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China's Rise and the Chinese Overseas

Edited by
Bernard P. Wong and
Tan Chee-Beng



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Since the 1978 opening up of China and her active engagement in economic reformation and modernization, China has become a truly global economic power. These developments have, consequently, had an impact on ethnic Chinese people living across the world.

Traditionally, the study of immigrant communities has focused on internal factors, such as the leadership and social organization of the actors inside the communities. This book, however, turns its attention to the exogenous factors that have helped shape the lives of the Chinese diaspora. In doing so, it presents a valuable contribution to the recent literature, which focuses on the effect of globalization on the Chinese overseas. Using a number of empirical case studies, including the San Francisco Bay Area, Canada, South Africa and Hungary, it provides an investigation into how China's contemporary position in the world has affected the identity of the various locales of the Chinese in different continents. While demonstrating the implications of China's rise on patterns of circular migration and transnational movements, it also explores how the social and economic relations between Chinese communities and their host and ancestral countries have changed. Ultimately, it highlights how China's rise has brought new economic opportunities and political clout for the Chinese overseas, but at the same time has created new stereotypes and racial images by association.

As an in-depth study of Chinese societies as well as current migration trends, this book will be useful for students of Chinese studies, ethnic studies, anthropology and sociology.

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First published 2018
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN: 978-1-138-29368-7 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-315-23195-2 (ebk)

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Wearset Ltd, Boldon, Tyne and Wear

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Introduction

Contemporary China's rise and the Chinese overseas

Tan Chee-Beng and Bernard P. Wong

This book¹ is about the impacts of contemporary China's rise on the Chinese overseas and their residing countries. Since 1978, which marks the opening up of China and her active engagement in economic reformation and modernization, the country has now emerged as a global economic power. What are the impacts of this China's rise on the Chinese overseas? The term "China's rise" is of course a convenient term. As Wanning Sun, John Fitzgerald and Jia Gao have pointed out in their chapter in this book, "China's rise" as an analytical concept can be confusing and the term had been used before in different contexts, including when the People's Republic of China (PRC) was founded in 1949. The term is used in this book to refer to the emergence of China as a world power, which began in the late twentieth century after China's opening up and market reform, which culminated in her becoming the world's largest economy in the world in the twenty-first century, accompanied by her growing military might and global political influence. Its use should not mislead one to think that China was never a strong country – one needs only to think of the great Tang China, or China as a naval power as shown by Admiral Zheng He's voyages to, in present-day labels, Southeast Asia, South Asia and Africa.

The term "Chinese overseas" needs some explanation, too. While some ethnic Chinese scholars who are not of Chinese origin frown upon the use of the term "overseas Chinese" for its historical connection with *huaqiao*, or Chinese sojourners, the term "Chinese overseas" cannot always refer to only the Chinese of nationalities other than that of China, which it generally means to refer to, sort of like *haiwai huaren* in Chinese. For convenience, "Chinese overseas" and, for that matter, "overseas Chinese," often refers to Chinese who live outside China, or, more clearly, outside Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. Similarly, "Chinese diaspora" is also often used to refer to all the Chinese living outside China, that is, Chinese overseas, even though strictly those who have become rooted locally and do not see China as home are not diasporic anymore, that is, strictly diaspora is best used to refer to the new immigrants and those who still regard China as a home they can return to or who still see themselves as belonging to the nation of China. In this book, we use "Chinese overseas" in the general sense of all the Chinese living in diaspora, i.e., living outside Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan,² and the contributors will identify

specific groups of Chinese, such as the new Chinese migrants or the local Chinese of a few generations, when specific distinctions need be made.

Contemporary China's rise has many impacts globally, especially economically and politically, and there are now many books and articles assessing the impacts of China's rise, discussing, among others, whether China's rise will be peaceful or a threat to other big powers and neighboring countries (e.g., Guo 2006; Yee 2011; Chan 2013; Roy 2013; Dellios and Ferguson 2013; Herrick, Gai and Subramaniam 2016). There are also many titles in Chinese, generally also on the economic and political aspects about China and the world order (e.g., Chen and Liu 2011). While China's twenty-first-century rise has great impacts on the Chinese overseas, too, there is not as much discussion, and so the work of Kuehn, Louie and Pomfret (2013) is a welcome contribution, examining the impacts of China's rise on cultural production and representation in the Chinese diasporas, in literary writings and in films.

This book began with a panel on China's rise and the Chinese overseas organized by the editors at the ISSCO (International Society for the Study of Chinese Overseas) regional conference held in Seoul in 2015, of which five papers (those by Evelyn Hu-DeHart, Amy Liu, Ngeow Chow-Bing and Tan Chee-Beng, Mette Thunø, and Bernard Wong) have been revised and included in this book, and we are also pleased that Eva Xiaoling Li and Peter S. Li, Wanning Sun, John Fitzgerald and Jia Gao, Karen L. Harris, Duan Ying, Amy H. Liu, and Yelena Sadovskaya have joined us to bring forth this book. We did not fix a definite theoretical framework for the book, as we thought it would be more useful to see how each specialist on the Chinese overseas sees the issue of China's rise in his or her particular region and from his or her research experience. The chapters in this book show that the contributors do separately address certain common issues like the need to examine the impacts of China's rise in relation to not just China but also the local national policies and political economy, the need to see the issues in the historical and cultural contexts of Chinese immigration, China's soft policy and her increasing interest to use the Chinese overseas as public diplomats, assessing whether China's rise is beneficial to the Chinese overseas, and the impact on Chinese integration into the local societies and influence on the ethnic identification of the Chinese overseas.

This book shows that Chinese immigration has always affected the Chinese overseas and their residing countries. In fact, most contributors in this book find it necessary to discuss the impact of contemporary China's rise in its historical and local social context, viewing immigration and relating this to the host societies in historical perspective. Chinese migration in great numbers had occurred in the past when China was poor and war-torn, as in the nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth century. Many of the early migrants were rather involuntary, forced by circumstances of poverty or social disorder. The twenty-first-century rise of China has led to educated Chinese and successful businesspeople having the option to migrate overseas, adding to the diversity of Chinese populations within a country. This has also included transforming the traditional demographic pattern of Chinese of South China origin, as now many are from

other provinces, like Zhejiang and Shandong, even Xinjiang. There are also increasing numbers of non-Han migrants from China, including the Huis and Uyghurs, who are Muslims, who transform the foodscape in many cities worldwide by opening restaurants offering cuisine from northwest China, as can be seen in some cities in Malaysia, New Zealand, Australia and Canada.

The book begins with Bernard Wong's chapter describing the impact of new migration following China's rise on the Chinese community in the San Francisco Bay Area. One of the impacts is "subethnic change" as the community is no more merely a Cantonese community, for, after the 1980s, there are both Cantonese and Mandarin speakers. This new phenomenon is also observed by Eva Xiaoling Li and Peter S. Li in Canada. As Bernard Wong points out, "The rise of China has enabled the entry of many Chinese wealthy elites, students and entrepreneurs." This has an impact on Chinese social organizations, too, with the establishment of associations by students from China, including many alumni associations based on universities in China, such as Peking University and Fudan University. This reflects not only the diverse origins of students from China studying in the USA but also the presence of highly qualified professionals working in the USA, thus indicating occupational changes of the Chinese there. Bernard Wong describes these high-tech workers as "the pillars of the high-tech economy in Silicon Valley."

In Chapter 2, Eva Xiaoling Li and Peter S. Li discuss the making of the Chinese in Canada over historical periods as a result of changes in China and Canada. They provide an in-depth analysis of the expansion in education in China and the pursuit of higher degrees overseas. The increase in the pool of fresh graduates in China does not just serve the increasing need of post-reform China; the highly educated people in China and the students studying overseas also provide a pool of talent that helps to fill the need for skilled workers in Canada and other countries. Governments, such as those of Canada and Singapore, have introduced immigration regulations to facilitate the admission of highly educated migrants. The highly educated new Chinese migrants fill in the demand for skilled labor in the expanding information-based economy of Canada. Eva Xiaoling Li and Peter S. Li conclude that "the future effect of home country on Chinese overseas would be more likely to be based on economic incentives and job opportunities, rather than a sense of cultural affinity or ancestral identity of Chinese overseas."

In Chapter 3, Wanning Sun, John Fitzgerald and Jia Gao also take a historical and cultural approach to Chinese migration to understand the impact of China's rise. Like Bernard Wong, and Xiaoling Li and Peter S. Li, in their study of USA and Canada, Sun, Fitzgerald and Gao also note a rapid increase in the size of the Chinese-speaking population in Australia, due to the increase of migrants from China since the 1990s. China's rise means that there are more people with the means to consider migration, not just to pursue a better career but also, in the words of Sun, Fitzgerald and Gao, "to enjoy a cleaner and higher-quality life-style," and Australia appeals to Chinese migrants as a good place to live and to educate their children. Similar to other contributors, Sun, Fitzgerald and Gao also

emphasize the need to analyze Chinese immigration and China's rise in relation to racial politics and immigration regulations. The experience of racism in daily life has led to many new migrants feeling attached to their home country.

The need of Chinese as a minority to position and reposition themselves in relation to racism and changing local and international politics is amply discussed in Karen Harris's historical overview of the Chinese in South Africa. She writes, "Throughout the twentieth century the South African Chinese community was constantly reacting and resisting the strictures of the various colonial, segregationist, apartheid and postapartheid regulations and policies." Thus the Chinese have umbrella national associations to articulate their interests. With the rise of China, the local Chinese have also used this foreign representation to gain leverage to get an official response from the local government.

The intricate nature of the impacts of China's rise on the Chinese overseas is well illustrated in the chapter on Malaysia by Ngeow Chow-Bing and Tan Chee-Beng, who show the need to discuss this issue in relation to the politics of ethnicity that defines the country's development. They show that the impact of China's rise on Malaysia and on the ethnic Chinese needs to be analyzed in relation to the state interest of both China and Malaysia and the political economy of Malaysia. Although a small country with a population of 30 million, of whom the Chinese make up 25 percent, Malaysia has a relatively large proportion of Chinese compared to other countries outside Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and Singapore, the last of which formed an independent island country after leaving Malaysia in 1965. There are officially recognized Chinese primary schools throughout the country and there are independent Chinese secondary schools and colleges that are funded by the Chinese community. Thus the Chinese in Malaysia are culturally self-reliant, even though they have been in touch with China culturally and economically.

Overall, the Chinese businesspeople and elites in Malaysia welcome China's rise, including her vision of "One Belt One Road," hoping to have more economic and cultural exchange. But people who own smaller businesses do not generally benefit much from China's rise and in fact face stiff competition from China. Culturally the impacts have been linked to China's soft diplomacy, which the Chinese welcome with caution. China has been more assertive in soft diplomacy to get the support of the Chinese in Malaysia, and she has begun to donate money in support of Chinese-medium schools.

China has become more assertive in her soft diplomacy worldwide and also protecting its citizens overseas. But is China willing and able to take care of the Chinese overseas who are citizens of other nationalities? In this respect, it is interesting to note the discussion of Ngeow and Tan about the Chinese ambassador to Malaysia taking a politically highly symbolic walk down Petaling Street (symbolically the "Chinatown" of Kuala Lumpur) when a group of nationalist Malays planned to hold a provocative demonstration there. This symbolic act of China's assertiveness is of course controversial even among the local Chinese. For Chinese living as minorities in the Malay world and indeed elsewhere, there is a need to be concerned that China's rise and assertiveness should not incite

anti-Chinese feeling, for their experiences tell them that when there is an anti-Chinese campaign or riot it is the local Chinese who will suffer. China as a big power is ultimately concerned with her big power strategic consideration, not the fate of specific Chinese overseas community. Furthermore, China can legitimately protect her citizens overseas but not the Chinese of other nationalities; with the latter it can only express human rights concerns.

This concern of the Chinese overseas as minority about its own fate is also discussed by Karen Harris. While the South African government welcomes China's investment in the mining industry and Chinese retailers coming to do business, the local Chinese need to be concerned about the fallout of opposition to certain Chinese investments by opposition leaders. "Their positioning and repositioning for over a century within the contours of changing international dispensations and allegiances persist," writes Karen Harris, that is, the local-born Chinese in South Africa have to continue to adjust to changing political situations. In a country like Indonesia, where there has been a history of Chinese being made the scapegoat of the country's economic problems or of poverty, there is obviously serious concern about nationalist and narrow-minded politicians using the issue of China's investment to arouse anti-China feelings that can easily be transformed into anti-ethnic Chinese in the country. The USA as a superpower has and will continue to have occasions of conflicts with China, which is not just an economic power but also a growing military one. Chinese-Americans can easily become scapegoats of anti-China campaigns or anti-China media reports or they have to face suspicions and accusations. Bernard Wong discusses these challenges for Chinese-Americans, and he points out that the Chinese in the USA seem to experience more hardships due to the rise of China, as false accusations of Chinese-American as "spies" has been on the rise.

The Chinese minority in Myanmar is also very much concerned about how the Burmese perceive China and how Chinese investments would affect them, more so because Myanmar borders China to the north and Chinese traders from Yunnan can easily make their presence felt in Myanmar. In Chapter 6, Duan Ying examines the impacts of China on Myanmar and the Chinese there under the theme rethinking of "*pauk-phaw*," the discourse about the friendly relationship between Burma and China. Bordering Yunnan, Chinese traders and entrepreneurs can move into Myanmar both by land and by air, and there are economic opportunities for them there. Building shopping malls and hotels, doing business and engaging in mining and logging, the increased presence of China and new Chinese migrants as well as tourists is much more visible and felt than in other more developed Southeast Asian countries. Thus, Duan Ying writes that "relations between China and Myanmar have encountered some uncertainty, characterized by some sensitive issues such as the moratorium on the construction of the Myitsone Dam [and] frustration over Chinese investment in copper mining." There are negative stereotypes of the Burmese about the Chinese, and Duan Ying points out that there are Burmese critics who question the legitimacy of Chinese capital, assuming it to be related to jade smuggling and drug trafficking. Some local Chinese groups have tried to promote a greater understanding of

the locals about China and Chinese culture, but Duan Ying stresses the need of China and Chinese investors to have “comprehensive consideration about local culture, civil movement, public opinion and the complex power relations between local regime and central government,” that is, there is the need to cultivate trust and understanding. Myanmar is strategically important to China, and as she opens up more democratic space and thus gets more USA and European support and influence China will need to rely on more soft power than merely on the support of the political dominance of the Myanmar military. The impacts of China’s rise in Myanmar is very much intertwined with big power politics and China’s state and private investments in the country. The *pauk-phaw* relationship is thus an important rhetoric to articulate friendship between China and Myanmar and between Chinese and Burmese.

The emergence of China as a center of global capitalism has significant impacts in most countries in the world, and China has become a major if not the most important trading partner of many countries. From textiles and footwear to increasingly electronic products especially mobile phones and computers, many people all over the world have bought relatively inexpensive Chinese products. Despite the presence of voices against this increasingly Chinese presence, most governments welcome Chinese investment. Amy H. Liu writes that, in Hungary, despite opposition to economic migrants, the presence of the Chinese is not much included in this public rhetoric. Her research shows that “the Chinese diaspora is simply a political instrument in a larger economic game between Beijing and Budapest,” and, as long as Chinese economic contribution is needed, “the almost 20,000 Chinese in Budapest will also continue to be ‘welcomed’ in Hungary despite pervasive racism.” In fact, the stereotypes against the Chinese, who are mostly not citizens, are rather negative, like not making an effort to learn the local language and not being likely to regard Hungary as home.

Cuba is an interesting case where the present Chinese population is rather small but the economic impact of China’s rise is felt everywhere today in the Cubans’ daily life. Public transport depends on Chinese-made buses; even ATM machines are Chinese; while appliances at home like rice cookers, refrigerators and washing machines, even coffee makers, are also Chinese-made, as reported by Evelyn Hu-DeHart. She points out that Cuba once had a vibrant Chinatown, which was established slightly before the San Francisco and New York City Chinatowns, but most Chinese left after their businesses and properties were nationalized in the 1960s. Today there are only a few thousand people who still identify as Chinese and most of them are “mixed-blood descendants of Chinese men and Cuban mothers and grandmothers,” as Evelyn Hu-DeHart writes. There are few new Chinese immigrants except for the “thousands of Chinese students who have arrived since 2006,” who study Spanish, tourism, journalism and medicine. Cuba’s case illustrates very well the need to analyze the impacts of China’s rise in the context of China, as well as in the contexts of local and international politics. The 50 years of US embargo and the loss of Soviet subsidies following the collapse of the Soviet Union, allowed China to move in to alleviate Cuba’s hardship, and enabled her to be in the best position to consolidate

economic and political ties with Cuba. While President Barack Obama began the normalizing process with Cuba in 2015, we learn from Evelyn Hu-DeHart that Chinese state and private entrepreneurs are already ready for the day when Cuba liberalizes her policy on foreign investments and property ownership. As it is, Chinese state enterprises are already “building different kinds of power and energy plants throughout Cuba.” This will lead to more new Chinese migrants going to Cuba and will no doubt transform the demography and ethnoscape of the present small Chinese community in the country. Both Cuba and Myanmar are marked by the intense presence of China, not only in investment but also in people’s daily life, even though Cuba is so far away from China, showing that it is the overall internal and external factors, including big power politics, that influence the impacts of China’s rise. However, Myanmar has an influx of many Chinese traders due to both the country’s proximity to China and a lack of any hindrance to Chinese doing business directly.

China’s rise has great significance in post-Soviet Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), especially now in the 2000s with the pursuit of the “One Belt One Road” vision.³ According to this, China is pushing for greater political and economic relations, and she has many investments in the countries there, including, importantly, infrastructure development. The study of the Chinese in Central Asia has been rather neglected, although scholars are beginning to pay attention now that China is playing a bigger role there. Although the Chinese population is small, they are diverse and there are non-Han Chinese groups. This book has a chapter by Yelena Sadovskaya, who writes about the diverse Chinese diasporas in Kazakhstan, comprising Han Chinese, Uyghurs, Dungans (called Dongganren, i.e., Donggan people, in Mandarin), Koreans, Uzbeks and others, most of whom arrived as refugees in the early 1960s. However, the Dungans had a longer history of settlement, being descendants of Hui who fled Shaanxi and Gansu toward the end of the nineteenth century. Unlike the small numbers of Han who had settled for around two generations and who have mostly intermarried and who have not maintained much of their Chinese culture, the Dungans still maintain their traditional culture and many of their students are now receiving education in China. A long-term impact of China’s rise is the re-Sinicization of the younger generation of Dungans. Unlike the Dungans, writes Sadovskaya, “local Uyghurs do not benefit as much from China’s rise.” This is understandable given China’s suspicious attitudes toward the Uyghurs in Xinjiang and abroad. Sadovskaya also examines the new Chinese migrants comprising Han Chinese professionals, petty traders and businesspeople running small and medium-sized enterprises, and their controversial contribution to the national and local economies. There are some similarities with Burma, as Kazakhstan also borders China, although in this case most traders and migrants have come from or through Xinjiang. The chapter by Sadovskaya points to the need to do more research in Central Asia on the fascinating diverse groups of both Han and non-Han Chinese overseas who have different histories of settlement and strategies and perspectives of adaptation in Kazakhstan.

Finally, we have an excellent chapter by Mette Thunø, which examines China's changing policies toward the Chinese diaspora in the twenty-first century. As an economic power and a growing military power, China is now engaged in political and economic relations globally and she has paid attention to increasing her soft power. In this endeavor, China is paying attention to mobilizing the Chinese overseas as "public diplomats." In fact, the PRC has mobilized the Chinese overseas to support its economic reforms and to unify Taiwan with the mainland as well as speaking out against separatist movements. Now, as Mette Thunø points out, China also mobilizes the Chinese overseas as public diplomats to improve China's image abroad or to help articulate China's position on internal (such as on issues of national unity) and international issues. China's soft power is also noted in some other chapters, notably that of Ngoew and Tan, and Wanning Sun, John Fitzgerald and Jia Gao. Sun, Fitzgerald and Gao point out that in Australia many Chinese are willing to do their bit for China, especially those who experience alienation or who have experienced racism. They point out that most Chinese migrants use the Chinese media to be informed about China and Australia, and this is an important arena of pursuing public diplomacy. In fact, the Chinese overseas can serve as public diplomats not only for China but also for their residing countries, and in this respect Sun, Fitzgerald and Gao point out that the Australian government "was and still is slow to see the actual and potential value of this cohort in pursuing its own ambitions."

Overall, the impacts of China's rise on the Chinese overseas are significant and varied. Economically, the emergence of China as an economic power and a center of global capitalism means that her presence in countries all over the world is significant and visible and China as a place of investment is also very important. Large Chinese entrepreneurs, like many non-Chinese corporations, have been attracted to invest in China, but within a country the extent that the local Chinese benefit from Chinese investment may not be very significant, since China and her entrepreneurs generally cooperate with the local government and large corporations, which may not belong to the local Chinese. The Malaysian case shows that business size matters, as the larger Chinese businesses may be able to benefit from China's rise but for the smaller firms this is not so. On the other hand, increasing Chinese investment encourages more influx of petty and large Chinese businesspeople to a country, contributing to the increase of new Chinese migrants all over the world. However, not all of these new arrivals will stay, while some countries have strict regulation against migrants obtaining citizenship or permanent resident status, as in the case of Malaysia especially with regards to Chinese migrants.

The migration of the Chinese is multidimensional in direction. Many of the Chinese students who study overseas stay behind, and there are many professionals from China migrating overseas, contributing to the need for skilled labor in, for instance, Canada and the USA. But an economically strong China means that many highly educated Chinese have moved back to China to take advantage of the economic opportunities there or move transnationally with families based outside China, in the USA or Australia for instance. As described in the chapter

by Bernard Wong, the Chinese immigrants and students from China are builders of the high-tech economy and are contributors to the local and USA economy. Similarly, China also benefits from investment, talent and cultural exchange from America. In the twenty-first century, Chinese overseas live in a much more globalized world in which they have even more transnational links with a China that has also become an important center of global capitalism. And there is much mobility and transnational networking. Like many middle-class and professional Chinese overseas having transnational family networks in different parts of the globe, more and more Chinese from China are also having transnational families. And there are of course those who do business transnationally between China and a home overseas. This inevitably leads to a change in attitudes about homeland. As the Chinese overseas opt for flexible citizenship (Ong 1999), and live transnationally, they may have more than one homeland (Tan 2011).

Culturally the impact is generally positive. The emergence of China as an economic power has meant that learning Chinese is useful and governments all over the world have encouraged learning Chinese or at least got rid of past restrictions on learning Chinese. In countries where learning Chinese was difficult because of lack of facilities or government restriction, now they have better opportunities to learn the language, while China has sent teachers to teach Chinese at Confucian Institutes all over the world. Coeditor Tan's visits to Mauritius and Tahiti found that there are even older Chinese, not just non-Chinese and young Chinese, who take advantage of the facility to enroll in learning Chinese, i.e., Mandarin, at the China Cultural Center of Mauritius and at the Confucian Institute (Tahiti). At the same time, China has sent artists, dancers and martial arts experts, often at the request of the local Chinese, to different countries in support of the local Chinese cultural activities (cf. Tan 2016). And China has also contributed to the development of Chinatowns in different parts of the world, like making contributions to erect Chinatown arches. Of course, from China's perspective, all these contributions from China are part of her soft diplomacy, to build a bridge with the local Chinese and their country.

Among its many impacts, the emergence of China as a world power also has an influence on the ethnic culture of the Chinese overseas, most evident of which is perhaps the rise of the Mandarin-speaking population among Chinese overseas, and the popular use of Mandarin among Chinese overseas communities. In terms of ethnic identity, China's rise provides a new material and cultural base for Chinese overseas to develop what may be termed as "multiple ethnic identities" or "transnational ethnic identity," as opposed to the notion of singular identity of having to choose between the "home" country and the "new" country. Various chapters in this book have noted the increase in diversity of the Chinese population due to the diverse origins of new Chinese migrants whose migration is spurred by or corresponds to China's rise. The increase in new migrants also means increase in the use of Mandarin, and this has an impact on local Chinese cultural industry, in mass media and Chinese writing. Where the Chinese have become localized culturally, China's rise has implications for re-Sinification. In the case of the Dungans in Central Asia, we have seen that the young people are

not just learning Chinese locally; many also go to China to study. However, change in cultural identity does not necessarily mean change in ethnic identification. In fact, Bernard Wong argues that, contrary to popular perception,

the Chinese community in the San Francisco Bay Area has not become more “sinicized” or developed more allegiance to the People’s Republic of China as a result of the emergence of a strong China. Paradoxically, as a whole it has become more Americanized, with more participation in US society and more commitment to America.

However, the extent to which the new immigrants are integrated into the local society depends on local policy of acceptance as well as whether they face racism in their daily life. There is also the issue of whether new Chinese migrants are integrated into the existing Chinese community or not. In some countries, new migrants challenge the leadership of the localized Chinese who are descendants of older generations of migrants, as reported by Isabelle Lausent-Herrera (2013); in others, such as in Mauritius, the new migrants and the more established and localized Chinese cooperate in the same associations (Tan 2016), while in Singapore Tan observes that the leadership of the Chinese associations has now comprised many new migrants who are highly educated professionals even though ordinary Singaporeans have rather negative stereotypes about the new Chinese migrants.

China’s investments overseas may be welcome by the governments but if they benefit only those in power and the rich, and very little for ordinary people, there may be opposition to greater Chinese involvement, especially in resource-related investments, such as mining in some African countries. Opposition parties’ politicians and the local media may oppose increasing commercial involvement and this may create anti-China feeling, as discussed in the chapters on Hungary, Myanmar and South Africa, which affect the local Chinese. In countries like Indonesia, which has a history of anti-Chinese riots, it is understandable that the local Chinese are concerned about the behavior of China and the nature of investments by firms from China.

Does a strong China help their émigrés overseas? China’s increasing influence in the world is often viewed as flexing its soft power, and China’s continuous interest in Chinese overseas around the world is sometimes suspected to carry an underlying motive to advance Chinese’s interest. By extension, Western powers have also exploited such views, rightly or wrongly, to accuse segments of the Chinese overseas population for its actions as having sacrificed the national interest of the residing country for the benefit of China. In view of the controversy surrounding the emerging influence of China globally, it would be too simplistic to assess China’s rise in terms of whether it benefits or harms Chinese overseas. In other words, the influence is bound to be multidimensional and multifaceted. Undoubtedly, China’s rise has brought new economic opportunities and political clout for Chinese overseas, but at the same time it has created new stereotypes and racial images for Chinese overseas by association.

The destiny of Chinese overseas as an ethnic group has much to do not only with factors emanating from the larger society but also with an emerging strong China, as well as the responses of other big powers and, in this respect, the relationship between China and the USA is most significant, for, as Kissinger (2011) points out, “a peaceful and growing world requires co-operation and friendship between the United States and China.”

Lastly, our study of China’s rise and the Chinese overseas provides a wealth of information for the formulation of theories relevant to migration, transnationalism, ethnic interaction and integration, and broadly global politics, capitalism and ethnicity. During the Cold War and the years since then until the rise of China, most overseas Chinese communities tried to emphasize their distinctive separation from the PRC. With the rise of China as an economic power and her increasing, concerted effort to bring in the Chinese overseas for her soft diplomacy, the Chinese overseas, willingly or unwillingly, for good or for worse, are once again closely embraced by a strong China. Those who experience discrimination and racism in their own country may hope for China’s protection, but the experiences of the Chinese in Southeast Asia and India tell them to be wary of this. Eventually their fate lies with their residing country unless they choose to leave. Nevertheless, our book shows that they need to be concerned about the impacts of China’s rise, which affect them positively and negatively as the case may be.

Notes

- 1 We thank Peter S. Li for reading and making some useful comments on this chapter.
- 2 Peter S. Li and Eva Xiaoling Li (2011) have given their definition as follows:

the population of Chinese overseas is defined as those ethnic Chinese who have settled outside of Mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau either in their generation or in their ancestral past but claim or trace an origin from China. It includes first-generation Chinese immigrants who may retain the nationality of China but have settled in another country, as well as descendants of Chinese immigrants, who may have fully assimilated into the adopted country of the migrant ancestors.

- 3 The One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative was announced by President Xi Jinping when he visited Central Asia and Southeast Asia in 2013. Inspired by the historic Silk Road by land and by sea, this initiative may be described as China’s strategic vision to enhance her strategic interests and influence through economic development that will link countries in Central Asia, West Asia, the Middle East and Europe, as well as Southeast Asia, South Asia and Africa, and by extension, Oceania and South America, with China. This serves also to portray China’s peaceful rise as benefiting both China and other countries.

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1 The rise of China and its impact on the Chinese in the San Francisco Bay Area

Bernard P. Wong

Introduction

The formation of an ethnic group and its relationship with the larger society have been envisioned differently by social scientists of various schools of persuasions. Some have argued that the continuity of ethnicity is an artifact of the emergence of capitalism. Others believe that some ethnic groups have an inherent anti-assimilation tendency to the host society. Some insist that it is the enculturation process emphasizing one's own ethnicity. Still others argue that it is the larger society or the encapsulating society that molds the assimilation process of the ethnic group. This chapter, while not denying that there are many forces or factors emanating from the larger society and from the ethnic groups, would like to show that the emergence of the country of emigration as a world power plays a pivotal role in shaping the ethnic culture and its interaction patterns with the larger society. Specifically, this chapter is interested in examining how the rise of China in the past three decades has affected the ethnic Chinese in San Francisco. This Chinese community is chosen to investigate the relationships between China and the Chinese-Americans for a variety of reasons. First, the San Francisco Chinese community is the oldest in the United States and it has a cross-section of the Chinese population of the USA in terms of age, sex and economic characteristics. Second, it is representative of the Chinese in the USA in terms of social organization and occupational structure. Third, the Chinese in this region comprise both the Chinatown-connected and the non-Chinatown population. Fourth, the trends set up by the Chinese immigrants are representative of the rest of America such as the formation of identity and their participation in the larger society.

A formal relationship between United States and the People's Republic of China did not officially begin until 1979 after President Nixon's visit to China. Although the Chinese Communist Party started ruling the Chinese mainland in 1949, the US government did not recognize China during the period between 1949 and 1979. During this period, the Chinese communities in the USA had only minimal contacts with China. The isolation was aggravated by the Korean War (1950–1953), when the USA and PRC were adversaries. Few Chinese-Americans were interested in having any deep contacts with the Chinese

mainland during this period for fear of being labeled as traitors and being given possible “concentration camp” treatment similar to that imposed on Japanese-Americans in the 1940s. Contacts between the PRC and Chinese-Americans have been on the rise since the implementation of the modernization programs of Deng Xiaoping in the 1970s, and the influence of China on the Chinese-American communities has been felt more deeply since 1980. With the emergence of China as a global economic power in the past 30 years (1980–2016), many changes occurred in USA–China relations. However, the increased activities between Chinese-Americans and China do not necessarily imply that the Chinese in the Bay Area are more “sinicized” and less committed to the USA. On the contrary, the increased contacts with PRC make the Chinese in America keenly aware of their destiny. The Chinese in America have to decide where they belong. The relationship between the Chinese-American communities and the larger society is now a minority–majority relationship, as well as one in which an ethnic group is eager to participate in the resource distribution of American society. Instead of considering itself part of the Old Country, with political affinities with the ROC or the PRC, Chinese-American communities are developing closer ties with their host societies. Instead of isolating from city, state and federal governments, many Chinese-Americans are eager to participate in American politics. They want to be fully fledged members of the USA.

The main purpose of this chapter is to examine how the rise of China has played an important role in achieving changes in (1) the rise of sharp heterogeneity in terms of class and subethnic differences, (2) the formation and use of a variety of new ethnic identities, (3) rapid changes in the mindset of sojourning to establishing roots – from isolated enclave to interest group in a multicultural society, (4) changes in social structure from traditional associations to modern associations, and (5) development of the new transnationals.

Impacts on demographic and subethnic changes: not merely a Cantonese community anymore

Within the ethnic Chinese community in the San Francisco Bay Area, there have been many changes. Since 1980, China’s open-door policy has led to the relaxation of migration of Chinese to the USA. Not only has there been a large increase of Chinese immigrants to the USA, there has also been an increase of diversity among the Chinese immigrants in terms of dialects, occupations and localities of origins, political ideologies and social classes. This community houses the oldest Chinatown in the USA. In the past, it was a place for the old Chinese immigrants, predominantly Cantonese from Siyi (Four Counties) and Sanyi (Three Counties) in Guangdong. Their relatives later joined them and with their second- and third-generation offspring these Chinese have become the permanent settlers of the San Francisco Bay Area, which includes the City of San Francisco, East Bay, South Bay and North Bay. After the implementation of the 1965 Immigration Law, changes in the community started. The new law allowed the

immigration of Chinese family members, their children, intellectuals, scholars, skillful workers and refugees to the USA.

Further changes occurred again after the 1980s. Of the arrivals, in addition to the family reunion visa holders, there are now highly skilled individuals in science, technology and the arts, investors and others. With the relaxation of emigration and the opening of China after the 1980s, more Chinese of different social backgrounds have been allowed to leave. Tourists, students, exchange scholars and even dissidents started to come to America. Now, in addition to members of *Falungong* and *Tai Du* (independent Taiwan), there are *Zang Du* (independent Tibet) and *Gang Du* (independent Hong Kong) people. Consequently, there is a great deal of heterogeneity among the Chinese in the Bay Area. Today, among the new Chinese immigrants, there are billionaires as well as paupers. In fact, 19 percent of them live under the poverty level (Hooper and Batalova 2015). Some have to pay high rents to live in crowded rooming houses, sharing a common kitchen and bathroom with total strangers. From interviewing social workers in San Francisco, it can be seen that there is an increase of new immigrants from China who have applied for welfare assistance in the past two decades. Issues like aging, housing, health care, childcare, elderly care and other social problems have multiplied.

The rise of China has enabled the entry of many Chinese wealthy elites, students and entrepreneurs. Some are purchasers of expensive homes and lucrative investment properties. They specifically target areas with good school districts and major universities with the hope that their children will be admitted to them. They seek to buy homes in Hillsborough, Stanford, Palo Alto, Milbrae and Belvedere, where many good schools are found and luxury homes are located.

Restaurants and retail businesses such as grocery stores, gift shops, rental properties and clothing stores are popular with the latest immigrants from China. Through investments in these businesses, they are able to obtain green cards (permanent residency). The Migration Policy Institute (MPI), in Washington, DC, reported that among the new Chinese immigrants the emigration of wealthy elites and students outpaced low-skilled workers (Xiang 2016). There are highly educated PhD holders as well as people who are lowly educated. The highly educated ones seek employment in the high-tech sector. The lowly educated ones work in the Chinatown area. Some were from urban China; others were from rural China. Among Chinese immigrants in 2013, 47 percent of them came to the USA after the 2000s (Hooper and Batalova 2015). Thus, more wealthy Chinese immigrants came to the USA during the ascent of China as a global power. Conspicuous consumption among some of the wealthy is noticeable. Some drive Mercedes, BMW, Ferrari, Maserati or Tesla. In the Bay Area, there is an erroneous perception that all the Chinese from Mainland China are rich. In reality, one out of five Chinese immigrants lives under the poverty line (Hooper and Batalova 2015).

There is also a geolinguistic change. Today, some speak Mandarin, others speak Cantonese, Taiwanese, Shanghainese, Sichuanese, Fujianese or Hakka. Chinese news is now broadcast in Cantonese and Mandarin. In the 1940s–1970s,

the Chinese in the Bay Area spoke the Cantonese dialects of Siyi and Sanyi. From 1970s–1980s, the major dialect used in the Chinese community was the Cantonese used in Guangzhou, Hong Kong and Macao (Wong 1998). Since the 1980s, both Mandarin and Cantonese have been spoken everywhere. These include other Chinese neighborhoods such as Richmond, Irving Street, Noriega, Visitation Valley and Chinatowns (Oakland and San Francisco). However, in the high-tech area south of San Francisco, there are now more Mandarin speakers than Cantonese speakers.

Among the immigrants, there are geopolitical and cultural differences. Hong Kong Chinese speak Cantonese and have been influenced by Chinese culture and the British political system. Taiwan Chinese have been influenced by Western capitalism and Chinese culture. Mainland Chinese came from a country ruled by communists. Hence, there is multiculturalism among these three groups of Chinese. They may call themselves Chinese-Americans in dealing with outsiders and the larger society, but among themselves they may identify each other as Taiwan Chinese, Mainland Chinese-Americans, Hong Kong Chinese, old overseas Chinese (*lao huaqiao*), local-born Chinese (*tusheng*), new immigrants (*xin yimin*) and so on. However, this diversity within the community should not be interpreted as a “balkanization,” since there is a common culture shared by all Chinese. From interviews with the informants in San Francisco, the following is a sentiment shared by all my Chinese informants:

They like Chinese traditions and Chinese heritage. Their homes are decorated with Chinese arts, paintings and artifacts. The new immigrants like to send their children to Chinese schools during the weekend. My estimate is there are 10,000 Chinese kids attending the Chinese schools after the regular public schools to learn Chinese language, arts, painting, dance and music.

Michael Chang, who has been chair of the Asian American studies program at De Anza College since 1989, made a similar statement:

All the immigrant Chinese like to maintain Chinese culture in America. Some professional artists from Chinese mainland are invited here to teach Chinese music, dance, painting.... It is good because they are the experts doing what they know best. Parents also appreciate the talents of these people and send their children to learn from these experts.

(Wong 2006: 191)

Gone were the days where the *luoye guigen* (fallen leaves return to the root) thinking ideology prevailed. They were the sojourners. Today, it is the opposite. Here is the general saying among the Chinese immigrants: “When you settle down, you grow root [*luodi shengen*].” Occasionally, some mainland Chinese told me that they would like to have “US permanent ID cards or passports” first before they go back to China for employment or visit. This sentiment of growing roots in the USA explains why the Chinese in America are not eager to promote

the interests of China. In fact, like other Chinese communities in the USA, the Chinese in San Francisco are more interested in participating in the politics of the USA. They consider themselves parts of the larger society. Most of the Chinese-Americans are more concerned with their social mobility, livelihood and well-being in America than with advancing the interest of their mother/ancestral country. The majority of the Chinese-American organizations and Chinese-Americans are reluctant to play the role of “public diplomats” (*gong-gong waijiao*) of China. For many Chinese-Americans, the USA rather than China is their true home. They made a distinction between “politics” and “culture.” They are proud of their “cultural heritage.” Since they have deliberately made a choice to be citizens of the United States, they are no longer interested in participating in the political affairs of other foreign countries.

Impact of the PRC overseas Chinese policy on the Chinese in the San Francisco Bay Area

Polarization of political orientations in the Bay Area Chinese community is quite noticeable. Even for the two major local Chinese newspapers (*Sing Dao Daily* and the *World Journal*), they do not share the same political ideology toward China. One is pro-Taiwan and the other is pro-PRC. There is a large PRC consulate. The Republic of China is represented in the Bay Area by the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office. The Taiwan government and the mainland Chinese government do not always agree with each other on many issues. Squabbles and disagreements between the two still exist and in certain areas are noncompromising. Thus, for instance, Taiwan has been interested in the purchase of military hardware and technology from the USA over the protest of China. Some Chinese-Americans are for the US sale of weaponry to Taiwan; others are against it.

There are disagreements on cultural issues, too. In Chinese schools in the San Francisco Bay Area, there have been some heated debates on the use of textbooks issued by the Overseas Chinese Commission of the Republic of China in Taiwan. Some thought that the contents and information about the Chinese Communist Party, the Nationalist Party and current events are not “objective” enough. In terms of the use of the phonetic systems, PRC has a standard *pingyin* system to indicate the sounds of the Chinese characters in Mandarin. But Taiwan prefers to use the Taiwanese style *general pingyin* system, which transliterates the local dialect as well as Mandarin. Further, the PRC has been using simplified Chinese characters, to the use of which Taiwan is vehemently opposed. The latter accuses the former of destroying Chinese cultural heritage.

Taiwan and the PRC may involve the local Chinese to participate in their disputes or disagreements. Their antagonism with each other at times creates uncomfortable feelings among the Chinese in the Bay Area. Thus, for instance, in public activities, such as the Joint Athletic Meet of the Chinese, there is an agreement among all the Chinese-Americans participants: “Do not talk politics!” In the area of citizenship, Taiwan and China have two different policies. Since

1957, with the exception of the period of the Cultural Revolution in 1966–1976, Beijing's policies toward overseas Chinese (including Chinese-Americans) have been relatively consistent (Fitzgerald 1972). The PRC's policies toward overseas Chinese differ significantly from those of the ROC (Republic of China, i.e., Taiwan). While the Taiwan government still considers overseas Chinese to be citizens of the Republic of China and prefers to maintain that relationship, the PRC began as early as 1954 to encourage overseas Chinese to respect the local customs and abide by the laws and, if possible, become citizens of their countries of residence (Wong 1986; Fitzgerald 1972). In 1954, Premier Chou En-lai pointed out the differences between the PRC and the ROC concerning the problem of nationality:

For our past, we are willing to urge the overseas Chinese to respect the laws of the local governments and local social customs. It is worth pointing that in the past, reactionary Chinese governments never had any attempt to solve the problem of overseas Chinese nationality. This not only placed the overseas Chinese in a difficult position, but was often the cause of discord between China and the countries of residence. In order to improve this situation, we are prepared to solve this problem, beginning with those Southeast Asian countries with which we have diplomatic relations.

(Chou En-lai, Report to the First Session of the First National People's Congress, September 23, 1954)

In 1957, the Chinese Communist Party explicitly advocated that overseas Chinese should acquire nationality in their countries of residence. The following joint statement was made in the Fifth Session of the First National People's Congress, spelling out the stand of the PRC on the matter of nationality (Fitzgerald 1972):

The broad masses of overseas Chinese residents abroad must now put aside any reservation, and on the principle of free choice, choose local nationality. They must live and work in peace in the countries of residence, actively cooperate and coexist with the local people, and strive for the peace, happiness, and prosperity, of the countries in which they live. This will be of assistance in promoting friendly relations between China and the countries of residence.

(*Kuang-tung Ch'iao-po*, May 1, 1958)

This policy of encouraging overseas Chinese to acquire local citizenship and participate actively in the social life of the country of residence differs significantly from that of the Taiwan government, which claims the overseas Chinese as nationals of the Republic of China (Wong 1986). Currently, the People's Republic of China does not accept dual nationality (Article 9 of the Nationality Laws of China). When a Chinese becomes naturalized in the USA, he or she is no longer a citizen of China. This policy differs from that of Taiwan, such that, even after becoming US citizens Chinese can still be citizens of the Republic of China.

There is a common sentiment expressed among the Chinese-Americans in the Bay Area: "Whether I like it or not, the U.S. is now my permanent home. My children are born here and my career is here. Why should I go back to Taiwan or China?" Thus, the rise of China does not distract the loyalty of the Chinese-Americans toward America. Further, China's Nationality Law (Article 9) actually excludes Chinese citizenship to Chinese-Americans who settled in the USA. This actually helps their decision to stay put and grow root in the USA.

Practical considerations also motivated Chinese immigrants to be citizens of the USA. A citizen can vote and demand legal protection from the larger society and it opens up more economic opportunity. Citizenship is sometimes required for certain employment, especially for federal jobs. It allows individuals to run for political office and sponsor relatives to come to the USA. A citizen travels with a passport rather than a green card, which often invites unfair treatment from immigration officials around the world. Officials in the PRC are more courteous to Chinese visitors with US passports than to those with green cards. Chinese with American citizenship are given preferential treatment when they visit China. My informants surmised that preferential treatment is given owing to some practical reasons. The first is economic; they could bring in American dollars and could afford to spend more money in China. Second, there are transnational talents and capital which can help the modernization programs of China. Third, Chinese-Americans could be important foreign policy tools, as they are citizens of one of the most powerful nations in the world with which the PRC wishes to foster political/economic alliances and promote friendlier relationships. The PRC's policy toward overseas Chinese vacillated from hands-off, leaving overseas Chinese on their own devices, to counting them as citizens, to considering them the enemy (during the Cultural Revolution) and to encouraging them to be members of the receiving country. This policy remains to be the current practice. From interviewing my informants, the majority believe that this practice reinforces the commitment of the Chinese-Americans to their host society.

Changes of identity politics: from ethnic enclave mentality to ethnic interest group

From the time the Chinese set foot in America in the 1850s until 1965, the Chinese were relatively isolated from the larger society (Wong 1982). Past discriminatory laws in the USA served to exclude them from the larger society. Americans of Chinese descent in the pre-1965 era have developed adaptive strategies for survival, which included living in Chinatowns and focusing on the ethnic economy. These survival strategies did not help them to participate in mainstream America. Changes occurred after the civil rights movement in the 1960s and after the implementation of the new Immigration Law of 1965. Most of the Chinese who lived in the USA before 1965 were relatively isolated. This isolation was felt particularly so in the Chinese enclaves – Chinatowns. In fact, Chinatowns were cultural colonies and cultural transmission units. They were

enclaves isolated from the larger society. This isolation started to change gradually. There has been an increase in the participation of Chinese-Americans in the resource distribution of the larger society. In the 1970s, there were many youth groups and second-generation Chinese returning to Chinatowns to organize them to fight for their rights. From 1980s to the present, the Chinese population in America has become politically more mature. They have learned how to use the ballot box to fight for their rights and do learn how to use their common identity and destiny to mobilize and unify them to fight for equal rights. At the same time, they have learned how to coalesce with other Asians to fight for their place in America. Identity politics are deployed to help Chinese-Americans and Asian Americans to unify themselves to obtain resources from the larger society.

Chinese-American identity

In dealing with other Asian ethnic groups and China, the Chinese in America adopt the Chinese-American identity. In adopting this identity, they are able to distinguish themselves from Japanese-Americans, Filipino Americans or Vietnamese. In dealing with China, the Chinese will use the identity of Chinese-Americans, or Americans of Chinese descent. Naturalized Americans and permanent residents of Chinese descent, whether they are from Taiwan, Hong Kong or Mainland China, whether they are old settlers or new immigrants, and the local-born Chinese in the USA, are grouped together under the label of *Meiji huaren*. This includes the first, second, third and fourth generations of Chinese in America. The PRC also uses the label of *Meiji huaren* in their official documents to refer to Chinese with American citizenship. Therefore, some Chinese who have American citizenship when they travel to Asia use this term to identify themselves. A preferential order of hierarchy was then set up with *Meiji huaren* on the top, followed by the Chinese from Southeast Asia, and at the bottom are their compatriots from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan.

The issues pertaining to one's ethnic identity are complex. They evolve with the context of interaction, audience and social situation, the length of residence in the USA, original birthplace, age, generation, personal success, property ownership and citizenship. Identity is also affected by whether they have children born in America. In terms of identification, some distinguish between cultural and political contexts. Social scientists have debated for years whether ethnic identity is subjective or objective. Fredrik Barth (1969) and a host of writers (Novak 1972; Greeley 1971; Glazer and Moynihan 1970) tended to emphasize the subjective aspects of ethnic identification. Prior to the 1960s, most social scientists believed that there were objective characteristics that determined ethnic categorization. Recently, some social scientists, reacting against the subjective categorizations, have argued that ethnic identification is influenced by both subjective and objective factors (Jenkins 1996). In the San Francisco Bay Area, we find both these factors working in one's ethnic categorization. Subjectively, they value their ethnic culture. Objectively, there are common grounds and legal categorization that place them into certain ethnic/racial groups.

Asian-American identity

In addition to using the Chinese-American identity to organize themselves, the Bay Area Chinese coalesce with other Asians to form Asian-American groups for political action and other goal-seeking activities. In fact, in the past 20 years, many organizations started to mushroom in the Bay Area, including Asian Americans for Community Involvement, Asian Law Alliance, the Asian American Center for Advancing Justice and the Asian American Manufacturers' Association. When Chinese professionals started to move to Silicon Valley in the 1960s, numerically the population was quite small. It was difficult to have any political impact until there was a critical mass in the 1990s. The increase in educated Chinese immigrants from the 1990s helped the awareness of this issue of having a larger presentation through the adoption of this new identity. The Chinese wanted to use the Asian identity to form a larger coalition. Using "Asian-American" identity as a basis to organize a coalition to unite people from China, the Philippines, Korea and Japan has certain advantage. Numerically speaking, they hope to gain more voters by using the region to form an ethnic bloc. After the 1970s, in the Bay Area, one saw an infusion of a large population of Vietnamese. In order to have representation and voice in the larger society, it is advantageous to use a larger population base to develop this Asian coalition. Assuming the identity of Asian-American is therefore a tool to accomplish better results in their participation in the power structure as well as in the resource distribution of the larger society. In official statistics and government documents, all peoples from Asia are listed under one category: Asians. In certain situations, the government links Pacific Islanders with other Asians as well. For instrumental purposes, the Chinese are also being lumped together with other Asians. Such an inclusion is often used to satisfy certain statutory requirements or entitlements.

There are certain physical and cultural characteristics being shared by different Asian groups. One hopes that if one group breaks any racial barrier the others will also benefit. However, as time went on, as more and more Chinese from different regions of China arrived they started to form organizations like Organization of Chinese-Americans. Using the Chinese identity to unify all the Chinese has only recently become an option. However, in the San Francisco Bay Area not everyone agrees with this idea of using the Chinese identity. One Chinese community activist commented:

Asian identity, Asian coalition ... are important because all the Asians encounter common prejudice and share common traditions and interests. They want to change how other think about them. They also want to change people's attitudes toward the black and Hispanic. We are for the civil rights of everybody. It is not just for the Chinese Americans. This is the reason why I have a problem with the OCA – Organization of Chinese Americans.

(Personal Interview with Informant Y)

Another elected Chinese-American official said:

We don't have the votes from the Chinese. It does not make sense to use the Chinese American identity to unify among ourselves. In Silicon Valley, the Chinese with other Asian voters will develop a formidable voting bloc. It is good to have some influence than no influence.

(Personal Interview with Informant C)

The development of Asian identity and its use for politics are examples of how objective factors and practical considerations dictate the choice of identity.

Many Chinese agree that an Asian identity does exist. They share certain cultural characteristics: strong family sense, interest in children's education, personalism. They also share similar consumption patterns: enjoyment in purchasing electronic items, cell phones, Asian food items and real estate property. Therefore, some argue that there is a *de facto* similarity among them. They share more with each other than with non-Asians.

In political activities, Asian-American politicians tend to solicit votes from other Asians. The Asians also form a voting bloc to obtain their political goals. At universities, there are Asian Americans Studies programs. Socially, people use terms like "We Asians" when Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos or Vietnamese get together. Many white people who cannot distinguish one sub-Asian ethnic group from another use the term "Asian" for them all. So, the term Asian-American has practical, social, political and economic significance. Major civil rights organizations such as the Organization of Chinese Americans and the Committee of 100 use the "Asian-American" identity to rally all the Asian members and are attempting to follow in the footsteps of other ethnic groups, such as African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, Asian-Pacific Americans, of using a larger population base to conduct their political activities and to advance their interests. In a sense, Asian-American in an interest group based on Asian culture and, as such, it is used to obtain social justice and to participate in the resource distribution in American society.

Fuller participation in the larger society

Following the opening up of China after the USA-China rapprochement, many more Chinese were permitted to come to the USA to join their families or to study. Some Chinese-Americans even use this opportunity to ship ashes of their ancestors to have them reburied in the USA. Funeral homes and cemeteries provide the reinterment services for these deceased relatives of the Chinese-Americans. This is an indication of the resolve to settle in America permanently. They want to make America the permanent home for their ancestors and for themselves. Thus, for instance, one can see big Chinese cemeteries in Colma and many old and recently arrived Chinese immigrants go there with their families to celebrate their *Qingming* Festival.

Historically, there were many legal restrictions and laws against the Chinese in the USA. The Chinese were not allowed to enter many occupations. In New

York State, 27 occupations were legally off limits to the Chinese until the 1940s, not to mention the Chinese Exclusion Law of 1882, which denied the admission of the Chinese to the USA in the first place. Many Chinese in the pre-1945 era developed a sojourner mentality. The USA was considered a place for temporary existence and, as such, they put up with many inconveniences. There was no commitment to the USA, but throughout the years this attitude has changed. The *luodi shenggen* thinking started brewing after 1945, when many stranded scholars, refugees and old immigrants decided not to return to China (Rose Lee 1960). Today, the ideology of establishing root in America prevails. Establishing root implies fuller participation in the social, political and economic life of America.

Although many unfavorable laws have changed and many discriminatory practices have been removed, in certain areas Chinese still meet obstacles. One is in the area of promotions known as the “glass ceiling.” This is a barrier like a glass for promotion; one can see through it but one cannot go through. According to some, there are also subtle discriminations in getting financing and housing. Some find it difficult to borrow money to start a business. Others were shocked to find out that there are still archaic ordinances about the ownership of homes in the South Bay. Some old deeds specifically pointed out that ownership of certain homes by blacks or Asians is prohibited. These ordinances or restrictions, when discovered, were quickly corrected. The fact that they existed shocks many Chinese immigrants. They also feel that they have to continue to fight for equal treatment and equal rights. In general, the social, economic and political acceptance of the new immigrants has induced their loyalty and commitment.

The Chinese in the Bay Area are active voters in local elections. The ballot boxes are important tools in America for the obtainment of fair and equal treatment and legislation for Chinese immigrants. According to voter registration records in the county of Santa Clara in 2000, there were 23,244 voters of Chinese descent. Forty-seven percent of them voted in the election of March 2000 (*Sing Dao Daily*, May 6 and May 20, 2000). Many cities in the Bay Area have Chinese-American mayors; as some examples, Michael Chang was elected mayor for Cupertino, Otto Lee was mayor of Sunnyvale and Ed Lee is the current mayor of San Francisco. The cities of San Jose, Campbell and Palo Alto had or have Chinese-Americans in their city councils. Running for political offices and fighting for the civil rights of all the citizens are, indeed, clear indications of commitment to their local communities.

