reports on leisurely pursuits like music and gardening to tone down its pro-Beijing political slant. From its 50th issue onwards, the pictorial came with the free supplement of *Camera Club* 攝影俱樂部, a photographic periodical that was published from 1956 to 1960. Li invited Mak to be an editorial assistant of *Camera Club*. Li was also involved in *Photoart*. His name did not appear in its editorial and advisory teams, but he managed the periodical behind the scene.

Li was closely connected to two CCP figures. One was Liao Chengzhi 寥承志 (1908-83, b. Tokyo), a Long March veteran who was involved in propaganda work since the late 1920s. After WWII and before the founding of New China, Liao headed the Xinhua News Agency. From 1949, he was the vice chair of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission 華僑事務委員會 (OCAC) and served as its chair from 1959 until its closure during the Cultural Revolution.[221] The other person was Fang Fang 方方 (1904-71, b. Puning), vice chair of OCAC since 1954. The Liao-Fang tandem was influential, especially in the 1950s, in defining the CCP policies towards the Overseas Chinese in and outside of communist China.

After the communist takeover in 1949, Li left the HK publishing industry and worked under the radar. His task was to mobilise progressive youths and cultural workers from HK and Southeast Asia to return to China, in order to contribute to its socialist revolution. In 1959 and 1962, Tchan was invited to lead a team of HK photographers on three occasions to photograph the natural landscape of China. Despite his ill health, Li accompanied Tchan and the HK photographers on these trips to China. Tchan's photographs were also widely circulated in China. In the 1960s, Li received orders from Liao to establish a photo periodical to "unite the HK photographers, influence Southeast Asia, resist 'yellow culture, gambling and drugs' and to reduce the imprint of British colonialism".[222] Their blind faith in photography, thinking that it could lead to the litany of stated outcomes, remains striking today, even though that line of thought was by no means unique to the communists. In Singapore, for instance, as the territory transited from colonialism to independence, the successive governments in Singapore incorporated or mobilised salon photographers in a bewildering range of cultural and socio-political projects—to dispel the image of Singapore as a cultural desert,[223] to project a clean and beautiful image of the nation overseas, to divert young people from vices and bad influences towards a meaningful hobby like photography,[224] and even to promote neighbourliness.[225]

Photo Pictorial was funded by Li Qing and supported by communist China.[226] Mak Fung only realised that in 1973, even though he had worked for Li since the 1950s. In other words, without him realising, Mak had become involved, in a very distanced way, in CCP's cultural work directed at HK and Southeast Asia, packaged under the guise of a publication like *Photo Pictorial*. However, the funding support was probably limited because Mak's account (in the 396th issue) persistently stressed the difficulty in keeping *Photo Pictorial* afloat. Its distribution in Southeast Asia was more important than its sales

in HK in sustaining the periodical. Even though the details of Li's involvement in *Photoart* remained shady, he was certainly unable to keep it afloat after 1963. His death in 1973 also compounded Mak's anxieties about keeping *Photo Pictorial* afloat. Luckily, Tchan dug into his pockets and registered a limited company for the periodical. He also paid in advance for the shares of Mak and Li's widow. Tchan became the board chairman while Mak was made the managing director.[227]

Uniting the Chinese: Sex and Moralisation

Despite the stated agenda of *Photo Pictorial* to resist yellow culture, female nudity appeared on the front cover in two of the first 13 issues. Of course, the two covers were contributed by the acclaimed New York-based salon photographer Wellington Lee 梁光明 (b. 1918, Kaiping, China—d. 2001, New York), giving them the legitimacy of art rather than pornography. The photographs inside the covers were more titillating. In the fifth issue, for instance, Yung Yung 容庸 contributed a two-page spread, which visualised his fantasy of a lady set in an ahistorical past, emerging from her bath for the photographer and his viewers to enjoy.[228] In the same issue, a certain Mei Li Hua 美麗華 (literally, Beautiful Chinese) contributed another two-page spread featuring pictures of scantily-clad women working in the HK night clubs, accompanied by a brief text that made a passing comment about the difficulty of photographing in these places.[229] It was apparently so well received that Beautiful Chinese contributed another instalment of four photographs titled "Night Club Sights II: Striptease" on the seventh issue (15 January 1965), in which a lady is seen (probably in a photo studio) performing the process of undressing herself for his camera. The short accompanying text indicated that the readers requested for an encore after the first instalment. Other than the serious investigation of the art and technique of photography, they hoped that *Photo Pictorial* could also provide some "軟性的節目" (literally, soft programming). The text added, without any hint of irony: "Night clubs offer these programmes under the pretence of the art of stripping. As for this set of photographs, obviously they only serve as a record!"[230]

While *Photo Pictorial* was more than willing to gratify the sexual needs of its predominantly Chinese male readership, it was also unwilling to relinquish the moral high ground where it pitched itself. When Tchan and his team were publishing *Photoart*, they made a concerted effort to argue for the seriousness of nude photography, distinguishing it from pornography. S. F. Dan even suggested that the proliferation of yellow culture in mainstream society served only to make the distinction between art and pornography even more ambiguous.[231] With the inclusion of "soft programming" in *Photo Pictorial*, Tchan and his team had contributed to the confusion in order to excite their readership. After that, the choice of covers became more careful because, I suspect, they realised that the nudity would make it difficult for *Photo Pictorial* to enter certain markets in Southeast Asia. In total, 477 issues of *Photo Pictorial* were published during its 41 years of existence. According to Lee Wing Ki, the front cover of 192 issues featured a woman figure, not infrequently cast in a sexualised manner.[232] If *Photo Pictorial* operated with the agenda of influencing the patriotic Chinese men in HK and Southeast Asia for the communist remaking of China, it did so by first placing the bodies of women on display for exploitation.

There was a moralising and patriarchal tone that underpinned *Photo Pictorial*. In the second issue, for instance, *Photo Pictorial* carried a photo story of the Beatles' visit to HK. It was pitched as an exemplary set of images (photographed by a certain Huang Qianli 黃千里) that captured the fans' reactions in an artistic way.[233] But the accompanying text offered no advice on how the photographer made his shots. Instead, it was riddled with desultory jibes at the Beatles-mania. Early on, the Beatles was known as the Kuangren Yuedui 狂人樂隊 (literally, Madmen Band) in HK. It offered the writer the most unimaginative pun to take pot shots at the band and their fans. Not only did he describe the band's performance as akin to the shaking of Malaria-inflicted people, he also compared the jumping fans with the "uncivilised tribes in Africa". The writer concluded: "What kind of a civilised world is this! What kind of cultural art is this!"[234]

Even though the writer meant to deplore the impact of Western pop culture in HK, he had no hesitation in using the trope of uncivilised Africa as a way to argue for the superiority of certain cultures over others. By implication, neither the Beatles nor primitive Africa could compare to the unnamed benchmark of eternal China.

In the sixth issue (15 December 1964), *Photo Pictorial* published a set of six photographs on womenfolk in HK. The photographer Su Gong 肅恭 did not supply the lengthy captions. Instead, a somewhat pretentious hack was responsible for writing them based on his whims and fancies. The last snapshot featured a lady photographed unaware in the central district. Based merely on her poise and appearance, the writer adjudged that she was originally from a rich family, but tough times had befallen on her. Instead of showing empathy, he quickly derided her as a parasite of society and added that, sheltered by her family wealth, she had also been a parasite in the past. What was his intended takeaway through that litany of presumptions? If a person had no survival skills, regardless of whether she was rich or poor, her life would still be the same, he concluded.[235] Without making any attempt to understand her plight, the writer exploited her image to peddle his paternalistic nonsense to the readers of *Photo Pictorial*.

In the 88th and 89th bumper issue (15 December 1972), *Photo Pictorial* published a selection of the best images culled from the different salons in HK. Mak Fung wrote an introduction to the selection, in which he "analysed" some of the photographs in a passing manner. He picked out three images depicting the hippies and used the guise of interpreting the photographers' intention to make moral judgments about the people who were being photographed.[236] In the 101st issue (15 December 1973), *Photo Pictorial* reproduced a series of photographs taken by Gerhard Jacob in Germany, featuring the fad of women wearing short skirts. The images were accompanied by moralising captions, suggesting that the miniskirt trend would attract perverts and voyeurs, and that the police head would soon have to contend with the rapid erosion of societal wellbeing.[237] In short, women in miniskirts should cover up, as though they were at fault for "helping" the voyeurs and perverts lose control of themselves. Despite the guise of indignance, *Photo Pictorial* had no qualms reproducing the images for the consumption of their male-dominant readership.

In 1978, *Photo Pictorial* became the first and only Chinese-language photo periodical that readers in China could officially import and subscribe. It left an indelible impression on the likes of Hu Wugong 胡武功, Wang Wenlan 王文瀾, Wu Jialin 吳家林 and Bao Kun 鮑昆, practitioners who would become the notable figures of China photography today. In the words of Hu, *Photo Pictorial* "opened a window, through which imageries from overseas were projected into the long-enclosed world of China photography".[238]

Photo Pictorial also played a significant role in bringing images of China to its readers overseas. In the 78th issue (February 1972), the editors pointed out the trend of American, European and HK tourists visiting China. There was a strong demand for photographs of China, with some overseas readers apparently writing in to make their request heard. The editors promised to fulfil their request, even encouraging readers to submit their travel shots of China to the periodical.[239] In the 79th issue (March 1972), the editors projected that HK and Overseas Chinese visitors would have increased opportunities to tour the motherland. Apart from the magnificent sights, which would dazzle the visitors, there would be opportunities to experience new and moving encounters. The editors noted that it would take some preparation to capture these moments in photography.[240] To underscore the point, Mak Fung's photograph of a smiling patient in Guangzhou, apparently undergoing a thyroid operation while receiving only an acupuncture anesthesia, was reproduced in the same issue.[241]

According to Lee Wing Ki, the scenic shots of China on *Photo Pictorial* served to promote tourism to the Overseas Chinese communities and to remind them of the beauty of their motherland. Some of these images had resulted from special tours organised for salon photographers. The photographs of the aforementioned China photographers also started appearing on *Photo Pictorial* in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Lee asserts that the CCP had manipulated these images to implant ideological control outside of China.[242] However, revisiting the celebratory accounts of Hu and Bao praising the imprint of *Photo Pictorial* on China photographers, I do not get the sense that they operated under duress from the CCP when they contributed their works to the periodical. In fact, the periodical from HK brought a glimpse of openness that catalysed their subsequent careers.[243] Nonetheless, it is possible to argue that the flow of China imageries (manipulated or otherwise) overseas was already enough to sustain the umbilical cord between the motherland and her ethnic Chinese photographers elsewhere. Perhaps the most obvious reciprocation of that connection from Southeast Asia came from a reader in Malaysia, a certain Lai Ming-Hoi 黎明海 who was lauded by the periodical for elevating and perfecting the craft of 分區復攝法 multi-exposure with zone technique. The cover image on the 111th issue (15 October 1974) was one such creation by Lai in which the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests 祈年殿 from the Temple of Heaven in Beijing was curiously exposed onto the husk of a pineapple. The image was titled 身處梨園思故國, which was loosely translated as "Motherland in the Heart". A more literal translation would be "Thinking of the Mother Nation in a Pineapple Plantation", with the tropical fruit signifying the reader's residence in Malaysia while longing for his lost motherland.

As for the rest of the readers in Southeast Asia, how susceptible were they to the political agenda of *Photo Pictorial*? Personally, I think its political impact is difficult to gauge

with certainty. The practical challenge of distribution, the myriad of politics that existed in different parts of Southeast Asia during the cold war era, and the individual perspectives of the readers in encountering the periodical made it even harder to account for its imprint on the readers.

