Chinese Immigrants in Europe

Chinese-Western Discourse

Volume 5

Chinese Immigrants in Europe

Image, Identity and Social Participation

Edited by
Liu Yue and Wang Simeng

DE GRUYTER

Foreword by the editors

This volume is largely based on the papers delivered in two sessions of the conference "Chinese Immigrants in Europe: Image, Identity and Social Participation." The first conference was initiated and organized by Liu Yue and took place from 15 to 16 September 2017 at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou (China). The second one was organized by Wang Simeng and held on 16 August 2018 at The Paris Institute of Political Studies (France). The coastal province of Zhejiang, with the capital of Hangzhou, has been the largest sending region of Chinese emigrants for more than 40 years. The motivation behind organizing the two conference sessions was to make a topical contribution from the two important sending and receiving regions of Chinese international migrants to the research field of (new) Chinese immigrants in Europe and to provide multidisciplinary answers to all relevant open questions. We believe that, by dealing with the current situation of Chinese immigration in Europe and its trends, key insights can be gained in relation to both the target group, and the situation and developmental trends of other (ethnic) minority groups in other relevant European countries.

We would like to express our gratitude to all of the participants at the aforementioned conferences, who provided cutting-edge, inspiring stimuli during discussions, and to all of our authors, who have introduced and discussed this highly complex field of research with their respective professional insights into its various facets.

The research program "Cultural Identities of Young Generations of Chinese Immigrants in Europe" (14CMZ042, 2015–2019), which was funded by the National Social Science Fund of China and led by Liu Yue, laid the foundations for the scholarly framework that enabled the publication of the present volume. The interdisciplinary research program "Chinese of France: Identifications and Identities in Transition" (2018–2020), co-directed by Wang Simeng and funded by the City of Paris, France, has also supported the publication of this book both academically and financially.

We would also like to thank Dr. Anja-Simone Michalski and Dr. Lydia White for their editorial support, and Ms. Meiken Endruweit, Dr. Sandra van Lente and Ms. Sridevi Padmanabhan, who proofread the manuscripts. Without the support of all these participants, it would not have been possible to realize this volume.

Berlin/Paris, February 2019
Liu Yue
Wang Simeng

Contents

III **Chinese immigrants in Europe: New dynamics**

Liu Yue, Wang Simeng
Introduction

We are living in a world in which the visible and invisible borders between nations are being shaken at an unprecedented pace. This is due to changing conditions such as economic globalization, international mobility, the transnational circulation of knowledge and practices, and *brain gain* against *brain drain*, supported by national policies. Another traditional reason for the decision to migrate is the unbalanced development of the economic and political situation between the region of origin and the recipient region. Consequently, people are operating in a world where there are far more choices and options available for every important life decision than ever before, and they are much more networked, connected and mutually dependent than even just a few decades ago.

We are also experiencing a wave of international migration, and *the integration* of migrants into their host societies is not always in focus. The *diversity* of migrants, in terms of their external identity and self-image, and their social participation, is increasingly visible. However, this is taking place against the backdrop of being a "normal case" (Bade 2004) for the development of European societies and is continuing to increase within the context of the international trend toward mobility. With regard to the diversity of international migrants, it is helpful to avoid overgeneralized explanations and interpretations regarding the decision to migrate. Instead, we need to develop *differentiated* approaches in order to properly shape a common future for a mobilized and interconnected world.

All over the world, wherever immigration and emigration take place, people are faced with similar or comparable challenges. In this case, the key question in the observation of migration could be formulated as follows: Why do people emigrate to a particular destination? Is the so-called host society willing to integrate immigrants into existing social, economic, political and educational structures? Does the host society have a cultural-psychological structure that is prepared for migrants, or are its efforts to attract immigrants due to social sustainability goals? Are there gaps between the goals of migration and the reality of immigration that need to be covered by the policies, or are they difficult to regulate?

In this volume, we consider *migrants* to be those people who have relocated the spatial focus of their life long term (for more than three months; the duration criterion is related to national contexts). If the change of their life's focus has taken place or takes place across national borders, they are referred to as international migrants. At a time when it was not technically feasible to spatially change one's life focus, migration (across national borders) constituted both a fundamental and usually irrevocable change to migrants' living environments and lifestyles, a forced

affiliation with the target society and a changed relationship with the place of origin. It was a decision that had profound effects not only on the migrants themselves, but also on people who closely associated with them (especially youth and family members) for a longer (sometimes lifelong) period.

The following observations can be easily confirmed: there is, globally, an increasing pattern of cross-border travel, and the ideas of transnationalism and multiculturalism are advancing in the thinking and behavior of people who value them worldwide. On the basis of this observation, certain *atypical* questions arise in area migration research: What can be done to make people mobile? What prevents people from being mobile? Considering our own experiences regarding a change of geography and where we live, it is easy to see that, whether we planned to or not, intended to or not, we have had to change our homes so often that living in a single place for the duration of our lives is no longer the *norm*. The ideal living scenario that was relevant in the past – an individual pursued education, work, started a family and eventually died in the same place where he/she was born – has increasingly become an impossibility for many people. In today's society, the drive is to be mobile, we are therefore entirely justified to consider ourselves *migrants*.

Therefore, the perspective of international migrants is an *insider perspective* that is different from an *outsider perspective*. The outsider perspective is, in our opinion, characterized by an external point of view observing and investigating migrants, in which the observer does not share comparable experiences with the respondent. In contrast, an insider perspective helps the observer to comprehend, deconstruct and reconstruct the life of the respondent when it is experienced firsthand in a similar way. A good example is that, in many migrant-oriented organizations and institutions, the people involved also tend to have been migrants with similar experiences. They are especially motivated due to their own personal experiences and are able to put themselves in the position in which the migrants find themselves. We are quite pleased that such an insider perspective is present throughout this volume. Almost all our Chinese authors have pursued an important part of their educational training outside China and have experienced or are currently experiencing more stable long-term changes to their life's focus in European countries. During their stays abroad, they have been in contact with Chinese migrant communities and have witnessed the living situation and problems of people with the same background, to some extent. Themes relating to the image of immigrants constructed in the host society, the identity development of people with foreign roots and social participation of migrants in the host society are therefore not only research questions for them, but have also been a part of their lives. It is precisely this insider perspective, in which we investigate a part of ourselves, that allows the research on various themes to consider the life of

the target group not as a *mere* object of investigation but as a *lively* human phenomenon.

Although the earliest testimonies of Chinese migrants in Europe go back to the period between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries in connection to the trade in goods along the Silk Road, mass migration from China to Europe did not begin until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and migrants' main destinations were Great Britain and France. After the wave of immigration of Chinese to Europe reached its peak in the first half of the twentieth century, emigration from mainland China stagnated from 1949 to 1978 after the founding of the People's Republic of China. It was only after the beginning of the Reform and Opening-up Policy in the late 1970s that the possibility of emigration from mainland China increased. From 1978 to 2008, more than 10 million Chinese emigrated (Zhuang 2011, 13), with Europe being the main destination for Chinese who emigrated after 1978. In scholarly discourse, the recent migration wave from mainland China to Europe has received significant attention in a number of publications since the 1990s (e.g. Benton and Pieke 1998; Platonova and Urso 2003; Liu 2005; Johanson et al. 2009; Shen 2010; Latham and Wu 2013 etc.). Although statistical results differ widely due to their methodologies, France and the UK have been undoubtedly the two largest recipient countries for Chinese immigrants since then (Knerr 2015, 10),[1] while Italy, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, etc. have been taking in significant numbers of Chinese migrants as well. This group is known in scholarly discourse as "new Chinese immigrants," and their number in 2008 is likely to rise to between 2.6 and 3.2 million (Song 2011, 144). Among the new migrants from mainland China to Europe, a noteworthy proportion of emigrants originate from the coastal province of Zhejiang in eastern China.

In this volume, the focus is on two key countries in Europe, Germany and France. Both countries are considered immigration countries, where people with migration backgrounds form a significant proportion of the population. Moreover, the issue of international migration has attracted much attention in and outside these countries in recent years. Germany and France are home to two distinct types of groups of migrants of Chinese origin, both of which share similarities as well as clear differences. Both Germany and France attract a large number of young Chinese students, who in this era, during the search for talent and skilled labor, are often treated in German and French migration policies as potentially highly skilled migrants and have constituted an important proportion of the highly skilled immigrants in both countries for a long time. In

---

1 According to statistics from EUROSTAT (quoted in Knerr 2015), in 2015 Chinese citizens in France, the UK and Germany amounted to 250,000, 225,000 and 100,000 respectively.

Germany, the trend has become so stable in recent decades that highly skilled immigrants from China constitute about half of the people of Chinese origin living in Germany, and their number continues to increase (cf. Liu 2018). In France, the first wave of Chinese migrants with no or a minimal level of education came before the First World War (cf. Ma 2012). However, recent Chinese migratory flows into France have diversified. Increasingly, young Chinese are coming to France to pursue higher education and, once they graduate, many of them decide to change their migratory status to become highly skilled newcomers (cf. Wang 2017a).

According to the German Federal Statistical Office, in 2017, around 19.3 million people (23.6 % of the total population) in Germany either had a migration background or had at least one parent who was not born in Germany. The number of people with a migration background increased by 4.4 % compared to 2016 (Statistisches Bundesamt 2018). In 2017, 136,460 Chinese citizens lived in Germany, including some 40,000 for training purposes (BMI 2018, 248). Taking German citizens of Chinese origin (including descendants of the first migrant generation) into account, the total number of people with a Chinese migration background in Germany is estimated to be 150,000 (Liu 2018, 108). Even though overseas Chinese in Germany account for only 1 % of the German population with an immigration background and do not represent an important group among overseas Chinese in Europe, they are representative of the highly skilled professionals who have left China for Europe because of their educational background. For example, 9,652 people from a third country traveled in to Germany in 2017 and, as highly skilled persons, they were granted the EU Blue Card. Their numbers showed a continuous annual increase of about 20 % when compared with 2016 and 2015. Meanwhile, China was, after India, the second largest country of origin of EU Blue Card holders in Germany (BMI 2018, 8).

In France, the number of Chinese migrants in early 2010, excluding their descendants, was estimated to be between 400,000 and 480,000 people, the majority of whom live in the Paris region (Lucchini 2012). According to the 2013 national census, immigrants to France born in China were the fifth largest national group after Algerians, Moroccans, Tunisians and Turks, excluding EU citizens (INED 2017). According to the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE), in 2015, 7.3 million people born in France had at least one immigrant parent (11 % of the total population), of which 9 % had at least one parent born in Asia (4 % Turkey, 2 % Laos/Vietnam/Cambodia, 3 % other Asian countries). In terms of their age, 73 % of them were under 25 years old (Brutel 2017). The transition of these migrant descendants to adulthood (marked by the completion of their higher education, entry into the workforce

and participation in social life in French society) accounts for the generational shift that is taking place among Asian populations in France.

The research interest in Chinese migrants in Germany is closely linked to the history of Chinese immigrants and sailors at the Port of Hamburg in Germany in the first half of the nineteenth century, although the first wave of mass migration from China did not take place until the outbreak of the First World War (cf. Guo and Liu 2016). The parallel development of workforce migrants and student migrants in Germany and the important role of many Chinese intellectuals who stayed in Germany in modern Chinese history have led to previous studies on migrations in the Sino-German context primarily focusing on the Chinese students and intellectuals who stayed in Germany between the late nineteenth century and 1945 (Harnisch 1999; Meng 2005; Ye 2005; Liu and Du 2018). Other studies from a German perspective have dealt with traditional, less skilled migrants such as sailors, street vendors and professionals in the service sector in approximately the same period (Gütinger 2004; Yu-Dembski 2007; Amenda 2011). It was not until recently that researchers became more interested in the social status and social integration of Chinese immigrants in Germany (He 2012; Liu 2018). Despite the importance of the community of overseas Chinese, the development of the identities of Chinese immigrants and their younger generations in cultural interstices are now only starting to be discussed (cf. Liu 2015).

The historical, parallel development of the two immigrant groups mentioned above characterizes the image and determines the social characteristics of Chinese immigrants in Germany compared with other European countries. The period between the end of the nineteenth century and the outbreak of the First World War as well as the periods following the First and Second World Wars, the so-called boom periods, have profoundly affected not only the image of Chinese immigrants in Germany, but also the image of the Chinese in general. The fact that a large proportion of Chinese immigrants were intellectuals has shaped the idea of the Chinese in Germany at the time in a relatively more positive manner than in other European countries (cf. Liu 2018). Among the Chinese who came to Germany after the end of the First World War, there were numerous renowned politicians, scholars, and educators such as Zhou Enlai (周恩来), Ma Junwu (马君武, also known as Künwoll Mahoe) and Chen Yinke (陈寅恪), all of whom played a significant role in modern Chinese history after they returned to their native country.

In this context, Almut Hille's contribution to this volume presents evidence for the image of Chinese immigrants constructed through literary productions depicting Chinese migration to Germany and Switzerland since the twentieth century. These images were developed in close relation to Chinese intellectuals who studied and lived in Germany at the time. The lives of Chinese migrants in Europe were particularly marked by the student struggles and political

activists in China. The images of Chinese migrants that were conveyed were impressive and influential, because they were not only constructed from a *foreign point of view*, but also largely characterized by the *self-perception* of the student migrants.

The fact that Chinese immigrants in Germany came from highly skilled backgrounds played a particularly active role in their political participation, which is confirmed by Guo Yi's paper, focusing on Chinese immigrants since the 1980s. It asserts that the political participation of Chinese immigrants living in Germany, most of whom are new immigrants, is much more active compared with many European countries, and that German-speaking Chinese are more involved in grassroots political processes. Guo notes that Germany, as an important destination for the new wave of Chinese emigration, is providing a positive example of how to increase Chinese migrants' awareness of political participation. Here, highly skilled Chinese migrants who have earned university degrees in Germany play a major role.

However, the traditionally less-skilled migrants who came to the country alongside highly skilled migrants cannot be disregarded. They are still a crucial part of the group of Chinese migrants in Germany. The living situations of these two groups have developed in parallel, and little research has been conducted on them so far. In her article, Zhao Jing delves into the role that existing transnational connections play in the migration process of Chinese immigrants to Germany, taking into account the fact that the overseas Chinese are not considered a homogeneous group. With the statement, "the migrants root their roots," she observes and stages the living environment of Chinese immigrants in different places throughout Germany through knowledge, actions and emotions. She primarily deals with the first generation of Chinese immigrants.

On the French side, the first mass immigration of Chinese migrants is related to the history of recruiting Chinese workers at the frontline or in industry during the First World War. After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, migration flows from mainland China halted for a long time. South-East Asian immigrants with Chinese roots formed the main proportion of 'boatmen' who immigrated to France in the 1970s and 1980s. This phase of migration history in relation to China has already been the subject of numerous publications (cf. Guillon and Taboada-Léonetti 1986; Live 1991; Costa-Lascoux and Live 1995). As China introduced the Reform and Opening-up Policy at the end of the 1970s, which continued into the 1980s and even more intensively in the 1990s, a growing number of Chinese emigrated to France not only from the historically largest regions of origin such as Fujian, Guangdong and Zhejiang (cf. Ma Mung 1999; Béja and Wang 1999; Poisson 2004; Auguin 2009), but also from other major Chinese regions, including the northern parts of China severely affected by

the economic reform and rising levels of unemployment (cf. Cattelain et al. 2005; Lévy and Lieber 2009).

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the migration routes that the Chinese have taken to France have diversified even more, with the consequence that Chinese migrants in France have become more heterogeneous. China has recently become the second largest country of origin for foreign students in France after Morocco, and studying is considered the most important reason for migrating to France. The massive arrival of students, skilled workers and professionals in France is subject to increased research interest (cf. Wang 2015; Li 2019; Guiheux and Wang 2018). Other recent research has increasingly dealt with subject-specific perspectives in political science, sociology and geography, such as political participation and collective mobilization (Wang 2000; Chuang 2015; Wang 2017b), ethnic entrepreneurship and associations (Chen K. 2016; Li 2017), sexuality, marriage and intimacy (Chen T. 2016; Lévy 2016; Wang 2017c), intergenerational and family relationships in terms of social mobility and solidarity (Wang 2012; Wang 2014; Wang and Schwartz 2016).