At the state and federal government levels, there are Chinese-American officials. Some are elected and some appointed. As examples, David Chiu and Phil Ting are California State assemblymen from the San Francisco area. The appointment of Elaine Chao by President Bush to lead the labor department and the appointment of Steven Chu to be the secretary of the Energy Department and Gary Locke to be ambassador to China and secretary of commerce do show the political clout, ability and willingness of Chinese-Americans to serve the country. The success of Chinese-American politicians in US society in general and in the San Francisco Bay Area in particular indicates their efforts in

establishing themselves in America. Many government offices have started to recruit Chinese-Americans to work in their agencies. These include the Immigration and Naturalization Services, the US Armed Forces, the FBI, IRS and other law enforcement agencies. These are gestures of acceptance that make them feel they are part of US society. Acceptance invites further participation and identification with the larger society. One informant summed up the feelings of many:

The more the Chinese are accepted by the mainstream society, the more they identify with the U.S. From my observation and my experience, the Chinese get along well with their white co-workers. In the work place, they get along well. Diversity is a characteristic here.

(Personal Interview with Informant K)

The infusion of the well-educated Chinese immigrants helped change the political landscape in the Bay Area. There are now more Chinese-Americans from the USA, Taiwan and Hong Kong participating in American politics than any other periods in history. Mainland Chinese in Silicon Valley are latecomers and have fewer of them participating in US and local politics in the San Francisco Bay Area. Nevertheless, they are learning quickly how to participate in US society through political activities.

A recent demonstration/protest against the selective prosecution of a Chinese police officer in New York City is a case in point. In many Asian shopping centers, there were leaflets distributed to the public to inform them about the importance of protests. As an example, Officer Peter Liang of the New York Police Department shot a fleeing suspect accidentally and unintentionally, and was convicted of manslaughter. Many Chinese-Americans who were familiar with the case believed that it was a miscarriage of justice. They voiced their complaints because in similar cases the white police officers who committed the acts were never charged. This protest movement attracted 60,000 Chinese to Brooklyn to protest. This movement gains much support in other cities, including Washington, DC, Dallas and San Francisco. One participant in the protest told me that he never saw so many Chinese-Americans with Chinese flags from both Mainland China and Taiwan in the demonstration.

China's rise and its impact on the social organizations of the Chinese in the Bay Area

Among the Chinese in the San Francisco Bay Area, there are the Chinatown-connected Chinese and non-Chinatown residents. In the Chinatown area, the major Chinese social organizations are those traditional associations that were derived mainly from the social structure of traditional China. These associations formed the community's social structure, with the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) – also known as the Chinese Six Companies – at the top as an overall, umbrella organization that coordinates the hometown or district associations. These traditional associations are based on kinship or

pseudokinship (family names), villages, localities of origin, dialects or regions in China. Additionally, there are also merchant, trades, political and fraternal associations. From their inception, these organizations had close ties with Republican politics in China. Many of the organizations contributed manpower, financial resources and moral support to the Kuomintang's (KMT or Guomintang) overthrow of the Manchu dynasty in 1911 (Chu 1973; Chesneaux 1971).

In every major Chinatown there is a KMT office. On the walls of Chinese Six Companies in San Francisco, there still is a framed calligraphy by Chiang Kai-shek. When new leaders were installed at the Chinese Six Companies in San Francisco, everyone sang along to a recording of the national anthems of the USA and the ROC. In the past 10 years, with the rise of the PRC as a world power, there have been debates in the leadership on the appropriateness of such a practice. Some wanted to use only the national anthem of the USA and the flags of the PRC and the USA. Some leaders wanted to ban the use of the national flag from Taiwan. Thus, for instance in 2004, an elected leader, Daniel Hom, refused to be sworn in at the ornate meeting hall of the Chinese Six Companies, where a ROC flag hangs. He further argued that California government officials should preside over the Six Companies inaugural ceremony and that the leaders of the association should pledge allegiance only to the United States but not Taiwan. He refused to sing the national anthem of the ROC or salute its flag. This indicates that the community did openly challenge the old social order and the influence of the KMT. However, this should not be taken to mean that the traditional connection between the Kuomintang (KMT) of Taiwan and Chinatowns is broken. The Taipei Economic and Cultural Office of the Republic of China (Taiwan) is still connected with some social organizations of Chinatowns in the USA.

With the rise of China since 1980s, the tie with the ROC has considerably weakened. A number of fraternal associations (Tongs) such as Chee Kung Tong (*Zhi Gong Tang*) and Suey Sing Tong (*Shuai Sheng Tang*), which had close connections with the Republican revolution of Sun Yat-sen, seem to have lost their interest in Kuomintang's political activities in Taiwan. In San Francisco's Chinatown today, one can see 70 percent of the associations using the flags of the People's Republic of China and the other 30 percent using the flags of the ROC to decorate their meeting halls or official buildings. Some associations use the American flag together with a flag from the ROC or the PRC. The symbolism indeed shows a triangular relation between China, Taiwan and the USA. Before the 1980s, almost all traditional associations were dedicated supporters of the government of the KMT in Taiwan. Their sympathy and dedication to the KMT started to change with the rapprochement between China and the USA. There are indications that many leaders of traditional associations have shifted their sympathy to the PRC. Some received visitors and government officials of the PRC to their official activities. Some leaders in the Bay Area suggested that the name of the Overseas Chinese Commission of ROC should be changed and their office should be abolished. These leaders of traditional associations such as the family, kinship and fraternity organizations in Chinatown argue that the ROC

(in Taiwan) is not China. They further stated that many Chinese immigrants have never lived in Taiwan and have no intellectual or ideological connections with the Overseas Chinese Commission of the Republic of China. Some even want to have a severance of any official ties with the KMT or the Overseas Chinese Commission of the Republic of China (Taiwan). Thus, the rise of China has altered ideologies and behavioral patterns of the traditional associations.

The non-Chinatown-connected Chinese, such as those who live and work in Silicon Valley, have nothing to do with the kinship, clanship, village and dialect associations. Their major social organizations are not based on family, kinship, clanship or villages in China. With the rise of China, many Chinese professionals came to this area from Mainland China; the organizations important to them are the modern professional and business associations. They have professionalism and a modern business agenda to advance the social, professional or commercial interests of the associations' members. School or college attendance, former neighbors, and colleagues are now used as principles for social organization. Many of these associations were established by Chinese students from China helping their peers in the high-tech business. North American Chinese Semiconductor Association (NASCA) and the Silicon Valley Chinese Engineers Association (SCEA) are just two examples. Founded in 1996, NASCA primarily recruits students from Mainland China, and it has a membership of 1,000 or so. This organization has been quite active in Silicon Valley, organizing at least 15 meetings and seminars in 2001, and it has played host to officials and visitors from PRC. Most of these meetings are well attended.

The SCEA is similarly an active organization. It was established in 1989 and it recruits engineers of Chinese descent who work in Silicon Valley. This organization has professional meetings, dance parties, sporting events and celebrations of Chinese New Year, Thanksgiving and National Day. When China was admitted to the WTO, the SCEA held an event to which officials of the Chinese consulate in San Francisco were invited. The SCEA is concerned with promoting the professional interests of the Chinese high-tech engineers and bridging the gap between China and the USA. In this role as a go-between, the SCEA once filed a protest against the NBC for misrepresenting the Olympic position of China. Because of the successful activities of SCEA, the membership grew from 500 in 1989 to 3,500 in 2002. It is seen as a protector of the professional and civil rights of Chinese engineers (Wong 2006: 64).

Alumni associations are important among all the Chinese who work outside Chinatown. With the rise of China, many graduates from elite Chinese universities came to the Bay Area to obtain employment. Some came with Chinese government scholarship. Others came with their own financial resources. Some came with H1B visas to work in the USA. They are from universities like Tsinghua University, Jiaotong University, Peking University, Zhejiang University, the Chinese University of Science and Technology and Fudan University. Their alumni associations are represented here. Alumni associations play an important role in the social lives of the Mainland Chinese professionals. As immigrant engineers or high-tech professionals, their work schedules tend to be irregular,

making it difficult for them to see each other during normal leisure-time hours. Besides nonconventional hours, some engineers also work on Saturdays and Sundays, making their work habits an isolating factor that inhibits their contact with the larger society. Alumni associations not only help immigrants adjust to America; they also foster connections between university classmates in different parts of the world as they assist each other in networking for jobs and other business opportunities. Besides serving as fundraising organizations, or helping to connect alumni with their alma maters, the various Chinese alumni associations are culture brokers filling the void of kinship.

The Bay Area over the past 10 years has also seen the rise of regional associations serving merchants from northern China, such as Hebei Commercial Association and Huabei Regional Association. In the old days, all the traditional associations were established to serve the Guangdong people from southern China. The professional and alumni associations have replaced the traditional kinship, clanship, fraternity or village associations. These new immigrants from China have therefore caused structural changes of the traditional social order of the Chinese-American community in the San Francisco Bay Area. They found these traditional associations to be old-fashioned, outdated and unable to service the needs of the modern professional Chinese.

Builders of the high-tech economy in the San Francisco Bay Area – occupational changes

In the past, the Chinese were the laborers and builders of the San Francisco economy. The Chinese started to come to the USA in the early nineteenth century, originally to work in the gold mines, to labor on the railroads and to clear the land for agriculture in California (Wong 1982, 1998). After the completion of the railroads, and the closing of the mining companies, they started to focus on laundries, restaurants, grocery stores, gift shops and sweat shops. Before the 1970s, the Chinese were in the *huaren sanguan* – the three trades of the Chinese: restaurants, garment factories and laundries. The latter two are now gone. The restaurant business still remains. However, within the restaurants, there are more and more Chinese restaurants catering to Chinese from other areas of China such as Shanghai, Beijing, Sichuan, Hunan and Zhejiang. Although the traditional Cantonese restaurants still play an important role in the culinary scene, their numbers have dwindled. After the rise of China in the 1980s, there has been a rise in the numbers of Chinese high-tech professionals. In 2005, there were 20,000 Chinese high-tech workers from Taiwan and about the same number who had come from Mainland China (Wong 2006). These workers are the pillars of the high-tech economy in Silicon Valley. There is a common saying expressing the crucial presence of the Chinese in the business: “Silicon Valley is built by the IC!” IC refers to the Indians and the Chinese. They are the “laborers” of the new economy. Among the Chinese, some of these high-tech workers self-deprecatingly called themselves “high-class laborers” (*gaoji laogong*).

After the emergence of China as an economic power, Silicon Valley has recruited many Chinese high-tech workers and attracted the establishment of many Chinese start-up companies. In fact, many are graduates of elite universities in China or the USA. As in all high-tech occupations, their salaries are relatively high and their skills are well appreciated. Many of the older Chinese high-tech companies were established by the Taiwanese Chinese. Solectron, Cadence Design, Yahoo, Network Appliance, Integrated Device Technology, Youtube, Nvidia and Trident are just some examples. Most recently, there have been companies established by Chinese entrepreneurs from Mainland China. GRIC, Viador, WebEx and Sina.com are a few examples. Some are in hardware, others in software. Some specialize in web design, e-commerce, fiber optics, video and voice technology. Some of the entrepreneurs have also branched out as venture capitalists, incubators and angel investors.

The high-tech Chinese workers are important for the local economy. They are taxpayers, customers and consumers. They are valuable clients of real estate offices, banks, restaurants, grocery stores, travel agencies, video stores, accounting companies and the like. And, since the Chinese and other Asians have become an important demographic group, American advertising companies are now eager to target them. Thus, clothing companies are now using Asian models for their ads on blue jeans and cosmetics advertisements. The banks also use Asians for their advertising. Furthermore, Wells Fargo and other banking institutions are eager to attract Chinese customers (*San Francisco Examiner* September 3, 2000); they specifically open new services just for them. The rise of China coincided with the change of the general economy of the USA. In fact, beginning in the 1980s, the focus of US foreign trade gradually shifted from the Atlantic-European region to the Pacific Rim (Fong 1994; Wong 1998). Many products, from electronics and textiles to toys were (and today to continue to be) manufactured in places like China, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan and Japan. At about the same time, there was also a restructuring of national economics in many advanced industrial countries from a manufacturing base to a service base and from low-tech to high-tech businesses. This was particularly the case in the urban regions of the United States. In the San Francisco Bay Area, garment and other manufacturing businesses became less important, moving out of the United States and relocating to the low-cost areas of Asia and Central and South America. The San Francisco Bay Area is now the high-tech center of the USA and Chinese immigrants who are highly trained in science, technology and computer science are now pivotal players.

Chinese transnationals

The rise of China has created also a new group of itinerants, the transnationals who traverse between China and America for business or employment (Wong 2006; Yang 2013). This is a new phenomenon and these itinerants are called “circular migrants” or “astronauts” (*taikongren*), the latter because of their frequent flying between continents. Some of them are transnationals with a permanent home in the USA and a home away from home in China. A small

minority just return to China to work temporarily owing to their inability to find jobs. These are the so-called sea turtles (*haigui*, referring to returnees). Some return to China because of the availability of special economic opportunities. Some experienced a “glass ceiling” in their career ladders and decided to leave (Wong 2006). The rates of Chinese students returning to China fluctuate depending on the economic conditions in San Francisco. During the recession of 2007–2009, many more Chinese students returned to China than they do now.

Michael Chang, the former mayor of Cupertino echoed what Connie Yu said about the transnational Taiwanese American and the mainland Chinese business-people and engineers:

They may want to go back to China or Taiwan, but not forever. They want to establish roots and settled in the U.S. permanently. They return to Asia principally to visit relatives or to do business. Many are used to the American environment. Children grew up in the U.S. and are not comfortable with Asia. Economically, Asia may be more ahead now, but not environmentally. Some of Chinese engineers or business people say they just cannot put up with the traffics and pollution any more in Beijing or Taipei.

(Connie Yu 1986)

Other informants agreed. Whether they are from Taiwan, Hong Kong or Mainland China, the Chinese want to establish roots in America. The so-called returned migration is for business purposes only. The frequent zigzagging across national borders is a new way of life in the new global economy. Chinese-Americans often play the role of brokers, conduits, experts and mediators for many economic transactions between China and the Bay Area. The majority of the returnees to China as investors, engineers, researchers, troubleshooters, planners or developers tend to be there on a temporary basis. After their assignment or project is over, they will return to the Bay Area to settle permanently. Another expert informant concurred:

During the recession in 1993, a noticeable number of Chinese went back to Asia for better economic opportunity. They kept coming back. What made them come back here is the quality of life and their family. Most of them left their wives and children here. Some went back to Taiwan with the entire families. Most of them have citizenship and properties in the U.S. They brought houses in Milpitas, Sunnyvale, Cupertino, Los Altos or Palo Alto.

(Wong 2006)

Those who travel back and forth are not always happy about this new mode of existence. One entrepreneur complained that the “nomadic life style” is hard for children:

The money made is ok. Not great. There are difficulties. Not enough holidays with family. My family gets angry. Children are alienated. There are

fourfold whammies. First, growing up is a challenge; second, growing up as an Asian in America is a challenge; third, growing up not having parents in one place; fourthly, growing up being immigrant is hard.

(Wong 2006)

The lifestyles of the transnationals created new forms of households that did not exist before: the patrifocal family and the matrifocal family (Wong 2007). Both are single-parent households. The former is headed by the father owing to absentee mothers who are transnationals working temporarily in Asia. Similarly, the matrifocal family is run by the mother because the father is a frequent flyer transnational. Nowadays, there is also a new development called “parachuted children,” who live without the supervision of parents. These are young children dropped off by their parents to attend elementary or high schools in the Bay Area or elementary schools. These young students, called *xiao liuxuesheng* (young students studying abroad), have become a new phenomenon in the Bay Area. Some live in boarding schools and some live by themselves with or without supervision by their relatives (Wong 2007). According to News China (December 2016), over 40,000 children were “parachuted” into the USA. Many of them live in the San Francisco Bay Area.

The rise of China has ripple effects on the general economy of the San Francisco Bay Area. From 1990–2009, the economic picture of the USA was not at all robust. On the contrary: GDP growth went from 1.9 percent in 1990 to –3 percent in 2009. The unemployment rate went from 5.6 percent in 1990 to 10 percent in 2010 (US Real GDP 1990–2015). Meanwhile, the economy of China was developing, seeing a growth of GDP from 3.8 percent in 1990 to 7.8 percent in 2013 (China GDP Annual Rate 1989–2016). In a developing economy, China needed talents, investments and materials from abroad. Some Chinese-Americans were recruited to work in American or Chinese companies in China. This was particularly beneficial to many laid-off dot-com workers, both Chinese- and non-Chinese-Americans during the period of the Great Recession in Silicon Valley. They were able to obtain employment in China. Some Chinese-Americans were sent by American companies to establish research, to be troubleshooters and to organize manufacturing plants in China. These practices can be called “brain circulation and capital circulation.” Some became investors/entrepreneurs in the rapidly developing economy in China. The rise of China thus created jobs and economic opportunities for Chinese-Americans as well as Americans. Another new group of travelers is “birthing tourists.” They came as tourists from China to deliver their babies in the Bay Area’s hospitals with the intention of getting US citizenship for their children. It is hoped that children who are citizens of the USA could later sponsor their parents to come to the USA.

The emergence of China impacted on the USA’s and San Francisco’s economy in another way. With rising standards of living, Chinese consumers started to import products made in the USA. These included items from computer products to pistachio nuts from California, Coca-Cola, cosmetics products

and others. Thus, the prosperity of China generated economic transactions between the USA and China. China is one of the most important purchasers of Boeing airplanes and a big importer of US agricultural products such as soybeans and maize. It is estimated that US food exports to China will reach \$21.5 billion in 2017 (Smith, Baculinao and Flanagan 2016). Many high-tech companies were invited to invest in China or develop plants in China. Economic growth has made some of the Bay Area's companies rich. HP, Motorola, IBM, Intel, Oracle, Apple and other American companies in the Bay Area sold many of their products in China. Agricultural goods from the Bay Area, such as wines, oranges, grapes, nuts etc., also found their ways to the dining tables of the Chinese in Mainland China. Increased exports have created jobs for American workers instead of causing job loss as claimed by many politicians who are against free trade. There is a new development in the field of education. Many universities in the Bay Area, including the University of California, Stanford and the University of San Francisco, have enrolled many more Chinese students than before the 1980s. Financially, foreign students from China have helped the financial difficulties of these universities, especially during the Great Recession of 2007–2009, when university budgets took a severe hit. The high fees paid by wealthy Chinese students from China have helped the operation of many universities in the Bay Area.

In the past 35 years, the San Francisco Bay Area, especially Silicon Valley, has been a favorite place for job recruiters, investment recruiters and other headhunters from China to attract Chinese and American students and other professionals to work in China as teachers, engineers or architects or to conduct their entrepreneurial activities. International travel between China and the Bay Area has been on the increase. Many direct flights between major cities in China and San Francisco have been instituted since the 1980s. Today, United Airlines alone has direct flights from San Francisco to Beijing, Shanghai and Chengdu. Beginning from May 2016, there will be more direct flights from San Francisco to Xi'an. Both American Airlines and United Airlines are planning to offer more direct flights to major cities in China.

Economic interactions between China and the Bay Area have also led to cultural and friendship exchanges. Many Chinese cities have become sister cities with those in the Bay Area (Wong 2006). Shanghai became the sister city of San Francisco, Huizhou of Milpitas, and Dalian of Oakland. Others are Redwood City with Zhuhai, Davis with Qufu, and Larkspur with Shangyu. Chinese language programs and classes have become more prolific in the Bay Area. Mandarin is now taught in many public schools. College enrollment in Chinese language classes has grown in many universities in the Bay Area. A Confucius Institute has been established at San Francisco State University. The institute has trained many local teachers to teach Mandarin and organize Chinese proficiency competitions for college students. There is also a flagship program established in San Francisco to teach Chinese language to be used in different disciplines.

Scapegoat, suspicions and accusations – challenges for Chinese-Americans

The destiny of the Chinese-Americans has historically been affected by USA–China relations (Wong 1986; Lowe 1998). When the USA needed Chinese immigrants, they were welcome. In World War II, China was the ally of the USA; the Chinese-Americans were treated relatively well. After the War, communism was the enemy of the USA and, likewise, communist China was automatically an evil empire for the USA. Chinese-Americans were suspected to be fifth columnists. During the Korean War, Chinese-Americans in Chinatown were identified by white Americans as the enemy. The whites would blame the Chinese, stating that “your sons killed my sons in Korea.” During the Vietnam War, the Chinese were called “gooks.” In 1972, when President Richard Nixon visited China, China suddenly became a friend in the eyes of the Americans. The political rapprochement continued to bloom in the 1980s. From 1990, USA–China relations deteriorated. China was painted as a new “evil empire.” The media turned to stereotypes again in discussing the issues of the spy plane incident when a US spy plane collided with a Chinese fighter jet near southern China in 2000. The spy plane incident touched upon other stereotypes as well. The international conflicts were suddenly transformed into an ethnic/racial conflict. Talk show hosts and mainstream printed media in the San Francisco Bay Area, as well as different parts of the USA, started to ridicule the Chinese-Americans. Many Chinese expressed great dismay about the treatment of the Chinese in the press. China has been perceived to be a threat to the USA for the simple reason that China has become a global power capable of challenging the supremacy/hegemony of the USA in the world (Meisner 1999; Committee of 100 Survey 2016b). Many social scientists (Hsu 1981; Riesman 1950; Henry 1965; Head 2016; Kruhly 2012) have pointed out that a superiority complex and xenophobia frequently lead to racism. Rising from this emphasis and the need to feel superior to other nations is the attitude of exclusiveness and the fear of outsiders.

With the rise of China as a world power, xenophobia and racism against China and the Chinese-Americans are also on the rise in the United States and the San Francisco Bay Area (Quellette 2015; Koo 2015; Committee of 100, 23rd Annual Conference Program, April 26, 2014; Wong 2006). The American attitudes toward the rise of China are now antagonistic (Committee of 100 Survey 2016b). In the past 30 years, some Chinese have been accused of being spies conducting espionage on American nuclear or hydraulic facilities without clear evidence. Wen Ho Lee (a scientist), Sherry Chen (a hydrologist) and Xiaoxing Xi (a physics professor) were charged as spies. Owing to the lack of evidence and protests from the general public, as well as the Chinese-American communities, many cases were dropped. There are other cases of false accusations in the San Francisco Bay Area. The Committee of 100 and other Chinese civil rights organizations have recognized the rise of xenophobia against Chinese-Americans. In the annual conference of 2016, the Committee of 100 specifically scheduled a topic on “Economic Espionage: Spies or Stereotypes” to highlight

this problem and to inform Chinese-Americans and the general public about the dangers of racial profiling and the government's responsibility to protect both national security and the civil liberties of all Americans (Committee of 100 2014, 2016a). News media such as the *World Journal* and *Sing Dao Daily* and others have coverage on the unfair treatments and challenges facing the Chinese-Americans working in science and technology.

Some of those who were charged falsely sustained great loss in their reputations and loss of income and time. These individuals and their families had to suffer social and financially. In the Bay Area, Chinese-Americans have learned how to fight back. They are willing to adopt the conflict approach of US society to obtain justice. They are using tools that are commonly used by American society, such as demonstrations, laws and courts, as well as social media, to fight for their cause. An example of these is the case of Wen Ho Lee. Because of the protests of Chinese-Americans, 59 out of 60 counts on the indictment were dropped and in June 2006 \$1.5 million in compensation was awarded to him for damages. Chinese-American voters have written letters to their respective congressmen for their help (Wang 2015) to fight racism. As a result of their petitions, 22 US Congress members urged Loretta Lynch, then attorney general, to investigate whether there is a practice of targeting federal employees based on national origin or race (Wang 2015). Some of the reasons why Chinese-Americans are willing to fight for their civil rights today are: (1) increased educational background of the new immigrants, who are not afraid to speak out and who are knowledgeable about avenues to address distress issues, and (2) the commitment to stay and fight. The strategies of growing roots and participating socially, politically and economically in the host society showed the change of orientation. It is US-oriented rather than China-oriented.

Conclusion

The rise of China has caused many individual and collective changes in the Chinese-American community in the Bay Area. There are changes in the occupational structure, social organizations, demographic composition, family structure and political orientation. Chinese immigrants and students from China are builders of the high-tech economy and are contributors to the local and the US economies. Similarly, China also benefits from investment, talent and cultural exchange from America. In their multiple formal and information transactions with the PRC, the USA and ROC, the community has learned where their true home should be. The Bay Area Chinese have sharpened their sense of "belonging." Becoming keenly aware of the politics of the PRC and the ROC toward the Chinese in America, residents of the Chinese ethnic community became more concerned about their place and responsibility in US society.

The search for an "ethnic identity" showed concern about their desire to participate effectively in American society. Increasingly, there is a tendency to use the Asian-American identity to organize the Chinese and other Asians in America. The coalition with other Asians and forming a larger ethnic interest

group is a common technique used by other ethnic groups in America. Within this Asian-American identity, subidentities such as Chinese-American, Taiwan-American, Hong Kong-American represent changes brought about by Chinese migration movements in the new era after the 1980s. The formation of multiple identities in different contexts for various goal-seeking activities is something new. The present study also found that factors outside an ethnic community, such as international relations and changes in the old and new countries, can cause significant changes in an ethnic community as well as in the larger society. These extracommunity factors hasten the transformation of an enclave community into an ethnic interest group geared to fuller participation in the resource distribution of the larger society.

Contrary to popular perception, this study showed that the Chinese community in the San Francisco Bay Area has not become more “sinicized” or developed more allegiance to the People’s Republic of China as a result of the emergence of a strong China. Paradoxically, as a whole it has become more Americanized, with more participation in US society and more commitment to America.

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2 From Cold War to open door

The making of the Chinese community in Canada

Eva Xiaoling Li and Peter S. Li

“Home” and Chinese overseas

In the literature on Chinese overseas, the concept of home is often used as a theoretical anchor point by which the migration and settlement of Chinese overseas are understood. Home is commonly used to refer to the place of origin or ancestral home, although in more recent identity studies home is more likely seen as a fluid and hybrid formation rather than a permanent fixation. In this chapter, the concept of home country refers to China as the ancestral place from which most Chinese overseas originated. Focusing on Canada, this chapter explains how China since the nineteenth century, and its relationship with the West, affected Chinese immigration to Canada and their integration in the destination society. At the same time, changes in Canada, notably its immigration policy and equality legislation, also shaped the formation of the Chinese overseas community.

China scholars and North American scholars tend to put unequal emphasis on home country in their study of Chinese overseas. China scholars on Chinese overseas, mostly historians, prefer to classify the history of Chinese overseas using China's history as a point of reference. For example, Chen (1989) divided the history of Chinese overseas into five periods. The first period was from the end of the Song dynasty (960–1279) to the end of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), during which time commodity production increased in China, followed by trade missions venturing outside China by sea and by land. The second period was from the sixteenth century to the Opium War (1839–1842), when large numbers of Chinese merchants traveled to Southeast Asia and settled there. The third period, from 1840 to 1949, saw the massive emigration of Chinese laborers and contract workers from China to Asia, Latin America and North America. The last period is from the founding the People's Republic of China to the present, during which time the rise of new China has strengthened the status of Chinese overseas. Chen's classification of overseas Chinese history, widely adopted in Chinese writings with minor variations, essentially sees such a history as an extension of China in the context of its economic and political development.

Using China as a cultural reference point is also popular among some overseas Chinese scholars. For example, *The Encyclopedia of the Chinese Overseas*,

edited by Pan (1998), began with a central discussion of China as the ancestral homeland, followed by the concept of *quaoxiang*, or home village, of overseas Chinese to stress the strong ties between overseas Chinese and the homeland. Throughout the book, there is a persistent emphasis on China as the center, influencing the culture, values and institutions of overseas Chinese in different parts of the world.

North American scholars, however, tend to place much less emphasis on China and frame the history of Chinese overseas in reference to the migration history and integration process in the destination society (Anderson 1991; Kowng and Mišćević 2005; Li 1998; Lyman 1974; Wickberg 1982). Accordingly, Chinese in the USA and Canada are typically classified roughly into four periods: (1) initial migration and recruitment of Chinese workers in the middle of the nineteenth century to answer labor demands in the West; (2) the development of Chinese exclusion and other discriminatory policies in destination society from the latter part of the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century; (3) the struggle for enfranchisement and the gaining of civil rights for Chinese after World War II; and (4) changes in the immigration policies of the destination societies in the 1960s and the growth of Chinese immigration. The reference point in framing this history is clearly the destination country and its policies regarding racial minorities and immigration.

The tension between the two perspectives goes beyond how the history of Chinese overseas is classified. Using China as the point of departure, Chinese outside China have been typically referred to as *huaqiao*, literally meaning Chinese sojourning overseas, and typically translated as overseas Chinese (Zhuang 1989). The assumption is that China would always remain the ancestral land of Chinese overseas, who would eventually return to their home country. North American scholars typically interpret Chinese as a racial minority with unequal status vis-à-vis majority members (Anderson 1991; Backhouse 1999; Li 1998; Saxton 1971; Ward 1978). The notion of hyphenated minority, such as Chinese-Americans or Chinese-Canadians, is often used. The emphasis here is clearly using majority members of the destination society as a comparative group to interpret the Chinese minority.

The real tension of the two perspectives has to do with the competing salience of home country or destination society in accounting for the experiences of Chinese overseas. The debate also reflects different inquiries posed by scholars. China scholars favor studying the internal organization of Chinese overseas communities and the use of cultural resources in adapting to a new land. Thus the focus is on cultural transplantation and continuity. North American scholars, however, often study the Chinese minority in relation to majority members in the context of social inequality. Transplanted culture may be important as means to overcome hardship in the new land, but economic and political development in the destination country, especially pertaining to racial minorities and immigration policies, becomes the focal point of inquiry.

For this chapter, a more balanced approach is adopted to explain the making of the Chinese-Canadian community as resulting from two major forces.

The first has to do with developments in China as the source country of Chinese immigration and China's relations with the West. The second force is related to changes in the destination society regarding policies of immigration and racial equality. The focus here is on political and economic forces in the home country and destination society, and not on cultural transplantation and continuity. The salience of home country effect or destination influence varies depending on the historical period. Both factors may also interact to produce more complex effects on how the Chinese overseas community has been shaped.

Adopting this perspective, the making of the Chinese community in Canada may be framed in four periods: (1) nineteenth-century China and emigration; (2) Chinese-Canadians during the Cold War; (3) Canada-China relations after 1970 and Chinese immigration; and (4) China's market reform and Canada's demand for skilled immigrants. In each period, events in both home country and destination country produced profound effects on Chinese immigration and on the Chinese community in Canada.

Nineteenth-century China and emigration

Chinese immigration to Canada began in 1858 when gold was discovered in Fraser Valley, British Columbia. The Canadian gold rush attracted the initial arrival of Chinese gold miners from California. Shortly after, large numbers of Chinese workers were recruited directly from China to work on the western section of the Canadian Pacific Railway. At the height of railway construction in 1881 and 1882, over 11,000 Chinese came by ship to Victoria directly from China (Li 1998: 16). When the Trans-Canada Railroad was completed in 1885, the federal government imposed a head tax on every Chinese entering Canada. Between 1886 and 1904, some 44,654 Chinese paid about three million Canadian dollars in head tax for entering Canada (Li 1998: 42). Despite the government raising the head tax to \$100 in 1900 and to \$500 in 1903, Chinese immigrants continued to arrive (Li 1998: 34). They provided the low-cost labor for Canada's west in developing various burgeoning industries, such as mining, lumbering and canning. The Chinese quickly became the target of racial discrimination in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Many laws were passed to restrict Chinese immigration and to curtail the rights of those already in Canada (Li 1998: 29–43).

Undoubtedly, labor needs in western Canada opened the way for Chinese migration. However, devastating economic and political conditions in China in the nineteenth century created the conditions that drove many poor peasants and workers in the southeastern provinces of China to venture overseas in search of a living.

Toward the latter part of the nineteenth century, the Qing dynasty, which had ruled China since 1644, was showing many signs of weaknesses. China fought unsuccessfully against the British invasion in the Opium War (1839–1842) and had to sign the Treaty of Nanjing, giving up trading and territorial rights – the first of many unequal treaties with Western powers that followed (Wakeman 1975; Hsu 1970).

The penetration of foreign capital into China undermined its national integrity and in the long run accelerated the disintegration of a weak imperial empire already plagued with many internal social and economic problems. Nineteenth century China suffered from stagnated farm productivity and rising population pressures (Ho 1967; Perkins 1969). Toward the second half of the nineteenth century, declining farm productivity and frequent natural disasters such as famine and flood further intensified the contradiction in the agricultural tenancy system of China. It was a system characterized by the control of farmland by few absentee landlords and the subsistence of majority peasant tenants who worked on the land. The system of farming further discouraged mechanization and limited farm productivity, eventually driving many to the brink of starvation.

The social and economic contradictions in Chinese society eventually led to the Taiping Rebellion, a peasant revolt that lasted 14 years, from 1850 to 1864, and affected much of China south of the Yangtzi River (Shurmann and Schell 1967). The rebellion was eventually put down with foreign help by the Qing government (Shurmann and Schell 1967; Spence 1990). China witnessed another abortive revolt, the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, before the Qing dynasty was overthrown by Revolutionary Alliance of Sun Yat-sen in 1911. China continued to be divided by warlords after 1911 and then open conflicts between the National Party of China and the Chinese Communist Party. Japan invaded the northeastern part of China in 1931, and a full-scale war was fought against Japan from 1937 to 1945. Thus, from the middle of the nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century, China had witnessed starvation, rebellions, revolutions, civil wars and foreign invasions. The harsh conditions in China were a major factor that explains why, since the middle of the nineteenth century, many Chinese in the coastal provinces endured great hardship to venture overseas in search for a better chance of survival (Li 1998).

The continuous immigration of Chinese led to rise in the population of Chinese in Canada. By the time the 1931 census was taken, there were 46,519 Chinese in Canada (Li 1998: 67). However, Canada adopted a policy of excluding Chinese entry between 1923 and 1947. As a result, the population of Chinese in Canada dropped to 34,627 in 1941 and to 32,528 in 1951 (Li 1998: 67). Chinese in Canada during this period had to endure severe hardship, such as a serious sex imbalance in the Chinese community and a marginal economic and social status in Canadian society.

Chinese-Canadians during the Cold War

The end of World War II opened a new era of change both in China and North America. China was an allied country in World War II and the defeat of Japan brought China a higher international stature. However, civil war resumed in China between the Nationalist Party and the Communist Party. In 1949, the Nationalist Party retreated to Taiwan, and the People's Republic of China was founded. In the following year the Korean War broke out, with the USA and other countries supporting South Korea, and China supporting North Korea.

Despite the truce in Korea in 1953, the Cold War and tensions between China and the West endured for three decades to come.

In Canada, returned Chinese veterans began to demand the right to vote. In 1947, the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923, which barred Chinese from entering Canada, was repealed, and franchise was first given to Chinese veterans and then to all Chinese in Canada (Lee 1967; Li 1998: 90–91). The postwar period also witnessed a strengthening of human rights and equality principles in Canada.¹ These changes resulted in Chinese in Canada gaining civil rights that were long deprived of them and improving their social status in Canada. The repeal of the 1923 Chinese Immigration Act in 1947 also enabled limited Chinese immigrants to be admitted to Canada in the 1950s (Li 1998: 91–95). Between 1949 and 1955, about 12,560 Chinese immigrated to Canada, 60 percent of whom were wives and children who were probably joining their husbands or fathers after the long period of Chinese exclusion (Li 1998:96).

In 1947 Canada's prime minister, Mackenzie King, reiterated Canada's postwar immigration policy, which favored European immigrants and restricted the admission of Asians (Hawkins 1988). Later, in explaining the restrictive policy as applied to the Chinese, J.W. Pickersgill, minister of citizenship and immigration from 1954 to 1957, said:

The only reason that admission was confined to unmarried children was, of course, that a chain of immigration would have been set up that would have been very hard to control because of the lack of facilities of any kind that could be made available in China to provide accurate information.... As I say, in order to make sure, particularly once the communist regime was established in China, that our limited immigration was not permitted to become an avenue for the back door infiltration of communist agents ... it was felt by the government responsible at that time and has been felt by the present government since that these controls had to be maintained.

(Canada, House of Commons, Canada, June 6, 1960: 4715–4716)

The restriction on Chinese immigration to Canada between the late 1940s and early 1960s reflected a racial bias of Canada toward Asians and other nonwhites, considering them less preferable to European immigrants. Pickersgill's statement above revealed a Cold War mentality of distrust of Chinese immigrants – every Chinese immigrant was seen as a potential agent from communist China who could infiltrate Canada and undermine its democratic system. The Korean War (1950–1953), which involved the United States, Canada and other countries of the West on the one side, and North Korea and China on the other side, and the subsequent Cold War of the 1950s and 1960s further promoted sinophobia in the West. Fear of communist infiltration became another convenient pretext to restrict the entry of Chinese to Canada.

Since the restrictive immigration measures only permitted the immigration of immediate family members of Chinese-Canadians, including minor children, some Chinese resorted to illegal means to enter Canada in the 1950s. In some

cases, children of Chinese-Canadians misrepresented their age to qualify for admission.² In others, real and fictitious birth certificates indicating a Chinese-Canadian parent were sold to prospective immigrants. It is difficult to estimate precisely how many Chinese entered Canada by illegal means before 1960. But the question of illegal entry prompted the Canadian government to conduct an investigation in 1959 (Hawkins 1988: 131–134). On June 9, 1960, Ellen Fairclough, minister of citizenship and immigration, introduced the Chinese Adjustment Statement Program, by which Chinese who had entered Canada illegally could come forward to make statements about their illegal entry and their true family background, in return for being allowed to remain in Canada if they were of good moral character and had not been systematically engaged in illegal immigration (Hawkins 1988: 133). Between 1960 and 1970, 11,569 Chinese made use of the program and had their status adjusted (Hawkins 1988: 133).

In 1962 Canada changed the requirements for immigration that resulted in Chinese who had no relatives in Canada being able to apply, for the first time since 1923, as independent immigrants (Privy Council, 1962–1986). Further changes in the immigration regulations in 1967 (Privy Council, 1967–1986) finally resulted in a universal point system that was to be applied to all prospective immigrants, irrespective of country of origin or racial background. It took 20 years after ending the Chinese exclusion in 1947 before Canada finally adopted a universal standard of assessment for all prospective immigrants.

The founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 also changed the outlook and politics in the Chinese-Canadian community. The notion of Chinese as sojourners in Canada eventually returning to their ancestral home was always more myth than fact. During the exclusion period from 1923 to 1947, every Chinese in Canada who planned to leave Canada temporarily and return within two years had to register, and the failure to do so would render them inadmissible to Canada (Li 1998: 35). The legal restriction in Canada and the chaotic situation in China before the end of World War II were not conducive for Chinese-Canadians to settle in China permanently even if they wanted to do so. After 1949, land reform and farm collectivization in China and the harsh treatment of landlords brought apprehensions among many Chinese in North America, and dashed whatever remaining hope they had of returning to China. At the same time, the gaining of voting and other civil rights in Canada after World War II, and the entrenchment of equality principles in Canadian society enhanced the economic opportunity and social status of Chinese in Canada.

Historically, politics in Canada's Chinatowns were deeply affected by politics in China (Lee 1967; Wickberg 1982). After World War II, the influence of homeland politics was substantially weakened in Canada's Chinese community (Wickberg 1982: 258–266). In the 1960s, the Nationalist Party of China, which continued to rule Taiwan, maintained 20 branch offices among Chinese communities in Canada, and had a reported membership of 3,000 people in Canada (Lee 1967: 319). However, as the relationship between Mainland China and Canada improved, beginning in 1970, and with the entry of the People's

Republic of China to the United Nations in 1971, the influence of Taiwan on Chinese in Canada was overshadowed by the rising importance of the new China.

Canada–China relations after 1970 and Chinese immigration

Canada and China did not maintain formal diplomatic relationship during the Cold War period of the 1950s and 1960s. However, relationships between China and the West began to improve in 1970. China's ability to alleviate itself from a backward country of starvation to self-sufficiency, and its rising influence among Third World countries, prompted the West to recognize its emerging importance.³ Canada clearly saw the economic value in trading with China as early as the 1960s,⁴ but concerns over the US reaction to Canada's recognition of China delayed the establishment of formal diplomatic ties between Canada and China (Holden 2004). On October 25, 1971, the United Nations voted to replace the Republic of China with the People's Republic of China. Canada and China established formal diplomatic relations on October 13, 1970, and Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau visited China in October 1973. During the visit, Canada and China signed the Canadian–Chinese Trade Agreement, allowing each side to extend the most-favored nation status to each other (Holden 2004: 3–4). Canada also agreed to enable relatives of Chinese-Canadians to emigrate from China to Canada for the purpose of family reunification. Within one year of the agreement, Chinese-Canadians had filed 6,000 applications for immigration visas for about 15,000 relatives, 90 percent of whom lived in the Guangdong province (*Montreal Star*, 1974). The media reported some successful cases of reunion in 1974 (*New York Times*, 1974; *Toronto Star*, 1974; *Montreal Star*, 1974). The improved relationship between China and Canada in the 1970s resumed direct immigration from China to Canada, which was interrupted by the Korean War and later the Cold War. However, the numbers directly migrating from Mainland China to Canada remained small compared to those from Hong Kong in the 1970s and 1980s (Li 1998: 99).

Undoubtedly, Canada's adoption of a new immigration policy in 1967 to use a universal point system of assessing prospective immigrants based on educational qualification and occupational skills benefited the immigration of Chinese to Canada. However, Hong Kong, not Mainland China, became the main source of Chinese immigration from 1968 until the mid-1990s (Table 2.1).

Between 1968 and 1994, 522,061 new immigrants from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China landed in Canada. Immigrants from Hong Kong accounted for more than two-thirds of this volume of immigration.

For the same period, between 1968 and 1994, 115,167 immigrants from Mainland China arrived in Canada, accounting for about 22 percent of all immigrants from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China entering Canada. However, about 59 percent of all immigrants from Mainland China came in the later part of this period, between 1985 and 1994. One factor that accounted for the rise of immigrants from Mainland China during this period was Canada's ad hoc policy toward students from China after 1989. The 1989 Tiananmen Square

Table 2.1 Immigrants from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Mainland China admitted to Canada annually, 1968 to 1994

<i>Country or region of last permanent residence</i>	<i>1968–1976</i>		<i>1977–1984</i>		<i>1985–1994</i>		<i>1968–1994</i>	
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>
Hong Kong	60,527	67.4	50,785	64.1	243,888	69.1	355,200	68.0
Taiwan	5,063	5.6	5,455	6.9	41,176	11.7	51,694	9.9
Mainland China	24,278	27.0	22,986	29.0	67,903	19.2	115,167	22.1
Total	89,868	100.0	79,226	100.0	352,967	100.0	522,061	100.0

Source: Department of Manpower and Immigration, 1967–1973 Annual Reports, Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Service Canada; Manpower and Immigration, 1974–1977 Annual Reports, Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Service Canada.

student protest⁵ and its aftermath resulted in Canada condemning China's government's action and allowing several thousand visa students from China at Canadian universities at the time to remain as permanent residents in Canada. At that time, Canada required international students seeking to apply for permanent residents after their study to do so outside Canada, but this requirement was temporarily waived for students from China after 1989. At the same time, Canada was careful to process the students from China after 1989 as economic immigrants and not refugees seeking protection from political persecution, probably for fear of further damaging the relationship with China.

Increased Chinese immigration to Canada after 1967, mainly from Hong Kong, changed the population size and composition of Chinese in Canada. The total number of Chinese in Canada rose from 58,197 in 1961 to 118,815 in 1971, and then from 289,245 in 1981 to 633,933 in 1991 (Li 1998: 67). The Chinese immigrants who came between the 1970s and 1990s tended to be well educated, diverse in professional occupation, upwardly mobile and financially secure, especially compared to their working-class predecessors who had come to Canada in the earlier part of the twentieth century.

Much of the social mobility of the Chinese had to do with the emergence of the Chinese new middle class since the 1970s. If the new middle class is broadly defined as those in managerial, administrative, professional and technical occupations, then 26 percent of all Chinese in the Canadian labor force in 1981 and 38 percent in 1991 belonged to this class (Li 1998: 129–131). Educationally, Chinese-Canadians were more likely to have completed a university degree than other Canadians. In 1991, about 53 percent of Chinese in middle-class jobs had a university degree, compared to only 36 percent among other Canadians in similar jobs (Statistics Canada, 1994). Unlike other middle-class Canadians, 83 percent of middle-class Chinese-Canadians in 1991 were born outside of Canada (Li 1998: 129). Furthermore, in 1991 among the middle-class Chinese-Canadians born outside of Canada, 90 percent had immigrated to Canada after 1967 (Statistics Canada, 1994). These statistics indicate the importance of Chinese immigration after 1967 in the making of the Chinese middle class in Canada.

China's market reform and Canada's demand for skilled immigrants

Since the 1990s, two major forces have shaped the immigration from China to Canada. The first is related to the economic reforms in China since 1979 and the subsequent transformation of the university system that produced a large supply of university graduates; the second has to do with Canada's revamping of the immigration system toward the late 1990s to address the human capital needs of Canada's information-based economy.

China underwent major social and economic reform toward the late 1970s. The ending of the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976) and the downfall of the Gang of Four⁶ brought stability to China as the reformists assumed political power. Among them was Deng Xiaoping,⁷ who systematically loosened control of the centralized economy to enable China to develop a market economy based on features of capital investment, competition, productivity and profitability. China's market reform brought double-digit economic growth in China in the 1980s and 1990s (Naughton 1995; Vogel 2011). One of the outcomes of China's market reform was the government's determination to use market principles to overhaul the system of higher education as a means to intensify research and to increase its capacity.

Efforts to reform the higher education system of China began in the early 1990s. In 1994, the former State Education Commission launched a formal plan to reform higher education in China and provided substantial financial resources to support major educational projects (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China 2005). The educational reform had several components, including direct state investment to major research projects of national significance; decentralization of university control to permit more local autonomy; diversification of financing, which allowed universities to generate revenue; and cost sharing, which shifted a large share of educational cost to students (Li, Li and Zong 2007; Wang 2001). Along with changes in university financing, the state also discontinued the practice of free university education and guaranteed job assignment for graduates in 1997 (Li, Li and Zong 2007). In other words, China has allowed market features to guide the expansion of the university system, allowing universities to grow based on the economic rationale of supply and demand and not based on central planning. The reform of higher education in China has increased the opportunity to attend universities (Chen 2004), but at the same time, individual household spending on higher education also increased (Ding 2003).

The result of educational reform was a sustained increase in the number of university graduates every year since the 1990s. Prior to restructuring between 1985 and 1999, the number of students graduating from China's universities was under one million every year (Figure 2.1). As a result of the higher education reform, by 2003, the number of university graduates had increased to two million; by 2008, to 5.4 million; and by 2013, close to 6.9 million (Figure 2.1). In other words, within a period of 14 years, the number of students graduating from universities in China annually had increased sevenfold.

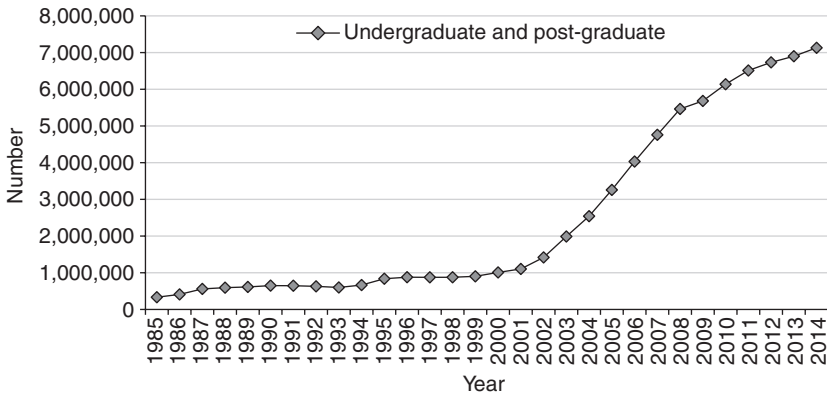


Figure 2.1 Number of students graduated from institutions of higher education, undergraduate and graduate levels, PRC, 1985–2014.

Source: Data between 1985 and 2013 are from China Statistical Yearbook (2014), Chapter 21, Education, National Bureau of Statistics of China, China Statistics Press. Data for 2014 are retrieved from <http://data.stats.gov.cn/english/easyquery.htm?cn=C01>; Table “Number of Graduates by Level and Type of School.”

The changes resulted in an abundant supply of fresh university graduates every year. Severe job competition and slower economic growth after 2000 compelled many university students to consider further studies at home or abroad to delay competing in an adverse job market (Li, Li and Zong 2007). Data on the number of students going abroad to study and returning to China annually indicate a rising trend after the mid-1990s, with the number going abroad exceeding the number returning every year (Figure 2.2). From 1985 to 1992, only a few thousand students went abroad yearly. The number going abroad increased to over 20,000 a year in 1995, and to over 100,000 after 2001. In 2012 alone, the number going abroad was 400,000 (Figure 2.2). Meanwhile, the number of students returning to China every year has been increasing too, but at a slower pace than those going abroad. The space separating the two curves in Figure 2.2 indicates the cumulative stock of students staying abroad, which was created by the disparity between students going abroad from PRC and those returning to PRC every year. In the 14 years between 2000 and 2014, the difference between those going abroad and returning to China annually has created a stock of 1.5 million PRC students staying overseas.

In sum, the pool of fresh university graduates in Mainland China and the stock of PRC students staying abroad has also been enlarging since the 1990s. The surplus of university graduates, both in Mainland China and from Chinese students remaining abroad, produced a pool of potential immigrants for Canada and other countries seeking skilled workers with educational credentials.

In Canada, there were serious discussions on immigration in the 1990s that culminated in a new immigration policy in the early 2000s (Li 2003). The

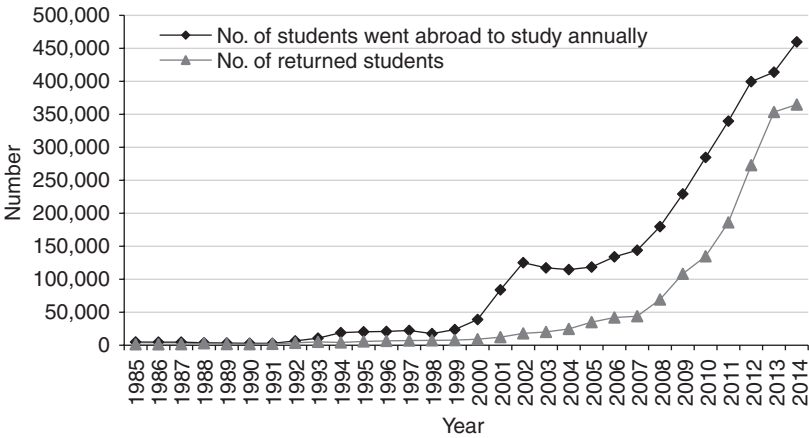


Figure 2.2 Number of PRC students who went abroad to study and number returned annually, 1985–2014.

Source: Data between 1985 and 2013 are from China Statistical Yearbook (2014), Chapter 21, Education, National Bureau of Statistics of China, China Statistics Press. Data for 2014 are retrieved from <http://data.stats.gov.cn/english/easyquery.htm?cn=C01>.

emergence of the new economy under the information age has exacerbated the demand for skilled workers in Canada. Throughout the 1990s, virtually all jobs created in Canada were related to knowledge-based occupations (Zhao 2000). At the same time, Canada also faced the problem of out-migration of skilled workers to the USA. Thus, admitting immigrants with university credentials allowed Canada to recuperate its loss of human capital from net migration to the USA and to sustain labor growth in knowledge-based sectors.

The emergence of the knowledge-based economy and the rising demand for skilled workers prompted Canada to revamp the immigration system to strengthen the admission of immigrants with high education credentials and occupational skills. Both the new Immigration Act of 2001 and the revised immigration regulations of 2002 reinforced immigrant selection based on human capital criteria.⁸

It was the combination of two forces, one related to China and the other to Canada, that created the conditions to trigger the rising volume of Chinese immigration from China to Canada since the late 1990s. Specifically, it was China's economic reform that enabled the university system to expand and to produce an ever-enlarging cohort of university graduates and skilled labor pool every year. The increase in China's supply of university graduates coincided with the growing demand for skilled immigrants in Canada as it relied more heavily on the information-based economy.

Prior to the mid-1980s, Chinese immigration to Canada was mainly from Hong Kong, which accounted for two-thirds of Chinese immigration to Canada between 1968 and 1984 (Table 2.1). The volume of immigration from Hong

Kong to Canada rose sharply after 1985, reaching a peak of 44,000 in 1994 before declining (Figure 2.3). The rise and fall of immigration from Hong Kong to Canada in the 1980s and 1990s were affected by political and economic factors in Hong Kong and Mainland China (Li 2005). The scheduled return of Hong Kong to the PRC in 1997 and political uncertainties in the 1990s provided the political context for emigration from Hong Kong in the late 1980s and early 1990s. However, it was the 1989 Tiananmen Square student protest in Mainland China and its aftermath that strengthened the political will for those with means in Hong Kong to leave. Opinion surveys conducted in Hong Kong before and after 1989 indicate only a small proportion of the general population, about 12 to 13 percent in 1988 and 1991, had emigration tendencies (Lam, Fan and Skeldon 1995; Wong 1995). However, respondents in managerial, administrative and professional occupations were more inclined to plan to emigrate (Lam, Fan and Skeldon 1995; Salaff and Wong 1995). The booming economy of Hong Kong in the early 1990s also provided the financial means for investors and professionals to immigrate. At the same time, Canada expanded the Business Immigration Program in the mid-1980s. Between 1991 and 1995, business immigrants accounted for 42 to 64 percent of all economic immigrants from Hong Kong to Canada each year. The decline of immigration from Hong Kong to Canada was related to changing economic conditions in Hong Kong after the mid-1990s. The erosion in real estate prices in Hong Kong beginning in 1995 and further decline in the 1997 Asian Financial Crisis reduced the wealth of middle-class Hong Kong residents and hampered their means of emigration (Li 2005). These factors accounted for the rapid decline of Hong Kong immigration to Canada after 1995.