Distribution and Reception in Southeast Asia

In the first place, we do not have concrete data of its circulation and reach. We know that from the fourth issue (15 October 1964) onwards, its agent for Malaysia was the East Asia Cultural Enterprise Company 東亞文化事業公司 at 36 Pekin Street, Singapore.[244] In its 30th issue (August 1967), *Photo Pictorial* published a letter and salon photographs sent by Singapore-based Zhang Langhui 張浪輝. Zhang explained that he was an avid reader of *Photoart* and *Photo Pictorial*, which he considered to be first-rate publications in Southeast Asia. *Photo Pictorial* was especially well received by his peers in photography.[245] Zhang's opinion should not be taken lightly, as he was a noted writer, photographer and publisher associated with the Chinese-speaking Left in Singapore. From 1954 to 1958, Zhang and his friends ran the Nan Tah Book Store 南大書局 (100 Middle Road), which specialised in banned books from communist China.[246] From his brief account, it is impossible to say anything more regarding the political imprint of *Photo Pictorial* on readers in Singapore, as Zhang confined his letter only to matters concerning photography. In its 51st issue (August 1969), *Photo Pictorial* published two photographs submitted by Singapore-based Han Tan Juan 韩山元 (b. 1942, Kulai—d. 2016, Singapore), a self-professed reader of the periodical who often sent his images to the editors to seek constructive criticism.[247] Han was then at the start of his lifelong career in journalism. Over time, he would also become a noted *minjian* 民間 historian in Singapore. The fact that notable figures like Zhang and Han were earnest readers of *Photo Pictorial* meant that the periodical was held in good stead within the Chinese-inclined cultural milieu of Singapore then. The periodical continued to be an important reference for Chinese-speaking readers in Singapore during the 1970s. In the 96th issue (15 July 1973), two letters from Singapore were printed in the 讀者信箱 Readers' Letterbox section of the periodical. One reader lamented that it was impossible to find in Singapore one reasonable Chinese-language book on colour photography while commending *Photo Pictorial* for publishing Chan Shiu-man's 陳紹文 writings, which provided practical information on the topic.[248]

In Bangkok, *Photo Pictorial* appeared to be well received, as reported by Chow Chongmankhong, a founding member of RPST, to the editors when he visited HK during the winter of 1969.[249] It is unclear if Chongmankhong was trying to be polite. In its 118th issue (15 May 1975), *Photo Pictorial* reproduced an extensive selection from the Sixth Thai International Salon of Photography 1974. Apparently, the president of the salon 陳炳海 Chen Binghai and his brother 陳榮河 Chen Ronghe had to make separate trips to HK, bringing the original prints there to cast the plates for the images to be reproduced on *Photo Pictorial*.[250] The fact that they took the trouble to do so meant that *Photo Pictorial* continued to be held in high regard for at least some salon photographers in Thailand. In the 121st issue (15 August 1975), the editors noted that they had received

many invitations asking them to visit the readers in Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines, which they had no choice but to turn down due to the lack of time.[251] In the 110th issue (15 September 1974), a reader from Laos wrote in to enquire why his submission to the Special Page on Family Life one year ago had not been published.[252] This would indicate that a year before the communist victory in 1975, the periodical continued to be available to readers in Laos. However, the communist takeover of Indochina in 1975 probably resulted in *Photo Pictorial* losing access to its markets in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.

In Indonesia, *Photo Pictorial* was very well received when it was first published. According to Mak, the editorial team received many submissions from there. However, as Suharto came into power in the mid-60s, the import of Chinese-language publications was banned, truncating the ties between *Photo Pictorial* and its readers in Indonesia. Since then, as Mak Fung noted, it had become difficult to see the works of Indonesian photographers (by which he unwittingly meant the Indonesian Chinese salon photographers). It was only with the fall of Suharto in 1998 and during the presidency of Abdurrahman Wahid (r. 1999-2001) when tangible connections were re-established. Since the middle of 1999, *Photo Pictorial* had been able to showcase, once again, the works of Indonesian photographers.[253] If *Photo Pictorial* operated with the agenda of influencing practitioners in Southeast Asia, Suharto's policy of banning the open display and performance of Chinese culture represented the most drastic way of curtailing its imprint.

Despite Mak's recollections, the ban did not completely eradicate the connection between the periodical and its readers in Indonesia. In the 90th issue (15 January 1973), the landscape photographs of Java, taken by Toky Yauw 姚道琪, were featured in *Photo Pictorial*.[254] A selection of portraits reflecting the "heavy scent of life" (濃厚的生活味), taken by Yauw, Ong Tjhoeng Pauw, Pitojo Kadiroen and Anwar Sanusi 丘年林, was reproduced in the 99th issue (15 October 1973).[255] Setyadi J.'s 劉忠坤 candid snapshots of women, children, youths and fishermen in Indonesia were featured in the 136th (15 November 1976) and 137th (15 December 1976) issues.[256] The intro text in the 136th issue portrayed Setyadi as being antagonistic towards those who would waste time photographing landscape, implying that his focus on people constituted a more meaningful practice.[257] In the 77th issue (January 1972), the portfolio of Ong was featured in *Photo Pictorial*, accompanied by an intro penned by his friend Ho Sau 何綏 (b. 1925, Guangzhou).[258] According to Ho, Ong was a member of the CPA and the 35mmPS. He was also their most active overseas member in terms of submitting to the monthly club contests. Ong was duly recognised with an award for his diligence. Apparently, the photo scene in Indonesia had been lethargic since its independence, which prompted Ong to turn to HK for inspiration, using the club competitions to hone his craft. To sustain his practice, Ong also had to source for photo supplies and equipment from Singapore and HK.[259] Ho's biographical sketch of Ong inevitably contributed to the impression, at least amongst the readers of *Photo Pictorial*, that Indonesia had a lot of ground to make up before reaching the standard of HK photography, conveniently forgetting that the only yardstick visible to them was the contest culture and aesthetic framework of salon photography. In the 115th issue (15 February 1975), Ong's photographs of Parangtritis

were reproduced alongside a brief intro text, which highlighted the potential of churning out salon works at the sand dunes in the area. The text also indicated that the authorities had already planned to turn the area into a tourist destination and that Parangtritis would soon attract domestic and foreign visitors, including photographers.[260] The short text made clear the connection between salon photography and tourism in terms of opening up an "undeveloped" space for leisure and consumption.

In its 232nd issue (15 November 1984), or even earlier, *Photo Pictorial* finally listed its sales agents across China, Southeast Asia, the Americas, Australia and Europe. In Malaysia and Singapore, the photo periodical was sold through World Book Company. Apparently, Sabah continued to receive the periodical through its own agents. In Kota Kinabalu, it was sold at 國棟書報社 whereas in Sandakan, it went through Kedai Buku South East Asia 東南亞書局.[261] In the Philippines, it was sold through 老夫子書報中心. Surprisingly, it was also available in Indonesia through 集源公司.[262] In Thailand, it was sold through 秋鴻書報社.[263] By its 301st issue (15 August 1990), or even earlier, the Singapore-Malaysia agent had become International Book (S) Pte Ltd 國際圖書（新）有限公司 at Bras Basah Complex, Singapore.

Southeast Asia in *Photo Pictorial*

Continuing our close reading of *Photo Pictorial* in this vein, how did Southeast Asia and her photographers appear in *Photo Pictorial*? Are there any clues that would help us reconstruct and quantify the linkages between HK and Southeast Asia? Over time, did those connections strengthen or wane?

In the early issues of *Photo Pictorial*, because its content was more watered down than that of *Photoart*, the works of photographers from Southeast Asia were typically printed to illustrate short articles on the art or the technical aspects of photography. To that end, the works of Thai photographers Sukapol Suriya 羅道安 (on the seventh issue) and 林旭華 Lin Xuhua (on the ninth issue, dated 1 July 1965) were published early on in *Photo Pictorial*. Chitt Chongmankhong's iconic *When the Storm Comes* (1960), which won the gold medal at the 18th Hong Kong International Salon of Photography in 1963, was also printed in the third issue (15 September 1964) of *Photo Pictorial*. Mak wrote a detailed defence of that winning image, which resulted from two negatives. Apparently, some petty photographers felt that the composite image had gone against the logic of perspective. Mak argued that Chongmankhong's darkroom intervention highlighted his subjective view of the objective world, which was permitted in the context of art, even at the expense of visual perspective.[264] Wee Lee Fong 魏利煌 (1920-96), a Kluang-based doctor and a former politician from the Labour Party of Malaya, contributed a short article in the 60th issue (May 1970) on how to create the zoom effect through the enlarging process in the darkroom.[265]

By the 38th issue (May/June 1968), the portfolios of Singapore-based Yip Cheong Fun and Thailand-based Tan Ban Chong were reproduced in greater depth. The work of Chow Chongmankhong was featured in the 60th issue and characterised as "prose style

photography" 小品.[266] A certain Duong Hon-Stiang 楊漢青, based in Vientiane, sent four images from a trip to Vat Phou, the temple complex in Southern Laos associated with the Khmer Hindu empire, to *Photo Pictorial*. They were published on its 49th issue (June 1969) as a simple travelogue and a showcase of the resulting pictures produced by his newly-purchased Pearl River camera.[267] Duong's piece also resembled a simple photo story. Chang Chee's photographs were featured in the 85th issue (15 September 1972), in which he was lauded as a vanguard of Pictorialism in Thailand since the 1950s. His images exuded a "dense atmosphere of life and soil" (濃重的生活與泥土氣息).[268] In the 54th issue (November 1969), Manila-based Taguibao Angsin 洪禮藝 (b. 1932, Jinjiang, China) contributed a photo story on the constant threat of fire in the urbanised spaces in the Philippines. His contribution was billed by the *Photo Pictorial* editors as an exemplar of reportage photography 報導攝影.[269] In the 79th issue, Angsin contributed landscape shots of Mayon Volcano and Taal Volcano.[270] In the 85th issue, he submitted photographs documenting the worst flood in decades in the Philippines. The brief introduction segregated these documentation photographs, which were also deemed important and meaningful, from his usual pursuits of Pictorialism as an amateur photographer.[271]

The works of K. F. Wong continued to be extensively featured in various issues of *Photo Pictorial*. In the 61st issue (June 1970), a substantial portfolio of his latest works was published to mark his gradual transition from salon photography to the "photography of folk traditions" (民俗攝影).[272] In the printed portfolio, the phrase "photography of folk traditions" was used to describe Wong's photographs of the indigenous people in Sarawak. In the 114th issue (15 January 1975), the editors published another set of Wong's photographs of the Sarawak people.[273] One of the images, titled "Dyak Hunter" (達雅族獵人), was retitled "To the Farm, Sarawak" and sold as a postcard, published and printed by John Hinde Limited, Republic of Ireland.[274] In the 135th issue (15 October 1976), another set of his photographs of the Sarawak natives was featured on *Photo Pictorial*. The photographs revealed the covering-up of the women's bodies—a change precipitated by increased contact with the "outside" world and the searching lens of Wong.[275] In the 71st issue (June 1971), an extensive selection of Wong's "landscape photography" (風光攝影) from Bali was featured in *Photo Pictorial*.[276] In the 92nd issue (15 March 1973), Wong's travel pictures from Nepal were played up by the editors, who dedicated a spread of 20 pages for the listless work.[277] In the 123rd (15 October 1975) and 124th (15 November 1975) issues, *Photo Pictorial* published a broad selection of Wong's travel snaps from Kashmir, which resulted from a commission by a client. Wong was evidently enamoured by the "primal loveliness of everything there, unadorned by civilisation, making it a real paradise".[278] In this brief survey of his work, it is possible to suggest that Wong was able to entice the editors of *Photo Pictorial* to publish his work on numerous occasions, first, by putting the bodies of the Sarawak indigenous peoples on view for the increasingly urbanised Chinese readers in HK and Southeast Asia. On top of his reputation as an acclaimed photographer, Wong's taste for travel and the relative ease in which he was able to do so with his Malaysian passport (instead of, for instance, the Republic of China or the Indonesian passport) allowed him to visit "untouched" places and bring back images, which might appear exotic and attractive to the readers. He was also the exemplary Overseas Chinese, revisiting the motherland as early as 1975, a year after Tun Abdul Razak shook hands with Mao Zedong in Beijing. Photographs from his

return to the home county of Xianyou 仙遊 and his tour of China were printed on the 130th (15 May 1976) and 137th (15 December 1976)) issues of *Photo Pictorial*.[279] I suspect he also used his standing with the periodical to help his nephew Peter Wong 黃彼得 get published on *Photo Pictorial*. In the 108th issue (15 July 1974), *Photo Pictorial* published a selection of travel photographs taken by the latter in India and Nepal, heralding him as a new talent from Sarawak.[280] In the 188th issue (15 March 1981), *Photo Pictorial* published another spread of Peter Wong's work shot in North India.[281] In the Editors' Words section of the same issue, *Photo Pictorial* played up his work, connecting his achievements with the nurturing that he received from his uncle, K. F. Wong.[282]

In 1974, *Photo Pictorial* started organising monthly competitions. Its readers responded to the initiative enthusiastically. From Southeast Asia, the likes of Kang Tien Gwan 江鎮源 (Indonesia), Loke Hong Seng 陸鴻升 (b. 1943, Singapore), Yeo Boon Khee 楊文錡/楊汶錡 (Singapore) and Chachawan Eiamwonghiran 葉樹勛 (Thailand), amongst others, submitted to the monthly competitions. Given the fame of K. F. Wong, it is no surprise that the submissions from Sarawak, shot by local Chinese photographers, were overwhelmingly about the indigenous peoples. It seems that for these Chinese photographers, the cultures and lives of the Sarawakian Chinese, for instance, were of no value in terms of submitting to a photo contest in HK.[283] The competitions also helped to maintain the spectre of the motherland in a tacit but iconic way. The silver medals that they issued in 1974 featured an engraving of the Great Wall. In 1975, they changed the design to that of the panda bear.[284] In 1976, *Photo Pictorial* started awarding bronze medals, which featured the Guilin landscape.[285] To the best of my knowledge, gold medals were only introduced by the early 1980s.