Since 2010, academics have been increasingly addressing the issues facing the Chinese in France from Chinese perspectives. Against the background mentioned above, the two articles by Wang Simeng and Li Yong offer a contemporary basis for the discussion of the topic that they further explore. Wang Simeng provides insight into the diversity of living conditions and the transnational practices of highly skilled Chinese migrants in Paris, examining three aspects: career choices, marriage behavior and political participation. As actors moving between the local and the global, these highly skilled Chinese immigrants intimately perform transnationalism in the economic sector and also engage in it in terms of political engagement and participation. Some of them enter into standard professions and others undertake emerging but not undisputed activities as *daigou* (代购). Regarding political requirements and participation, these highly skilled migrants experience political resocialization processes, and those trained in the social sciences and humanities in particular position themselves as global citizens, linking different national political spaces. Finally, these highly skilled migrants display certain special behaviors when it comes to the choice of their spouse compared to other members of the Chinese population in France. More engaged in binational relationships, the behavior of women migrants differs to that of men due to the transnational matrimonial market as well as gendered family and marriage norms in Chinese society. The research illustrates the manner in which the group in the study shape not only the economic sector, marriage market and political space in their host society, but also in China, their country of origin, through the processes of globalization and transnationalization, employing various transnational practices.

Li Yong examines young, highly skilled people from China living in France and shares their reflections on international mobility and work experiences through the angle of their subjective perception of an "identity crisis" in the wake of their graduation. Regarding the causes of the "doubled" identity crisis, he points out that a proper positioning of identity in the interstices between Chinese and French societies is difficult to find in today's context of rapid social change in China. His contribution echoes that of Wang Simeng in the sense that, as she shows, some young highly skilled Chinese decide to become *daigou* because they feel "economically downgraded" and like they are experiencing an identity crisis compared to their peer group who stayed in China.

From a geographical perspective, Li Zhipeng uses the example of Chinese immigrants from Wenzhou, one of the most representative regions of origin for Chinese migrants in the Zhejiang province since the 1980s, to investigate the Chinese diaspora's economic and political links with France as the receiving country and China as the country of origin. Because the Wenzhou community is characterized by the specificity of its foreign Chinese entrepreneurial organization, according to Li, the economic activities of the Wenzhou diaspora are always linked to the economic development of the Wenzhou region and are closely connected to the economic development of transnational networks with different hubs within the diaspora from Wenzhou.

In spite of the fact that France is now one of the largest host societies for Chinese migrants in Europe, and although a number of descendants of Chinese immigrants have actively participated in the political realm in recent years, Chinese migration still receives scant attention in scholarly debate. Liu Ruoxi's research focuses on the career decisions and development of the second generation of Chinese immigrants in France. It also analyzes the factors influencing the deviation of the group's career paths from that of their parents from the perspective of structural integration.

In addition to discussions of important, topical themes related to Chinese migrants in the two major host European countries Germany and France, two articles on Chinese immigrants in the UK and Russia provide additional, valuable insights into the lives of Chinese immigrants elsewhere in Europe, developed through encounters between ancient and new dynamics. Tu Mengwei and Daniel Nehring deal with the moral grammar of new, young Chinese immigrants in the UK who have emigrated as single children for reasons of family piety. Compared with migrants from China in the last 150 years, who emigrated in order to survive and to improve their lives and those of the whole family, this represents a widening of emigration motives, in which children of wealthy families migrate in order to study abroad. Additionally, new aspects of intergenerational relationships emerge during the transnationalization of the family and of individual life journeys. This

article echoes the two contributions on highly skilled Chinese migrants in France, given the similarity of Chinese immigration histories in the UK and France.

Lü Yunfang draws attention to another, new extension of the emigration route from China to Europe. In her article, Lü details how a group of migrants from Jian'ou, a city in the north of the historical province of origin for Fujian's emigrants, found and anchored new international business opportunities in a new migration destination, Moscow. On the one hand, there are similarities in behavior and thoughts regarding family and kinship relations with the former migrant population from Fujian through their activities organized in associations, community and entrepreneurial networks, but, on the other hand, there is evidence of a new kind of integration, which is particularly pronounced in the new generation of migrants.

Another way of analyzing identity development in the younger generation of Chinese immigrants is from outside the host country. This is the analytical angle adopted by Cao Xu. Drawing on participant observation and interviews, he examines the development of cultural identity among young foreign students engaged in international study and exchange programs at Zhejiang University, who are from the descendant generation of Chinese migrants in Germany, Great Britain, Italy and Denmark. Although this should not be understood as a representative study of the descendants of Chinese migrants in Europe, the relationship between cultural identity and the personal life plans of immigrant children who have come to study in China (to embrace their root culture) provide valuable insights.

Finally, the use of the term 'Chinese immigrants in Europe' for the group under consideration in this volume should by no means be understood as an attempt to standardize a diverse and multidimensional community. On the contrary, the discussions in this volume strive to promote relative and differentiated perspectives, which have been realized thanks to insights gained from different approaches. Emerging aspects and patterns from other host regions with new Chinese immigrants in the EU such as Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Eastern European and Scandinavian countries, where the models of existence and social integration of Chinese immigrants have become serious societal issues (see Thunø 2007; Johanson et al. 2009; Li 2013; Wang and Le Bail 2016) are areas for future research.

Bibliography

Amenda, Lars. *China in Hamburg*. Hamburg: Ellert & Richter, 2011.

Auguin, Estelle. *L'éthique chinoise et l'esprit du capitalisme: la diaspora chinoise originaire de la région de Wenzhou*. Paris: Université Paris Descartes, 2009.

Bade, Klaus J. *Sozialhistorische Migrationsforschung*. Göttingen: V&R, 2004.

Béja, Jean-Philipe and Chunguang Wang. "Un 'village du Zhejiang' à Paris?" *Hommes et Migrations*, 1220, (1999): 61–72.

Benton, Gregor, and Franke N. Pieke (eds.). *The Chinese in Europe*. London: Macmillan, 1998.

Brutel, Chantal. *Être né en France d'un parent immigré. Une population diverse reflétant l'histoire des flux migratoires*. 2017. https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/2575541 (20 March 2018).

Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat und Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BMI). *Migrationsbericht der Bundesregierung 2016/2017*, 2018.

Cattelain, Chloé, Marylène Lieber, Claire Saillard and Sébastien Ngugen. "Les Déclassés du Nord." *Revue européenne des migrations internationales* 21.3 (2005): 27–52.

Chen, Ken. "Les associations chinoises. La transition générationnelle d'immigrés chinois aujourd'hui à Paris." *Hommes & Migrations*, 1314.2 (2016): 35–42.

Chen, Ting. "Femme et mère, entre le besoin et le désir. Étude de cas clinique d'une femme chinoise se prostituant à Paris." *Hommes & Migrations* 1314.2 (2016): 93–100.

Chuang, Ya-Han: *Migrants chinois à Paris: au-delà de l'"integration": la formation politique d'une minorité*. Paris: Univ. Paris 4, 2015.

Costa-Lascoux, Jacqueline, and Yu-Sion Live. *Paris XIIIe, lumières d'Asie*, Paris: Autrement, 1995.

Institut national d'études démographiques (INED). https://www.ined.fr/fr/tout-savoir-population/chiffres/france/immigres-etrangers/population-immigree/#r202 (20 February 2017).

Guiheux, Gilles, and Simeng Wang. "A case of Double Socialisation in the Social Sciences. The Expérience of Chinese Researchers Trained in France." *China Perspectives* 4 (2018): 21–30.

Guillon, Michelle and Isabelle Taboada-Léonetti. *Le triangle de Choisy: un quartier chinois à Paris*. Paris: CIEMI et L'Harmattan, 1986.

Guo, Yi, und Yue Liu. "Generationswechsel der chinesischen Auswanderer und soziokulturelle Merkmale der neuen Migrantengeneration nach 1978." *Generationenverhältnisse in Deutschland und China. Soziale Praxis-Kultur-Medien*. Eds. Almut Hille, Liaoyu Huang und Benjamin Langer. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016. 195–210.

Gütinger, Erich. *Die Geschichte der Chinesen in Deutschland. Ein Überblick über die ersten 100 Jahre seit 1822*. Münster: Waxmann, 2004.

Harnisch, Thomas. *Chinesische Studenten in Deutschland. Geschichte und Wirkung ihrer Studienaufenthalte in den Jahren von 1860 bis 1945*. Hamburg: Institut für Asienkunde, 1999.

He, Zhining: *Chinese in Germany und their social integration* (translated by Liu Yue). Beijing: People's Publishing House, 2012.

Johanson, Graeme, Russel Smyth and Rebecca French (eds.). *Living Outside the Walls: The Chinese in Prato*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009.

Knerr, Béatrice. "Chinesen in Europe. From the 17th century to present day. An overview." *Chinese Diasporas in Europe: History*, Challenges *and Prospects*. Eds. Béatrice Knerr und Jieping Fan. Kassel: Kassel University Press, 2015. 1–22.

Latham, Kevin, and Bin Wu. *Chinese Immigration into the EU: New Trends, Dynamics and Implications*. London: Europe China Research and Advice Network, 2013.

Lévy Florence, and Marylène Lieber. "La sexualité comme ressource migratoire, Les Chinoises du Nord à Paris." *Revue française de sociologie* 50.4 (2009): 719–746.

Lévy, Florence. "'Migrer pour l'enfant'. Le projet migratoire paradoxal des femmes de Chine du Nord." *Hommes & Migrations* 1314.2 (2016): 77–83.

Li, Minghuan. *Seeing Transnationality. How Chinese Migrants make their dreams come true*. Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press, 2013.

Li, Yong. "La confrontation des diplômés chinois au marché du travail français: une insertion incertaine." *Connaissance de l'emploi* n° 145 (Janvier 2019): 1–4.

Li, Zhipeng. *La diaspora Wenzhou en France et ses relations avec la Chine*. Poitiers: Université de Poitiers, 2017.

Liu, Hong. "New migrants and the revival of overseas Chinese nationalism." *Journal of Contemporary China* 14.43 (2005): 291–316.

Liu, Yue. "Cultural identity of the second generation of overseas Chinese: Approaches and prospect of a new research field." *Chinese Diasporas in Europe*. Eds. Beatrice Knerr and Jieping Fan. Kassel: Kassel University Press, 2015. 145–158.

Liu, Yue. *Chinese Immigrants in Germany. Transformations in historical process* (translated by Liu Yue). Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press, 2018.

Liu, Yue and Weihua Du. *Chinese students in Berlin before 1949* (translated by Liu Yue). Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press, 2018.

Live, Yu-Sion. *La diaspora chinoise en France: immigration, activités socio-économiques, pratiques socio-culturelle*s. Paris: EHESS, 1991.

Lucchini, Giulio. "Singularités de la migration chinoise en France." *La Chine à Paris*. Ed. Béhara, Richard. Paris: Robert Laffont, 2012. 243–272.

Ma Mung, Emmanuel. "Territorialisation marchande et négociation des identités. Les 'Chinois' à Paris." *Espaces et sociétés* 96.2 (1999): 145–162.

Ma, Li (ed.). *Les Travailleurs chinois dans la Première Guerre mondiale*. Paris: CNRS Editions, 2012.

Meng, Hong. *Das Auslandsstudium von Chinesen in Deutschland (1861–2001)*. Frankfurt a. M.: Peter Lang, 2005.

Pieke, Franke N., Pál Nyíri, Mette Thunø and Antonella Ceccagno. *Transnational Chinese. Fujianese Migrants in Europe*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004.

Platonova, Anna, and Giuliana Urso. "Asian Immigration to the European Union, United States and Canada." *Journal of global policy governance* 1.2 (2003): 143–156.

Poisson, Véronique. *Franchir les frontières: le cas des chinois du Zhejiang en diaspora*. Paris: EHESS, 2004.

Shen, Wei. "China in the global migration order – historical perspectives and new trends." *Asia Europe Journal* 8 (2010): 25–43.

Song, Quancheng. "A Sociological analysis of the size and the characteristics of the Chinese New Immigrants in Europe." *Journal of Shandong University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)* 2 (2011): 144–150.

Statistisches Bundesamt. *Pressemitteilung Nr. 282 vom 1. August* 2018. https://www.destatis. de/DE/PresseService/Presse/Pressemitteilungen/2018/08/PD18_282_12511.html (31 December 2018).

Thunø, Mette (ed.). *Beyond Chinatown. New Chinese Migration and the Global Expansion of China*. Copenhagen: Nias Press, 2007.

Wang, Chunguang. *People from Wenzhou in Paris. Intercompany construction activities of a migrant group* (translated by Liu Yue). Nanchang: Jiangxi People's Publishing House, 2000.

Wang, Simeng. "'Une vie qui est ailleurs': Une sociologie des troubles mentaux à travers le parcours d'un adolescent d'origine chinoise à Paris." *Lien social et politique*s 67 (2012): 233–248.

Wang, Simeng. "'Enfant abandonné en Chine puis domestique en France? Que suis-je pour eux ?!' Obligations familiales à rebours des enfants migrants d'origine chinoise à Paris." *Enfances, Familles, Générations* 20 (2014): 21–44.

Wang, Simeng. "Des 'soucis matrimoniaux' dans le contexte transnational: le cas des migrants et des migrantes chinois qualifiés à Paris." *Migrations Société* 157.1 (2015): 149–166.

Wang, Simeng, and Boris Schwartz. "Des personnes âgées d'origine chinoise à Belleville: parcours migratoires, dynamiques familiales et participation à la vie du quartier." *Hommes & Migrations* 1314.2 (2016): 103–112.

Wang, Simeng and H. Le Bail (eds.). Special issue *Migrations chinoises et générations* Revue *Hommes & Migrations*. 1314.2 (2016).

Wang, Simeng (2017a). *Illusions et souffrances. Les migrants chinois à Paris*. Paris: Editions rue d'Ulm, 2017.

Wang, Simeng (2017b). "La resocialisation politique de migrants internationaux et leurs prises de parole politiques: Le cas de jeunes Chinois qualifiés à Paris." *Participations* 17 (2017): 155–176.

Wang, Simeng (2017c). "The Gendered Transformation of Matrimonial and Family Norms in the Context of International Migration. The Case of Chinese 'Spouses of French' Residing in the Paris Region." Revue européenne des migrations internationales 33.2 & 33.3 (2017): 273–300.

Ye, Jun. *Das andere Lernen vom Westen: Chinesische Studierende in Deutschland der modernen Zeit und ihre Akzeptanz gegenüber der deutschen Kultur* (übersetzt von Liu Yue). Beijing: Peking University Press, 2005.

Yu-Dembski, Dagmar. *Chinesen in Berlin*. Berlin: Berlin Edition, 2007.

Zhuang, Guotu. "Historical changes in numbers and distribution of Overseas Chinese in the world." *World History* (China) 5 (2011): 4–14.

Chinese immigrants in Germany

Almut Hille
Migration aus China im deutschsprachigen literarischen Diskurs

Abstract: The present essay examines literary discourse regarding Chinese migration to Germany and Switzerland in the early and late twentieth century. The analysis begins by examining reports by Joseph Roth and Anna Seghers from the 1920s and 1930s as well as Anna Segher's novel *Die Gefährten* of 1932, followed by reports and memoirs of Chinese migrants such as M. Tseng Ching, Feng Zhi and Han Sen from the 1930s. Following this, the analysis shifts its focus to the 1980s and 1990s, when a new wave of migration from China took place. This wave finds itself represented in the characters in the book published by Wei Zhang *Zwischen den Stühlen: Geschichten von Chinesinnen und Chinesen in der Schweiz* in 2006. The literary characters in the narrative volume *Nachtschwimmen im Rhein* (2008) and the novel *Die chinesische Delegation* (2007) by Luo Lingyuan also reflect the migrations of the time. Finally, this research examines questions of belonging, loss or gain of home and language, and political or professional commitment in the literary texts as well as descriptions of everyday life in big cities like Berlin to reveal narratives around Chinese migrants in the early and late twentieth century.