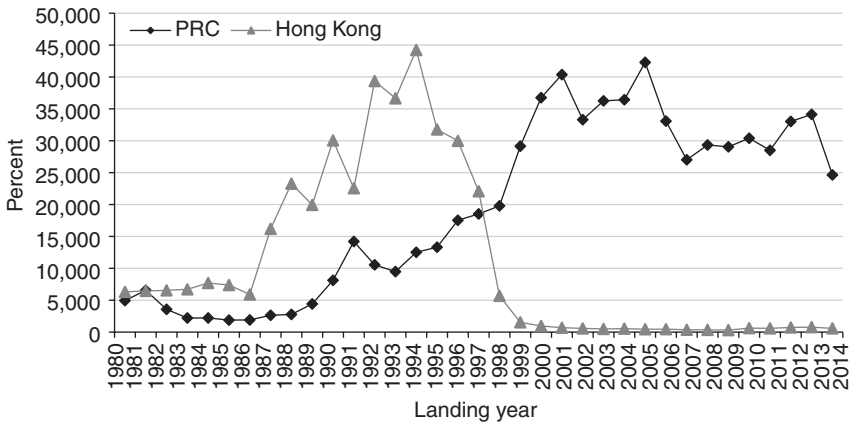


Figure 2.3 Immigrants from PRC and Hong Kong admitted annually to Canada by landing year, 1980–2014.

Source: Data from 1980–2009 compiled from microdata file of Permanent Immigrant Data System, 1980–2009, released by Citizenship and Immigration Canada; data from 2010–2013 updated from Facts and Figures: Immigrant Overview Permanent Residents, 2014, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2015.

From the return of Hong Kong to China in 1997 to 2003, when SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) broke out, immigration from Hong Kong remained low. After 2003, the economy of Hong Kong recovered, but many with means to emigrate then saw better opportunities in Hong Kong and a proportion of those who immigrated to Canada also returned to Hong Kong (Li 2005).

In contrast, immigration from Mainland China to Canada began to increase after 1993, reaching almost 20,000 in 1998 and over 40,000 in 2001 before receding to 33,231 in 2002. The number exceeded 36,000 for 2003 and 2004, and over 42,000 for 2005. The annual number of immigrants from Mainland China has declined since but remained at a relatively high level of 25,000 or more per year (Figure 2.1).

The growth in the number of immigrants from Mainland China to Canada since the mid-1990s has been largely sustained by university-educated immigrants. The annual proportion of PRC immigrants with a university degree entering Canada rose drastically during this period, rising from 27 percent in 1995 to 39 percent in 1997, and nearly 50 percent in 1999, 2000 and 2001.⁹ Between 2002 and 2009, the number of immigrants with degrees declined but they continued to account for 30 to 40 percent of all PRC immigrants annually. Undoubtedly, the expansion of immigration from China to Canada has been driven largely by the immigration of those with educational qualifications.

The term “new Chinese immigrants” is sometimes used to refer to those who came to Canada in the immigration wave from the PRC since the 1990s. New Chinese immigrants contributed to the increase in the Chinese population in Canada, which rose from 1.03 million in 2001 to 1.22 million in 2006 and to 1.49 million in 2011¹⁰ (Statistics Canada, 2008). The increase of PRC immigrants in Canada also brought social and economic changes to the Chinese community. Historically, the Cantonese language was widely used in the Chinese community. After the 1990s, there were many indications that, in addition to Cantonese, Mandarin was also commonly adopted. Data on linguistic characteristics from the 2011 census reveal that among those in metropolitan centers who spoke a Chinese language most often at home, 25 percent in Toronto and 30 percent in Vancouver spoke Mandarin (Statistics Canada, 2011). Many church advertisements in *Singtao* and *Mingpao*, the two leading Chinese daily newspapers in Canada, frequently advertised for services being held in Mandarin. Further, real estate agents and automobile dealers advertising in Chinese newspapers typically either claimed to speak Mandarin or to have partners who did so as a means of capturing the new Chinese clientele. Such evidence further indicates the linguistic influence of immigrants from Mainland China in the Chinese-Canadian community.

The impact of PRC-born immigrants in the Canadian labor force is also evident. The 2011 National Household Survey indicates that there were 653,012 Chinese, measured by Chinese visible minority status, in the Canadian labor force (Table 2.2). Of these, 21 percent were Canada-born Chinese-Canadians, 24 percent were Chinese immigrants who came to Canada before 1990, and 54 percent were Chinese immigrants who immigrated between 1990 and 2009. In Canada’s labor force in 2011, PRC-born immigrants accounted for 29 percent of

Table 2.2 Chinese in Canadian labor force by immigrant status, place of birth and year of immigration, 2010

<i>Immigrant status and year of immigration of Chinese</i>	<i>Chinese in labor force</i>		<i>%</i>
	<i>Number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>PRC-born</i>
Canadian by birth	139,386	21	0
Immigrated before 1990	159,134	24	29.0
Immigrated 1990 to 2009	354,492	54	65.3
Total	653,012	100	42.5

Source: Calculation from Public Use Microdata File for Individuals, 2011 National Household Survey, Statistics Canada.

those who came to Canada before 1990, and 65 percent of those who immigrated between 1990 and 2009. In short, PRC-born immigrants made up about two-thirds of Chinese who immigrated to Canada between 1990 and 2009 and participated in Canada's labor force in 2011.

Occupationally, Chinese immigrants who came to Canada between 1990 and 2009 showed a remarkable similarity to those who came before 1990, with a high proportion in middle-class occupations (Table 2.3). Thirty percent of those

Table 2.3 Occupations of Chinese in the Canadian labor force, by immigrant status and period of immigration, 2011

<i>Occupations in:</i>	<i>Canadian Landed immigrants</i>			
	<i>By birth</i>	<i>Before 1990</i>	<i>1990–2009</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>[1]</i>	<i>[2]</i>	<i>[3]</i>	<i>[4]</i>
	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Management	7.3	13.4	9.7	10.1
Business, finance and administration	23.2	22.1	20.3	21.3
Natural and applied sciences	12.2	12.4	15.9	14.2
Health	7.3	6.5	4.8	5.8
Social science, education, government service and religion	10.3	6.2	6.9	7.5
Art, culture, recreation and sport	6.5	2.4	2.6	3.4
Sales and service	25.8	22.1	26.9	25.5
Trades, transportation and equipment operators	5.0	7.6	6.3	6.4
Primary sector	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.5
Processing, manufacturing and utilities	1.5	7.0	6.2	5.4
Total	100	100	100	100
All occupations (<i>number of cases</i>)	139,386	164,197	357,223	660,806

Source: Public Use Microdata File for Individuals, 2011 National Household Survey, Statistics Canada.

Chinese who landed in Canada between 1990 and 2009, compared to 36 percent of those who came before 1990, were in managerial and administrative jobs. Other professional occupational categories, including those in sciences, health, social sciences, government service, art and religion accounted for another 30 percent of the jobs of Chinese immigrants who landed between 1990 and 2009, compared to 28 percent for Chinese immigrants who came before 1990. Thus, 60 percent of Chinese immigrants who came to Canada between 1990 and 2009 had middle-class jobs in 2011, compared to 64 percent of Chinese immigrants who came before 1990. Undoubtedly, the ability of a substantial proportion of the more recently arrived Chinese, mainly from the PRC, to hold managerial and professional jobs in Canada had to do with their high educational credentials.

China and Chinese immigration to Canada

Historically, poor conditions in China and labor needs in Canada created the conditions for Chinese labor migration in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. After the end of World War II, limited immigration from China to Canada resumed in the early 1950s after Canada ended the long period of Chinese exclusion from 1923 to 1945. However, immigration from China to Canada was interrupted by the development of the Cold War and the hostility between China and the West. Sinophobia and Canada's reluctance to ease immigration for Asians made direct immigration from China to Canada difficult until relationships between China and Canada improved after 1970. Changes in immigration regulations in Canada in the late 1960s to use a universal system of assessing all prospective immigrants opened the way for Chinese immigration to Canada based on educational qualification and occupational skills. However, it was Hong Kong, not Mainland China, that became the main source of Chinese immigration to Canada from the 1970s to the mid-1990s.

Economic reforms in China since the late 1970s brought a subsequent expansion in China's system of higher education. By the late 1990s, universities in China were undergoing a rapid trajectory of rapid growth and substantially increased the number of university graduates every year. The abundant supply of university graduates within a short period of time since the late 1990s resulted in China's job market not being able to satisfy job demands of all new graduates. Meanwhile, Canada was changing its immigration system to place more emphasis on educational credentials in selecting new immigrants as a means to address the demand for skilled labor under the information age. These two forces, the oversupply of human capital in China and Canada's demand for skilled immigrants, created a new condition for the immigration of PRC immigrants to Canada.

The analysis shows that the rise of China, in combination with Canada's labor needs and its relations with China, produced different effects on Chinese immigration to Canada in different periods after World War II. For the latest wave of Chinese immigration to Canada after the mid-1990s, Canada has benefited from the surplus of human capital produced by China's university system. Whether

the wave of Chinese immigration to Canada can be sustained depends on future economic opportunities in China and the direction of Canada immigration policy. Given Canada's continuous reliance on immigration to address its labor needs, Canada will likely continue to welcome highly educated immigrants for the future. However, whether university graduates in China would remain potential immigrants for Canada depends on future economic opportunities in China. If China continues to expand its economy, especially in the technical and information sectors, and increase the demand for high skilled workers and raise their remuneration, then those potentially going abroad permanently may choose to remain in China. At the same time, Chinese immigrants who immigrated to Canada and elsewhere may also be attracted to return to China, either temporarily or permanently, to seek better job opportunities.

China, as the home country of immigrants, would continue to affect the conditions and prospects of Chinese immigration. However, the future effect of home country on Chinese overseas would be more likely to be based on economic incentives and job opportunities than a sense of cultural affinity or ancestral identity of Chinese overseas.

Notes

- 1 Canada adopted a series of legislative bills and policies to strengthen human rights and advanced equity in the postwar decades, including the Canadian Bill of Rights in 1960, the Canadian Human Rights Act in 1977, the multicultural policy in 1971 and the Charter of Rights in 1982 (see Li, 1996).
- 2 See Canada, House of Commons, June 6, 1960.
- 3 On October 16, 1964, China shocked the world in conducting its first nuclear test successfully, making it the fifth nuclear-armed state after the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain and France. China managed to develop its own nuclear program despite the Soviet Union withdrawing its technical support to China after their relationship turned sour in the late 1950s.
- 4 The value of Canada's exports to China, mainly wheat, was \$9 million in 1960 and \$147 million in 1962 (Holden 2004:3).
- 5 In the spring of 1989, students in Beijing staged massive demonstrations that culminated in the occupation of Tiananmen Square. The government sent army to put down the student protest in June 3 and 4, 1989. The action brought condemnations from many countries. The incident is typically referred to as the June 4 Incident in China.
- 6 The Gang of Four refers to the radical political ruling group that was responsible for the repressive policies during Cultural Revolution, during which time production was interrupted and experienced party officials and administrators were systematically removed and purged. The four members included Jiang Qing (the wife of Mao Zedong), Wang Hongwen, Yao Wenyuan and Zhang Chunqiao.
- 7 Deng Xiaoping was purged during the Cultural Revolution but was reinstated after the fall of the Gang of Four. With the support of other moderate leaders of China, he started economic liberalization and market reforms in China in 1979.
- 8 Statutes of Canada, 2001; Privy Council, *Canada Gazette*, Part II, Vol. 136, 14 June 2002, 2002-227, pp. 177-360.
- 9 Data from 1980-2009 are compiled from microdata file of Permanent Immigrant Data System, 1980-2009, released by Citizenship and Immigration Canada; data from 2010-2013 are based on *Facts and Figures: Immigrant Overview Permanent Residents, 2014*, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2015.

- 10 The detailed information collected in Canadian censuses was not collected in the 2011 Census. Instead, the 2011 National Household Survey was used to supplement the census information. According to the 2011 National Household Survey, there were 1,324,700 persons under “Chinese visible minority origin,” and 1,487,580 persons under “Chinese ethnic origin.” The “Chinese ethnic origin” included 1,210,945 Chinese single ethnic origin and 276,635 Chinese multiple origin. Data for Chinese visible minority origin are based on Statistics Canada (2013); data for Chinese ethnic origin are from 2011 National Household Survey, Data Table Number 990010-X2011028.

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3 From multicultural ethnic migrants to the new players of China's public diplomacy

The Chinese in Australia

Wanning Sun, John Fitzgerald and Jia Gao

Introduction

The phrase “China’s rise” aptly captures the country’s enhanced economic, political and strategic position in the twenty-first century. As an analytic concept for approaching China and its place in the world, however, the term can be as confusing as it is clarifying. It implies that China has not risen or stood up before, despite similar phrases having circulated widely after the founding of the Republic in 1912, on the creation of the Nationalist government in 1928, and at the founding of the People’s Republic in 1949. At the same time, it assumes that there were earlier periods when China fell on its own sword or for some other reason failed to “rise,” without specifying when exactly those periods were. In relation to identity politics and community formation among emigrant Chinese communities, in particular, it draws attention to the growing power of the People’s Republic of China at a time when many ethnic Chinese migrants from a variety of countries and regions profess to have little to do with Beijing. To consider “China’s rise” as an exogenous factor in Chinese-Australian community affairs, China’s emergence as a great power needs to be approached from a variety of perspectives. Through an examination of Chinese migration to Australia, we argue in this chapter that it is insufficient to treat China’s rise as a stand-alone exogenous factor. Adopting an approach that is both historical and cultural, we aim to get to the core of these questions by taking a number of consecutive steps. We first offer a historical account of Chinese migration to Australia in earlier decades from South China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Southeast Asia. Second, we trace the phenomenal growth of migration from the People’s Republic of China (PRC) since the inception of the economic reforms era and China’s open-door policy in relation to trade, investment and outbound migration. Third, focusing on the decades after 2000, we juxtapose the wildly differing expectations that Australia and China have in relation to Chinese migrants as potential agents of public diplomacy for these nations respectively. Finally, shifting from a historical to a cultural analysis, we present some preliminary evidence pointing to the willingness of Australia’s Chinese migrant community to participate on behalf of China in its public diplomacy efforts.

Early history of Chinese migration

The early history of Chinese migration to Australia is generally presented as a tale of opportunity, hard work, victimization and defeat. According to this account, a stoic community of miners and agricultural laborers braved the high seas to seek their fortunes in the Australian colonies, and held out as best as they could against discriminatory immigration restrictions, widespread racism and the personal anguish of family separation, before succumbing to misfortune, packing their bags and returning to China. Chinese miners, laborers and merchants certainly faced more than their share of prejudice in Australia but this standard narrative of arrival, suffering and return does little justice to their enterprise and resilience from the earliest days of settlement to the present day. Growing interest in the history of Chinese overseas, sparked by China's "rise," presents an opportunity to cast the history of Chinese Australia in a different light.

Rather than go home, as legend has it, the Chinese in Australia were on the move for a century or more among different nodes of their business and social networks in Australia and the Pacific Islands, Hong Kong, Shanghai and their home counties in Guangdong. Those who went back to their home villages or to Shanghai or to Hong Kong as often as not returned at some point to Australia, where they were actively engaged in work, education, politics, health services and charities, and where they ran lively Chinese-language media, supported a vibrant associational life and enjoyed considerable success in business and commerce extending throughout Australia and extensive Cantonese diaspora networks overseas (Kuo 2013; Fitzgerald 2007).

People traveled from China to Australia more or less without interruption from the time Mak Sai Ying (Mai Shiying) first stepped ashore in 1818, in the earliest years of British occupation of the continent, until the early 1950s, when migration from China all but ceased. An estimated 90,000 villagers from counties around the Pearl River Delta followed Mak Sai Ying over the course of the nineteenth century, some arriving as indentured laborers but the great majority as free agents under the credit ticket system. Most were drawn by opportunity, mining for precious metals from the 1850s to the 1870s and for tin in the 1880s, and undertaking agricultural labor, household farming and a variety of business ventures over the latter half of the nineteenth century (Choi 1975; Yong 1977; Atkinson 1995; Ryan 1995).

Early cohorts of Chinese migrants to Australia were predominantly male, following a pattern that skewed the gender ratio of Chinese communities well into the twentieth century, when a semblance of balance was achieved through the birth of girl children and, to a limited extent, through female migration. Restrictions on family migration in the decades after 1905 made Chinese-Australian males more than usually mobile, compelling them to commute in ever-greater numbers and with increasing frequency between Australia and China to marry, to raise children and to visit their families (Jones 2004).

The number of new Chinese arrivals fell away toward the end of the nineteenth century with the introduction of colonial legislation imposing poll taxes

on Chinese immigrants and limiting entry through a formula linking the number of entrants to tonnages of shipping, on a model first introduced in Victoria in 1855 and subsequently into other Australian colonial jurisdictions. The number of Chinese arrivals declined accordingly. At the founding of the federated Commonwealth Government in 1901, close to 30,000 Chinese were resident in Australia. Between 10,000 and 20,000 lay buried on Australian soil. In the same year the Commonwealth Government applied uniform national immigration restrictions to limit the entry of non-European citizens, including people from China. The Commonwealth could not exclude Chinese explicitly on the model of the US Chinese Exclusion Act (1882) because Australia continued to defer to British sovereignty in foreign affairs and trade, and Britain did not favor explicit racial exclusion among its colonial dominions (York 1993; on British treaties and Australian immigration, see Fitzgerald 2012). In consequence, the Commonwealth implemented a system of administrative exclusions focusing on the application of a dictation test to all Asians. Under the Immigration Restriction Act (1901), Chinese and other Asians wishing to migrate to Australia could be required to take a dictation test at the discretion of local authorities at their port of entry (Jones 1999) – a test that remained in force until 1958 (York 1993: 362). Administrative discretion worked both ways, enabling officials to exclude whomsoever they chose, while enabling members of excluded categories to present a case for exemption typically for educational or business purposes.

The arrival of new entrants from China declined under the new exclusion provisions without quite drawing to a halt until 1949. Over the three decades to 1941, for example, 1,130 new Chinese arrivals were admitted as merchants, students or tourists, averaging between 30 and 40 new entrants from China each year (York 1993: 366). Travel by resident Chinese-Australians to and from Australia and the Pacific Islands and ports in Hong Kong and China far exceeded new arrivals. Around 28,000 registered Chinese departures and arrivals are recorded for New South Wales over the first two decades of the twentieth century at a time when the total registered Chinese population hovered between 7,000 and 10,000 (Williams 2001: 63–64; see Tables 1.3 and 1.6). From the turn of the century to the outbreak of World War II, members of the small Chinese-Australian community undertook 80,000 journeys to and from Australia. Many were traveling multiple times (Jones 2004). The high rate of international movements suggests that, in the absence of significant numbers of new migrants from China, international mobility was essential for conducting family and business affairs.

International mobility enabled significant business investments in Hong Kong and China, while ensuring the continuing viability of local businesses in Australia. Chinese-Australians made up the largest identifiable group of international investors in Shanghai before the communists expropriated their properties – by one account contributing one-third of total foreign investment in Shanghai – in addition to making substantial investments in Hong Kong, Singapore, Guangzhou and Tianjin. The Ma family, along with the Kwoks, Lees, Choys, Lius and other prominent Heungshan (Zhongshan) merchant families with

extensive networks in Australia, built the Wing On, Sincere, Dah Sun and Sun Sun department stores into the most successful retail chains in the Republic of China.¹ These families and their business partners were among the most frequent travelers between China and Australia. The success of the Chinese-Australian stores in China in turn enabled numerous small shareholders in Australia, and many family stores in regional Australia connected to the Four Great Companies of Shanghai, to prosper in otherwise difficult times (Wilton 1998; Fitzgerald 2007: Ch. 8).

Mobility also expanded educational opportunities over this period. Chinese-Australian residents enjoyed equal access to public good and services in the Commonwealth, including health and education services. Many Chinese families nevertheless preferred to send their children to China for early childhood education before returning them to Australia for formal schooling. Children born in Australia who accompanied their families to China were technically entitled to return on presentation of certification of their Australian birth or domicile (Bagnall 2015: 205). Family members born overseas, however, were not entitled to join their husbands and fathers in Australia after 1905, when formal migration for family reunion came to a halt (York 1993: 366). Family reunion then often took the form of travel under business or education visa programs or via the poor substitute of transnational mobility.

In addition to residents and family members traveling with approved certification, new arrivals traveling with approved student and merchant visas came to Australia in considerable numbers. Between 1920 and 1925 over 400 young people from China secured student visas to study in Australia under a bilateral arrangement negotiated by the Chinese consul general. For Chinese-Australian families the education visa program promised opportunities for local employment, extended family reunion and community rejuvenation in addition to business development (Kuo and Fitzgerald 2016b). Students arriving under the program were typically sponsored by their parents and extended family members, or by fellow villagers, business firms and church congregations (Kuo and Fitzgerald 2016a). In consequence, Australia hosted a substantial number of students from China in the 1920s at the height of the period of immigration restriction. Bearing in mind the relative size of the Australian and US populations, and the weight of their respective school and college systems, the number of Chinese entering Australia on student passports exceeded the number studying in America in the 1920s by two or three times (National Archives 1996). And, unlike the cohort of Chinese students in America, the Australian student program was based on persistent patterns of kinship and hometown networking that linked Chinese-Australian families and businesses with Hong Kong and other sites overseas well into the 1950s and 1960s.

The advent of the Cold War following Chinese Communist victory in 1949 effectively disrupted established patterns of mobility, education, business and family networking linking Australia directly with China. These links were halted for a generation or more before formal diplomatic relations were established between Canberra and Beijing in 1972. Over this interval, the historical pattern

of migration to Australia by people of Chinese descent shifted from China to Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaya/Malaysia, Taiwan and elsewhere as Canberra progressively eliminated racial categories of immigration exclusion. At this time, citizens of China were excluded from the expanded immigration intake not on grounds of race but because they lacked formal channels for migration and mobility between Australia and China.

In consequence, a change came over the source and character of ethnic Chinese migration to Australia, changing from a century-long pattern in which China had been the primary source of Chinese migration to a new pattern in which countries of Southeast Asia as well as Hong Kong and Taiwan became the primary sources of Chinese migration. This shift was accompanied by new patterns of family and business mobility that intensified connections with Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan and largely bypassed Mainland China.

In the absence of migration from the PRC during the Cold War period, the Colombo Plan, launched by the Australian government in the 1950s, had a profound impact on many aspects of Australian society, especially on the Chinese community. According to Oakman (2004), there were only about 20,000 Asian students who arrived in Australia between 1950 and the early 1980s under this official scheme. Although China did not participate in the plan, the young students of Chinese descent from other Asian countries who did come under the plan were able to speak acceptable English – they came mainly from middle- or upper-middle-class family backgrounds and were good at academic studies. While studying in Australia, many played an active role in negotiating cultural and social differences between Anglo-Australians and the Chinese (Yuan 2001). The Colombo Plan was the start of the Australian education export sector, and many groups of Chinese migrants have since come to Australia through various education schemes. Since the settlement in Australia of large groups of Asian students under the Colombo Plan, the Chinese have gradually become visible among the professions, especially in the areas of accounting, engineering, medicine, teaching and the civil service.

Chinese migration to Australia in the decades of economic reforms

Australia resumed direct immigration from the Chinese mainland in significant numbers in the late 1980s and early 1990s, largely as a result of the start of economic reforms in China in the late 1970s and the implementation of its open-door policy in relation to study abroad. Having lived in a society that was virtually closed off to the – especially Western – world, Chinese citizens could now contemplate the possibility of going abroad. While going abroad to study was initially reserved mostly for government-sponsored (*gongpai*) studies, soon enough the floodgate was open, allowing many self-funded young Chinese individuals to go abroad.

China's economic reforms did not have a smooth journey, nor were they proceeding in tandem with political reforms. By the end of the 1980s, demands for

democracy and political reforms intensified, culminating in large-scale student-led pro-democracy movements. The violent oppression following the Tiananmen incident on June 4, 1989, made Chinese students in Australia as well as in some other Western countries fearful for their safety if they were to return to China. In Australia, Chinese students organized themselves and lobbied to be permitted to stay (Gao 2006, 2009). After issuing a series of temporary visas, the Australian government finally decided in 1993 to allow 45,000 Chinese nationals in Australia who had arrived prior to or soon after the Tiananmen incident to settle in Australia permanently. This decision signaled the beginning of the demographic shift from *Huaren* to *Zhongguoren* in Australia's Chinese migrant community.

After the hiatus following the Tiananmen incident, China resumed its course of economic reforms and its commitment to an open-door policy on trade, investment and outbound migration. The tide of going abroad, having started in the early 1980s, gained further momentum. Like a number of Western countries such as Canada, Germany, Japan and New Zealand, Australia quickly identified language education as a new market segment. For example, the ELICOS (English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students) scheme, which had started operating in Australia in 1986, brought just a few hundred Chinese students here to study English in the second half of that year. However, with a number of ELICOS colleges promoting their courses heavily in major Chinese cities, the pull factor from Australia started in earnest in 1987 and 1988, resulting in something of an "Australia fever" in China. By 1989, the number of mainland Chinese in Australia's ELICOS scheme had swollen to about 45,000.

In addition to the "Australia fever" in China, the 1993 decision to allow Chinese students to stay in Australia was not made without consideration of Australia's long-term and strategic national interest. As a strong advocate of integration with Asia, then Prime Minister Paul Keating made a decision that was flawlessly timed to coincide with a new phase in China's reform, accelerated by Deng Xiaoping's famous inspection tour of southern China in early 1992. By 1980, Sino-Australian trade had already grown to US\$1.27 billion, and Australia had become China's fifth-biggest trading partner (Huan 1985: 124). Also, by as early as 1980 Australia had achieved a trade surplus of about AU\$650 million with China (Fung and Mackerras 1985) and an annual growth rate averaging 24.5 percent, which was almost double the nation's total export growth rate (Woodard 1997: 147–148). By the mid-1980s, Australia had effectively integrated itself into the Asia-Pacific economy, and over 60 percent of its total trade was conducted with Asia and the Pacific (Humphreys 1985).

Despite being constantly distracted by numerous negative comments about China, policymakers in Australia have found China to be a trade market that is too good to be ignored. More specifically, despite the humanitarian nature of the Chinese student influx of the late 1980s and early 1990s, their final settlement in Australia was a perfect example of Keating's "Asianisation" policies (Scott 2008), which not only reemphasized education and skills in the migration intake but also included an understanding of the potential value of human capital in Australia's future trade relations with China and other Asian countries. To a

great extent, the resumption of direct immigration from China was part of Australia's efforts to take advantage of the rapidly developing Chinese economy and link its economic restructuring to China's modernization. Thus, two different socioeconomic and sociopolitical transformations that were based on rather distinct sets of social circumstances in China and Australia joined forces in the late 1980s to reactivate direct immigration from China to Australia.

Chinese migration to Australia since 1993 has been subject to more selective policies than before. In addition to educational qualifications, skills have been further emphasized, and the capacity to invest in Australia has been added to the selection criteria for new immigrants. Thus, the trend has generally been away from family migration and toward skill-based migration. For example, in 1996–1997, of those mainland Chinese citizens migrating to Australia in either the family or skill stream, around 72 percent were in the former category, with only 28 percent of this group entering under the skill category (DIBP 2015). However, family migration trended downwards rapidly in the first half of the subsequent decade, so that by 2005–2006 these positions were diametrically reversed, with just 28 percent of mainland Chinese settling in Australia under the family category and 72 percent skilled (DIBP 2015). The balance has shifted back toward family settlement slightly in recent years, so that for the last three years of the survey period (2011–2012 to 2013–2014) the split has been around 38 percent in the family stream and 62 percent in the skill stream (DIBP 2015).

Since the global financial crisis of 2008, China has remained a leading source of migrants to Australia in the skill category (DIBP 2015). Moreover, there has been a steady shift away from Hong Kong/Macau and toward Mainland China as the major source of skilled migrants from the China/Taiwan/Hong Kong/Macau region (henceforth "CHMT"). In 1996–1997, only 31.3 percent of skilled migrants from this region came from the PRC, with Hong Kong/Macau supplying 42.8 percent and Taiwan 25.9 percent. The percentage of skilled migration from both Hong Kong/Macau and Taiwan dropped off dramatically during the first half of the 2000s, with Taiwan falling below 10 percent for the first time in 2003–2004 (to 7.4 percent) and Hong Kong following in 2006–2007 (9.1 percent). These figures have continued to trend downwards, to their current level of around 4–5 percent per annum for Hong Kong/Macau and 2 percent for Taiwan. This means that, from 1999–2000 onwards, Mainland China has accounted for at least 50 percent of the annual skilled migrant intake from the CHMT region and, from 2008–2009 until 2013–2014, has been sitting consistently within the range of 91–95 percent of this cohort. The overall number of skilled migrants arriving annually from Mainland China has also increased impressively across this period: in 1996–1997 the PRC supplied Australia with just 2,065 skilled migrants (compared to Hong Kong/Macau's 2,830 and Taiwan's 1,712). By 2013–2014 the number of skilled migrants from Mainland China had increased nearly eightfold to 16,434 (with only 832 coming from Hong Kong/Macau and 350 from Taiwan in that year).

This upward trend has not been nearly as pronounced in the family category, as Mainland China had already come to dominate family-based migration from

the CHMT region by 1996–1997. Indeed, since that year the PRC has accounted for an average of more than 85 percent of family settlements in Australia from the CHMT region, peaking at over 91 percent in 2009–2010, and falling below 80 percent in only one year during the entire period (1997–1998). The absolute number of migrants in the family stream coming from Mainland China has, however, crept up reasonably steadily, from a low of 3,015 in 1997–1998 to 10,327 in 2013–2014, whereas Hong Kong/Macau has contributed only around 400–800 family migrants annually throughout this period, with Taiwan consistently providing fewer than 500 family migrants in each year of the survey period except for the last two (2012–2013 and 2013–2014) (DIBP 2015).

As a direct result of Australia's greatly expanded intake of mainland Chinese migrants since the early 1990s, Australia has seen a rapid and considerable increase in the size of its Chinese-speaking population. The estimated number of ethnic Chinese living in Australia in 1996 was as many as 343,523, and the 2001 census recorded more than 555,500. In the past 10 years or so, this number has increased significantly and, according to the 2011 census, there were about 866,200 Australian residents claiming Chinese origin, and as many as 74 percent of them were in the first generation of their family to move to Australia.

China's rise may have simultaneously provided both the push and the pull factors determining individuals' decisions to migrate to another country. On the one hand, China's relentless pace of economic development, modernization and urbanization in the decades of economic reform has significantly increased the standard of living for many within China. While it has led to drastic stratification across the socioeconomic spectrum, it has at the same time created a hitherto unavailable status of privilege for the echelons of socioeconomic elites. Thanks to this, the primary motivation behind the migration of Chinese students in the 1980s and early 1990s – to maximize their economic opportunities for the purpose of material gain – has become less relevant. They can now pursue such aspirations in China without needing to leave the country. Although not everyone buys the rhetoric and ideology of Xi Jinping's China Dream wholesale, many people's life chances have been significantly enhanced by the country's economic development.

On the other hand, modernization and the achievement of economic prosperity have led to some unintended and undesirable consequences, including environmental degradation, increased anxiety – even fear – about food safety and the pollution of air and water, and the decline of public morality. To members of the burgeoning middle class in urban China, who have come to value quality of life more than standard of living, Australia looms on the horizon as a place that is incontrovertibly more appealing to live in and better for bringing up their children. In the early twenty-first century, such individuals opt to migrate less to pursue economic and career opportunities and more to enjoy a cleaner and higher-quality lifestyle. Due to such factors as its geographic proximity to China, warm climate, beautiful landscape, relaxed pace of living, friendly, easy-going people and the general perception that it has a democratic political system, Australia has, not surprisingly, become one of the favorite

choices for prospective migrants from China. Thus, as with migrants from China in earlier eras, family and community strategies intersect with policies and regulations to shape patterns of mobility.

Like migrants elsewhere, Chinese migrants in Australia make strategic choices. Typically, they hedge their bets, wanting to take advantage of everything that both the host country and the mother country have to offer. Unlike Chinese students who settled in Australia in the 1980s and early 1990s, most of whom did not wish to return to China, newer migrants entertain a more flexible connection to China and are more open-ended about where they may settle. Among them, we have witnessed a higher level of “flexible citizenship” practices (Ong 1999), with a considerable percentage having permanent residence status in Australia while retaining their Chinese passports, and freely and frequently coming and going as they please – effectively adopting a practice of circular migration.

Migrants as public diplomacy agents: contrasting views and approaches

China’s rise as a key driver of global economic growth has injected much confidence and pride in its people and government in recent years, especially since the Beijing Olympics of 2008. Many commentators and policy experts have observed that, despite China’s rise, or probably at least in part because of it, China continues to have a very serious image problem – notwithstanding the exponential growth in its global influence in the domains of politics, economics and international relations (M. Li 2009a, 2009b; Shambaugh 2013; J. Wang 2011). In the eyes and minds of the Chinese government and its people, the international community, especially the global West, holds a view of China that is largely biased and inaccurate.

The recognition of its own image problem is a motivating force behind China’s embrace of the notion of “soft power.” Defined as a form of power that is constituted by one’s cultural resources rather than through military or economic strength, soft power has the ability to influence others to accept the powerful nation’s own normative values, media, business practices, education and language (Nye 1990). Chinese leaders, policy thinkers and scholars alike embrace Nye’s (2005) argument that soft power is “about whose story wins (not whose army wins)” (Zhao 2009: 248). In other words, to produce narratives and discourses that appeal to foreign publics is to create soft power assets and resources. Conversely, the inability to produce narratives and discourses that are attractive to foreign publics is a sign of a deficiency in one’s soft power resources and capacities.

It is also widely agreed in China that a crucial means of realizing its soft power objectives is to engage in effective public diplomacy (d’Hooghe 2008, 2011; Sun 2015; J. Wang 2011). Public diplomacy is broadly defined as a country’s engagement and communication with foreign publics (J. Wang 2011). It is also understood to be “the process by which direct relations with people in a

country are pursued to advance the interests and extend the values of those being represented” (Sharp 2005:106). In public diplomacy, state and nonstate actors use the media and other channels of communication to influence public opinion in foreign societies for the purpose of promoting their nation’s interests (Gilboa 2008). The main objectives of public diplomacy are to promote a country’s goals and policies, communicate about its ideas and values, and build a common understanding (Leonard 2002). First, public diplomacy is about people-to-people communication (not government-to-government), and its targets are therefore foreign publics rather than foreign governments; second, it involves nonstate actors as well as state actors; and, third, it works by shaping public opinion through media and communication, rather than through formal diplomatic channels. For these reasons, public diplomacy theorists have always stressed the importance of diaspora, who are in effect “public diplomats” whose lives “cross ... international boundaries” and who “carry messages whether international actors like it or not” (Cull 2008: 51). In recent decades, these individuals have also inhabited the virtual world of blogs and social media, and for this reason their actions at both the level of interpersonal communication and the level of media use warrant careful examination.

Situated in this context, overseas Chinese people, once treated with varying degrees of suspicion and ambivalence by the Chinese government and considered less than patriotic, are now considered to be both “targets” for and “actors” on behalf of China’s public diplomacy. Treating them as targets of China’s public diplomacy, China wants to keep – or get – the diasporic Chinese on side and encourage them to invest in China; considering them as actors and agents, China wants to encourage them to promote Chinese culture and lobby for China’s political interests within the wider international community (d’Hooghe 2008).

Given the inherently “hostile” nature of foreign – especially Western – media and publics, whose political, ideological and cultural values differ greatly from those of China, it seems logical to the Chinese government to use ethnic Chinese communities and their media enterprises in these countries as a platform for pursuing their own goals. In the hopeful thinking of China-based media scholars, diasporic Chinese media may not only become a regular source of news about China for the mainstream media of the West but also influence the West’s news-making agenda (Cheng 2011: 81). “To borrow someone’s vessel to go out to sea” (*jiechuan chu hai*) is a metaphor that is often used by Chinese policymakers to describe the role of overseas Chinese media and organizations in bridging the chasm between China and the West, helping China promote its culture and values, and lobbying for its political and economic interests in migrants’ host countries.

The Chinese government’s interest in mobilizing diasporic Chinese support is evidenced in a series of regular forums it organizes. Since 2001 the China News Service (CNS), China’s official news agency for external communication, has hosted a biennial international forum of Chinese-language media. At the 2001 forum in Nanjing, which was attended by more than 130 Chinese media organizations from all over the world, Guo Dongpo, director of the Overseas

Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO), thanked the overseas Chinese media for their contribution to

protecting the interests of overseas Chinese and the legacy of Chinese culture, the spread of Chinese civilization, the integration of Chinese immigrants within their local societies, the economic and social development of their host countries, and the friendly relationship between their host countries and China.

(CNS 2013)

In 2013, Qiu Yuanping, the new OCAO Director, used the seventh forum to explain Chinese President Xi Jinping's concept of *Zhongguo meng* (the "Chinese dream"). The concept, as Qiu explained, was created to encourage both the citizens of China and all overseas Chinese alike. "The same ancestry and affection shared by the Chinese media worldwide are the foundations of their solidarity, influence, credibility and discursive sovereignty." She also expressed the hope that the Chinese media abroad would publish "objective" reports on China and become "storytellers of real Chinese stories" (CNS 2013).

In contrast to the Chinese government's keen interest in engaging Chinese migrants in its public diplomacy exercises, the Australian government was and still is slow to see the actual and potential value of this cohort in pursuing its own ambitions. Citing many examples of Chinese migrants in Australia – cultural intermediaries, social compradors, businesspeople and community leaders – at the end of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century who had made a substantial contribution to the promotion of Australia-China relations, Fitzgerald (2015: 276) laments that the role of Chinese-Australians in Australian public diplomacy has gone largely unacknowledged, and believes that this lack of recognition and acknowledgment is worrying: given the "dramatic demographic shifts and a significant change in the balance of power between China and Australia over this period, the failure to recognize and acknowledge the role of Chinese Australians in the relationship deserves to be rectified."

In the meantime, the Australian government and policymakers are also finally turning their attention to ethnic communities in Australia as potential public diplomacy assets. *Smart Engagement with Asia*, a report penned by the Australian Council of Learned Academies featuring key scholars such as Ien Ang and John Fitzgerald, states that Australia suffers from a "soft power deficit" and a "lack of recognition for the role of ... diaspora groups in linking Australia with their various countries of origin" (ACOLA 2015). According to the Department of Foreign Affairs' *Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016* document, Australia wants to be seen as a "contemporary, creative, successful, diverse and tolerant nation; and an attractive place to study, work, visit, live and invest" (DFAT 2014: 2). The document also proposes to "employ soft power for trade, investment and economic prosperity promotion" (2014: 3). Special mention is made of the "diaspora communities" in this process: "Diaspora communities not only play a key role in projecting contemporary Australia to the region, but also

contribute to fostering a cohesive, harmonious and stable Australian society” (DFAT 2014: 10). However, just how the diaspora communities can be utilized to play these key roles is still a largely unexplored question. And, so far, there is little evidence that this recognition of the role of the diaspora communities in Australia’s public diplomacy agenda has translated into concrete policy implementation.

The relative lack of recognition of the Chinese contribution to Australian public discourses is one of the reasons that the Chinese government may stand a better chance than its Australian counterpart of wooing Chinese migrants as public diplomacy agents. Another crucial reason is the marginal role that Chinese migrant communities play in Australia’s multiculturalism. As an official policy and discourse, multiculturalism was institutionalized in the early 1970s by Gough Whitlam and was continued into the 1980s and beyond by a succession of mostly Labor governments. However, by the mid-1990s and during the 2000s, under the rule of successive Liberal governments with John Howard as prime minister, multiculturalism fell out of favor, at least at the level of federal politics, especially after the 9/11 terrorist attacks of 2001 (Colic-Peisker and Farquharson 2011). As an ideology and discourse that seeks to recognize and normalize diversity, the efficacy of Australia’s multiculturalism was put to the test in the ways in which the Chinese communities experienced it. To be sure, these communities, diverse in themselves in terms of language, place of origin, socioeconomic status and political allegiance, contribute to Australia’s multiculturalism as a demographic reality. And in a variety of contexts, including schools, businesses and cultural activities, Chinese migrants practice what Chris Ho (2011) calls “everyday multiculturalism.” However, at the level of managing multiculturalism and governing cultural diversity, the role of Chinese migrants has been marginal. As Fitzgerald (2015: 270) observes, “While Chinese are welcome participants in multicultural Australia, managing the bilateral relationship remains a preserve of White Australians.” This view is reinforced by Andrew Jakubowicz (2011: 703), who argues that, despite Chinese contributions to Australian politics, racism still remains an important reality: “an emerging Australian multicultural nationalism has to include rather than marginalize its ‘Chinese’ citizens.”

Like multiculturalism, racism also operates at the level of both national politics and everyday practice. If the inherent racism in Australia’s multicultural policy has in part led to a shift in the identity of Chinese migrants from multicultural ethnic citizens to new players on behalf of China’s public diplomacy, then the overt racism experienced by Chinese migrants at the level of both national discourses and everyday encounters has pushed them further toward identifying with China. Chinese migrants, like other Asian migrants, have also, from time to time, been the target of political careerists wishing to play the race card. In 1996, Pauline Hanson, the newly elected Queensland independent and former Liberal MP, advocated a return to a unitary pre-multicultural Australia. Targeting mainly Asian migrants, she and her One Nation Party argued that Australia was in danger of being “swamped” by Asians, who, she argued, had failed to assimilate

into Australian society. Shifting from the institutional discourse to the everyday encounter, the racism experienced by Chinese migrants may be best evidenced in the attacks on two Chinese students and several other passengers on a Sydney train in April 2012. While the mainstream media were at pains to avoid racism as a possible motivation for this attack, judging by the content of messages tweeted by one of the victims it is obvious that they were convinced that they were targeted because they were Chinese (Cai 2012).

Extension of China's soft power: evidence from the media

This new synergy between the PRC government and Chinese migrants in Australia is best evidenced in and embodied by the transformations of the Chinese-language media in Australia over the past three decades. The majority of Chinese migrants in Australia use Chinese-language media – print, radio, television and online and social media – to keep themselves informed about both China and Australia (Gao 2006; Kuo 2013; Sun et al. 2011a, 2011b; Sun 2015). The Chinese media in Australia prior to the arrival of large numbers of PRC migrants were mostly owned and operated by Taiwan, Hong Kong and Southeast Asian migrants of Chinese descent, and tended to operate mostly independently of China (Kuo 2013). As a result, the landscape of Chinese news media in Australia features the juxtaposition of two types of media. The first is those Australian editions of Chinese-language media whose ownership lies outside both China and Australia. *Singtao Daily* and TVBA (Television Broadcasts Australia) both belong to this category. The second is the locally produced Chinese-language news media, owned by Chinese migrants from either Hong Kong or Mainland China. The *Australian Chinese Daily* (*Aozhou Xinbao*) and the *Daily Chinese Herald Daily* (*Aozhou Ribao*) fall into this category, as do the radio stations 2AC and 2CR in Sydney and 3CW in Melbourne.

But migration from the PRC in the past three decades has brought about two significant changes, which have incontrovertibly changed the Chinese media landscape in Australia. First, most media outlets that used to be owned by Hong Kong and Taiwan migrants and tended to be critical of China have been driven out of the market (Brady 2007). Those that have survived the new environment have undergone significant changes. For instance, formerly Cantonese-oriented media such as *Singtao Daily* and TVB – which have Australian editions but are owned and based in Hong Kong – have had to undergo fundamental changes in order to accommodate the reading habits, sensibilities and values of Mandarin-speaking migrants from the PRC, now the mainstay of their audience. These changes range from media content, editorial stances and formats, not to mention the shift from Cantonese to Mandarin in terms of format. Second, and perhaps more importantly, there has been exponential growth in the number of Mandarin media outlets that are owned by former PRC nationals and that cater exclusively to PRC migrants. Consequently, the majority of the Chinese-language media outlets in Australia are now operated by and cater to Mandarin-speaking PRC migrants (Fitzgerald 2015; Gao 2013, 2015; Sun et al. 2011a, 2011b).

In terms of ownership, broadly speaking, the Chinese-language media in Australia fall into three categories. The first includes media outlets that are owned and based in Hong Kong but publish Australian editions; as mentioned above, *Singtao Daily* and TVBA are examples of this category. The second includes Chinese media that are wholly Australian-owned. As an example of this, the *Australian Chinese Daily* started in 1987 and was initially owned by Chinese migrants from Indonesia. The current owner, Sandra Lau, a migrant from Hong Kong, claims that the paper is the “first and only daily newspaper to be edited, produced and published in Australia” (www.australianchinesedaily.com.au/eng/home). Likewise, the *Chinese Herald Daily* was previously owned by Vietnamese-Chinese, and was then sold to PRC migrant operators. It started in 1998 with its current title and is now part of the Chinese Newspaper Group, which is currently owned by migrants from the PRC. The group now owns nine publications in various parts of Australia, as well as online news (www.1688.com.au) and property (www.ozhouse.com.au) websites. Even though the group claims to be the “only privately owned and operated Chinese press group in Australia,” the owners of the paper are said to reside in Shenzhen most of the time. Even more widespread on the global scale and boasting a much closer connection with the PRC is the former Austar International Media Group, now CAMG, which is owned by PRC migrant Tommy Jiang, who started with 3CW Chinese radio in Melbourne and subsequently acquired radio stations in Perth, Canberra, Brisbane and elsewhere, in addition to a plethora of newspapers and magazines (Sun 2014).

The third category of ownership consists of media outlets whose existence is a result of partnerships with mainland Chinese media organizations. In comparison to the first segment, this is a relatively new phenomenon. Wesydney (www.wesydney.com.au), a Chinese-language website servicing the Chinese community in Sydney, is the Australian platform and portal of WeChat, a mobile text and voice messaging communication service developed by Tencent in China, one of the world’s largest Internet companies. Similarly, Sydney Today (www.sydneytoday.com) is a social media platform in partnership with sina.com, the biggest microblogging service in China.

These media outlets’ close connection with China is evidenced in the display of pro-China nationalism on the part of the Chinese media in general, especially on occasions when controversies erupt. These controversies range from politically sensitive topics related to human rights and ethnic unrest to China’s territorial disputes with other countries. A recent example comes from an incident that occurred on July 25, 2015, when a group of pro-Tibetan protestors stormed the Chinese consulate in Sydney. While the incident was widely covered in a form of a factual news brief in the mainstream English-language media, some Chinese-language media in Australia responded very differently. For instance, the Australian edition of the *Singtao Daily* published a full-page political advertisement on its front page listing many Chinese individuals and organizations as signatories, and condemning the actions of the Tibetan and pro-Tibetan protestors.

Pro-China sentiment can also be easily circulated nowadays thanks to the rapid growth of Chinese-language social media platforms, which have made it increasingly easy to maintain flexible identity and cultural practices on a daily basis. For instance, the wide use of *weibo* (microblogging) and now increasingly WeChat, surpassing telephone, email and QQ, enables PRC migrants in Australia to maintain daily and instantaneous contact with family and friends in China. These platforms also allow the posting and distribution of news, current affairs, opinions and commentaries that are related to both China and Australia. When the two Chinese students were attacked on a Sydney train (see the earlier discussion), one of them tweeted that he believed that they were the targets of racist attacks. His message was retweeted 10,000 times and the story of his attack made it to a number of mainstream Chinese media. While WeChat as a social media platform has been largely used by Chinese communities all over the world to increase connections among themselves and with China, there is little evidence to suggest that it is also doing the same to facilitate increased connections between PRC migrants and members of their mainstream host societies.

Conclusion

Our discussion shows that China's rise has simultaneously produced both push and pull factors in relation to individuals' decisions to leave China for another country. Similarly, China's rise has generated both positive and negative responses from the rest of the world. A number of key factors – including, most prominently, the marginal role of Chinese migrants in Australia's multiculturalist politics, the new career and business opportunities China's rise has presented, and the Chinese government's renewed commitment to forging ties with migrants – have led to a significant pattern of migration practices, with the most recent arrivals marked by higher rates of return migration and much higher rates of circular migration. In other words, China may have risen, but this has not stopped people from wanting to leave China. Instead, it has resulted in a more strategic practice of flexible (Ong 1999) or selective (Liu 2015) citizenship. Migrants of Chinese origin now take greater pride in being Chinese and a keener interest in maintaining and cultivating ties with China – political as well as cultural, social and economic – and in exploiting business and career opportunities that have become available thanks to China's rise. Unlike the pre-Tiananmen Chinese who settled in Australia on humanitarian protection visas, individuals in the newer waves of Chinese migration to Australia demonstrate a higher level of willingness to move between the two countries to maximize life chances for themselves and their families.

Equally importantly, China's rise has led to a recentring of China in the diasporic public sphere. If the Chinese diaspora has previously been conceptualized as a Sinophone public sphere (Shih 2007) that features transnationalism and a decentering of the PRC (Ong and Nonini 1997), our discussion makes it abundantly clear that this view is no longer the case. What we see is a noticeably higher level of willingness on the part of Chinese migrants to answer the PRC

government's call to "do their bit" for the motherland. This is partly attributed to varying levels of cultural alienation that Chinese migrants experience in their host cultures. Even though many individuals succeed in securing employment, daily life in a predominantly Western-oriented, English-speaking mainstream society, many migrants still identify with China and the Chinese in cultural and emotional terms, particularly if they have experiences of racism at both the personal and the social level.

Furthermore, while the Tiananmen cohort of migrants secured their residency in Australia on political grounds – they were critical of the Chinese regime and feared persecution upon return – they have mostly maintained close familial and professional ties with China. As China has come to assume the status of an economic powerhouse, their distrust of the Chinese regime may still remain, but when confronted with issues that polarize China and their host country many find themselves in the role of actively promoting China's public diplomacy agenda.

In this discussion, we have unpacked the myriad and specific ways in which the rest of the world – as an array of potential destinations for China's outbound migration – reacts and responds to China's rise. Through an examination of the social, political and cultural changes and formations in the host countries, we establish that these structural processes, in particular their racial politics and immigration policies, are either parallel to and independent of, or related to and contingent on, China's rise – or some combination of both of these factors. Our study makes it clear that, alongside official government policies and regulations, it is just as important to identify the specific ways in which family and community strategies come to shape migrant identities at both individual and collective levels. Finally, our analysis demonstrates the importance of considering how various dimensions come to interact and intersect to produce a distinct environment for Chinese migrants within a particular society and at a particular historical time.

Note

- 1 On Chinese–Australian business history, see W. Chan (1998, 1999); Z. Li (1999); Yong (1965–1966, 1977); Yen (1998); Wilton (1998).

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4 Rising China and the history of the South African Chinese

Karen L. Harris

Introduction

As China emerged as a new and prominent world force toward the end of the twentieth century, South Africa was undergoing its historic democratic transformation. This and China's other various changing global positions were to have tangible impacts on the relatively small Chinese community in South Africa. This chapter proposes to present a broad historic overview of how the South African Chinese, as an ethnic cultural minority, had to position and reposition themselves within the convoluted contours of changing international dispensations and allegiances. It will argue that the respective South African governments' formal relations with China – albeit with the Chinese Empire, the Republic of China, the Republic of China on Taiwan and the People's Republic of China – had implications for the position and place of the South African Chinese community. It will be argued that this dimension of the community's deliberations with the changing governments in both Africa and Asia, is one of the lesser known factors that placed the South African Chinese in a very invidious position under the new South African democratic dispensation. It will also be contended that, to a greater and lesser degree, the emergence of China as a force in Africa also impacted on their place in South African society at large and even into the second transition of the twenty-first century.

This chapter has a fivefold structure. It begins with the last Chinese dynastic period, which coincided with the arrival of the first waves of overseas Chinese to southern Africa. The second section considers the period 1912 to 1949 with the establishment of the Republic of China, while the next focuses on the dual dynamics surrounding the mid-twentieth century founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Republic of China on Taiwan. The penultimate section considers the official diplomatic recognition of the People's Republic of China in 1998 by the new democratically elected government in South Africa, while the last reflects on the current impact of China's rising manifestation in Africa in the twenty-first century and the bearing that this has had on the South African Chinese communities.

Chinese Empire to 1912

The first Chinese to venture forth and settle on the shores of southern Africa arrived intermittently during the time of the last imperial dynasty of China. However, the Empire of the Great Qing (1644–1911) was little perturbed about its overseas compatriots (Fairbank 1992: 191). In fact, throughout most of the Chinese Empire emigration or the leaving of the Middle Kingdom was either strongly discouraged or forbidden by imperial decree and accompanied by dire consequences if transgressed (Irick 1982: 389). Historically the dynastic leaders regarded their country as essentially continental, and the archaic sanction was that it was the center of the civilized world, self-contained and universal (Wang 1977: 2–3). To varying degrees, many Chinese emperors were also of the opinion that emigration was a “disgrace to the mother country” (Coolidge 1909: 16) and therefore emigrants were denounced or ignored. As the Qing government entrenched their political control over China, the prohibition on emigration was directed more vehemently against those who violated their Confucian moral responsibility to family and ancestors. They were considered “social and economic misfits whose presence within China’s borders were not beneficial” (Irick 1982: 390). In 1712, an edict was issued that requested foreign governments to repatriate all Chinese citizens who were abroad “so that they may be executed,” and in 1773 severe punishments were imposed on Chinese headmen who organized illegal emigration (Pan 1991: 8–9). Enforcement of the law was however practically impossible, and throughout the first two centuries of the Qing dynasty emigration increased (Irick 1982: 390), as did the penetration of and interaction with the West. Ultimately the Qing Empire would be forced to come to terms with this reality. Thus, the first individual Chinese sojourners who arrived at the southern tip of Africa during the Dutch East India Company (1652–1799) and British colonial periods (1799–1803 and 1806–1910) were of no concern to the Chinese authorities. Their fleeting presence was of no consequence to imperial China and thus they were left to their own devices (Harris 1998a: 274–332).