Photo Pictorial was occasionally culpable for misrepresenting the peoples of Southeast Asia in a direct way. In its 99th issue, for instance, the periodical reproduced a colour portrait of a Malay woman taken by HK photographer Pat Fok 霍麗萍. The Chinese caption, *Malai guniang* (馬來姑娘), stated her ethnicity (and gender) whereas the corresponding English caption, "Malaysian Girl", indicated her nationality instead.[286] Till today, it is not uncommon to encounter Chinese-speakers from Taiwan, HK or China who struggle to differentiate between *Malai* (馬來 or Malay ethnicity) and *Malaixiya* (馬來西亞 or Malaysia). The caption to Fok's portrait contributed, in a very minor way, to the state of confusion.

For its 65th issue (November 1970), the editors of *Photo Pictorial* invited Singapore-based K. Huang to submit a selection of his works from his 1970 solo show (opened in July 1970), which was themed as an extension to his well-received exhibition, *Our Peoples' Life*, in 1959. The editors lauded his work as an exemplary showcase of Realism 現實主義 in photographic art.[287] Based on a cursory search of the Chinese papers in Singapore, it is obvious that Huang's involvement in photography had been extensive since the 1950s. However, his name has faded from the attention of photographers and institutional curators. It is not easy to find samples of his work within the national collections in Singapore. His work was of course featured on newspapers, but the quality of newsprint reproduction provides an additional barrier towards a fuller appreciation of

Huang's photographs. In a way, his work received better treatment in terms of print quality in HK periodicals like *Photo Pictorial*. In other words, HK periodicals provide a potential resource for future writers to resurface important practitioners in Southeast Asia, especially those whose works have lapsed from institutional or public attention.

In 1967, the periodical organised an invitation exhibition featuring 225 prints contributed by over 70 HK-based photographers, which toured KL, Sandakan, Johor, Muar, Malacca, Ipoh, Penang and Singapore from the second half of October. The touring exhibition was organised at the request of photographers from Malaysia and Singapore, with Wan Ye Jing providing crucial assistance.[288] A bumper edition (issues 31 and 32 combined) of *Photo Pictorial* was published for September and October, featuring selected works from the touring show. The materialisation of the exhibition showed that HK photography remained the key reference point for Chinese-speaking salon practitioners in Malaysia and Singapore. However, when the editorial committee of *Photo Pictorial* made an open call for submissions on its 39th issue for a special volume on HK photography (which materialised in its 43rd/44th/45th bumper issue for January/February 1969), they received various letters from its overseas readers, questioning the rationale for not extending the invitation to practitioners in Southeast Asia or the Overseas Chinese photographers elsewhere. Rather revealingly, the editorial team replied that *Photo Pictorial* was a HK publication, with HK people as its main focus.[289] Its response hinted at the delicate act of balancing the need to represent Southeast Asia in order to sustain the periodical while being based in HK and staffed by people from the colony.

Before the late 1980s, the editors did an admirable job in that regard. The periodical duly reflected the photographic developments, filtered through the lens of salon photography and/or Chineseness, in different parts of Southeast Asia. In its 69th issue (March 1971), for instance, it reproduced a selection from the members of the Bangkok Pictorialists Circle (BPC), a salon photography group led by the likes of Chow Chongmankhong, which was only founded in 1969.[290] Commenting on the portfolio, the editors of the periodical opined that the photographic trend in Bangkok had turned towards an emphasis on "subject matters from the realities of life" (現實生活題材) instead of focusing on light, colour and lines.[291] In 1976, *Photo Pictorial* sponsored the gold, silver and bronze medals for the best submissions from Asia in the 2nd Manila International Color Slide Exhibition, organised by the Multi-Color Exhibitors Association 菲律賓多彩攝影家學會 in the Philippines and supported by the government's Department of Public Information. Emil Davocol (b. Quezon City) won the gold medal, and his submission was reproduced as the cover of the 132nd issue (15 July 1976). In 1981, or even earlier, *Photo Pictorial* appointed Tong Koon Hung and Na Teng Choon 藍廷駿 (b. 1942, Manila), amongst others, as its international portfolio editors. Na wrote about Philippine photographers and contributed photo stories that introduced, for instance, the Manila Chinese cemetery as a tourist destination.[292] Using his penname 雲鶴 Yunhe, Na also wrote poetry to complement photographs contributed by other photographers beyond the Philippines in the recurring Poetigraphy 詩影交輝 section of *Photo Pictorial*.

For a periodical that was covertly supported by the CCP, *Photo Pictorial* had, to the best of my knowledge, made almost no reference to the 1967 riots in HK, especially during

the months when violence partly inspired by the Cultural Revolution broke out on the streets against the British government. Instead of expressing its affinities with the pro-China demonstrators, *Photo Pictorial* remained muted. Its apolitical veneer should not be seen as surprising because the periodical would have been shut down if they supported the riots more openly. It would also affect its access to readers across Southeast Asia where national governments in that cold war era remained ever vigilant against the import (and impact) of political strife from neighbouring locales. Throughout its existence, *Photo Pictorial* seemed to stay away from any overt discussion of politics, until perhaps the 1990s when the politics (and political class) in China was directly referenced or visualised in the periodical. It was an editorial and political decision framed by the practical need to maintain its Southeast Asian market, more so than the threat of censure in the colony where communist publications continued to be available throughout the cold war era. To be more specific, the importance of the Southeast Asian market in sustaining the periodical, especially the non-communist locales where it could be distributed without significant resistance, meant that the editors had to maintain an apolitical façade without disregarding the agenda of orienting the Chinese photographers in the region towards the motherland. In that sense, it was surprising when the editors made a mildly critical comment to a reader's submission printed on the 52nd issue (September 1969). Since its fourth issue, *Photo Pictorial* ran a recurring and ever popular What's Wrong (錯在哪裡) section in which readers could submit their images to receive critique from the editorial team. In the 52nd issue, a certain 蔡哲民 submitted a photograph of a monk and a kid walking up a hill, with the photographer standing at a higher position, photographing the two persons with his camera tuned downwards. As the two human figures were shaded by trees on the hillside, the buildings at the foot of the hill, basking in the sun, became the unintended focal point of the image. This is a common error in black-and-white photography amongst beginners learning to envision how the interplay of light and shadows would impact the pictorial composition. Having pointed out his mistake in a fair-handed manner, the person tasked to critique the image could not resist a jibe. It seemed that he was more offended by the connotation of the photograph, as implied by its title, "Walking Up the Hill to Cultivate Oneself" (上山修道). The editorial member quipped: "Lastly, in this great era, should we use photographs to promote 'walking up the hill to cultivate oneself' (translation mine)?"[293] The "great era" that he mentioned might have been a reference to the Cultural Revolution in China, or the political struggles taking place across Indochina. In any case, he clearly felt agitated enough to take a low shot at the earnest reader, equating the single image with a call for inaction or societal withdrawal by the photographer in that era of idealism and passion. It is impossible to identify the reader with certainty, but he could well have been Singapore-based Chua Tiag Ming, who was active in salon photography during the 1960s and the 1970s.

Reorienting towards China and the Receding of Southeast Asia

The situation changed when *Photo Pictorial* started gaining official access to the market of readers in communist China in 1978. Since its inception, images of communist China had filtered to its readers in Southeast Asia via the periodical. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, as more China photographers started sending works to *Photo Pictorial*, their

contributions gradually seized the limelight from their Southeast Asian peers in terms of quality and the sheer diversity of subject matter. China was still projected as a travel destination by *Photo Pictorial*. But the energy of her photographers, hungry to experiment with the medium after being released from the travesty of Mao and the Cultural Revolution, meant that different narratives and images of China started clamouring for attention in the *Photo Pictorial*. Certainly, by the early 1990s, there was nothing covert about the hold of China on *Photo Pictorial*, which even published a series of photographs featuring the ambassadors of the New China era under the guise of its Portraiture 人像攝影 section in the 311th issue (15 June 1991).[294] To the best of my knowledge, no other political appointees from any country received similar spotlight in *Photo Pictorial* throughout its long existence. In the 359th issue (15 June 1995), Qin Xian'an 秦憲安 contributed a series of images that revolved around the visage and iconography of Mao, accompanied by citations of propaganda songs from China.[295]

At the same time, because its readers in Southeast Asia were predominantly ethnic Chinese practitioners of salon or street photography, they could not really match up to the China photographers in terms of their thirst for innovation. With their particular understanding of photography, which *Photoart* and *Photo Pictorial* helped to cultivate since the 1960s, its Southeast Asian contributors and readers could only submit images that increasingly cast the non-communist parts of the region into a space for leisure and travel. It was fuelled by submissions from practitioners in the region who focused excessively on what they deemed to be of "indigenous" flavour in a bid to get published or to win its monthly competitions. The aforementioned images from Sarawak that followed in the wake of K. F. Wong's fame quickly come to mind. In the same vein, Paiboon Pattanasitubol's 關鎮賢 photographs of cock fighting in Thailand was featured on the 210th issue (15 January 1983).[296] Later on, the postcard-perfect contribution by Thai photographer Chavana Chamorman in the 309th issue (15 April 1991) served to cast Buddhism in Thailand in an idyllic and picturesque light.[297] *Photo Pictorial* was also directly culpable for casting the region in that manner when it themed, for instance, the 121st issue as a special edition on Thai landscapes. Chang Chee contribute two images to open the special issue. The front cover was probably taken at Pae Muang Pee. The caption indicated that it was a new destination with good potential for salon photography, again making clear the connection between the photographic practice and tourism. The image in the inner cover featured Prasat Hin Phimai, another newly developed tourist site at Isan, Northeast Thailand. Singaporean photographer K. Huang contributed a portfolio of daily scenes that a backpacker or travel photographer today might still experience and photograph in Thailand—worshippers at Wat Phra Kaew, a marketplace at Bangkok, the ruins at Ayutthaya and a Miao lady in the north, amongst others.[298]

More importantly, when *Photo Pictorial* introduced a recurring section on Reportage Photography 報告攝影 in 1990, or even earlier, it was completely dominated by works submitted by China photographers. While the periodical continued to publish contributions from Southeast Asia, they were rarely (perhaps never) featured in the section, suggesting that the editors felt that its readers and contributors from the region were not capable of providing materials that could be classified as reportage photography.