1 Frühe Beobachtungen: Joseph Roth und Anna Seghers

Eine erste Welle chinesischer auch temporärer Migration nach Deutschland gab es im frühen zwanzigsten Jahrhundert. Student*innen und Künstler*innen, aber auch Kaufleute, Arbeiter*innen sowie politische Aktivist*innen kamen ins Land und zogen vorrangig nach Berlin und in die anderen größeren Städte wie Hamburg oder Leipzig. In Berlin war es der wohlhabende westliche Stadtbezirk Charlottenburg, in dem Student*innen und Künstler*innen bevorzugt lebten, in der Nähe der 1884 gegründeten Technischen Hochschule, der 1920 gegründeten Hochschule für Politik, der 1875 gegründeten Hochschule für die Bildenden Künste, die seit 1902 in einem Gebäude am Steinplatz untergebracht war, und der Chinesischen Gesandtschaft am Kurfürstendamm. Gleichzeitig entstand rund um den Schlesischen Bahnhof (der heutige Ostbahnhof) im Stadtbezirk Friedrichshain im ärmeren Berliner Osten ein Quartier der kleinen Kaufleute, Laden- und Restaurantbesitzer*innen, das auch als *Gelbes Quartier* bezeichnet

wurde. Dort lebten einige hundert Chines*innen in einfachen Verhältnissen. Sie waren auf der Suche nach Arbeit und besseren Lebensbedingungen vorrangig aus der chinesischen Küstenprovinz Zhejiang ausgewandert und mit der 1904 eröffneten Transsibirischen Eisenbahn über Moskau nach Berlin gelangt (vgl. Yu-Dembski 2007, 20–21).

In der deutschen Öffentlichkeit der Zeit wurden besonders die revolutionären Veränderungen in China seit dem Sturz der Mandschu-Dynastie und der Gründung der Republik durch Sun Yatsen 1911 wahrgenommen. In Reportagen und Feuilletons der 1920er Jahre finden aber auch die chinesischen Migrant*innen, ihre Feiertage und Einrichtungen des Alltags Beachtung. So berichtete Gabriele Tergit in der *Vossischen Zeitung* wiederholt über das „Gelbe Quartier". Joseph Roth veröffentlichte in der *Frankfurter Zeitung* vom 23. März 1925 unter dem Titel *Die Chinesen beweinen ihre Toten* eine Reportage über die Trauerfeier der „Berliner chinesischen Kolonie" für Sun Yatsen. Darin beschreibt er seine Beobachtungen zu den Versammelten, den chinesischen „Studenten, Diplomaten, kleinen Kaufleuten und Proletariern", und er glaubt zu begreifen, warum im Hintergrund des Saales in besonders großer Zahl „die chinesischen Proletarier stehen, ein bisschen schüchtern, in viel zu engen, blank gewetzten Kleidern, die ärmsten Proletarier der Erde. Es ist *ihr* Toter, um den hier geklagt wird" (Roth 1976, 38).

Mit der Ausweitung der Unruhen in China und den Auseinandersetzungen verschiedener revolutionärer Gruppen nach Sun Yatsens Tod nimmt das öffentliche Interesse in Deutschland noch zu, wobei sich besonders linksbürgerliche und kommunistische Kreise für das immer weitere „Erwachen Chinas" begeistern (vgl. auch Streim 2011, 155–157). Anna Seghers, die von 1925 bis 1932 in Berlin lebte, veröffentlichte in der *Roten Fahne*, dem Zentralorgan der Kommunistischen Partei Deutschlands, am 1. Mai 1932 gemeinsam mit Schü Yin die Reportage *1. Mai. Yanschuhpou*, in deren Mittelpunkt die Vorbereitungen der roten Gewerkschaften für Streiks und Kundgebungen zum 1. Mai in einem Arbeiterviertel von Shanghai, der Aufstand der Arbeitergarde und das Beschwören der proletarischen Internationale stehen.

Über die gemeinsame Textarbeit mit Schü Yin reflektiert Anna Seghers in einem als *Kleiner Bericht aus meiner Werkstatt* im September 1932 in der Zeitschrift des Bundes proletarisch-revolutionärer Schriftsteller Deutschlands *Die Linkskurve* veröffentlichten Dialog.[1] Deutlich wird, dass Schü Yin, die die

---

1 Anna Seghers war 1928 Mitglied des Bundes proletarisch-revolutionärer Schriftsteller geworden. *Die Linkskurve* wurde von Johannes R. Becher, Kurt Kläber, Hans Marchwitza, Erich Weinert und Ludwig Renn herausgegeben.

Abb. 1: *Rote Fahne*, Ausgabe vom 1. Mai 1932.

Ereignisse des 1. Mai in Shanghai selbst mit erlebt hatte, genaue Beschreibungen des Stadtviertels Yanschuhpou, der Straßen, Fabriken und Wohnverhältnisse, der Räume, in der die roten Revolutionäre sich trafen und wohnten, zu formulieren versuchte. Gemeinsam mit Anna Seghers entstanden anschließend Metaphern, Sätze und Bilder, die es den deutschen Leser*innen ermöglichen sollten, den 1. Mai als „Weltfeiertag" wahrzunehmen: Allen sollte bewusst werden, „daß der Erste Mai auf der ganzen Welt *gemeinsam* gefeiert wird, daß er aber in jedem Land *anders* gefeiert wird.", und alle sollten so in ihrer „Mitfeier", ihrem Engagement bestärkt werden (Seghers 1971, 10).

Gleichzeitig sollten die Leser*innen sich möglichst genaue Vorstellungen von den Verhältnissen vor Ort machen und nachvollziehen können, dass „in Shanghai eine andere Aktion [geschieht] als in Berlin, und Janshupou [. . .] anders aus[sieht] als der Wedding":

> Yanschuhpou, „Weidenufer", das Innerste des Arbeiterviertels. Die meisten Fabriken Schanghais, chinesische und ausländische. Hölzerne Häuser nach europäischem Muster, Baracken, elektrisches Licht einmontiert, schwache, fade Glühbirnen.
>
> Inwendig: Ein kleiner Tisch steht an der linken Wand, auf dem Tisch ein paar Schalen und Eßstäbchen. Eine Schale ist voll mit saurem gesalzenen Kohl, mit Zeitungspapier zugedeckt. Der saure Geruch steigt aus dem Spalt. Neben der Tür steht das Bett, ein paar Bretter über zwei Bänken. Auf diesem Bett liegt ein Bettuch aus ausländischem Faden, ein Kissen nach ausländischer Mode, eine dünne Decke. Vor der anderen Wand ein Haufen schmutziger Kleider. Das ist das Heim der Arbeiterin Schü Yin.
>
> (Shü Yin und Seghers 1932)

Hinter dem Namen der Figur und (Mit-)Autorin Schü Yin verbirgt sich die politische Aktivistin Hu Lanqi (auch Hu Lan Hsi), eine enge Freundin von Anna Seghers in Berlin.[2] Sie war im Laufe der 1920er Jahre in China zunächst in der

---

2 Vgl. Wagner 1996.

Frauenbewegung aktiv, trat 1926 dem linken Flügel der Kuomintang bei. 1929 musste sie China verlassen; sie reiste nach Europa und kam über Paris nach Berlin, wo sie 1930 Mitglied der Kommunistischen Partei Chinas wurde und an *Chi Chuang* (*Der Rote Strahl*), dem Pamphlet der Parteizelle in Berlin, mitarbeitete (vgl. Li 2010, 67–69).

So wie Hu Lanqi lernte Anna Seghers in Berlin noch weitere (temporäre) Migrant*innen und politische Aktivist*innen aus China kennen, etwa Emi Siao (auch Emi Hisao oder Xiao San), Liau Han-sin (auch Liao Huanxing), Liao Chengzhi oder Chen Chi-yin (vgl. Li 2010, 70–79). In ihrem Roman *Die Gefährten* (1932) fiktionalisiert sie das Leben einiger ihrer Bekannten in Berlin bzw. in Europa. Sie erscheinen als Teil einer kommunistischen Internationale.

Die Romanfigur des Liau Han-tschi begegnet den Leser*innen zunächst in einem chinesischen Restaurant in Limehouse, der Londoner *Chinatown*. In interner Fokalisierung wird von seinem Wunsch nach Teilhabe an der revolutionären Bewegung, metaphorisiert im Betrachten zweier Fotografien von Sun Yat-sen – zunächst in grau, dann „bunter, pfiffiger" – erzählt:

> Ich kann nicht verstehen, was zu Hause vorgeht. Gestern habe ich Nachricht bekommen, ich verstehe wenig davon. Die Kommunisten, schreiben sie, sind in die Kuomintang eingetreten. Wann habe ich im Grund überhaupt etwas davon verstanden. – Ich war versessen darauf, nach dem Westen zu fahren. Jetzt sitze ich auf der falschen Seite der Erde.
>
> (Seghers 1983, 189)

Politische Schulung und Anleitung zu späterer eigener Aktivität in China erhofft sich Liau Han-tschi von seinem schon länger in Europa lebenden älteren Bruder Liau Yen-kai. Dieser weist ihn zunächst nach Berlin, einer Stadt, in der ein Revolutionär mehr lernen könne „als in sonst einer Stadt": „Deutsche Parteiarbeit, wie man Menschen zusammenhält" (Seghers 1983, 199, 201). Berlin liegt – so ein weiteres Bild – bereits ein wenig östlicher und damit China näher als London und auch Liau Han-tschi fühlt sich hier schon weniger fremd; die Müllerstraße, die „kahle, kärgliche, unabsehbar lange Straße schien rund um die ganze Erde, um alle Städte gewunden" (Seghers 1983, 199). An ihr scheint – mehrdimensional erzählt – der Weg in die Heimat zu liegen, der Liau Han-tschi zunächst zu dem Studenten Sun Fo-li führt. Dieser wohnt in einem Hinterhof der Müllerstraße bei der Arbeiterfamilie Balke, die sich ihm akkulturiert hat, wie Liau Han-tschi beobachtet:

> Mit dem kleinen Studenten war eine Flut chinesischer Bücher und Zeitungen über die Familie hereingebrochen, die ihre Betten, ihre Tische und Stühle und ihr Plüschsofa überflutete. [...] Fo-li krempelte seine Ärmel hoch und half der Frau, ein Abendessen nach seinen Angaben zu richten. Die Jüngere bändigte mit zwei dünnen Holzstäbchen die auf

der Pfanne tanzenden Kohlblätter. Fo-lis zweijährige Anwesenheit in diesen Wänden
hatte die ganze Familie verändert, wie ein Tropfen Tinte einen Eimer Flüssigkeit färbt.

(Seghers 1983, 200–202)

Ausgehend vom Mikrokosmos der Wohnung der Balkes hat sich Sun Fo-li tief
in die Stadt „hineinwühlen" können; er lebt mit der Tochter zusammen, die
ihm gleichzeitig Kampfgefährtin ist, und weiß: „[...] sie und ihre Familie, das
ist ein gutes Nest" (Seghers 1983, 202). Dieses Nest ist nicht nur chinesisch, son-
dern von der proletarischen Internationale geprägt: In der Wohnung hängen
nebeneinander die Fotografien von Tschen Tu-hsiu, Karl Liebknecht und Rosa
Luxemburg. Von den politischen Vorgängen in der Heimat erfährt Liau Han-
tschi in der Stimme seines Bruders: „Bei uns in Kanton zieht sich alles zusam-
men. Der faktische Leiter der Whampoa-Militärschule ist jetzt ein gewisser
Tschiang Kai-schek. Er ist gerissen und hart und hat Geldgeber. An diesen
Menschen knüpfen sich jetzt eine Menge Erwartungen und Befürchtungen."
(Seghers 1983, 201) Einmal mehr zieht es Liau Han-tschi nach Hause, dennoch
wird er kurz in Berlin bleiben, auch wenn ihm „der blaue Streifen zwischen den
Dächern, der schattige Hof, das Licht, alles [...] nicht wie die Wirklichkeit
selbst, sondern wie ihre Erinnerung [erschien]. Vor langer Zeit, bei der Heim-
reise, habe ich mal bei meinem Freund Fo-li in Berlin, in Deutschland, über-
nachtet" (Seghers 1983, 202). Seinen Bruder Liau Yen-kai, der inzwischen in
Moskau lebt, wird Liau Han-tschi nur für wenige Stunden in Berlin treffen. In
das kurze Kapitel des Romans, das ihrem Treffen gilt, fließt eine Menge Berliner
Lokalkolorit ein. Das kleine chinesische Restaurant, in dem sie sich begegnen,
dürfte einem der Restaurants in der Charlottenburger Kantstraße nachempfun-
den sein: Es ist „in eine lärmende Straße eingezwängt, gold und blau lackiert,
mit Fahnen und Bildern geschmückt [...] festlich und heiter. Auf den Gesich-
tern der Studenten, die rundherum saßen und zu Mittag aßen, lag eine Art von
Gruß" (Seghers 1983, 227). Gleich am Eingang fällt ein Schild auf, dessen Wort-
laut den politischen Umständen in China geschuldet ist: „Japaner und Engländ-
der werden höflichst darauf aufmerksam gemacht, daß für ihre Sicherheit in
diesem Lokal nicht garantiert werden kann." (Seghers 1983, 227) Das Leben
der chinesischen Migrant*innen, besonders der Student*innen und politischen
Aktivist*innen, in Europa ist – so wird im Roman deutlich – geprägt von den
Kämpfen in China. An diesen wollen sie teilhaben, deshalb möchten sie mit so
viel Wissen wie möglich (Seghers 1983, 201), teilweise auch mit politischer
Schulung und Kampferfahrung in die Heimat zurückkehren. Liau Yen-kai, der
schon vor seiner Migration nach Europa in China politisch aktiv war und der
„inzwischen bestimmt [wurde], nach Rußland zu fahren" (Seghers 1983, 230),
lernt in Moskau weiter. Seinen Bruder versucht er Härte, die auch auf familiäre
Bindungen keine Rücksicht nimmt (vgl. Seghers 1983, 230), zu lehren und ihn

für den Kampf der Kommunisten zu gewinnen. An dem Bahnhof, an dem die Züge aus Berlin Richtung Osten abfahren, als Schwellenort gelingt Liau Han-tschi der Übertritt zu den Kämpfenden: „Dieser Bahnsteig war ja schon eine Schwelle." (Seghers 1983, 232) Auch er wird sich nun zielgerichtet Wissen und Erfahrungen aneignen, um vorbereitet auf den Kampf um die (richtige) Zukunft Chinas nach Hause zurückkehren zu können.

2 Berichte und Reflexionen: M. Tseng Ching und Feng Zhi

Neben den genannten Texten, in denen chinesische Migrant*innen bzw. die entsprechenden Figuren eine Rolle spielen, entstanden auch Berichte und Skizzen, in denen diese selbst ihre neuen Umgebungen und die Menschen in ihnen beobachten und sich in Bezug zu ihnen setzen.

So veröffentlichte M. Tseng Ching in der *Ostasiatischen Rundschau* vom 1. Januar 1939 den ersten Teil eines auf Fortsetzung angelegten Berichts *Mein siebenjähriger Studienaufenthalt in Deutschland*. Berlin nimmt er als eine Stadt wahr, die viele Chinesen beherbergt, in der es „allein acht chinesische Restaurants [gibt], in denen auch viele Deutsche verkehren", in der man ihm aber dennoch mit großer Neugier begegnet: Seinem eigenen

> Verlangen, in Berlin alles kennenzulernen [...] stand die Neugierde der Berliner gegenüber, bei denen ich durch Kleidung und Benehmen Aufsehen erregte. So musterte man mich anfangs von Kopf bis Fuß, und die Blicke der Passanten wurden mir oft so unangenehm, daß ich eine unheimliche Angst bekam und von der Straße verschwand. Wenn der Berliner auch oft ausländische Typen zu Gesicht bekommt, so erregen sie doch immer wieder seine Neugierde. Nun muß ich ja bekennen, daß mein ganzes Auftreten und vor allem meine Kleidung danach angetan war, um auffallend zu wirken. Ich trug damals noch den Anzug der chinesischen Studenten [...]. (Ching 1939, 13)

Von den Migrant*innen aus China, die im ärmeren Teil der Stadt wohnen und ihren Lebensunterhalt etwa durch Hausieren verdienen, grenzt der Student M. Tseng Ching, der auch in den Restaurants in der Kantstr. verkehrt, sich ab. Mehr noch: Sie scheinen ihm ein „falsches Bild" des chinesischen Volkes für die Deutschen zu bieten; er führt ihr Aussehen bzw. Verhalten, zu dem auch „Unsauberkeit" und Vergehen „gegen die deutschen Gesetze" gehören würden – hier werden bekannte Topoi der pejorativen Betrachtung des „Anderen" aufgerufen – auf ihre Unwissenheit und Ungebildetheit zurück (Ching 1939, 14). Die Beschreibung des eigenen Verhältnisses zu den Deutschen und zu dem Land des Studienaufenthaltes strukturieren Topoi, die teilweise bis heute für

die Berichte und Erzählungen chinesischer Migrant*innen im deutschsprachigen Raum prägend sind: Da ist, neben der oft erwähnten Gastfreundschaft und Hilfsbereitschaft, die Rede von ungewohnten Gerichten; von der eigenen Bewunderung für die Objekte neuer Architektur und Technik, aber auch bewahrter Tradition wie „die großen Regierungsgebäude, die riesigen Kaufhäuser, die Untergrundbahn, [...] die großen Parkanlagen [...], das Schloß von Sanssouci"; von der schwierigen Sprache und den befremdenden Familienverhältnissen, in denen z. B. „die einzelnen Glieder der Familie ein gesondertes Sparbuch haben" (Ching 1939, 14–15). Seinerseits aufklären möchte M. Tseng Ching die deutschsprachigen Leser*innen der *Ostasiatischen Rundschau* über gesellschaftliche Veränderungen in China nach 1911 und das Alltagsleben: So betont er Neuerungen in der familiären und öffentlichen Stellung der Frau sowie Umwandlungen in den Auffassungen von Erziehung – zu unangemessen erscheinen ihm die offensichtlich verbreiteten Vorstellungen von Frauen mit gebundenen Füßen sowie Zopf tragenden und Opium rauchenden Männern (Ching 1939, 16).