However, from the beginning of the nineteenth century the initially insignificant number of overseas Chinese began to grow globally and, with the advance of Western colonization and commerce in China, more Chinese – both free and contracted – were enticed to go abroad (Wang 1991: 23). Under increased pressure from Western powers the Qing government had to agree to treaties, of which some were to grant better trade concessions to the West and others to legalize the transportation of Chinese “coolie” labor abroad. In order to disguise their true imperialistic motives, the clauses of these agreements drafted by the West included a “principle of reciprocity,” whereby China was accorded the right to protect its subjects overseas (Fitzgerald 1972a: 5–6). The Qing government was slow to respond. As Wang points out, “Chinese sojourners’ communities abroad were not under Chinese official control” and “[g]rowth of the Overseas Chinese settlement was not fostered nor even countenanced by the Chinese imperial government” (Fairbank 1992: 193). It only began to exercise

this right in the 1880s and unwillingly recognized the right of its subjects to emigrate under license (Irick 1982: 390, 400; Wang 1991: 24, 1977: 66).

The mid-nineteenth-century growth of Western colonization resulted in an insatiable demand for unskilled or menial Asian labor on the plantations, in the mines and on the railways of many developing colonies around the world (Yen 1985: 32–33). Earlier contact and experience with the Chinese in various eastern colonies had led the imperial powers to believe that “no race in the world would do them better service than the Chinese” (Pan 1991: 26). While Western demand for labor and the opportunities in the West’s colonies represented a crucial factor in the escalation of Chinese emigration during this time, circumstances within China played an equally important role in the supply. Many Chinese opted for emigration to seek a new life away from the pressure of extreme want and impoverishment as a result of natural calamities, population explosion, internal rebellion and strife, compounded by foreign wars and economic pressures (Richardson 1978: iii). The migration was expedited by the increased use of steam in navigation, which induced thousands of people to seek refuge abroad (Tan 1986: 43) and become part of the mid-nineteenth-century Chinese “diaspora.”

This large-scale emigration emanated mainly from the southern coastal regions (Fitzgerald 1972b: 86), it having been argued that it was easier for individuals living in this area to opt for emigration as a solution to their problems “because their ancestors had themselves emigrated within historic memory from central and northern China” (Mitchison 1961: 16). However, unauthorized emigration and fraudulent methods of recruitment, as well as unfair treatment of Chinese labor, were rife both before and after the Qing government instituted regulations (Richardson 1982: 35; Campbell 1923: 97; Irick 1982: 390). This, I have argued elsewhere, added to a “very ambivalent social and psychological position in which the overseas Chinese emigrants would find themselves” (Harris 1998a: 74–75). They were faced with, on the one hand, the displeasure of the motherland and, on the other, the resistance of the inhabitants of the host society. In this sense the overseas Chinese were, as Ching-hwang Yen (1985: xiii) wrote, “men and losers of the two worlds. They lived in one but carried the burden of the two.”

The lure of gold in America, Australia, New Zealand and ultimately South Africa induced an increase in both free and indentured Chinese emigration. Besides the 1,000 or so free Chinese settlers who arrived in the diamond and gold mines in South Africa of their own initiative, the start of the twentieth century saw the importation of 63,695 indentured laborers for the gold mines over a period of some half-dozen years (1904–1910). The widespread political furor and public reaction against the proposed Chinese labor importation scheme both in Britain and locally resulted in regulations being drafted that would annul concerns. This also included taking into account the agreements set out in the “Treaty of Peking [*sic*]” of 1860 and the 1904 “Anglo-Chinese Labor Convention.” Thus, besides the extremely restrictive nature of the draft Labor Importation Ordinance, with 17 of the 35 sections restraining the laborers, it also took into account the stipulation of the latter Chinese Convention that there

should be “proper supervision and protection of such immigrants” (TAD CD 1945, 1904: 3). The regulations were drawn up “in concert with the Chinese Minister in London,” Ta-jen Chang, who suggested five “additions and alterations on the initial draft ordinance” (Sung 1959: 89), the first of which stated that the consul general could:

make representations to the authorities on the subject of any matter affecting the comfort and well-being of the immigrant that may appear to him necessary.

(TAD CD 1945, 1959: 4)

Thus, the resultant Labor Importation Ordinance that was signed by Chang and the minister of the British Foreign Office, Lord Landsdowne, on May 13, 1904, included stipulations that had been included at the specific request of the Chinese authorities (TAD CD 1945, 1904: 3; *Ordinances of the Transvaal*, 1904). According to historian Peter Richardson (1982: 35), this involvement of the Chinese government marked a dramatic change in its policy and revealed an attempt to rectify and combat the exploitation of Chinese labor that had taken place over the previous four decades. Of importance to this discussion is the fact that in 1905 the Chinese emperor also ensured that the powers of the consul general also acquired jurisdiction over the free or nonindentured Chinese in the South African region (PRO CO 1905; BRA HE 1904; SAD BEP 1963a). This particular stipulation was to have a determining effect on the political positioning of the South African Chinese and was to have a far-reaching impact on the community for the remainder of the twentieth century. In a sense, it also contributed to the position they would find themselves in under the new postapartheid democratic dispensation.

The first Chinese consul general to be appointed in South Africa was Lew Yuk Lin, who was described as “a man of considerable experience in European matters, having been both in London in the Legation, and at Brussels as Charge d’Affaire” (TAD FLD 1904a). It is interesting to note that his appointment as consul general in the Transvaal was strongly supported by the Chamber of Mines and British Transvaal government. They also indicated that it would be “a more sensible arrangement for the Chinese consul or Consul General at Johannesburg to be responsible to the Chinese government, and not to the Chinese Minister in London, who could not be acquainted with the questions that might arise.”

This was obviously a very pragmatic outlook on the part of the mine owners and other protagonists of the Chinese mine labor scheme as they realized that its future could be influenced by the consul general’s disposition. This approach, it should be noted, was one that would contrast starkly with the South African government’s attitude to the official Chinese representation some decades later.

Consul General Lew Yuk Lin arrived in South Africa in May 1905 and set up the Imperial Consulate General in Johannesburg (TAD FLD 1904a: 2; CAD GH 1905). It soon became apparent that the small nonindentured Chinese community, both there and in other parts of the country, would make use of the

access to the consul general granted by the Chinese emperor. This ultimately meant that they had a formal conduit to official government bodies, and, though not the initial reason for the appointment of the consul general, this set a pattern for the dominant part of the twentieth century. According to the available records, Consul General Lew Yuk Lin interceded on matters ranging from obtaining exemption from the Liquor Laws so that the Chinese community could consume liquor on the various festival days (TAD LD 1907a) to petitioning against the more hard-core discrimination introduced by the British Transvaal colonial authorities against Asians (*Transvaal Government Gazette* 1906).

A case in point was the resistance that arose in 1906 among the Chinese community about the draft Asiatic Law Amendment Ordinance, also known as the “Black Act.” This was as intense and as concerted as the renowned Indian passive resistance movement led by Mahatma Gandhi. In short, the legislation demanded the compulsory registration of all Asians over the age of eight, with a “Registrar of Asiatics” compelling them to provide additional information as well as finger and thumb impressions. The Chinese community’s simultaneous but separate reaction to the enactment of this law took the form of a number of meetings and the compilation of a five-page petition that they – “the Chinese Association and others” – addressed and sent to the Chinese consul general (TAD GOV 1906). This the consul general in turn forwarded to the governor’s office in Johannesburg, whereon, at his request, it went to the Colonial Office in London (PRO CO 1906). In addition, the Chinese Association (CA) deputed a Cantonese member to go to England and present their grievances to the Chinese minister and British government. He was accompanied by Lew Luk Lin, who was still consul general in Johannesburg (*Indian Opinion* 1906). The Chinese petitioners had obviously believed that the inclusion of the consul general in their actions, both locally and abroad, would be more expedient, as well as appropriate, in terms of the jurisdiction granted to him by the Chinese emperor.

Although the combined efforts of the Chinese and Indian delegations and petitions succeeded in stalling the implementation of the Asiatic Ordinance, this was to be a short-lived victory. Merely one month later, with the election of a new responsible government in the Transvaal in early 1907, the so-called “Black Act” was reintroduced virtually unchanged as the “Asiatic Law Amendment Act” (*Statutes of the Transvaal* 1907). This ushered in a second phase of resistance, in which it was again evident that the Chinese resident in the Transvaal took recourse to the official Chinese representation in the form of the consul general. Not only did Liu Ngai, the acting Consul General appointed in 1907, assist the Chinese action, but he also made personal visits to Chinese leaders who were incarcerated as a result of the passive resistance (TAD LD 1908) and sent an endorsement to Gandhi regarding *satyagraha* (passive resistance) (Gandhi 1961: 427). In the later phases of the resistance movement, Liu Ngai again acted on the Chinese community’s behalf by for example intervening on the question of using Delagoa Bay (Lourenço Marques) as a port of embarkation

for the direct deportation of Chinese and Indian “transgressors” to China and India (SAD IND 1910).

Another equally serious matter that emanated from another region in South Africa in this same period was the introduction of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1904 in the Cape Colony (*Statutes of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope* 1904). This was one of the first overtly racist pieces of legislation introduced in South Africa that targeted a single identifiable cultural group (Harris 2009: 18). With the pending introduction of the indentured Chinese laborers to the Transvaal mines, the Cape politicians deemed it necessary to introduce legislation to prevent the entrance of Chinese laborers deserting from the mines, while at the same time to exclude any newcomers from China. The Act made it illegal for any Chinese person to enter or reside in the Cape Colony unless he (women were not included in the legislation as independent persons) had qualified and obtained a “Certificate of Exemption” (*Statutes of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope* 1904). The small and scattered nature of the Chinese throughout the Cape Colony made coordinated resistance difficult. Although at this time a number of regional Chinese associations emerged in the Cape, possibly as a direct result of the Act, it was felt taking overt action might lead to further restrictions (Yap and Man 1996: 65, 451, fn. 74).

As was the case with the “Black Act” in the Transvaal, some of the Chinese community’s objections to the Cape “Chinese Exclusion Act” were channeled through consuls general Lew Yuk Lin and his successor Liu Ngai, as well as requests for permits and concessions (SAD GG 1910; SAD BEP 1963a). Consul General Liu also repeatedly petitioned the authorities about the “extremism” of the Exclusion Act, requesting that it be amended to allow the admission of “educated Chinese subjects” as a means to removing the “regrettable impression that Chinese subjects of any class are undesirable under any circumstances” (CAD PMO 1909). He also referred to the “great hardship which [his] countrymen in the Cape Colony have suffered from the Act,” stating that his “Government consider the Act a great indignity and grave injustice to the Chinese nation” (SAD GG 1910b). The various South African government officials declined these requests, deferring a decision to after the forthcoming unification of the country (CAD PMO 1909; CAD GH 1908) and thus, despite the consuls general’s repeated efforts, the “Exclusion Act” remained intact on the statute books until 1933 when it was subsumed under the more inclusive immigration legislation (*Statutes of the Union of South Africa* 1933).

It is interesting to note that in the responses from the minister of the interior, General Smuts, as well as the British governor general, Lord Gladstone, they were both of the opinion that Consul General Ngai had “passed beyond the legitimate sphere of the consular functions and to be assuming the role of a diplomatic agent” (SAD GG 1910). Gladstone claimed that there was a definite ruling on the subject in a circular of June 1906, which stated that:

under no circumstances [should consuls] be permitted to approach the Local Governments except on matters connected with the personal welfare of their

countrymen as individuals, and if they should make any representations on general political questions they should in all cases be required to communicate them to their respective Governments, to be dealt with through the proper diplomatic channels.

(SAD GG 1910)

Yet, despite this rebuff, Consul General Liu Ngai and his successors persisted in dealing with issues on behalf of the Chinese community. Besides repeatedly interceding on the Chinese Exclusion Act and Black Act, other aspects taken up included the proposed Gold Law of 1908 relating to the prospecting for and mining of precious and base metals that discriminated against the Chinese as “colored persons”; the access to hospital accommodation; the granting of licenses; and other discriminatory regulations that impacted on the Chinese community (TAD MM 1908).

Thus, under the dispensation of the closing phase of the Chinese Empire at the start of the twentieth century a precedent had been set whereby the very small Chinese community within South Africa could use the consular provisions made by the Qing dynasty as a conduit to the South African authorities. The consul general was their official intermediary to make their voice heard in a cautious and almost inconspicuous way. This established *modus operandi* would persist throughout the twentieth century as both China and South Africa underwent further political and constitutional transformations.

The Republic of China 1912 to 1949

With the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911 the Chinese Empire was officially ended and in 1912 the Republic of China was established under the revolutionary leadership of Sun Yat-sen and the Kuomintang (KMT). However, the Republic of China entered a period of extended conflict headed by the provincial commanders or “warlords,” which lasted into the middle of the twentieth century. The escalating civil war culminated with the eventual expulsion of the KMT to Taiwan in 1949 following the communist victory led by Mao Zedong (SAD BLO 1944–1946).

Despite this dramatic change in the Chinese regime, from all accounts it appears as though some form of Chinese consular representation continued both in South Africa and elsewhere regardless of the termination of the indentured labor scheme and the ramifications on the Chinese home front. The American vice and deputy consul, Edwin Gonsaulus, who had been appointed to perform the functions for the Consulate General of the Republic of China, corresponded with the governor general in South Africa as regards Chinese interests in British South Africa, as well as matters relating to the recognition or nonrecognition of the Republic of China (SAD GG 1913). That it was business as usual was apparent from the “reestablishment of the official Chinese Consulate General in South Africa” in 1919 with the reappointment of Lui Ngai in the position, which he held for just over a decade until 1930 (SAD GG 1919a, 1919b, 1920).

Two years prior to the founding of the Republic of China, changes had also occurred in the political composition of South Africa. The two independent states and two colonies had combined to form a constitutional Union and therefore legislation of the former regions had, to some extent, been consolidated while at the same time incorporating salient features of their respective previous legislations. Not unlike other colonial destinations, the Union was set up as an exclusively “white affair” and the minority embarked on establishing their dominance and control of the state. As early as 1911, Lew Yuk Lin, in his new position in the Chinese legation in London, addressed lengthy correspondence to the British authorities regarding the “shameful treatment” and “invidious discriminations” that Chinese nationals suffered in South Africa (SAD BNS 1914). He claimed that the “Chinese in South Africa were still being treated in a most degrading manner and are even placed on a level with criminals” (SAD GG 1914: 1–2). The “serious disabilities” which were imposed on them were related to immigration, trading licenses, ownership of immovable property, mining, full citizenship and the use of sidewalks (SAD GG 1914: 2–5). He concluded this communiqué by declaring that:

Unless some remedy can be found for these grievances, their existence, if persisted it must, it is to be feared, sooner or later, impair the good relations which exist between the peoples of our two countries.

(SAD GG 1914: 5)

This matter was again drawn to the attention of the British Colonial Office in 1914 (SAD BNS 1914). In the latter correspondence Lew Yuk Lin also referred specifically to one of the first key pieces of legislation introduced in the Union, that relating to immigration. According to the Union government’s Immigrants’ Regulation Act of 1913 the Chinese, along with other Asians, were designated “prohibited immigrants” (*Statutes of the Union of South Africa* 1913). As a result, the already small number of Chinese present in the country dwindled to an estimated 2,000 as they became reliant on natural increase. This also meant that the introduction of “wives and minor children” of individuals already resident in the country was no longer merely a formality (SAD BNS 1914, 1925).

Within months of the foundation of the Union in 1910, Liu Ngai also took up the matter of immigration, specifically requesting the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act claiming that his government considered the Act a “great indignity and grave injustice to the Chinese nation” (SAD BNS 1910). He also repeatedly took up this matter in the 1920s, when he either directly requested permission from the Ministry of the Interior and the Immigration Office to grant admission for prospective wives or endorsed such petitions by, among others, the Transvaal Chinese Association (SAD BNS 1924a).

After the First World War Consulate General correspondence and requests petitioning the South African authorities also made reference to the “covenant of the League of Nations,” referring to the “common bond among civilized peoples, and all nations European or Asiatic, white or yellow, were appealed to to [*sic*]

enter the League on a footing of equality.” In 1929, in objecting to racial classification of the Chinese in terms of the Liquor Bill, the consul general argued that “universally ... they were regarded as the oldest civilization in the world” and pointed out that he was aware that South Africa was “ambitious to take an important role in international affairs” and therefore he urged them “to pursue a policy of ... goodwill ... in dealings with the people of a friendly nation” (SAD GG 1929). The subtle undertones in these communiqués of the first half of the twentieth century regarding civilization and the international relations were to persist in later deliberations with the apartheid regime.

During the interlude between the two World Wars, this also led to the consul general in South Africa raising requests regarding the conclusion of a “Treaty with China on the basis of reciprocal equality” (SAD BNS 1924–1925, 1928–1933). In time, certain concessions were made to allow the “admission of Chinese merchants and their representatives with a view to the extension of trade relations between the Union and China.” This development culminated in the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1904 and its amendment of 1906 in 1933. The latter development can be seen partially as the result of the repeated petitions by Consuls General Lew Yuk Lin, Liu Ngai, Edwin Gonsaulus and their successors, Ho Tsang (1930) and Ting Shao (1931) (SAD BNS 1931), and others together with the community representations. The repeal of the Act was however also perceived to have been precipitated by expedient considerations regarding the expansion of the Union’s export trade to China and a concerted effort to find trading partners outside the British Empire (SAD GG 1933). This economic rationale would feature again in future Chinese–South African relations.

During the course and in the wake of World War II these requests for Chinese representation in South Africa surfaced again with more intensity. The Chinese government, through among others Dr. Wellington Koo the Ambassador in London, repeatedly requested the appointment of a diplomatic representative in the Union of South Africa (SAD BLO 1943–1953; SAD BTS 1942a). One reason given for this request for enhanced status of representation was “war supplies” and the “passage of munitions to China” from the United States via the Cape (SAD BLO 1942). The South African Union government sidestepped the request by responding that it was policy not to extend diplomatic representation during the continuance of hostilities and “it would be difficult to make an exception in the case of China” (SAD BLO 1942). The South African authorities believed that the real reason for the Chinese request was a “question of prestige” and that “seeing that they are now our Allies ... they should wish to appoint a diplomatic representative ... to the Union” (SAD BLO 1942). It is interesting to note that in a secret communication on the matter the South African government officials also reiterated the sentiment that they felt that:

Doubtless the Chinese also wish to provide their community in the Union with the protection which can only be accorded by a diplomatic mission having access to the highest authorities.

(SAD BLO 1942; SAD BTS 1942b)

In 1948, the Chinese again proposed the exchange of diplomatic representatives. Once again, the newly elected National Party (apartheid) government in South Africa chose not to pursue the matter, but rather to “approve in principle with the idea of an exchange of diplomats, but to stall for the time being.” It was noted that China was a “member of the Big Five” and that such an appointment “would also counter criticisms levelled against” South Africa that she was “so reactionary” that she did “not wish to have diplomatic relations with colored nations” (SAB BTS 1948). The South African government also made reference to the fact that China’s internal position was “unstable” (SAB BTS 1948). Again, the South African undisclosed reaction included reference to the fact that they should “expect a Chinese Minister to press more persistently for increased privileges to Chinese living in the Union” (SAB BTS 1948), something that they were not prepared to countenance.

In line with this latter supposition, the various Chinese consuls general continued to support or approach the South African government on behalf of the local Chinese community. As the social engineering of apartheid increased aspects that were raised included immigration, requests for municipal grants, applications for reduced lease arrangements, permission to build a Chinese school, and the granting of liquor licenses (SAD JUS 1940). The consul general was also responsible for establishing and maintaining the *Overseas Chinese Consular Gazette* (later known as the *Overseas Chinese Newspaper*) in 1931 as a means to communicate with the overseas Chinese in South Africa (*Transvaal Chinese Association Newsletter* 1998b:1; *Transvaal Chinese Association Newsletter* 1999b: 1). Therefore, the standing of Chinese–South African relations, and the role of the consul general as an intermediary remained relatively unchanged throughout the period of the Republic of China to 1949.

The Republic of China on Taiwan 1949 to 1967

The mid-twentieth-century foundation of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 occurred a year after the National Party government with its apartheid policy assumed power in South Africa. While it set about promulgating and enforcing this discriminatory ideology, it initially adopted a “wait and see” policy regarding the international debate over recognition of the communist government of China and the Republic of China on Taiwan (ROC) (SAD BLO 1949). While still on the mainland, the ROC had an extensive diplomatic network, but after its evacuation to Taiwan its diplomatic network diminished, as more international states switched recognition to the new PRC government.

Despite this global trend, the appointment of consuls general from the ROC stationed at Johannesburg continued unabated. In 1948 Li Chao was appointed Consul General, to be succeeded by Ting Shao in 1952, Samuel S Wang in May 1956 and Tsung-Han Liu in October 1959. (SAD GG 1948–1959). Even after South Africa became a Republic in 1961 and was removed from the Commonwealth the appointments still continued: Dr. Wei Yu-sun was replaced by Chen Yih-yuan in 1964 (SAB BTS 1964) and Lo Ming-yuan was succeeded by

Wei-min Lee in 1970 (SAD URU 1970). Here again it appears that pragmatic considerations of a different type were at play. In recognizing the Chinese consuls general, the South African government noted that China had as yet not taken a position as regards its own status within the international community, despite extreme pressure from African and Asian countries as well as China's key position as a member of the United Nations Organization (UNO) (SAD BTS 1964).

During this period the ROC consular representatives continued to make requests to upgrade their mission in the Union to the status of ambassador. Included in the reasons in a 1960 address they referred to the fact that China had been represented in the country for over 50 years and that they were still South Africa's friends at the UNO and believed that Nationalist China and South Africa needed to support each other in their common fight against communism (SAD BTS 1961). However, it was not until 1976 that this official diplomatic relationship was to be realized.

Regardless of the lack of ambassadorial recognition, the ROC consuls general continued to support the local Chinese community in their endeavors to obtain a more just and viable position within an increasingly racist South African society. However, the impact of the apartheid policies on "nonwhite" people, including this small community, were unremitting and from the 1950s, with the escalation of the drafting and implementation of discriminatory legislation, the consuls general were perpetually involved in assisting the community in their objections to the apartheid system. These included issues such as the Population Registration Act, under which the Chinese were eventually categorized as a subdivision of the colored "group" (*Government Gazette* 1951); the Group Areas Act, which after 20 years was disbanded in terms of the Chinese and replaced with a permit system (SAD GGR 1959); and the Separate Amenities Act, which was also made subject to permission (Harris 1999: 179–201; Yap and Man 1996: 315–370). In these deliberations with the government, consular representatives reiterated references to them being "people [who] ... came from ... one of the highest cultures in the world" with a "tradition of 4,000 years of civilization" (SAD BEP 1959; SAD GGR 1959).

The consuls general were also involved in resolving other petty apartheid obstacles like vouching for Chinese individuals in order for them to board a train using a first-class compartment or to attend a movie or theater performance reserved for whites (Accone 1998: 12). The ROC representatives also remained involved with the local community by encouraging and supporting Chinese cultural activities, while making considerable financial contributions to celebratory events as well as to education (Yap and Man 1996: 290, 291, 312, 429). The Chinese consular representation thus continued to intercede as the voice of the small community.

Taiwanese and PRC embassies 1967–1998

As apartheid South Africa became increasingly more ostracized in the international arena as a result of its apartheid policies, so too was the ROC gradually

losing its international diplomatic recognition in favor of the PRC. In 1971 it lost its two-decade-old seat on the UNO Security Council (Lin 2001: 81–82), while South Africa was on the receiving end of UN economic and other sanctions. Thus the two so-called “pariah” states – SA and ROC – were drawn closer together primarily for economic reasons. As early as 1967, South Africa had opened the long-awaited reciprocal consulate in Taipei in order to facilitate the growing trade relations between the two regions (Yap and Man 1996: 417). In 1976 these relations were formalized into official bilateral diplomatic relations (Lin 2001: 81–82). By 1979, South African exports to the ROC exceeded R180 million, making the ROC its fifth-largest trading partner (*Rand Daily Mail* 1980); in 1980 a record R400 million uranium deal was concluded (*Argus* 1980a); and ROC–South Africa bilateral trade was registered at R6.12 billion in 1993 (Sono 1994: 18).

In the light of this rapid development at both the economic and the diplomatic levels, the South African government was obliged to reconsider the position of the local South African Chinese community. Visits by ROC high-ranking officials and a visit by the prime minister of the ROC in 1980 forced the government to take action in this regard after having given assurances that a “new deal” would be considered to ensure that the status of the South African Chinese was improved (*Argus* 1980a). Subsequently a commission of inquiry was appointed into the Group Areas Act and other legislation, which recommended that the Chinese should have better rights to own and occupy property, while special considerations would be given to other matters (*Rand Daily Mail* 1984). Commenting on these developments, the opposition in parliament stated that it was “surprising that it should take the visit of a foreign Prime Minister to cause the government to re-examine the position of some of its own citizens” (*Argus* 1980b).

Besides a number of concessions which were granted as a result of this Commission of Inquiry, there was also the 1980s’ proposal for the introduction of a new consultative body called the “President’s Council.” It would comprise 60 members nominated by the state president and would include representatives from the “white, coloured, Indian and Chinese population groups,” while the majority population, the blacks, were excluded. The reaction from the Chinese community was cautious, and they ultimately requested that they be “excused the honour” (*Financial Mail* 1980). They stated that they refused to accept participation on the grounds that “their numbers did not warrant participation,” nor did they believe they had the “right to make decisions affecting much larger population groups” and that they “preferred no role until full rights [were] given” (Anon 1980: 8). This critical episode also resulted in the formation of the Chinese Association of South Africa (CASA) in March 1981, which united the six disparate Chinese regional organizations into one umbrella organization, as this would then enable them to articulate their position and demands with one voice (Anon 1981: 6). It is however interesting to note that in these deliberations about their response one publicized reaction was “no comment until they have heard what the Consul of Taiwan had to say” (CASA Mission Statement 2004).

The latter reference to consulting with the “Consul of Taiwan” serves to underline the importance of this foreign link in the Chinese community’s local deliberations dating back to just after the turn of the twentieth century. So determining, and effective, was this reliance on the Taiwanese representation that in 1963 the South African government had actually launched an investigation into the *locus standi* of the Chinese consul general acting on behalf of the South African Chinese (SAD BEP 1963b). As I have argued elsewhere, having no vote and no voice, as well as being a numerically insignificant minority group, made taking recourse to the local Chinese embassy a justifiable option (Harris 1998b).

The People’s Republic of China 1998

As South Africa began to move slowly toward the dismantling of apartheid in the last decades of the twentieth century, the local Chinese were to face another change in the official diplomatic Chinese representation. The PRC government apparently had its first contact with the South African National Party government within a year of taking over power. In 1950, Mao Zedong sent a telegram to the South African authorities in protest of the “policy of racial segregation.” It is speculated that Mao Zedong was “probably more concerned with the effect these apartheid laws would have on South Africa’s local Chinese population” (Davies 1995:16–17, fn. 45). In 1965, Beijing had also aligned itself with the Pan African Congress (PAC) as the only recipient organization in South Africa to receive PRC aid (Davies 1995: 21). The African National Congress (ANC), on the other hand, had an amicable, but limited relationship with the PRC as a result of the ANC’s support of the Soviet Union in the Sino-Soviet split (Davies 1995: 22–27). Moreover, it has been argued that “southern Africa and China [PRC] have always been peripheral to one another’s interests,” while “the historical links remain sketchy and episodic” (Alden 1997: 80).

Given this limited contact, and the fact that pre-1990 South African legislation made it basically impossible for the South African Chinese community to maintain bonds with the mainland, the “switch” of diplomatic allegiance by the new South African ANC-dominated government to the PRC came as quite “a surprise” (Rogers 1996). After much speculation about the “two Chinas question,” President Nelson Mandela “abruptly announced” in November 1996 that South Africa would establish full diplomatic relations with PRC from January 1998 (Alden 2000: 89). Despite assurances to the contrary and an undertaking that the status quo with the ROC would remain intact, it was stated that it “was not in South Africa’s best interests to be at odds with the rest of the world” and that it was “inconsistent with the country’s role in international affairs” (Anon 1996: 1). Within months of this announcement, the PRC embassy was established in Pretoria and consulates were set up along with national and provincial trade delegations (*Transvaal Chinese Association Newsletter* 1999a: 1). After initial disgruntlement over losing official diplomatic status, the position of the ROC and its representation in the new South Africa remained “essentially unchanged” (Granelli 1996: 1). The former embassy transformed into the Taipei

Liaison Office, trade between South Africa and the ROC proceeded without interruption and their relations with the local Chinese community persisted (*Transvaal Chinese Association Newsletter* 1998a: 1).

The South African Chinese community, on the other hand, adopted a position in between the two China debate. Already in 1992, two years prior to the inauguration of the democratic dispensation, CASA announced a policy of “establishing and maintaining contact with both PRC and ROC” (*Transvaal Chinese Association Newsletter* 1998a: 1). After the new democratic dispensation extended the franchise to all South Africans and with all South Africans having access to parliament, the Chinese-South Africans now had a legitimate voice in their own right. It was only after this that we see the Chinese community, that is, the South African-born Chinese, as full citizens of the new South Africa interacting with government for the first time without the intervention or assistance of a foreign diplomatic mission. The instance was related to the new democratic government’s mandate to redress the imbalances of past injustices. This included the promulgation of legislation concerned with the question of employment equity. Here again the Chinese found themselves outside the ambit of the law as they were excluded from the benefits of the Employment Equity and the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Acts. Blacks, coloreds and Indians qualified and therefore had access to appointments, promotions, preferential shares and other employment equity rights and economic empowerment benefits in both the public and private sectors, yet the Chinese were sidelined (Accone 1999: 10, 1998: 12; *The Chinese Association – Gauteng* 2002).

At the time a government spokesperson of the Department of Labour commented that the ANC did not view the Chinese “among previously disadvantaged groups” because they were “a small group with no voice” (Anon 2000: 4). Yet it was precisely this small size and lack of official recognition that had led the Chinese throughout the past century to make use of the various diplomatic channels available. Now, under the new local dispensation, in terms of both the new democratic South Africa and the PRC with official ambassadorial status, the South African Chinese community stood their ground and confirmed their legitimate place within both past and present South Africa. The PRC official ambassadorial representatives were not at all involved in these deliberations, probably attributable to the PRC’s policy of recognizing sovereignty (Park and Alden 2013: 643) and adhering to “noninterference” in internal affairs.

An eight-year-long debate and court battle reiterated the details of the discriminatory legacy of the South African Chinese and contested misconceptions about them (Nathan and Sonnenbergs 2008a: 1–2, 2008b). As an identifiable “foreign-looking community,” it was argued that their options under the apartheid regime were often limited to either adjusting or emigrating. On June 18, 2008, a High Court judge eventually ruled that the South African Chinese “fall within the definition of black people in the Constitution,” allowing them to “now enjoy the full benefits of black economic empowerment (BEE)” (SAPA 2008a: 4). According to the CASA chairman, the Chinese community’s struggle had “not been about economic opportunism, but about lack of recognition and

clearing up of the misconceptions of the historical injustices the South African Chinese faced” (Gerardy 2008: 8). Yet, although they won the battle, they lost the war, as both ministerial and public reaction to the High Court victory perpetuated an invidious position with rather defamatory comments and negative media coverage (SAPA 2008b: 2). This susceptible situation within the South African community at large was further compounded by the international hype around the Chinese “invasion” of Africa, the so-called new imperial onslaught (Alden 2007: 5; Lee 2006: 303–304). While legally “setting the record straight,” for some the entire BEE court debacle exposed their vulnerability as one of South Africa’s smallest minorities (Accone 2007: 25; Terblanche 2006: 10).

It is however not the concern of this chapter to deliberate on what is integral to the historical record: the South African Chinese minority were indeed discriminated against (Harris 1998b). This is a view that the first president of the new democratic government, Nelson Mandela, neatly encapsulated in an address delivered in 1998, when he said they were:

a community which has shared the indignities heaped on all those in South Africa who were not categorized as “white”, a community which, because of its small size and its own insistence on human dignity, helped expose the twisted logic of apartheid.

(www.mandela.gov.za/mandela_speeches/1998/980819_crime.htm)

Rather, this chapter has shown how the introduction of official government representatives from the Chinese Empire over a century ago – and the subsequent representations that followed as China’s constitutional and global position changed – had a unique but determining impact on the place and position of the South African Chinese community. In a sense, it has shown how having had access to an “official voice” in South Africa also sometimes denied the Chinese community a “direct voice.” This led to the erroneous perception and contentious deliberation that they were neither victims of nor agitators against apartheid.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it must however be emphasized unequivocally that over the past century the South African Chinese have by no means been solely dependent on the foreign Chinese consular and diplomatic representations in South Africa in terms of their position. Throughout the twentieth century the South African Chinese community was constantly reacting to and resisting the strictures of the various colonial, segregationist, apartheid and postapartheid regulations and policies. As the political pressure mounted, their organizations transformed from local and regional associations and clubs to umbrella national organizations that spoke on behalf of the community. Given their miniscule size and concomitant peripheral status it was however expedient, and effective, to direct their objections and resistance through the available consular and diplomatic channels. What must be placed on the record is that in using the foreign Chinese representation they gained more direct access to

government authorities with greater leverage, which obliged the powers to officially respond. This then forced them to take cognizance of the enormous problematic inherent in their policies. It was thus expedient to make use of official representation as the global position of China changed within the context of South Africa.

Two decades after the founding of the new democratic dispensation, South Africa – along with China – has continued to position herself on the global stage. Relations with China have been cemented in the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) group, which combines two emerging economic giants with three resource-rich markets. This is regarded as a “significant diplomatic arrangement” (Butler 2011: 11) and one which is said to serve as a “platform for dialogue and co-operation” (Sapa 2011: 21). It is however most visible in the economic sector where increased investment by the China–Africa Development Fund is occurring, particularly in the South African mining industry (Anon, 2011: 16), as well as the influx of Chinese individuals into the small business sector, with retail clothing dominating (Singh and Savides, 2011: 20). While the South African government welcomes these developments, heralding this as the “China moment” and one that “offers a new window of opportunity Africa can’t afford to miss” (Lund 2011: 20), there are those who do not concur. Opposition politicians and the media have cautioned against this trend, claiming that the Chinese investment comes at a price that impacts on the local labor force (Kotch 2013: 4). Regardless of this, China remains rated as South Africa’s largest trading partner, while Africa is China’s biggest African trade partner (Anon 2012: 19; Anon 2013: 22). These commercial relations have gradually begun to spill over into other sectors, which reflects on this growing synergy between the two countries. As part of the cooperative agreements, the education minister has indicated that Mandarin will be developed as a school curriculum subject so as to “reinforce South African participation in what she called ‘the new emerging world economy’” (Anon 2014: 14). For many of the South African-born Chinese (Beaver 2011: 9), whose numbers continue to diminish, this remains tangential to surviving in a country where for so long they had to carve out a survival niche. Their positioning and repositioning for over a century within the contours of changing international dispensations and allegiances persist.

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5 Cultural ties and states' interests

Malaysian Chinese and China's rise

Ngeow Chow-Bing and Tan Chee-Beng

Introduction¹

In his study of the ethnic dimension in the relations between China and ASEAN countries, Leo Suyardinata observed that China was often not interested or ineffective in protecting the Chinese overseas, and in fact would sacrifice their interests when they came into conflict with other priorities of China's national interests and foreign policy (Suyardinata 1985). However, Suyardinata's study was conducted when China was still a relatively weak power with limited policy tools. Today, will a stronger China be interested to strengthen its ties with the Chinese communities worldwide? The active activities of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of China's State Council would suggest so. In *When China Rules the World*, British author Martin Jacques points out that

as [China's] rise continues and Chinese worldwide interests grow, the Chinese diaspora is likely to greatly expand, become increasingly prosperous, buoyed by China's own economic success, enjoy enhanced prestige as a result of China's rising status, and feel an even closer affinity with China.
(Jacques 2012: 334)

But what exactly will be the impact of China's rise on Chinese overseas communities? How are cultural ties and state's interests balanced as China and Chinese overseas engage with each other?

In general, China's rise in the twentieth century² is seen as contributing to the improved economic, political and cultural statuses of the ethnic Chinese outside Mainland China. The cultural ties between China and Chinese overseas underlie the assumptions that the expanding Chinese economy presents great business opportunities to the ethnic Chinese, who could utilize their family and other forms of networks in China. When China initiated its open-door policy, the Chinese government had encouraged the Chinese from outside Mainland China to invest in China; they were seen as an asset to attract investment and to assist China to enter overseas markets. Today investment from Hong Kong and Taiwan and to some extent from the Chinese overseas is still significant, and so is investment from many countries. China is also active in investing overseas, in South-east Asia and elsewhere, including Africa.³

The impact of an economically risen China elevates the prestige and usefulness of Chinese culture and language in many places. As Jiemin Bao observed in Thailand, “it is now fashionable to study Chinese” and “now people tend to emphasize both the cultural advantages and economic benefits of learning the language” (Bao 2007: 96). Whereas in the past most Southeast Asian governments restricted the study of Chinese, now people (ethnic Chinese or otherwise) can study the language as they like. Even in Indonesia, where the Suharto regime (1966–1998) had not only closed Chinese schools but also banned the use of the Chinese language in print, people are now free to study the language, and there are a number of Chinese newspapers and even television broadcasts. This is a very visible cultural impact of the rise of China.

A more powerful China introduces (or reintroduces) new dimensions into the relationships between China, Chinese overseas and the governments of the countries where these Chinese overseas reside. China identifies the presence of the Chinese overseas in different countries as “soft power” resources to be utilized, especially with regards to their positive role in the bilateral relationship between the Chinese government and the governments of these Chinese overseas. However, there have also been some concerns, especially among indigenous nationalists in Southeast Asian countries, that a more powerful and confident China is less likely to refrain from active intervention on behalf of the Chinese overseas than a weaker China.

Ethnic and cultural ties, however, would have to be balanced by states’ interests in examining the relationship between China and the Chinese overseas. While the Malaysian Chinese⁴ generally view positively the impact of the rise of China on Malaysia with regards to Malaysia–China relations and the Malaysian Chinese community, the overall attitudes are characterized by welcome and wary, a mixture of mostly positive and somewhat negative attitudes. The presumption of shared cultural ties and interests should be scrutinized in the context of how the China factor in Malaysia is shaped by both China’s state interests and the ethnicized political economy of Malaysia. This chapter draws from several interviews with leaders of important Malaysian Chinese organizations (*huatuan* – see below), newspaper reports and several other secondary sources. It is divided into five sections. The first section briefly introduces Malaysia and the Malaysian Chinese. The following three sections examine the impact of China’s rise on the Malaysian Chinese community in business, culture and politics, respectively, followed by the conclusion. This chapter shows that the impact of the contemporary rise of China on a country and the Chinese overseas is not just economic; the soft diplomacy of China has cultural and political impacts, too, and where ethnic Chinese have to deal with racial politics in their respective country, they cannot take the rise of China for granted.

Malaysia and Malaysian Chinese

Malaysia has a population of 30 million, with about 25 percent of it Chinese. Since independence in 1957, the country has been governed by the same ruling

coalition (Barisan Nasional, or BN), led by UMNO.⁵ The coalition has been described as “consociational,” whereby political parties representing major ethnic groups (Malays, Chinese and Indians) work as an alliance in politics, especially during elections (cf. Chee 1991; Lijphart 1977; Tan 2012). However, the “consociational” formula has become increasingly untenable with the increasing UMNO’s hegemonic role within the BN coalition and the concomitant dominance of the Malays within the country. The racialization of the country manifests in what is known as the New Economic Policy and the National Cultural Policy (initiated in the 1970s), by which the Malays receive substantial governmental protection and support in the spheres of university admission, business opportunities, civil service recruitment and promotion, government-funded scholarship, the elevation of Islam (the religion professed by all Malays) above other religions, and others. The country’s constitution protects the fundamental civil rights of ethnic minorities, including Chinese and Indians, and they have a role to play in the governance of the country. However, it is undeniable that under the strongly pro-Malay governmental policies the minorities have felt a sense of marginalization in politics, culture and even business.

Malaysian Chinese community, however, has strived to maintain its own political, cultural and economic interests, by forming various forms of associations and organizations. In terms of politics, both within the ruling coalition and the opposition coalition there are several Chinese-supported parties (Malaysian Chinese Association, Gerakan, Democratic Action Party, Sarawak United People’s Party, etc.), which ensure that Chinese are not left out in the national politics of the country, whether in the government or in the opposition. In culture and education, the most important organizations have been Dong Zong (United Chinese Schools’ Committees Association) and Jiao Zong (Unite Chinese Schools’ Teachers Association). Both organizations are headed by Chinese educationalists who see their most important mission as protecting the primary and secondary schools that use Chinese as medium of instruction and administration. In addition, there are three major Chinese alumni associations from the universities of China/Taiwan/Singapore, namely, Nantah Alumni (alumni of Nanyang University, the Singapore-based Chinese university that ceased operation in the 1980s), Liu Hua (Malaysia’s Association of Graduates of Universities and Colleges in China), and Liu Tai Lian Zong (Federation of Alumni Associations of Taiwan Universities). All these associations share the goal of preserving the cultural right of the Chinese community, especially the right to mother-tongue language in education.

In business, the Associated Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (ACCCIM) has been the primary business organization representing Chinese business interests. It is part of the worldwide alliance of Chinese chambers of commerce. In addition, in terms of fostering business ties with China, there are also the Malaysia–China Business Council (MCBC) and Malaysia–China Chamber of Commerce (MCCC). The former is government-initiated and elite driven, while the latter is driven mainly by Malaysian Chinese business persons, with the majority of the membership coming from Chinese small and

medium enterprises. Finally, in each of the 13 states of Malaysia there is one Chinese Assembly Hall, which serves as the overall organization that looks into the interests of the local Chinese community. All these Chinese Assembly Halls form an umbrella association called Hua Zong (Federations of Chinese Associations Malaysia). Dong Zong, Jiao Zong, Hua Zong, Liu Hua, ACCCIM, MCCC, and many other Chinese-based organizations (not including Chinese-based political parties) in Malaysia are collectively referred to as *huatuan* (Chinese organizations). They are the important institutions of the Malaysian Chinese community (other institutions include the abovementioned Chinese schools and Chinese newspapers) that keep the community from being assimilated or further marginalized. With the rise of China, these organizations' contacts with China have increased substantially.

China's rise and the Malaysian Chinese business community

In general, the rise of China has created a buoyant mood among the Malaysian Chinese business community, which sees China as a land of opportunity for investment and expanded trade. Traditionally, Chinese businesspeople from Malaysia have played a key role in fostering Malaysia–China economic relations. They were the pioneers in investing in China, which began in the 1980s (cf. Ho 1995; Gomez 2006; Lin 1988; Zheng 2008). As Lin Wuguang points out, Malaysian investment in China began in 1984, when Malaysian mattress brand Dreamland established with its Chinese partner the Tianjin Mengxiang Flexible Furniture Co., Ltd., and by 1994 there were 308 Malaysian investment projects in China (Lin 1998). Robert Kwok's Shangri-La group was also an early investor in China with the completion of the Hangzhou Shangri-La Hotel in 1984, and since then the group has owned many hotels in China, including 16 Shangri-La hotels in different cities in China. Parkson Corporation, Malaysia's Lion Group's retailing arm, established the first foreign department store in China, when in 1994 Parkson China was opened in Beijing. Since then both Malaysian Chinese capital and Malaysian state enterprises have invested in China. The Malaysian Chinese also played the role of facilitating China's capital to invest in Malaysia, and in the process both China and Malaysian Chinese businesses have benefited from expanded markets, lower labor costs and the introduction of different technologies and managerial systems (Li 2007). Overall, the Malaysian Chinese businesses contribute much to the dynamic economic relations between Malaysia and China. Since 2009, China has been Malaysia's largest trade partner, and Malaysia has been China's largest trade partner among ASEAN countries. This is despite the fact that China's foreign direct investment in Malaysia is still small compared to its investment in Singapore.

Today, the economic rise of China is welcome by both the Malaysian Chinese businesspeople and the Malaysian government from the perspective of economic gains. There is a positive narrative about the emergence of an economically powerfully China, considering the economic opportunities that this may bring, like more tourists from China coming to the country or China importing more

palm oil from Malaysia. In late 2013, the Chinese government launched its “One Belt One Road” initiative. The Chinese business community in Malaysia has enthusiastically responded to this initiative and sees the twenty-first-century Maritime Silk Road as creating plenty of business opportunities to the Chinese businesses in Malaysia. The Malaysia–China Chamber of Commerce (MCCC), for example, has organized several seminars to discuss how to capitalize on the twenty-first-century Maritime Silk Road initiative. It has even come out with a handbook on the role of Malaysia in China’s “One Belt One Road” initiative for Malaysian Chinese businesses (MCCC 2015).

However, not all Chinese businesses in Malaysia have benefited from greater economic relations with China. Under the ethnicized political economy of Malaysia, increasingly the strategic and key sectors of the economy have been under the control of the government-linked companies (GLCs) and government-supported Malay entrepreneurs, while more and more Chinese businesses are concentrated in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Eighty percent of SMEs in Malaysia are in fact Chinese-owned and operated by them. With greater economic and trade relations with China, Malaysia very soon encountered economic competition from China, especially with regards to the latter’s export of inexpensive goods, which capitalizes on its large pool of cheap labor. Overall, Malaysian labor-reliant SMEs have been facing stiff competition from China, as pointed out by Chin Yee Whah in his excellent survey; it is the larger ones that are in a better position “to survive and prosper” through moving up the value chain by cutting down reliance on foreign labor and invest in research and development (Chin 2007).

In the view of an MCCC leader, this is something inevitable as economic globalization has forced many developing economies to make the transition, and Chinese businesses in Malaysia are no exception. The coming challenge of China will not be the only factor, as ASEAN economic integration (which will result in similar competition from Vietnam) and the coming membership of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) will also present huge challenges to the businesses of all ethnic groups in Malaysia. However, with the Malays having government support in general, the majority of the Chinese businesses, especially Chinese SMEs, will face a greater challenge. According to this MCCC leader, the focus of Malaysian Chinese business is to make transformation and adjustment, such as transitioning from manufacturing to retailing and services, including working with China-based partners, and considering market niches in which China does not yet have comparative advantages, such as food safety regulations.⁶

A case in point is the steel industry in Malaysia. One of the Malaysian Chinese business tycoons, Pheng Yin Huah, has encountered stiff competitiveness from the steel industry in China. Pheng has been a successful businessman who has earned the nickname the “King of Steel,” and he owns two major steel companies in Malaysia, namely Kinsteel and Perwaja. He has served as the president of Hua Zong, the important Chinese organization in Malaysia mentioned above. His fortune has declined significantly because of what Pheng calls

“dumping”: fierce competition from China’s steelmakers. However, he remains very friendly with China, and in his capacity as president of Hua Zong he interacts frequently with the Chinese ambassador to Malaysia, with whom he remains on very friendly terms. He has sought help from Tianjin Zhiyuan Investment Group Co., Ltd., a China-based alloy manufacturer, to revamp the Perwaja steel plant in Kemaman in Terengganu, which ceased operation in 2013. Under the MOA signed, Zhiyuan which initially will invest at least RM100 million, will gain access to the plant in Kemaman and will bring in new machinery (The Malaysian Insider 2015; Liew 2015).

Another perceived China opportunity by the Malaysian Chinese businesses is the huge China market. As mentioned earlier, there are many successful Malaysian Chinese tycoons investing in China, but there are also many cases of failure. The interviewed leader of MCCC classified three generations of Malaysian Chinese investment into China. The first generation of Malaysian Chinese investments in China, in the 1990s, generally failed, owing to inexperience and unfamiliarity with Chinese laws. There were only a few notable exceptions, such as Robert Kwok’s Shangri-La hotel operations. The second generation began in the 2000s, where entries into the China market saw more successes as experiences accumulated and as the Chinese economic laws became more institutionalized, although not overwhelmingly so. The third generation began in the 2010s, when more and more investments into China came from government-linked companies (GLCs) and less so from the Malaysian Chinese businesses; concomitant with this trend was the increasing investment from China into Malaysia.⁷ The trends since 2010 – increased Malaysian GLC presence in China and increased Chinese investment in Malaysia – signaled that mutual investments between Malaysia and China are increasingly based more on states’ interests rather than on ethnic Chinese ties.

In the past several decades, the Malaysian government has been courting more investment from China to help boost economic growth in Malaysia. The most notable project has been the so-called dual industrial parks – the Malaysia–China Kuantan Industrial Park and the China–Malaysia Qinzhou Industrial Park – initiated in the early 2010s. The Malaysia–China Kuantan Industrial Park is set up specifically for the purpose of getting more investment from China. Among the initial partners to invest in this park are Malaysian GLCs, the state government of Pahang and a property business group from a Malaysian Chinese tycoon. However, the property business group has since pulled out. To date, investment projects in the Malaysia–China Kuantan Industrial Park are still low in number, especially in comparison with its counterpart the China–Malaysian Qinzhou Industrial Park. So far it is hard to determine whether this park will provide ample opportunities for ethnic Chinese businesses in Malaysia. In other cases, the main targets and goals of Chinese firms may not always provide advantages for the Malaysian Chinese businesses. As China’s capital becomes more powerful and China establishes good relationship with other governments, there is no need to rely on local Chinese cultural ties. Thus, in entering the Malaysian market, the main considerations are costs and benefits. This is because firms and

institutions in China investing in Malaysia are apt at exploiting the advantage of cooperating with the Malaysian government and Malay-led GLCs or with ethnic Chinese firms. As Lim (2015) illustrates so well, firms from China, most themselves government-linked, do business in Malaysia mainly with GLCs in the construction sector, which is very much controlled by the government, and with ethnic Chinese firms in the manufacturing sector, where these firms still have some advantages.

As Martin Jacques points out, the gainers from economic relations with China are those countries that benefit from the cheap manufactured products made in China and that at the same time are able to capitalize on China's demands for raw materials as well as knowledge-based and capital-intensive products. The main losers are those who face competition from China directly, especially those involve in labor-intensive manufacturing (Jacques 2012: 233–234). In this context, Malaysian Chinese businesses are no exception. There have been some gainers, especially those who are able to tap into the China market, which a few ethnic Chinese tycoons, such as Robert Kwok and William Cheng, are known to be doing exceptionally well in China. However, the recent gainers, especially those related to the export of palm oil to China, have been government-linked companies such as Sime Darby and FELDA. The majority of Malaysian Chinese business, which is more likely to be small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), on the other hand, may not be able to benefit much from the China market, as the competition is stiff and the technological know-how of the Malaysian SMEs has not overall been sufficiently competitive.

Cultural impact as seen from the Malaysian Chinese education movement

In the context of the politics of ethnicity in Malaysia, the Malaysian Chinese have strived hard to keep their cultural rights, especially in the sphere of preserving the Chinese schools. Within the national education system, Chinese-medium education is officially maintained in the primary schools under the national type school system. At the secondary level, all schools are supposed to be Malay-medium schools, although in some schools there is provision for studying Chinese as a subject. Outside the governmental system, there are 60 Chinese-medium secondary schools supported by the Malaysian Chinese community, called *duzhong* (independent Chinese secondary schools), for those who wish to continue to receive their education in Chinese at the secondary level. Finally, at the tertiary level, three colleges supported by the Chinese have been in operation since 1990, namely Southern University College (founded in 1990), New Era College (1998) and Han Chiang University College of Communication (1999). Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, a university sponsored by the Malaysian Chinese Association, the major Chinese-based ethnic party in the ruling coalition, has also been running since 2012. The newest entrant into the tertiary level is Xiamen University in Malaysia, which will be discussed in more detail below.

Despite the tolerance of the existence and operation of these Chinese educational institutions, many Malaysian Chinese have always been suspicious of the government's intention to curb Chinese education (Lee 2011; Tan 1997). There have been persistent calls on the government from certain Malay nationalist groups to close down Chinese schools. While it is true that the government has not closed down Chinese schools or pursued an assimilation policy, like some other Southeast Asian governments did in the past, the Chinese educational movement (*huajiao yundong*) remains forever vigilant about the goal, intentions and policies of the Malaysian government. For years, the Chinese educationalists in Malaysia have been struggling against what they suspect to be the unilingual and monocultural policies of the government of Malaysia. For them, the fact that the Chinese schools are not closed down does not mean that the government will not do it eventually. Moreover, the policies of the government have not been friendly toward the development of the aforementioned Chinese educational institutions. Several restrictive policies are always in place, such as the limitation of the number of Chinese schools despite rising demands, control over the schools' management, personnel and curricula, refusal to institutionalize support for *duzhong*, refusal to recognize the diploma (called the Unified Examination Certificate, or UEC) issued by *duzhong* (thereby restricting the higher education and employment opportunities of the graduates of Chinese independent schools to essentially the private sector only), and many others. In particular, the laws on education (the Education Act of 1961; the Education Act of 1996) of Malaysia are seen as unfriendly toward Chinese education because the ultimate objective of the educational system of Malaysia, as laid down in these educational laws, is to create a unified educational system where all schools of non-Malay language streams (Chinese and Tamil) will gradually cease to exist. The recent Education Blueprint, published by the government in 2012 and launched in 2013, one that will guide educational policies of Malaysia until the year 2025, is also widely perceived by these Chinese educationalists, especially those associated with Dong Zong, as the government's aim to eventually turn the Chinese schools into national schools where the Chinese language will not be the essential language of instruction.

