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LEE KUAN YEW AND THE "ASIAN VALUES" DEBATE

MICHAEL D. BARR[1]
Queensland University of Technology

The "Asian values" debate sprang fully formed onto the international stage in the early 1990s—or so it seems from the mountain of literature on the subject. According to conventional wisdom, Lee Kuan Yew launched the concept from Singapore as part of a self-serving effort to justify Singapore's paternalistic and illiberal system of government and to argue that Asian cultures are so different from western cultures that they are exempt from considerations of human rights (Öjendal and Antlöv 1998, 527; Fukuyama 1998, 23). Much of the debate has therefore focused on the politics of "Asian values", particularly questions of ulterior motives. Advocates of "Asian values" are routinely and often correctly accused of putting forward self-serving arguments to justify human rights abuses and undemocratic practices. Advocates of "Asian values" also accuse their critics of hypocrisy (Mahbubani 1998, 48–51 and 70–71), and of using human rights concerns as a means of pursuing ulterior political or economic agendas—a charge that carries sufficient truth to make it an effective foil in debate. Beyond the politics, however, there are serious questions to be pursued. As the debate has progressed it has become more common for academics to examine some of the assumptions and syllogisms of the "Asian values" argument, seeking not only evidence of ulterior motives and inconsistencies, but also the strands of truth that might otherwise be lost in the politics.

This article examines the thinking of Lee Kuan Yew, who is one of the main architects of the "Asian values" argument, but whose contributions have never been considered in more than a piecemeal fashion. It traces the history of his thinking in the hope that it will enable us both to critically analyse his arguments, and to discern the degree of genuineness in his current position. It is also intended to provide a culturally sensitive critique with which to engage Lee's successors in the "Singapore school" of the "Asian values" debate—people such as Goh Chok Tong, Lee Hsieng Loong, Kishore Mahbubani, Tommy Koh and Bilahari Kausikan.

Briefly, this article studies the history of Lee Kuan Yew's contribution to the "Asian values" debate for three ends. First, the paper demonstrates that Lee's

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advocacy of "Asian values" is based, for the most part, on positions that he has held over a period of nearly forty years. The key ideas that formed the basis of the modern "Asian values" debate became a central part of Lee Kuan Yew's political thought in the 1960s. Some elements can be traced back as far as the 1950s. The surprising fact that ideas with such a narrow, remote base of origin have found widespread resonance throughout East and Southeast Asia suggests that the concept contains elements that reflect widespread Asian cultural concerns and legitimate aspirations of which western critics should take cognisance. Secondly, the article examines the reaction of Lee and others to the 1960s counter culture and the student protest movements, and tries to discern the role that perceptions of these phenomena and the subsequent atomism of western society played in building and legitimising the "Asian values" argument. Furthermore, it suggests that the atomistic libertarianism prevalent in the West since the 1960s may be an example of culturally-specific morality, rather than a universal norm to which Asians should aspire. Thirdly, the study uses these tentative conclusions to uncover a point of theoretical and practical weakness in Lee Kuan Yew's position, centred on his conceptualisation of the role of the family.

These three arguments are prefaced by an overview of the main premises of the "Asian values" argument, and a brief account of the debate's sudden rise to world prominence in the 1990s.

PARAMETERS OF THE DEBATE

As a necessary first step in studying Lee Kuan Yew's contribution to the modern concept of "Asian values", we need to identify the central tenets and characteristics of the argument, which today has taken on a life of its own beyond the thoughts of Lee. The prime tactical premise of the "Asian values" argument is one of cultural relativism: that many of the hegemonic political, social and cultural norms of the late twentieth century are western, rather than universal, norms and no more legitimate than alternative norms that could be considered "Asian". This premise taints the claimed hegemonic norms with the odour of cultural imperialism, to which advocates of "Asian values" respond with strong, some say exaggerated, assertions of state sovereignty (Inoue 1999, 30–34). Thus, the Chinese Communist Party is able to argue in its 1991 White Paper that "owing to tremendous differences in historical background, social systems, cultural tradition and economic development, countries differ in their understanding and practice of human rights" (State Council, PRC 1991, 1–2). The tactical position thus established then provides the basis for a positive assertion of the legitimacy, if not the superiority, of a favoured political, social or cultural argument or practice which is identified as being or springing from an "Asian value". Cultural relativism

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therefore acts as a cover for cultural and political assertion, which is the heart of the "Asian values" argument.

Once the basic premise of cultural relativism has been set, it can be used to support a choice of varied and often contradictory arguments. Nevertheless, at its core the "Asian values" argument is remarkably consistent. Its proponents advocate a view of society that is always hierarchical and tends to stem from emphasising the interdependence and social nature of human beings. The cultural source of "Asian values" is most commonly Confucianism. It is important to note, however, that the Confucianism referred to here is not the original set of ethics advocated by Confucius, but rather the state-centred form adopted by successive Chinese emperors from the second century BC onwards. At heart, Confucianism is about people and relationships, and it governs how everyone acts in a traditional Chinese hierarchical society. The relationship between rulers and subjects, for instance, is likened to that between fathers and sons: the subject/son is expected to give his ruler/father obedience and respect, and the ruler/father is urged to be a *junzi* [virtuous gentleman], and to govern the state/family by example and by exhortation and education rather than by the arbitrary imposition of his will. At the serious risk of parodying a highly sophisticated and continually evolving philosophy, Confucianism might be described as an ethical system and humanistic worldview that places great emphasis on forms of conduct within relationships, personal virtue, obedience to authority, family loyalty, and education.[2]

Lee Kuan Yew today denies that he has ever spoken of "Asian values", claiming that he has always advocated "Confucian" values, demonstrating the importance of Sinic culture in his thinking and in the "Asian values" debate.[3] Most East and Southeast Asian cultures also contain significant elements of hierarchy and paternalism, none of which have been challenged by an indigenous equivalent of the European Enlightenment or the French Revolution, with their emphasis on freedom and reason.[4] Cultural perspectives originating in the region therefore stem from and tend to lead to a web-like relational or communitarian view of society where everyone knows his or her place in a social hierarchy. This worldview is usually juxtaposed to "western" liberal and atomistic views of society that emphasise the autonomy of persons. This contrast enables advocates of "Asian values" to present communitarian arguments that have strong cultural resonance —arguments that emphasise the "rights" of the state, the community (e.g., religious, ethnic or economic community) and the family ahead of the rights of the individual person. On occasion this proposition has been argued with profound bluntness, as when the Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China (PRC) declared to the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993 that "individuals must put the state's rights before their own" (Tang 1995, 215). More often, however, the argument is put more gently—for example as a call to redress the West's perceived imbalance between rights and responsibilities. In its milder