Feng Zhi – chinesischer Germanist, Lyriker und Übersetzer, der von 1930 bis 1935 in Heidelberg und Berlin studierte[3] – verfasste 1937 den Text *Erinnerungen an Eichkamp*, den er 1943 in chinesischer Sprache publizierte.[4] Berlin erscheint in Feng Zhis Erinnerungen als eine zu schnell gewachsene Stadt, an der einiges unecht wirkte; gerade die großen Bauten konnten ihn nicht beeindrucken:

> Unter kaiserlicher Herrschaft wuchs Berlin in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts viel zu rasch. Im Vergleich mit Paris oder London vermittelt die Stadt deshalb oft einen hohlen und hochstilisierten Eindruck – sie wirkt streng, steif, monumental und stillos. Am deutlichsten zeigt sich das bei den Bauten im pseudoklassischen Stil, die die Straßen säumen. (Feng 2004, 134)

Anders als M. Tseng Ching – und ja auch unter anderen Bedingungen, an einem anderen Publikationsort und für ein anderes Publikum – reflektiert Feng Zhi in seinem Text vorrangig die politischen Veränderungen in Deutschland vor und nach der Machtergreifung durch die Nationalsozialisten. Den Berliner Vorort Eichkamp, in dem er vom Frühjahr 1932 bis zum Frühjahr 1933 lebte, zeichnet er als ein auf den ersten Blick etwas weltfernes sozialdemokratisches Biotop, das sich nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg entwickelt hat:

---

3 Er traf Anna Seghers 1951 auf ihrer einzigen Reise nach China und ermöglichte ihr ein Wiedersehen mit Hu Lanqi in Peking; vgl. u. a. Li 2010, 67; 157.
4 In deutscher Sprache erschien der Text, übersetzt von Ursula Stadler, 2004.

> Die Bevölkerung von Eichkamp gehörte größtenteils der Sozialdemokratischen Partei an, die in Deutschland nach der Revolution die stärkste Partei war. In jenen Jahren litten die Menschen entsetzlich unter dem Kriegstrauma, und so blieb ihnen nur die Flucht in eine Welt der Ideale. Man war überzeugt, daß es von nun an keine Kriege mehr geben könne und daß alle Menschen Brüder seien. Die Sozialdemokraten hatten eine neue Sicht von der Welt, träumten von ewigem Frieden und waren gut zu ihren Mitmenschen. [...] Die Bewohner von Eichkamp machten den Eindruck einer großen Familie, und ihr einziger Laden war eine Kooperative, die gemeinsam getragen wurde. Tagsüber arbeiteten sie in Berlin, abends kehrten sie nach Eichkamp zurück, und jeder genoß den ganz besonderen Frieden dieses Ortes nach Herzenslust [...]. (Feng 2004, 134–136)

Fast als naiv scheint Feng Zhi die Vorstellungen zu bewerten, auf denen das von ihm als idyllisch gezeichnete Leben in Eichkamp ruht. Doch gegen Ende der Weimarer Republik veränderte sich in seiner Wahrnehmung die (politische) Idylle. Der Weltwirtschaftskrise, der wachsenden Arbeitslosigkeit, der Armut und dem Hunger hatte die Sozialdemokratische Partei nichts entgegenzusetzen, „und so wurde diese milde und tolerante politische Partei angesichts der eiskalten Realität immer schwächer. Gleichzeitig gewannen die Kommunistische und die Nationalsozialistische Partei als rechte und linke Extremparteien zusehends an Einfluß [...]" (Feng 2004, 135). Die Bewohner*innen von Eichkamp mussten einsehen, dass sich der „Friede [...] immer weniger aufrechterhalten" ließ; die Lage außerhalb ihres Biotops wurde „von Tag zu Tag bedrängender" und nach der Machtergreifung durch die Nationalsozialisten verblieb die Bedrohung nicht außerhalb Eichkamps, sondern brach in die Idylle ein: Symbolisch dafür steht, dass ein Freund des Hauses, in dem Feng Zhi lebt – der Chefredakteur der Zeitschrift *Die Weltbühne* Carl von Ossietzky – verhaftet wird (vgl. Feng 2004, 138, 139).

Mit den Olympischen Spielen 1936 rückt Eichkamp, das in der Nähe des Olympiastadions liegt, noch einmal in den Blick der (Welt-)Öffentlichkeit, auch der chinesischen Medien. Anschließend schwindet es aus der Wahrnehmung, auch aus der Wahrnehmung seines kurzzeitigen Bewohners Feng Zhi (vgl. Feng 2004, 140).

3 Späte Erinnerungen: Han Sen

Erst vor einigen Jahren erinnerte sich Han Sen, 1925 als Sohn der politischen Aktivist*innen Xie Yun San und Chen Qiyin in Berlin geboren,[5] in seinem Buch

---

5 Hu Lanqi, die Freundin von Anna Seghers, arbeitete mit Han Sens Vater in der kommunistischen Zelle im Wedding zusammen (vgl. Yu-Dembski 2007, 56). Anna Seghers lernte auch Cheng Qiying, die Mutter von Han Sen, kennen und arbeitete mit ihr zusammen, möglicherweise an

Ein Chinese mit dem Kontrabass (2001) an seine Kindheit und Jugend in Berlin und in der Schweiz. Das Buch ist in deutscher Sprache verfasst worden. Han Sen nennt es eine Sammlung von Lebenserinnerungen, die „Schilderung einer langen, ungewöhnlichen Reise", als die er sein Leben betrachtet (Han 2001, 327). Der erste Teil ist mit dem Leitmotiv, das über seinem Leben steht und im Text wiederholt aufgerufen wird, betitelt: *Meine Heimat ist Berlin*. In diesem, den ersten acht Jahren seines Lebens geltenden Teil des Buches entwickelt Han Sen die Narrative von Einsamkeit, vielfachen Zugehörigkeiten und politischem Engagement, die auch die späteren Teile seiner Erinnerungen prägen. Das politische Engagement seiner Eltern wurde zum Movens seines Lebens: Beide waren bereits 1919 in China in der 4.-Mai-Bewegung engagiert, emigrierten noch im selben Jahr nach Europa und studierten ab 1923 zunächst in Göttingen und später in Berlin. Nach der Rückkehr seiner Mutter nach China blieb Han Sen beim Vater, dessen politische Aktivitäten zunehmend im Mittelpunkt ihres gemeinsamen Lebens standen. Seit 1926 Mitglied der fünf Jahre zuvor gegründeten Kommunistischen Partei Chinas war er damit beauftragt, die Verbindungen der Partei mit den kommunistischen Parteien Europas zu fördern. Er arbeitete mit ebenfalls in Berlin lebenden, späteren hohen Funktionären der Volksrepublik China wie Zhou Enlai und Zhu De zusammen, trat 1927 im Berliner Sportpalast auf einer kommunistischen Massenkundgebung zur Unterstützung der chinesischen Revolution gemeinsam mit Ernst Thälmann als Redner auf, kämpfte im Spanischen Bürgerkrieg 1936–1939 u. a. an der Seite von Egon Erwin Kisch. Der Junge Han Sen blieb oft allein, er wuchs in den Straßen von (Ost-)Berlin und unter der Obhut verschiedener Pflegepersonen auf, oftmals andere Kinder beneidend, wenn er sah, „wie sich ihre Mütter um sie kümmerten" (Han 2001, 11). Er hingegen fühlte sich oft „ganz allein auf der Welt" (Han 2001, 13), bis sein Vater ihn schließlich zu sich und in die Obhut der Vermieterin „Oma Sarah" in der gemeinsamen Wohnung in der Langenbeckstraße am Volkspark Friedrichshain nahm. Das Berliner Leben bestand für ihn nun, unterbrochen von einiger Zeit in der Kindergarten-Gruppe der reformpädagogischen Odenwaldschule, aus Kartoffelpuffern mit Apfelmus, dem Besuch von kommunistischen Demonstrationen oder Massenkundgebungen gemeinsam mit seinem Vater und dem stundenlangen Herumtoben auf der Straße oder im Volkspark Friedrichshain – trotz seiner „kleinen Nase" gehörte er zu einer richtigen Straßen-Gang (vgl. Han 2001, 13, 21, 22). Sein Deutsch erhielt eine

---

einem Roman über chinesische Frauen als einem gemeinsamen Schreibprojekt (vgl. Li 2010, 77–79).

Berliner Färbung, die noch im späteren Leben immer wieder herauszuhören ist (vgl. Han 2001, 170, 294).

Ausgrenzung aufgrund etwa seines Aussehens erfuhr Han Sen gemäß seinen Erinnerungen nicht; auch nicht nach der Machtübernahme durch die Nationalsozialisten, „vielleicht weil Chinesen in Deutschland keine nationale Minderheit darstellten und deshalb kein offizielles Objekt rassistischer Verfolgung waren" (Han 2001, 28). Aber er beobachtete, „wie die neue braune Macht jüdische Ladenbesitzer in aller Öffentlichkeit schikanierte" und Razzien bei politisch Missliebigen, auch in ihrer Wohnung, durchführte (vgl. Han 2001, 26, 27).

Im Laufe des Jahres 1933 musste sein Vater wie viele andere Kommunist*innen Deutschland verlassen. Er migrierte mit seinem Sohn weiter in die Schweiz, wo Han Sen vielfältige (neue) Zugehörigkeiten entwickelte, aber auch erste Anfeindungen wegen seines „exotischen Aussehens" erfuhr (Han 2001, 38). Die Narrative des steten (Weiter-)Wanderns sowie des Heimat- und Sprachverlusts, die seine Erinnerungen fortlaufend durchziehen, werden in dem dieser Zeit gewidmeten zweiten Teil des Textes ausgeprägt. Han Sen vermisste Berlin:

> Ja, mir fehlte eigentlich alles Gute und Schlechte dieser Großstadt, an die ich so gewöhnt war. Manchmal kam es mir so vor, als hätte mir jemand den Boden unter den Füßen weggezogen. Hier in Basel war mir alles fremd. Dazu sprach man noch ein abscheuliches Kauderwelsch, Schwyzerdütsch genannt, das ich nur schwer – oft auch gar nicht – verstehen konnte. (Han 2001, 30)

Die nächste Station war Genf, wo sich Han Sen, da er kein Wort Französisch verstand, noch isolierter fühlte als in Basel; seine Sehnsucht nach seinen deutschen Freunden, nach seiner Berliner Heimat nahm mit jedem Tag zu (vgl. Han 2001, 31, 32). Erst mit dem Besuch der Schule erwarb er französische Sprachkenntnisse, hatte wieder Umgang mit anderen Kindern und fand neue Freunde – seine „eigentliche Muttersprache" blieb jedoch die deutsche (Han 2001, 37). Ein Stück Heimat fand er wieder, als er 1936 in das Institut Monnier – die Schweizer Schule des 1934 ebenfalls zur Emigration gezwungenen Leiters der von den Nationalsozialisten geschlossenen Odenwaldschule Paul Geheeb und seiner Frau Edith Cassirer – aufgenommen wurde. Er fühlte sich „angenehm in [s]eine Vergangenheit zurückversetzt" (Han 2001, 47), findet Freunde fürs Leben wie Fritz Trechsel oder Beatrice Reventlow. Gleichzeitig – so erinnert sich Han Sen – schwanden „mit den Jahren in der Schweiz [...] meine Hoffnungen zusehends, Deutschland so bald wiederzusehen, und ich machte mir kaum mehr Illusionen. Doch ganz tief in meinem Inneren blieb der Wunsch lebendig, irgendwann wieder in meine Heimat zu kommen." (Han 2001, 55). 1940 jedoch musste er mit seinem Vater – der nach dem Ende des Spanischen Bürgerkriegs in Frankreich interniert, aber wie alle chinesischen Gefangenen auf Antrag der chinesischen Regierung entlassen

worden war – nach China, in ein ihm unbekanntes Land ‚zurückkehren'. Die deutsche Sprache bleibt ihm eine Heimat (vgl. etwa Han 2001, 148, 154), das Gefühl der Zugehörigkeit zu Europa bestimmend für sein Leben wie er auch in dem Dokumentarfilm *Ein Chinese mit dem Kontrabass* von Ullabritt Horn (2002) betont.

4 Migrant*innen im Porträt: Wei Zhang

Die Narrative vielfältiger, mitunter widersprüchlicher Zugehörigkeit(en) sowie des Heimat- und Sprachverlusts prägen auch die von Wei Zhang unter dem Titel *Zwischen den Stühlen. Geschichten von Chinesinnen und Chinesen in der Schweiz* (2006) publizierten Porträts von Migrant*innen. Im Vorwort zu dem Band sucht die 1964 geborene Wei Zhang[6] nach Grundlagen und Motivationen für die zweite Auswanderungswelle vorrangig jüngerer Chines*innen in den 1980er und 1990er Jahren nach Europa. Diese wurde durch die 1978 beginnende Öffnungspolitik unter Staatsoberhaupt Deng Xiaoping möglich und führte zunächst vorwiegend Student*innen ins westliche Ausland; die Möglichkeit zur Auswanderung stand später aber auch anderen Gesellschaftsgruppen offen.[7] ‚Der Westen' war, nach der langjährigen extremen Isolation Chinas,

> gleichsam über Nacht zum Inbegriff des Fortschritts, der Technologie, der Zukunft, aber auch der Zuflucht vor der politischen Instabilität Chinas geworden. Diese Projektion wurde auch von der Generation unserer Eltern gestützt, denn sie trugen die unverheilten Wunden der Kulturrevolution und wollten, dass ihre Kinder nie mehr erleben sollten, was sie selber erlitten hatten. (Zhang 2006, 11–12)

Nach 1978 waren ausländische Spielfilme und literarische Texte wieder zugänglich, wurden Fremdsprachen – hauptsächlich Englisch – wieder an den Schulen unterrichtet, die Hochschulaufnahmeprüfungen wurden wieder eingeführt, und es konnten persönliche Begegnungen mit ‚Fremden' oder ‚der Fremde' stattfinden. Die von Wei Zhang Porträtierten ergriffen diese Möglichkeiten und migrierten – vorwiegend als Student*innen oder aus privaten Gründen, z. B. als künftige Ehepartnerinnen – in die Schweiz. In den Porträts, die auf der

---

6 Ihr Debütroman erschien 2018 unter dem Titel *Eine Mango für Mao*.

7 Nach Aussagen von Migrant*innen scheint es ein „Sog" gewesen zu sein, der besonders chinesische Studierende in den 1980er Jahren ins Ausland zog; aber auch für andere Gesellschaftsgruppen ist die Rede davon, dass „die Auswanderung nach Übersee in den südlichen Regionen der Provinz Guangdong [. . .] als fast so etwas wie eine Tradition" galt (vgl. Zhang 2006, 78, 33).