However, the rise of China as well as internal political considerations (like a weaker UMNO-led government trying to get ethnic Chinese votes in elections) have led the government to give some support to Chinese education, something that the government was reluctant to do in the past. Some policy measures have been quite accommodative to the demands of the Chinese education movement. For instance, in the past, owing to the refusal of government's recognition of *duzhong*, Chinese-educated students had limited opportunities for tertiary education, confined mostly to studying in Taiwan and, after the 1990s, the private institutions of higher education in Malaysia. In the 2000s, the trend of studying in Mainland China began to emerge. However, degrees from Taiwan and China in the past were not officially recognized by the Malaysian government, again limiting these degree holders to finding jobs in the private sector only. In 2011, Malaysia and China signed an agreement on mutual degree recognition,

extending the government's recognition of the degrees of more than a few hundred universities in China.⁸ In 2013, Malaysia and Taiwan signed a similar agreement.

As mentioned earlier, Dong Zong and Jiao Zong are the two recognized leading organizations of the Chinese education movement. In Dong Zong's view, China's rise will provide benefits and support to the struggling Chinese education movement not just in Malaysia but in all of Southeast Asia. One of its publications states that:

The various achievements made by Chinese reforms since 1980s, the increasing close interactions with Southeast Asia, and the fast growth of the Chinese economy, all increased the practical value of the Chinese language. Chinese education and teaching has become a worldwide demand, and is no longer a "sensitive" subject. All these developments have caused the South-east Asian countries to re-evaluate the importance of the Chinese language. They provide a better environment for the implementation of Chinese education and teaching.

(Dong Zong 2004: 622)

Before the 1990s, Dong Zong's relations with the Overseas Chinese departments of the government in Taiwan were much greater than its relations with Beijing. However, beginning in the 1990s, Dong Zong had engaged scholars from China to help write the textbooks it published for use in the Chinese schools in Malaysia. In 1993, a delegation consisting of the leaders of Dong Zong and Jiao Zong visited 13 Chinese universities at the invitation of China Overseas Exchange Association (*Zhongguo haiwai jiaoliu xiehui*). The delegation visited five cities (Beijing, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Xiamen and Guangzhou) and explored the opportunities for the graduates of Malaysia's independent Chinese schools to attend universities in China. It also sought the Chinese government's acceptance of the UEC issued to *duzhong* graduates, so that holders of the UEC would not have to go through the Chinese language test when applying for admission to Chinese universities. Dong Zong was successful in this matter, as all holders of UEC have been exempted from such a requirement since 2007. Furthermore, the first China's universities exposition in Malaysia was also organized by Dong Zong in 2003. Since then, Dong Zong has regularly organized such expositions in Malaysia.

As Dong Zong's relations with China became closer, it eventually involved itself more actively in the activities organized by the Chinese government. Since the 2000s it has been sending representatives to attend the activities organized by the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council, such as the International Conference for Friendships of Overseas Chinese Associations and the World Chinese Education Forum, among others. There was a strong belief that the increasing importance of China, and hence the Chinese language, presented a great chance for Chinese education to grow. However, in moving closer to China, complications sometimes arose when occasionally Dong Zong became

too supportive of China's official stand on controversial issues. In 2011, Dong Zong came out with a strong statement condemning the Nobel Committee for awarding Nobel Peace Prize to Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo (*Sin Chew Daily* 2010). This episode put Dong Zong at the receiving end of a lot of criticism from the Chinese intellectual circle in Malaysia, but it was unprecedented in the sense that Dong Zong felt obliged to express its pro-Chinese government position publicly even though this issue had nothing to do with the mission and work of Dong Zong.

The rise of China and the increasing importance of China to Malaysia also resulted, as mentioned earlier, in the increased number of students pursuing education at the tertiary level in China. According to Liu Hua (the Malaysia's Association of Graduates of Universities and Colleges in China), from the 1990s to the 2000s the number of Malaysian students in China numbered in the double-digits only, and it rose to about 1,000 students in the late 2000s, and many more since then. Now there are about 7,500 Malaysian university students studying in China (see Table 5.1).

The overwhelming majority of these university students in China are Malaysian Chinese. Considering that Malaysia's governmental universities are still relatively restricted to recruiting graduates of government secondary schools only, China's universities present a very good opportunity for graduates of *duzhong*. There is a small number of Malay or Malaysian Indian students, numbering a few hundred, who mostly attend the language courses at Beijing Foreign Studies University and Beijing Language and Culture University. The embassy of China in Malaysia is particularly supportive of providing scholarships for non-Chinese students (mostly Malays) to study in China.

An interviewed leader of Liu Hua has expressed that he is supportive of non-Chinese learning Chinese languages and culture. At the same time, however, he also noticed that with more non-Chinese learning Chinese languages, some natural advantages that Malaysian Chinese have are gradually disappearing. For example, he noted that the head of operations for the Chinese language program in Radio Television Malaysia (RTM) – the government's broadcasting agency – is now a Malay, while in the past the position was always reserved for the Chinese. Another case is the head of Chinese language team at Bernama, the national news agency, who is now also a Malay and who has received education

Table 5.1 Number of Malaysian university students in China, 2010–2015

Year	Number of Malaysian university students in China
2010	2,800
2011	4,338
2012	6,045
2013	6,126
2014	6,751
2015	7,500 (estimate)

Source: Malaysia's Association of Graduates of Universities and Colleges in China.

in China.⁹ In this case, this leader of Liu Hua reckoned that, while the rise of China created huge educational opportunities for the Malaysian Chinese and increased the prestige of the Chinese language and of the alumni of China's universities, China's policies that target non-Chinese in Malaysia may result in the loss of some natural advantages of the Malaysian Chinese, although from the perspective of China's "soft power" foreign policy these policies make sense.

There is also a similar concern among Dong Zong's leadership. Despite Dong Zong's optimism about the impact of the rise of China, there is a concern among its leaders that China is promoting a kind of Chinese-language education that caters to the ethnic majority and does not necessary translate into more benefits to the Chinese education movement in Malaysia. There are several aspects of this concern. First, there are question marks over the usefulness and meaningfulness of the presence of a Confucius Institute (called Kong Zi Institute, KZI, because of the religious sensitivity over the term Confucius) in Malaysia to the Chinese education movement. The spread of Confucius Institutes worldwide underscores the phenomenon that the teaching of Chinese language is in high demand in many non-Chinese-speaking countries. The application process of a Confucius Institute usually comes first from the host institution, before evaluation and approval by the Hanban Office (the government department in charge of all Confucius Institutes around the world, which is under the auspice of the State Council) in Beijing. Henceforth, when the University of Malaya applied to establish a Confucius Institute with the backing of the government, there was the implicit assumption that the Chinese language is a "foreign language" in Malaysia and that the official assistance of China to help the teaching of this "foreign language" is needed, when in fact the Chinese language has been widely used in Malaysia by the Chinese, and it is not seen by them as a "foreign language." While it is true that the KZI at the University of Malaya basically aims to teach the Chinese language and culture to the non-Chinese-speaking population in Malaysia, particularly the Malays and Indians in the civil service, from the perspective of the Chinese education movement the KZI may in a way indirectly deny the legitimacy of the Chinese language as one of the legitimate local languages in Malaysia.

Furthermore, the ability of the KZI in promoting a true appreciation of the Chinese language and culture is also questioned. The kind of programs that the KZI offers mostly deals with the teaching of Chinese as a second language, which aims to give the students some basic command of the language and some appreciation of Chinese culture as an "external culture," which could be helpful for these students but are hardly helpful to the Malaysian Chinese education movement as a whole. The interviewed leader of Dong Zong explained that a Malay official learning the Chinese language with an instrumental mindset does not necessarily make him or her more sympathetic toward the Chinese education movement or the vision of a multi-linguistic educational environment in Malaysia. Learning the language because of its practical utility does not make one truly appreciate Chinese culture or the goals and mission of the Chinese education movement.¹⁰ In fact, there are some implicit fears of the negative consequences

of KZI teaching the Chinese language to government officials, especially those who come from the educational bureaucracy. The reason is that these officials, after completing some basic courses in Chinese language at KZI, may be appointed as headmasters or senior officials of Chinese primary schools.¹¹ While having more Chinese-speaking Malays or Indians serving as headmasters or senior officials of Chinese schools should be welcomed in principle, there are fears that these headmasters or senior officials may not actually share the same visions of the Chinese education movement and may implement the government's monolingual educational goal. This worry of the Dong Zong leader is also shared by the interviewed Liu Hua leader, who pointed out that "Kong Zi Institute may not be a good thing to the Malaysian Chinese community."¹²

The expected opening of a branch campus of Xiamen University also illustrates the differences between a China eager to project its soft power and the local Chinese education movement with a different goal. Dong Zong and Xiamen University have regular ties and contacts, but, according to both the leader of Dong Zong and the leader of Liu Hua, apart from some courtesy visits, Xiamen University hardly informed or involved Dong Zong or Liu Hua in its operation to open this branch campus. Dong Zong, as an acknowledged leading Chinese education organization, is a stakeholder that should be welcomed in the discussion about this operation. However, as a perceived antagonist to the government, Dong Zong was basically excluded from participating in the discussion, because Xiamen University had to walk a careful line and it decided to work mainly with the official side rather than with Dong Zong. From Dong Zong's perspective, this new university may draw away students from the three institutions of higher education supported by the Chinese community in Malaysia and may create even more problems for these institutions. In a press interview, Professor Wang Ruifang, the president of Xiamen University in Malaysia, said that while he understood the concerns about drawing away students from the Chinese-supported institutions in Malaysia, and that the university would be careful not to create this negative impact, ultimately he suggests competition is unavoidable and "good for parents, students, and society" (*The Star*, 2016: 26). From the perspective of China, opening a branch campus of Xiamen University in Malaysia is part of the exercise to showcase China's excellent relations with Malaysia, a demonstration of Chinese soft power and a pilot test for future "going out" of other Chinese universities. However, the concerns of the Malaysian Chinese education movement are not major considerations for China and Xiamen University.

The rise of China has encouraged Chinese and non-Chinese in many countries to learn Chinese, while the governments that had restricted their Chinese citizens studying Chinese have also adopted a more open attitude toward studying Chinese, even encouraged it. The local Chinese welcome such a development. But in Malaysia, where there are local systems of Chinese education, China's role in local education development has received mixed reaction owing to the racial politics in Malaysia and the politics of the Chinese community. Although in principle the Chinese educationists (including the interviewed

leaders of Dong Zong and Liu Hua) welcome non-Chinese (Malays and Indians) learning the Chinese language through China's sponsorship of scholarship for non-Chinese students and through the Kong Zi Institute, they have reservations owing to their strong fear and distrust of the Malaysian government. Still, the rise of China and the growing importance of the Chinese language have no doubt encouraged more of those Chinese who do not know Chinese to encourage their children to learn Chinese, while the Malaysian government has allowed some recognition of the Chinese language and education in response to the local politics of ethnicity, no doubt thanks to the growing global importance of China.

China's rise and Malaysian ethnic politics

It has been sensitive to talk about "political ties" between Malaysian Chinese and China. At the time of Malaysia-China negotiations for diplomatic relations, China's nationality policy and its policy toward the communist insurgency in Malaysia were the most important issues to be tackled (Abdul Razak Baginda 2016). Since the establishment of diplomatic ties in 1974, China indeed has upheld its policy of not interfering in Malaysian internal affairs, including speaking on behalf of the Malaysian Chinese. Although China has always invited notable Malaysian Chinese civic, political and business leaders to attend its Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) since the 2000s, the Chinese government can argue that CPPCC is a political advisory body, thus not strictly a governmental organization and therefore should not complicate China's nationality policy, which does not recognize dual nationality.

The rise of China, however, does have impacts on the ethnic politics in Malaysia. This is most notable in the so-called "Ambassador's Walk" episode, which occurred in September 2015. Since early 2015, Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak has been dogged by controversy and corruption allegations related to 1 Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB), a state-owned strategic development company. After the *Wall Street Journal* exposed the alleged siphoning off of funds from 1MDB into the private bank account of Prime Minister Najib, a civil society coalition eventually launched a mass demonstration called Bersih 4 in late August 2015, demanding the removal of Najib as prime minister. The demonstration drew support mainly from the ethnic Chinese. Since then, several UMNO ministers and Malay nationalist groups accused the Bersih 4 demonstration as challenging the power of the Malays by the Chinese. One of the Malay nationalist leaders threatened to launch a counterdemonstration at Petaling Street on September 26, and this was viewed as provocative because Petaling Street is symbolically the "Chinatown" of Kuala Lumpur, although in actual fact not many Chinese reside or do business there anymore. Before the date of the planned demonstration, on September 25, the Chinese ambassador, Dr. Huang Huikang, paid a visit to Petaling Street. He was accompanied by the president of a Chinese traders' association, and his visit was couched under the pretext of expressing goodwill to the Chinese community before the Mid-Autumn Festival. He was also interviewed by reporters,

whereupon he made statements that China has always been against any form of terrorism, extremism and racism. In addition, he said that

the Chinese government has always pursued peaceful co-existence in international relations and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.... But with regard to the infringement on China's national interests, violations of legal rights and interests of Chinese citizens and businesses which may damage the friendly relationship between China and the host country, we will not sit by idly.

(Yap 2015)

Later that day, the Malay nationalist organizer of the protest was arrested by the police for endangering public safety, and the protest planned for the next day fizzled.

Ambassador Huang's action and statement raised uproars and apparently triggered the Malaysian Foreign Ministry to call in the ambassador to explain. It was reported that "Malaysia views his [Huang's] remarks seriously. It is tantamount to interfering in Malaysia's domestic affairs" (Malaysiakini 2015). However, underscoring the importance of China to Malaysia, a cabinet minister intervened against the Foreign Ministry's move and attempted to cancel the summoning of Ambassador Huang. But then, sensing that such a move could be seen as succumbing to China's influence, the government reversed the decision, and so Ambassador Huang was summoned to meet with the acting foreign minister (the foreign minister was abroad on duty), three days after the visit. To make things even more confused, the Chinese ambassador said that his meeting with the acting foreign minister was just a normal meeting and he was not "summoned." Nevertheless, the Malaysian government apparently accepted whatever explanations and clarifications Ambassador Huang made and the episode ended afterwards. In the press interviews after the meeting with the acting foreign minister, Ambassador Huang described that the relations between Chinese overseas and China were like between a married daughter and her parental home (*Sin Chew Daily* 2015b). This could be another statement that would stir up Malaysian ethnic politics but apparently only the Chinese newspapers reported the statement and most Malays and Indians were not aware of such a statement from the Chinese ambassador.

This episode raised several interesting observations. The Malay-language newspapers, such as the staunchly pro-government and UMNO-owned *Utusan Melayu*, strongly objected to Ambassador Huang's statement and asked him to be sent back to China. A number of Malay politicians, such as the president of UMNO's youth wing (also a cabinet minister), accused Ambassador Huang of interfering in Malaysian domestic affairs. Interestingly, some government critics also agreed with this assessment, but argued that it was because of the weaknesses of the government, which invited the interference of a big power, in this case China. Therefore, Malaysia should act tough and expel the ambassador (Ignatius 2015). Chinese-language newspapers in Malaysia, however, generally

offered a more benign explanation. For example, the editorial of the *Sinchew Daily*, an influential Chinese newspaper in Malaysia, highlighted that Ambassador Huang's message against racism and extremism resonated as a universal message (*Sin Chew Daily* 2015a). Politicians from the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) also suggested that Ambassador Huang had no intention of interference and his action and statements were misinterpreted. China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Hong Lei, came to the defense of Ambassador Huang, saying that visiting the Chinese community during a traditional Chinese festival is a normal thing for an ambassador of China to do (*Nanyang Business Daily* 2015).

There have been other controversies lately in relations to China's ties with Malaysian Chinese. In February 2016, in a visit to a town in the state of Johor, Ambassador Huang announced that the embassy of China would donate RM40,000 to eight Chinese primary schools there. According to Ambassador Huang, there was nothing unusual as during his tenure; the Chinese embassy had been quite supportive of the Chinese schools and other cultural activities. But, this time, questions were raised in several quarters, primarily by some opposition politicians, such as why Ambassador Huang chose to make donations in a town located within the constituency of Malaysia's defense minister and whether the ambassador intentionally highlighted that the Malaysian government had been underfunding Chinese schools (Malaysiakini 2016). Then, on April 29, 2016, the Chinese government donated RM60,000 to a *duzhong* and 10 Chinese primary schools in Kuching, the capital city of the state of Sarawak. China's consul general to Sarawak Fu Jijun mentioned that this was just a beginning and China would continue to donate to support Chinese education in Sarawak (*China Press* 2016). However, the donation was made during the Sarawak election period and the consul general was accompanied by the leader of a Chinese party in the ruling coalition. Furthermore, the consul general's speech mentioned the ruling coalition and the Chinese political party supporting Chinese education. This might have been a calculated move to give the donation at the time when political parties were campaigning to solicit votes, but China seemed not to be sensitive that such soft diplomacy could be seen as meddling in local politics.

The reactions of the Malaysian government to the Chinese ambassador's action and statement illustrate the careful stand the government has to take in light of the importance and increased influence of China to the country. In the "Ambassador's Walk" episode, despite official acceptance of Ambassador Huang's explanation that there was no intention to interfere in Malaysian domestic affairs, there are persistent questions pertaining to the ambassador's intention. Even if what Ambassador Huang had in mind was the protection of the citizens of the People's Republic of China, which is a standard practice of an ambassador when the citizens of his or her country are under threat overseas, there are still implications for Malaysian ethnic politics. Nevertheless, if an anti-Chinese riot had been to occur, it would indeed have been hard for the looting mob to differentiate between a Malaysian Chinese and a Chinese from China, and for this reason it can be argued that it was not wrong for the ambassador to be concerned and to issue the statement mentioned above. During the 1998

anti-Chinese riots in Indonesia, Beijing's response was limited to issuing some cautious statements only, a balancing act between a policy of noninterference and pressures to act on behalf of the Chinese overseas. Today, a more confident China (which has an increasing number of Chinese expatriates) probably would have taken much stronger action to deter anti-Chinese riots. Thus, the Malaysian government could not ignore the fact that deterioration of ethnic relations in the country might arouse the attention of China, with whom Malaysia wants to be on good terms for economic reasons. However, this episode may also implant in the mind of some Malay politicians that the Malaysian Chinese always have a "big brother" to protect them, and this may reinforce their prejudice against the ethnic Chinese. The Malaysian Chinese are cautious, too, as are most Chinese overseas, for they fear that they may suffer if an assertive policy of China backfires and causes negative impact on local ethnic politics.

Conclusion

Malaysia and China have come a long way since the two countries established diplomatic relations in 1974. The end of the Cold War allowed ease of contacts, and the Chinese overseas can visit China easily, while people in China can also visit their relatives in Southeast Asia. China has become Malaysia's important trading partner. We have discussed the investment in China and increasingly China has more investment in Malaysia. Despite the competition in manufactured goods from China, Malaysia is able to capitalize on its other strengths. With experience in Islamic banking, for instance, some Malaysia-based banks have played important roles in Islamic banking beyond Malaysia. The first bank to launch Islamic banking in Hong Kong in 2008 was the Kuala Lumpur-headquartered Hong Leong Bank. Recently, Bank Muamalat Malaysia cooperated with Bank of Shuizuishan in China to launch an Islamic bank in Ningxia (Krishna Kumar 2015: 6).

As we have seen, a significant number of Malaysian Chinese businesspeople are involved in investment in China and cooperating with China-based firms to invest in Malaysia. As discussed by various scholars, such as Liang (1993), Wang (1995: 25) and Tan (2001: 223), ethnic Chinese investment in China is motivated by economic rationality and not by their ethnicity. Like investors from other countries, they invest where they can gain profit. But the rise of China is a mixed blessing as smaller Malaysian manufacturers face stiff competition from China. China's investments into Malaysia have been guided by, first, the interests of China's firms, which mean cooperating more often with the Malaysian GLCs, and, second, the securing of the overall positive relationship between Malaysia and China. The Malaysian Chinese business community can play a role and benefit from these increased Malaysia-China economic relations, but ethnic ties are not enough to guarantee any positive outcome.

Our analysis of the complicated cultural impact of China's rise on the Chinese education movement in Malaysia shows that political and cultural institutions from China are careful in not offending the Malaysian government when

“supporting” the Chinese education in the country. In most countries where the percentage of the Chinese population is small and where there is a shortage of local Chinese who are good in Chinese literacy and Chinese arts, the ethnic Chinese generally welcome the immigration of well-educated Chinese from China as they help to maintain and promote Chinese mass media and cultural performance. In Malaysia, both local politics and the rise in the cultural influence of China have helped the Malaysian Chinese community to get some official recognition of Chinese education, while increasing number of Chinese students from Malaysia are studying in universities in China. Cultural relations with China have become easier and more frequent after the end of the Cold War, especially since the establishment of diplomatic relationships.

However, the main concern of China and its firms and institutions is not the cultural interest of the local Chinese but the overall consideration of foreign relations and good relations with the local government. The establishment of the Kong Zi Institute and the Xiamen University campus in Malaysia all points to China’s overall soft diplomacy rather than any specific concern with helping the local Chinese community. In any case, China’s relationship with the Chinese education in Malaysia is guided by the overall interest of China rather than that of the local Chinese community. Wang Gungwu noted in 1979 that “whatever China’s ultimate intentions, the Southeast Asian Chinese are mostly irrelevant and no asset to China” (Wang 1981: 283). Nevertheless, we need to qualify that the Chinese overseas are relevant where they are useful to China’s soft diplomacy to reinforce its influence in the region and globally.

China’s rise also has impacts on Malaysian ethnic politics. The “Ambassador’s Walk,” discussed above, shows the potential impact of a more assertive China on Malaysia’s racial politics. As more and more China’s citizens become students, expatriates, investors, workers and family members (husbands or wives) in Malaysia, China’s protection of its citizens overseas (*huaqiao*) may be seen as its attempt to protect all Chinese overseas regardless of citizenship. The impact on local ethnic politics is twofold. On the one hand, it makes the Malaysian government more careful in managing domestic ethnic politics, but on the other hand it reinforces the long-held suspicion that China will eventually interfere in other countries’ domestic affairs on behalf of the Chinese overseas.

Our Malaysian case shows that the impact of the rise of China is not just economic but also multidimensional, including cultural and political impacts. While the ethnic Chinese generally perceive the rise of China positively, SME businesspeople experience competition from China and, given the Malay dominance in GLCs, ethnic Chinese business may not benefit much from increasing Chinese investment in Malaysia as firms from China choose to cooperate with GLCs. Overall, the ethnic Chinese are more concerned about the political impact of an assertive China; that is, whatever China does, they hope that the impacts will not lead to more anti-Chinese sentiment and intensifies racial politics against the local Chinese. This is an understandable concern in Southeast Asia, where anti-Chinese policies and discrimination had been introduced following the independence of the new states.

Cultural ties may be relevant in cross-state investment, as in the case of Chinese overseas capitalizing on cultural ties in their investment in China (cf. Douw, Huang and Godley 1999), or firms and organizations from China capitalizing on Chinese overseas, based on ties of common Chinese civilization or civilizational ethnicity (Tan 2001: 225), to pursue their economic ventures or cultivate political and cultural influences in different countries. The Hui businesspeople from China, who are Muslims, have similarly capitalized on religious affinity to cultivate good relations with the government and major Muslim elites in Malaysia. The association of the Hui migrants in Malaysia, Overseas Chinese Muslim Association Malaysia (OCMA), regularly organizes seminars on China–Malaysia Islamic forums, as well as giving donations that allow Hui businesspeople to meet prominent Malay politicians. At the same time the Hui speak Putonghua (Mandarin) and identify with the Chinese civilization, and so they can interact easily with Malaysian Chinese. The double use of cultural ties (Chinese culture and Islam) by the Hui migrants in Malaysia is interesting.¹³ In our study of the impact of the rise of China on Malaysia we have focused on analyzing cultural ties and state's interests in the context of a country's political economy, an ethnicized political economy in the case of Malaysia. We believe this approach is also relevant for the study of China in relation to the Chinese overseas and state interests in other countries.

Notes

- 1 We thank all the interviewees and the Association of Graduates from Universities and Colleges of China, Malaysia, for their kind assistance. In addition, Ngeow Chow-Bing wishes to acknowledge the partial support provided by UMRG RP022B–15HNE of the University of Malaya.
- 2 China's rise in this chapter refers to the emergence of China as an economic and world power from around the turn of the twentieth century, and it does not refer to China as a regional and world power in historical times.
- 3 There are now a number of works on investment in China by the Chinese from Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and elsewhere, as well as on China's economic involvement overseas; see, for instance, Chan and Tong (2000); Huang (2000); Lever-Tracy, Ip and Tracy (1996); Li (2013); Lin Jinzhi (1988); Lin Xiaosheng (1994); Lim (2015); Ren (2009) and Zhuang (2001: 369–439).
- 4 In this chapter, Malaysian Chinese refers to the citizens of Malaysia who are of Chinese descents. A technically more correct term would be "Chinese Malaysians," with "Chinese" as an adjective and "Malaysians" as the term signifying citizenship. However, the term "Malaysian Chinese" has long been used in Malaysia to denote these ethnic Chinese who are Malaysian citizens, and we follow this usage here.
- 5 UMNO is the main Malay-based political party, called United Malays National Organisation.
- 6 Interview with a leader of MCCC, January 15, 2016. This leader of MCCC has invested in China for many years and he has been involved in many China-related business operations since then.
- 7 Interview with the MCCC leader (see note 6).
- 8 At several government universities, there are a number of lecturers who received their doctorates from universities in China, including the more prestigious ones such as Peking University and Fudan University; this would have been unimaginable in the 1980s and earlier.

- 9 Interview with a leader of Liu Hua, January 9, 2016. This leader has served in the leadership position of Liu Hua since the very beginning of this organization.
- 10 Interview with a leader of Dong Zong, February 14, 2015. This leader has been involved in the Chinese education movement since late 1990s.
- 11 Hitherto, all government-funded Chinese primary schools have Chinese-educated Chinese headmasters. The fear that a non-Chinese-educated headmaster could be the first step to convert these schools into national schools where Chinese would no longer be the medium of instructions for most subjects has always been present in the ethnic Chinese community and the Chinese education movement in Malaysia. In 1987, the government made such attempts, igniting storms of resistance from the Chinese community, and later the government had to resort to a major crackdown known as Operasi Lalang.
- 12 Interview with the Liu Hua leader (see note 9).
- 13 Tan's doctoral student Ma Hailong has conducted research in Malaysia on the Hui migrants in Malaysia. Ngeow has coauthored with Ma Hailong on a paper related to the Hui people in Malaysia. See Ngeow and Ma (2016).

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6 Rethinking “*pauk-phaw*”

Chinese migrants, ethnic interaction and China’s rise

Duan Ying

Since the turn of the twenty-first century, both China and Myanmar have encountered great socioeconomic transformation. In 2008, following the adoption of a new constitution backed by the military regime, Myanmar began to transform politically from military rule to some form of democracy, allowing many agents to play a part in political development. In 2013, after Xi Jinping came to power, China sought to reinforce its global economic and political influence with the adoption of the “One Belt One Road” initiative, which encourages economic cooperation with Central Asia, the Middle East, Europe, Africa and Southeast Asia. In this macro scheme, China and Myanmar play important roles in the economic development and peace in the region, and in the context of global politics the relationship between Myanmar and China has also become more complicated. This study will focus on the “*pauk-phaw* friendship” and its effects on the peoples of the two countries, especially those living in the border regions. The term “*pauk-phaw*,” meaning “brothers” in Burmese, has been used by Burmese to describe the friendship between Myanmar and China. In Chinese this is transliterated as *baobo*, thus “*baobo* friendship” when said in Chinese.

There has been some research on the nature of the Myanmar state under the military regime (e.g., Pedersen, Rudland and May 2000; Rotberg 1998; Smith 1999), how people lived under the regime (Fink 2001; Schober 1997), resistance to military rule (Skidmore 2005; Jordt 2007) and the relationship between Myanmar and China (Mya 1994; Lin 2000; Maung 2011). However, little attention has been paid to ordinary people’s concept of state, and the China–Myanmar relationship in daily practice, although U Chit Hlaing (2008) is an exception. Scholars in China generally rely on documents and secondary sources in their study of Myanmar and the China–Myanmar relationship (e.g., He and Li 2005; Fan 2012; He 2015). Based on my anthropological research in Burma and in Yunnan, China, as well documentary and historical research, I will discuss the formation and development of the *pauk-phaw* friendship between China and Myanmar in this chapter. Through analyzing the roles of the state, interaction between different ethnic groups, commercial activities, cultural exchanges and the interrelation between indigenous Burmese, Burmese Chinese and Chinese from China in the transnational network, this study seeks to illuminate the changing nature of the *pauk-phaw* friendship. By placing the study in the

regional and global perspectives, one can better understand the multiple dimensions and significance of the development of China–Myanmar relations.

Burmese Chinese, Myanmar and China

Officially, the governments of both China and Myanmar recognize their *pauk-phaw* friendship as a rhetoric of diplomacy and international communication. However, it has different meanings, rather complicated and even ironic in some sense, when we talk with different groups of people.

Chinese had migrated to Burma since the Ming dynasty. Most of them were from Guangdong and Fujian through maritime route, and from Yunnan by land, and most of them were engaged in business (Lin 2000: 15–16). For most Chinese living in Myanmar nowadays, there is no doubt that Myanmar is their homeland. However, the Burmese government has been treating these Chinese, hereby referred to as Burmese Chinese, as “migrants” or “outsiders.” Although there are Chinese who are citizens, they are not officially recognized as constituting a legal category in the country, just like the Indians and Bangladeshis are also not officially recognized as ethnic groups of Myanmar. Thus, under the military dictatorship influenced by Burmese nationalism, the local Chinese have not been able to integrate into the mainstream society, even though they have been living in the country for a long time. “We are living in other people’s country” is a remark occasionally mentioned by them.

Although the Burmese Chinese lead a relatively affluent life, they are worried about their future as the situation in Myanmar is constantly changing. Owing to a lack of citizenship and security, they construct their belonging to Burma through various means and find ways for survival. Thus, while on the one hand they despise the corruption and inefficiency of military bureaucracy, and do not want to be politically involved with them, on the other hand they establish flexible and prudent social relations with the authorities in order to make a living. Mr Li, a 66-year-old Chinese man in Mandalay commented in Yunnanese:

Generally it is difficult to protect our rights and interests because most of us do not have full citizenship. But we continue to live here. Besides politics, the Myanmar government did nothing for the people, i.e., it rarely affects the lives of ordinary people. However, it is easy for Chinese to make a living here. To support the whole family, only one family member needs to go out to work.

Mr. Huang, another Chinese man in Mandalay, 54 years old, expressed his opinion about corruption and Chinese survival:

Corruption is certainly not good, but if it is a national problem, you cannot solve it immediately. Moreover, from another point of view, it is not a bad thing as some problems can be solved conveniently and rapidly by money and social relationship rather than through formal channels, or according to rules.

Most Burmese (including indigenous minorities) depend on agriculture, while most Chinese make a living by doing business. Hence, there is no obvious conflict between the Chinese and the Burmese who do business with them. For example, Chinese merchants purchase cash crops from Burmese peasants. Chinese and Burmese get along well in everyday life, and intermarriage between them is common. There is real *pauk-phaw* friendship between them.

Of course, both Chinese and Burmese have different perceptions of one another. From the Burmese point of view, the Chinese are good at business. A Burmese woman married to a Chinese man can live quite comfortably. But the Chinese work too hard to acquire land and pursue wealth, and they do not seem to care about spiritual cultivation. Burmese officials are familiar with the Chinese mentality of making concessions to avoid trouble, and so they are inclined to take advantage of them.

In Chinese eyes, compared with their hardworking and thrifty livelihood, the Burmese lack planning and are too engrossed in Buddhism. The older generation of China-born Chinese are proud of Chinese history and civilization, and they have their ethnic superiority. However, the local-born Chinese have acquired the local ways of life, like speaking Burmese and wearing the sarong in daily life, and they are more appreciative of the active role of Buddhism in Burmese society. For instance, the idea of impermanence can at least bring people relative peace of mind in facing troubles and unrest in the secular world. Thus, the Burmese Chinese have integrated some Buddhist ideas into their life, so that they can stay calm and serene when things go tough.

The flow of people, goods and information between Myanmar and China in different periods has also shaped the Chineseness of Burmese Chinese. For them, China used to be their "homeland," but nowadays they regard it as their ancestors' homeland. Until the 1950s, most Chinese in Burma still retained Chinese nationalism and Chinese identity. It was Premier Chou En-lai who encouraged overseas Chinese to naturalize in their host country. At that time, some Chinese leaders were confused and complained that they were abandoned by the new China. However, with the changing political situation of Burma and increased tension between China and Burma in the 1960s, the overseas Chinese had to make a decision to return to China or be naturalized in Burma. In fact, a large number of overseas Chinese were forced to leave Burma after the "6.26" anti-Chinese riot in 1967. Those who stayed in Burma learned to live in silence. Their experiences with these political events and with Burmese nationalism have taught them to rethink their relationship with Myanmar and China.

State-building, economic development and ethnic relations

Since the independence of Burma, Prime Minister U Nu initiated a series of economic policies to improve national industry and economy. The government encouraged foreigners who have lived in Burma for a long time to join the Burmese nationality, but it did not implement any policy of forced assimilation. Chinese organizations and activities such as Chinese education, the Chinese

press and Chinese ceremonies were permitted, and in most cases overseas Chinese were generally treated the same as the Burmese. Some China-born Chinese still had strong tendency of Chinese nationalism and were closely oriented toward China. However, others chose to adopt Myanmar nationality (cf. Lin 2000: 27–48; Fan 2005).

After 1962, Ne Win took power and launched a nationalization policy and a planned economy under the ideology of Burmese socialism. Burmese private economy suffered serious setbacks. Chinese and Indian merchants were affected badly by the nationalization policy. Many Indian migrants returned to India. However, most local-born Burmese Chinese decided to naturalize in Myanmar owing to the government policy restricting aliens doing business as well as the Chinese government policy of recognizing only one nationality and its diplomacy of “peaceful coexistence.” Life was hard for the Burmese Chinese. Their business property was nationalized, and the new managers who took over their trades were not familiar with Chinese business practices, causing businesses to plummet, and these state-run stores soon collapsed. Life became even more difficult after the anti-Chinese riot in 1967.

The simplistic state planning did not change the existing social stratification of economic division and polarization between the rich and the poor. Lack of consideration for the local economy caused the failure of planned economy. All these coupled with military dictatorship and other factors eventually led to the “88.8.8” democratic movement. After 1988, the military government actively promoted opening up the economy and modernization, and some economic autonomy was allowed in minority regions to facilitate ceasefire. Chinese merchants gained many opportunities for development, and they became prosperous again during this period. Meanwhile, sections of political and commercial elites gradually merged with the military dictatorship and dominated the Burmese economy. These developments neither solved the problem of unfair resources distribution nor benefited the ordinary people. Instead, it became a potential source of ethnic conflicts (see Pedersen, Rudland and May 2000; Skidmore 2005).

Meanwhile, the Burmese Chinese learned how to survive in such a hostile environment. Their attitudes to Myanmar–China relations have also undergone a subtle change. One of my informants, a Chinese in Mandalay who had experienced the nationalization movement and anti-Chinese riot, said,

We wore Mao badges, read the red book and supported new China at that time, but many years later, all was gone with the wind. I felt that I was naive and impetuous, completely influenced by ideology. People can talk about “*pauk-phaw*” friendship, but not between countries.

This attitude is also reflected in the response of local Chinese to certain political and social events. On January 12, 2007, China voted against the draft resolution proposed by the United Kingdom and the United States at the UN to sanction Myanmar because of its military dictatorship. The local Chinese were of the attitude that “this might not be a good thing as China’s vote helped the military

government, and this might cause anti-Chinese sentiment among Burmese people who didn't like the military government,” as articulated by Mr. Li, a Chinese man in Yangon. On the other hand, the Burmese Chinese are able to obtain help from China. In June 2007, the Burmese government refused to renew the license of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, although later they were granted it after intervention by the Chinese embassy. Some Chinese were worried about this. An informant explained:

Although the matter has been resolved, the Burmese government might feel annoyed because of the pressure from China. Chinese need to be careful to avoid trouble. Myanmar is run by a nationalist government, and so the Chinese should try to avoid getting involved in certain sensitive issues.

After U Thein Sein was elected president of Myanmar in 2011, the military still played important roles in the Burmese political arena owing to its arrangement of seats in Congress. Nevertheless, it was the beginning of the democratic process, in which freedom of speech and social stability have since been improved significantly. There is, however, a sustained tension between the minority, who dominate the national economy, and the majority who are not well-off. Some rich Chinese are part of the minority, which dominates the Burmese economy. But it is worth noting that the superiority of the Chinese in business can be attributed to their history and experience of trading. There are only a few rich Chinese who have conspired with high-level military officials and they cannot represent most Chinese who have lived in Burma for a long time. Most of the local-born Chinese have a strong identity and belonging to Burma, and they get along well with Burmese and other indigenous groups in their everyday life. Overall, economic crises and polarization between the rich and the poor may be politicized to become ethnic tension between the Burmese and the Chinese, who may be labeled “foreigners” or “outsiders,” making them convenient scapegoats.

In addition, with the open-door policy of the new government, Myanmar is becoming more involved in globalization. The Burmese traditional culture and ways of life are thus impacted by urbanization, the market economy, consumerism, mass media, religious secularization and Western ideas. In Mandalay and Upper Burma, the Chinese and their economic activities have contributed to urban development, and there has been an increase in Chinese migration to this region. However, it is simplistic to blame the Chinese for disarranging traditional Burmese cultural landscape in Mandalay and label it sinicization (see below). Furthermore, to essentialize the Chinese in Myanmar as a single group ignores their diversity, comprising Hokkien, Cantonese, Hakka and Yunnanese as the main groups.

Mandalay: urbanization or sinicization?

As Mandalay becomes more prosperous, more and more Chinese move here. One of my informants in Mandalay told me that, “twenty years ago, if you ask

people where is Chinatown, someone may tell you the exact location, now, if you ask the same question, most people will say that everywhere is Chinatown, and Mandalay has become a Chinese city.” When I mentioned this to most of my Chinese friends in Mandalay, some of them were very concerned about this because Burmese Chinese suffered a lot in a series of political events in Myanmar, including nationalization and the 6.26 (June 26) anti-Chinese riots in 1967. They were very worried that a Chinese boom might lead to the Chinese getting blamed in the tension between the government and the Burmese public.

The Chinese migrated from Upper Burma and China, and the development of Mandalay associated with this Chinese migration has changed the urban landscape. Maung Mya, a Burmese scholar living in the USA, labels this development as the “Chinese colonization of Mandalay and upper-Burma” (Mya 1994: 455–456). However, is urbanization of Mandalay equivalent to sinicization and even Chinese colonization? After the democratic movement in 1988, the military government carried out economic reforms. To attract tourists and foreign investment for the economic development of the city, and to prevent public gathering in Mandalay, the military government launched a large-scale relocation plan in 1990 in the name of “beautification and urban development.” Many Mandalay citizens were forced to migrate to some nearby small towns, in order to prevent people organizing demonstrations and other activities. This created an opportunity for more Chinese to migrate to Mandalay. In view of unequal citizenship and their marginalized political status, most Chinese concentrate on doing their business and avoid getting involved in politics, which is why the military government permitted the Chinese to move to the city.

The urban population increased as a large number of Chinese migrated to Mandalay, and this influenced the housing, prices and lifestyle of the city. The different livelihoods and social stratification resulted in the “production of the geography of difference” (Harvey 2000: 78–79). In Mandalay, the daily cost of living in the Chinese quarter is slightly higher than that among the Burmese. For example, a bowl of noodles costs 1,300 kyat (RMB1 = 170 kyat in 2007) in the Chinese quarter but only 800 kyat in the Burmese quarter. Many Burmese who worked in Mandalay gradually moved out owing to both the government’s relocation plan and the cost of living. This is an important reason for the central area of Mandalay to become a Chinese city. The working class moved to the outskirts of the city and return to the urban center to make a living, reflecting the problems of social stratification and the polarization of wealth. The geographical division of the urban landscape is not just between the Burmese and the Burmese Chinese. Many new Chinese immigrants also live at the outskirts of the city because of a lack of money, and they gradually build a new Chinese community there. They are different from the local Chinese in their ways of life, values, social relations and so on. As a result, subethnic differences between the old and new Chinese have also become visible in the urban landscape of Mandalay.

Although the Chinese get along with the Burmese in daily life and they call each other *pauk-phaw*, this does not mean that they are similar in terms of economic values and consumption. Economic capability often leads to some kind of

judgment of social status and stratification, especially under the condition of absence of common values and morality (cf. Berry 1981: 14–17). For instance, rich Chinese often have meals in luxury restaurant such as Oriental House and the Golden Duck Restaurant. They spend tens of thousands of kyat for a meal, which amounts to approximately a month’s wage for an ordinary worker in Mandalay. The expenditure of a Chinese wedding is also five times higher than that of the Burmese. The huge gap in consumption capacity may cause the discontent of Burmese. Some Burmese liken the Chinese to greedy and wasteful pigs. There is a boundary between the Chinese and the Burmese owing to economic differences, social class and segmentation of consumption space.

In addition, many shopping malls and hotels have been built by the Chinese, and some Burmese argued that these “modern” buildings destroyed the historical and cultural landscape of Mandalay as the ancient capital of Burma. They argued that the Burmese traditional ways of life and religious beliefs were eroded by secular life and values promoted by Chinese. Some Burmese elites linked the income of rich Chinese to drug trafficking and smuggling jade, and they questioned the legitimacy of Chinese capital. They even treated the “sinization” of Mandalay as alienation of Burmese culture and the decline of moral tradition (Mya 1994: 451–458).

The China–Myanmar relationship is an important factor in Sino-Burmese ethnic relations. Trade between China and Myanmar has led to a large number of electronic products, clothing and other commodities made in China, a portion of which has come in illegally, flooding the market in Mandalay and Upper Burma. Maung Mya compared this to British colonialism, pointing out that the only difference is that the British control relied on military force but Chinese colonialism is embedded in Burmese economy and culture (Mya 1994: 447–459). This sort of Burmese-centered narrative becomes rather sensitive and complicated once nationalist sentiment is evoked (cf. Duan 2012)

Pauk-phaw, neighborhood and the rise of China

Pauk-phaw, as a synonym for friendship between China and Myanmar, has become a propaganda in Myanmar–China diplomacy. Indeed, the exchange of people and goods between Myanmar and China can be traced to the Han dynasty. Trading in border areas became active during the Qing dynasty. After Myanmar’s independence, the two countries established diplomatic relations in the middle of the twentieth century. Myanmar and China have maintained good relations since then, although there are still a few problems between the two countries, such as boundary settlement, remnants of KMT in Myanmar, and anti-Chinese riots.

The economic activities and cultural communications between Myanmar and China have become increasingly frequent since the military government initiated open economic policy in 1988. Aung San Suu Kyi and her party returned to power in 2011, at a time when Myanmar was facing great political and social transformation. Meanwhile, the United States and other Western powers gradually initiated dialogues and cooperation with Myanmar. Since then the relations

between China and Myanmar have encountered some uncertainty, characterized by some sensitive issues such as the moratorium on the construction of the Myitsone Dam, frustration over Chinese investment in copper mining, and local war in northern Myanmar and others. From the regional and geopolitical perspective, Myanmar is located between China and India, so it needs to consider how to balance its national interests.

We need to also explore the reason of tension between Myanmar and China in everyday life. Undoubtedly, China's rise has impacts on neighboring countries. Nowadays a great variety of products from China have filled the markets in Myanmar and Southeast Asia, although ironically "Made in China" is despised, implying being cheap but not of high quality, or using inferior materials and turning out substandard goods etc. In addition, lumbering and jade trading create negative perceptions, too. Chinese firms have invested in forestry and mining in Myanmar, but in view of the special political situation in the country the legitimacy of mining and logging is often questioned, while a change of policy would influence investment and sustainable planning. Moreover, there is the problem of excessive felling, which actually leads to devastating deforestation, a phenomenon commonly known as being "shaved." This problem is caused by a lack of regulation and proper supervision, while prejudices arising from market competition also cause misunderstandings of Burmese people toward China, and this undermines China's image abroad.

With the increase of economic cooperation and cultural communication between the two countries, a large number of Chinese tourists and businesspeople have gone to Burma. However, these Chinese tourists and investors know little about Burmese society and culture. There are thus unnecessary conflicts arising from cultural differences. For example, most Burmese people believe in Buddhism, and it is a basic etiquette that one should take off shoes, dress modestly, keep quiet and respect monks and avoid intimacy when in temples and monasteries. Chinese attitudes to Buddhism and religious beliefs are different. Most of them do not treat religious practice as a crucial part of their social lives. Moreover, the lifestyles and values of Burmese and Chinese are different as Burmese people's world view is defined much more by Theravada Buddhism. Some China enterprises fail to establish harmonious labor relations with Burmese workers owing to lack of basic understanding of Burmese culture and attitudes toward work. These enterprises thus prefer to hire workers from China to work in Burma as they are willing to sacrifice leisure time to earn more money. As such, it is difficult to achieve a win-win outcome for both China and Myanmar if the local community does not benefit much from development, thus affecting cooperation and trust. Take the suspension of the Myitsone Dam project as another example. The dam is located on the source of the Irrawaddy River, which is of religious significance to the local Kachin, and it is also the source of Burmese civilization. Not having comprehensive consideration of local culture, civil movement, public opinion and the complex power relations between the local regime and central government is one of the main reasons why this project was boycotted by the Myanmar government.

All these developments have caused unhappiness among the masses in Myanmar, including among Burmese Chinese. A new understanding of *Deyou* (Chinese in Burmese) has emerged. There are three kinds of Chinese in Myanmar: (1) Chinese who have lived in Myanmar for a long time, who respect native culture and see themselves as an ethnic group in Myanmar; (2) ethnic minorities such as Shan, or Kokang from Upper Burma, who have moved into the hinterland of Myanmar in the name of China through various means; (3) merchants from China who move into Myanmar looking for business opportunities. There is some veiled criticism toward the latter two categories among the Burmese public, and some radical Burmese even use *yaoguo* (“despoiler” in Burmese) instead of *pauk-phaw* to refer to them (Ming Mau Thwe 2015).

In Myanmar, different people have their respective understanding of the “One Belt One Road” initiative and the rise of China. It mingles hope and fear for Burmese Chinese. On the one hand, local Chinese attempt to promote official recognition of Chinese education through participating in cultural communication and public diplomacy between Myanmar and China. They organized the HSK (a test of Chinese as foreign language) and related courses approved by the Myanmar government to enhance the social significance of Chinese education, and promoted Chinese education for local people, regardless of religion and ethnicity. In cooperation with the Confucius Institute, local Chinese schools set up Chinese teaching classes in the new capital, Naypyidaw, and several other places (including in Buddhist temples) in Upper Burma. Mandalay Fu Qing School has established a Chinese teaching class at Mandalay University and it has also offered Chinese training courses on tourism and hotel service since 2015. In addition, Chinese schools around the country encourage their teachers and students to study in China. In 2012, Li Ruiwen, a teacher of Fu Qing School, obtained a PhD in Chinese language and literature at the Minzu University of China in Beijing, and became the first Burmese person to receive a PhD in China. U Revada received his MA in linguistics at Yunnan University, and he is the first monk to obtain an MA in China. In the same year, 2012, Fu Qing School and the Institute of Ethnology of Yunnan University jointly established the research center for the study of Burmese language and culture.

Considering the tension of Myanmar–China relations in the era of transformation, Fu Qing Chinese School has organized a series of lectures on Burmese culture for Chinese enterprises in Myanmar. It has also invited Chinese scholars to deliver talks on contemporary China for senior government officials in Naypyidaw. In 2015, the Myanmar–China Friendship Association held a seminar on “Understanding Burma” at Yunnan University, and printed a handbook that introduces Burmese cultural traditions and regulations of business and trade in Myanmar. Some young Chinese from China and Myanmar cooperate to set up websites and WeChat official account platforms to enhance mutual understanding, trust and reciprocity through multiple communication. All these are aimed at dispelling potential ethnic tension and protecting the Chinese from being made scapegoats again in the Myanmar–China conflict and subsequent social unrest. The principal of Fu Qing School stressed that

Myanmar is undergoing great changes at present, and the bilateral relations between Myanmar and China is also rather uncertain. It is harmful for local Chinese if there are some misunderstanding and conflicts between the two countries. Hence, we make great efforts to promote mutual understanding and communication. It is actually also for ourselves.

Conclusion

“Perhaps, Burma is not ready to be involved to the world, the step should be a little slower”; “although we are not rich, but you see, everybody is smiling.” When I was in Myanmar, these words from my friends touched me deeply. Myanmar is continuously changing. While the democratic progress may be slow owing to historical reasons and military legacy, it is now unlikely for the military bloc to completely dominate politics. The involvement of various domestic and international forces has become a reality that cannot be avoided.

Meanwhile, it is puzzling for many Chinese in China “why China aid Burma so much, and yet it has not gained their appreciation and respect.” This is the sentiment that some people in China feel with China’s rise and its involvement in the global world. With the implementation of the “One Belt One Road” initiative, there are both opportunities and challenges for countries neighboring China. On the one hand, there are opportunities to promote trade and cultural exchanges with China; on the other hand, there are misgivings about the role of each country in the realization of the One Belt One Road vision. In other words, whose One Belt One Road has become an issue of debate in Myanmar.

After the incidents of the Myitsone Dam project and the investigation of the Letpadaung copper mine, Aung San Suu Kyi cautiously expressed her attitude about Myanmar–China relations: “the relationship between the two countries is not a patron–client relation, it is one between friends and neighbors.” Indeed, we need to reconsider Myanmar–China relations in the context of the nation-state, political economy and globalization, as well as regional ecological systems of multiple coexistence, owing to human geography, the flow of people and the long history of trade between Myanmar and China. China also needs to rethink the possible consequences of political change and social transformation in Myanmar, and pay attention to the influence of ethnic nationalism and related ideology, in order to avoid simplistic views about ethnicity and economic development, as well as modernization and sinicization in Myanmar–China relations. This is the way to enhance mutual trust based on traditional friendship, and look for new ways to rebalance relations between the two countries.

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7 Loving the money but not the migrants

Hungarian attitudes toward the Chinese

Amy H. Liu

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán was vocal about the dangers of “economic migrants” coming into the country even before the refugee crisis. In April 2015, his government held a national consultation – a survey of 12 questions to eight million citizens – on the issue of immigration. The questionnaire attracted widespread criticism for its legal implications and wording. Regardless, the launch of this national consultation signaled a growing hostility – concern, at best – within the government on this issue. There are two reasons why these migrants are seen as a threat. The first is that they “jeopardize the jobs and livelihoods of Hungarians.” The second is that they are thought to come under the guise of refugees and asylum-seekers but are in reality terrorists. Despite this hostile anti-immigration position, one migrant group seems to have been relatively excluded from public rhetoric: the Chinese. This omission is surprising since, arguably, the Chinese are the definition of economic migrants. What explains this exclusion?

In this chapter, I offer three explanations. The first considers the historical relationship between the Chinese and the Hungarians. In spite of their current geographical location, Hungarians are not Indo-Europeans; ancestors to the present-day *Magyars* are believed to have migrated from Central Asia/western China. It is possible that this Asiatic bond somehow renders the Chinese “tolerable” even when the political climate is hostile toward outsiders. The second explanation focuses on the Chinese community itself. Globally, the tendency of the Chinese to keep to themselves and work hard – all without demanding much from the host state – has often rendered them “model minorities” (Kim 1999). It is possible that this reputation has neutralized any Hungarian concern about the Chinese community. The third explanation examines the dynamic between China and Hungary. With the rise of China, how the Hungarian government treats the Chinese diaspora can have economic implications for China–Hungary relations. It is possible that the Hungarian government is strategically harnessing the Chinese diaspora as a way to signal a hospitable investment environment to China.

To test these explanations, I use two different, original surveys.¹ The first one, administered by TÁRKI Social Research Institute, is a nationally representative survey of all adult Hungarians ($N=1,007$). For the second survey, I employed both random walk and snowball methods to collect information on the Chinese

in Budapest ($N=476$). Note that the survey results are representative of the larger Chinese population with a 5 percent margin of error. Both surveys were conducted in 2014 in the language of the targeted respondent (i.e., Hungarian or Chinese). With the survey data, I find evidence supporting only the third explanation. Specifically, the Hungarian government has generally omitted the Chinese from its anti-immigration rhetoric not because of a shared past between the Chinese and Hungarians or because of some characteristic unique to the Chinese in Budapest. Instead, it seems the Chinese diaspora is simply a political instrument in a larger economic game between Beijing and Budapest.

This chapter proceeds as follow. It first provides an overview of the Chinese in Hungary. It then offers descriptive evidence of how the Chinese have been depicted by the Hungarian government during the second Orbán administration (May 2010–April 2014). Next it considers the three possible explanations for this pattern. It concludes in the last section.

The Chinese in Hungary

The story of the Chinese migrant begins in 1989. While the average Chinese citizen could get a passport by 1985 (Nyíri 2007: 51), visa requirements effectively limited her travel options. The first country to waive the visa was the Soviet Union in 1988. Hungary soon followed: visa restrictions were lifted on January 1, 1989 (Nyíri 2007: 52). This exemption immediately transformed Hungary into an attractive destination for two reasons. First, in the wake of the June 4 Tiananmen Incident (1989), Chinese dissidents considered Hungary a safe place. From a historical standpoint, Hungary was the country that had the audacity to withdraw – or at least attempt to withdraw – from the Eastern Bloc in 1956. Coincidentally, the Hungarian prime minister who was deposed in the aftermath of the 1956 Revolution (Imre Nagy) was finally given a proper state funeral in June 1989. The event foreshadowed the changes that would soon follow in Hungarian politics. Second, the visa waiver made Hungary popular as well from an economic standpoint. By the late 1980s, China was on the verge of an economic collapse. The government even resorted to freezing state employee assets. But it was during this time that embellished stories of successful shuttle traders throughout the Soviet Union abound. Looking for capital alternatives, many Chinese took advantage of the visa exemptions and cheap train tickets and headed to Moscow – and ultimately Budapest (Nyíri 2007: 52).