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form, which is preferred by Lee Kuan Yew, this argument is able to muster considerable support in both Asia and the West.[5]

STRONG STATE

Based on this worldview, proponents of "Asian values" argue for a paternalistic, illiberal state, which is presumed to be strong and stable—although in the wake of the collapse of the Suharto government, the strength and stability of such regimes are open to question. Such a state-centred view of society has been characterised by Neera Badhwar as "republican communitarianism" (Badhwar 1996, 4–5). In practice, such a government can take any form from the Leninist dictatorships of Vietnam and the PRC to the relatively benign "semidemocracies" of Singapore and Malaysia.[6] An important corollary of the "strong state" argument is the deconstruction of "liberal democracy" into its component elements —liberalism and democracy—and the advocacy of "illiberal democracy" as a legitimate, if not superior, alternative theory of government (Zakaria 1997, 22–36; Plattner 1999, 121–34). Lee Kuan Yew is by far the most formidable advocate of illiberal democracy in the world. He links his arguments for paternalistic government to the necessity for strong measures to achieve economic growth, and routinely bolsters his case with references to the multitude of failed democracies in post-war Asia, Africa, and more recently, the former Soviet Union (Lee 1991a, 12–24). In the multiracial societies of Southeast Asia, Lee and others also point to the need to achieve social stability in the face of racial, ethnic and religious tensions (Lee 1978, 3).

The family is also given a special place in the "Asian values" argument, both because it provides the prime conceptual basis of a relational view of society, and because it is a natural and self-sustaining mechanism for providing nurture, socialisation and social services to the population (Goh 1994, 417–22). The family is a person's first community, and it is here that a child learns his or her place in the world, the lessons of hierarchy, and the nature of living in a society dominated by relationships. The family also provides the emotional and philosophical model for thinking of society as an organic unity, which provides the strongest rationale for communitarianism.[7] As Lee argued to Fareed Zakaria in 1994, "Eastern societies believe that the individual exists in the context of his family. He is not pristine and separate. The family is part of the extended family, and then friends and the wider society" (Zakaria 1994, 113).

Below the two main premises of strong government and strong families, there is also a raft of non-core arguments that form a more low-key and less consistent part of the "Asian values" debate. These highlight the traditional emphasis that "Confucian societies" place on education, thrift and a disciplined work ethic.

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Lee Kuan Yew regards these "Chinese values" as essential ingredients of East Asia's economic growth (Sheridan 1997, 68). Although this argument tends to be felt most strongly in Sinic and sinicised East Asian societies, it is notable that Dr Mahathir, a Malay nationalist, has spent the greater part of his career trying to convince Malays to adopt these virtues as their own.[8] Lower again on the hierarchy of the "Asian values" debate is a range of contradictory claims. In Singapore, for instance, Lee claims that "Asian values" uphold the virtue of clean government (Lee 1998a, 32–34), while in Indonesia they have been used implicitly to defend nepotism and "crony capitalism" (Lee 1998b).

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

There is an element of validity in the perception that the "Asian values" debate was launched in the 1990s, although it would be more correct to say that this was the time when the debate first achieved world prominence. It would be foolish to be overly dogmatic about causes within the confines of this brief article, but the general reasons for the sudden outburst of this debate seem to centre on a unique set of paradigms besetting Pacific Asia, Europe and the United States in the early 1990s. At that time, the West was enjoying an unprecedented level of confidence in the political and economic spheres. It had just won the Cold War; Europe was a Union; and markets were multiplying, growing and becoming increasingly more open thanks to the collapse of communism and the pace of globalisation. The forces of political and economic liberalism were riding high, declaring "the end of history" and the beginning of a "new world order" of democracy, freedom and economic prosperity. In this euphoria, the European Union and the United States responded with uncharacteristic enthusiasm to pressure from human rights activists and some conservatives to "export" democracy and human rights throughout the world. The Clinton Administration went as far as to proclaim that the promotion of democracy abroad was one of the three main pillars of American foreign policy and a "strategic investment in our nation's security" (Christopher 1993, 387). China was particularly despised by a coalition of American pressure groups because of its policy of enforced abortions, its treatment of Tibet and its guilt over the Tiananmen Square massacre. On the other hand, the West—and particularly the United States—was beset with endemic social problems. Crime, drugs, family breakdown, shootings, homelessness and racial tensions were so rife in the United States that even President Clinton and his advisers were questioning whether the American ethos of individualism had gone too far (Frohnen 1996, 1–7).

Meanwhile, Pacific Asia was celebrating both its social cohesion and its economic success. Its leaders looked askance at disorder in America and were proud

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that most Pacific Asian countries had been able to achieve phenomenal economic growth without suffering from the excesses of individualism that they could see across the Pacific. Nevertheless, they were very insecure in their success, and despite the bravado of many of their leaders, they were painfully aware that their continued growth depended upon access to American and European markets to sell their goods. Furthermore, resentment at past colonial and neo-colonial exploitation by the West was never very far below the surface, and was given continued renewal by Chris Patten's brinkmanship over the return of Hong Kong to China.

The combination of western and Asian confidence and insecurity boiled onto the world stage in 1993 when a series of United Nations conferences on human rights coincided with a peak in American threats to cancel or put conditions on China's Most Favoured Nation (MFN) trade status because of its poor human rights record. Since China had become a focus of investment in Asia, this move not only threatened the economic growth of China, but that of the region. The West's new-found assertiveness on human rights was perceived as a hypocritical attempt to keep Asia subservient to the West politically and economically. The accusations of hypocrisy turned especially vicious when both Europe and America stood wringing their hands while Muslims in Bosnia were massacred by Serbian Christians while the final UN conference was in session in Vienna.[9] A primitive version of the "Asian values" argument became the standard repertoire of leaders across Pacific Asia. China's *People's Daily* accused the West of "setting up obstacles to communication on human rights and using the issue cynically as a political club to beat less-developed countries" (*The Straits Times* 16 June 1993). While on a visit to China to promote closer economic ties Prime Minister Mahathir of Malaysia was quoted saying that human rights were "a tool Western governments use to subvert Asian countries" (*The Straits Times* 15 June 1993). Chinese Premier Li Peng agreed that each country should be left to define its own concept of human rights and that "different countries have different views on democracy and human rights, and on the priorities which should be accorded to them" (*The Straits Times* 15 June 1993). Indonesia's Foreign Minister Ali Alatas warned European aid donors not to link their pledges to human rights issues (*The Straits Times* 11 June 1993). He called for "understanding of the traditions and social values of developing nations, many of which were endowed with ancient and sophisticated cultures" and warned that "an individualistic approach" to human rights at the expense of the interests of society could lead to "instability and even anarchy" (*The Straits Times* 16 June 1993). Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai declared that it is "natural that approaches to the implementation of fundamental human rights vary because of differences in socio-economic, historical, cultural backgrounds and conditions" (*The Straits Times* 30 March 1993). And Lee Kuan Yew, on a visit to China to negotiate the building of a Singapore-sponsored industrial