Grundlage von narrativen Interviews entstanden, wird ihre ‚Befremdung' in der Konfrontation mit einer anderen Sprache – „Das Schweizerdeutsche wirkt [...] wie ein fast unüberquerbarer Fluss, der die grosse Mehrheit der chinesischen Immigranten hoffnungslos am Ufer stehen lässt." (Zhang 2006, 11) – und einem anderen Wertesystem in den Mittelpunkt gestellt. Wei Zhang formuliert: „Emotional bleibt ein Ausgewanderter sein Leben lang ein ‚Überseechinese'. Die Werte der Heimat bilden weiterhin seine Lebensgrundlage." (Zhang 2006, 14) Dabei basiert die

> kollektive Selbstdefinition als Chinesen [...] nicht in erster Linie auf einer gemeinsamen Sprache oder Religion, sondern vielmehr auf einem einigermassen homogenen Wertesystem hinsichtlich des Familienlebens, der Erziehung, der Freundschaft, der Partnersuche, der zwischenmenschlichen Beziehungen sowie vieler Belange des Alltagslebens bis hin zum Kulinarischen. (Zhang 2006, 14)

Dieses Wertesystem wird in den Porträts vielfach thematisiert und, vorrangig in Abgrenzung vom ‚Anderen' der Schweiz, entfaltet. Der Heimat- und Sprachverlust scheint die Wahrnehmung der Migrant*innen zu präsupponieren; gleich bei Ankunft in der Schweiz kann mit „dem Verlust der Muttersprache und der Erkenntnis, sich weder auf Englisch noch auf Deutsch kompetent genug ausdrücken" zu können, das „Selbstbewusstsein [...] auf einen absoluten Tiefpunkt" sinken wie Frau Du, 1983 als Studentin in die Schweiz gekommen, berichtet (Zhang 2006, 18). Ähnlich erging es Frau Tan, die im Jahr 2000 als junge Frau auf der Suche nach Arbeitsmöglichkeiten zu Verwandten in die Schweiz kam: Sie sprach kein Wort Deutsch, und so war „die erste Woche in der Schweiz [...] furchtbar hart. Ohne die elementarsten Sprachkenntnisse fühlte ich mich so hilflos wie ein kleines Mädchen" (Wei 2006, 34). Aber auch mit fortschreitenden Sprachkenntnissen bleibe sie „eine Ausländerin, die nur gebrochen Deutsch spricht" und fühlt sich „unterprivilegiert" (Zhang 2006, 35). Frau Gu und ihr Mann reisten 1984 bzw. 1988 zunächst zu Studienzwecken nach Deutschland und beschlossen nach den Pekinger Ereignissen des 4. Juni 1989, in Europa zu bleiben. Ihre anfangs „minimalen Sprachkenntnisse" (Zhang 2006, 61), die zunächst fast ausschließlich Bekanntschaften mit Landsleuten erlaubten, baut Frau Gu aus und entscheidet sich auch nach einer temporären Rückkehr nach China in den 1990er Jahren wieder für ein Leben in Europa.

Für einige Migrant*innen erfolgte das Ankommen in der Schweiz zunächst auch fast mühelos, es bedeutete keine Verlusterfahrung. So berichtet Frau Jiang, die in den frühen 1990er Jahren als Studentin in die Schweiz migrierte:

> Ich verfüge über eine grosse Anpassungsfähigkeit. Fremdes Essen war zum Beispiel nie ein grosses Problem für mich. Deutsch hatte ich bereits an der Universität gelernt, auch die sprachliche Kommunikation würde für mich also keine Barriere darstellen.

> Der Einstieg in der Schweiz verlief für mich ganz mühelos. Ich merkte keinerlei Kultur-
> schock, zumindest an der Oberfläche nicht. (Zhang 2006, 113)

Die meisten der Porträtierten entwickeln während ihres Lebens in Europa neue, wenn auch instabile Zugehörigkeiten. Die anfangs erwähnte Frau Du etwa reiste zwei Jahre nach ihrer Migration in die Schweiz zum ersten Mal wieder nach China und erfuhr, wie sehr sie sich bereits an das Leben in der Schweiz gewöhnt hatte, „nicht nur im Sinne materieller Annehmlichkeiten, sondern auch in Bezug auf die Zivilisiertheit des alltäglichen Verhaltens, die ich in China vermisste" (Zhang 2006, 19). Die Schweiz und die dort beobachtete „Bodenstän-digkeit" des Lebens werden – in Zusammenklang mit der Ablehnung der „chine-sische[n] Propaganda" – für sie zu einem Modell, und so gab Frau Du auch die Idee auf, „,für China' zu studieren und später nach China zurückzugehen und das Gelernte anzuwenden" (Zhang 2006, 20), während ihre Motivation zum Stu-dium eigentlich noch von Fragen geprägt war wie: „Worin besteht die Zukunft Chinas? Wie entwickeln wir das Land? Was sollen wir vom Westen lernen und was nicht? [...] Was war in China schief gelaufen? Warum waren die Chinesen trotz ihrer Intelligenz und Begabung in solche Armut geraten?" (Zhang 2006, 17–18).

Deutlich wird, dass die ursprüngliche Motivation, zum Studium nach Eu-ropa zu gehen, in den frühen 1980er Jahren – wenn auch unter anderen Vorzei-chen – eine ganz ähnliche war wie in den 1920er Jahren: Junge Leute möchten so viel Wissen wie möglich erwerben, um es bei der Gestaltung der (neuen) chi-nesischen Gesellschaft einsetzen zu können. In einer politisch und wirtschaftlich stabilen Situation in Europa gibt es aber offensichtlich mehr Migrant*innen, die sich wie Frau Du gegen eine Rückkehr nach China entscheiden und stattdessen doppelte bzw. doppelt marginale Zugehörigkeiten entwickeln. Nach über zwan-zig Jahren in der Schweiz verspürt sie „eine grosse Sehnsucht nach der klassi-schen chinesischen Kultur" und beginnt, viele ihrer

> früheren Ansichten zu korrigieren, als ob ich im Zuge meiner Odyssee von China in die
> Schweiz schliesslich wieder nach China zurückzukehren versuchte. Was ich früher an
> den Chinesen als ‚unzivilisiert' wahrnahm – zum Beispiel die ausgelassene Unruhe bei
> Tisch –, empfinde ich inzwischen eher als einen sympathischen Ausdruck von Spontanei-
> tät. [...] Privat bezeichne ich mich als Chinesin, die in der Schweiz lebt, [...]. Die Schweiz
> ist kein Immigrationsland. Dass man hier sein Nest baut, bedeutet nicht, dass man sich
> automatisch auch als Schweizer bezeichnen darf. In China bin ich zwar keine Ausländerin,
> aber dennoch auch nur eine ‚Überseechinesin' aus der Schweiz. Die im Zuge der rasanten
> Veränderungen in der chinesischen Wirtschaft entstandenen neuen Gesellschaftsstrukturen
> haben keine Tür mehr für mich offen gehalten. Obwohl ich weiterhin noch mit vielen Leu-
> ten meiner Heimatstadt befreundet bin, ist mein Zuhause nicht mehr dort. Die mir vertraute
> chinesische Gesellschaft ist weitgehend verschwunden. Meine zwanzigjährigen Wurzeln in

der Schweiz scheinen mir auch keine Rückkehr mehr zu erlauben. Ich befinde mich letzt-
lich am Rande beider Gesellschaften.   (Zhang 2006, 25)

Das Gefühl, nicht mehr zurückkehren zu können, weil die Entwicklungen in
China „verpasst" wurden, scheint von vielen Migrant*innen geteilt zu werden.
Auch Frau Jiang, die in den frühen 1990er Jahren als Studentin in die Schweiz
kam und aus familiären Gründen blieb, berichtet:

> [Die] frühere Heimat ist leider inzwischen nur mehr zu einem Besuchsort geworden, denn
> infolge meines langen Auslandsaufenthalts habe ich mich vom chinesischen Alltag und
> seinen ‚Alltagstechniken' entfremdet. [...] Die schweizerische Kultur habe ich nie abge-
> lehnt, weil ich von Natur aus neugierig bin. Ich beobachte meine Umgebung und lerne
> dadurch auch viel. Deshalb finde ich, dass ich inzwischen eine andere Mentalität entwi-
> ckelt habe als meine Landsleute zu Hause. Falls ich wirklich einmal nach China zurück-
> kehrte, würde ich die hier mögliche Unabhängigkeit und Freiheit am meisten vermissen.
>   (Zhang 2006, 112, 116–117)

Ähnlich formuliert es Frau Huo, die in den 1980er Jahren zunächst als Studen-
tin nach Neuseeland und später zu ihrem künftigen Ehemann in die Schweiz
ging. Trotz anfänglicher sprachlicher Schwierigkeiten erarbeitete sie sich vor
allem eines: Freiheit (Wei 2006, 74). Im Schweizer Alltag kann sie ihre Identität
wahren, trotz unterschiedlicher Weltanschauungen und Mentalitäten (Zhang
2006, 75), und lebt eine doppelte Zugehörigkeit:

> Für alle meine Nachbarn und Geschäftskollegen bin ich ‚die Chinesin'. Ich habe einen
> starken Akzent, und im Büro bekomme ich auch oft Anrufe von Chinesen. Eigentlich bin
> ich innerlich immer ganz Chinesin geblieben. Natürlich gibt es schweizerische Einflüsse,
> und was die Schweizer können, kann ich in der Regel auch. Aber ich lebe in der Schweiz
> ein chinesisches Leben.   (Zhang 2006, 77)

Frau Liang, die Ende der 1980er Jahre als Studentin in die Schweiz kam, ist –
im Gegensatz zu vielen anderen Migrant*innen – nachdem sie sich einmal ent-
schlossen hatte, in der Schweiz zu bleiben, auch offiziell Schweizerin geworden.
Aber sie fühlt sich weiterhin „wie eine Bürgerin zweiter oder sogar dritter
Klasse", spürt „die Diskriminierung [...] bei der Arbeitssuche, der Woh-
nungssuche und manchen Dingen, die mit den Kindern zu tun haben"; auch
diese mussten sich daran gewöhnen, dass „nur wenige Schüler [...] freund-
schaftlich mit ihnen [verkehren]" (Zhang 2006, 82).

Es gibt aber auch jene Migrant*innen, die gemäß den Aussagen in ihren
Porträts gar keine neuen Zugehörigkeiten entwickeln. So berichtet Frau Deng,
die ihrem Mann Ende der 1990er Jahre zunächst zu einem Studienaufenthalt
nach Kanada, später in die USA und die Schweiz folgte:

> Der schweizerische Lebensalltag interessiert mich nicht besonders. Ich fühle mich hier als ein Gast; mein Zuhause ist immer noch in China. Ohne äusseren Zwang würde ich mich wahrscheinlich kaum um die Gesellschaft hier kümmern. Als ‚integriert' würde ich mich deshalb nicht bezeichnen. Damit meine ich nicht nur die Schweiz, sondern auch die anderen westlichen Länder, in denen ich vorher gelebt habe. Hier ist lediglich mein Lebensumfeld, nicht mehr als das. [. . .] Im Zentrum meines Lebens stehen die Liebe und die Gefühle. [. . .] Ohne meine kleine Familie in der Schweiz wäre ich schon lange nach China zurückgereist. Nach der Pensionierung werde ich sicher zurückkehren. (Zhang 2006, 121)

Auch Frau Ma folgte ihrem Mann, nachdem er als Student in der Schweiz für seine politischen Aktivitäten im Umfeld des 4. Juni 1989 auf eine ‚schwarze Liste' der chinesischen Polizei geraten war, mit ihrer Tochter in die Schweiz. Möglichkeiten zur beruflichen Teilhabe findet sie kaum und so wird sie Hausfrau – eine Rolle, die sie sich nie hätte vorstellen können und die sie mit einem „Gefühl der Verlorenheit" verbindet, in dem sie „von der Gesellschaft, in der [sie] lebt, nicht respektiert wird und auch sich selber nicht akzeptieren kann" (Zhang 2006, 165). Ohne Beherrschung der Sprache und ohne eine Arbeitsumgebung hat sie kaum Bezug zu „Land und Leuten", in ihrem Porträt heißt es:

> Ich fühle mich als Ausländerin. Aber das stört mich eigentlich nicht. [. . .] Die Frage des Lebensmittelpunkts hat sich weitgehend entschärft. Lange Zeit wünschte ich mir sehnlichst, dass meine sterblichen Überreste dereinst in meiner Heimatstadt auf einem Hügel über dem See bestattet werden sollten. Aber als ich vor kurzem einmal aus dem Fenster blickte, fand ich den See hier nicht weniger schön. Warum sollte ich nicht hierbleiben?
> (Zhang 2006, 168)

Wei Zhang sieht die meisten chinesischen Migrant*innen in der Schweiz in einer Situation des „Dazwischen-Seins", wobei das Dazwischen „eine eigenartige Identität [ist], mit welcher man überall etwas verkörpert, aber doch nirgends ganz dazugehört" (Zhang 2006, 12, 15). Sie spricht damit eine (neue) Signatur der von immer größerer Mobilität geprägten globalisierten Welt an, die unter dem Begriff der Zugehörigkeit (engl. *belonging*) in den Sozial- und zunehmend auch den Kultur- und Geisteswissenschaften diskutiert wird. Persönliche Identitäten lassen sich, das zeigt etwa die Sozialanthropologin Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka in ihrer Studie *Zugehörigkeit in der mobilen Welt. Politiken der Verortung* (2012), kaum in Entweder-Oder-Schemata pressen. Vielmehr sind es Mehrfach-Identitäten bzw. -Zugehörigkeiten, die Menschen ausprägen, wobei der prozessuale Begriff der Zugehörigkeit der Vielfalt und Veränderlichkeit dessen, was Menschen als Gemeinsamkeit erleben, besser gerecht zu werden scheint als der eher statische Begriff der Identität (vgl. Pfaff-Czarnecka 2012, 24). Gleichzeitig scheint das ‚nirgends ganz Dazugehören' auch als defizitär empfunden zu werden, wie in den Porträts chinesischer Migrant*innen größtenteils sichtbar wird.

5 Fiktionen der Liebe: Luo Lingyuan

Neben den Narrativen vielfältiger, mitunter widersprüchlicher Zugehörigkeit(en), des Heimat- und Sprachverlusts, der gewonnenen Freiheit und der erfahrenen Diskriminierung ist es das Narrativ der Suche nach Liebe, das Luo Lingyuans Roman *Die chinesische Delegation* (2007) und ihre Erzählungen in dem Band *Nachtschwimmen im Rhein* (2008) prägt. Die 1963 geborene Autorin kam 1990 ohne Sprachkenntnisse nach Berlin, „der Liebe wegen", wie sie betont (vgl. Yu-Dembski 2007, 134). Ihre ersten Erzählungen, in denen sie versuchte, „den chinesischen Leserinnen und Lesern das Leben in Deutschland zu schildern" (Luo 2008, 175), entstanden in chinesischer Sprache; eine Auswahl wurde 2008 in deutscher Übersetzung unter dem Titel *Nachtschwimmen im Rhein* veröffentlicht. Im Mittelpunkt dieser „chinesisch-deutschen Liebesgeschichten" (Luo 2008, 176) stehen Figuren aus China nach Deutschland gekommener Frauen und ihre Liebes- bzw. sexuellen Beziehungen.

Auch die Hauptfigur des Romans *Die chinesische Delegation* Song Sanya ist eine junge Frau, die als Studentin nach Deutschland kam und sich wegen einer Liebesbeziehung zu längerem Bleiben entschloss. In Nullfokalisierung wird in dem Roman erzählt, wie sie sich im deutschen Alltag bewegt, als Übersetzerin und Reiseleiterin für offizielle Delegationen aus China berufstätig ist und sich immer wieder mit den Ambivalenzen des eigenen Lebensalltags konfrontiert sieht. Sie lebt mit ihrem Freund Kurt zusammen – „stark wie ein Bär", dessen „Augen heller als die Sterne am Himmel strahlen" (Luo 2007, 86) – und ist im Begriff, mit ihm eine Familie zu gründen. Das Verhältnis der beiden Figuren zueinander wird jedoch nicht nur in materieller Hinsicht als ungleichgewichtig imaginiert: Kurt ist Doktorand der Psychologie und Lehrbeauftragter an der Freien Universität Berlin, Song Sanya bringt meist mehr Geld nach Hause als er (vgl. Luo 2007, 86, 87, 107) und scheint auch emotional die Stärkere zu sein, wenn sie ohne Ängste das Familienleben nach ‚deutschem' Muster vorbereitet (vgl. Luo 2007, 145, 183, 258). Gleichzeitig ist ihre Position in der deutschen Gesellschaft allein aufgrund des Passes eine schwächere: Song Sanya spürt – was in den Porträts von Wei Zhang und auch in Luo Lingyuans Erzählungen in dem Band *Nachtschwimmen im Rhein* keine Rolle spielt – einen steten Druck, Geld zu verdienen und Steuern zu bezahlen, damit die Ausländerbehörde ihre Aufenthaltserlaubnis immer wieder verlängert (vgl. Luo 2007, 17, 107). So soll es für die Leser*innen nachvollziehbar werden, dass sie das Angebot einer Geschäftspartnerschaft mit einem Mitglied der Delegation aus der Stadt Ningbo in der Provinz Zhejiang – dem Bauunternehmer Gao – zumindest kurz erwägt, auch wenn sie sich vom System der Bestechlichkeit von Beamt*innen durch Unternehmer*innen in China eigentlich abgestoßen fühlt (vgl. Luo 2007, 158–159, 7).

