The Nanyang Revolution

In this innovative reading, the development of the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) is explored in the context of an emerging nationalism in Southeast Asia, the interplay of overseas Chinese networks and the Comintern. Based on extensive new archival material, Anna Belogurova shows how the MCP was shaped by the historical contingencies of anti-imperialism in Southeast Asia, long-term Chinese migration trends, networks, identity, and the organizational practices of the Comintern. This is the story of how a group of left-leaning Chinese migrant intellectuals engaged with global forces to create a relevant and lasting Malayan national identity, providing fresh international perspectives on the history of Malaysia, Chinese communism, the Cold War, and decolonization.

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The Nanyang Revolution

The Comintern and Chinese Networks in Southeast Asia, 1890–1957

Anna Belogurova

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# Contents

*List of Figures and Tables*  | page vi  
*Acknowledgments*  | vii  
*Note on Transliteration*  | xi  
*List of Terms and Abbreviations*  | xii  

## Part I Revolution in the Nanyang

1. Prologue: A Durian for Sun Yat-sen  | 3  

## Part II The Comintern, the MCP, and Chinese Networks, 1930–1935

4. The MCP as a Hybrid Communist Party: Structure, Discourse, and Activity, 1930–1934  | 83  
5. The Comintern, Malaya, and Chinese Networks, 1930–1936  | 115  

## Part III The GMD, the MCP, and the Nation: *Minzu* Cultivated, *Minzu* Lost

7. Language, Power, and the MCP’s Lost Nation, 1939–1940  | 189  
8. Epilogue  | 224  

*Selected Bibliography*  | 237  
*Index*  | 257  

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Figures and Tables

Figures

2.1 Yang Shanji, 1924. Courtesy of RGASPI, Russia. page 31
4.1 A Chinese gardener, 1930. Courtesy of National Archives of Singapore. 108
7.1 Anti-British drawing, 1940. Courtesy of National Archives, UK. 206
7.2 MCP propaganda against the trade union registration ordinance introduced by the government of the Straits Settlements in 1939, ca. 1940. Courtesy of National Archives, UK. 209
7.3 Street scene in Singapore, ca. 1940. Singapore Federation of the Chinese Clan Associations Collection. Courtesy of the National Archives of Singapore. 214
7.4 MCP publication “Forward!” 1939. Courtesy of RGASPI, Russia. 219

Tables

3.1 Non-Chinese members in communist organizations in Malaya. 64
4.1 The organizational structure of the Nanyang Provisional Committee in 1928. 91
6.1 CYL membership. 170
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Note on Transliteration

All Chinese proper names are spelled using pinyin romanization with the exception of proper names which are commonly used in English in a different Romanization, i.e., Chiang Kai-shek, Canton. Names of individuals are spelled in Pinyin if the characters are known. When it was impossible to identify a person’s name in Chinese characters, I used the English Romanization of their names found in the original text. For the place names that were Romanized from Mandarin or a Chinese dialect pronunciation that I was unable to identify, I used the Romanization that I found in the original English-language text and italicized it. As a rule, I provided Chinese characters only for the personal names which are commonly not available in English-language studies of the MCP. The original English language of the documents has been minimally corrected for better flow and easier understanding.
Terms and Abbreviations

- **AAIL**: All-American Anti-Imperialist League
- **AEBUS**: Anti-Enemy Backing-Up Society
- **AIL**: Anti-Imperialist League(s)
- **ASCWPRA**: Alliance for the Support of the Chinese Workers and Peasants Revolution in America
- **CC**: Central Committee
- **CCP**: Chinese Communist Party
- **CI**: Communist International
- **CO**: Colonial Office Records
- **CP**: Communist Party
- **CPPI**: Communist Party of the Philippine Islands
- **CPUSA**: Communist Party of the United States of America
- **CYL**: Communist Youth League
- **DEI**: Dutch East Indies
- **ECCI**: Executive Committee of the Third Communist International (the Comintern)
- **FEB**: Far Eastern Bureau of the Comintern
- **FESLAI**: Far Eastern Secretariat of the League Against Imperialism
- **GMD**: Chinese Nationalist Party, Guomindang
- **htaqiao**: Chinese overseas
- **ICP**: Indo-Chinese Communist Party
- **KMM**: Kesatuan Melayu Muda (Young Malay Union)
- **KPD**: Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands
- **KUTV**: Kommunisticheskii universitet trudiashchikh sia Vostoka (Communist University of the Toilers of the East)
- **LAI**: League Against Imperialism
- **MCA**: Malayan Chinese Association
- **MCP**: Malayan Communist Party
- **MFLU**: Malayan Federation of Labor Unions
- **minzu**: “nation,” “nationality,” “people,” “national”
List of Terms and Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minzu Guoji</td>
<td>“International of Nationalities”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPAJA</td>
<td>Malayan Peoples’ Anti-Japanese Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRCA</td>
<td>“Monthly Review of Chinese Affairs”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanyang</td>
<td>The areas of Chinese migration that roughly correspond to the contemporary English-language definition of Southeast Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NARA</td>
<td>National Archives and Records Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEI</td>
<td>Netherlands (Dutch) East Indies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGLU</td>
<td>Nanyang General Labor Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIANKP</td>
<td>Nauchno-issledoval’tskaia assotsiatsiiia po izucheniiu natsional’no-kolonial’nykh problem (Academic Research Association for the Study of National-Colonial Questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NKVD</td>
<td>People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPC</td>
<td>Nanyang Provisional Committee of the CCP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PKI</td>
<td>Partai Komunis Indonesia (Communist Party of Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPTUS</td>
<td>Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat of the Red International of Trade Unions (Tikhookeanskii secretariat Profinterna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTI</td>
<td>Partai Tionghoa Indonesia (Chinese Party of Indonesia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGASPI</td>
<td>Rossiiskii gosudarstvennyi arkhirv sotsial’no-politiches-koi istorii (Russian State Archive of Sociopolitical History)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCP</td>
<td>Siamese Communist Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIRD</td>
<td>Strategic Information Research Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMP</td>
<td>Shanghai Municipal Police</td>
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<tr>
<td>UMNO</td>
<td>United Malays National Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics</td>
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