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town, went to the nub of his immediate concern: he warned the United States of adverse consequences if China's MFN status was weakened, saying that human rights diplomacy should not be linked to trade (*The Straits Times* 17 May 1993). A month later, he proved himself to be an effective spokesman and intellectual leader of the nascent "Asian values" consensus with his championing of Confucian values over liberalism and democracy in a major interview in *Time* magazine (*The Straits Times* 16, 17 June 1993).

The "Asian values" debate might have died in 1993 if the underlying concerns it addressed had disappeared, but the debate continued to bubble along with less venom but more sophistication. The debate has increasingly come to be fought on an intra-civilisational basis. Asian leaders such as the Dalai Lama (Dalai Lama 1999, 3–7), former Taiwanese President Lee Teng-hui (Lee 1999, 9–14), Myanmar's Aung San Suu Kyi (Aung 1995, 52–53) and Indonesian President Abdurrahman Wahid have declared their rejection of the illiberal and anti-democratic elements of the "Asian values" argument. On the other hand, many aspects of the debate have come to mirror arguments between western liberals on the one hand, and western conservatives, communitarians, and even some sentimental anti-imperialists, on the other (Rodan 1996, 337–46). These parallels have given the debate added impetus among western academics, activists and politicians.

LEE KUAN YEW'S COMMUNITARIANISM

The "Asian values" debate may have caught the world by surprise in 1993, but the essential components of the argument were already core elements of Lee Kuan Yew's thinking in the mid-1960s. The ideas of communitarianism had, in fact, been coalescing in his mind in the early 1960s, and some elements, such as his scepticism about the tenets of liberalism and democracy, can be traced back to the 1950s. In many ways, the current debate is the end result of several decades of "trial and error" as Lee floated ideas, ran arguments and initiated social experiments. This history gives us an opportunity to sift through the development of his ideas.

The trail of Lee's overtly communitarian thinking can be traced back as far as 1962. In this year, when Singapore was still a self-governing colony, Lee revealed his emerging faith in the virtues of "social discipline". At that stage, he was only experimenting with ideas of communitarianism, but the pattern of his thought was becoming plain. Speaking of countries that he had visited recently and on which he had made observations, he said:

> Here again, you see, the most important thing I found was that there was social cohesion. I have enumerated in several of my talks of what I consider

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> to be the three basic essentials for successful transformation of any society. First, a determined leadership, an effective determined leadership; two, an administration which is efficient; and three, social discipline. If you don't have those three, nothing will be achieved.
>
> . . . Where the social discipline is less, the progress is slower . . . If you don't get social discipline, everybody does what he likes to do, or will not bustle about what he is told to do. And that becomes the whole momentum (Lee 1959–90, 14 June 1962).

By the mid-1960s, when Singapore had been through the trauma of joining and then leaving Malaysia, the communitarianism of the modern "Asian values" debate was dominant in Lee Kuan Yew's thinking. It was prominent in the rhetoric with which he justified the subjugation of the trade unions and most of civil society to the will of the government at that time. In August 1965, Singapore separated from Malaysia in a highly charged and antagonistic atmosphere and faced an uncertain and precarious future as a city-state. Lee declared that he was setting out to build a "rugged" and "tightly-knit" society capable of ensuring the country's survival. He first sprang this rhetoric on an unsuspecting audience in October 1965, less than three months after Singapore became independent. "This is a dangerous part of the world," he announced, so we must "breed a rugged generation to ensure our survival" (Lee 1959–90, 30 October 1965). This was heady stuff to tell an audience that had come to watch a ping pong tournament. Nevertheless, it marked the beginning of a period of rhetorical flourish in which Lee praised communitarian values and idealised the "rugged society". This period, which Chan Heng Chee has characterised as "politics of survival" (1971), marked the first clear sign of Lee Kuan Yew's communitarian approach to politics and society. The government's already well-established tendency to subsume to itself elements of civil society was accelerated and intensified with the object of turning the whole of society into a unitary whole moving in one direction—a "tightly organized society" under a centralised, technocratic government (*The Mirror* 24 July 1966). When he spoke of a "rugged society" he meant that the society as an organic whole was to be "rugged" and resilient. Lee envisioned the "ruggedness" of the individual members of society as being akin to members of a "herd" who, due to their cultural instincts, are effective "digits" (Lee 1966–67, 19) in the collective. "Of this I am quite certain," he told an audience of civil servants as early as April 1965:

> You can have a great leader, but if the herd has not got it in it, you cannot make the grade. The herd must have the capacity, the stamina, sufficient social cohesiveness to survive. The future is so full of problems that if we

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> have not got the stamina and the will to face it, then we do not deserve to survive. And I am saying this tonight to you in the hope that there will be enough in the herd with the will and the resolution to see this through (Lee 1959–90, 15 April 1965).

The message was repeated a few months later, when he praised the "spirit" and the "verve" of "the people as a whole", although on this occasion he did not mention his fanciful and insulting metaphor of the "herd" (Lee 1959–90, 13 June 1965).