Auch den romantischen Avancen eines Herrn Xia scheint sie für einen kurzen Moment nicht abgeneigt zu sein, kann sich vielleicht sogar eine Rückkehr nach China vorstellen (vgl. Luo 2007, 222–228). „Ich bin eben doch eine echte Chinesin" (Luo 2007, 216), denkt sie an solcher Stelle. Die Figur Song Sanya lebt chinesische Traditionen und verspürt in ihrem Leben in Deutschland mitunter Heimweh und Einsamkeit (Luo 2007, 227). Besonders stört es sie, dass man in Deutschland „immer die kleine Chinesin" bleibt; gleichzeitig genießt sie, was sie mit ihrem Leben in Deutschland gewonnen hat: Freiheit (vgl. Luo 2007, 227). Hier wird imaginiert, was auch in den Porträts von Migrantinnen evident wurde. Die Defizite von (neuen) Zugehörigkeiten werden in der Betrachtung Song Sanyas durch die meisten Delegationsmitglieder als „Ausländerin" (Luo 2007, 48, 125), die schon seit so langer Zeit nicht mehr in China leben würde, dass ihr „die Verhältnisse daheim [...] nicht mehr vertraut [sind]" (Luo 2007, 78), illustriert. Gleichzeitig unterliegt die junge Frau noch dem Anspruch ihrer Landsleute, China im Ausland „Ehre" zu machen, wozu es fast in Widerspruch zu stehen scheint, dass sie – wie Herr Xia feststellt – vieles von der Schönheit und Weltoffenheit der Stadt Berlin in sich aufgenommen hat (vgl. Luo 2007, 100, 142).

Song Sanyas Beziehungen zu Deutschen werden nur über Kurt und ihren Chef, den Reisebüroleiter Bernd Kischmann, figuriert. Dem einen scheint sie sich – obwohl sie eigentlich als die Stärkere gezeigt wurde – spätestens mit der geplanten Heirat unterordnen zu müssen, dem anderen ist sie zu Dank verpflichtet (vgl. Luo 2007, 258, 117). Da wirkt es fast wie ein Ausgleich, wenn sie ihre Beobachtungen Deutschlands und der Deutschen für chinesische Reisende in Verallgemeinerungen fasst wie: „Sie schreien jetzt schon vor Angst: Die Chinesen kommen!" (Luo 2007, 132), oder „[...] Deutschland sei ein Liebling des Himmels. Hochwasser, Dürre, Sandsturm, Erdbeben oder solche Katastrophen kennen die Deutschen nur aus den Nachrichten" (Luo 2007, 133).

Am Schluss des Romans spielt eine Rolle, was im literarischen Diskurs über die chinesische Migration nach Europa sonst kaum aufscheint: die illegale Migration. Nachdem ein Reisender sich in Paris von der Delegation abgesetzt hat, berichtet Song Sanya, dass „Paris [...] ein riesiges Schlupfloch für illegale Einwanderung [ist]. Es heißt, dass allein zehntausend Chinesen hier illegal leben" (Luo 2007, 253). Sie betont, dass „illegale Einwanderer [...] ein schweres Leben vor sich [haben], und das nicht nur für ein Jahr, sondern oft für Jahrzehnte" (Luo 2007, 254). Vernünftiger scheint es, nach China zurückzukehren, aber „sie weiß [...], dass die Flüchtigen nicht wieder zurückkommen" (Luo 2007, 253).

In der deutschsprachigen Presse der Gegenwart gibt es zu einer möglichen illegalen Migration aus China nach Europa nur kurze Notizen; so berichtet etwa *Der Tagesspiegel* vom 14. März 2018, dass chinesische Migrant*innen von einem in Spanien agierenden Menschenhändlerring nach Europa geschmuggelt

werden. Es überwiegen Berichte über die seit ungefähr zehn Jahren noch einmal stark gestiegene Zahl von in Deutschland lebenden Chines*innen, unter ihnen immer mehr Studierende. Sie träfe ein *Kulturschock*, der in den Facetten bzw. Narrativen entfaltet wird, die den Diskurs seit hundert Jahren prägen: das deutsche Essen, die Sprache, die Einsamkeit, die chinesischen Restaurants in der Berliner Kantstraße, das *Ausländer-Bleiben* und das Gefühl, vielleicht nicht mehr nach China zu passen (vgl. Gillert 2017).

Literatur

Ching, Tseng M. „Mein siebenjähriger Studienaufenthalt in Deutschland." *Ostasiatische Rundschau* 1 (1939): 13–16.

Der Tagesspiegel, „Chinesischer Menschenhändlerring in Spanien aufgeflogen." 14. März 2018. https://www.pressreader.com/germany/der-tagesspiegel/20180314 (10. Mai 2018).

Feng, Zhi. „Erinnerungen an Eichkamp." (Aus dem Chinesischen von Ursula Stadler.) *minima sinica* 2 (2004): 133–140.

Gillert, Sonja. „Wovon Chinesen träumen, wenn sie nach Deutschland ziehen." *Die Welt*, 19. April 2017. https://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article163693159 (18. April 2018).

Han, Sen. *Ein Chinese mit dem Kontrabass*. München: Claasen, 2001.

Li, Weija. *China und China-Erfahrung in Leben und Werk von Anna Seghers*. Oxford u. a.: Peter Lang, 2010.

Luo, Lingyuan. *Die chinesische Delegation*. Köln: dtv, 2007.

Luo, Lingyuan. *Nachtschwimmen im Rhein*. Köln: dtv, 2008.

Pfaff-Czarnecka, Joanna: *Zugehörigkeit in der mobilen Welt. Politiken der Verortung*. Göttingen: Wallstein, 2012.

Roth, Joseph. „Die Chinesen beweinen ihre Toten." *Werke*. Joseph Roth. Hg. und eingeleitet von Hermann Kesten, Vierter Bd. Köln: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1976. 38–40.

Seghers, Anna. „Kleiner Bericht aus meiner Werkstatt." (Zunächst erschienen in: *Die Linkskurve* 9.9 (1932)) Frankfurt a. M.: Druck-Verlags-Vertriebs-Kooperative, 1971. 10–13.

Seghers, Anna. „Die Gefährten." *Aufstand der Fischer von St. Barbara/Die Gefährten*. Anna Seghers. Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1983. 97–326.

Shü, Yin, und Anna Seghers. „Yan shuhpou." *Die Rote Fahne*, 01. Mai 1932. 15.

Streim, Gregor. „Das Erwachen des Kulis. China in den Reisereportagen der Weimarer Republik (Richard Huelsenbeck – Arthur Holitscher – Egon Erwin Kisch)." *Deutsch-chinesische Annäherungen. Kultureller Austausch und gegenseitige Wahrnehmung in der Zwischenkriegszeit*. Hg. Almut Hille, Pan Lu und Gregor Streim. Köln u. a.: Böhlau, 2011. 155–171.

Wagner, Frank. „Eine Frau und ihr Name." *Argonautenschiff. Jahrbuch der Anna-Seghers-Gesellschaft Berlin und Mainz e. V.* 5 (1996): 275–276.

Yu-Dembski, Dagmar. *Chinesen in Berlin*. Berlin: be.bra verlag, 2007.

Zhang, Wei. *Zwischen den Stühlen. Geschichten von Chinesinnen und Chinesen in der Schweiz*. Zürich: Verlag Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 2006.

Guo Yi

Politische Partizipation der chinesischen Einwanderer in Deutschland im europäischen Vergleich

Abstract: Historically, overseas Chinese have been described as a silent ethnic group in terms of their political participation. This article establishes the manner in which this perception has undergone a profound change in recent years, especially in European countries that have been the preferred host countries for new migrants from China since the Reform and Opening-up Policy of their country in the late 1970s. This article demonstrates how the increasing motivation towards political engagement is closely related to the Chinese perceiving a neglect of their interests in the political sphere. It outlines the particular ways in which overseas Chinese engage in politics, including their active participation in elections strongly influenced by their ethnic roots as well as their motivations for being politically active.[1]

1 Ausgangspunkt und Kernfragen der Forschung

Der vorliegende Beitrag handelt von einem Thema, das in letzter Zeit in China große Aufmerksamkeit gefunden hat, jedoch im wissenschaftlichen Diskurs nur wenig erörtert wurde: Inwiefern beteiligen sich Auslandschinesen an der politischen Landschaft im Zielland? Das Wort *Auslandschinesen* versteht sich hier als eine umfassende Bezeichnung für die außerhalb Chinas lebenden Menschen mit chinesischen Wurzeln, die sowohl in China als auch außerhalb Chinas geboren sind und zur ersten Generation oder Nachwuchsgeneration chinesischer Migranten gehören. Dabei spielt es keine Rolle, ob die Angehörigen der ersten Generation oder Nachwuchsgenerationen der Auswanderer aus China ihre chinesische Staatsbürgerschaft beibehalten oder aufgegeben haben. In traditionellen Zielregionen der massenhaften chinesischen Auswanderer nach Mitte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts versteht man im chinesischsprachigen Kontext nicht selten auch Menschen mit chinesischen Wurzeln nach der dritten Generation als *Auslandschinesen* (*Overseas Chinese*),

---

anders als bei den meisten gängigen Statistiken, die nur bis zur zweiten Generation der Migranten zählen. In diesem Kontext ist die Bezeichnung eher als ein kultureller und nicht als statistischer Begriff zu verwenden. In Zielorten der sogenannten *neuen* chinesischen Emigration vom Festland nach Ende der 1970er Jahren wie in vielen europäischen Ländern ist der Widerspruch im Kontrast dazu einfacher zu überwinden, da die meisten Angehörigen der zweiten Generation der neuen chinesischen Immigranten zurzeit noch Jugendliche oder junge Erwachsene sind und daher gemeinsam mit ihrer Elterngeneration problemlos sowohl als Auslandschinesen als auch als Einwohner mit chinesischem Migrationshintergrund kategorisiert werden können.

Mit dem Begriff *politische Partizipation* bezeichnen wir die Beteiligung der Bürgerinnen und Bürger an Willens- und Entscheidungsprozesse, um Einfluss auf die öffentliche Politik auszuüben. Diese Partizipation beinhaltet sowohl eine Beteiligung von Individuen als auch eine Beteiligung von politischen Interessengruppen. Im Zuge des verstärkten Personalaustausches spiegelt die politische Einflussnahme der Migranten in den Aufnahmeländern einerseits ihre intensive Vernetzung in den Gastgebergesellschaften, andererseits die multikulturelle und dynamische Identitätsbildung und -entwicklung der Migranten wider (vgl. Massey et al. 1993; Bade 2004).

Die Realisierungswege der politischen Partizipation der Auslandschinesen schlagen sich bisher hauptsächlich in der Teilnahme an politischen Wahlen nieder. Die politisch Agierenden versuchen, als Kandidat*innen oder als Wähler*innen Einfluss durch die Partizipation in politischen Organisationen (u. a. Parteien), um die eigenen Interessen zu wahren und etwas zu verändern. Eine Vielzahl an erfolgreichen Fällen der politischen Partizipation von Auslandschinesen in europäischen Ländern in den letzten Jahren waren dafür repräsentativ, wobei die Erfolge in überregionalen Wahlen eine deutlich höhere Aufmerksamkeit in den chinesischen Medien und unter den chinesischen Beobachtern erfahren haben als jene in regionalen Wahlen.

Im Bereich der politischen Partizipation von Auslandschinesen wird hier zwischen der Beteiligung an politischen Wahlen als Kandidaten, was als *aktive Partizipation* bezeichnet wird, unterschieden von *weniger aktiven Partizipationsformen,* wie der Mitgliedschaft in Vereinen und Interessengruppen, die in Bezug auf die Anforderungen an personalen, professionellen und sozialen Kompetenzen der Betroffenen sowie deren Motivation, Selbstbehauptung und Durchführungskompetenz bedeutende Unterschiede aufweisen. Bei der aktiven Partizipation steht das Bestreben im Zentrum, die Entscheidungsbefugnis zu erhalten bzw. „unmittelbar die jeweiligen Sach- und Personalentscheidungen" (Vetter und Remer-Bollow 2017, 168) zu treffen. Die Beteiligung an politischen Wahlen mit dem Ziel, direkten Einfluss auf die öffentlichen Entscheidungsprozesse auszuüben, wird in den

Vordergrund der vorliegenden Untersuchung gestellt mit der Überzeugung, dass diese Form der aktiven sozialen Beteiligung in der absehbaren Zukunft weithin als ein wichtiger Weg der sozialen Integration und Einflussnahme der chinesischen Immigranten in Europa dient. Zwar versteht sich die Gründung von politischen Parteien und Vereinen ebenfalls als eine wichtige Form der politischen Einflussnahme und der Wahrung der eigenen Interessen,[2] doch im vorliegenden Beitrag wird dies nicht weiter erörtert, da die chinesischen Immigranten in Europa mehrheitlich nach Ende der 1970er Jahren eingewandert sind, und es bis zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt keinen Sinn macht, die Einzelfälle der Gründung von politischen Gemeinschaften als einen auch für andere Regionen übertragbaren Gegenstand zu betrachten.

In Bezug auf die politische Partizipation der Auslandschinesen in den traditionellen Zielländern wie Nordamerika und Südostasien gibt es Versuche, die politische Beteiligung der Auslandschinesen hinsichtlich ihres Geburtshintergrunds in drei Kategorien zu klassifizieren: (1) politische Partizipation der einheimischen Kandidaten mit chinesischen Wurzeln, (2) politischen Partizipation der ersten Einwanderergeneration chinesischer Herkunft und (3) politische Partizipation der neuen chinesischen Immigranten. Auch gibt es Versuche, solche Partizipationswege hinsichtlich der Agierenden der Partizipation wie Partizipation der Eliten, Partizipation der Individuen und Partizipation durch Vereine und Gemeinschaften der Auslandschinesen zu kategorisieren (vgl. Wan 2011). Ein eventuelles Problem bei der Übertragung solcher Erklärungsmodelle besteht darin, dass die auf der Grundlage der traditionellen Zielländer der chinesischen Auswanderer entwickelten Interpretationsmodelle wie z.B. „politische Partizipation der Eliten-Chinesen" (Wan 2012), „Partizipation der ethnischen Gruppen" (Jin und Zhu 2016) und „nicht-Wahl-bezogene politische Partizipation" (Jin und Sun 2017) in ihrer Anwendung auf die europäischen Zielländern, die in den letzten vier Jahrzehnten die meisten neuen Emigranten aus China aufgenommen haben, keine zufriedenstellende Erklärungskraft erzeugen können. Eine gewisse Differenziertheit sollte für die Betrachtung dieser *neuen* Migrantengruppe in Europa bewusst entwickelt werden, die im Vergleich zu den traditionellen chinesischen Migranten weltweit durch ihre hohe Aktivität, starke Dynamik und schnelle Entwicklung gekennzeichnet sind.

---

2 Zwar wurden in den Hauptzielländern der neuen chinesischen Immigranten in Europa wie Frankreich, Italien und Spanien etc. zahlreiche Vereine unter ihnen gegründet. Diese Vereine sind jedoch in erster Linie aus kommerziellem Zweck gegründet worden und die Mitglieder stammen meist aus einer gemeinsamen Herkunftsregion wie z.B. Qingtian (Provinz Zhejiang) und Wenzhou (Provinz Zhejiang). In diesen Fällen können die Vereine nicht als Vertretungen der politischen Interessen der Mitglieder verstanden werden.