By the 1990s, the spectre of Southeast Asia was largely evoked in specific ways. For Norman Lau 劉淇 who wrote a column for the recurring 鏡底逸聞 (literally, Obscured News from the Bottom of the Lens) section of *Photo Pictorial* since 1992, or earlier, he evoked Southeast Asia in one of his columns to validate HK as the "kingdom of photography" (攝影王國) since the 1960s, making the claim that the practitioners from the region were in agreement over its leading status.[299] For its editors who were trying to balance the needs between its longstanding readers from salon photography and those who gravitated towards *Dislocation NuNaHeDuo* 女那禾多, Southeast Asia was evoked alongside HK and China to mark out the geography of its readership, which was characterised as more conservative than that of USA and Northern Europe.[300] In a bid to defend its editorial position, the editors ended up flattening the latitude of openness across different parts of Southeast Asia.

I suspect the importance of the Southeast Asia market to the survival of *Photo Pictorial* started receding in the 1980s, with the China readers gaining ground. By the 1990s, it was no longer important, nor all that productive, to have Southeast Asian photographers photograph their home cultures and environments. In the 336th issue (15 July 1993), *Photo Pictorial* featured Nicolas Righetti's images of the collective cremation rites in Bali.[301] In the 354th issue (15 January 1995), Australia-based China photographer Xu Jiashu 徐家樹 submitted a series of photographs taken at a Hindu temple in Little India, Singapore. Xu came on an invitation by SCPS to speak at its event. Upon arrival, Xu noted that Singapore reminded him of China. However, instead of photographing the Chinese culture in Singapore, he decided to direct his lens at the Hindu temple. The SCPS members who accompanied him did not take any photographs. Xu was told that they would travel several times a year to photograph.[302] Alongside the aforementioned examples, Xu's intro text made clear, once again, the shift of *Photo Pictorial*'s cultural reference (and editorial focus) by the 1990s from that of HK and Southeast Asia to one centred on China, with the British colony soon to be handed over in 1997. For the local photographers whom Xu met in Singapore, the nation was no longer interesting as a subject matter. For the photographers in Southeast Asia who followed *Photo Pictorial* since the 1960s, the nation had long been exhausted in the service of salon photography.

2.5 Coda: *NuNaHeDuo* (1992-99)

In 1992, *Photo Pictorial* made space for the emergence of *Dislocation NuNaHeDuo* 女那禾多. The latter was started by Lee Ka Sing 李家昇, Holly Lee 黃楚喬 and Lau Ching Ping 劉清平 (b. 1963, HK) as a special supplement to *Photo Pictorial*. To think of *NuNaHeDuo* as merely an attempt to innovate the photographic practices in HK fails to capture its organic and idiosyncratic outlook. In Lau's opinion, the supplement allowed its founders to invite friends and other creatives, within and beyond photography, to collaborate through the pretext of photography. Even though its editorial direction was driven by the editors' modest desire to experiment and have fun with like-minded peers, *NuNaHeDuo* helped to facilitate the intersection of photography with literature, performance, video, painting and even dance.[303] Its subscription form in 1993 billed itself as the "only contemporary photography magazine in Hong Kong". Lee Wing Ki suggests

that it would not be an exaggeration to call *NuNaHeDuo* the "cradle of the HK contemporary art world".[304] In this sense, it might be surprising to some that *Photo Pictorial*, a longstanding photographic periodical that was established with a focus on popular and salon photography, would decide to bear the cost in order to make editorial space for the founders of *NuNaHeDuo* to stage their experiments. It lends credence to my proposition that salon photography was an unstated factor in the evolution of contemporary photography (and, by extension, contemporary art) in places like Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and HK.

Apart from a few special issues on Taiwan and China, the focus of *NuNaHeDuo* was on HK practitioners. Given the importance of Southeast Asia to *Photo Pictorial* in terms of supplying the readership and potential subject matter for publication, the region and its photographic practitioners hardly surfaced in *NuNaHeDuo*. This is not surprising, given the intention of its founders to collaborate with practitioners who came within their orbit. The looming handover also provided the political backdrop for some HK practitioners to turn inward and grapple with questions of cultural and national identity. In this sense, *NuNaHeDuo* marked another step in the decoupling of HK and Southeast Asia, as seen in this attempt to trace the evolution of photo periodicals from the British colony since the 1950s.

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[1] Singapore Art Society, *First Open Photographic Exhibition*, exh. cat. (Singapore: Singapore Art Society, 1950).
[2] Raymond Thomas, "Exhibition Hints", *Straits Times*, June 28, 1953, 12.
[3] "S'pore Has a New Hobby Club", *Straits Times*, November 12, 1950. For a brief analysis of the connections between the Singapore Art Society, British Council and the Grand Design of the colonial government, see Seng Yu Jin, "The Primacy of Painting: Institutional Structures of the Singapore Art World from 1935 to 1972" (master's thesis, National University of Singapore, 2006), 49-57.
[4] Sunny Giam, "Society is Eight Years Old…", *Singapore Free Press*, July 1, 1958.
[5] "Two Assignments in Malaya for Top Army Photographer", *Straits Times*, June 1, 1958, 17; "The Man behind the Camera", *Photographic Journal*, June 1956, 118-119.
[6] Raymond Thomas, "A Commentary – First Pan-Malayan Photographic Exhibition", in *First Pan-Malayan Photographic Exhibition*, exh. cat. (Singapore: Singapore Camera Club, 1953).
[7] Leo K. K. Wong, preface to *Vision Beyond: Hong Kong Art Photography 1900-2000*, ed. Chan H. W. (Hong Kong: Leisure & Cultural Services Department, 2001), 1:14.
[8] Ibid., 1:15.
[9] Mary Warner Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History*, 3rd ed. (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2010), 165–170.
[10] Lee Sow Lim 李少林, *Li Shao Lin tan sheying* 李少林谈摄影 (Lee Sow Lim on photography) (Singapore: Xinjiapo sheying zhuanke xuexiao, 1992), 134.
[11] Benedict Anderson, *A Life beyond Boundaries* (London and New York: Verso, 2016), 36.
[12] David Trench, *Hong Kong and Its Position in the Southeast Asia Region* (Honolulu, Hawaii: East-West Center, 1971).

[13] Nanyang 南洋 was a term that appeared frequently in Chinese sources. However, it should not be understood as an exact substitute for Southeast Asia. Benedict Anderson noted: "It [Nanyang] thus signified the southern region oriented from Beijing and reachable via waterway or seaway. At various times it could refer to China's own southeastern coastal provinces, the Philippine and Indonesian archipelagos, and the Malay peninsula—but not land-accessible Burma and Laos." See Anderson, *A Life beyond Boundaries*, 35.
[14] Aihwa Ong, "Introduction: Worlding Cities, or the Art of Being Global", in *Worlding Cities: Asian Experiments and the Art of Being Global*, ed. Ananya Roy and Aihwa Ong (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 17.
[15] The National Library Board of Singapore has scanned some of the more important newspapers within its collection. The digital scans of these materials published before 1990 can be accessed anywhere in the world on http://eresources.nlb.gov.sg/newspapers/.
[16] Wang Gungwu, "Chineseness: The Dilemmas of Place and Practice", in *Sinophone Studies: A Critical Reader*, ed. Shu-mei Shih, Chien-hsin Tsai and Brian Bernards (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 131-132.
[17] Ien Ang, *On Not Speaking Chinese: Living between Asia and the West* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 25.
[18] Rey Chow, "On Chineseness as a Theoretical Problem", in *Sinophone Studies: A Critical Reader*, ed. Shu-mei Shih, Chien-hsin Tsai and Brian Bernards (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 44-45.
[19] Sunny Giam, "The Royal Frowns upon Hong Kong", *Singapore Free Press*, November 24, 1959, 6.
[20] Sunny Giam, "Many Moscow Entries in Penang Salon", *Singapore Free Press*, August 6, 1957, 12; "353 Pictures for S'pore Show", *Singapore Free Press*, February 18, 1958, 7.
[21] Xu Yulin 許玉麟, "Mantan Xianggang sheying shalong zuopin" 漫談香港攝影沙龍作品 (A discussion on Hong Kong photo salon works), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, December 22, 1966, sec. Fukan, 16; Yong He, "Xianggang de sheying huodong" 香港的攝影活動 (Hong Kong's photographic activities), *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, February 17, 1981, sec. II, 10.
[22] Sunny Giam, "Sam Hoi's Century in Salon Print", *Singapore Free Press*, July 21, 1959, 6.
[23] Sunny Giam, "Shooting for 'les Salons' Is Keenly Guarded", *Singapore Free Press*, October 20, 1959, 6.
[24] Xu, "Mantan Xianggang sheying shalong zuopin".
[25] "Dama Guoji Shalong Yingzhan pingxuanhui jin zai Long juxing" 大馬國際沙龍影展評選會今在隆舉行 (Judging for the Malaysia International Salon of Photography takes place today at Kuala Lumpur), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, August 14, 1965, 10.
[26] "His Specialty—Photos of People", *Singapore Free Press*, October 16, 1959, 5.
[27] K. Huang 黃克, "Dongnanya yingyi fengqi" 東南亞影藝風氣 (Trends in Southeast Asian photographic art), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, December 4, 1960, 14.
[28] See, for instance, Gu Guang 古光 [pseud.], "Cong yingzhan pingxuanyuan tan qi" 從影展評選員談起 (Let's talk about the judges of salon competitions), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, August 13, 1964, sec. Fukan, 17.

[29] Jason Wordie, "From Settlers to Snorkelling, Hong Kong Has Long Had Links to Sabah", *Post Magazine*, June 11, 2016, https://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/article/1970381/settlers-snorkelling-hong-kong-has-long-had-links-sabah.
[30] Lee Yong Leng, *North Borneo (Sabah): A Study in Settlement Geography* (Singapore: Donald Moore for Eastern Universities Press, 1965), 26, 63-64.
[31] Ibid., 38.
[32] Long Jing 龍井 [pseud.], "Shandagen Sheying Xuehui chengli de guocheng" 山打根攝影學會成立的過程 (The process of founding Sandakan Photographic Society), *World Photography*, February 1956, 319.
[33] Sabah Photographic Society, *1st Sabah International Exhibition of Photography 1985*, exh. cat. (Sandakan: Sabah Photographic Society, 1985), 107.
[34] Steve Chong Yun Ming, interview by author, Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia, August 5, 2019.
[35] Ibid.
[36] For an account of Tchan's life and career, written with his support and published by his company, see Ding Zunxin 丁遵新, *Chen Fuli zhuan* 陳復禮傳 (Tchan Fou-li biography) (Hong Kong: HK China Tourism Press, 2000). See also Tchan Fou-li, *Chen Fuli • Shiying fanxin* 陳復禮 • 詩影凡心 (Tchan Fou-Li • My heartfelt poetic moments) (Hong Kong: HK China Tourism Press, 2005).
[37] Ding, *Chen Fuli zhuan*, 124.
[38] Ibid.
[39] "Chen Xiyuan gezhan kaimu" 陳錫元個展開幕 (S. Y. Chen's solo exhibition opens), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, February 12, 1960, 6.
[40] "Yishujia Lei Luping di Xing Ni gongkai zhanlan yishu zuopin" 藝術家雷魯萍抵星擬公開展覽藝術作品 (Lou Lo Pang arrives in Singapore: Plans for public art exhibition), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, November 23, 1958, 6.
[41] Secretariat Office, "Dongnanya Sheying Xuehui jianshi" 東南亞攝影學會簡史 (A brief history of South East Asia Photographic Society), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, November 4, 1960, 14.
[42] Sunny Giam, "Local Experts Are Now Taking to Colour Work", *Singapore Free Press*, May 13, 1958, 12.
[43] Sunny Giam, "Colour Films Are Sweeping All Before Them", *Singapore Free Press*, February 17, 1959, 12.
[44] Sunny Giam, "Sparkling Colour Show for Singapore by 3 Top World Raters", *Singapore Free Press*, April 21, 1960, 9.
[45] Wee Beng Huat, "Putting Colour into a Picture", *New Nation*, April 22, 1972, 15.
[46] "Cong bisai kan woguo sheying yishu" 從比賽看我國攝影藝術 (A view of the photographic art in Singapore through this competition), *Lianhe Zaobao*, September 2, 1987, sec. Sheying Teji, 10.
[47] "Niucheshui Sheying Julebu juban Gang yingyi zuopin zhanlan" 牛車水攝影俱樂部舉辦 港影藝作品展覽 (Kreta Ayer Camera Club organises Hong Kong art photography exhibition), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, August 6, 1977, 29.
[48] "Xinjiapo Yingyi Yanjiuhui qingzhu shiwu zhounian jinian juxing yishu sheying zhanlan" 新加坡影藝研究會 慶祝十五週年紀念 舉行藝術攝影展覽 (Photo-Art