CULTURAL BALLAST

By 1965, Singaporeans had become used to Lee Kuan Yew, the English-educated Anglophile who despaired of the "antiquated ideas" embodied in ancient traditions (Lee 1959–90, 13 August 1965). Lee had a well-deserved reputation for belittling the supposed glories of past cultures (Lee 1959–90, 8 August 1966). Then, in August 1966, without obvious warning, he began bemoaning the lack of tradition in a young country like Singapore, and started placing uncharacteristic emphasis on the virtues of social traditions (Lee 1959–90, 28 August 1966). Two months later, in November 1966, the new direction of Lee's thinking emerged as a dominant theme at a meeting at the University of Singapore (Lee 1959–90, 24 November 1966). In this address, he spoke at length of the positive roles that the local communal cultures of Singapore could play in the development of a "rugged society". He announced that he was seeking to build a new social consensus based upon the retention of traditional cultures, and said that he hoped that the members of each community would use their cultural heritage as an anchor, so that each person would be a strong, robust member of society. The cost of losing one's cultural roots without developing an adequate replacement, he said, was to become "a soulless creature" and "a very weak digit" (Lee 1959–90, 24 November 1966). A month later Lee coined the term "cultural ballast", by which he referred to the supposedly innate strength that comes from identification with one's cultural heritage (Lee 1991b, 29). He focused on language, because "with the language goes the literature, proverbs, folklore, beliefs, value patterns" (Vasil 1984, 175). Lee saw a nexus between culture and language, and hoped that teaching school children their "mother tongue", even as a second language to English, would provide them with the "cultural ballast" they needed to be strong "digits" in Singaporean society.

Lee's focus on language and cultural ballast is peculiar to the Singaporean situation, if not to Lee himself. The significance of these developments for this paper, however, stems from the fact that Lee had made an association in his mind

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between cultural assertion and the "rugged" and "tightly-knit" society. Yet, given the peculiarly Singaporean focus of Lee's concept of "cultural ballast", even this association would be of limited import to the broader "Asian values" campaign if not for the fact that Lee's cultural assertion was inspired in part by a reaction to a much broader phenomenon: the western cultural schism associated with the student protests of the 1960s. Lee began expressing his concerns in 1971, when he bemoaned the recently-emerged western youth culture of "violent demonstrations in support of peace, urban guerrillas, free love and hippieism". He expressed his hope that "the traditional importance of the Asian family unit" could prevent the excesses associated with contemporary western mores (Nair 1976, 174). Later the same year he repeated this sentiment, telling an English audience that he was confident that Singapore could to some extent "inoculate and immunise the people [from western vices], through their cultural and social values" (*The Straits Times* 5 November 1971). A year later, Lee began paying frequent and favourable attention to the virtues and the importance of Chinese culture in Singapore.[10] Goh Keng Swee has testified independently of the importance of the example of the Chinese-educated in Lee's thinking at that time. He told *The Straits Times* that they not only proved themselves worthy adversaries when they were aligned with the Communist Party, but "when the counter culture of the West developed, [they] held it in contempt" and retained their strength and cohesion (*The Straits Times* 4 February 1982).[11] Although his primary inspiration was Chinese culture, Lee attributed similar qualities of "cultural ballast" to other Asian cultures and came to believe that every person should retain their own cultural underpinning, and the strength that he believed was associated with it. Hence he gave Indian audiences the same messages of cultural assertion that he gave Singapore's Chinese communities. "You and I instinctively want to keep something of the past because man does not live by bread alone," he told a Tamil audience in 1967:

> He needs that little extra: the lifeline that gives him some sustenance, some succour and comfort in moments of adversity. It is with that sustenance which springs from a knowledge that for thousands of years people like him, acquiring certain techniques of social organism [*sic*], were able to survive all kinds of natural and man-made calamities. And we want to give that positive aid to everybody to keep (Lee 1959–90, 5 February 1967).

The western student revolt associated with the Vietnam moratorium threatened the sense of order and hierarchy that was intrinsic to Lee's view of society, and he saw the cultural assertion of the Chinese in particular, and of Asian societies in general, as a significant line of defence.

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COUNTER CULTURE

The emotional basis of Lee's reaction to the 1960s student culture was far from unique. Many in the West also feared that the libertarian culture of protest, free love and drugs was a threat to order in their societies. Indeed, Deputy Prime Minister Goh Keng Swee later went on record as identifying his own concerns with those of western intellectuals who had come to be appalled by post-1960s western culture. He singled out for special attention Christopher Lasch's *The Culture of Narcissism* and Paul Johnson's *Enemies of Society*—especially Chapter 12 onwards, which deals with the alleged post-1960s debasement of American culture, values and education (*The Straits Times* 30 December 1982). In the 1960s, most of Asia was exposed to the counter culture only at the elite level. Singapore was an exception to the rule because of the widespread use of English and ready access to a relatively open media. Lee Kuan Yew stated the problem, as he saw it, very explicitly in 1971:

> If they are to develop, people in new countries cannot afford to imitate the fads and fetishes of the contemporary West. The strange behaviour of demonstration and violence-prone young men and women in wealthy America, seen on TV and the newspapers, are not relevant to the social and economic circumstances of new underdeveloped countries. The importance of education, the need of stability and work discipline. . .: these are vital factors for progress (Nair 1976, 175).

Lee was convinced of the potential pervasiveness of the American counter culture by the example of Canadian, British and Australian youths who "imitated" the Americans because of "the nexus of a common language", which acted as a "lowest common denominator" (*The Mirror* 20 November 1972). "Permissiveness, social indiscipline leads to disorder and decline," he warned a few years later in a lecture on the dangers of accepting American values (Lee 1959–90, 30 April 1975). On this occasion, he linked American-style democracy to the development of the permissive society, foreshadowing a symbiosis that was to prove an enduring and central key to the "Asian values" argument. Lest it be thought that these were casual interjections by Lee, he confirmed his perception of a dichotomy between western permissiveness and Asian family values in a public letter to Deputy Prime Minister Goh Keng Swee in 1979: "We have to reject the passing fads of the West. Particularly important are intra-family relationships. We must reinforce these traditional family ties found in all Asian societies" (Goh et al. 1979, v). This letter prefaced the introduction of moral education, religious knowledge and Confucianism courses in schools, which marked the proper beginning of the "Asian values" campaign in Singapore.

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By the 1980s, the counter culture was but a dim memory, but its legacy of permissiveness was still a potent force, at least in the minds of Singaporean leaders. When Culture Minister S. Dhanabalan banned *Cosmopolitan* in 1983, he specified its consistent culture of "permissiveness" as the reason. Echoing the views that Lee Kuan Yew had been espousing for more than a decade, he told members of the government's censorship boards:

> We cannot allow every fickle craze from the mass consumer markets with which we do business to take root in our society. Unfortunately, that which panders to the lowest taste has often the widest appeal.
>
> . . . In these societies, there is a ferment in ideas, especially those that challenge and undermine every traditional value and institution.
>
> One sometimes gets the impression that the last days of Pompeii are being re-enacted in these societies. Every traditional virtue and value has been insidiously and systematically undermined—be it patriotism or fidelity to marriage partner, or consideration for children and women, or respect for the aged or temperance of any desire (*The Straits Times* 19 February 1983).