Die vorliegende Untersuchung basiert auf den oben aufgeführten Überlegungen und versucht, folgende Fragen zu beantworten: Wie sieht die aktuelle Situation der politischen Beteiligung der Auslandschinesen in repräsentativen Ländern in Europa aus? Welche Merkmale der Teilnehmer an politischen Wahlen mit chinesischen Wurzeln lassen sich erkennen? Zeigen sich Unterschiede in der politischen Partizipation der Auslandschinesen in den einzelnen Ländern, die auf verschiedene gesellschaftliche Gegebenheiten zurückgehen? Und wenn ja, inwieweit? Gerade mit der Grundannahme, dass die Fälle in Europa nicht mit einem aus den Gegebenheiten in den traditionellen Zielländern entwickelten Erklärungsmuster bewertet werden sollten, fokussieren wir dabei auf Deutschland, wobei zugleich andere Länder berücksichtigt werden, die für das Thema von Bedeutung sind.

2 Überblick über die neuen Immigranten aus China in Europa

2.1 Statistische Größe der Zielgruppe

Die massenhafte Einwanderung aus China nach Europa fing Mitte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts an. Die erste Welle von chinesischen Einwanderern nach Deutschland erreichte ihren Höhepunkt vor dem Ausbruch des Ersten Weltkrieges (vgl. Yu-Dembski 2007; Amenda 2011). Die Geschichte der chinesischen Einwanderung nach Deutschland einschließlich der studentischen Migration, die eine wichtige Rolle für die Geschichte der in Deutschland lebenden Chinesen spielt, erfuhr während der beiden Weltkriege Unterbrechungen. Erst nach der Einführung der Reform- und Öffnungspolitik in der Volksrepublik China 1978 war die legale Auswanderung wieder möglich. Die *neue* Emigrationswelle, die zum Teil auch wegen der gestiegenen Motivation fürs Auslandsstudium entstand, begann im Laufe der 1980er Jahre.

Nach der Statistik der Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Concil of the People's Republic of China sind in den Jahrzehnten von 1978 bis 2008 über 10 Millionen chinesische Staatsbürger ausgewandert (Zhuang 2011, 13). Eine andere Statistik der UNO besagt, dass sich die Auswanderung von Chinesen mit Geburtsorten in China von 4,08 Millionen im Jahr 1990 auf 5,49 Millionen im Jahr 2000 mit einem Wachstum von 34,5 % gesteigert hat (Wang und Miao 2014, 166). In den wissenschaftlichen Diskussionen wird die statistische Größe der neuen Auswanderer in den letzten Jahrzehnten noch ausdifferenzierter nach ihren Zielländern hinterfragt. Nach Zhu (2002) soll die Zahl der direkt

aus China stammenden Emigranten und die der Wieder-Auswanderer mit chinesischen Wurzeln zwischen Ende der 1970er Jahren und dem Anfang des einundzwanzigsten Jahrhunderts zwischen 4 und 5 Millionen liegen, wobei die Zahl der neuen Auswanderer aus Festland-China über 1,7 Millionen beträgt und Europa, als Zielregion für 700 000 von ihnen, die wichtigste Aufnahmeregion für die neuen chinesischen Auswanderer bildet.

Basierend auf den offiziellen Statistiken der Aufnahmeländer der neuen chinesischen Einwanderer in Europa beziffert Li (2011, 284–287) die Zahl der neuen Einwanderer aus China im Jahr 2007 in Großbritannien bei ca. 360 000, die neuen Einwanderer aus China und deren Familienangehörige in Italien im Jahr 2006 bei 150 000, wobei die Zahl der neuen chinesischen Immigranten und deren Familienangehörige in Spanien im Jahr 2008 und in Frankreich 2005 jeweils bei 120 000 und 150 000 liegen soll. Nach Einschätzung Songs (2014, 194–195) unter Berücksichtigung der illegalen Einwanderer und der Zählung seitens verschiedener Vereine der Auslandschinesen in Europa soll die Zahl der Auslandschinesen einschließlich traditioneller und neuer Einwanderer in Frankreich bei 800 000 bis 1 Million liegen, wobei die Zahl der Auslandschinesen in Großbritannien bei 500 000 bis 600 000, in Italien bei 280 000 bis 300 000, in den Niederlanden bei 160 000 und 200 000, in Spanien bei 160 000 und 200 000 und in Deutschland bei 150 000 bis 180 000 liegt.

In der aktuell anhaltenden Welle der so genannten *neuen* Auswanderung nach der Reform- und Öffnungspolitik in China stellt die ostchinesische Küstenprovinz Zhejiang eine wichtige und repräsentative geographische Herkunftsregion der neuen Emigranten aus Festland-China dar (vgl. Wu und Zhou 2001). Die meisten Emigranten aus Zhejiang kommen aus den südlichen Städten Wenzhou und Qingtian und sind vor allem nach Frankreich, in die Niederlande, nach Italien und Spanien gegangen. Nach einer jahrzehntelangen Entwicklung sind die neuen Immigranten aus Zhejiang vor allem in den südeuropäischen Ländern eine nicht zu unterschätzende ethnische und soziale Gruppe geworden, die hinsichtlich der Besonderheiten ihrer sozialen Netzwerke, ihrer Einwanderungswege und ihrer Lebens- sowie Bewirtschaftungsmodelle weltweite Aufmerksamkeit auf sich gezogen haben (vgl. Benton und Pieke 1998; Johanson et al. 2009; Platonova und Urso 2013; Latham und Wu 2013). Die neuen chinesischen Immigranten sind zu einer Zeit ausgewandert, die stark geprägt ist von wirtschaftlicher Globalisierung und technischer Förderung der Mobilität, und sie haben auch im Zusammenhang der multikulturellen Entwicklungstendenzen der Aufnahmegesellschaften in den europäischen Ländern einen eigenen sozialen Charakter, „transnationale Auslandschinesen" (Liu 2002), und eigene Finanzierungsmodelle für die Existenzgründung, wie die Migranten aus Wenzhou (Wang 2000; Xia 2008), entwickelt,

die in der Betrachtung der neuen Immigranten chinesischer Herkunft in europäischen Ländern nicht außer Acht gelassen werden sollten.

2.2 Annahmen über die politische Partizipation der Auslandschinesen in Europa

In der wissenschaftlichen Diskussion kommt es nicht selten vor, dass die chinesischen Einwanderer in den Aufnahmegesellschaften als eine stille ethnische Gruppe bezeichnet werden. Eine solche Behauptung ist berechtigt, wenn man auf die Geschichte der politischen Partizipation der Auslandschinesen weltweit zurückblickt. Die traditionellen Zielregionen Südostasien und Nordamerika stellen dabei in gewissem Maße eine vergleichbare Basis dar. Obwohl in den beiden Regionen die Geschichte der chinesischen Einwanderung bereits vor Mitte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts begann, war erst ein Jahrhundert später eine politische Partizipation der Auslandschinesen Realität geworden.

Einerseits war dabei die pragmatische Einstellung der traditionellen Migranten chinesischer Herkunft im politischen Bereich das entscheidende Faktor für das zurückhaltende Partizipationsverhalten, andererseits waren die jeweiligen Gegebenheiten in den Aufnahmegesellschaften mitverantwortlich für die fehlende Aktivität der chinesischen Immigranten bei der Wahrung eigener politischer Interessen. Vor allem in südostasiatischen Ländern wie Malaysia, Indonesien und den Philippinen, hatten die Auslandschinesen erst nach dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs die Möglichkeit, sich am politischen Leben zu beteiligen. Erst im Laufe der 1960er und 1970er Jahre wurde die soziale Atmosphäre für die Beteiligung der Auslandschinesen weiter gelockert (vgl. Zhu 2005) und durch die Minderung der ethnischen Konflikte mit anderen Nationalitäten gewann die politische Partizipation der Auslandschinesen der zweiten und dritten Generation einen Entwicklungsfreiraum.[3]

Parallel dazu erlebten die Auslandschinesen in Nordamerika eine Art der politischen Partizipation, die alles andere als reibungslos war. Erst durch das Inkrafttreten des „Magnuson Acts" 1943 wurde das sogenannte „Chinese Exklusion Law" aus dem Jahr 1882, das einzige diskriminierende Recht gegenüber einer ethnischen Gruppe in den USA, abgeschafft. Erst im Laufe der 1960er Jahre waren die Auslandschinesen und ihre Nachwuchsgenerationen in den USA in der Lage,

---

3 Dabei spielte auch die Tatsache eine wichtige Rolle, dass sich die Auslandschinesen der zweiten Generation in der Regel in die einheimische Gesellschaft integriert und eingebürgert haben und somit eine stärkere politische Identität als Bürger eines Nationalstaates entwickelt haben (vgl. Pan 2004).

wie andere ethnische Minderheiten auch ihre Bürgerrechte ganz und gar auszu-üben.[4] Mit anderen Worten, bis in die 1960er Jahre mussten die ersten Einwande-rergenerationen der Auslandschinesen in Nordamerika in vielerlei Hinsicht mit einer sowohl politischen als auch gesellschaftlich diskriminierenden Umge-bung kämpfen. Dabei ging es ihnen eher um den Kampf um eine normalisierte und gerechte Behandlung als um die Wahrung der eigenen gesetzlichen Inte-ressen (vgl. Li 1996; Wan 2011).

Die Veränderung der Situation der politischen Partizipation nach den 1970er Jahren war einerseits auf die Veränderung der externen Gegebenheiten zurückzuführen, andererseits auch aufgrund der grundlegenden Veränderung der subjektiven Einstellungen gegenüber der Herkunftskultur zustande gekom-men, die sich von einer rückkehrstrebenden Motivation der ersten Einwande-rergeneration zu einem Integrationsbewusstsein der Nachwuchsgenerationen (vgl. Kang 2010) entwickelte und mit einer Verbesserung der Bildungshinter-gründe der Nachwuchsgenerationen (vgl. Wang 2005) einherging. All diese Fak-toren führten dazu, dass es seit den 1970er Jahren vermehrt US-amerikanische Politiker mit chinesischen Wurzeln auf die politische Bühne geschafft haben.[5]

Allein die unterschiedlichen Voraussetzungen für die politische Partizipa-tion in Südostasien und den USA lassen die Annahme zu, dass im Bereich der politischen Beteiligung von Auslandschinesen in Europa aufgrund der unter-schiedlichen Voraussetzungen der jeweiligen Länder deutliche Unterschiede vorliegen können. In den europäischen Ländern gibt es, im Vergleich zu den tra-ditionellen Zielregionen der chinesischen Emigranten, wesentlich bessere gesell-schaftliche Rahmenbedingungen für internationale Migranten, um politisch aktiv zu sein. Die Mehrheit der Auslandschinesen in Europa ist erst in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten in die jeweiligen Staaten eingewandert und erlebt gerade den ersten Generationswechsel. Die Immigranten chinesischer Herkunft machen in den meis-ten europäischen Städten zwar nur einen kleinen Anteil der internationalen Mi-granten aus, sind aber im Vergleich zu einigen anderen ethnischen Gruppen eher als zurückhaltende und stille Gemeinschaften angesehen. Im Zuge der demogra-phischen Veränderung und der stärkeren Mobilität innerhalb der EU wurden in

---

4 Beispielsweise unterlagen in den USA die Auslandschinesen lange Zeit festgelegten Zuwan-derungsquoten und strengen Regulierungen für die Eheschließung zwischen eingewanderten Chinesen und US-Bürgern.

5 Zu den bekanntesten Vertretern gehören u. a. Elaine L. Chao (赵小兰, Tochter einer Migra-tionsfamilie chinesischer Abstammung, die erste asiatisch-amerikanische Frau in einem Minis-teramt auf nationaler Ebene), Gary Faye Locke (骆家辉, Angehöriger der dritten Generation einer chinesischen Migrationsfamilie, erster Gouverneur chinesischer Abstammung in der Ge-schichte der USA und ehemaliger Botschafter der USA in China).

vielen Ländern eine Reihe von Maßnahmen ergriffen, um den Anreiz für hochqualifizierte Fachkräfte zu erhöhen, in das jeweilige Land zu ziehen, und Kulturen zu entwickeln, die Migration begrüßen. All diese Faktoren tragen dazu bei, dass die neuen chinesischen Einwanderer in Europa (vor allem in Festlandeuropa) wenig historisch bedingten Vorurteilen entgegentreten müssen und auf relativ gute Lebens- und Arbeitsbedingungen treffen.

Die externen Impulse stellen den größten Unterschied der politischen Partizipation der Auslandschinesen in Europa dar. Es darf davon ausgegangen werden, dass bestimmte Gemeinsamkeiten bezüglich der Qualifikation und der beruflichen Struktur der ersten Einwanderergeneration aus China eine wichtige Rolle spielen. Der Anteil der beruflich weniger qualifizierten Menschen unter den Immigranten aus Zhejiang der ersten Einwanderergeneration in Europa[6] erinnert stark an die Situation der Migranten der ersten Einwanderergeneration aus Guangdong und Fujian[7] in ihren traditionellen Zielregionen. Die bei vielen traditionellen Emigranten fehlende Fachkompetenz und die mangelhafte Fähigkeit, sich gesellschaftlich und kulturell in die Aufnahmegesellschaft zu integrieren, haben zur Folge, dass es für die erste Auswanderergeneration zunächst ums Überleben geht und daher extrem schwierig ist, politisch aktiv zu werden. Erst nach den Generationsübergängen sind die Nachwuchsgenerationen in der Lage, sich für die Wahrnehmung und Wahrung ihrer Interessen und der eigenen sozialen Gruppen zu engagieren.

Als ein bisher erfolgreicher Fall der politischen Partizipation in Großbritannien ist besonders Alan Mak (麦艾伦, Jahrgang 1983) zu erwähnen. Mak ist ein Politiker der britischen Konservativen Partei und wurde 2015 zum Abgeordneten im Unterhaus gewählt. Er hat somit als der erste Abgeordnete im Unterhaus mit chinesischem Migrationshintergrund „Geschichte geschrieben" (China Minutes 2015). Mak ist Sohn einer Migrantenfamilie aus Hongkong, die in den 1970er Jahren nach Großbritannien eingewandert ist. Das „British Chinese Project" wurde von Christine Lee (李贞驹), einer britischen Rechtsanwältin mit chinesischen Wurzeln, initiiert und im Jahr 2006 gegründet. Es ist ein bekanntes Projekt bzw. eine zivilgesellschaftliche Organisation für die Förderung der politischen Partizipation von Auslandschinesen in Großbritannien,

---

6 Wu und Zhou (2001) behaupten, dass unter den Emigranten aus Wenzhou und Qingitan in Zhejiang fast die Hälfte vor der Emigration in der Landwirtschaft tätig war. Der sehr hohe Anteil an weniger qualifizierten Arbeitskräften unter den Emigranten aus Zhejiang in den letzten Jahrzehnten wird auch von Xia (2008) bestätigt.

7 Guangdong (auch als Kanton bekannt) und Fujian sind beide südchinesische Küstenprovinzen, die die größten Heimatprovinzen von Auswanderern aus China vor der Gründung der Volksrepublik China 1949 darstellten.

das darauf abzielt, die Motivation der Auslandschinesen für die Äußerung ihrer politischen Meinungen zu erhöhen und kompetente Angehörige der chinesischen Community zur verstärkten politischen Teilhabe zu bewegen. Der stellvertretende Präsident dieses Projekts Alex Yip (叶稳坚) wurde im Jahr 2015 zum ersten Stadtrat chinesischer Abstammung in Birmingham gewählt, als in Großbritannien geborener Sohn einer chinesischen Familie aus Hongkong. An den regionalen Wahlen 2018 in Großbritannien haben 26 Kandidaten teilgenommen – so viele wie nie zuvor mit einem chinesischen Migrationshintergrund, wobei sich der Anteil der Angehörigen der neuen chinesischen Immigranten ebenfalls stark erhöht hat.

Ende 2016 lebten insgesamt nahezu 200 000 französische Staatsbürger chinesischer Herkunft in Frankreich (China News 2016). Eine Zahl, die nicht unbedeutend ist für alle Parteien, die in überregionalen Wahlen gewinnen möchten. Obwohl Frankreich zu den größten Zielorten der chinesischen Einwanderer in Europa neben Großbritannien seit Mitte des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts zählt, hat es vor 2000 in Frankreich noch keine Erfolge der aktiven politischen Partizipation gegeben. Nach 2001 hat sich die Situation langsam aber kontinuierlich verändert, bis es in den letzten Jahren auf einen Höhepunkt gekommen ist. He Ying (何英), die in der Provinz Hubei in China geboren und 1984 als Studentin nach Frankreich gekommen ist, wurde 2001 parteiunabhängige Vizebürgermeisterin der Stadt Bussy-St-Georges in Frankreich. Im gleichen Jahr ist auch Yan Ruyu (颜如玉), die in Laos geborene Tochter einer Familie chinesischer Herkunft, 1975 nach Frankreich eingewandert, als Mitglied der Partei Rassemblement pour la République Vizebürgermeisterin geworden, nachdem sie zwölf Jahre zuvor zur Stadträtin gewählt worden war.