However, with the sudden influx of Chinese newcomers – upwards of 40,000 – the Hungarian government feared a political backlash. In response, visa requirements were swiftly reinstated in 1992. Those still coming in by train were denied entry. And those already in Hungary faced similar challenges: those with legal status had troubles renewing their residency permits, and those without status were arrested by the police (Nyíri 1999). Many subsequently moved on to Czechoslovakia or Romania – two neighboring countries that by this point also had no visa requirements. Although the Chinese migration flow dropped precipitously after 1992, the years through 1995 were known as the Golden Era. During

this period, “you could start whatever you want” (Nyíri 1998; translation by author). Rumors of the Chinese success in Hungary were widespread. In fact, there were some Chinese who migrated east from Western Europe to take advantage of the lower costs. During this time, the Chinese monopolized a gap in the economy: since there was a demand in Hungary for basic goods in the wake of the transition, the Chinese were there to sell these goods (namely textiles) cheaply (Nyíri 2007: 85).

In 1995, when the Hungarian government introduced a textile tariff, the Chinese saw their profits diminished (Korać 2013). Many responded by moving on to other countries in addition to, as mentioned above, what is now the Czech Republic and Romania. Yet the inflow of *new* Chinese migrants continued. Those in Hungary survived economically by adopting a variety of strategies. Some stayed with textiles; others began selling higher-quality goods. Some acquired multinational companies; others opened their own shops or restaurants. By the late 1990s, there was a proliferation of Chinese fast food shops. According to Nyíri (2007), in 2002 there were over 100 restaurants and several hundred fast food shops in Budapest alone.

Nowadays, the “Hungarian fever” is clearly no more; the majority of the migrants from the early 1990s has since moved on to another destination – or returned to China. Yet, by all indications, the Chinese population remains stable at a little under 20,000. Note that less than 10 percent of this population – perhaps as low as 5 percent – is from the original 40,000. In fact, 75 percent of them arrived *after* 2000. This suggests that the rates of arrival and departure have been relatively balanced.

The majority of the Chinese still reside in Budapest, most notably in district VIII (Józsefváros). The now-closed Four Tigers Market (Négy Tigris Piac) – informally known as “Chinatown” by the locals – used to be here. There are vibrant Chinese communities as well in districts X (Kőbányá) and XV. The former is home to the only self-proclaimed “Chinatown” (Tangren Jie); the latter, home to the Hungarian-Chinese bilingual school. Across these communities, based on my surveys, the “average” Chinese is a 38-year-old man from Zhejiang. Migrants in Zhejiang account for 27–36 percent of the Chinese population. Other well-represented provinces include Fujian (11–18 percent) and Liaoning (5–10 percent).

Depictions of the Chinese

To demonstrate how the second Orbán administration (May 2010–April 2014) has depicted the Chinese, I look at printed media – specifically two of the largest newspapers. The first of the two is *Magyar Nemzet* – a conservative paper often associated with Orbán and his Fidesz party. The second is *Népszabadság*, a left-leaning newspaper supportive of the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) – the major party currently in the opposition.

Using Textplore – a Hungarian language-based content analysis software – I searched for all articles that contained *magyar*^{*2} and *kínai*^{*3} in any part of the

text between June 1, 2010 – the first full month of Orbán’s second administration – and March 31, 2014 – the last full month before the 2014 parliamentary election. With this search criterion, Textplore identified a total of 1,913 articles from *Magyar Nemzet* and 1,464 articles from *Népszabadság*. With the help of two native Hungarian research assistants, I created two subsamples.

The first subsample (“all irrelevant removed”) filtered out any article based on the title⁴ that was considered definitely irrelevant (e.g., “Chinese tennis player defeats Hungary’s Szavay at Wimbledon”). With this subsample, I then created a list of the most frequent words that appeared in all the titles – regardless of the newspaper source and the context of the article. Based on this list, I selected the top 550 most commonly used words – excluding articles, prepositions and postpositions. These 550 words accounted for 25 percent of all words in the list. The choice to break the list at 550 was because of a natural juncture: all words outside the top 550 appeared only once or twice in the entire “all irrelevant removed” subsample. With this list, I then had the two research assistants independently code for whether the word was positive, negative or neutral in connotation. I subsequently checked all assignments and made an executive decision when the assigned values did not match. There was no instance when one person identified a word as positive and the other considered the same word negative. The discrepancies were always positive/negative versus neutral. The inter-coding reliability between the two native Hungarian coders was 91.9 percent.

Next, for the second subsample (“definitely relevant”), I identified articles – again, according to their titles – that were considered relevant (e.g., “The Chinese market will shut down next year”). Each article title was then subsequently translated into a string of positive, negative or neutral words based on the 550-word list using automated keyword replacement. I then cross-checked each article to verify that my subjective hand-coding of titles matched the objective computer-generated binary text classifiers. Over 90.4 percent of the articles matched. Now that all articles in the “definitely relevant” subsample had been assigned a value, I then collapsed the dataset to *year-month* units of analysis for each newspaper – noting the number of positive, neutral and negative articles.

While not all articles about the Chinese are always positive, what is important here – given the political climate – is the general infrequency in which the newspapers depict the Chinese negatively. In Figure 7.1, the top graph looks at just *Magyar Nemzet*. The black line graph is a simple count for the number of nonnegative – i.e., positive *and* neutral – articles. To put this number in perspective, the gray bar graphs illustrate what percentage of total articles these nonnegative articles constitute. Two related comments merit discussion. First, in most instances the number of nonnegative articles – whether it is 1 (January 2014) or 19 (June 2011) – *is* the number of *all* articles. Relatedly, in the months when there are zero nonnegative articles, there are simply no relevant articles (e.g., August 2011) about the Chinese.

It is important to also note that this finding is not being driven by the newspaper’s political tendencies. In the same figure, the bottom graph focuses on

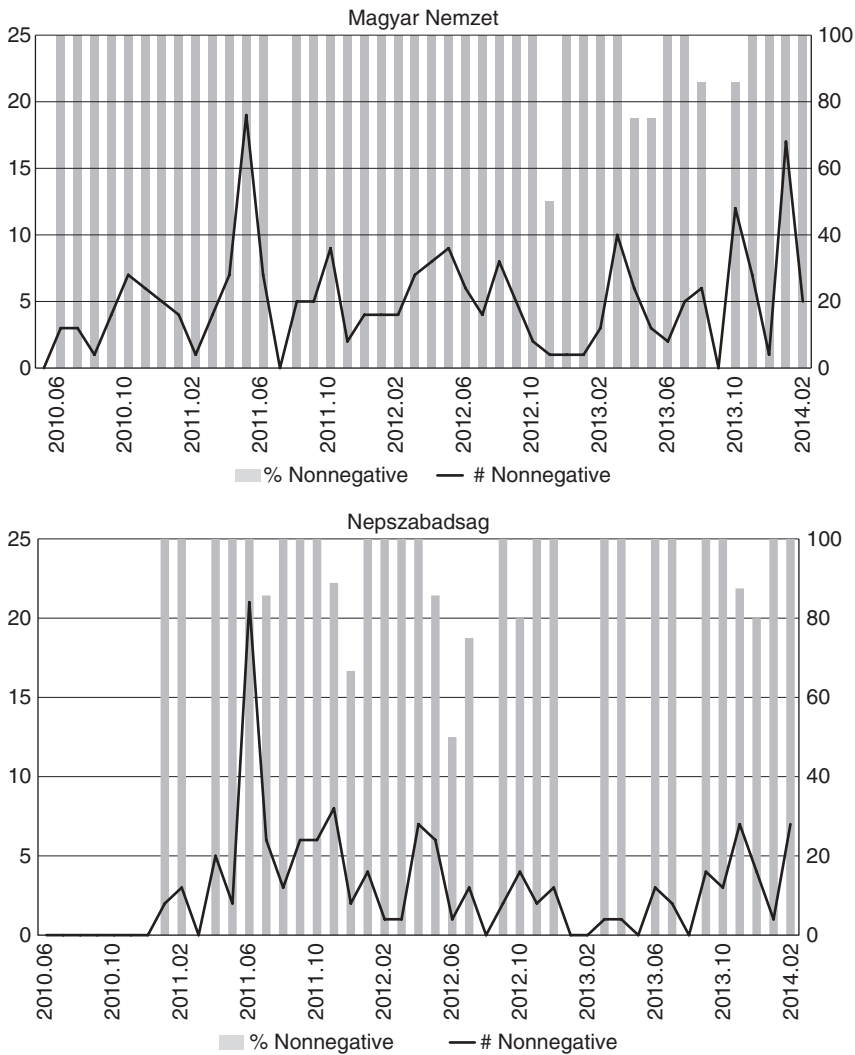


Figure 7.1 Newspaper depictions of the Chinese.

Népszabadság. Recall that this newspaper is generally associated with the opposition. And, while it may report the same news as its counterpart, there is no reason to assume the tone of voice will be equally positive. And while we see some slight differences and more variation (most notably June 2012), the general pattern matches that of *Magyar Nemzet*. In short, it seems that, despite growing anti-immigration rhetoric in the second Orbán administration, the government has generally excluded the Chinese. In the next three sections, I examine three possible explanations.

Explanation 1 Historical relationship between the Chinese and the Hungarians

Geographically, Hungary is in present-day Europe; politically and economically, it is a member of the European Union. Socially, however, the ties to the continent are more ambiguous; there is simply “something not quite European about Hungary” (Macmillan 2003: 257). For starters, the Hungarian language does not belong to the Indo-European family. Instead, its linguistic family – Finno-Ugric – has its roots in Central Asia/western China. Anthropologists believe that ancestors of modern-day Hungarians migrated from Asia (Sugar, Hanák and Frank 1994). And one of the most commonly cited pieces of evidence of this Asian linkage include the ordering of names: family names first, given names second – just like Chinese. Another piece of evidence is the word for women – *nő* in Hungarian and *nu* in Chinese.

It is possible that the historical relationship between the Chinese and Hungarians has some latent effect in the present day. Before the refugee crisis, the Hungarian government was vocal about this cultural affinity. Under the policy of “Eastern Opening” (*Keleti Nyitás*), the government aggressively pursued a number of bilateral cultural exchange programs. Three Confucius Institutes were established in Miskolc, Szeged and Pécs (Budapest already had one, dating back to 2006). City officials were encouraged to identify a sister city in China and to formalize the relationship. One deputy mayor showed me a pamphlet highlighting the cultural relationship between his city and the sister city in central China. On the cover was a picture of a Hungarian man in traditional attire and another picture of a Chinese man in his. The message was unmistakable: The two men share a cultural bond based on similarities in clothing patterns and designs.

For this affinity to matter – even if only at the margins – people should be aware of this shared bond. In the TÁRKI survey, respondents were asked the following question:

There is a certain idea that Hungarians and Chinese have a historical connection with each other. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

As illustrated in the first bar of Figure 7.2, about a quarter of the respondents agreed – either strongly or somewhat – with the statement. Note that the whiskers at the top of the bar represent the 95 percent confidence interval. This range – from 23 percent to 28 percent for the whole population – is quite low especially when put in a comparative perspective. Admittedly, it is higher than those who disagreed (14–19 percent) or were uncertain (18–22 percent). However, about one-third of the population (30–36 percent) had never even heard of the link. It is difficult to fathom historical affinity – even if anthropologically true – having any effect if the majority of Hungarians are in disagreement, uncertain or unaware of its existence.

Even when shifting the focus away from the Hungarians to the Chinese, the survey results tell a similar story. In the Chinese survey, respondents were asked the following two questions:

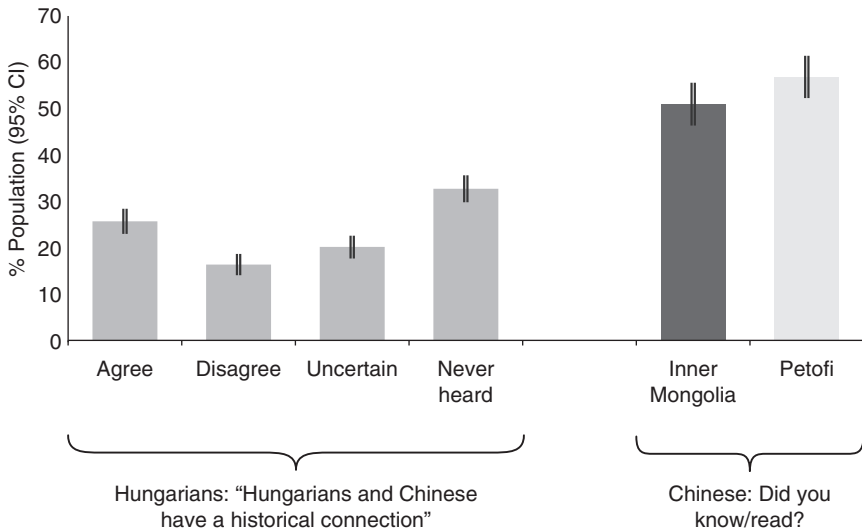


Figure 7.2 Historical familiarity between China and Hungary.

Did you know Hungarians migrated from Inner Mongolia?

Did you read poems by Petöfi Sandor in school in China?

For the first question, one out of every two Chinese respondents answered in the affirmative (see bar five); and, for the second question, as many as 60 percent of the population recall having read Petöfi Sandor's poems (see bar six). Petöfi is a revered poet who fought in the 1848 Revolution. Today, one of the bridges over the Danube River in Budapest is named in his honor. The purpose of these two questions was to gauge how much the Chinese knew about the Hungarians. While it seems that there is a doubling effect, it is important to exercise caution. There is the possibility of an ex post exposure effect. Local Hungarians – in an attempt to find some common ground – will tell the Chinese migrants about the origins of the Hungarian people and the importance of Hungary's national poet. This of course happens *after* the Chinese has migrated to Hungary. Put differently, if the same survey questions were asked to a Chinese person outside Hungary, these figures are very likely to be much lower. In sum, if there is a historical relationship between the Chinese and Hungarians, its effects do not seem to manifest in the present day.

Explanation 2 The Chinese as examples of model minorities

While not always the case, Chinese communities have a three-pronged reputation – globally and historically. The first is that they are economically hardworking.

Chinese migrants allegedly work longer hours for less pay than their host counterparts or other migrants. But, at the same time, they are socially docile. They tend to keep to themselves; they also ask little of the host country with respect to cultural accommodation – just not to interfere with their own community efforts at being Chinese. Third, they are politically disengaged: they do not (or at least are not perceived to) drain the welfare system. They pay their taxes; they put in but do not take out. In many countries, from the United States (Hsu 2015) to Peru (Carranza Ko 2017), this combination of economic ethics, social docility and political disengagement has earned the Chinese the distinction of “model minorities” (Kim 1999).

It is possible that the Chinese in Central Eastern Europe are model minorities as well. By all accounts, the Chinese in Budapest work hard, keep to themselves socially and have stayed out of politics. To assess this claim, I use a question from the same TÁRKI survey. Respondents were given the hypothetical prompt:

Below you can see a list of different groups of people. Please point out those who you would not be happy to see as your neighbors.

To put the Hungarian responses in context, I asked the same do-not-want-as-neighbor question to respondents in Bulgaria and Romania. Those surveys are also nationally representative. While the Chinese may be reputed to be model minorities, it does not seem to be the case in Hungary. Almost 35 percent of the respondents mentioned the Chinese as a nondesirable neighbor (see the first bar of Figure 7.3). In contrast, only 18 percent in Bulgaria and 14 percent in Romania answered in the affirmative. This figure is considerably high. It is not just a relative story about Hungary’s figure being double of its neighbors. It is also an absolute story: 35 percent only measures those who were forthcoming in

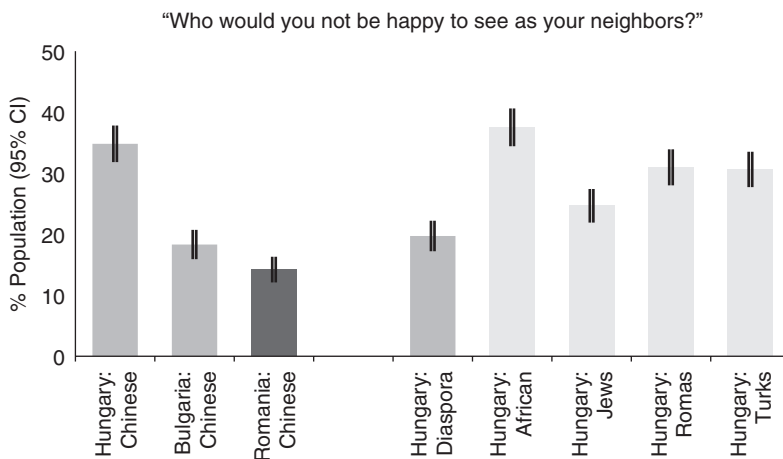


Figure 7.3 Attitudes toward Chinese as neighbors.

their answers. It is very likely that there are a number of respondents who would not want a Chinese neighbor but chose not to reveal it to the survey enumerator.

One interpretation is that Hungarians are perhaps just more xenophobic than the Bulgarians or Romanians. If this is the case, it is possible that the 35 percent for the Chinese is actually a low figure given the context. To consider this explanation, I look at the responses for all other types of neighbors. At first glance, it seems that anti-outsider sentiments are high in Hungary. Even when it comes to a coethnic from Romania (Transylvania; *Erdély* in Hungarian) or Serbia (Vojvodina; *Vajdaság* in Hungarian), 17 to 22 percent of the population would oppose having such individuals as neighbors (fourth bar)! Note that this range is in fact statistically larger than the Romanian response for Chinese neighbors.

Even if we take into consideration that the Hungarian baseline is higher, there are still three surprising implications. First, the Chinese are tied with the Africans (34–41 percent) for being the most unwanted neighbors. Second, the Chinese are more undesirable than the Jews (25 percent) or the Roma (31 percent) – two groups that have been widely vilified, as evident by the strength of the far-right Jobbik party. Third, despite having been occupied by the Turks at one point in history and general anti-Muslim sentiments, Hungarians prefer a Turkish neighbor to a Chinese one (31 percent). In short, there is no evidence of Hungarians perceiving the Chinese as model minorities.

Explanation 3 Economic relationship between China and Hungary

Consider that Fidesz is a right-wing party (Bozóki 2008; Drahekoupil and Domonkos 2012) and is generally Eurosceptic. At a time when Brussels has been preaching austerity measures, China can offer the much-needed alternative resources. During the period of the “Eastern Opening,” Orbán championed an economic policy to increase more investments from countries to the east – including China – so as to counterbalance the European Union’s presence. And since Chinese monies are more likely to flow into countries that are welcoming and hospitable, it is possible that Fidesz has an incentive to depict China in a positive – or, at a minimum, nonnegative – light.

The TÁRKI survey has a relevant question to test this explanation:

Think about Hungary’s economy today. How much do you agree or disagree that Hungary should strengthen economic cooperation with eastern countries like China?

Respondents could answer along a five-point range from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree.” As illustrated in Figure 7.4, when it comes to money, more than half the population would agree – either strongly or somewhat – that Hungary needs to strengthen its economic relationship with China. This percentage is high. While it is lower than those for Bulgaria and Romania (62–68 percent), it is higher than neighboring Poland (45–51 percent).

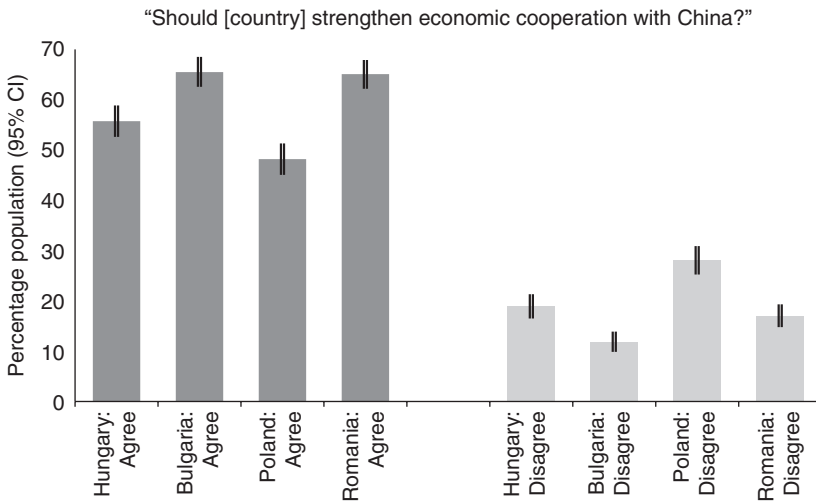


Figure 7.4 Attitudes toward Chinese investment.

Even if we shift the focus to those who disagree, the numbers further confirm that economic factors are at play. In Hungary, about 16–21 percent of the population hold some negative – whether strongly or somewhat – viewpoint. Compared to its neighbors, this range is statistically no different from Romania’s (15–19 percent). Interestingly, disagreement rates in Poland are the highest (25–31 percent).

There is an explanation for Poland’s less positive/more negative response. In 2009, the Chinese Overseas Engineering Company (Covec) won a bid to build two sections of a Polish highway. Unfortunately, Covec employed a strategy that had been commonly used with bids in Africa: after underbidding and winning a contract, the Chinese firm would renegotiate for higher numbers. When Covec tried to up the numbers and Poland responded by not budging, Covec just left (Jacoby 2014). Since this was the first major Chinese investment not just in the region but in the entire European Union, this development was highly publicized – and scrutinized. It is not wholly surprising that respondents in Poland express more wariness than the Hungarians.

However, this is not to say that Chinese firms have done better in Hungary. WanHua’s merger and acquisition of BorsodChem was seen at times as hostile takeover – until officials reassured the public otherwise (Jacoby 2014). Today, while Chinese investments still constitute a small proportion of total foreign investment in Hungary, they are nonetheless important. In 2015, Chinese companies in Hungary were responsible for 7,500 jobs locally (*Hungary Today* 2016). For some time, Hungary ranked third in Europe in inward Chinese investment (Chinese Ministry of Commerce 2010) – and first in the region (Matura 2013). It seems that Orbán and Fidesz, in hoping to attract more Chinese monies,

have left the Chinese community untouched – all the while espousing anti-immigration rhetoric. But such actions are not surprising: diaspora networks attract investment (Leblang 2010). Moreover, this is consistent with Beijing's position that overseas Chinese are an important instrument in China's "socialist modernization" (Nyíri 2007: 127).

Implications since the refugee crisis

It is no secret that the Hungarian government believes it has (or should have) the right to detain economic migrants who "themselves should cover the costs" of staying in Hungary. The European Union maintains that Hungary does not have the authority to do so. This tension between Budapest and Brussels was clearly evident during the 2015 refugee crisis. The European Union was vocal when criticizing how Hungary handled refugees. There was the shutdown of Keleti train station in Budapest (Hartocollis and Bilefsky 2015). There was the instance when the camera operator László Petra tripped a refugee (Phipps and Nolan 2015). There were the deplorable conditions at the Röszke refugee camps (Angerer 2015). And there was the border fence with Serbia (Moffett and Feher 2015).

Whether these developments are the fuel for – or the evidence of – growing active hostility toward immigrants is not the point. Instead, what is just as important is what is being implied passively. Even in the most hostile of political environments, money can compensate for cultural differences. But it is important to also recognize the precarious nature of this relationship. Before the 2008 Global Financial Crisis, the Fidesz Party, now in power but then in opposition, accused the government of mass importing Chinese guest workers, alleging that such policies would lead to competition over Hungarian jobs (Nyíri 2007). Relatedly, the far-right Jobbik Party campaigned on an anti-Chinese (among other anti-outside influences) platform. Yet, these same two parties have since then been quiet in their rhetoric about this one migrant group.

Without a doubt, there is a cultural gap. Even though the ancestors of present-day Hungarians are reputed to have migrated from Central Asia/western China, stereotypes that "Chinese eat dogs" and rumors that "Chinese never die" persist. It does not help that the Chinese are (perceived to be) the most insular of the different migrant communities. They make relatively little effort to learn the language and they are not likely to see Hungary as a permanent home (see Örkény and Székelyi 2010). But this is not to say that there have been no efforts to bridge this divide. Aside from the Hungarian-Chinese bilingual school, there are friendship associations, radio and television programs and other cultural activities. In the past few years, there have been Chinese New Year celebrations in Budapest and other major Hungarian cities. In fact, fireworks for the 2014 were set off from *within* Buda Castle.

What is also striking is that most of the Chinese are not citizens – and therefore cannot vote. And, even for those who are citizens, there is little political engagement. Politics is often seen as a vehicle for inviting trouble (*zhao mafan*).

If we focus only on their voting powers, the Chinese are arguably the weakest of all the migrant groups. Yet, their organizational capacity makes up for whatever shortcomings. From the Hungarian Chinese Association to the provincial associations, from the Committee of Traders at the Four Tigers Market to the embassy, the Chinese have been able to bargain successfully as a collective unit.

The cultural differences notwithstanding, China has been important to Hungary – and arguably vice versa. In 1949, Hungary was the fourth country, after the Soviet Union, Bulgaria and Romania, to recognize the People's Republic of China (PRC) – just five days after the PRC was established (October 1). Yet, relations between the two countries turned tepid after the 1956 Hungarian revolution and continued to be during the Soviet-Sino split. (Vidra 2005). The situation, however, has improved after the 1989 transition – and dramatically since the turn of the century. For the Chinese government looking to increase its influence in Europe, Hungary has always been – in the words of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi – “a bridgehead in Chinese-European cooperation” (Du Bois and Magdi BIRTHA 2015). In 2003, Hungarian Prime Minister Péter Medgyessy's visit to Beijing was the first for an East European head of state after the Cold War. In 2009, then Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping visited Hungary as part of his five-country⁵ European tour.

And ever since Orbán returned to power in 2010, the two countries have engaged in a multitude of business deals that are arguably unprecedented for the region – from high-speed railway development (Keszthelyi 2014) to airport repurposing (Balazs 2011), from chemical processing plants (Bryant 2011) to nuclear energy training (*World Nuclear News* 2015), from Hungarian foods exports (LeFleur 2016) to Hungarian-issued Chinese RMB sovereign bonds (Chan 2016), and from advocating Chinese as an official language of the UN World Tourism Organization (*Xinhua* 2015) to student exchanges (Guo 2016). For China, Hungary is the “flagship” (Du Bois and Magdi BIRTHA 2015) of Chinese–Central European and Chinese–East European regional cooperation. In 2015, Chinese investment in Hungary surpassed US\$3.5 billion (*Hungary Today* 2016). And, for Hungary, China is an economic partner of immeasurable importance. In 2015, China also became Hungary's top non-EU trading partner (*Hungary Today* 2016).

Even locally, the role the Chinese have played – and continue to play – in Hungary's economy cannot be overstated. Over the nearly three decades, the Chinese community in Hungary has evolved economically. Gone are the days of selling cheap goods at the open-air Four Tigers Market and dotting the streets of Budapest with *Kínai Búfés*. Admittedly, some Chinese do still engage in the sale of cheap goods and operate restaurants. However, today, the Chinese also control nontrivial investment in Budapest specifically and throughout Hungary generally – whether they are mergers and acquisitions, brownfields or greenfields. What this suggests is that, for now, so long as the Chinese economic influence – if not outright presence – is in demand by the Hungarian government, the almost 20,000 Chinese in Budapest will also continue to be “welcomed” in Hungary despite pervasive racism.

Notes

- 1 This project was supported by a Council for American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) multi-country fellowship and a Colorado European Union Center of Excellence (CEUCE) faculty research grant. Benedek Paskuj and Florá Somogyi deserve substantial acknowledgment for their research assistance and technical support. Michael Feng, Anett Gulyas, Imre Hamar, Elizabeth Liu, Mary Liu and Xia Lisha were invaluable when it came to the Chinese surveys. I also owe many thanks to Olimpia Chirea, Zoltán Fabian, Ivan Gogov, Dorota Kachaniak, Roxana Nicoara, Blanka Szeitl, Magdolna Várnai, Yana Vezenkova and Maria Zlateva for their help with the non-Chinese surveys. And, of course, none of this would have been possible – or anywhere as fun – without Melinda Szabó.
- 2 The search term *magyar** includes words such as *magyar* (Hungarian as an adjective, e.g., “the Hungarian government”), *magyarok* (Hungarian as a noun, e.g., “the Hungarians in Budapest”), *magyarul* (Hungarian as in the language) and *Magyarország* (Hungary).
- 3 Similarly, *kinai** encompasses words such as *kinai* (Chinese as an adjective, e.g., “the Chinese market”), *kinaiak* (Chinese as a noun, e.g., “the Chinese in Budapest”) and *kinaiul* (Chinese as in the language). Note that it does not include *Kína* (China).
- 4 Note that the full texts for *Népszabadság* articles – while available to Textplore for content analysis – are not directly accessible through the software given copyright restrictions.
- 5 The other countries were Belgium, Germany, Bulgaria and Romania.

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8 China in Cuba in the shadow of normalization of US–Cuba relations

Observations on the ground in Havana

Evelyn Hu-DeHart

Historical overview

Chinese contract laborers (“coolies”) – almost 125,000 men – arrived in Cuba between 1847 and 1874 to work alongside African slaves on the sugar plantations (López 2013). By the time of Cuba’s independence from Spain in 1902 and in the decades after, free Chinese immigrants joined survivors and descendants of coolies to settle in Cuba. They settled in Havana and all the provinces, in towns big and small, building a *barrio chino* (Chinatown) whenever a critical mass was reached. Chinese associations, or *huiguan*, were formed in Havana, with chapters in many provincial towns across the nation. The Chee Kung Tong was established in 1902, and the Guomindang (Kuomintang) in 1921. Together these were the main overarching organizations that complemented the Casino Chung Wah (or Zhonghua Huiguan), established in the waning days of the colonial period in 1893 (López 2009). Located just outside historic Old Havana (in which Chinese were forbidden to reside or operate businesses), Havana’s Chinatown had grown to 44 city blocks by the 1920s, making it the largest Chinatown in Latin America.

During the 1920s, a particularly prosperous time fueled by prodigious sugar harvests, Cuba attracted some 20,000 free immigrants from Guangdong – mainly the Siyi counties (especially from Taishan and Xinhui) – at a time when China’s economy was wracked by continuous civil war and social calamities. Fathers, uncles, sons and nephews, mostly men, came to set up small businesses in Havana and sugar-rich provinces, sending money home regularly through established remittances channels. Eventually, women and families migrated as well, so that the Chinese communities took on the semblance of normal community life, with schools, newspapers, recreation centers and clubs. Much of the growth in families was formed by Chinese men and Cuban wives, producing the next generations of mixed-race *chinoscubanos*, or *chinos mestizos* (Herrera and Castillo 2003).

Havana’s Chinatown also participated actively in Cuba’s growth as a prime Caribbean tourist destiny. In addition to the perpetually warm and sunny weather, the pristine beaches and the crystal blue waters, Cuba’s attraction for North American tourists also relied heavily on gambling, prostitution, opium and

other illicit thrills, with Havana Chinatown a main site for bordellos, cabaret shows, strip clubs, porno theaters etc. During the 1950s, close to half a million tourists annually flocked to Cuba, and tourism became Cuba's second source of national revenue, next to sugar (Hearn 2012). During this time, much of Chinatown's businesses, both the above- and below-board kinds, operated in the informal economy or black market.

Given the essentially petit bourgeois nature of Cuba's Chinese communities – the entrepreneurial spirit and family labor behind the small business-driven prosperity, Fidel Castro's anti-US imperialist revolution that turned quickly to communism and alliance with the Soviet Union soon clashed with the lives and works of most Cuban Chinese. At first, some young Cubans supported the revolution, forming the Chinese "José Wong Brigade" militia. In October 1968, the militia, led by trade unionist Pedro Eng, occupied the KMT building and raised the flag of the People's Republic of China in Cuba for the first time. They also cleaned up Chinatown's vice and closed down the houses of prostitution and gambling as well as the opium dens (GarcíaTriano and Eng 2009). Since the 1959 Revolution, the *Alianza Socialista de China en Cuba* has occupied the old KMT building. All during the Sixties, the revolutionary regime began nationalizing big and small businesses – from the large plantations to the small shops and truck farms of the Chinese communities throughout the island, until the process was completed in 1968. With their businesses shuttered and their livelihood shattered, most Chinese Cubans left the country, most to Miami, New York City and other points in the United States, while some returned to China (Seuc 1998).

In 1980, the Casino Chung Wah's own census counted only 4,302 Chinese, most of them Cuban-born and of mixed heritage. By 2002, that number had dwindled to 2,866, and only a handful, little more than 100, were China-born and spoke Chinese (Taishan or Xinhui mostly; a few had learned Mandarin), who are now quite old (in the late 60s and older). Very few new immigrants have arrived to revitalize the population, in part because the state-directed command economy of socialist Cuba has created practically no incentive for individual Chinese to migrate to Cuba, a situation exacerbated by the cool relationship between Cuba and China for the long period of the Cuba–Soviet Union Alliance from 1960 to 1990. The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 plunged Cuba's economy into deep despair when Soviet subsidies ended, but that moment also signaled an opportunity for the Sino-Cuban freeze to begin to thaw (López 2009; Hearn and Alfonso 2012; Hearn 2012; Sweig 2012: 124–127).

During the difficult days of the "special period" in the 1990s, a group of young Cuban Chinese leaders created a new state enterprise called the "Group for the Promotion of Chinatown" (Grupo Promotor del Barrio Chino). Led by community activist Yrmina Eng, of the mixed-race second generation, and entrepreneur Carlos Alay and his two brothers, whose parents were both Chinese and who spoke Chinese, the Grupo labored for a decade to revitalize Chinatown on the basis of tourism, centered on a small restaurant lane off the old Chinatown main thoroughfare of Zanja Street named El Cuchillo (The Knife). They

marshaled what limited community resources remained, and some investment from family members in China to open new restaurants, bars, nightclubs, provided language classes in Mandarin, established a home for the elderly and promoted festivals and celebrations directed by the Casa de Artes y Cultura Tradicionales (Center of Traditional Arts and Culture) (López 2009). An enterprising mixed-race Cuban, Roberto Vargas, having studied martial arts in China, opened the Wushu Academy in the *barrio*, next to the Min Chi Tang (formerly Chee Kung Tang) building, and it is one of the major successes of the revitalization project. Meanwhile, the Cuban government also allowed the 13 or so remaining *huiguan* to open their own restaurants and earn income from tourism as well. The Grupo persuaded the PRC to finance the erection of a new gateway to the *barrio*. In 2006, the Office of the Historian of the City took over the Grupo, presumably to assert greater state control over the development of Chinatown. Since then, not much has happened in Chinatown.

The present situation (2016)

In 2015, US President Barack Obama began the process of normalizing relationships with Cuba, after an embargo that had endured for 50 years. While the embargo – which Cubans insist on calling a *bloqueo* (blockade) – did not destroy the Castro regime as the USA had hoped, and it did not isolate Cuba from the rest of the world, it did wreak considerable havoc on the Cuban economy, especially after the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, when critical Soviet aid was withdrawn, and again in 2015 with the collapse of Venezuela, which had offered Cuba a lifeline after Soviet support ended.

President Obama accelerated normalization when he visited Havana with his family in March 2016. Within narrow limits, he loosened some of the severe restrictions of the embargo, such as restoring the US embassy in Havana, increasing the exempt categories for American citizens to visit Cuba short of outright tourism, and permitting import of more humanitarian food and medicine to a society often short of such critical products. But until the US Congress lifts the Helms–Burton Act, enacted in 1996 to codify into law the embargo, which was originally imposed as executive action in 1960, President Obama cannot lift the embargo; only Congress can abrogate it (Sweig 2012: 171–173). This means that US businesses and investors remain shut out of the Cuban market, a gaping hole that European and Latin American states and entrepreneurs have been rapidly filling. Asian states, notably China and to a lesser extent Vietnam and Japan, have also rushed in. In 2015, Cuba opened up an embassy in Singapore.

Most Cubans have an encounter with China in their daily life in Havana today (2016 at the time of writing), as do most foreign tourists, no matter what country they come from. This is because Cubans and tourists ride the thousands of Chinese Yudong (中国字通) buses that make up the bulk of the vehicles in public transportation throughout the city, as well as literally all the modern, brightly colored, air-conditioned tourist buses roaring through the city streets of historical Old Havana and the upscale hotel neighborhoods of El Vedado and

Miramar. From the most humble Cuban city worker and resident, and many school-age children and youth who pay only 40 cents in Cuban peso, which is a small fraction of one US cent, to the most jaded of tourists, China is never far away. Furthermore, for those Cubans and foreign residents who have an account with a Cuban bank, they withdraw money from Chinese ATM machines – the Union Pay machines emblazoned with Chinese characters that are ubiquitous throughout China and now also highly visible in Cuba. The relatively small number of Cubans who own cell phones likely use China-made apparatus. For the even smaller number of Cubans who own and drive a car, some of them may be using the China-made Geely. For the handful with access to cable television, they can watch several channels of CCTV, including the Spanish-language one.

Furthermore, Cuban students at the prestigious University of Havana would easily notice the palpable presence of Chinese and other Asians (primarily South Vietnamese) learning Spanish, journalism and engineering. Also unavoidable is the looming presence of the university-affiliated Confucius Institute, located in the remodeled Pacific Restaurant of the old Chinatown, serving the larger Havana community with Chinese language and culture classes for all age groups. Cuban students in Havana living in the several high-rise residences for students from the provinces and abroad would also mingle with Chinese and other Asian students. Cuban medical students cannot miss the 300-plus Chinese medical students on their campus on the outskirts of the city.

In every Cuban household, without exception, there are Chinese-made appliances: refrigerators, washing machines, pressure cookers, rice cookers and, most definitely, televisions, as well as smaller products such as water filter systems and the indispensable expresso coffee maker, without which the typical Cuban cannot start the day.

The last time China made such a dramatic entrance into everyday Cuban life was during the *período especial* of the 1990s, when life became extremely harsh after the withdrawal of Soviet and Eastern bloc subsidies from food to petroleum when the Soviet Union collapsed and the Cold War came to a close. The public transportation system practically collapsed, and those unable to afford the dollar tourist taxis (which described almost all Cubans then) walked miles every day, until China came to the rescue for many workers with up to one million Chinese “Flying Pigeon,” “Forever” and “Phoenix” bikes, all painted black and looking the same. Today, with public transportation back in service, it is not known what has happened to these bicycles, once beloved but now scorned. Cubans tell me most have become scrap metal, but hundreds have been retro-fitted into *bicitaxis* for tourists in Old Havana.

So here in a nutshell is what one can say about the presence of China in Cuba at this moment in mid-2016. After having lived in Cuba consistently for eight months, from October 2014 to May 2015, I have found it extremely difficult to do research on the new or revitalized Chinese presence in Cuba, which, as noted, had at one time one of the largest and most vibrant Chinatowns in the Americas. It was established slightly before the Chinatowns of San Francisco and New York City, and rivaled them in size and prosperity; it survived the initial phase

of Castro's revolution, but when the revolution began nationalizing their properties and businesses in the Sixties most left Cuba with their families, many to the USA, while others returned to Hong Kong and China. The old Chinese community today consists mainly of old men living out their remaining days in the government-run retirement home, or in their own homes, whiling away their time in the remaining associations such as the Min Chih Tang (formerly the Chee Kung Tang), which provides them with breakfast and lunch with money from the Cuban government. Most of those who identified with the Chinese community are mixed-blood descendants of Chinese men and Cuban mothers and grandmothers. On major holidays, such as Spring Festival/Chinese New Year, and Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead)/Ching Min, the community and the descendants spread out through the city come together to celebrate, then retreat back into their daily routines around the city and the provinces.

Opening for China

Something deeper and more widespread must be going on, because the Chinese embassy occupies a whole city block in the upscale Vedado neighborhood. A fellow socialist country that became estranged from Cuba when the Soviet Union became its staunchest ally in the early days of the Castro revolution, China has reemerged on the scene, more confident and assertive than ever because China today is a world power that has overcome Russia economically and politically. China–Cuba state-to-state relations have been warming since the 1990s, when Castro reached out to China to help alleviate the island's economic hardship. President Hu Jintao visited Cuba in 2008, and in July 2014 President Xi Jinping also stopped by to greet the Castro brothers, Fidel, then in poor health and retired, and his younger brother, Raul, who is currently in charge of the Cuban state. Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi also visited the island in April 2014. China is Cuba's second-largest trading partner behind Venezuela (although that may be changing fast with the near-collapse of the Venezuelan economy as its oil sector falters), and Cuba is China's leading partner in the Caribbean, with bilateral trade a little over \$2 billion according to Chinese government data. China has become Cuba's second-largest trading partner. China imports nickel from Cuba, with petroleum a future potential, but Cuba's petroleum deposits are far from fully developed. In short, China's relationship with Cuba is economically driven, as is the case with all Latin America (Hearn 2011).

Since the late 1990s, China has invested \$1.3 billion in Cuba, mostly in large-scale projects, such as onshore and offshore oil exploration (as yet there is no drilling, which is very expensive), expansion of Cuba's largest refinery in Cienfuegos (Cuba currently produces some low-quality crude oil), development of the new deepwater port in Mariel (near Havana on the north coast), which has been declared a "free trade zone" and whose large container port has been built with Brazilian capital but is still not fully in operation. China is also modernizing the eastern port city of Santiago on the Caribbean side, building entire dock facilities, new restaurants etc. Chinese state companies are also building

different kinds of power and energy plants throughout Cuba, from the traditional kind to wind energy. China is also building hospitals, and, just this May, the Beijing Enterprise Group signed an agreement with the Cuban Ministry of Tourism to build a golf course as part of a large-scale tourist resort complex of hotels, condos, a marina, shopping malls etc. Currently, Cuba has only one 18-hole golf course, but it plans to have at least 12 (Frank 2015).

These types of investments do bring into Cuba certain new types of Chinese who are distinct from previous generations of immigrants: engineers, business managers, technicians, translators and other mechanical experts. In April, I had lunch in Havana with Mr. Seaman Dai, business manager of the China Machinery Industry Construction Group, Inc., of Beijing and Guangzhou, and six engineers (hydraulic, mechanical) plus one interpreter; the team comes periodically to Cuba to check on the energy plants they are constructing in collaboration with Cuban engineers, who have also visited China. Mr. Dai says that he comes to Cuba four or five times a year, for two weeks or so each time, to check on the energy projects in progress. China designs and imports the machinery; other material, such as cement, may be imported from Mexico.

This means that cargo ships from China (Cosco and subsidiaries) deliver machinery and other parts to the port of Mariel. Their numbers are small, but in places where big Chinese projects are located, such as the port of Santiago, they can be visible. On May 2 in Havana, I met Captain Li of the Guangzhou Ocean Shipping Co. Ltd, a subsidiary of COSCO, China Shipping Co. He had just delivered a shipment of construction machinery to the port of Mariel; the crossing from Guangzhou across the Pacific to Panama took 30 days, then another three days' crossing from the Panama Canal to Cuba.

So where are the nongovernmental Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs, tourists and labor migrants? Are they coming to Cuba as well, as many are already throughout Latin America, notably in big countries such as Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Mexico and Venezuela, arriving in large numbers in the wake of bilateral development and trade agreements and state and private Chinese investments, following a similar pattern already well established in many African countries, as well as parts of Europe and, of course, the United States (Michel and Beuret 2009; Cardenal and Araújo 2013; Hearn 2011, 2016; Gallagher and Porzecanski 2010). An estimated 750,000 Chinese individuals are officially living in Africa; they are mostly entrepreneurs and shopkeepers, and some are workers (*mingong*) for the many Chinese state-sponsored development and infrastructural projects. In Latin America, for example, there are an estimated 75,000 *xinyimin* (new immigrants) to Argentina, where they have taken over the supermarket sector, owning and operating almost 8,900 markets throughout the country, 7,000 of which have formed their own trade association, CASRECH, the Chinese Chamber of Shops and Supermarkets (Cardenal and Araújo 2013: 68).

So where is this

army of tireless entrepreneurs ... astonishing human beings with an unlimited capacity for self-sacrifice, who venture out into the world driven only

by the dreams of success and who go on to conquer impossible markets which Westerners never dared to tackle ...?

(Cardenal and Araújo 2013: 5)

This is where the experience in Cuba *so far* diverges from the rest of the developing world, where new Chinese immigrants follow in the wake of Chinese state-funded development projects.

So far, the closest thing to new Chinese immigrants to Cuba are the thousands of Chinese students who have arrived since 2006. From 2006 to 2013, 3,584 Chinese students studied Spanish in Cuba with Cuban government scholarships, at the special Talalá campus on the northern coast just outside Havana. More recently, a handful of self-funded students have arrived to study tourism, journalism, architecture, etc. Medical students have continued to come for Cuba's vaunted medical education; in 2015, there are still 474 medical students with Cuban government scholarships (Eng Menéndez 2016). One of the language graduates of the Talalá school mentioned above is Patricia Chan, who now works for Seaman Dai and the Chinese energy company, also mentioned above. I believe that most of the students who have studied in Cuba will return to China to work, as did Patricia Chan. While at present there are few economic opportunities for Chinese graduates of Cuban higher education, some will elect to stay, as we shall see, and may be among the first to transition to true immigrants who elect to stay, work and build careers and families.

Very recently, I made the acquaintance of the two principal owner/managers of a Chinese travel company in Cuba, one of two, based in Beijing with day-to-day operations in Havana. Mr. Wu Qingli and Mr. Han Qingshan (Antonio) co-own and manage the Tianbo International Travel Agency (天博) in Havana and Beijing. Mr. Wu of Urumqi has been in Cuba for 18 years (traveling back and forth to China, although his son and girlfriend are currently in medical school in Cuba). Mr. Han has been in Cuba for 12 years, has married a white Cuban woman and has a two-year old daughter; recently his younger brother came to Cuba to work with him in the travel business. According to them, about 30,000 Chinese visitors came to Cuba in 2014, and their company handled about half of them. Most of the visitors – 90 to 95 percent – are Chinese government and business clients, not traditional tourists. They are people like Mr. Seaman Dai, mentioned above, representatives of Chinese companies with large projects in Cuba who come to check on these projects. A small number come as “tourists” to scope out investment opportunities in Cuba, even though, at present, as foreigners they cannot invest in property and small businesses as private entrepreneurs.

As with other foreigners interested in business opportunities in Cuba, they find opportunities blocked by current Cuban government policies regarding property ownership. Big investors such as the Spanish hotel chain Meliá “co-own” the 22 hotels in Cuba with the Cuban government, with the government owning the hotels proper and the Spanish company managing the hotel business; in other words, these are joint projects. So it is with all other large foreign

investments, including the big Chinese development and infrastructure properties. At present, only Cubans can own property, including – and this is significant – Cuban immigrants to the USA, Spain and elsewhere who have held on to their Cuban passports and nationality, or who have key family members remaining in Cuba who serve as their business partners. These are the only people outside Cuba who are buying up choice real estate and opening up fancy restaurants serving the growing tide of tourists and Cubans with access to dollars. In other words, aside from hotels and restaurants, and a few companies selling machinery (Chinese) and construction materials (Italian), there are no retail businesses or storefronts selling consumer goods other than government-owned stores. With the normalization of USA–Cuba relations, starting with the re-establishments of embassies and exchange of ambassadors, and the lifting of the US-led embargo, these restrictions would have to be softened if not eliminated entirely, or foreign investors would be reluctant to trade with Cuba and establish businesses in Cuba, and US banks would be unwilling to extend credit to Cuba or to US businesses in Cuba. When these changes take place, not only Americans but Chinese and other entrepreneurs are poised to jump into Cuba as well, one of the last remaining frontiers in capitalist expansion in the Americas and the world.

Each year, some 350,000 Cubans from the diaspora (USA primarily, but also Spain and other parts of Europe and Latin America) visit their families in Cuba. They constitute the largest flow of visitors. Another 100,000 non-Cuban Americans visited Cuba last year, and the number is fast growing as Obama continues to loosen up travel restrictions. In the wake of the imminent end of the US embargo,¹ more tourists from Europe and Canada (already the largest tourist sending nation) will be flooding Cuba. With the widening of the Panama Canal near completion (2016), and with the container port and deepwater harbor of Mariel, as well as the free trade zone, ready for business anytime, Cuba is ready for takeoff *if and when* the state removes restrictions regarding foreign investment and property ownership. To attract new Chinese immigrants to Cuba, the same kind who have been going to Africa, Eastern Europe and Latin America, these are the necessary changes. Many, but not all, of the tourists from the USA, China, Europe and Latin America are “business” or “entrepreneur” tourists, that is, visitors interested primarily in scoping out investment and business opportunities and prospects in Cuba.

In preparation for that day, which could be soon, I have found a few Chinese *xinyimin*, individuals who label themselves as such and who are clearly conscious of the path-breaking role they are playing. Let me conclude this brief presentation by introducing you to two of them:

- 1 Kagita Chen (陈秀连) is an attractive woman in her forties who wandered around Europe before discovering Cuba 14 years ago. She is from Zhongshan. She drives a beautiful late model Mercedes and lives in an upscale neighborhood far from Old Havana and old Chinatown. With her Cuban residency status and Spanish fluency, she and her older sister can apparently

own a fancy Chinese restaurant outside Chinatown, in the University of Havana neighborhood. To maintain ties with the old Chinatown, they also own and operate a restaurant there, as well as serve as officers of the Zhongshan association (*huiguan*).² More importantly, Kagita has built relationships with important revolutionary figures, cultural and art institutions far outside Chinatown, including the old revolutionary figure and former minister of culture Armando Hart, currently president of the Cuban Cultural Society José Martí. She has also cultivated relationships with some of Fidel's sons, several of whom have visited China and love to eat Chinese food. She calls herself a "*xinyimin*," who makes a unique living for the moment as a "business entrepreneur" acting mainly as an intermediary between prospective Chinese investors, and as a consultant to Chinese companies doing business in Cuba.

- 2 Leo Xiang (向), from Chongqing. He went to Cuba seven years ago to study medicine, and has one more semester before receiving his MD. Leo tells me he would like to stay in Cuba after receiving his MD, first to obtain an MA in public health, then, with Kagita Chen as a role model, plans to open up business in Cuba as an "*agencia informativa*," or consultancy, to promote private Chinese businesses in Cuba, especially in pharmaceuticals, medical equipment and other medicine and public health-related products and services.

Besides Leo, I have heard of other Chinese students with similar aspirations to stay in Cuba and pursue business opportunities for themselves and, mostly, for other Chinese investors, using the cultural capital they have acquired in Cuba as their calling card.

Finally, what about Cuban Chinese themselves, not the 100 or so very elderly Chinese immigrants, but their descendants? How has a rising China benefited or affected their prospects in a changing Cuba? Since most of them are of mixed Chinese heritage with very little Chinese cultural capital, do they have much potential to capitalize on the developing new relationships between Cuba and China?

Among the Cuban-born generation, there may be a few, such as Carlos Alay, an exceptional Chinese-Cuban entrepreneur who owns three restaurants in Chinatown, notably one on the tourist lane El Cuchillo, speaks Mandarin and Cantonese and sent his two mixed-heritage children to Tianjin to study for three years (although they did not come back with much Mandarin fluency, and now work for their father in his restaurants). With a degree in food sciences from the University of Havana, he worked in a food science lab before going to Havanatur (the largest of several state tourist agencies) to work as a tour guide for Chinese tourists from Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong for a few years. Today, with his restaurants, he continues to hustle for "businesses" with Havanatur and other places (although he would not be specific with me). He lives well by Cuban standards, but is far from earning the money that Wu and Han make in their China travel agency.

Carlos still lives in Chinatown, but there are other mixed-heritage Cubans living outside Chinatown who have made names for themselves and had contact with China: foremost among them is probably the Cuban Chinese artist Flora Fong and her son and daughter, Li and Liang Dominguez Fong (their father is a well-known Cuban artist who runs his own gallery, where the children also exhibit). All three of them have made numerous trips to China and exhibited in various galleries in Shanghai, Beijing and elsewhere in China.

José Antonio Choy is an eminent contemporary Cuban architect and painter, who has also visited China, the land of his father and father-in-law. Like the Fong family, he and his wife and two daughters, all architects, live far from Chinatown in an upscale neighborhood. But he is proud of his Chinese heritage and has some entrepreneurial orientation. So, if the opportunity arises, he, the Fong family artists and Carlos Alay, may be among the Cubans who can profit from positive and proactive China–Cuba relations. At the same time, they do not have much accumulated capital to invest in a new Cuban economy, and most lack sufficient Chinese language ability, spoken and written, factors that may limit their usefulness as intermediaries and consultants, let alone partners, of future Chinese investors, who are more likely to turn to the likes of Kagita Chen and Dr. Leo Xiang.

Concluding observations

There is clearly an opening for China to become the major foreign investor in Cuba, and she is walking right in. It may be too late for the United States to reclaim its historic dominance in Cuba, after 50 years of a failed embargo policy that President Obama is belatedly trying to change, but with his hands tied by the US Congress. Behind the president's efforts to renew trade and investment relations with Cuba are a range of American merchants, from rice farmers to broadband providers. But the Chinese are already doing brisk business in Cuba, led by state enterprises as well as private entrepreneurs. They are building and operating businesses from restaurants to energy plants, from golf courses to port facilities. Serious oil exploration in the Gulf of Mexico waters of Cuba is probably not far behind. Furthermore, given Cuba's tumultuous relationship with the United States, she remains wary of US intentions, while her relationship with China and the historical Chinese community in Cuba carries far less baggage. On September 23, 2016, six months after President Obama's visit, Chinese premier Li Keqiang visited Cuba, again, to "deepen commercial and political ties between the two countries" (*Reuters* 2016).