REACTION TO LIBERTARIANISM

It is too simplistic to say that stress on "Asian values" is merely a reaction to post-1960s libertarianism, but this aspect certainly goes some way towards explaining its appeal. Joseph Chan, in his description of the difference between the "communitarian" approach of "Asian values" and the "liberal" approach that predominates in the West, lists the areas of practical difference as including censorship of pornography, marriage law, the decriminalisation of homosexuality, and the invasion of civil liberties in drug detection (Chan 1998, 32–33). This is hardly a complete list of the fields of debate on "Asian values". Nevertheless, it is significant that these concerns are among the most sensitive touchstones of the post-1960s ideological divide in the West, and are also the area on which the advocates of "Asian values" are likely to get the strongest support from their respective communities. This simple observation provides a clue to the emotional appeal of the cultural assertion contained in the "Asian values" argument. This feature also provides a link to the relative appeal—or at least toleration—of the strong, illiberal state advocated and imposed by Lee and others. Every time Lee Kuan Yew or Goh Chok Tong highlights social dislocation in the United States they touch sensitive nerves in significant sections—if not in the overwhelming majority—of

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their constituencies. This was shown very clearly in a survey conducted by the Times Publishing Berhad (publisher of *The Straits Times*) in the early 1980s. Even considering the tendency of Singaporeans to conform outwardly to government opinion, the survey showed overwhelming support for what we might call "traditional family values" and a near-total rejection of permissiveness (*The Straits Times* 13 February 1983). Other factors also contribute to a high level of popular acquiescence to authoritarianism, including negative features such as social control and intimidation, and positive features such as good economic performance and generally high levels of middle-class satisfaction. It is reasonable to believe, however, that the idea of building a firewall against libertarianism makes authoritarianism more palatable, even if not positively desirable.[12] The resultant dichotomy also affords advocates of "Asian values" an ideal opportunity to engage in a syllogistic sleight of hand and create what Michael J. Sullivan has called "the 'West-Asia' binary logic" (Sullivan 1999, 123), whereby genuine differences are exaggerated into supposedly mutually exclusive conceptions of social relations, governance and human rights.

Before leaving our consideration of these matters, it may be appropriate to consider a significant point that was flagged in the introduction of this article: the suggestion that the West's permissive and atomistic morality of the last three or four decades should not be regarded as a universal norm, but as a culturally specific morality. Although it would be misleading to attribute the social ills of western society since the 1960s exclusively, or even primarily, to the counter culture, there can be no doubt that this period heralded a striking change in western moral norms, and that since then Western Europe, America and the rest of the developed world (except Japan, Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore) have suffered from levels of family breakdown and other social ills that were only of minor concern in the first half of the century (Fukuyama 1999, 34). Francis Fukuyama made his name as a herald of political and economic liberalism with *The End of History and the Last Man*, and yet he sees the last four decades of the twentieth century as a period in which the West underwent a major cultural upheaval in which "liberal democracies [fell] prey to excessive individualism" (Fukuyama 1999, 4–7 and 10). Fukuyama has also collated criminal and social statistics from fourteen mainly western countries that verify the perception that the changes in morality and the social ills—what he calls the "Great Disruption"—began in the 1960s and early 1970s (Fukuyama 1999, 283–97 and 27–60). One can welcome or bemoan the new freedoms and licence associated with these changes, but surely the development of this morality is too recent, and its expression is tied too closely to post-1960s western culture, for it to be regarded as an expression of timeless or universal virtues. If this point is conceded, then modern western morals should be recognised as culturally dependent and temporally particular social mores, and the search for underlying universal values should

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extend further afield. It should further be recognised that advocates of "Asian values" have a right to reject western individualistic values in favour of more traditional, family-centred mores, and it should not be surprising that they would do so.

SINIC VALUES?

No doubt it does not come as a complete surprise that many of the elements of "Asian values" pre-date the contemporary debate, but it is uncanny just how closely Lee's thinking in the 1960s is linked to the rhetoric of the 1990s. Yet the lessons of the period go even deeper because despite Lee's western education, beginning at a British colonial primary school and finishing at the Cambridge Law School, he seems to have acquired and retained traces of a traditional Chinese cultural perspective that have, in turn, coloured his political perspective. Beneath his speeches in the 1960s was an implicitly relational, hierarchical, elitist and communitarian perspective that can be attributed reasonably to "Asian values" in the broadest, non-sectarian sense of the term, although it would be more accurate to follow Lee's own terminology and describe them as Sinic or "Confucian" values. If this argument is accepted, it suggests that the ingenuous elements of the "Asian values" debate go to the very question of the nature of society and cannot be dismissed lightly. Lee's very perception of the political process is breathtakingly elitist and communitarian. Although it is difficult to conceive of a more elitist inspiration for a model of democratic politics than that of the relationship between teacher and student, Lee consciously adopted this overtly Confucian model to rationalise his relationship with the electorate. He explained his position succinctly in 1966:

> In my experience—both as a pupil in school and in universities, and subsequently in trying to teach people at large simple political ideas—the most important person is the man who is in charge of the boy. . . For effective teaching—such as explaining to an ignorant audience the simple A.B.C. of currency or reserves backing, and why our currency could be sound if we do this or that—one really has to give of oneself. The process demands effort and nervous energy (Lee 1966–67, 7).

Elsewhere in this speech Lee expressed his vision of society in even more overtly organic and elitist terms when he introduced the concept of the social "pyramid". The social "pyramid", said Lee, consisted of "top leaders" at the apex, "good executives" in the middle, and a "highly civic-conscious broad mass" at the base (Lee 1966–67, 13). The role of each of these social strata was distinct, requiring

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"qualities of leadership at the top, and qualities of cohesion on the ground" (Lee 1966–67, 9). Lee supplemented his imagery of the pyramid with that of a military organisation (Lee 1966–67, 12), and argued that after the leaders come the "middle strata of good executives", because "the best general or the best prime minister in the world will be stymied if he does not have high-quality executives to help him carry out his ideas, thinking and planning" (Lee 1966–67, 12). Finally comes "the broad base" or the "privates" (Lee 1966–67, 12). They must be "imbued not only with self but also social discipline, so that they can respect the community and do not spit all over the place" (Lee 1966–67, 13).