Association of Singapore celebrates 15th anniversary and organises art photography exhibition), *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, November 11, 1979, 4.
[49] Koh Siew Tin, "Lure of Mountain 'Magic'", *Straits Times*, February 20, 1986, sec. Bilingual, 5.
[50] Koh Siew Tin, "Have Camera Will Travel", *Straits Times*, February 23, 1984, sec. Bilingual, 2.
[51] Singapore Art Society, *Second Annual Exhibition of Photographs*, exh. cat. (Singapore: Singapore Art Society, 1951).
[52] Singapore Art Society, *First Open Photographic Exhibition*.
[53] Singapore Art Society, *Third Open Photographic Exhibition*, exh. cat. (Singapore: Singapore Art Society, 1952).
[54] C. A. Gibson-Hill, "Fourth Open Exhibition of Photographs", in *Fourth Open Photographic Exhibition*, exh. cat. (Singapore: Singapore Art Society, 1953).
[55] C. A. Gibson-Hill, "Fifth Open Exhibition of Photographs", in *Fifth Open Photographic Exhibition*, exh. cat. (Singapore: Singapore Art Society, 1954).
[56] "353 Pictures for S'pore Show".
[57] Chan Bong Soo, "Low-Cost China Cameras in Malaysia", *Straits Times*, July 28, 1965, 14.
[58] Arthur Richards, "Playing with Lenses", *Straits Times*, June 25, 1972, 15.
[59] "Xianggang mai xiangji bijiao pianyi? No! Yinwei……" 香港買相機比較便宜？No! 因為…… (Is it cheaper to buy cameras in Hong Kong? No! Because……), *Lianhe Wanbao*, September 27, 1984, 4.
[60] "Xianggang sheying qicai lingshouye yingye jian 40%" 香港攝影器材零售業營業減40% (Retail of photographic equipment in Hong Kong drops by 40 percent), *Lianhe Zaobao*, July 26, 1989, 20.
[61] "Keda ronghuo hetong ruanpian ke zai Zhongguo xiaoshou" 柯達榮獲合同 軟片可在中國銷售 (Kodak is proud to receive contract to sell its film in China), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, May 9, 1979, sec. 30th Singapore International Salon of Photography Special Supplement, 4.
[62] "Xiao wang Zhongguo feilin Daoliu hui Gang xiaoshou" 銷往中國菲林 倒流回港銷售 (Film imported to China is resold in Hong Kong), *Lianhe Zaobao*, November 12, 1988, 26.
[63] Kannan Chandran, "Pictures from the Heart", *Straits Times*, June 6, 1986, sec. Arts & Leisure, 30.
[64] In a short profile of Francis Wu published on *Chinese Photography*, in which he served as editor-in-chief, it was indicated that he was born in Canton in 1912. In other sources, the year of his birth was stated as 1911. See David Cohen, "A Great Photographer", *Chinese Photography*, April 1950, 16.
[65] "'Supreme Artist'", *Singapore Standard*, January 7, 1954, 4.
[66] "Great Artist and Skilful Technician", *Straits Times*, January 7, 1954, 8.
[67] "Wu Zhangjian geren yingzhan kaimu" 吳章建個人影展開幕 (Francis Wu's solo exhibition opened), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, January 7, 1954, 5.
[68] "Mr. MacDonald to Join Wu's Gallery", *Straits Times*, January 9, 1954, 7.
[69] "Armed Men Will Guard the Wu Pictures", *Straits Times*, February 17, 1954.

[70] "Wu Zhangjian jiezuo zai Long zhanlan" 吳章建傑作在隆展覽 (Francis Wu's outstanding work to be exhibited in Kuala Lumpur), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, February 17, 1954.
[71] "History of Hong Kong Art Photography 1900-2000", in *Vision Beyond: Hong Kong Art Photography 1900-2000*, ed. Chan H. W. (Hong Kong: Leisure & Cultural Services Department, 2001), 1:25.
[72] Christian A. Peterson, "Approved Biography for Francis C.K. Wu", Luminous-Lint, last modified June 1, 2013, accessed June 10, 2019, http://www.luminous-lint.com/app/photographer/Francis_C_K__Wu/.
[73] "Francis Wu Is Seeking Nudes", *Singapore Standard*, January 5, 1954, 5.
[74] "Film Shows at the USIS", *Singapore Standard*, January 2, 1954, 2; "U.S.I.S. Offers Feast of Photography", *Straits Times*, January 2, 1954, 4.
[75] "Francis Wu Is Seeking Nudes".
[76] "Mr. MacDonald to Join Wu's Gallery". See also "Wu Zhangjian sheying gezhan kaimu" 吳章建攝影個展開幕 (Opening of Francis Wu's solo exhibition), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, April 21, 1954, 6.
[77] "The Governor of Singapore", *Singapore Standard*, January 10, 1954, 1.
[78] "Wu Zhangjian sheying gezhan kaimu".
[79] "Shutterbugs Get a Lesson", *Singapore Standard*, January 6, 1954, 5
[80] Peterson, "Approved Biography for Francis C.K. Wu".
[81] "Zhongguoren dui sheying zhi guannian" 中國人對攝影之觀念 (Chinamen's concept of photography), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, January 9, 1954, 5.
[82] "Wu Zhangjian sheying gezhan kaimu".
[83] "Lighting Display", *Straits Times*, January 20, 1954, 5.
[84] Michael Yap, "'China Girl'", *Straits Times*, January 20, 1954, 6.
[85] Amateur Photographer [pseud.], "Cater for the Chinese Mr. Wu!", *Singapore Standard*, January 12, 1954, 6.
[86] Francis Wu, "Exhibition and Contest Photography", *Chinese Photography*, May 1950, 16.
[87] Cohen, "A Great Photographer", 16.
[88] "Di er jie Huaren Huayi sheyingjia yingyi yantaohui zai Zhuhai shi longzhong kaimu" 第二屆華人華裔攝影家影藝研討會在珠海市隆重開幕 (Grand opening of the second ethnic Chinese photographic art seminar at Zhuhai city), *She Ying Bao* (Chengdu), March 5, 1994, 2.
[89] For Taiwanese critic Kuo Lihsin, Lang Jingshan's claim of China (and Chineseness) rested not on the idyllic landscapes of his composite photographs, nor the long robes that he preferred to wear. It took shape in his collusion with the Kuomintang government in maintaining political control through his apolitical stance, his dominance in photography throughout Taiwan, and its patriarchal structure that he helped entrench. See Kuo Lihsin 郭力昕, *Shuxie sheying: Xiangpian de wenben yu wenhua* 書寫攝影：相片的文本與文化 (Writing photography: Textural and cultural aspects of the photograph) (Taipei: Meta Media International, 1998), 27.
[90] "Di er jie Huaren Huayi sheyingjia yingyi yantaohui".

[91] K. K. Goh 吳啟基, "Shijie Huaren sheyingjia shengda juhui Yong jingtou jilu lishi" 世界華人攝影家盛大聚會 用鏡頭記錄歷史 (Grand gathering of Chinese photographers worldwide: Recording history through the lens), *Lianhe Zaobao*, August 3, 1996, sec. Fukan, 6.
[92] Zhang Congxing 張從興, "Xinjiapo sheying yishu ying fanying shehui shenghuo" 新加坡攝影應反映社會生活 (Singapore's photographic art should reflect the life of society), *Lianhe Zaobao*, August 15, 1996, 6.
[93] Society of Worldwide Ethnic Chinese Photographers, epilogue to *Singapore Today* (Hong Kong: Society of Worldwide Ethnic Chinese Photographers, 1997), 290.
[94] Yang Shao Ming 楊紹明, preface to *Singapore Today* (Hong Kong: Society of Worldwide Ethnic Chinese Photographers, 1997), 18.
[95] Wong Chee Meng, "200 Lensmen Here to Shoot S'pore", *Straits Times*, August 6, 1996, sec. Life!, 9.
[96] Han Yong Hong 韓咏紅, "Goujian dongxifang goutong qiaoliang" 構建東西方溝通橋梁 (Building a communication bridge between East and West), *Lianhe Zaobao*, August 13, 2001, sec. zbNOW, 5.
[97] Sim Chi Yin, "Even Jay-Walkers Get to Grace New Photography Book", *Straits Times*, June 21, 1997, sec. Life!, 2.
[98] Wong, "200 Lensmen".
[99] "*Jinri Xinjiapo* sheyingsai Shouci chusai 10 jiazuo xuanchu" 《今日新加坡》攝影賽首次初賽 10 佳作選出 (*Singapore Today* photo contest: Ten images selected in the first preliminary round), *Lianhe Zaobao*, March 4, 1996, 6.
[100] "*Jinri Xinjiapo* sheyingsai Zhanxian woguo zhanxin jingshen fengmao" "今日新加坡"攝影賽 展現我國嶄新精神風貌 (*Singapore Today* photo contest highlights the new spirit and landscape of our country), *Lianhe Zaobao*, January 17, 1996, 7; "200 gedi Huaren mingjia qiji Woguo xiayue cheng shijie sheying jiaodian" 200 各地華人名家齊集 我國下月成世界攝影焦點 (Gathering of 200 Chinese masters from different places: Singapore becomes the focus of world photography next month), *Lianhe Zaobao*, July 30, 1996, 4.
[101] Sim, "Even Jay-Walkers"; "*Jinri Xinjiapo* xiayue 23 ri faxing" 《今日新加坡》下月 23 日發行 (*Singapore Today* to be published on the 23rd next month), *Lianhe Wanbao*, May 19, 1997, 6.
[102] See Yang, preface to *Singapore Today*, 19, for his exact words in Chinese: "新加坡是一個多元種族、多元文化、多元宗教、和睦相處的優雅社會。新加坡的成就足以對居留在世界各地、身處當地文化氛圍中的華人和華裔提供有益的借鏡。"
[103] Liang Wern Ling 梁文寧, "Shijie Huaren Sheying Xuehui jiang zai Xin zhuban daxing zhanlan" 世界華人攝影學會將在新主辦大型展覽 (The Society of Worldwide Ethnic Chinese Photographers plans to organise a big exhibition in Singapore), *Lianhe Zaobao*, November 15, 1995, 10.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Norman Yik 易锐民, "Yang Shaoming 'buhui danchu' Shijie Huaren Sheying Xuehui" 楊紹明"不會淡出"世界華人攝影學會 (Yang Shaoming "will not fade out"