Postscript

Since the chapter was written (August 2016), Cuba's pre-eminent revolutionary leader Fidel Castro died on November 25, 2016. This came shortly after Donald Trump became the president-elect of the United States on November 6. Trump's skeptical position on the normalization of relations with Cuba is undoubtedly

influenced by the strong anti-Castro position of most Cubans in Florida, with whose support he narrowly won the presidency. A reversal by Trump of Obama's détente with Cuba would constitute a setback to renewal of trade and commercial relationships between two historical partners separated by only 70 miles of water in the Gulf of Mexico. According to the *Wall Street Journal* of November 30, should this happen, China is best positioned to expand its growing economic presence on the island in the absence of serious competition from US investors and businesses (*Wall Street Journal* 2016). Moscow is unlikely to return to Cuba in any serious way to resume its old partnership. So, in the near future, the coast appears clear for China to forge ahead with plans to increase its presence in Cuba, continuing with state-sponsored investment projects, likely to be followed by streams of entrepreneurial *xinyimin* with private capital to invest; this pattern is already well established in other parts of Latin America and in Africa.

Notes

- 1 The US embargo, which was imposed as a presidential act by President Eisenhower in 1960, has since been taken over by Congress in the Helms–Burton Act of 1995; this means that the president cannot unilaterally lift the embargo; only Congress has the power to do so. The Helms–Burton Act also imposed sanctions on third countries doing business with Cuba if they also want to do business with the USA. Related to the embargo, Cuba remained on the US list of terrorist-sponsoring nations, along with Syria, Iran and Iraq, by mid-2015. While Cuba remains on the list, US banks cannot extend credit or open up branches in Cuba, and US credit cards are not accepted. So one of the great burdens and risks for US tourists and the study abroad program such as the one I directed for Brown University is that most business is transacted in cash! (Exception can be granted by the US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), which enforces the embargo.) From the Cuban perspective, the embargo is called a "blockade."
- 2 The Chinatown restaurant the sisters operate belongs to the Zhongshan association, named Los Dos Dragones; as with all surviving *huiguan* in Havana Chinatown, they own and operate restaurants that sell a mixture of Cuban and Chinese food, from pizza to fried rice.

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9 Ethnically diverse diasporas and migrations from China to Central Asia in the twenty-first century

**Origin and contemporary challenges
with special reference to Kazakhstan**

Yelena Y. Sadovskaya

The impact of China's rise in post-Soviet Central Asia (CA) – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan – is regional and country-specific. First, China's economic presence and migration are historically rooted, and are facilitated by centuries-long traditions of trade and cooperation along the Great Silk Road. Second, relations between the Qing government and the Russian empire, as well as territorial delineations between them in the nineteenth century, also had an impact on the formation of similar multiethnic populations on both sides of the border and on the emergence of Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Tajik diasporas in Xinjiang, China's western region.

China's geoeconomic and geopolitical interests toward Central Asia strengthened in the 1990s, after the breakup of the Soviet Union. Its relations with Kazakhstan and each CA country were driven mainly by economic and internal political factors. Three CA republics, along with Russia, have long borders with China: Kazakhstan (1,782 km), Kyrgyzstan (858 km) and Tajikistan (414 km), and this close proximity facilitates the movement of capital, goods and people. Their location had already made Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan China's priority partners in the region by the late 1990s.

Today, Kazakhstan is China's strategic partner in Central Asia. This partnership benefits from continuously improving international legal frameworks, and is embodied in programs of economic, trade, financial and humanitarian cooperation. Developing sectoral and regional cooperation actively is accompanied by transborder migrations in both directions. The bilateral migrations are ethnically diverse and involve, among others, Han Chinese, Kazakhs, Uyghurs, Hui (Dungans), Koreans and Tatars. "Chinese migration" to Kazakhstan is not actually "Chinese" in the sense that Han Chinese do not constitute a majority in migration flows.

What kind of migration movements are currently observed between China and Central Asia? To what extent has this migration resulted in the establishment of Chinese and non-Chinese diasporas, or in the establishment of community organizations uniting Han Chinese, Uyghurs and Dungans, who are engaged in Chinese, joint and local companies? What are the economic,

sociocultural, diasporic relations – if any – of the Chinese communities with their host societies? How has the rise of China affected the diaspora/community identity? These and related issues remain largely unstudied throughout Central Asia. This calls for further research.

Diaspora is an important and controversial issue in migration discourse, and it is important to clarify definitions of diaspora and ethnic community used in this chapter. There are many theoretical frameworks in diaspora analysis, such as those developed by Ashkenasi, Brubaker, Castles, Cohen, Safran, Sheffer, Tololyan and others. The initial idea of diaspora signified a forced movement of people, such as victims of persecution, who lived in exile. Conventionally, the “ideal” notion of diaspora is presented by Jewish and Armenian tradition. Another type of diaspora is formed as a result of migration and colonization, e.g., British diaspora. Cohen (1997: 151–154) also identifies new types of diaspora that emerged in the twentieth century and they were based on grounds of specific ethnicities and reasons of migration: labor diasporas (Indian, Mexican and Turkish diasporas) and trade diasporas (Chinese and Lebanese) active in ethnic entrepreneurship.

Cohen’s typology is applicable to the analysis of the Chinese, Uyghurs and Dungans in Kazakhstan, since they emerged under different circumstances, mainly as a result of forced, spontaneous and mass emigrations that followed violent clashes with the Qing government in the nineteenth century and in waves of forced migrations throughout the twentieth century. Han and Uyghurs came also to trade and work (seasonal migrations) in the Ferghana Valley in the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. The story is of course much more nuanced for each diaspora, and more similar for the new ethnically diverse communities from China, who emerged as a result of contemporary trade, labor and entrepreneurial migrations.

In this chapter, the term diaspora refers to an ethnic migrant community (former migrants, now citizens of Kazakhstan), dispersed in different ethnic environments outside of their country of origin (China), which has common history, cultural traditions and language, as well as social organizations to structure diaspora activities. We distinguish between local diasporas (of Chinese and other ethnicities) and respective migrant communities in Kazakhstan, since the latter are temporary and fluid because of Kazakhstan’s migration policy restrictions. These recent migrant communities, be they Han Chinese, Uyghurs or Dungans – traders and entrepreneurs, specialists and workers – stay in the country only temporarily, are scattered in urban areas (as a rule) and form more individualized, fragmented, noninstitutional groups, and we apply this notion to these newly emerged (since the 1990s) groups throughout this chapter. Ethnic identification is undoubtedly present among these groups and individuals, though not in a “diasporic” way when it is an ethnic consolidation factor, for solidarity or even survival. Exceptionally, the expat community establishes its social organizations; however, their activities remain limited and people tend to rely on informal networking.

Chinese migration and diasporas

China's rise is widely studied worldwide by economists, political scientists, international relations experts, sociologists and anthropologists. Most contemporary studies on China's activities in Central Asia and Kazakhstan cover economic and political issues, international relations and security challenges; however, there is less study of Chinese migration in Kazakhstan (Sadovskaya 2001, 2007a, 2007b, 2007c, 2012, 2014; Syroezhkin 1997, 2010, 2015). Studies of ethnic diasporas in Kazakhstan/CA, originally from and linked with China – Chinese, Uyghur, Dungans – are generally at the initial stage of research. This may have to do with Kazakhstan's Soviet past, from decades of political repression during Stalin's rule, which adopted an ethnocultural policy of "unification" and development of a new generation of "Soviet people" (without ethnic identification), when both the study and public discussion of ethnicity were not encouraged. The "Iron Curtain" period since the 1950s, when migration was limited and scholars' exchange restricted, also had negative impacts on migration and diaspora studies.

The Uyghur studies is an exception: Uyghurs in Kazakhstan and Central Asia, in Soviet times and in the post-Soviet period, as well as Uyghurs in Xinjiang, are widely studied in Kazakhstan and abroad. A compilation and review of publications can be found in various research journals, such as *Asian Research Trends* (Kamalov 2006), *Central Asian Survey* (Kamalov 2012) and other sources. Studies of Uyghur identities and related issues are addressed by a number of scholars such as Gladney (1996, 2004), Millward (2007), Rudelson (1997), Roberts (1998, 2004), Starr (2004) and Toops (2004). Among the latest publications is a book on history and contemporary cross-border interaction between China's Xinjiang and Central Asia at the beginning of the twenty-first century (Mackerras and Clarke 2009), in which there are several articles devoted to the Uyghurs in Kazakhstan and Central Asia (see for instance Kamalov 2009: 115–132).

Uyghur migration across Kazakhstan's and other CA countries' borders is addressed in the article by Clark and Kamalov (2004). Local scholars Bekturganova (2002), Kamalov (2014), Syroezhkin (2003, 2015) and others address identity, ethnosocial and ethnocultural aspects and political and security challenges in their studies. However, the more recent developments in the economic interaction of the Uyghur diaspora with China and the role of ethnic organizations have remained largely unstudied.

The Dungans in Xinjiang started attracting more scholarly attention abroad once this western region became more open. Laruelle and Peyrouse researched the Dungans' role in XUAR and the neighboring Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan as cultural and economic mediators between China and Central Asia (Laruelle and Peyrouse 2009). Kok-Kheng Yeoh's paper looks at the issue of preserving Dungans' ethnic identity in the context of changing social, ethno-political and economic relations in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Central Asia at large (Yeoh 2015; see also Yeoh, Lui and Fan 2011)

There is a substantial research output by Dungan scholars on the history, culture and high-profile personalities of the Dungan diaspora in Kazakhstan (Dzhanshanlo 2011; Sushanlo 1971; Vansvanova 2000; Yanlosy 1998). Still, gaps remain, including on the present-day life of the Dungan diaspora, its successful regional cooperation with Hui (Dungans) in China, the role of ethnic organizations in enhancing business cooperation, and expanding interaction in cultural, educational and other spheres. There is a need to reevaluate these processes from a new geoeconomic and geopolitical perspective, in particular in the context of the China's global rise, and to study prospects of cooperation between Kazakhstan and its eastern neighbor.

As for the Han Chinese in Kazakhstan, they have been completely unstudied, partly because of the community's small size and scattered settlement pattern and partly because, during long periods of tension between China and the Soviet Union, the Han remained politically and socially passive, "kept a low profile" and lacked active leaders.

The goal of this chapter is to study Chinese and other ethnic diasporas in the context of China's increasing economic presence in Central Asia, as well as the impact of China's rise on the diasporas and communities in Central Asia, with a focus on Kazakhstan. The key issues addressed include China's economic rise in Central Asia, particularly Kazakhstan; the history of migrations between China and Kazakhstan; contemporary migration between China and Kazakhstan: patterns and dynamics (including return and circular migration); ethnically diverse diasporas and communities in Kazakhstan and their sociodemographic profile, socioeconomic status and activities, identity issues and perspectives of cooperation; and gaps in knowledge and the mapping of issues for further research.

The research uses both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative analysis is applied to official (governmental) statistics from Kazakhstan and China, secondary sources (earlier sociological research) and national and international media reports, in Russian and English. Qualitative research methods include five in-depth semistructured interviews with Han Chinese in Almaty conducted in 2015–2016, and one focus group with six Han Chinese participants in Karaganda city, central Kazakhstan, in March 2016.

China's rise in Central Asia

China's rise in Central Asia is manifested first of all through its large-scale trade, investment, infrastructural projects and "soft power" policy. China is a "global factory" for manufacturing goods, however five former Soviet Union (fSU) Central Asian republics account only for 1 percent of China's trade, with consumer goods dominating in its exports and raw materials making up the biggest share of Chinese imports from the region. The latter is driven by China's demand for energy resources, some of which are expected to grow tenfold in the coming decades. The desire to diversify sources of energy, and to ensure the stability and security of energy supplies, has increased China's interest in resources from neighboring countries/regions, primarily Russia and Central Asia.

Kazakhstan is the ninth largest country in the world by area, scarcely populated and rich in natural resources – oil, gas and rare earth elements. Its population is 17.5 million people (as of January 2016), with multiethnic structure: Kazakhs (66.5 percent), Russians (20.6 percent), Uzbeks (3.1 percent), Ukrainians (1.6 percent), Uyghurs (1.5 percent), Germans (1.0 percent) and other ethnicities. Being rich in natural resources, Kazakhstan's economy remains nondiversified and resource-dependent and needs a constant inflow of foreign investment for its development. Kazakhstan's need for investment, on the one hand, and demand for energy resources in the vibrantly developing Chinese economy, on the other hand, are the key drivers of cooperation between the two countries.

China is ready to invest in the development and transportation of hydrocarbons from resource-rich Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. Several oil and gas pipelines have already been (and continue to be) constructed with Chinese investments: the Kazakhstan–China oil pipeline, the Turkmenistan–China gas pipeline, running through Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan, and others. (CNPC, 2016). In addition to oil pipelines and related infrastructure, Chinese specialists and workers have contributed to the construction of industrial facilities including oil refineries, gas processing plants, hydropower stations and plastics plants, among others.

Kazakhstan is not only a geographical neighbor and an important partner, but also a gateway to Central Asia with a huge transit capacity. China is interested in CA countries as transit corridors for the supply of goods to Europe and for the development of business and communications. CA countries would benefit from this, too, because multifunctional logistics centers would be built in the Kazakhstani cities of Almaty, Aktobe and Aktau along the road and railway routes from China to Russia, which would form an integrated complex of international-level hubs.

Transport projects have become one of China's priorities in Kazakhstan and Central Asia, which is vividly reflected in the idea of establishing the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB), as part of the more ambitious One Belt One Road Initiative (MFA and MofCOM of the PRC 2015). The SREB project was proposed by CPC General Secretary Xi Jinping in September 2013 during his first official state visit to Astana. Xi Jinping emphasized that the creation of the SREB, i.e., the development of an integrated transport network in landlocked Central Asia, Russia and further on to Europe, would help strengthen economic ties and deepen cooperation and connectivity between the participating countries (Tengrinews.kz 2013).

Besides this, Kazakhstan and other Central Asian republics are attractive regional markets, primarily owing to their geographical proximity. According to China's General Customs Administration, trade turnover between Kazakhstan and PRC reached \$28.5 billion in 2013 (Suleimenov 2014); however, this dropped considerably in 2014 and 2015 because of the economic crisis and shrinking demand.

China has made large credit injections in CA, linking them to the needs of its own economy. Today, cooperation covers the energy sector, communications,

logistics and transport, agriculture, SMEs' production and "traditional" trade business. This cooperation demonstrates growing interdependence and regionalization of economic relations between China and Central Asia, but also the region's stronger integration in the globalization processes.

Why is there a similar multiethnic composition at the borderland areas of Kazakhstan and China?

Migration and trade between China and Central Asian countries have a rich history, especially in their border areas. They stretch back to the relationship between the Qing dynasty and the Russian empire and between China and the Soviet Union. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, massive migrations of nomadic Kazakhs took place in the *Stepnoi* region, and it was important for the Russian empire to delineate the boundary between its own and Chinese territories. After negotiations and the delineation, which took several decades, in 1881 the new boundary split the areas of traditional settlement and pasture of the Kazakh people, who found themselves split by the border; 137,600 Kazakhs remained in the three districts (Ili, Tarbagatay and Altay) of the Xinjiang province (as well as in Mongolia) and formed the basis of the contemporary Kazakh diaspora in China (Sarsembaev 1995: 34–37). Simultaneously, 5,000 Kazakh families (counted in *yurts* – traditional portable felt Kazakh nomads' houses), 45,000 Taranchi (Uyghurs) and 4,000 Dungans moved to the territory of the Russian Empire (Masanov 1999: 133–134; Vansvanova 2000: 43; Syroezhkin 2003: 428–429).

Migration was greatly affected by the key historic events of the early twentieth century: World War I, the 1916 revolt of Kazakhs and its suppression, the October Revolution of 1917 and the civil war, the poor harvest and famine in 1921, the establishment of the Soviet Union in 1922 and the forced sedentarization of Kazakhs in rural areas in the 1930s. Those dramatic decades saw significant fluctuations in migration flows, which mainly included forced emigration and refugee flows from Kazakhstan, including to China.

The period after World War II, in particular from the 1950s to the 1960s, was characterized by return migration from China to Kazakhstan, both organized under the resettlement policy and spontaneous. On the one hand, this was a continuation of the postwar repatriation policy of the Soviet Union, and on the other hand this was a process underpinned by an economic rationale, as the Soviet Union needed more labor. In the 1950s, more than 230,000 people, mainly Kazakhs and Uyghurs, relocated to the Soviet Union from China (Ablazhei 2003).

The next migration wave from China was spontaneous in response to the Chinese government's Great Leap Forward economic policy involving forced industrialization and collectivization. This led to destitution and famine, and in the 1960s Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Han Chinese, Dungans and members of other ethnic groups in Xinjiang applied for Soviet citizenship. According to various estimates, between 60,000 and 100,000 people fled to the Soviet Union through the Khorgos section of the Soviet Union–China border opened by the Soviet

authorities (Khafizova 2000). The migrants and refugees were settled mainly in the Central Asian Soviet republics: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

Political tensions between the Soviet Union and the PRC in the 1960s and 1970s during the Chinese Cultural Revolution virtually eliminated all contacts between their peoples from the 1970s until the mid-1980s, and migration exchange was minimal.

On China's side, after the establishment of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) in 1954, the central government launched a demographic policy that aimed to increase the proportion of Han in the total population of Xinjiang. As a result of mass resettlement from the inland provinces and high birth rates among non-Han ethnic groups, the total population of Xinjiang increased and the ethnic composition changed considerably. In 1953, of the 4.5 million total population of the XUAR, indigenous Uyghurs comprised 74.7 percent, Han 6.1 percent and ethnic minorities 19.2 percent (Toops 2004:246). By 2010, of a total population of 21.8 million, Uyghurs comprised 45.8 percent (10 million), Han 40.5 percent (8.8 million), Kazakhs 6.5 percent (1.4 million), Hui (Dungans) 4.5 percent (983,000) and other ethnicities 2.7 percent (quoted from Baltabaeva 2015: 501).

Thus, the wavelike migrations over the last two centuries and government-organized and facilitated emigration in the border regions of Kazakhstan and China produced a unique multiethnic profile to the area, where one could find – in different shares – Uyghurs, Chinese, Kazakhs, Dungans, Kyrgyz, Russians, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Koreans and other ethnicities. In addition to history and demography, there are other factors conducive to migration in the area historically called Eastern and Western Turkestan. These include similarity of languages (Turkic) and religion (Islam), a traditional way of life, and historical traditions of trade and cooperation along the Great Silk Road throughout Central Asia.

Political tensions in Sino-Soviet relations were normalized only after 1986, during the *perestroika* policy of political liberalization proclaimed by Mikhail Gorbachev. In 1988, an intergovernmental agreement on mutual visits by citizens was signed in Moscow between the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China, and the contacts resumed: in July 1991 the agreement on developing cooperation between the Kazakh SSR and Xinjiang of the PRC was signed. This agreement opened the way for trade, economic cooperation and private visits. In this context, it is not surprising that the first to go to Kazakhstan were Uyghur and Kazakh families in search of their relatives who had fled to the Soviet Union in the 1960s. Furthermore, at that time China was vigorously pursuing market-based reforms, local production was growing and thus Chinese entrepreneurs from the eastern and western provinces set out to a new country in search of new markets.

At the same time, the economic crisis that was unfolding in the Soviet Union created a severe shortage of goods and food. In this situation, the Uyghurs who arrived in Kazakhstan not only found their relatives but also established business connections, while the Hans and Dungans could also discover new opportunities for trade and business. Tens of thousands of petty traders used to travel from

China to Kazakhstan, and in the early 1990s the country, especially its southern part, had a lively market in Chinese goods. This was the last wave of migration in the Soviet period, and it primarily encompassed petty traders and individual entrepreneurs from China.

After the breakup of the Soviet Union in December 1991 and liberalization of the migration policy, trade migration intensified. The resumption of business, family, ethnocultural and religious contacts led to the revival of historical interactions and the creation of new forms of communication between citizens of Xinjiang and Kazakhstan. The flow of traders from China was supplemented with a counter flow of Kazakh shuttle traders. This activity was typically informal as many Kazakhstanis were not registered with the authorities as individual entrepreneurs, though since the end of the 1990s the traders started to legalize and institutionalize their business.

Contemporary migrations between China and Kazakhstan: main patterns and dynamics

The most important facilitator for migration in the 2000s was China's global rise. China's engagement in the region was accompanied by growing trade, bilateral projects in various sectors and a rapid increase of Chinese business. China's rise in Central Asia also reflects its Go Global foreign policy, which incorporates a westward expansion of its investment, trade and business, communication and migration.

Currently, all main migration patterns can be observed between China and Kazakhstan and the other CA republics, including permanent and temporary, legal and illegal, voluntary and forced, etc. Most are economically motivated, which includes labor, trade and business migration. The next type of migration between Kazakhstan and China is driven by social and cultural factors, including migration for permanent residence and educational migration and academic mobility from and to China, which rapidly increased in the 2000s. Immigration for permanent residence to Kazakhstan is represented mainly by ethnic Kazakhs (*oralmans*). Since 1991, repatriation of *oralmans* served as a key direction of Kazakhstan's state migration policy. Emigration from Kazakhstan for permanent residence in China is a newly emerged trend that has intensified since the mid-2000s.

As for circular migration, this is facilitated by geographical proximity; in fact, Chinese migration to Kazakhstan is primarily migration from and to neighboring Xinjiang and not China as a whole. The Kazakh diaspora in Xinjiang may be involved in circular movements; however, further analysis is needed to verify whether these are frequent private visits, business trips or circular migration with temporary employment in Kazakhstan.

Migration is now a steadily growing phenomenon. In terms of the number of Chinese citizens arriving in Kazakhstan, this is a very sensitive issue that remains at the forefront of public discourse. In the 1990s the migration exchange was relatively modest and consisted mostly of "shopping tourists" or petty

traders. However, in the economic growth period of the 2000s, the volume of crossings of the Chinese–Kazakhstani border increased substantially and reached its maximum in 2011, with 503,700 people crossing the border from Kazakhstan to China and 342,600 foreigners crossing the border in the opposite direction (Statistical Agency of the RK 2014; MNE RK 2015). The main reason for the number of people exiting Kazakhstan for China substantially exceeding the number in the opposite direction (1.5- to 2.5-fold since 2003) is mainly due to petty traders, who are the major group shuttling across the border to China for shopping (and today – for recreational and medical tourism – in the rising scale).

Apart from the number of Chinese citizens arriving in Kazakhstan, there are other aspects of Chinese migration that stir anti-Chinese sentiments and public resentment in the country. This is manifested by a growing number of publications on the threat of sinicization of the republic in its mainstream media. Chinese migration is accompanied by a growing quantity of misinformation and myths about the “influx” of the Han Chinese: obtaining citizenship en masse, applying for permanent residence, buying up property and land, the emerging Chinatowns etc. We can say that contemporary migration flows from China are multiethnic, represented by Kazakhs, Uyghurs, Dungans, Chinese, Koreans, Uzbeks and other ethnicities, and Han Chinese do not constitute a majority: Kazakh returnees predominate in these flows. An important feature of migration from China is not only that it is ethnically diverse, but also each ethnic group of migrants has its own pattern of settlement, labor and business practices, and adaptation strategies. Distinct ethnic diasporas emerged in Kazakhstan as a result of centuries-old migrations from China; contemporary migrant communities are brought about by the growing cooperation with and migration from the PRC.

Ethnic Uyghurs in Kazakhstan

Uyghur diaspora in Kazakhstan: contemporary status and challenges

Uyghurs from China came in several waves, including those fleeing persecution in Xinjiang in the nineteenth century. In 1897 there were already 55,800 Uyghurs residing within the Russian Empire in the geographical territory of what is now Kazakhstan. The twofold rise in the number of Uyghurs in Kazakhstan in 1970 reflects the results of the resettlement policies and influx of refugees from Xinjiang at the beginning of the 1960s, as a response to famine and repressions in China during Great Leap Forward policy. According to the 1959 Soviet population census, 59,800 Uyghurs resided in Kazakhstan, and 120,900 in 1970 (Figure 9.1).

As of January 1, 2010, the Uyghur diaspora included 246,449 people, or 1.54 percent of Kazakhstan’s total population. Ninety-six percent of Uyghurs reside in the south of the country: Almaty region (155,158 people) and Almaty city (80,529 people) (Statistical Agency of the RK 2010). The proportions of the urban and rural Uyghur populations were 42.7 percent and 57.3 percent, respectively (Smailov 2010: 9–10).

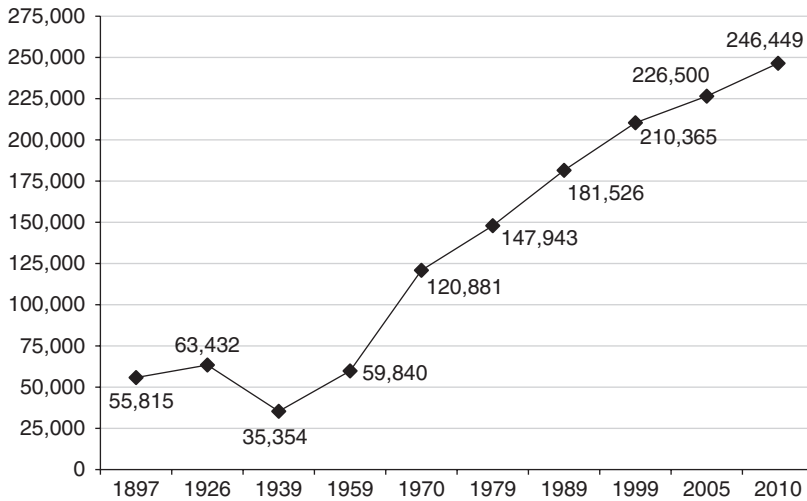


Figure 9.1 Uyghur diaspora in Kazakhstan in 1897–2010 (people).

Source: compiled from Asylbekov and Galiev (1991: 101) and Statistical Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2006, 2011).

In Soviet times, Uyghurs were broadly represented in science and education, theater and arts, trade and management; the majority, however, resided in rural areas of the Almaty region bordering China and were engaged in the collective enterprises (agricultural farms) producing grain, meat, dairy, tobacco and vegetables. During large-scale privatization and the building of the Kazakh nation-state that followed the breakup of the Soviet Union, Uyghurs were driven out of some key sectors of the economy. According to Kazakhstani historian and ethnologist A. Kamalov, even in rural areas the Uyghurs' livelihood depended on individual and family economic activity, which was spurred by the dissolution of collective enterprises and state farms. Young people tended to earn money in Almaty (Kamalov 2014: 52).

Uyghurs comprise three subethnic groups, which emerged as a result of the "waves" of Uyghur migration from China to Kazakhstan. According to American researcher S. Roberts, they self-identify as: *yerlikldr* ("locals" – the Uyghurs born in Kazakhstan whose ancestors have been living on its territory since at least 1900); *keganldr* ("newcomers" – first- or second-generation Uyghurs who arrived in Kazakhstan from the 1950s to the 1960s); and *khitailiklar* ("Chinese" – Uyghurs from China who came in recent years to work or trade in Kazakhstan (Roberts 1998: 511–530)). Roberts revealed sharp differences between these groups in terms of identity perception, views of the past and future prospects for the Uyghur nation, the role of culture and language, etc. (ibid.). There is a need for further in-depth studies of Uyghurs and their subgroups, with a full use of anthropological and ethnological tools, including network analysis and multisited ethnography.

There are many reasons behind the current status of Uyghurs in Kazakhstan. One of them, as widely believed by the scholarly community, is the traditional conflict between nomadic and sedentary peoples. Nomadic Turkic people contemptuously refer to farmers (such as Uyghurs and Uzbeks) as *sarts* (merchants), who in turn perceive nomads as savage people. Another reason is discrimination against ethnic minorities in Kazakhstan. Official state policy toward ethnic minorities proclaims equal rights and provisions for minority interests and needs. However, representative sociological surveys revealed that Uyghurs had the highest level of dissatisfaction (87 percent) of all minorities in terms of their political and civil service representation; 32.7 percent of Uyghurs feared that they might be made redundant from a civil service post, and 38.8 percent did not trust civil service recruitment to be conducted in a fair manner and therefore did not apply (Kurganskaya, Dunaev and Aitkhozhin 2003).

Yet another reason is Uyghurs' political aspirations. Uyghurs do not have a nation-state of their own; in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, which was established within China in 1954, their share of population is only 45 percent (2010). The breakup of the Soviet Union and the emergence of five sovereign states in Central Asia, each with its titular Turkic population, lead to the rise of aspirations among Uyghur leaders (who resided mainly in Kazakhstan at that time) for establishing the independent state of Eastern Turkestan, or Uyghurstan, in Xinjiang. This prompted Chinese authorities to classify "Uyghur separatist movements" as terrorist groups and launch persecution campaigns.

This position has been reinforced by bilateral intergovernmental agreements between China and Kazakhstan, obliging the latter to return those Uyghurs who fled violent conflicts in Xinjiang to China. The flow of refugees from XUAR is relatively low in numbers but politically sensitive. China led on the signing of joint documents on regional security with Central Asian republics, particularly with Kazakhstan; issues of "combatting terrorism, separatism and extremism" have been addressed at multiple bilateral and multilateral meetings, including within the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Thus, against the background of China's geopolitical rise in the 1990s and 2000s, CA republics had to restrict, and in many cases outlaw, the domestic political activity of Uyghur groups and leaders.

Despite these challenges, Uyghur scholars and community leaders recognize that, among former Soviet states, Kazakhstan created perhaps the most favorable conditions for Uyghur culture and identity (Kamalov 2014: 57). The process is not without controversy since Uyghurs in Kazakhstan, on the one hand, have a strong feeling of affiliation with their ethnic homeland – Xinjiang – and, on the other, are adapting to the nation-building policy in Kazakhstan that proclaims the integration of all ethnic groups and the development of a unified civic nation. The complexity of the situation is that Kazakh society itself keeps exploring its national and civil identity and deliberating on the future development of the country (Kamalov 2014: 54, 57).

In this context, what are the prospects for Uyghur diaspora to better integrate within wider Kazakhstani society? Within the diaspora itself, the coming of new

generations gradually erases the distinctions between three subgroups, which does help with the integration. Further favorable factors include commonality of languages and religious affiliation. As Uyghur scholars note, the enthusiasm for the political independence of Xinjiang is gradually decreasing, the new generation's ties with historic homeland are weakening, and visits of Uyghurs from China are becoming less frequent (Kamalov 2014: 57), and this may have an impact on business ties and economic and trade activities between Xinjiang and Kazakhstan.

Uyghur diaspora organizations (called national cultural centers – NCCs) in Kazakhstan are active in educational and cultural activities and festivals. They express loyalty to local authorities and proclaim interethnic peace and stability as their major goal (APK 2016; Uighur.kz 2012). NCCs are less active in the economic and political sphere, owing to Uyghurs' status in China and the restrictive and controlling policies toward ethnic minorities both at national and local levels. Because of their multi-identification (ethnic minority both in Kazakhstan and in China, though being indigenous to Xinjiang), Uyghurs and their organizations and leaders do not have close relationships with the Chinese authorities. There is no trust between them and their contacts and cooperation are limited. Contrary to Dungans, who cooperate closely with China at the regional level, local Uyghurs do not benefit as much from China's rise.

Uyghur traders and entrepreneurs from China

Uyghur traders and entrepreneurs from China are anchored in areas and districts of traditional Uyghur settlement in Almaty, such as Aksai, Zhetisu, Ainabulak, "Druzhba" and "Zarya Vostoka." Uyghur trade migration initially mostly leaned on the local Uyghur community, who provided reception areas through local businesses promoting trade and small business. Chinese Uyghur entrepreneurs have excelled in services, trade and restaurant businesses in Almaty and Bishkek, the capital of the neighboring Kyrgyzstan. One reason for a relatively easy adaptation of Uyghurs in these countries is that they are a Turkic people close to the Kazakhs and Kyrgyz from an ethnic and religious standpoint. They normally speak Uyghur and Chinese, but they have also quickly learned Russian, which is widely used in Central Asia. Thus, they can easily find a common language with both the locals and migrants from China – Kazakhs and Dungans – who are also Muslims.

American sinologist D. Millward regards Russian the *lingua franca* of Central Asia (Millward 2007: 291). Millward and other scholars indicate that in the 1990s the Uyghurs in Kuldja and Xinjiang who learned Russian served as interpreters and intermediaries between Russian-speaking traders and the Hans who sold wholesale goods. Uyghurs from Kazakhstan are multilingual as well: they are among the few ethnic groups in Kazakhstan who possess equal mastery of their native language (81.3 percent), Kazakh (80.5 percent) and Russian (76.1 percent) (Smailov 2000: 10).

The number of Uyghur traders and businessmen from China is not so big today, partially because of the abovementioned reasons. According to MIA,

a very modest number of ethnic Uyghurs – comparative to Kazakhs – obtained citizenship (around 1,000 people) or a residence permit in Kazakhstan (42 people). (Smailov 2010; MIA RK 2015). Uyghur entrepreneurs are substituted by Kazakh repatriates from Xinjiang, who serve as interpreters at the trade exhibitions of all kinds, intermediaries between local and Chinese traders, owners of trade and other kind of businesses.

Nonetheless, cooperation is developing at individual, kinship and (ethnic) group levels and mostly on the regional (Xinjiang) level. Mechanisms of this coethnic interaction (cross-border entrepreneurship and networks), however, remain largely unstudied. A range of empirical studies are needed to analyze the principles, forms, dynamics, success stories and internal and external factors influencing Uyghurs' entrepreneurship. The perspectives of this cooperation and the role of fluid Uyghur community of traders and businessmen (those with residence permit in Kazakhstan) are yet to be studied in depth.

The Dungans in Kazakhstan and their cooperation with China

The Dungans are another ethnic group originally from China that is developing active links with the PRC today. Dungans are descendants of the Hui people from the Chinese provinces of Shaanxi and Gansu. The year 2017 marks the 140th anniversary of their resettlement from China to Kazakhstan. As of January 1, 2010, the number of Kazakhstan citizens of Dungan ethnicity was 51,577 people, or 0.32 percent of the population (Statistical Agency of the RK 2011). The majority live compactly in the rural areas of the Zhambyl region, in the villages of Masanchi and Sortobe (Shortube) (42,404 people) and in the city of Almaty (6,535 people). The proportions of urban and rural populations were 17.0 percent and 83.0 percent, respectively, in 2009, and this has not changed much since 1970, when they were 17.9 percent and 82.1 percent. In fact, the absolute number of urban citizens has increased, because the Dungan population has grown threefold since 1970 (17,200). Dungans reside in the same locations in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, where they had settled nearly a century and a half ago.

Dungans are Chinese Muslims, who speak their native language and Russian freely. Thus, they can easily find a common language with both the locals (Kazakhs, Uyghurs, Russians) and migrants from China – Uyghurs, Kazakhs and Hans. Dungans' main occupation is arable farming: they grow crops and vegetables and are perceived to be successful and wealthy farmers, along with Koreans. More recently, Dungan entrepreneurs started promoting technology in agricultural production and processing enterprises, managing transportation and trade companies (Dzhanshanlo 2011: 210–211) or occupying traditional business, such as catering, or new economic niches such as real estate sale and services in Almaty (Yanlosy 2016).

The Dungan diaspora in Kazakhstan is an example of a China-origin ethnic group that is currently using China's rise to develop economic and cultural

cooperation with PRC. The interaction is growing dynamically in economic, business, cultural and educational sectors, as well as in tourism, primarily at the regional level, and is spurred by actors at various levels: heads and officials from regional administrations, businesspeople, officials from educational and agricultural entities, representatives of Dungan community organizations etc. This is accompanied by the development of legal frameworks and active institutionalization of the cooperation: MoUs and contracts are being signed, committees and working groups established and programs and cooperation “road maps” designed.

The Zhambyl region and Shaanxi province in the northwest of China are at the forefront of interregional cooperation, specifically in agriculture, including livestock breeding, production and processing. In January 2015, during his visit to Xi'an in Shaanxi province, the official Zhambyl region delegation signed agreements totaling around \$400 million for the construction of a wind farm, the creation of a high-tech agro-innovative cluster in the Zhambyl region, with the assistance of the Steering Committee of the Yanlin special agricultural technological zone, and other projects (Akizhanov 2015).

In addition to considerable investment and construction of the agricultural complex, China plans to transfer innovative technologies and train specialists and workers. The parties also signed a memorandum on the development of cultural and educational cooperation between the *akimat* (the local administration) of the Zhambyl region and the People's Government of Shaanxi province, and expressed readiness to promote student and teacher exchange between local universities (Olzhaev 2015). The administrative centers of the two regions, Taraz and Xi'an, are twin cities, and the Association of Dungans of Kazakhstan (ADK) is an active facilitator linking regional and local administrations, companies and people.

Cooperation with China in education and culture helps to introduce professionals, who are sorely needed to support the development of Dungan villages. Centers and associations of ethnic Dungans are active promoters of this cooperation, and they assist in training ethnic minorities abroad. Thus, since 2002 the Assembly of Peoples of Kazakhstan (APK) and the Association of Dungans have been facilitating education for Dungan students in China. ADK partners with five universities in Xi'an, such as North-Western University, Shaanxi Pedagogical University and the University of Petroleum and Gas, and with universities in Shanghai. The Chinese Language Center, set up by ADK, enters into agreements with these universities annually, and students enjoy discounts offered to ADK (ADK 2014).

Since the 2000s, hundreds of Dungan students have received language and professional training in China. The growing number of Dungans wishing to learn Chinese and gain education in PRC is a reflection of China's rise and a global trend that underpins transcontinental spread of Chinese businesses, and good command of Chinese is essential for successful cooperation. (Xinhua 2009a). Furthermore, fluent Chinese makes newly educated professionals more competitive not only in domestic but also in global labor markets: some

high-performing Dungan students studying at Chinese universities start receiving job offers even before graduation.

Obviously, these new opportunities for Dungans are mutually beneficial, because China is training Kazakhstani students to supply qualified specialists for its state and private companies, or joint ventures operating in Kazakhstan. Additionally, graduates serve as potential contributors to joint business projects with partners from Shaanxi and Gansu provinces, where they studied. This is another important area for strengthening regional business, social and cultural ties between Kazakhstan and northwestern provinces of China (Kharsanov 2014).

These achievements contrast with educational opportunities for Dungans in Kazakhstan through government-sponsored programs. Thus, only two Dungans (in 2005) and one Han Chinese (in 2011) have been awarded a prestigious academic mobility “Bolashak” program since its launch in 1994 (data as of early 2012) (Bolashak 2013). Thus, important outcomes of cooperation with China are new educational opportunities, professional and career perspectives for Dungans, and overall prospects for horizontal and upward social mobility, something they have been deprived of for years.

As for ethnic identity, this is expressed stronger and in a more multifaceted way among Dungans compared to ethnic Chinese. To explore it, we used a concept elaborated by the renowned Russian ethnopsychologist T. Stefanenko, specifically the basic three-component structure of ethnic identity, namely cognitive, emotional and behavioral identity (Drobizheva 1996; Stefanenko 2009, 2014) (see further discussion in the next section on Han diaspora).

According to Yeoh and his colleagues, “the present Dungan people are the third (ageing) or fourth generations of descendants of their forefathers who migrated from Shaan-Gan (China’s provinces of Shaanxi and Gansu) over a century ago,” and they maintained their ethnic Chinese identity

both through the fiercely guarded traditions and way of life, including the Shaanxi dialect of the Chinese language uniquely written phonetically in the Cyrillic alphabet, and a strong sense of being the descendants of a persecuted people, exiled in a foreign land, especially among the third generation who are today in their seventies or eighties.

(Yeoh, Liu and Fan 2011: 8)

Unlike Chinese in other countries of Southeast Asia, Australia, Europe and America, who are mainly descendants of economic migrants from China, the Dungans in Central Asia are mostly descendants of political/war refugees from northwestern China, who escaped the genocidal troops of the imperial Ch’ing-dynasty government (*ibid.*).

Dungans are proud of being representatives of Hui – one of the nationalities living in the northwestern provinces of China. They demonstrate respect toward China and its economic achievements and ancient culture. As underlined by Khusey Daurov, a renowned representative of the Dungan diaspora and leader of the ADK,

today's China develops very dynamically, and we are proud that our historical motherland is rising so rapidly.... Many Dungans would like to visit Shaanxi, Gansu and other provinces, to meet with people there, to learn more about history, culture and traditions of Chinese people.

(*People's Daily* online 2010)

It is not only emotional but also behavioral components of Dungan identity that are reinforced by economic and business cooperation, as well as educational activities: through learning Mandarin, Dungans get increasingly involved in business and other interregional activities. ADK plans to open Chinese language courses in Dungan villages, offering more Dungans an opportunity to learn Chinese language and culture and thus take part in business and cultural cooperation with China.

Dungans have a reputation for diligence, hospitality and respect for their culture, customs and traditions, some of which are rooted in late Ch'ing dynasty times. They actively participate in national and religious festivities, and they have a reverent attitude toward their traditional cuisine. On the ADK website and in the Dungan diaspora electronic magazine *Khueyzu Bo*, one can find dozens of recipes of Dungan dishes (ADK 2016; Khueyzu Bo 2016).

A young Dungan writing under the nickname Akhmed Shakh-Mansur, wearing a T-shirt with the inscription "I am Dungan," expressed his feelings in the following way (original language reproduced):

We call ourselves DUNGANS with a great pride!! We live in all most beautiful countries of the world, and all native people envy us.... Indeed, we are not possessing a flag, or a national emblem, but can say "dzamgy" in any country, and in 90 cases out of 100 we will hear "ho, ni na dzamgy?" It is in our houses that one can find endless supplies of vegetables and produce that we have been growing and saving during the whole summer!! These are our grandmothers who manage to visit 3 weddings and 2 funerals in one day. These are our cupboards full of countless candies and biscuits!! It is us who manage to look like Kazakhs, Turks, Chinese, Koreans and Uzbeks at the same time! But we can easily identify each other in the crowd! We are indeed the most hospitable people ready to welcome any guest and to have long idle talks! And wherever we are, we always remain DUNGANS!!

(OK 2016)

Many users share these feelings. For example, "ArlizovaDjamilya" said, "It is true, well done us, we are unique, we are the only ones!" and "Aziz B." said, "we don't idle away on May day picnics because we are planting onions in the fields." (ibid.) (May 1 was a national holiday in Soviet times).

Dungan identity is vividly expressed in these comments of young Dungans: pride in belonging to their ethnic group, uniqueness of the Dungan language, that they can recognize each other in any country of the world, best farming and national (including cuisine) traditions, national character and way of life:

hardworking, wealthy and hospitable. The older generation would add the Muslim religious tradition as a core part of Dungans' ethnic identity (Yanlosy 2016).

Some scholars, e.g., sinologist Rimski-Korsakoff Dyer, based on her extensive field study of Dungans in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, wrote that the Dungans turned their back to China and cut all ties with it (Rimski-Korsakoff Dyer 1981). That was an observation of Soviet times, when Dungans were prospering, and the situation is changing today (Yeoh, Liu and Fan 2011: 29–30). With intensifying contacts between Dungans from Kazakhstan and Hui from Shaanxi and Gansu, especially in language and cultural education, there is a long-term impact on the younger generation of Dungans in terms of re-Sinicization. This may be supplemented by a potential contention between ethnoreligious and ethnolinguistic allegiances between ethnicities (*ibid.*). As in earlier cases, not only individual, but also systemic in-depth studies are needed to monitor these complex demographic, social, cultural and linguistic developments.

Han diaspora and the emerging “overland Chinese” community in Kazakhstan

This section looks at two other groups: the local Han Chinese, who are Kazakhstan's citizens, and the emerging *huaqiao* (overseas Chinese) community, which comprises temporary migrants from China in Kazakhstan. Chinese citizens emigrated from China primarily from its eastern coast, and those living or working abroad are called the “overseas Chinese.” Since Kazakhstan and China share a land border, it may be more appropriate to call the Chinese immigrants in Kazakhstan “overland Chinese.”

As is the case with Uyghurs and Dungans, the majority of the Han Chinese arrived in Kazakhstan as refugees from Xinjiang in the early 1960s, fleeing famine and repression. However, of the three groups, the population of the local Han is the smallest (3,400 people), whereas Chinese migrants form the largest group, and their number continues to grow: their numbers in Kazakhstan, according to Chinese sources, are estimated to be up to 300,000 people (Xinhua 2009).

There has been no representative or in-depth study of Han diaspora and the overland Chinese community in Kazakhstan so far. The present analysis of the diaspora's social and ethnodemographic structure and dynamics is based on government statistics from population censuses and annual statistical data. These have been complemented by a small-scale pilot research among Kazakhstani Hans conducted by the author, the first of such endeavor. Undoubtedly, further applied sociological, anthropological and sociodemographic studies are needed.

The local *Han Chinese* in Kazakhstan

The population of ethnic Chinese in Kazakhstan is small: 3,424 people (0.02 percent of the total population), according to the 2009 census. Since 1970, the Chinese population in Kazakhstan has decreased by 17.8 percent (from 4,189

people) (Smailov 2000: 6, 8, 10; Statistical Agency of the RK 2010). As in China, males predominate among the Han Chinese: the proportions of males and females were 58.8 percent 41.2 percent in 2009. The Han population in Kazakhstan is now aging, and the share of persons above 60 is higher than 7 percent. In 2009, the proportion in the youngest cohort (below 20 years old) was 20.1 percent, in the 21–59 age bracket 63.2 percent, and in the elderly group (above 60) 16.7 percent (Statistical Agency of the RK 2010)

Initially, urbanization of the Han was rather slow. The refugees resided in special settlements of 25–30 persons, together with other residents in the rural districts of the Dzhambul, Chimkent and Karaganda regions. The Chinese did not have passports at that time, only certificates of stateless persons, and they had to check in with the local authorities periodically; these policies toward the Chinese continued during Mao Zedong's rule, presumably because of fear that they would become "a fifth column" of China in Kazakhstan. Today the Chinese are a highly urbanized group – 80 percent (2009) live in cities, predominantly in Almaty, Astana and Karaganda.

According to the 2009 census, the Han Chinese were well-educated: 24.1 percent (24.3 percent males and 23.8 percent females) had higher and incomplete higher education (among the population aged 15 and above). The share with vocational educations was 24.1 percent (23.9 percent males and 24.4 percent females). This means that nearly half (48.2 percent) of the Han Chinese had a professional education, and that males and females had equal levels of higher education. Today only 5.1 percent of the Chinese have primary education, and they are, as a rule, represented by the older generation.

The number of the Chinese who speak their native language has gone down – from 54.6 percent in 1970 to 29.8 percent in 1999. The proportion of those speaking the Chinese language is higher in rural areas than it is in cities. At the same time, the proportion of those speaking Russian doubled from 42.9 percent in 1970 to 94.4 percent in 1999, while the share of those speaking Kazakh increased from 2.6 percent to 27.4 percent, the growth rate having been especially rapid between 1989 and 1999.

This can be attributed to the urbanization of ethnic Chinese and their more active interaction with business partners, as well as by their involvement in trade and economic cooperation with China. It is not clear to what extent this is an assimilation or a "Russification" process, or whether Kazakhstani Hans do speak or learn Chinese – further studies are needed to highlight these ethnolinguistic aspects.

Kazakhstani ethnic Chinese and "Chineseness"

I conducted pilot research that included five in-depth semistructured personal interviews with Han Chinese carried out in Almaty in 2015–2016, and one focus group with Hans (six persons) conducted in Karaganda in March 2016 in accordance with the preliminary compiled guide. The guide questions aimed to explore a three-component structure of ethnic identity (Drobizheva et al. 1996: 296;

Stefanenko 1999: 198–199, 2014): cognitive (what they know about Chinese symbols, traditions, celebrations and cuisine); emotional (what they feel and whether they are proud of being Chinese and members of the Chinese diaspora, and what their attitude is to key diaspora figures, to the diaspora itself and to China); and behavioral (whether they or their children learn the Chinese language, who they do business with, whether they observe any special national traditions in business, etc.).

The study revealed that all participants considered themselves Han Chinese, however Chinese identity has a weaker expression for the Hans than for Dungans or Uyghurs. Many of them have a history of intermarriage over at least three generations. They describe their families as “mixed” or “half-breeds” (*polukrovki*): “my Mom is Ukrainian, my Dad is Chinese,” “my grandmothers are a Russian and a Jew, and both grandfathers are Chinese.”

Dmitry (names changed) said,

My paternal grandmother is a Russian from Transbaikal region, and grandfather is Chinese. Same with my maternal grandparents. So they are both of mixed blood. As for myself, you can see I don’t even look like a Chinese, we live in Kazakhstan – so I look like a Kazakh.

Dmitry notes that his nieces and nephews are in mixed marriages too: “Yes, they already got submerged in Kazakhstan. I am not even close to some of them. We only meet at funerals and weddings.”

Despite being born in mixed families themselves, parents of some informants apparently wanted their adult children to marry ethnic Chinese, which indeed they did. For example, Valery (name changed) who is from a mixed Russian–Chinese family, married his daughter to a local Chinese man, though there were only a few Chinese families in his remote town in eastern Kazakhstan. A focus group participant from Karaganda, also from a mixed family, decided to educate his daughter in China, where she met her future husband (a Chinese) and eventually stayed in Beijing. Han Chinese value intra-Chinese marriages; however, interviewees believe that it is getting more difficult to date ethnic Chinese in a big city. The biggest megalopolis, Almaty, internationalizes social life, and children from mixed Chinese families living in a multicultural environment do not prioritize the ethnicity of their friends, colleagues or potential spouses.

Though Dmitry talked about the weakening of Chinese identity, when asked what it meant for him to be Han, he answered: “Of course, I feel Chinese, I was born in China, and my attitude to Kazakhstan is also good because I have lived here all my life.” When asked “What do you think about China’s rise at present? Are you proud of it?” he replied,

Well, I can’t say I am very proud. Of course, it is good that they are rising. But I’m more interested in the rise of Kazakhstan because I live here. Chinese are rich and cool. But do I care? I wish people in Kazakhstan could be rich and cool.

Later on, however, Dmitry reports that his daughter lives in China: “and I am proud that she speaks Chinese and knows more about China than I do.”

Poor knowledge of the Chinese language impedes ethnic self-identification and consolidation of Han. Valery said,

I speak Russian and can speak only some Chinese because I have lived here [in Kazakhstan] already for 54 years. When I meet Han and start talking, I gradually recall Chinese. I was invited to work as an interpreter once, but since I know only the spoken language, they brought their own translators. [My] children don't speak Chinese either.

And do they [grandchildren] want to learn Chinese?

Yes, they would like to. Now we have good relations with China, and many young people, Kazakhs and others, go to China to study. There is a chance to work as an interpreter. They are willing, but not all have an opportunity.

Maria, a Han Chinese, and a Chinese language teacher from Karaganda, is very proud of having Chinese roots; she feels excited that more and more people are joining the Chinese language courses and her granddaughter is learning it, too. Maria and other participants feel uncomfortable when critical or negative attitudes toward Chinese people are expressed in public places such as markets.

We asked about some key concepts in Chinese culture, including “saving face” and “losing face,” and whether the participants and their communities follow Chinese customs and traditions. A majority of respondents knew very little about these concepts and barely used them. Only Maria was able to discuss her understanding of this tradition. As for Chinese customs and traditions, Chinese New Year dominates: “All get together around a large table. Everybody comes, and grandparents tell the family about their life in China while the young listen and try to remember.”

One interviewee in Almaty, 28-year-old Vera, from a mixed family, reported that her extended Chinese family live in their private houses very close to each other. The family celebrates many Chinese and national events and holidays throughout the year in one of her uncle's bigger houses. The celebrations are led by two great-grandmothers, 85 and 90 years old, who are highly respected in this Chinese lineage. They share their life stories and memories, practice traditions, e.g., kids greeting and bowing to adults, who would give them money. Of course, Chinese cuisine reigns at each meeting, although as families become more international they may bring dishes from their national cuisine – Russian or Korean – or cook them during the gathering.

Not surprisingly, Vera feels proud of having Chinese ancestry: “Chinese people are workaholics, I admire their hardworking nature”; “this ethnic mix inspires me towards stronger achievements.”

When asked whether his personal, family and community's interest in China is growing or not, another respondent, Valery, reported: “Not really. We hear

their life is getting better. But we live here and consider ourselves Kazakhstanis. So we wish Kazakhstan could also rise.” As to his feeling about being Chinese, he replied, “Well, sure. I was born there. Of course something remained in my blood.” In response to the question “Against the background of China’s rise, are you proud to be Chinese?” he laughed and said “No.”

As for mutual support and diaspora consolidation, interviewees responded that they tended to rely on themselves and family. Valery responded: “I rely on ... my family, close relatives mostly.... When I have difficulties, I go to my brother.”

And does diaspora play any role?

Why do we need the diaspora? If there is a celebration or somebody passes away, the whole diaspora would raise money and help. Every month we contribute 2,000 tenge [around \$10 before the 2015 default]. Step by step, the money is accumulated and we use it to support each other.... If someone retires from civil service, their pension is not sufficient. My pension is also small, sometimes not enough.

What about the Chinese New Year celebration? Did people meet on this occasion in Almaty?

No, nobody did. The elderly people met in the past, but they had passed away. Young people are passive. You know, they were born here [in Kazakhstan], and they don’t feel as Chinese. Everyone is engaged with himself, with his work, commerce, and they are not interested in the diaspora ... they are half-blooded, they consider themselves Russian.

As in case of Valery and other cases, we primarily observe kinship, rather than state’s social and/or diaspora support. For example, Vera came to Almaty after graduating from her home city university and fully relied upon her uncles – her father’s brothers – in adaptation, finding premises and a job, lending money etc. Vera is the owner of a small business and a successful manager now, but she highly appreciates her relatives’ support at the beginning of her carrier. This kind of inclusive and supportive family and kinship relationships are typical for previously politically oppressed and socially undersupported ethnic groups in Kazakhstan: we observed the same process among Germans, who were formerly deported to Kazakhstan in the 1940s and were for decades discriminated against as an ethnic group (Sienkiewicz, Sadovskaya and Amelina 2015).