Lee's relational, elitist worldview coloured most elements of his political thinking, putting him at odds with the most basic tenet of liberal thought: the equality of man. "I think one of the facts of life," Lee told a meeting of university students in June 1966:

> is that no two things are ever equal either in smallness or in bigness. Living things are never equal. Even in the case of identical twins, one comes out before the other and takes precedence over the other! So it is with human beings; so it is with tribes and so it is with nations (Lee 1959–90, 15 June 1966).

Lee was very open in his disregard for the principles of liberalism and the sanctity of human rights. Even when he was Leader of the Opposition in the late 1950s, he proclaimed the subservience of human rights to the need for good government: "We would be foolish to try and beguile ourselves with unsophisticated phrases of democracy and liberty and human rights and freedom, while we go down the drain" (Legislative Assembly 8 October 1958, column 807). Then, in one of his first speeches as Prime Minister, he declared his complete lack of interest in the theory of the separation of powers (Lee 1959–90, 15 August 1959), and duly conscripted and cajoled the civil service into becoming an arm of his People's Action Party (Chan 1989, 70–89), to be followed eventually by the whole of civil society, including the media (Rodan 1991, 110–11 and 129) and the trade unions (Vasil 1989, 144–70). He also espoused a utilitarian theory of law that rationalised the role of the courts as yet another instrument of nation-building and "the maintenance of good government" (Lee 1959–90, 18 January 1962).[13]

DEMOCRACY

Democracy also fared poorly in Lee's eyes. As early as 1955, he was on record as regarding democracy as an "experiment" to be judged by its results—a position

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that is completely consistent with his later practice of putting "good government" ahead of democracy (Legislative Assembly 24 November 1955, column 1239). It is significant that he now links his scepticism about democracy and his advocacy of "good government" to his communitarianism and cultural relativism. "All peoples of all countries need good government," he told an audience in Tokyo in 1992:

> . . . A country must first have economic development, then democracy may follow. With a few exceptions, democracy has not brought good government to new developing countries. Democracy has not led to development because the governments did not establish stability and discipline necessary for development.
>
> . . . As an Asian of Chinese cultural background, my values are for a government which is honest, effective and efficient in protecting its people and allowing opportunities to all to advance themselves in a stable and orderly society where they can live a good life and raise their children to do better than themselves (Lee 1992, 29–30).

Despite his scepticism about democracy, Lee has never been reluctant to justify his mandate by reference to his government's electoral majorities. He has, in fact, taken electoral victory as a licence to engage in whatever action is required to deliver "good government". In post-separation Singapore we did not witness a case of election results being ignored, rigged or overturned. Rather, the democratic mandate was used to justify the quashing of the liberal order. The "tightly knit" and "rugged" society was "illiberal democracy" in action decades before the term was coined.

THE DILEMMA OF THE FAMILY

There is, however, one major area of the modern "Asian values" debate in which Lee's record is less than consistent: the role of the family. Lee has not been a champion of the family in a sense that would be recognised by any western social conservative. He is a champion of working mothers, contraceptives, childcare, abortion, sterilisation, and eugenics, and has speculated on the potential benefits of encouraging single motherhood and polygamy for the brightest sections of the population. Yet despite the impression given by this list, from the late 1960s onwards he has displayed an underlying, though completely ineffectual, concern for the consequences of his own policies on family life. "There are almost no substitutes for the nurturing and nourishing a child receives from his or her

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parents, principally the mother," he told a meeting of female university students in 1968:

> . . . So I rejoiced when I read that nearly 50% of our university undergraduates are women. For this augurs well for the next generation. Later on, there will be other problems, such as the conflict between home and work. The creche and kindergarten are inadequate substitutes for the home. Perhaps we shall have to learn, like the advanced societies, that the investment a country puts into its women does not give the same kind of returns one expects to get from male citizens. For five to seven years after marriage there may be a hiatus in the economic returns as the women devote most of their time to rearing the family (Lee 1959–90, 5 October 1968).

In 1971, he expressed some of his worries to the Press Institute at Helsinki:

> Those who have been brought up in their own traditional life styles and cultural values have greater resistance to Western ills. By all means the pill to keep the birth rate down. But must it lead to promiscuity, venereal diseases, exhibitionism and a breakdown of the family unit? I do not have all the answers. I can only hope the pill plus the traditional importance of the Asian family unit, where paternity is seldom in doubt, can prevent the excesses from imitating contemporary Western sexual mores (Nair 1976, 175).

Lee's government has made great play of supporting the family, and even bases its housing and social security policies on the principles of the encouragement and presumption of intact, extended families. This suggests at a superficial level that he is what we might call a "familial communitarian" as well as a republican communitarian. It is therefore highly ironic that most of the threats to the stability and status of the traditional family came from his government's own policies. Despite the gulf between Lee's concerns for the family and many of his government's actions, there is nevertheless no reason to believe that he was insincere. The apparent inconsistency is perhaps best explained in Lee's rare admission that "I do not have all the answers". The significance for this study, however, is that Lee's ambivalence towards the family runs contrary to the spirit of the "Asian values" argument and exposes a point of weakness.

IN SERVICE TO THE STATE

The role of the family creates a dilemma for Lee Kuan Yew, as it does for many advocates of "Asian values", because the family is expected to fulfil two contradictory

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roles. It needs to be the building block of society and to provide the rationale for the paternalistic state, but it is also expected to be completely—and often humiliatingly—subservient to the needs of the state and the needs of the capitalist economy. Singaporeans are expected to function in extended, three-generation families, so that they, rather than the state, can take the main financial burden of caring for the young, the old, the sick and the unemployed. Housing policy currently contains incentives for three-tier families to live near each other, ignoring the fact that their separation was engineered by the government's housing policies in the first place (*The Straits Times* 1 March and 30 April 1982; Tremewan 1994, 59–60). Health and social security policies encourage, and sometimes force, adult children to assist aged parents with money (Ramesh 1992, 1093–108; Low 1998, 139–65). Government ministers and even the feature articles in the Sunday newspapers exhort parents to teach their children moral values, responsibility and respect for elders (*The Straits Times* 5 February 1981 and 6 June 1982). Yet all the while, the government is continually undermining the authority and standing of the family by pressuring it into assuming roles of subservience to the state.