from the Society of Worldwide Ethnic Chinese Photographers), *Lianhe Zaobao*, September 7, 2003, 28.
[106] Yang, preface to *Singapore Today*, 19.
[107] Liang, "Shijie Huaren Sheying Xuehui".
[108] Carl Lim 林弘諭, "Po jilu" 破記錄 (Records broken), *Lianhe Zaobao*, June 20, 1997, sec. World Book Fair '97, 2; "Duowei manhuajia • Shuzhan shang liangxiang" 多位漫畫家 • 書展上亮相 (Many comic artists to grace the book fair), *Lianhe Wanbao*, June 16, 1997, 7.
[109] "Goumai zhiding sheyingji zhe Ke huo Xianggang huigui jinian caizhao" 購買指定攝影集者 可獲香港回歸紀念彩照 (Buyers of selected photobooks would receive a commemorative colour photo of the Hong Kong handover), *Lianhe Zaobao*, June 28, 1997, 8
[110] "200 gedi Huaren mingjia qiji".
[111] See, for instance, Han, "Goujian dongxifang".
[112] Cheong Song Hing 張從興, "Shijie Huaren Sheying Xuehui fuzeren: Xinjiapo sheying yishu ying fanying shehui shenghuo" 世界華人攝影學會負責人：新加坡攝影藝術應反映社會生活 (Representatives of the Society of Worldwide Ethnic Chinese Photographers: Singapore's photographic art should reflect societal life), *Lianhe Zaobao*, August 15, 1996, 6.
[113] The likes of Kouo Shang-Wei (b. 1924, Vietnam—d. 1988, Singapore), Chua Soo Bin (b. 1932, Singapore) and Quek Tiong Swee all started out in salon photography. Over time, their practices would incorporate documentary photography.
[114] Poon Sing Wah 潘星華, "Xianggang huigui tupianzhan" 香港回歸圖片展 (Hong Kong handover photo exhibition), *Lianhe Wanbao*, May 21, 1997, 6.
[115] George Yeo, "Speech by George Yeo, Minister for Information & the Arts and Second Minister for Trade & Industry, at the Opening Ceremony of the Photographic Exhibition on the History and Development of Hong Kong on Monday, 23 June 1997 at 7.15pm", National Archives Singapore, last modified August 15, 1997, accessed September 17, 2019, http://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/data/pdfdoc/1997062303/yybg19970623s.pdf.
[116] Karen Strassler, *Refracted Visions: Popular Photography and National Modernity in Java* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 66.
[117] Ibid., 65-66.
[118] Lim Fong Wei 林方偉, "Touguo guangying moli cucao suiyue" 透過光影磨礪粗糙歲月 (Sharpen the grainy times through light and shadows), *Zaobao Zhoukan*, March 1, 2020, 6.
[119] Chong, August 5, 2019.
[120] Sabah Photographic Society, *1st Sabah International Exhibition*, 95.
[121] Wang Anyu 王安裕, "Zenyang xinshang sheying yishu" 怎樣欣賞攝影藝術 (How to appreciate photographic art), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, January 26, 1967, sec. Fukan, 13.
[122] Leung Sum probably left after the March 1950 issue as his name (and designation) was removed from the editorial team printed in the April 1950 issue. From the April issue onwards, David Choy and Ernest To 杜紹鴻 were credited as the associate editors of *Chinese Photography*.

[123] Francis Wu, Editorial Note, *Chinese Photography*, February 1950, 2.
[124] Francis Wu, Editorial Note, *Chinese Photography*, January 1950, 10.
[125] Lee Wing-Ki, "Flipping Open Sixty Years of Photo Magazines in Hong Kong", *Voices of Photography*, no. 21, 2017, 72.
[126] Wu, Editorial Note, January 1950, 10.
[127] Francis Wu, Editorial, *Chinese Photography*, March 1950, 3.
[128] David Choy 蔡青圃, Conclusion, *Chinese Photography*, February 1950, 60.
[129] Lang Jingshan 郎靜山, "Sheying yu Zhongguo huihua yishu" 攝影與中國繪畫藝術 (Photography and Chinese art), *Chinese Photography*, January 1950, 11-12.
[130] "Peter Dragon", in *Vision Beyond: Hong Kong Art Photography 1900-2000* (Hong Kong: Leisure & Cultural Services Department, 2001), 2:7.
[131] "Renxiang sheyingjia Long Bide" 人像攝影家龍彼得 (Works of our honorary advisor Mr. Peter Dragon), *Photoart*, January 1961, 6-8.
[132] Starting with the 9th issue (May 1961) of *Photoart*, for instance, Peter Dragon was tasked to contribute a series of writings on nude photography, which was then still viewed with suspicion in HK. See Peter Dragon 龍彼得, "Renwu sheying" 人物攝影 (Human figure study), *Photoart*, May 1961, 1-3.
[133] "History of Hong Kong Art Photography 1900-2000", 1:24.
[134] Peter Dragon, "Ni de shijue yao he ni de jingxiang yiyang" 你的視覺要和你的鏡箱一樣 (The camera eye), *Chinese Photography*, January 1950, 13-16.
[135] Lee, "Flipping Open Sixty Years of Photo Magazines", 72.
[136] Wu, Editorial, March 1950, 3.
[137] "Our Printing Process", *Chinese Photography*, February 1950, 58-59.
[138] Cohen, "A Great Photographer", 16.
[139] Zhao Cheng 趙澄, "Sheyingjie de xin gongxian Ming sheyingjia Zhang Yinquan Gaizhuang yingji chenggong" 攝影界的新貢獻 名攝影家張印泉 改裝影機成功 (New achievement of the photographic world: Famed photographer Zhang Yinquan succeeds in modifying cameras), *Chinese Photography*, April 1950, 50-51.
[140] Edwin Lai, "Hong Kong Art Photography: From Its Beginnings to the Japanese Invasion of December 1941" (master's thesis, University of Hong Kong, 1996), 106-7, http://hdl.handle.net/10722/210323.
[141] Zhao Cheng, "Zhao Cheng xiansheng zuopin" 趙澄先生作品 (The work of Mr. Zhao Cheng), *Chinese Photography* 1, no. 8 (1950): 21-22.
[142] Yu Ruiqing 虞瑞慶, "Shanghai de sheying jie keyi shuo tai chenji le" 上海的攝影界可以說太沈寂了 (It is true to say that the Shanghai photographic world has become too quiet), *Chinese Photography* 1, no. 8 (1950): 20.
[143] David Choy, "Bian hou yu" 編後語 (Afterword), *Chinese Photography* 1, no. 8 (1950): 48.
[144] K. F. Wong 黃傑夫, "Malaiya de jige jingtou" 馬來亞的幾個鏡頭 (Focus on Malaya), *Chinese Photography* 1, no. 9 (1950): 26-27.
[145] For a quick overview of the history and evolution of World Book Company, see Sing Song Chin, ed., *Passage of Time: Singapore Bookstore Stories 1881-2016* (Singapore: Chou Sing Chu Foundation, 2016), 62-69.

[146] From the 26th issue (November 1955) onwards, *World Photography* was printed by Fook Hing Offset Printing Company 復興橡皮印刷公司 on King's Road.
[147] Editorial Committee, "Fa kan ci" 發刊詞 (Inauguration text for the periodical), *World Photography*, September 1952, 2.
[148] The Ipoh branch (40 Hale Street) of the World Book Company was added to the list of distributors for *World Photography* in the 23rd issue (August 1955). It was dropped from the list since the 26th issue (November 1955).
[149] Short Replies, *World Photography*, October 1952, 47.
[150] G. C. Tansiongkun, "Ji zhong putong de bibing" 幾種普通的弊病 (Some common mistakes), *World Photography*, November 1952, 56-57.
[151] G. C. Tansiongkun, "Paizhao zatan" 拍照雜談 (On photographing), *World Photography*, January 1953, 104-5.
[152] G. C. Tansiongkun, "Lang Jingshan zai Feiliebin" 郎靜山在菲列賓 (Lang Jingshan in the Philippines), *World Photography*, July 1954, 244.
[153] Ibid., 245.
[154] Short Replies, *World Photography*, November 1952, 72.
[155] "Xianggang de Di Qi Jie Guoji Shalong" 香港的第七屆國際沙龍 (The Seventh Hong Kong International Salon), *World Photography*, December 1952, 75.
[156] Duzhe yu bianzhe 讀者與編者 (Readers and editors), *World Photography*, November 1953, 70.
[157] Lu Yunxian 陸雲閒, "Yuenan de sheyingjie dongtai" 越南的攝影界動態 (The development of Vietnamese photography), *World Photography*, January 1953, 113.
[158] Lin Qingquan 林清泉, "Bolishi sheying jintai" 玻璃市攝影近態 (Recent development in Perlis photography), *World Photography*, January 1954, 103.
[159] Editorial Committee 編者, Foreword 卷首語, *World Photography*, November 1955, 183.
[160] Wen Changliang 溫昌良, "Yejiada Xinminghui sheyingzu jianjie" 椰加達新明會攝影組簡介 (A brief introduction to the photo group of Jakarta's Sin Ming Hui), *World Photography*, November 1955, 212-13.
[161] Acknowledgements, *World Photography*, March 1953, 171.
[162] Yan Fook Leun, "Xingzhou sheyingjie zuijing dongtai" 星洲攝影界最近動態 (Recent developments in Singapore photography), *World Photography*, October 1953, 32-33.
[163] Jiang Zhiyong 江之永 [pseud.], "Xianggang Sheying Xuehui gaikuang" 香港攝影學會概況 (An overview of the Photographic Society of Hong Kong), *World Photography*, April 1953, 197.
[164] David Choy, "Xianggang Sheying Xuehui zhuban Di Ba Jie Guoji Shalong" 香港攝影學會主辦第八屆國際沙龍 (Photographic Society of Hong Kong organises the Eighth Hong Kong International Salon), *World Photography*, January 1954, 102-3.
[165] Huang Yaohui 黃耀恢, "Jieshao Zhuang Chengbao xiansheng" 介紹莊成寶先生 (Introducing Mr. Ch'ng Seng Poh), *World Photography*, March 1956, 366. The section lapsed after that issue.

[166] "Yip Luk-yu", in *Vision Beyond: Hong Kong Art Photography 1900-2000* (Hong Kong: Leisure & Cultural Services Department, 2001), 2:18.
[167] Lam Sai Hoong 林世雄, "Wo de congying sanbuqu" 我的從影三部曲 (The three steps in my photographic education), *World Photography*, March 1956, 336.
[168] R. A. Bates, "Pingxuan zhaopian" 評選照片 (Judging photographs), *World Photography*, December 1955, 228-231.
[169] Editorial Committee 編者, Foreword 卷首語, *World Photography*, August 1955, 75.
[170] Lao Qian 老前 [pseud.], "Xinjiapo ershi ren yishu sheying zhanlan shengkuang" 新加坡二十人藝術攝影展覽盛況 (On the grand occasion of the 20-men pictorial photography exhibition in Singapore), *World Photography*, July 1956, 68.
[171] Questions and Answers, *World Photography*, April 1953, 199.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Ibid., 200.
[174] Liang Huizhi 梁惠芝, "Jieshao *Zhongguo Sheying* jikan" 介紹『中國攝影』季刊 (Introducing *Zhongguo Sheying* quarterly), *World Photography*, August 1957, 229.
[175] G. C. Tansiongkun 陳志銘, "Feilübin Huaqiao Sheying Xuehui juban di si jie huiyuan zuopin zhanlan" 菲律賓華僑攝影學會舉辦第四屆會員作品展覽 (Philippine Chinese Camera Club organises the fourth exhibition of its members' works), *World Photography*, May 1956, 30.
[176] Francis Wu, "Sanlun chefu de shalong sheyingjia" 三輪車夫的沙龍攝影家 (A rickshaw driver and salon photography master), *World Photography*, April 1954, 152-53.
[177] Huaren 華人 [pseud.], "Beipoluozhou lieying ji" 北婆羅洲獵影記 (A photo hunting trip to North Borneo), *World Photography*, September 1955, 120-21.
[178] Lee, "Flipping Open Sixty Years of Photo Magazines", 74; Tchan Fou-li, "*Photo Pictorial* 20th Anniversary Congratulatory Message", in *50 Years of* Photo Pictorial, ed. Lee Wing Ki (Hong Kong: Photo Pictorial Publishers, 2014), 29.
[179] "Gaoyue" 稿約 (Submission call), *Photoart*, August 1960, unpaginated.
[180] Tchan Fou-li 陳復禮, "Fan kan ci" 發刊詞 (Prelude), *Photoart*, August 1960, 1.
[181] Dan, S. F. 鄧雪峰, "Bian hou ji" 編後記 (Editorial), *Photoart*, August 1960, 39-40.
[182] C. F. Hsu 徐慶峰, "Sheying shilüe" 攝影史略 (An outline of the history of photography), *Photoart*, August 1960, 26-27.
[183] "Xianggang Zhonghua Sheying Xuehui zhuban Diyijie Guoji Shalong ruxuan mingdan" 香港中華攝影學會主辦 第一屆國際沙龍入選名單 (Name list of the selected participants from the 1st CPA International Salon organised by the Chinese Photographic Association of Hong Kong), *Photoart*, September 1960, 32.
[184] "Yingtan dongtai" 影壇動態 (Movements in the photo world), *Photoart*, November/December 1960, 36.
[185] "Shijie gedi canjia bisai zuopin shuliang tongji" 世界各地參加比賽作品數量統計 (Statistics of the prints surrendered to competition), *Photoart*, March 1961, 4.
[186] Tchan Fou-li, "Guanyu chuangkan jinian sheying bisai" 關於創刊紀念攝影比賽 (About our inaugurating competition), *Photoart*, March 1961, 1.