Today even communication and networking within the Han diaspora are limited – that was the evidence from all the cities the informants and interviewees came from: Almaty, Karaganda and Ushtobe. Han Chinese prefer individual/family life and consolidation at the kinship level. The important issue is how the Hans see their future and the future of their children in Kazakhstan. The older generation does not want to remigrate to China and the people see their future in Kazakhstan – all participants of the focus group were unanimous in their

response. Some of them dream of visiting their birthplaces – Harbin, Urumqi, Haikhe – or traveling around China. One of the focus group participants reminded others (mainly 50- to 70-year-olds) that young Chinese should participate in that kind of discussion and their views may differ from the views of the older, or even middle-aged generation.

We can conclude that, based on the results of the pilot study, the Chinese identity of the local Hans in Kazakhstan is not so vividly articulated as among the Dungans and the Uyghurs: the majority do not speak any Chinese and cultural traditions are preserved mainly by the older generation and are limited to the Chinese New Year celebration. The reasons are multiple, including refugee status and political oppression for years; the “Russification” policy and propaganda of the Soviet times on creation of the “new Soviet type” of person without ethnic identification; urbanization and dispersed living in ethnically diverse communities across Kazakhstan; mixed (interethnic) marriages – all these factors prevented consolidation of a small Han diaspora and preservation of their native language and traditions.

Nonetheless, an important observation is that, in recent years, against the background of China’s rise in Central Asia, Kazakhstan in particular, there is a growing interest in China and in the revival of Chinese identity, especially among the younger generation. This revival manifests in increased enrollment of young people in Chinese language courses or graduate studies in China, visits to China, employment at Chinese and joint companies, active trade and joint enterprises with Chinese partners. The renewed interest toward China and its language and culture may lead to a revival of Han Chinese interest toward their ethnic and cultural identity. It has been spurred by more freedom to express their identity, as well as their perception of China’s rise as a global power. China’s “soft power” (Confucius Institutes and language courses, tourist agencies, cultural and educational exchange programs, exhibition activities, facilitating business interactions, etc.) may have indirect impact on these ethno- and socio-cultural dynamics as well.

However, there is still little public debate about Chinese national identity-building. Kazakhstan’s Chinese remain relatively passive participants of such discussions, preferring to focus on consolidating at the kinship level or, in far fewer instances, on establishing their coethnic local network. This issue remains unstudied, so is the conceptualization of national and cultural identity-building among Han Chinese in Kazakhstan, which opens significant prospects for collaborative international research.

“Overland Chinese” in Kazakhstan

The “overland” Chinese community in Kazakhstan is “fluid,” because practically all of them are staying and working in Kazakhstan on a temporary basis. We’ll briefly address the three major groups, namely Chinese labor migrants (managers, specialists and workers), petty traders and businessmen.

The Chinese labor force

Chinese specialists and workers are recruited in line with Kazakhstan's policy on the recruitment of foreign labor since 1993 for managing the recovery from the sharp economic crisis and meeting the challenges of the transition period, when there were not enough specialists in the country's market economy. From the late 1990s onwards, and especially after 2004, labor immigration started to accelerate and in 2008 the number of officially recruited labor from the PRC increased by 10,104 people, making up 22 percent of the total foreign labor force (54,204 people). In spite of ups and downs in 2009–2015, the share of Chinese workers made up 20 percent or more, reaching a high of 42.3 percent (the number was 11,713 of 29,458 people as of August 1, 2016) of the total foreign labor force (MHSD 2015; Gareeva 2016).

The labor force from the PRC in Kazakhstan is mainly Han Chinese. They work on temporary contracts, which are usually for up to one year but can be extended and, as a rule, come without their families because social infrastructure for Chinese has been undeveloped for many years since the 1990s – nurseries, kindergartens, schools, health centers and recreation facilities do not always provide services in the Chinese language. Only a limited number of the Chinese stayed for permanent residence in the 1990s and 2000s. At present, when the service infrastructure is developing, Hans' plans and motivation may change and this is worth further in-depth study.

Chinese specialists and workers are dispersed across the country. Those engaged in the oil and gas sector, such as engineers and workers for the construction or running of production facilities, live in specially arranged rotational camps. Specialists and managers working in offices of large companies live in apartments specially rented for them in Almaty, Astana and Aktobe, and they use the services of Chinese restaurants, health centers, banks and hotels.

Thus, on the one hand, immigration figures from China to RK go up; on the other hand, the Chinese presence remains latent and "invisible." Such an autonomous presence of relatively big groups of Chinese citizens raises a certain tension among the local population. At the same time, Chinese citizens are not always treated friendly, and there have been cases of them being detained by local internal affairs officers in public spaces, despite their legal status in Kazakhstan. Such practice does not add trust between Chinese citizens and the host community (local population) and is fraught with further growth of interethnic tension.

Chinese petty trade migration and community

Petty trade has been the most prominent sphere of economic interaction between Kazakhstan and China, dominated by traders from China and shuttle traders and individual entrepreneurs from Kazakhstan. The presence of a large number of small traders (normally not registered as entrepreneurs) shaped the trade infrastructure in the 1990s: spontaneous bazaars, small markets and big wholesale and retail markets.

The “Bolashak” wholesale and retail market near Almaty is a key hub for trading Chinese goods in Kazakhstan. It is in fact a conglomeration of dozens of wholesale and retail markets, tens of thousands of containers and trade places. According to local business owners, this highly sophisticated logistics system and trade containers was mainly controlled by Chinese (up to 50 percent) and Kyrgyzstani (at least 25 percent) citizens in the middle of the 2000s (Ikonnikov 2007).

Since the 2000s, foreign citizens have not been allowed to trade in Kazakhstan, thus Han Chinese hire locals, such as Dungans from the Zhambyl region, Kazakh repatriates from China who speak Chinese, or students learning Chinese. To purchase shipments of goods, entrepreneurs either transfer money via a Chinese bank or send a messenger with cash. Many immigrant Han Chinese did not register their businesses officially but just paid “contributions” (i.e., bribes) to the local market administration; this pushed trade further into the informal sector. By using such semilegal business practices, small traders have built up leverage over substantial financial and commodity flows.

Trade migrants have not formed their communities in Kazakhstan yet, but the fluid trade minorities have started adapting to controversial legislation through distorted social practices. In such a context, migrants and receiving communities tend to live in “parallel worlds,” without much communication or integration. In April 2009, a monthly Chinese-language newspaper was launched in Kazakhstan; it advertises goods and provides information on accommodation for rent, health centers and cultural events both in Kazakhstan and China. To counterbalance exclusion from the receiving community, this newspaper serves as a means of intraethnic consolidation of the Han migrants. This means a lot for the 300,000 Kazakstani *huaqiao* (Chinese estimates) (Xinhua 2009).

The trade sector has undergone profound changes in terms of ethnicities participating in it today. When Han Chinese could not conduct legal trade independently, they started to employ repatriated ethnic Kazakhs born in China, with their numbers in this business constantly increasing. Entrenched corruption and the expansion of the shadow economy also pushed the Han migrants from trade to other fields of entrepreneurship. They were replaced by Kazakh returnees who had either obtained Kazakh citizenship or, having status of resident aliens and good command of Chinese and Kazakh, managed to become facilitators between business owners in China and market owners in Kazakhstan. An indirect proof of such replacement comes with the data from the Interior Ministry: inspections between late 2013 and April 1, 2014, failed to identify any undocumented labor migrants of Han ethnicity at Kazakh wholesale markets (MIA RK 2014a).

Chinese business in Kazakhstan

The development of Chinese business in Kazakhstan started largely as a trade business, and soon various small and medium enterprises run by Hans from China were established. The latest official figure of actively operating Chinese and JV (joint-venture) companies in Kazakhstan as of August 1, 2016, was 793. (Yesenalina 2016). Though not always sustainable, Chinese SMEs and JVs are

numerous and active in a range of sectors, including manufacturing and assembling home appliances, metal and plastic products, and building constructions; they also thrive in a large trade and service sector, and on a rising scale – agricultural production and processing.

Big Chinese and joint businesses tend to be acknowledged for their contribution to the Kazakh economy and social sector (in the framework of its corporate social responsibility programs), however the impact of SMEs on certain domestic industrial sectors is seen as controversial. On the one hand, Chinese SMEs supply the market with goods and services; on the other, owing to a variety of external and internal factors, domestic enterprises lose in competition with Chinese businesses. The most prominent negative impact of the Chinese business activity is the decline of the footwear and textile sectors (Sadovskaya 2014: 205–213).

Despite the controversies around the expansion of Chinese business in Kazakhstan, its benefits with regards to goods supply cannot be disputed. Big companies, too, help develop specific sectors and support overall economic development, and assist in addressing social issues at the enterprise level. The trade patterns remain imbalanced, but this primarily depends on Kazakhstani governmental action, specifically on how effectively it can support local SMEs and negotiate with the Chinese side on promoting not only trade but also manufacturing companies. Some of the positive recent developments include an agreement to use Chinese credits and investments to support the noncommodity sectors (Dknews 2014).

Thus, the Han Chinese community in Kazakhstan encompasses both temporary migrants and newly arrived permanent residents from China. This merits further study to address the following questions: What is the profile of Han migrant community in Kazakhstan? How do they participate in Kazakhstan's public life? What are their motivations and individual strategies to come to Kazakhstan, their perception of the hosting country, its people and culture? How do they communicate and network with their coethnics in Kazakhstan and China? What are their aspirations and what social and human ties do they develop? Do they create transnational spaces across the border, or do they prefer to stay “invisible” and live in a “parallel world” with locals?

There are further research questions that would help explore other economic and political, ethnosocial and cultural (religious, linguistic), individual and collective dimensions of Han Chinese in Kazakhstan. For the academic community of Kazakhstan, this is a whole new area of research related to China's rise, migration, diaspora, community, identity etc. International research groups and projects would be crucial in studying these complex and challenging processes.

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10 China's new global position

Changing policies toward the Chinese diaspora in the twenty-first century

Mette Thunø

Introduction

In 2013, Chinese President Xi Jinping and the entire Politbureau's Standing Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) opened the Ninth National Congress of the All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese (*Zhonghua guiqiao huaqiao lianhehui*), with a record high of 3,200 attending delegates (MoFA 2007; Xinhua News Agency 2013). Xi's presence, along with all members of China's highest political echelon and their opening speeches, left no doubt that the Chinese diaspora would continue to receive high political priority under his new political leadership. This is, in fact, not surprising given the size of the Chinese diaspora – 60 million people, according to official Chinese accounts (Zhang 2015: 3) – with Chinese migration accounting for 10 percent of all global immigration flows to OECD countries in 2013 and constituting 22 percent of all international students' enrolment in OECD countries in 2012 (OECD 2015: 17, 31). The Chinese diaspora also contributed the second-largest amount of remittances (in absolute numbers) in the world in 2012 (making up 0.7 percent of GNP) (MPI 2012).

This chapter offers an analysis of the impact of China's strengthened global position on the political objectives of China's policies to reemploy and reempower the Chinese diaspora. Over a period of three decades, with dramatic economic, political and social developments, Beijing has also reconfigured its migration policies to reemerge as a major migrant-sending country. The construction of a new knowledge and entrepreneurial diaspora has been accompanied by a gradually increasing engagement with the diaspora that can be explained rationally as the Chinese state's quest for material and nonmaterial resources for domestic development. With the turn of the millennium and China's ascendance on the global scene, the Chinese government's increasingly vigorous efforts in terms of diaspora mobilization and engagement now call for additional reasoning. In this chapter, I argue that China's most recent policies of claiming the Chinese diaspora as "public diplomats" is part of China's quest for soft power enhancement through "public diplomacy", constituting a major policy shift away from engaging the diaspora primarily for the purpose of domestic economic development.

In other countries, such alterations in the objectives of diaspora embracement have translated into a range of civil, political and social rights such as dual citizenship (Ragazzi 2014). However, in return for providing economic and political resources, the Chinese state offers the diaspora no genuine political rights and no dual citizenship, although it does offer transnational inclusion by way of privileges upon return and by conducting a range of overseas language, cultural and media programs and activities. With these policies, China appears to be following its own unique trajectory as a nation-state, extending beyond its territorial realms and projecting extraterritorial power without surrendering state sovereignty over its citizens.

This chapter begins with a summary of the objectives of China's diaspora engagement during the formative period of the 1980s to the beginning of the new millennium. Against this background and based on political speeches and articles, I then examine recent changes in political discourse regarding the state's involvement in the diaspora to demonstrate how the concepts of "soft power" and "public diplomacy" are related to the Chinese diaspora. In particular, I consider the way that "public diplomacy" has been applied by leading government officials to the realm of China's "new migrants" and the diplomatic potentials they represent.

Throughout this chapter, I use the term "diaspora" to designate a wide array of people living beyond the borders of China as first-generation migrants or descendants with some kind of orientation toward China. From the perspective of the state, diverse Chinese communities are the objects of its policies of embracement and hence the term "diaspora" is used in this chapter as a political category of practice or analytical idiom (Brubaker 2005), rather than using the terms applied by the Chinese state to reflect its relations to overseas populations defined by citizenship (*huaqiao*, *huaren*, *huayi*). My using of "diaspora" does not imply any bounded notion of place or identity, nor any attempt to argue for an academic definition of what a "diaspora" ought to be.

Preparing for the reengagement of the Chinese diaspora in the late twentieth century

As China embarked on economic reforms after the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), the new leadership realized that the economic potential of the Chinese diaspora, particularly in Taiwan (ROC), Hong Kong and Southeast Asia, could become the economic key to its grand modernization project. Subsequently, the political discourse radically changed from denouncing Chinese emigrants as traitors to hailing them as heroes who were crucial for China's future. The new leader, Deng Xiaoping, expressed the new political direction by declaring overseas relations to be "a good thing" (*hao dongxi*) of which China needed more, not less (Guowuyuan Qiaowu Bangongshi 2001: 6). He also repeatedly appealed to the Chinese diaspora's loyalty by recalling its historical role in China's development, for instance by saying: "China is different from other countries and enjoys unique opportunities. For instance, we have tens of

millions of patriotic compatriots living abroad, who have made significant contributions to the motherland” (Zhonggong Zhongyang Wenxian Yanjiushi 2011: 717).

To govern the reengagement of the Chinese diaspora, institutions were quickly reinstated at the central level of the State Council with the coordinating agency of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (*Qiaowu bangongshi*) (OCAO) and its local branches, which are now to be found in all provinces. The so-called mass organization of All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese (*Zhonghua Quanguo Guiguo Huaqiao Lianhehui*) (ACFROC) was also resuscitated, primarily to revive domestic confidence in China’s new diaspora policies among returned Chinese emigrants (Thunø 2001). The issue of regaining overseas support and loyalty through domestic relatives was also underlined with policy announcements of reextending preferential treatment to returnees, as in the early twentieth century and the 1950s (Fitzgerald 1972; Mao 1993: 118–121; Peterson 2012).¹ In 1978, returned Chinese emigrants and their relatives were ensured treatment equal to other Chinese citizens and under certain circumstances special privileges, for instance in terms of employment, education and family planning.² These policies of extending preferential treatment to returnees and relatives of Chinese overseas were legally confirmed in 1990 with the adoption of the “Law of People’s Republic of China concerning the protection of rights and interests of returned overseas Chinese and the relatives of overseas Chinese” (Liu 2014; Thunø 2001). With these and other political and legal measures of rehabilitation, relations between the PRC and the Chinese diaspora gradually eased and paved the road for China’s new liaison with its diaspora.

To further advance the potential of diaspora resources such as economic investments and expertise, the Chinese government carefully refrained from making direct political claims on ethnic Chinese abroad. As an important first step, “The Nationality Law of the People’s Republic of China” was adopted in 1980 and excluded the possibility of dual nationality for Chinese citizens (Thunø 2001: 912). Upholding the principle of nationality based on country of birth, rather than on paternal bloodline (*jus sanguinis*), which was China’s stance prior to the People’s Republic of China (PRC) and still was the position of the government of Taiwan, somewhat appeased the countries of Southeast Asia with large ethnic Chinese populations, despite China’s new diaspora policies of engagement. However, the Sino-Indonesian Treaty on Dual Nationality in 1955, which stated that ethnic Chinese owed primary loyalty to their host countries, as well as subsequent treaties made between China and other countries in the region, had not prevented China’s support of local communist insurgencies in the region – a backing that had still not been forgotten (Cheng 2005; Fitzgerald 1972; Zhou 2015; Zhuang 2001).

China’s signals (especially to Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand) that courting the diaspora would not entail an extension of its own influence in the region were also reaffirmed with the reestablishing of initially diplomatic relations between China and Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. China’s attempts to stabilize long-standing territorial disputes also dwarfed Southeast Asia’s major

concerns about China's rising economic power, which rested on reinforced links to the ethnic Chinese of the region (Thunø 2001: 911–914). Moreover, to the governments of Southeast Asia, the prospects of economic engagement with China through their ethnic Chinese populations quickly became too attractive to ignore, although some ambivalence toward China still exists (Bolt 2000, 2011).

Chinese diaspora policies of reengagement in the late twentieth century

From the outset of the reform period, the objective of reembracing and remobilizing the Chinese diaspora was to tap the economic and knowledge resources of the diaspora kick-start economic reforms. This instrumental aim was complemented by the security and foreign policy objective of regaining Taiwan by winning over diaspora support. Finally, a cautious political role was envisioned for the diaspora in the field of civil diplomacy, with ethnic Chinese explaining China's situation in their host countries in order to improve the political climate for China. All three objectives are still identifiable as main aims of embracing the diaspora 35 years after their initial promulgation in the early 1980s, although they have been promoted with different degrees of attention and outcomes.

Economic development was paramount for China's development and financial investment, with foreign direct investment, remittances and donations being sought energetically from ethnic Chinese (primarily in Southeast Asia). Economic resources, cultural affinity, language competencies, personal relations and business networks made such financial investments feasible despite the initial immaturity of the Chinese economy. Preferential treatment as well as a continued emphasis on the legal protection of investment and donations accelerated the Chinese diaspora's financial engagement.³ During the 1980s, the Chinese diaspora's investments gradually increased, and just before the onset of the Asian currency crisis in 1997 it made up a significant two-thirds of all foreign direct investment in China (Bolt 2000: 155; Kang 2007: 6135; Long 2013; Ye 2014: 45–68).⁴ As for remittances and donations, it soon became clear that compared to economic investments they played a minor role as China's economy quickly took off (Thunø 2001: 919–920). Two decades later, China is the recipient of the second-largest amount of remittances in the world, but they still make up only 0.7 percent of GNP and play an insignificant role for China's development (MPI 2012).

Tapping the diaspora for knowledge was another instrumental aim that was pursued with a view to achieving China's modernization goals. The Chinese diaspora was able to transfer knowledge as well as financial investments, but Deng Xiaoping (who had himself been a student in France) also instigated policies to support the enlargement of the overseas talent pool by sending state-funded students abroad as well as permitting self-financed overseas study from 1981 (Xiang 2003: 29; Zweig 2013: 593). In 1978, 480 state-funded students were sent abroad, and only four years later 10,000 Chinese students were

studying overseas. However, “brain drain” as a result of students not returning after their studies abroad immediately became an issue of concern at the state level. In the period between 1978 and 2002, no more than 500,000 students left China to study abroad (Zhuang 2012), but luring them back to China remained a problem, despite a plethora of legal measures involving preferential treatment and recruitment activities (Xiang 2003; Zhuang 2012; Zweig 2006a, 2006b, 2013).

The second official objective of engaging the Chinese diaspora was to promote “peaceful unification” with Taiwan. In 1990, Deng Xiaoping expressed this aim by saying “Compatriots of the Mainland, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao as well as overseas Chinese are all children of the Chinese nation. We have to struggle [*fendou*] together to achieve reunification of the motherland and national rejuvenation” (Deng 1994). This policy of seeking the diaspora’s assistance in containing Taiwan’s independence, thereby legitimizing the PRC’s territorial and ideological claim over Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao, was but one reason – the other being the more immediate aim of winning over the loyalty and support of the Chinese diaspora from their allegiance to the Kuomintang government.

As competition to curry favor with the Chinese diaspora commenced, strong efforts were made by both the PRC and the ROC to claim and gain the support of the Chinese diasporic communities. During the period when China debarred the diaspora, strong ties to Taiwan had developed as resources from Taiwan’s economic ascendancy, and the anticommunist atmosphere of the Cold War period had been employed to establish close political, cultural and economic ties to the Chinese diaspora. The transfer in 1979 of United States diplomatic recognition from the ROC to the PRC and the consequential acknowledgment of Taiwan as part of the PRC, however, started a gradual shift of allegiances among the Chinese ethnic communities toward the PRC in the USA as well as in Southeast Asia (Lai 1998: 919–920).

The third objective, of wooing the Chinese diaspora, involved employing the diaspora to promote friendly relations between China and the world. However, in the early decades of diaspora governance, the Chinese government took a cautious stand in relation to the diaspora’s commitment to civil diplomacy, and activities were primarily directed at engaging the Chinese diaspora through diverse types of media and educational and cultural activities. Restraints were exercised to avoid upsetting local governments in Southeast Asia that were wary of China’s attempts to reinstitutionalize past practices of boosting Chinese ethnic identities to serve “fifth column” activities. Instead, the focus was placed primarily on domestic overseas Chinese affairs and on regaining confidence overseas by recognizing the diaspora’s legal choice of foreign citizenship and supporting their long-term integration into local societies. The strategy seems to have been first to gain the support and respect of local populations, and only subsequently to make the Chinese diaspora become a diplomatic asset for China. Moreover, it would have been premature to turn ethnic Chinese into agents of PRC foreign policy given the weak cultural and national linkages to China at this point. Instead, the Chinese government opted for a long-term strategy of cultivating a

shared national culture through the means of supporting overseas Chinese education, overseas Chinese media and overseas Chinese associations (the so-called ‘three pillars’) (Mao 1993: 339–348).

Enlarging the scope of the Chinese diaspora: producing a knowledge diaspora

During the 1990s, China experienced substantial economic growth rates in the transition to a market economy and improved international relations. Jiang Zemin came into office after Deng Xiaoping and continued the transnational policies of embracing the diaspora to attract resources for China’s domestic development, as well as employing the diaspora to oppose Taiwan’s pro-independence forces and conduct cautious civil diplomacy (Jiang 1997: 452–456). However, Jiang Zemin and Prime Minister Zhu Rongji became even more explicit in pointing out the particular value of the Chinese diaspora as a knowledge base rather than merely an economic asset. In 1993, Jiang explained:

What I need to emphasise is that presently a lot of departments and localities have the tendency to focus more on financial funding and less on human talent ... I wish that the government departments concerned with Overseas Chinese work would take the lead in changing this situation and place their work of attracting ethnic Chinese talents in a more important position.

(Jiang 1997: 456)

Later, in 1999, he stressed the importance of ethnic Chinese as a pool of human talent (Chen 1999).

In response to the Asian economic crisis, it had become evident that overreliance on ethnic Chinese capital and low-technology production were factors contributing to the vulnerability of China’s economy. Moreover, preferential treatment of ethnic Chinese spurred regionalism and the destabilization of Chinese society (Bolt 2000: 92–105). Hence, the Chinese leadership now actively started focusing on producing a knowledge diaspora and expressing great hopes regarding the potential of returning Chinese graduates for realizing China’s global investment ambitions. In 2001, Zhu Rongji underlined this change of focus in China’s diaspora policy from mainly attracting foreign capital to creating and tapping a Chinese knowledge diaspora to meet the increasingly competitive global quest for human talent (Zweig 2013: 594). This strategy was made even more explicit with programs to “select first-class students, sending them to first-class universities, to learn from first-class academics,” and in 2007 to 2011 with a scheme selecting 5,000 research students from China’s 49 most prestigious universities to study at esteemed US and European universities (Leung 2015).

The number of Chinese students studying abroad thus continued to increase, from 300,000 in 1997 to 933,000 in 2005 and then increasing dramatically for a variety of reasons to 3.5 million in 2014 (including high-school and

middle-school students) (Wang 2015: 13). Still, it remained a problem to “empower the nation through talent” (*rencai qiangguo*) because the majority of these students preferred to remain abroad after graduating. An official report in 2013 revealed that a vast majority (87 percent) of Chinese top scientists and engineers living abroad had no plans to return to China (Zhang 2013); and in 2014 it transpired that 51 percent of the Chinese students who had left to study overseas since 1978 had never returned (Wang 2015: 14–15).

To counteract this trend, Chinese embassies and consulates set up thousands of overseas student and professional associations and held major events in China (Leung 2015; Xiang 2011; Xie 2011). Various domestic government departments were established to implement lucrative recruitment programs offering high salaries, tenured positions, investment sites at industrial and enterprise high-tech parks, beneficial tax rates, one-off bonuses and business loans, equipment and facilities, improved working conditions, tax and housing privileges and multiple entry visas to entice both permanent return and short-term visits of different types (Cheng 2003: 283; Leung 2015; Xie 2011; Zweig 2004).

Although the many efforts to entice China’s overseas graduates to return and improved living conditions in China lately seem to have paid off in somewhat higher return rates (Wang 2015), the Chinese leadership realized at an early stage, in line with leading international economists (Dufoix 2011: 5), that in the increasingly globalized economy knowledge diasporas could be tapped without the people involved necessarily returning to China. As early as 1996, the official slogan of “returning home to serve the country” (*huiguo fuwu*) had been replaced by “serving the country” (*wei guojia fuwu*), implying that people could also contribute to China’s reform process from a distance (Cheng 2003; Zweig 2006a: 69, 74). This attitude to the Chinese knowledge diaspora was made even more explicit in 2001 with new policies outlining freedom of movement for returnees, captured by the 12-character slogan “Support overseas study, encourage returns, guarantee freedom to come and go” (*Zhichi liuxue, guli huiguo, lai qu ziyou*) (Zweig 2006a: 68–69). In support of these policies of providing more flexibility for overseas Chinese academics and researchers to interact with China, in 2014 the Ministry of Education announced more liberal conditions to leave and return to China for short visits (MoE 2014). In 2015, the Chinese president expressed the same standpoint by saying:

We want to uphold the policy that supports students studying abroad, encourages them to return to China, gives them the freedom of leaving and coming back, and explore the roles they can play; and we encourage Chinese students studying overseas to either return to China to work, or serve the country in multiple other ways.

(Zhang Feng 2015)

Decades of intense political attention at the highest leadership level with a view to establishing a new diaspora of Chinese students and graduates reflect a political refocusing from tapping overseas financial resources to tapping highly

skilled resources instead. In this endeavor, the Chinese leadership is redefining the Chinese diaspora, albeit applying the same measures as those applied to the traditional Chinese diaspora of economic migrants and their descendants. A large-scale bureaucracy has been established to send (the right) students abroad and lure them back, numerous associations and networks have been established for the state to embrace students as well as graduates, and special privileges have generously been extended to returning graduates. Furthermore, the Chinese state is countering transnational dissent by extending its reach beyond the domestic realms, as when President Xi Jinping in 2015 stressed that overseas Chinese students were a new focal point (*zhuolidian*) in the United Front Work (Zhang 2015). In early 2016, this was transformed into policies by the Ministry of Education underlining to use Chinese students abroad as “civil ambassadors” (*minjian dashi*) to strengthen overseas propaganda about the “China dream” (CCP Committee at MoE 2016).

The Chinese leadership has thus created a new type of highly skilled diaspora. Whether this diaspora remains abroad or returns home, the state strives to incorporate the people involved on similar terms as the conventionally perceived diaspora of “overseas Chinese,” albeit not discursively or institutionally including this dimension in its “overseas Chinese” policies.

New responsibilities with the embracing of the diaspora: overseas rescue missions

Entering the new millennium, China experienced consistent economic growth and developed its international status into that of a major global economic power. After the 1997 financial crisis and China’s admission into the World Trade Organization in 2001, it became particularly clear that China had become the engine for economic growth in Asia. The signing of free trade agreements produced successful foreign and diplomatic relations first with Southeast Asian countries, and China’s former tense interactions with several of these states were replaced with a “China fever” and an extension of political and social rights to Chinese minorities, even in Indonesia (d’Hooghe 2015: 187–195; Harding 2008; Hwang 2010; Zhu 2013: 171–200). Consequently, suspicion of ethnic Chinese as a “fifth column” dwindled and was overtaken by at least official salutes to ethnic Chinese as economic assets in engaging with China (Liu 2011: 830–831). In addition, the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand had also become emigration states in their own right, and were active in soliciting political and economic support from their own diasporas, which may have reduced the level of suspicion regarding China’s increasing diaspora engagement.

Challenging the directive of “keeping a low profile” in foreign affairs to gain economic advantages, Hu Jintao proclaimed in 2004 that China’s “foreign policy and diplomacy should serve the Chinese people” (*waijiao weimin*) and henceforth also actively extend protection of Chinese overseas nationals (Holslag 2009: 43–44). This policy change of drawing in China’s overseas Chinese population as part of China’s foreign policies reflected China’s growing need to

secure its global economic activities, which were now being undertaken by a rising number of Chinese migrants dispersed all over the world. Responding proactively to the recent mobile diaspora, also reflected the Chinese government's refocusing away from the financially powerful diaspora in Southeast Asia toward the "new migrants" (*xin yimin*). As Hu Jintao said in 2005:

The new Chinese migrants and the new generation of ethnic Chinese are a new force of high quality, higher potential, full of vitality and vigour. We need to look at a distance and on the basis of their characteristics and needs practically strengthen friendship and cooperation with them and in this way ensure that the source of overseas Chinese affairs may continue to develop.

(Xu 2012: 16)

This is quite a contrast to the situation in 1998, when the Suharto regime in Indonesia collapsed and anti-Chinese riots broke out, leading to looting and the burning down of shops and to widespread sexual harassment and violence against ethnic Chinese women without the Chinese government taking immediate measures, or initiating diplomatic dialogue, preferring to adhere to its non-interference policy (Purdey 2006: 108, 166–167). Strong reactions on social media among ethnic Chinese around the globe highlighted the limits of China's initially passive diplomatic approach (see, e.g., Arnold 1998; Tay 2000). In light of its active policies of reclaiming loyalty and resources from the diaspora, China was clearly expected by the Chinese diaspora to take action to defend the ethnic Chinese minority in Indonesia and display legal and moral responsibility.

Six years later, in 2004, 14 Chinese workers were killed in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and this time the Chinese state immediately reacted by offering assistance to its overseas nationals (Xia 2005). Following this incident, China started institutionalizing its overseas protection system with consular protection centers and coordination structures to better safeguard its nationals, especially Chinese migrants caught in natural or manmade disasters, and to provide legal assistance and protection for Chinese businesses (Li 2011b; MoFA 2007).

Since then, China has engaged in an increasing number of overseas rescue and emergency operations for Chinese nationals. Between 2006 and 2010, a total of approximately 6,000 Chinese nationals were evacuated after upheavals in Chad, Haiti, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, the Solomon Islands, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Tonga; and in 2011 alone 48,000 Chinese were flown out of Egypt, Libya and Japan (Duchâtel 2014: 46–48). Early in 2015, hundreds of Chinese nationals working as contract workers in Yemen were evacuated in several rescue missions by Chinese warships, as were 225 non-Chinese nationals (Rajagopalan 2015).

Arriving back in China following emergencies abroad, Chinese evacuees have generally made the media headlines by waving Chinese flags upon setting foot on Chinese soil and receiving the greetings of China's top leadership. In contrast to the embarrassment in 1998, these rescue actions now give the Chinese state a chance to assert itself as a responsible and moral power above local authorities and local ethnic Chinese leaders and associations. Enclosed in the

discourse of humanitarian aid, people including ethnic Chinese of foreign nationalities have also been extended consular assistance, and in so doing the Chinese state has proved its willingness, obligations and legitimacy to embrace the entire Chinese diaspora regardless of nationality questions. China has thus been able to directly demonstrate its intentions to protect and defend the Chinese diaspora, as well as raising its level of “soft power” and maritime power on the global scene.

The Chinese diaspora as public diplomats: a major shift in China’s diaspora policies

These rescue operations and extensive diplomatic activities were signs of China’s increasing confidence as not only a global economic power, but also to win weight as a political authority in the world. The power of a respectable national image was of course not foreign to China’s leaders, since the CCP had understood early on the significance of image-making through primarily external propaganda (Liu 2015). But the importance of gaining “soft power,” as proposed by Joseph Nye (Nye 1990, 2004) and the conditions for effectively projecting national images were realized to have changed with the information age (Nye 2008).

In China, Nye’s concept of “soft power” gained tremendous impact when Hu Jintao explained the importance of enhancing China’s soft power based on traditional Chinese culture in his report to the Seventeenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China in October 2007 (CPC 2007).⁵ China’s global advancement by way of Chinese cultural values was reiterated at the Eighteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China in October 2012 (CPC 2012) and in August 2013 at the National Propaganda and Ideology Work Conference, when President Xi Jinping unmistakably expressed the need for China to establish its own discourse about the “China story,” rather than being subjected to internationally controlled communication regimes (Cai 2013).

Following official authorization in 2007, the implementation of policies to enhance China’s “soft power” potential started vigorously with cultural, educational, academic, business, public and official diplomatic activities in countries around the world (d’Hooghe 2015: 5; Zhu 2013). Chinese language and culture was promoted abroad – for instance by establishing Confucius Institutes worldwide (CCP Committee at MoE 2016; Hartig 2015; Paradise 2009; Zhang 2007: 118–119) and hosting major international events such as the Olympic Games (2008), Asia Games (2010) and Shanghai World Expo (2010). Image-making activities were underscored by the global expansion of Chinese publicity departments and large media groups (Xinhua, China Central Television, China Radio International and *China Daily*) (Kingsley 2015; Rawnsley 2015).

Simultaneously with the strategy of strengthening China’s “soft power,” the trio of long-term objectives of China’s diaspora policies (modernization, national unity and international relations) was once again confirmed at the National Overseas Chinese Affairs Work Conference, held in February 2005. While the third objective of employing the Chinese diaspora as connections to the international

world was not new, the conceptualization of this task as “civil diplomacy” (*minjian waijiao*) was new, although the political implications remained vague (Commentary 2005). However, at the National Overseas Chinese Affairs Work Conference in 2011, one of the highest-ranking diplomats and advisors to Hu Jintao on foreign affairs, State Councillor Dai Bingguo (戴秉国), was invited as opening speaker to enunciate the new policies of making Chinese living abroad “public diplomats” (*gonggong waijiao*) of China in their countries of residence. He explained that China would be facing a more complicated (*fuza*) foreign policy situation in the future and that members of the Chinese diaspora were expected to act as friendly ambassadors for China by presenting China in a positive light in their respective countries of residence (Xie 2011; Zhen 2011).

At the same meeting, the deputy director of the OCAO, Xu Yousheng, (许又声) confirmed the three long-term objectives of China’s diaspora policies as the “three expansions” (*sange tuozhan*): attracting investments and talents, protecting and promoting national unity, and generating national soft power by way of public diplomacy (Zhen 2011). Shortly after this conference, the importance of implementing policies to realize the new intentions was reflected in the State Council’s passing for the first time of a five-year implementation plan for employing and embracing the diaspora (“Plan for the development of national overseas Chinese work (2011–2015)” (2011, no. 27) (*Guojia qiaowu gongzuo fazhan gangyao* (2011–2015)).⁶

Chinese people living overseas used to be regarded as a potential financial and knowledge resource, so recognizing and endorsing the Chinese diaspora as “public diplomats” constitutes a major change of policy. In an article written in 2010, the deputy director-general of the CCP’s Central Committee’s Office for Foreign Affairs (Zhongyang waishi bangongshi) (who became director of the OCAO three years later) Qiu Yuanping argued that this type of “civil diplomacy” had already taken off in relation to the Olympic torch relay in 2008 (Qiu 2010). Riots in Tibet broke out simultaneously, and protest movements against China impacted the torch relay. Encouraged by official Chinese-language media, including social media and Chinese embassies, the Chinese diaspora reacted strongly and quickly, especially against US and European media coverage of the Tibet riots, regarding this coverage as favoring the Dalai Lama. Numerous demonstrations were organized surprisingly quickly in major cities around the world (d’Hooghe 2015: 243–247; Li 2011a) and clearly demonstrated both the Chinese state’s new ambitions of extending its ideological reach beyond China’s territory and the potentials of the Chinese diaspora as China’s “public diplomats.” As “public diplomats,” the Chinese diaspora thus became both targets and vehicles for the Chinese state’s foreign policy aims in relation to China’s global expansion and positioning.

Before the notion of “public diplomats” was applied to the Chinese diaspora, “public diplomacy” had already been widely debated in Chinese political and academic circles as an important means to achieve China’s new foreign policy goals (d’Hooghe 2015: 93–131).⁷ Traditionally, China had relied on people-to-people diplomacy of revolutionary origin, dating back to the early days of communism, with propaganda orchestrated by the government and the CCP.

However, the Chinese leadership realized that in a postmodern and transnational world it would require more than centralized government-to-government diplomacy to control and influence the global image of China. In 2010, Qiu Yuanping published an article on the need for “public diplomacy” in *Guoji wenti yanjiu* (*Studies on International Questions*), in which she defined public diplomacy as “essentially public-oriented two-way communication, a public relations activity seeking consensus on an equal basis,” “mainly meant to influence the foreign public’s attitude to the formation and implementation of our foreign affairs policies and in this way have a positive impact on the implementation of these” (Qiu 2010). As for the implementation of “public diplomacy,” she argued that

[t]he state is the main actor in international relations. . . . Government officials and the general public join forces with the counterpart to develop public diplomatic activities, but the government cannot take over everything, nor can the public completely act as it pleases [*zifa xingwei*].

(Qiu 2010)

In line with other states in the world (Melissen 2007; Sharp 2007), a Chinese approach of achieving national image and narrative constructions by civil society agents under government supervision was thus set in motion. According to Ingrid d’Hooghe, the goals of “public diplomacy” in China are to make the outside world understand China’s political system and policies, acknowledge China as a reliable and responsible economic partner, perceive China as a trustworthy and responsible member of the international political community and finally respect China as an ancient but dynamic civilization (d’Hooghe 2015: 100–101).

The sincerity of the new political strategy regarding the Chinese diaspora’s role as an important player in China’s foreign affairs was underlined in February 2012 when Vice Minister of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs He Yafei (何亚非) was appointed deputy director of the OCAO; a year later the leading official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Qiu Yuanping (裘援平), was assigned to the position of director of the OCAO, replacing Li Haifeng. These unexpected appointments to the top positions of the OCAO reflected a determination at the highest political level to endorse the OCAO with new political obligations directly related to China’s foreign policy goals.

Soon after his appointment, He Yafei published an article on how “diasporic public diplomacy” (*qiaowu gonggong waijiao*) through proper guidance and patient motivation could help to convey a positive “story” about China’s national conditions, values and policies to more effectively enhance China’s international image. In He’s view, this new approach was needed

due to the mischiefs of ideology and the Cold War mentality, our official external propaganda activities have been easily drawn into question by foreigners who also misinterpret and misunderstand. . . . China’s propaganda has been criticised for not telling stories, but being too didactic.

(He 2012)

However, He had more in mind for the Chinese diaspora than becoming mere discursive tools of the Chinese state, since he stressed that bringing the Chinese diaspora into play would not be any different from how Israel, India, Japan and other nations influenced politicians in the US and Peru through their diasporas (He 2012).⁸

In fact, the case of the strong Jewish diaspora in the US may have served as a source of inspiration for the Chinese government as it started encouraging the Chinese diaspora to become directly involved in achieving China's foreign policy goals. The Chinese and Jewish diasporas share certain features such as being materially strong and considering their "homelands" to be critical to their identity. But, unlike the Chinese diaspora, the well-organized Jewish diaspora is a crucial political and diplomatic asset for Israel (Newland 2010; Shain 2003). China's aspirations of employing its diaspora in the same way may be observed in the Chinese government's active involvement in encouraging and assisting ethnic Chinese political participation in local and national elections abroad, such as the British general election in 2010 (Liu 2011: 831–832).

Targeting and employing the Chinese diaspora as “public diplomats” to secure “national unity” in relation to Tibet and Xinjiang

During the same period as the Chinese government decided to employ the Chinese diaspora as “public diplomats” to enhance China's “soft power” and achieve China's foreign policy goals of being a rising power in the world, similar approaches were applied to secure the second objective of Beijing's diaspora policies: “national unity.” As mentioned above, the Chinese government had worked constantly to win over more ethnic Chinese allying with the ROC and to change international public opinion to gain acceptance of China's claim to Taiwan and its “One country, two systems” policy. By the turn of the millennium, efforts to oppose Taiwan's independence intensified, with the pro-Taiwanese Democratic People's Party in power from 2000 to 2008. Beijing engaged in a vast range of attempts to prevent Taiwan's independence from challenging the very essence of Beijing's entitlement to define “Chineseness” and “China” as a nation-state. These attempts included PRC embassies and consulates busily setting up various associations such as the China Council for the Promotion of Peaceful National Reunification (*Zhongguo heping tongyi zujin-hui*), subordinate to the United Front Department of the CCP. This association is led by the vice president of the National People's Consultative Conference, with more than 100 subordinate local associations around the world inviting local ethnic Chinese as well as non-Chinese dignitaries as honorary members or as part of local leadership.⁹

Although it has not attracted much international attention, this major umbrella association constitutes a well-structured global network working along the lines of “public diplomacy” to counteract Taiwanese independence movements by winning over ethnic Chinese support and influencing foreign media and

international political decision-making. As public diplomacy and other measures aimed at molding global and domestic public opinion on the Taiwan issue proved successful, and with the KMT coming to power in 2008 making pro-Taiwanese supporters less influential, the diaspora started to be used as “public diplomats” against the escalating pro-independence forces of Tibet and Xinjiang.

Talking at the Eighth National Congress of Returned Overseas Chinese in July 2009, Wang Zhaoguo (Politburo member, former head of China’s United Front Department) urged the delegates in light of the ongoing clashes between Uighur and Han people in Xinjiang province to “thoroughly understand the principle that ‘national unity is a blessing and national separatism a disaster’” and “to resolutely support the Party and Government in safeguarding the unity of nationalities and social stability” (Wang 2009). In 2010, the Fifth Conference for Friendship of Overseas Chinese Associations was held in Beijing, with 600 Chinese overseas representatives, on the theme of “Protect a Unified China – the Situation and History of Xinjiang and Tibet” (*China News* 2010a). And the same topic was taken up in December 2013 at the Ninth National Congress of Returned Overseas Chinese by Vice President Li Yuanchao, emphasizing the overseas delegates’ role in supporting the unity of all ethnic nationalities in China to fight separatist forces and no longer just pro-Taiwan independence movements (Li 2013).

The fact that the government’s intentions were not restricted to calling on the Chinese diaspora for symbolic support only was revealed in 2010, when Li Haifeng, director of the OCAO, identified various measures that her agency would focus on to counteract overseas Tibetan and Uighur separatist movements. From now on, active liaising with overseas Tibetans and Uighurs and encouraging the Chinese diaspora to encompass national minorities in their activities, associations and societies were set high on the agenda. Chinese diaspora leaders, politicians and professionals were to be invited on study visits and lecture tours to “enhance the understanding of Chinese overseas on issues related to Tibet and Xinjiang to make them enthusiastic advocates on the issues of Tibet and Xinjiang” (*China News* 2010b). As such, the Chinese diaspora was clearly projected as both a target and vehicle also for the new goals of China’s “public diplomacy” efforts to win over external support for the Chinese state’s territorial claims and policies in western China.

Despite the Chinese government’s intentions to engage the Han Chinese diaspora in “public diplomacy” regarding issues of “national unity” on its behalf, the mobilization of the Chinese diaspora against political movements of Tibetans and Uighurs is quite different from the commitment anticipated of the diaspora with regard to the independence of Taiwan. From the beginning of the reform era, international political consensus was reached on Taiwan accepting the PRC’s policies of “One country, two systems,” and independence forces were not likely to seriously challenge the international status quo. Now soliciting support of the Chinese diaspora to both embrace the ethnically different Tibetan and Uighur diasporas and to contest the pro-independence forces of

T Tibetans and Uighurs is setting high hopes in the ethnic Han diaspora in terms of being a political force of power for the Chinese government's foreign policy ambitions.

China as a transnational state among others

Over the last couple of decades, many states have (like China) reembraced their diasporas for various purposes. A variety of policies with many comparative features have been implemented to engage, seduce and control the transnational migrant populations in order to tap into their economic, political and cultural resources and potentials (Gamlen 2008, 2014; Ragazzi 2014). In the case of China, the objectives of the government's diaspora policies changed with the new millennium from being primarily instrumental (tapping financial and knowledge resources) into increasingly engaging the diaspora as "public diplomats" on behalf of China's foreign affairs. This is not to say that the Chinese state has no interest in the economic resources of the diaspora, but with a strong global economy there is less need for regulation and policies to encourage specific economic practices of the diaspora. Instead, the objective of China's diaspora policies has changed in favor of using the diaspora to gain political impact in support of China's foreign affairs with a view to gaining international political leverage and international backing for domestic national issues pertaining to national cohesion.

This change in focus toward the Chinese diaspora has impacted on China's policies toward the diaspora as well as the Chinese government's institutional underpinning for policy implementation. As may be observed in other states (Gamlen 2014; Ragazzi 2014: 390), an impressive institutional bureaucracy has been set up to formalize relations with the state and (in particular) to perform the tasks of promoting and controlling Chinese diaspora associations and Chinese education, as well as supporting overseas Chinese media (Barabantseva 2005; Brady 2009; Liu 1998; Sun 2005).

The already-widespread domestic bureaucracy for the implementation of diaspora policies with the two parallel administrative bodies of the OCAO and AFROC (Thunø 2001) was extended during the period from 2000 to 2012, with the latter increasing its network from 8,000 to 18,400 affiliated representations all over China (including Tibet and Xinjiang). In addition, AFROC extended its organization overseas by hiring (*pinqing*) 107 consultants among prominent and politically influential Chinese overseas in 22 countries to promote Chinese interests in their countries of residence (*China News* 2009, 2013; Lin 2012, 2014).

It has also been observed that states increasingly return the favors of their diasporas with dual citizenship and in some cases also voting rights to instill a sense of national belonging and loyalty (Gamlen 2008; Rhodes 2010; Turcu and Urbatsch 2015). For the Chinese government, it also became clear that the emblematic rescue actions of Chinese nationals, preferential treatment, economic privileges and symbolic engagement would not suffice to meet the expectations of the Chinese diaspora. For the Chinese overseas to act as political, economic

and cultural communities in a dual relationship with both sending and receiving countries, the Chinese state was asked to make more concessions. Starting in 1999, Chinese overseas officially argued at the national convention of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) that the Chinese state's claims for transnational loyalty ought to also entail extending political rights such as dual citizenship in a number of other states. As this proposal was not accepted well in China, a new attempt was made with the CPPCC, but after lively discussions by Chinese officials and social media in 2004 it was again rejected by the Chinese government with reference to the sensitivities of this issue in relation to Southeast Asia and the fact that most Asian countries do not accept dual citizenship either (Liu 2011; Wang 2006). Instead, a permanent residency card (Chinese green card) scheme for high-end foreign experts was introduced in 2004, although it was only issued to 4,700 foreigners between 2004 and 2011 (Ng 2014; Zhang Yan 2015). In 2015, the government also made it possible to apply for long-term visas to make it more convenient and less costly for transnational Chinese of foreign citizenship to travel back and forth to China. In addition, Qiu Yuanping, director of the OCAC, promised at the annual National People's Congress held in March 2014 to provide more convenient entry–exit regulations for all Chinese living abroad, as well as making it easier to obtain a green card (Zheng 2014).

The Chinese diaspora's plea for acknowledgment as transnational members of the Chinese state was rejected with reference to the past. As an authoritarian state, China has no reason to offer dual citizenship apart from appeasing the diaspora. In contrast, democratic states offering dual or plural citizenships also often offer external voting and political rights, for instance in Brazil, Mexico, Croatia and the Dominican Republic (Itzigsohn 2012; Padilla 2011; Rhodes 2010; Spiro 2012), turning diasporas into overseas constituencies. The Chinese single-party state, however, has no need for extraterritorial constituencies and has made only the symbolic offer of political recognition of the diaspora as non-voting delegates to annual conventions of the political advisory body CPPCC (Liu 2011).

China is invoking a national imaginary of a diaspora deployed as “public diplomats” or lobbyists of Chinese foreign affairs. The Chinese state, however, is presently not willing to change the criteria of national belonging from territorial criteria to criteria of ethnicity. Nevertheless, China's motivation to ensure the support of the diaspora in the future is high, although it remains to be seen how the new objective of using the diaspora as a fortifier for China's foreign policy will be pursued in the future.

Conclusion

In 2014, the Overseas Chinese History Museum of China (Quanguo huaqiao lishi bowuguan) opened in Beijing after 50 years in the making, signaling the continued significance of the Chinese diaspora to China in the twenty-first century. Focusing on the contributions of the diaspora to China's historical and

modern development, the exhibitions feature China as a country in which emigration has a long history and underscore that the national loyalty of the Chinese diaspora and the Chinese state's claims to diasporic resources are innate outcomes embedded in China's history and culture. In so doing, this national museum contributes to the reimagining of the Chinese nation-state along transnational trajectories, with the nation-state as its core and gatekeeper of diasporic membership.

The realization of the huge new diaspora museum with government funding and diaspora sponsorships echoes the Chinese state's continued active policies of embracing the Chinese diaspora in the twenty-first century. Under the leadership of Hu Jintao and in particular Xi Jinping and his "big power diplomacy with Chinese characteristics," focusing on establishing international partnerships to gain global influence (Hu 2016; Lam 2015), the mobilization of the Chinese diaspora for purposes other than the financial aims of the late twentieth century have been conveyed. "Rejuvenating" (*fixing*) the Chinese nation to become globally rule-setting through the shaping of patronage, loyalties, rights and responsibilities to other nations (Yan 2014) implies that China is committed to strengthening its "soft power." To realize this ambition, the Chinese government declared back in 2011 that a strategic goal of its diaspora policies from now on would be to mobilize the diaspora to serve as agents in China's public diplomacy endeavors.

This new stage in China's diaspora policies reflects not only a more self-confident China asserting great power status in world affairs, but also the Chinese state's confidence in the potentials of the recently produced part of the Chinese diaspora for which the new discursive category was introduced, "new migrants" (*xin yimin*). These migrants are widely disseminated and interlinked across the globe in extensive transnational economic, social, cultural and media networks. As China is rising, it is cultivating and governing this part of the Chinese diaspora so that it has political value to China in the host countries, rather than reincluding the diaspora as part of a permanent return project to China. Diaspora policies favor cultivating linkages to Chinese diaspora networks of transnational capital and knowledge that may enable China to open up to new political, commercial and financial flows of people and capital.

To enter into a reciprocal relationship with the Chinese diaspora, and like other emigration countries with relatively large diaspora populations such as Mexico and Brazil, the Chinese state has vigorously implemented policies to further embrace the diaspora. China offers extensive privileges and rights to attract Chinese entrepreneurs and top scientists to return temporarily or permanently, but has refrained from the global trend of extending political rights of dual citizenship and balloting to the Chinese diaspora. China is a one-party state that does not need any extraterritorial constituencies, and yet it aspires to global political leverage by way of diaspora advocacy, so the authoritarian Chinese state pursues a unique trajectory. In doing so, Beijing both creates and governs the Chinese diaspora without directly challenging the sovereignty of other countries or giving overt reasons for concern about the loyalty of the Chinese diaspora.

Still, the mobilization of the Chinese diaspora as foreign policy instruments operating beyond Chinese territory and often as foreign nationals require policies and governmental practices that increasingly transcend China's territorial boundaries. The Chinese state ties global Chinese diaspora networks into reciprocal relationships bound together in a complexity of multiple interests, cultural affinities and economic interests. In reconfiguring the spatiality of the state, China breaks with the Westphalian principle of congruence between territory, sovereignty, population and political authority, while introducing new ways of conceptualizing citizenship and national belonging. Although we do not know the full extent and effect of China's most recent diaspora policies, nor the impact of these policies on the individual ethnic Chinese and on ethnic Chinese communities, the enlargement of the Chinese state's diaspora operations challenges the relationships between place, power and identity in ways that call out for further attention in future research.

Notes

- 1 From the 1950s to the 1970s, approximately one million ethnic Chinese returned, primarily from Southeast Asia, to assist in establishing the new People's Republic of China (1950s), or as refugees fleeing from persecution in Indonesia (1960s) and Vietnam (1970s) (Barabantseva 2011).
- 2 Stipulated with the "16 characters principle" of "Treating everyone equally without discrimination and extending appropriate treatment according to special conditions" (*Yishi tongren, budei qishi, genju tedian, shidang zhaogu*).
- 3 See, e.g., Regulations of the State Council for Encouraging Investment of Taiwan Compatriots (1994); Regulations of the State Council for Encouraging Investments from Overseas Chinese and Compatriots from Hong Kong and Macao (1990).
- 4 "Ethnic Chinese investments" include FDI from Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, Singapore and ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia.
- 5 For the development of political and academic debates on the concept and theories of "soft power" in China, see, e.g., Callahan 2011; d'Hooghe 2015; Wang 2010, 2008.
- 6 The "plan" has not been made public, but is mentioned in Chinese media (Zhen 2011) and reflected in local plans at the provincial level.
- 7 For an overview of the definitions of and studies on "public diplomacy," see Cull 2008; Gilboa 2008; Melissen 2007; Sharp 2007.
- 8 As of January 2016, He Yafei no longer appears as vice-director of the OCAC according to the OCAC homepage: www.gqb.gov.cn/leader/index.shtml (accessed February 28, 2016).
- 9 Webpage of China Council for the Promotion of Peaceful National Reunification: www.zhongguotongcuhui.org.cn/hnwtch (accessed July 20, 2015).

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