The government presumed that it could and should turn fertility on and off like a tap through eugenically-sensitive economic and institutional incentives and disincentives.[14] This approach extended back to 1970 when a Eugenics Board was constituted to license doctors to perform sterilisations on medical, social, and eugenics grounds (Chew and Lee 1991, 235). Confinement and ante-natal charges in hospitals, access to housing, and public servants' access to paid maternity leave came to be determined by formulae which took into account the number of children in the family, and whether the mother or father had been sterilised (*Far Eastern Economic Review* 12 August 1977). In 1973, the government reduced from five to three the number of children for whom tax relief was available. The maximum level of tax relief a couple could claim for their children was thus restricted to just over one thousand dollars. This applied to all Singaporeans, apart from women in a select group of professions: women doctors and lawyers could claim child-related tax relief of several thousand dollars (*Far Eastern Economic Review* 23 July 1973). As if these presumptions on personal life were not enough, in 1983 Lee became concerned about the dysgenic implications of educated women staying single, so he canvassed the possibility of making single parenthood and polygamy socially acceptable for graduates (*The Straits Times* 3 January 1987), and introduced a graduate match-making service, called the Social Development Unit (Saw 1990, 13). He also initiated a series of incentives for well-educated people to have more children and a series of disincentives to encourage poorly-educated people to have fewer children and be sterilised.[15]

The humiliation extended even further into family life. The government presumed that it could and should determine the languages spoken in family

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homes.[16] It presumed that it could and should take responsibility for the moral, social and civic education of children "to save Singapore from becoming a nation of thieves" (*The Sunday Times* 17 January 1982). And all the while mothers were being urged to enter the paid work force and parents were turning increasingly to third parties to raise their children. Despite the government's sensitivity about raising children to have Asian values, many Singaporeans now leave the rearing of young children to "substitute mothers"[17]—usually grandparents, but often elder siblings, private foster care, childcare centres, or foreign housemaids. Insofar as parents have retained a direct role in personally transmitting values to the young, it has been in spite of rather than because of government policy.[18]

For the purposes of this article we can leave aside the question of the stress that these developments have placed on families and parents, although these must be considerable. The matter of immediate concern is that the family has become utterly dependent on the whims of the government for its character and function. It has been nearly destroyed as a role model for a hierarchical society and a communitarian, patriarchal state. Its long-term value for the transmission of traditional Asian values (without the inverted commas) must also be in serious doubt. Yet neither Lee, nor any of his successors who wish to remain faithful to his legacy, can afford to give the family the support or the freedom that it needs to fulfil its communitarian function. It is part of the rationale of his rule that even the most trivial aspects of family and personal life are subject to government policy. "I am often accused of interfering in the private lives of citizens," he said in 1986. "Yes, if I did not, had I not done that, we wouldn't be here today" (*The Straits Times* 18 August 1986). Truly strengthening and respecting the family would recreate alternative foci of domestic authority to rival the government, and such a move runs completely contrary to Lee's narrow, state-focused version of "Asian values".

CONCLUSION

It seems clear that the seeds of the modern "Asian values" debate have been planted deeply in Lee's political thought for many decades and strains of illiberalism, communitarianism and cultural assertion are deeply rooted in Lee's mind. To a remarkable extent, the "Asian values" argument of the 1990s is merely the most recent version of ideas on which Lee has been acting and speaking for three to four decades. This does not mean that there are no elements of ulterior political motives in his arguments, but it is important to recognise that beneath the shell of convenience lies a kernel of genuine belief. Furthermore, these dispositions do seem to reflect some underlying Sinic values that should not be treated cavalierly by his critics. Although it is risky to apply the lessons derived

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from the study of Lee to anyone else, it does seem advisable to assume that regardless of ulterior, self-serving motives, many, if not most, advocates of "Asian values" also harbour genuine, culturally-based impulses that dispose them towards paternalism, authoritarianism and elitism.

More pertinent to the ongoing "Asian values" debate, particularly as it relates to Lee's successors in the "Singapore school", our study of Lee reveals two closely related and pivotal features: the significance of western libertarianism in fostering the "Asian values" reaction, and Lee's contradictions over family policy. These two features are to some extent the opposite sides of the same coin, since each of them concerns the tenuous relationship between family-focused and state-focused communitarianism. Familial communitarianism can be and is being used as a tool to support state-focused republican communitarianism, but this is not its natural function. In their purest forms the two are rivals. In its most extreme form, republican communitarianism is a form of totalitarianism that cannot allow any alternative sources of authority or power in society. The republican communitarian therefore must try to place the state over the family—along with the whole of civil society—as the prime centre of social good and authority. This is the primary strand of continuity that links the Leninist regimes of China and Vietnam with the semi-democracies of Singapore and Malaysia. Familial communitarianism, on the other hand, regards the family, rather than the state, as a prime source of social good and authority. Unlike republican communitarianism, it does not have the tendency to demand a monopoly of authority, but it does crave the space in which to function properly and build social capital.

Lee Kuan Yew seems to have a genuine inclination towards familial communitarianism, but he is too dedicated to the idea of the strong state—and too much the social engineer—to leave the private realm to itself. This is dangerous ground for Lee, or at least for the heirs to his mantle in Singapore, because familial communitarianism—manifest as a reaction to western permissiveness—is one of the main sources of his electorate's tolerance of his paternalistic style of government. Unless there is a decisive change of direction by Lee's successors, we can expect that the family will continue to be regarded as a vassal of the state and be required to bend and twist to meet every need of the capitalist economy. In the process, the traditional Asian values that make the family a role model for a strong state will be weakened with each generation. In the meantime, it leaves the "Singapore school" exposed to the logic of its own pro-family rhetoric. This provides a culturally assertive foil with which to challenge and deflect the logic of republican communitarianism. It remains to be seen what will be the long-term effect of the tensions contained in Lee's communitarianism. It is conceivable that there will be a political reaction to the assaults on the family, but reversing these trends would involve such a serious challenge to the acquisitiveness inherent in the Singaporean culture created by Lee that the chances of mounting a

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successful political response—either from within or from outside the PAP—seem remote. It seems more likely that the government's efforts to retain "Asian values" at the family level will be the factor that prompts a political reaction. A continuation of government policies will probably mean that Singapore will follow the example of the West and suffer from increasing levels of social dislocation and family breakdown. The government is likely to try to meet these challenges by continuing to use the law, the taxation system and its other instruments of social control to stem the slide away from "Asian values". Such moves, however, are likely to breed increasingly bitter resentment along with compliance: resentment that could very easily escape from the tight control of the government's feedback and control mechanisms. Unless Lee or his successors find a way to restore the status of the family and reconcile the demands of traditional family structures with the economic and other demands of Singaporean life, "Asian values" are likely to be a short-lived affair in the city-state.