[187] Because the article was written in Chinese, I cannot be exactly sure in terms of the location of the sand dunes. In my text, I have retained the Chinese names alongside what I believe are the places that they refer to.
[188] Nguyễn Cao Đàm, "Shaqiu Yuenan yishu sheying de xin ticai" 沙丘 越南藝術攝影的新題材 (Sand dunes, the new pictorial photographic subject in Vietnam), *Photoart*, January 1961, 9-11.
[189] Xing Jian 行健 [pseud.], "Yuenan gengyun zhe Chen Fangqu" 越南耕耘者陳芳渠 (Mr. Tchen Fong Ku, a veteran photographer of Vietnam), *Photoart*, September 1961, 4-5.
[190] "Xinqin de sheyingjia Lin Li" 辛勤的攝影家林立 (How Mr. Lim Lip overcomes his environment), *Photoart*, June/July 1961, 8-9.
[191] "Taiguo erjie sheying zhanlan" 泰國二屆攝影展覽 (National Photographic Exhibition of Thailand), *Photoart*, April 1963, 10-12.
[192] Clare Veal, "Thainess Framed: Photography and Thai Identity, 1946-2010" (PhD diss., University of Sydney, 2015), 266.
[193] I am not exactly sure if the latter is related to the 泰國影藝研究會 Thai Photo-Art Development Club.
[194] "Ben kan zhubian Chen Fuli xiansheng fang Taiguo ji" 本刊主編陳復禮先生訪泰國記 (Sketches of our publisher visiting Thailand), *Photoart*, June 1963, 23.
[195] Tchan Fou-li, "Yingyi yue hua • Zhu Taiguo sheying shiye pengbo fazhan" 影藝月話 • 祝泰國攝影事業蓬勃發展 (Words of the month: I hope photography in Thailand would flourish), *Photoart*, November 1963, 2.
[196] Na Trach 何澤汪, "Jianpuzhai Duli Jinianta" 柬埔寨獨立紀念塔 (Cambodia Independence Monument), *Photoart*, March 1963, 30.
[197] Ngo Khanh 吳詩慶, "Fojiao huangguo Jianpuzhai" 佛教皇國柬埔寨 (Cambodge, the Buddhist kingdom), *Photoart*, September 1961, 22-23.
[198] Photoart Resource Room, "Liao • Buzai shi shiwai taoyuan" 寮 • 不再是世外桃源 (Laos, no longer a paradise), *Photoart*, April 1961, 10-11.
[199] Bruce Lockhart, "The Fate of Neutralism in Cambodia and Laos", in *Cold War Southeast Asia*, ed. Malcolm H. Murfett (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Editions, 2012), 208-211.
[200] Tong Koon Hung 董貫行, "Xingzhou de zongjiao qingdiao" 星洲的宗教情調 (The religious life in Singapore), *Photoart*, October 1960, 34-35.
[201] Tong Koon Hung, "Dongnanya Sheying Xuehui san wei xinxiu" 東南亞攝影學會三位新秀 (Introducing three young stars of the South-East Asia Photographic Society), *Photoart*, March/April 1962, 26-27.
[202] Tong Koon Hung, "Qingnian xinxiu Li Jinhua" 青年新秀李晉華 (Introduction of "new blood" Mr. C. F. Lee), *Photoart*, June 1963, 10-11.
[203] Tong Koon Hung, "Jingwu shiqing" 靜物詩情 (Poetic still life), *Photoart*, June 1963, 26-27.
[204] For a detailed biography of Tong Koon Hung's life, see Tong Koon Hung, *Works of Poetic Photography Art by the Late Tong Koon Hung* (Singapore: South-East Asia Photographic Society, 1993), 5-6.

[205] Unless otherwise stated, this account of Malayan photography is based on Wan Ye Jing's 1961 contribution to *Photoart*. As and when possible, I have verified the details of his account using the catalogues of the exhibitions that he had highlighted here. See Wan Ye Jing 溫以敬, "Malaiya sheying yitan shihua" 馬來亞攝影藝壇史話 (The advance of photographic arts in Malaya), *Photoart*, October/November 1961, 9-11.
[206] The Photographic Society of the Federation of Malaya was eventually renamed the Photographic Society of Malaysia (PSM). On the PSM website, it indicates that the Photographic Society of the Federation of Malaya was established in 1956. See "Brief History", Photographic Society of Malaysia, accessed August 23, 2019, http://www.psm1956.org/about-us/brief-history.php.
[207] "Nature Exhibition in the Far East", *Photographic Journal*, October 1961, 311.
[208] Tchan Fou-li, "Zhongguo huayi yu fengjing sheying" 中國畫意與風景攝影 (The Chinese painting conceptions and landscape photography), *Photoart*, December 1962, 2-3.
[209] Giam, "The Royal Frowns upon Hong Kong".
[210] Bureau of Photoart 本刊同人, "Yingyi yuehua • Dazhong sheying zazhi shiyan le" 影藝月話 • 大眾攝影雜誌失言了 (Words of the month: What other people say about Hong Kong), *Photoart*, December 1962, 40.
[211] Curiously, on page 30 of the inaugural *Photo Pictorial*, there was an ad indicating that the 26th issue of *Photoart* had been published. However, as Mak Fung recalled, *Photoart* was discontinued after the 25th issue. See Mak Fung, "*Sheying Huabao* chuban de yuanyou shimo" 《攝影畫報》出版的緣由始末 (The history and origins of *Photo Pictorial*), in *50 Years of* Photo Pictorial, ed. Lee Wing Ki (Hong Kong: Photo Pictorial Publishers, 2014), 17.
[212] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors' words), *Photo Pictorial*, May 1, 1967, 2.
[213] Tchan Fou-li, "Fa kan ci" 發刊詞 (Inauguration message), *Photo Pictorial*, July 15, 1964, 1.
[214] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors' words), *Photo Pictorial*, November 15, 1964, 2.
[215] Lee, "Flipping Open Sixty Years of Photo Magazines", 75.
[216] In 1980, the printing works of Chung Hwa Book Company and Commercial Press merged to form C & C Joint Printing Co., (HK) Ltd. 中华商务联合印刷（香港）有限公司. It became responsible for printing *Photo Pictorial*.
[217] Tchan Fou-li, "Zhongguohua de shan shi zhen de ma" 中國畫的山是真的嗎 (Are the mountains in Chinese painting real), *Photo Pictorial*, October 15, 1964, 8-9.
[218] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors' words), *Photo Pictorial*, August 15, 1964, 2.
[219] Mak Fung's account of the origins of *Photo Pictorial* (and *Photoart*), originally published in the 396th issue, is republished in a 2014 compendium marking its 50th anniversary. Unless otherwise stated, the account here is based on Mak's article. See Mak, "*Sheying Huabao* chuban de yuanyou shimo", 16-20.
[220] "Xin Zhonghua Huabao Di er qi you Gang yundao" 新中華畫報 第二期由港運到 (The second issue of *Sin Chung Hwa Pictorial* arrives from Hong Kong), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, February 26, 1952, 5.
[221] OCAC was reconstituted in 1974 but remained dormant until CCP charted a new course for Overseas Chinese affairs. Liao Chengzhi returned to helm OCAC in the fall of

1977. Soon after, OCAC was renamed Overseas Chinese Affairs Office 僑務辦公室 under the State Council, with Liao serving as its director. See Glen Peterson, *Overseas Chinese in the People's Republic of China* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012), 171.

[222] Meng Jialin 蒙嘉林, "Xianwei renzhi de Li Qing xiansheng yu Xianggang *Sheying Huabao*" 鮮為人知的李青先生與香港《攝影畫報》 (The elusive Mr. Li Qing and Hong Kong's *Photo Pictorial*), in *50 Years of* Photo Pictorial, ed. Lee Wing Ki (Hong Kong: Photo Pictorial Publishers, 2014), 30.

[223] S. Rajaratnam, foreword to *Pictorial Photography: Seven Men Photo Exhibition*, exh. cat. (Singapore: Photographic Society of Singapore, 1965), unpaginated, who wrote, months before Singapore was ousted from Malaysia: "Photography is an art form which cuts across barriers of language, race and creed. In our multi-racial society it is an effective and essential method of communication to promote better understanding amongst the various communities of our new nation." Rajaratnam continued: "In the not too distant past, it was not uncommon for Singapore to be dismissed as 'a cultural desert', but it is gratifying to note that world opinion has changed completely, thanks to the efforts and diligence of our people and organisations such as yours [Photographic Society of Singapore] which have focused attention on our cultural life."

[224] "Yi Run Tang Buzhang yu quanguo sheying bisai kaimu zhichu: Wei manzu shehui xuqiu sheying qucai xu gexin" 易润堂部长于全国摄影比赛开幕指出：为满足社会需求摄影取材须革新 (Minster Jek Yeun Thong announces at the opening of national photo competition: To satisfy societal needs it is necessary to innovate photography and its subject matter), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, December 18, 1971.

[225] "Li Da Cai Yiyuan shuaizhong fang Hongshanjing xiaofan zhongxin" 黎达材议员率众访红山景小贩中心 (MP Lai Tha Chai visits Bukit Merah View hawker centre with entourage), *Nanyang Siang Pau*, July 9, 1980; "Li Da Cai shuo zuwu jumin ying yilixiangdai xiangjingrubin" 黎达材说组屋居民应以礼相待相敬如宾 (Lai Tha Chai says flat residents should be courteous and respectful to one another, just like guests), *Sin Chew Jit Poh*, July 26, 1981.

[226] Meng, "Li Qing", 30.

[227] Mak, "*Sheying Huabao* chuban de yuanyou shimo", 17-19.

[228] Yung Yung 容庸, "Chuyu tu" 出浴圖 (Pictures of emerging from the bath), *Photo Pictorial*, November 15, 1964, 10-11.

[229] Mei Li Hua 美麗華 [pseud.], "Yezonghui fengguang" 夜總會風光 (Night club sights), *Photo Pictorial*, November 15, 1964, 24-25.

[230] Mei Li Hua [pseud.], "Tuoyiwu • Yezonghui fengguang zhi er" 脫衣舞 • 夜總會風光之二 (Night club sights II: Striptease), *Photo Pictorial*, January 15, 1965, 18-19.

[231] S. F. Dan 鄧雪峰, "Yingyi yuehua: Renti sheying de zhuangyanxing" 影藝月話：人體攝影的莊嚴性 (Words of the month: The dignity of nude photography), *Photoart*, May 1961, 25.

[232] Lee, "Flipping Open Sixty Years of Photo Magazines", 75.

[233] Bianzhe hua, August 15, 1964.