This argument raises a complementary challenge for critics of "Asian values"—especially but not exclusively western critics. If the appeal of the strong state rests partially on a rejection of post-1960s western libertarianism, it behoves us to examine western assumptions and to consider how much of our human rights rhetoric might be culturally based, as the advocates of "Asian values" suggest.[19] It should be noted that such an exercise would not be unprecedented. Some Asian critics of "Asian values" have been searching for a balanced approach to the debate that allows them to criticise authoritarianism without embracing what is seen as the West's excess of individualism. Former Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim was trying to walk this path before his detention (Anwar 1996), as is the group associated with Chandra Muzaffar's International Movement for a Just World (http://www2.jaring.my/just). It might be some small service to the cause of freedom and democracy in Asia if we could engage in a little reflective thought on such matters ourselves.

NOTES

[1]The author would like to thank Professor Carl Trocki of the Queensland University of Technology School of Humanities and Professor Martin Stuart-Fox of the University of Queensland Department of History for their advice and assistance.

[2]There are many overviews of Confucianism. One of the most useful for a discussion of Confucianism and the "Asian values" debate is contained in the opening chapters of Wm. Theodore de Bary's *Asian values and human rights: A Confucian communitarian perspective* (de Bary 1998).

[3]See *Asiaweek* 21 May 1999 for Lee's claim that he talked about "Confucian values", not "Asian values". In fact it would be more correct to say that he experimented with the term "Asian values" in the 1970s, but abandoned it because of the difficulty in identifying generic Asian values (Seah 1977). Since then Lee and his government have experimented with alternative

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concepts: "National Ideology", "Shared Values", "Chinese values" and "Confucian values". Lee seems to have settled for "Confucian values", but "Asian values" is still a useful label to describe the basket of arguments being described in the body of this article.

[4]Thais, for instance, show immense respect to their king because he is presumed to possess extraordinary virtue and moral force, while in traditional Malay culture people grow up conscious of their place in a strictly hierarchical society, and define themselves by their relationship with their Sultan (Keyes 1987, 32–42; Milner 1982, 44–47 and 94–97).

[5]See, for instance, the fact that 23 of the world's elder statesmen, including Helmut Schmidt, Kiichi Miyazawa, Shimon Peres, Kenneth Kaunda, Malcolm Fraser and even Jimmy Carter, joined Lee Kuan Yew in 1997 to sign a Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities, which they argued was needed to balance the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (*The Straits Times Weekly Edition* 6 September 1997).

[6]William Case applies the term "semidemocracy" to Singapore and Malaysia (Case 1996, 437–64).

[7]This line of reasoning is taken much further by Lucian Pye, who argues that the child's perception of the seemingly "magical" and omnipotent power of parents in most Asian cultures fosters very personalised concepts of power, and quiescent but defensive responses to the exercise of power (Pye 1985, 21–25; Pye 1999, 763–82).

[8]Dr Mahathir has used the Chinese as a model for Malays since at least 1970 when he wrote *The Malay dilemma*. See for instance Chapter 7, 'Rehabilitation of the Malays and the Malay Dilemma', where he wrote that "the basis [of Chinese business skill] is the natural Chinese thriftiness which allows them to save and to expand on a minimal profit. The Malays can be told to spend less, but habit and the character of generations cannot be removed in a single stroke" (Mahathir 1970, 110).

[9]Muslims in the Malaysian Parliament were outraged and called for trade bans on the West (*The Straits Times* 29 October 1993).

[10]Excerpts of many of these speeches have been collected in Lee 1991b.

[11]Both Goh and Lee seem to have ignored the possibility that the Chinese-educated had only limited exposure to the counter culture because of their limited command of the English language.

[12]The true degree of support for undemocratic regimes is difficult to measure, but it is widely acknowledged that many of the undemocratic regimes of East and Southeast Asia represent broadly the aspirations of their populations. For instance, Onuma Yasuaki, a strong critic of the "Asian values" argument, nevertheless acknowledges the widespread acceptance of such regimes and actively denies that local "human rights activists represent the will of the people as a whole" (Onuma 1999, 105–06).

[13]Those seeking an indication of the jurisprudential philosophy at work in Singapore may wish to read the following reviews of particular proceedings: *JB Jeyaretnam v Law Society of Singapore* [1988] 3 *Malayan Law Journal* 425, p. 425; and International Commission of Jurists [Stuart Littlemore, QC] 1997.

[14]For an overview of eugenic measures see Lee, Campbell and Chia 1999, 65–68 and Dang Rajakru 1996, 3–27.

[15]The government, for instance, introduced a scheme whereby the children of university-educated mothers with three or more children received priority in gaining admission to the best schools, while the children of non-university educated parents who had been sterilised received a higher priority than the children of still-fertile uneducated parents. As well as these incentives and disincentives, the taxation, housing and welfare systems were used for eugenic

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purposes. Tax breaks were offered to university-educated couples who had children, while poorly-educated people were offered a $10,000 incentive to be sterilised. The latter inducement took the form of a deposit into the woman's Central Provident Fund (CPF) account that could then be used as a deposit for a Housing and Development Board flat (*Far Eastern Economic Review* 2 February and 21 June 1984). In 1985, Tony Tan successfully overturned the policy of linking access to education to the fertility and education of one's parents (*Far Eastern Economic Review* 4 April 1985; Sandhu and Wheatley 1989, 69). Many other aspects of Lee's eugenicist initiatives have been amended or abandoned as Singapore moved from a generally anti-natal to a pro-natal policy, and as the "second generation" of leaders have exerted their influence (Sandhu and Wheatley 1989, 181).

[16]There are many examples of government ministers and even senior civil servants lecturing parents on the need to speak Mandarin rather than other Chinese dialects at home. One example is found on the front page of *The Straits Times* of 17 January 1980.

[17]The term "substitute mothers" is taken from Lee, Campbell and Chia 1999, 162. They use the term without any implied criticism.

[18]The level of work force participation by mothers with children under twelve is not as high as might be expected—approximately 40 per cent in 1990. Since grandparents are the favoured providers of childcare, the exposure of young children to extra-family influences through childcare arrangements is still relatively low. For figures on work force participation by mothers and childcare arrangements see Lee, Campbell and Chia 1999, 163–66.

[19]There are small signs that such libertarian revisionism may have already made a modest start. See Waldron 1999, and Berns 1999.

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