[234] Zhang Gong 張恭, "Kuangren! Kuangren!" 狂人！狂人！ (Madmen! Madmen!), *Photo Pictorial*, August 15, 1964, 9-11.
[235] Zuiyan Ke 醉眼客 [pseud.], "Daqian shijie • Funü liu ti" 大千世界 • 婦女六題 (The expansive world: Six observations on women), *Photo Pictorial*, December 15, 1964, 24-26.
[236] Mak Fung, "Zuopin xinshang" 作品欣賞 (Appreciating the works), *Photo Pictorial*, December 15, 1972, 73-74.
[237] Gerhard Jacob, "Quwei sheying • Mini duanqun" 趣味攝影 • 迷你短裙 (Amusing photography: Mini skirts), *Photo Pictorial*, December 15, 1973, 36-39.
[238] Hu Wugong 胡武功, "Buneng wangque de yi ben zazhi" 不能忘卻的一本雜誌 (An unforgettable magazine—*Photo Pictorial*), in *50 Years of* Photo Pictorial, ed. Lee Wing Ki (Hong Kong: Photo Pictorial Publishers, 2014), 31. See also Bao Kun 鮑昆, "*Sheying Huabao* yu wo he pengyoumen bing Zhongguo sheying" 《攝影畫報》與我和朋友們並中國攝影 (*Photo Pictorial* and me, my friends and China photography), in *50 Years of* Photo Pictorial, ed. Lee Wing Ki (Hong Kong: Photo Pictorial Publishers, 2014), 38-39.
[239] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors' words), *Photo Pictorial*, February 1972, 4.
[240] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors' words), *Photo Pictorial*, March 1972, 4.
[241] Mak Fung, "Zhenma shoushu hou" 針麻手術後 (Just after an acupuncture anesthesia operation), *Photo Pictorial*, March 1972. 24-25.
[242] Lee Wing Ki, "Locating Photographic Practice in Hong Kong since the 1960s", Asia Art Archive, accessed August 28, 2019, https://aaa.org.hk/en/resources/papers-presentations/locating-photographic-practice-in-hong-kong-since-the-1960s.
[243] Hu, "Buneng wangque", 32-35; Bao, "*Sheying Huabao* yu wo", 38-39.
[244] By the 63th issue (August/September 1970) of *Photo Pictorial*, the stated address of East Asia Cultural Enterprise Company had become 167 South Bridge Road, Singapore.
[245] Zhang Langhui 張浪輝, "Zhang Langhui zuopinji" 張浪輝作品集 (The photo portfolio of Zhang Langhui), *Photo Pictorial*, August 1967, 22-23.
[246] Zhang Langhui, *Chen xing ji* 晨星集 (Morning stars collection) (Singapore: Wang luo xue tang, 2005), 145-151.
[247] Han Tan Huan 韓山元, "Duzhe jiazuo • Han Shanyuan zuopinxuan" 讀者佳作 • 韓山元作品選 (A monument and a child), *Photo Pictorial*, August 1969, 12-13.
[248] Duzhe Xinxiang 讀者信箱 (Readers' Letterbox), *Photo Pictorial*, July 15, 1973, 12.
[249] Chow Chongmankhong 鐘文就, "Xiaopin jiazuo ji" 小品佳作集 (Prose style photography), *Photo Pictorial*, May 1970, 7.
[250] "Diliujie Taiguo Guoji Sheying Shalong" 第六屆泰國國際攝影沙龍 (6th Thai International Salon of Photography 1974), *Photo Pictorial*, May 15, 1975, 15-27.
[251] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors' words), *Photo Pictorial*, August 15, 1975, 8.
[252] Duzhe Xinxiang 讀者信箱 (Readers' Letterbox), *Photo Pictorial*, September 15, 1974, 9.
[253] Mak Fung, foreword to *Enchanted Archipelagos: Collection of Photographic Works by Nusantara Photo Club*, ed. Anwar Sanusi (Surabaya: Nusantara Photo Club, 2000), unpaginated.

[254] Toky Yauw 姚道琪, “Yuwo de tudi” 腴沃的土地 (The good earth of Indonesia), *Photo Pictorial*, January 15, 1973, 25-28.
[255] Ong Tjhoeng Pauw 余昌行 et al., “Yinni fengcai lu” 印尼風采錄 (Indonesian portraits), *Photo Pictorial*, October 15, 1973, 20-25.
[256] Setyadi J. 劉忠坤, “Renwu suxie zhiyi—Funü” 人物速寫之一、婦女 (Sketches no. 1—Women), *Photo Pictorial*, November 15, 1976, 28-32; Setyadi J. 劉忠坤, “Renwu suxie zhier—Ertong, qingnian, yumin” 人物速寫之二、兒童、青年、漁民 (Sketches no. 2—Children, youth & fishermen), *Photo Pictorial*, December 15, 1976, 44-48.
[257] Setyadi, “Funü”, 28.
[258] Ong Tjhoeng Pauw 余昌行, “Yedao zhige” 椰島之歌 (Tropical song), *Photo Pictorial*, January 1972, 15-18.
[259] Ho Sau 何綏, “Yu Changxing zuopin jieshao” 余昌行作品介紹 (Introducing the work of Ong Tjhoeng Pauw), *Photo Pictorial*, January 1972, 16.
[260] Ong Tjhoeng Pauw 余昌行, “Yinni nanhai” 印尼南海 (Parangtritis), *Photo Pictorial*, February 15, 1975, 15-18.
[261] In 1985, Kedai Buku South East Asia 東南亞書局 had two premises in Sandakan. One was located at 12 Jalan Dua; the other at 43 Jalan Tiga.
[262] I suspect 集源公司 was a private company located at 87A Jalan Tiang Bendera, Jakarta.
[263] I suspect 秋鴻書報社 was located at 35/109-110, Soi Charan Sanitwong (Jaransanitwong Road) 62, Bangkok.
[264] Mak Fung, “Mingzuo xinshang • Baofengyu laile!” 名作欣賞 • 暴風雨來了！ (Appreciation of famous work: When the storm comes!), *Photo Pictorial*, September 15, 1964, 20-21, 26-27.
[265] Wee Lee Fong 魏利煌, “Heifang jishu • Bianjiao fangda fa” 黑房技術 • 變焦放大法 (Darkroom technique: Zoom-effect enlarging), *Photo Pictorial*, May 1970, 24-25.
[266] Chongmankhong, “Xiaopin jiazuo ji”, 6-9.
[267] Duong Hon-Stiang 楊漢青, “Shijiji • Liaonan fengguang” 試機記 • 寮南風光 (Test a camera during a trip along Southern Laos), *Photo Pictorial*, June 1969, 32-33.
[268] Chang Chee 張祺, “Taiguo Huayi” 泰國畫意 (Pictorial Thailand), *Photo Pictorial*, September 15, 1972, 10-15.
[269] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors’ words), *Photo Pictorial*, November 1969, 4.
[270] Taguibao Angsin 洪禮藝, “Feidao huashan” 菲島火山 (Volcanos in Philippines), *Photo Pictorial*, March 1972, 14-17.
[271] Taguibao Angsin 洪禮藝, “Feiliebin baoyuchengzai” 菲列濱暴雨成災 (Rain disaster ever worst in Philippines), *Photo Pictorial*, September 15, 1972, 16-20.
[272] K. F. Wong 黃傑夫, “Huang Jiefu jinzuo ji” 黃傑夫近作集 (Latest works of Mr. K. F. Wong), *Photo Pictorial*, June 1970, 15-22.
[273] K. F. Wong 黃傑夫, “Shalaoyue diandi” 砂勝越點滴 (Sarawak people), *Photo Pictorial*, January 15, 1975, 36-39.
[274] Wong, “Shalaoyue diandi”, 36.

[275] K. F. Wong 黃傑夫, “Shalaoyue hepan: Dangdi minzu de xinfengmao” 砂勝越河畔：當地民族的新風貌 (Alongside of Sarawak river: Borneo natives nowadays), *Photo Pictorial*, October 15, 1976, 23-27.
[276] K. F. Wong 黃傑夫, “Balidao fengguang teji” 峇里島風光特輯 (Camera Bali, Indonesia), *Photo Pictorial*, June 1971, 7-26.
[277] K. F. Wong 黃傑夫, “Niboer fengguang” 尼泊爾風光 (Portrait Kathmandu), *Photo Pictorial*, March 15, 1973, 17-36.
[278] K. F. Wong 黃傑夫, “Keshimier zhi ge” 喀什米爾之歌 (The song of Kashmere), *Photo Pictorial*, October 15, 1975, 17-24; K. F. Wong 黃傑夫, “Keshimier zhi chun” 喀什米爾之春 (Spring in Kashmere), *Photo Pictorial*, November 15, 1975, 20-24.
[279] K. F. Wong 黃傑夫, “Xiangyou sanji” 鄉遊散記 (In China mainland), *Photo Pictorial*, May 15, 1976, 48-49; K. F. Wong 黃傑夫, “Xianyou nongcun fengguang” 仙遊農村風光 (Touring Hsienyu Fu Kien), *Photo Pictorial*, December 15, 1976, 19-23.
[280] Peter Wong 黃彼得, “Ni Yin youzong” 尼印遊踪 (Camera India & Nepal), *Photo Pictorial*, July 15, 1974, 10-16.
[281] Peter Wong 黃彼得, “Fengjing, feiniao, renwu, bei Yindu” 風景、飛鳥、人物、北印度 (N. India portfolio), *Photo Pictorial*, March 15, 1981, 34-39.
[282] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors’ words), *Photo Pictorial*, March 15, 1981, 12.
[283] See, for instance, Wong Yeu Meng 黃友明, “Shalaoyue fengguang” 砂勝越風光 (Sarawak people), *Photo Pictorial*, May 15, 1974, 28-29; Wong Jui-Chiew 黃維周, “Jingjing de Lubahe” 靜靜的魯巴河 (The River Lupar and her people), *Photo Pictorial*, March 15, 1975, 32-33; Sim, E. H. 沈應賢, “Dayazu changwu” 達雅族長屋 (Longhouse of Dyak tribe, Sarawak), *Photo Pictorial*, October 15, 1975, 39-42.
[284] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors’ words), *Photo Pictorial*, March 15, 1975, 6.
[285] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors’ words), *Photo Pictorial*, November 15, 1975, 8.
[286] Pat Fok 霍麗萍, “Malai guniang” 馬來姑娘 (Malaysian girl), *Photo Pictorial*, October 15, 1973, 30.
[287] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors’ words), *Photo Pictorial*, November 1970, 2.
[288] Tchan Fou-li, “Guanyu Xianggang sheyingjia zuopin zhanlan teji” 關於香港攝影家作品展覽特輯 (On the special issue of HK photographers’ exhibition of works), *Photo Pictorial*, September/October 1967, 2.
[289] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors’ words), *Photo Pictorial*, January/February 1969, 4.
[290] “Mangu zuopinji” 曼谷作品集 (Fine works from Bangkok Pictorialists Circle, Bangkok), *Photo Pictorial*, March 1971, 12-16.
[291] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors’ words), *Photo Pictorial*, March 1971, 4.
[292] Na Teng-Choon 藍廷駿, “Feilübin de huaqiao yishan” 菲律濱的華僑義山 (Manila Chinese cemetery), *Photo Pictorial*, 15 January, 1983, 70-73.
[293] “Benqi cuo zai nali daan” 本期錯在哪裡答案 (Answer to this issue’s what’s wrong section), *Photo Pictorial*, September 1969, 40.
[294] Yi Jiaqi 衣家奇, “Zhongguo dashi zaoxiang” 中國大使造像 (Making portraits of China ambassadors), *Photo Pictorial*, June 15, 1991, 56-61.

[295] Qin Xian'an 秦憲安, "Yaoyuan de taiyang" 遙遠的太陽 (The distant sun), *Photo Pictorial*, June 15, 1995, 37-39.
[296] Paiboon Pattanasitubol 關鎮賢, "Douji de gushi" 鬥雞的故事 (Cock fighting in Thailand), *Photo Pictorial*, January 15, 1983, 65.
[297] Chavana Chamorman, "Fomen neiwei" 佛門內外 (The interiority and exteriority of Buddhism), *Photo Pictorial*, April 15, 1991, 10-13.
[298] K. Huang 黃克, "Taiguo xingjiao" 泰國行腳 (Touring Thailand), *Photo Pictorial*, August 15, 1975, 17-26.
[299] Norman Lau 劉淇, "Huisu wushi niandai Xianggang de sheying rechao" 回溯五十年代香港的攝影熱潮 (Revisiting the popular movement of photography in HK during the 1950s), *Photo Pictorial*, June 15, 1993, 89.
[300] Bianzhe hua 編者話 (Editors' words), *Photo Pictorial*, April 15, 1995, 98.
[301] Nicolas Righetti, "Bali jiti huozang guanliji" 峇厘集體火葬觀禮記 (Observing the rites of collective cremation in Bali), *Photo Pictorial*, July 15, 1993, 24-25.
[302] Xu Jiashu 徐家樹, "Xinjiapo Yindu shenmiao" 新加坡印度神廟 (Singapore Indian temple), *Photo Pictorial*, January 15, 1995, 16-21.
[303] Lau Ching Ping, interview by author, Hong Kong, May 3, 2019.
[304] Lee, "Flipping Open Sixty Years of Photo Magazines", 78.