2014 war ein erfolgreiches Jahr für die politische Partizipation der chinesischen Immigranten in Frankreich: Buon Tan (陈文雄), der 1967 in Kambodscha als Sohn einer Familie chinesischer Herkunft geboren und 1975 mit den Eltern nach Frankreich eingewandert ist, wurde in jenem Jahr als der erste Stadtrat chinesischer Herkunft der Stadt Paris gewählt. Gleichzeitig wurden im 19. und 20. Bezirk der Stadt Paris, wo sich eine große Zahl von chinesischen Kaufleuten und handwerklichen Beschäftigten aus der Provinz Zhejiang befinden, jeweils zwei Vertreter der neuen chinesischen Immigranten der zweiten Generation, Wang Lijie (王立杰, Geburtsjahr 1982) und Shi Weiming (施伟明，Geburtsjahr 1983), zu Bezirksräten gewählt (China News 2014). Zu Stadträten gewählte Kandidaten mit chinesischen Wurzeln wurden im gleichen Jahr noch Chen Hanguang (陈汉光), mit Familienwurzeln in Kanton, in der Stadt Lognes, Yang Xiwei (杨熙伟) aus Wenzhou in der Stadt Courbevoie und der in Laos geborene Liu Zhiwei (刘志伟) kantonesischer Herkunft in der Stadt Bussy-St-Georges. Beide wurden jeweils nach dem Wahlsieg zum

Vizebürgermeister berufen. Am 18. Juni 2017 wurde Buon Tan wieder als Kandidat der Partei *La République En Marche* zum ersten Abgeordneten chinesischer Wurzel ins französische Nationalparlament gewählt. Dieses Wahlereignis wurde in den chinesischen Medien weitgehend als „historischer Höhepunkt" (China News 2017) für die politische Partizipation der Auslandschinesen in Frankreich bezeichnet.

Die Situation der Beteiligung an politischen Wahlen in Frankreich zeigt, dass es ebenso viele Aktivisten in der ersten wie in der zweiten bzw. der Nachwuchsgeneration der chinesischen Immigranten gibt. Gleichzeitig ist deutlich erkennbar, dass sich überwiegend Immigranten aus der Provinz Zhejiang beteiligen. Dies bildet einen Kontrast zur Lage in Großbritannien, wo die politischen Vertreter unter anderem Kanton bzw. Hongkong als Herkunftsregion in China haben. Außerdem stammen nicht wenige Vertreter in Frankreich aus wiedereingewanderten Familien, die aus den ehemaligen Kolonialgebieten Frankreichs wie Laos und Kambodscha kommen und nur im kulturellen Sinne als Auslandschinesen angesehen werden können. Die chinesischen Kandidaten werden von einer Partei in ein Wahlkampfteam eingeladen, um gezielt als Ansprechpartner der ethnischen Minderheiten der betroffenen Region aufzutreten. Dies ist im Falle der beiden Bezirkschefs Wang Lijie und Shi Weiming, die beide in den 1980er Jahren in China geboren sind, besonders deutlich.

In Italien und Spanien sind besonders viele neuen Immigranten aus der Provinz Zhejiang, vor allem aus Wenzhou und Qingtian, die vor allem im Dienstleistungssektor arbeiten. Ein dominanter Teil der Immigranten in den beiden Ländern sind weniger qualifizierte Beschäftigte oder Handwerker, die in einzelnen Städten wie Prato in Italien sogar die größte ethnische Gruppe mit ausländischer Herkunft bilden und gleichzeitig Integrationsprobleme mit sich bringen (vgl. Johanson et al. 2009). Trotz der Zunahme der Bedeutung von chinesischen Lebensgemeinschaften für die lokale Gesellschaft kann von einer politischen Beteiligung der Auslandschinesen in den beiden südeuropäischen Ländern nur beschränkt die Rede sein. Bisher waren nur in Italien auf der kommunalen Ebene Einzelfälle von Wahlerfolgen zu verzeichnen.

2.3 Forschungsperspektive und -methode

Vor dem oben präsentierten Hintergrund gelten folgende Forschungsannahmen: Die politische Partizipation der Auslandschinesen in Europa ist wegen der eher kurzen Geschichte der neuen chinesischen Immigranten ein neues Phänomen, das aufgrund der jeweiligen gesellschaftlichen Rahmenbedingungen verschiedener Länder differenziert betrachtet und erforscht werden sollte.

Als ethnische Minderheiten im Ausland entwickeln Menschen mit chinesischen Wurzeln ihre Selbstbehauptung im engen Zusammenhang mit ihren ethnischen, politischen und kulturellen Identitäten. Dabei kann man nicht vernachlässigen, dass diese drei Identitätsbereiche sich nicht immer unterstützen und fördern. Die politische Partizipation setzt ein demokratisches Verständnis voraus, den nationalen politischen Prozess voranzutreiben und Brücken zwischen den Kulturen aufzubauen. Die Stärkung der eigenen ethnischen Identität steht daher im Widerspruch zur Stärkung der Identifikation durch politische Aktivitäten in Organisationen wie Parteien, die sich meistens für die Vertretung von Interessen einer sozialen, aber nicht einer ethnischen Gruppe einsetzen. Im konkreten Fall bedeutet dies, wenn jemand sich als Vertreter/Vertreterin einer ethnischen Gruppe versteht und sich *ausschließlich* für die Wahrung der Interessen dieser Gruppe engagiert, kann er/sie sich gar nicht gleichzeitig als Ansprechpartner/Ansprechpartnerin für die ethnische Mehrheit oder Vertreter/Vertreterin anderer ethnischen Minderheiten in die eigene politische Beteiligungspraxis eintreten.

Im Zeitraum vom Juli/August 2013 bis Februar/März 2016 wurde im Rahmen dieser Arbeit eine Reihe von Feldforschungen in Deutschland und Frankreich durchgeführt. Dabei wurden mehr als dreißig Menschen als chinesische Immigranten der ersten Generation oder Vertreter der Nachwuchsgeneration interviewt und Gespräche mit mehreren Vereinen der chinesischen Immigranten geführt. Unter den interviewten Angehörigen der zweiten Generation der neuen chinesischen Immigranten waren zwei Interviewpartner Vertreter der politischen Partizipation von Auslandschinesen, die erfolgreich zu Stadträten auf der kommunalen Ebene in Deutschland gewählt wurden. Für die Betrachtung der politischen Partizipation der neuen chinesischen Immigranten nach den 1980er Jahren ist Deutschland durchaus geeignet, da hier ein dominanter Anteil der Einwanderer chinesischer Herkunft in den letzten vierzig Jahren eingewandert ist und daher ein repräsentatives und vergleichbares Bild für die politische Aktivität im europäischen Vergleich darstellt.

3 Politische Partizipation der neuen chinesischen Immigranten: die deutsche Version

Nach Angaben des Statistischen Bundesamts (2016a, 41) lebten Ende 2015 in Deutschland nahezu 119 590 chinesische Staatsbürger in Deutschland. Im Vergleich zum Vorjahr ist diese Zahl um 38 % gestiegen. Die Zahl der zugewanderten Migranten aus China ist in den letzten Jahrzehnten stabil gestiegen, wobei

die Studierenden, die in der Regel wegen der Veränderung ihrer Lebensräume für mehr als drei Monate in Deutschland als *studentische Migranten* (*student migrants*) angesehen werden, seit Jahren die größte ausländische Studierendengruppe an deutschen Hochschulen bilden und deren Zahl im Jahr 2015 bei ca. 32 000 lag (Statistisches Bundesamt 2016b). Insgesamt leben aktuell 150 000 Einwohner chinesischer Herkunft in Deutschland, worunter rund 30 000 bis 45 000 deutsche Staatsbürger zu zählen sind und 10 000 Angehörige der Nachwuchsgeneration der chinesischen Migranten, die in Deutschland geboren oder aufgewachsen sind (Liu 2018).

Die politische Partizipation der chinesischen Immigranten hat in den letzten Jahren besonders in der chinesischen Presse starkes Interesse auf sich gezogen, da zahlreiche neue chinesische Einwanderer nach dem Jahr 2000 Erfolge in verschiedenen Wahlen in mehreren europäischen Ländern erzielt haben. Dabei lassen sich zwei Beteiligungsweisen unterscheiden, worin sich auch die spezifische Besonderheit in Bezug auf die politische Teilhabe der Auslandschinesen in Deutschland zeigt: (1) die Beteiligung als Kandidaten an Wahlen und (2) die Beteiligung an politischen Entscheidungsprozessen beispielsweise in Ausländerbeiräten.

(1) Die traditionelle Beteiligung der eingebürgerten oder in Deutschland geborenen Auslandschinesen als Kandidaten für Wahlen vor allem auf der kommunalen Ebene ist als die wichtigste Form der Einflussnahme auf die politischen Entscheidungsprozesse zu verstehen. 2009 wurde Zhang Yine (张逸讷), beruflicher Kaufmann und FDP-Mitglied, geboren in Shanghai und Ende der 1970er Jahren zum Studium in die Bundesrepublik Deutschland gekommen, zum Stadtrat der nordrhein-westfälischen Stadt Kaarst gewählt und damit der erste Stadtrat chinesischer Herkunft in Deutschland. Im März 2014 wurde Xie Shengyou (谢盛友, auch als You Xie bekannt), beruflich Schriftsteller und Inhaber eines China-Imbisses in Bamberg, als Kommunalpolitiker der CSU in den Stadtrat Bambergs gewählt. Xie wurde 1958 in der Küstenprovinz Hainan im Südchina geboren und ist 1988 zum Studium nach Deutschland gekommen. Ebenfalls 2014 wurde noch Wang Weihua (王伟华), die als Tochter einer chinesischen Familie im Jahr 1993 geboren wurde und 2001 mit ihrer Mutter von der Heimatstadt Tsingtao nach Deutschland eingewandert ist, als Mitglied der Grünen Partei in den Stadtrat Schwetzingen (Baden-Württemberg) gewählt.

(2) Die Partizipationsform als chinesischer Staatsbürger an dem örtlichen politischen Entscheidungsprozess in Bezug auf Ausländerangelegenheiten ist besonders deswegen zu erwähnen, da sie für Deutschland repräsentativ ist. Gu Yuhua (顾裕华) wurde als erste chinesische Staatsbürgerin im November 2010 Mitglied der Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Ausländerbeiräte der Stadt

Frankfurt am Main (vgl. Generalkonsulat der Volksrepublik China in Frankfurt am Main 2010), in dem auch ihr Landsmann Yang Ming (杨明, auch als Ming Yang bekannt) fünf Jahre später Mitglied wurde. Später wurde Yang Ming noch in die Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Ausländerbeiräte Hessens[8] gewählt. Sie sind beide in den 1980er Jahren nach Deutschland gekommen, haben ihre chinesische Staatsbürgerschaft bis zur Berufung in den Ausländerbeirat behalten,[9] und engagieren sich beide ausdrücklich für die Verankerung von Chinesisch als Fremdsprache an Schulen und die Integration chinesischer Immigranten in die deutsche Gesellschaft.

Durch die oben ausgeführten Fälle wird deutlich, dass es sich bei der politischen Partizipation der deutschen Staatsbürger chinesischer Herkunft vor allem um Menschen handelt (wie Zhang und Xie), die eindeutig in die Kategorie hochqualifizierter Immigranten fallen, die nach der Einführung der Reform- und Öffnungspolitik in China 1978 zum Zwecke des Studiums ausgewandert sind und sich nach dem Studium im Zielland niedergelassen haben. Auch bei Wang handelt es sich um eine Angehörige der Nachwuchsgeneration einer Familie der neuen chinesischen Immigranten, die in China geboren ist und erst im Schulalter ausgewandert ist. Im Vergleich zu vielen anderen traditionellen Zielländern der chinesischen Auswanderer zeigen diese erfolgreichen Fälle in Deutschland unkomplizierte und ganz gut mit einander vergleichbare Merkmale. Die Kandidaten chinesischer Herkunft engagieren sich möglicherweise aus verschiedenen Motivation für die politische Beteiligung, sie erhalten alle von der Vorfahrgeneration *keine existierenden Ressourcen* für Ihren Kampf um die politische Existenz; da sie selbst zu der ersten Generation politischer Teilhabe gehören. Auf der anderen Seite sind sie dank ihres hohen Ausbildungshintergrunds und ihrer erweiterten beruflichen Qualifikationen im Vergleich zu den traditionellen chinesischen Migranten in der Lage, sprachliche, wirtschaftliche, soziale und politische Kompetenzen zu entwickeln, die für eine Beteiligung am politischen Entscheidungsprozess durchaus gefordert sind. Wie uns Z. im Gespräch erzählte:[10]

---

8 Die Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Ausländerbeiräte in Hessen ist eine Vertretung der Ausländerinnen und Ausländer vor Ort, die in alle Wahlkreise in Hessen ihre entsprechende Organisation hat. Die Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Ausländerbeiräte in Hessen wurde offiziell als „gefragte und kompetente Ansprechpartnerin und Begleiterin der Landesregierung" mit „hohe[m] Engagement" und „Mitarbeit in vielen Gremien des Landes" gelobt (Landesregierung Hessen 2018).
9 Yang kandidierte im Februar 2018 bei der Wahl zum Oberbürgermeister in Frankfurt am Main als Parteiunabhängiger und erhielt 0,5 % der gültigen Stimmen.
10 Quelle: Gespräch mit Z., gebürtiger Chinese und Vertreter der politischen Partizipation der Auslandschinesen in Deutschland am 05. März 2016.

> Es war gar keine schwierige Sache, an politischen Wahlen teilzunehmen. Ich bin von der
> Natur aus diskussionsfreudig und weiß, wie man Menschen überzeugen kann. [...] Doch
> weiß ich auch, dass es für normale Chinesen keine leichte Sache ist. Du musst mit den
> Spielregeln der Parteipolitik vertraut sein und damit umgehen können. Wie und wann
> sollst du deine Meinung zum Ausdruck bringen? Mit wem gehst du um und was für eine
> Meinung wird gebildet? usw. Das ist ein komplexes Thema. [...] Du musst dich an die
> Umgangsweise der Deutschen anpassen.

Auch wenn man alles von Null anfangen muss, ist die Lernbereitschaft bei gut
ausgebildeten Menschen vor allem der zweiten Migrantengeneration deutlich
erkennbar, wie es auch bei W. der Fall ist:[11]

> In einem Verein wurde ich von dem Vizevorsitzenden unserer Partei in dem Bundesland
> angefragt, ob ich Interesse habe, in die Partei einzutreten und an Wahlen teilzunehmen.
> [...] Tatsächlich hatte ich keine Ahnung, wie sich die Politik in diesem Land entwickelt,
> und dachte sofort, das ist eine sehr gute Chance zu lernen.

Auch aus den persönlichen Lebenserfahrungen im Jugendalter an der Schule,
die zum Teil negativ geprägt waren, hat W. im Laufe ihrer politischen Praxis
zurückgegriffen und daraus Ideen für die Förderung der Integration von Immi-
granten(-kindern) an Schulen entfaltet.

Bei Gu (Ausländerbeirätin Frankfurt am Main 2010 und 2015) und Yang (Aus-
länderbeirat Frankfurt am Main 2015 und Ausländerbeirat Hessen 2015) handelt
es sich zwar um Fälle, die gar nicht typisch für die politische Beteiligung in Eu-
ropa sind, doch repräsentativ für eine spezifisch deutsche Partizipationsweise.
Als Ausländerbeiräte auf kommunaler und Landesebene verfügen sie zwar nur
über sehr beschränkte Wirkmöglichkeiten in politischen Entscheidungsprozessen,
haben doch im gewissen Maße schon eine große symbolische Bedeutung für die
Bekämpfung gegen Diskriminierung gegenüber internationalen Migranten und
für die Förderung der Integration von Immigranten in die Aufnahmegesellschaft.
Gerade vor dem Hintergrund des Aufbaus der *Willkommenskultur* der deutschen
Gesellschaft sollte die Rolle der Beratungs- und Kontrollfunktion nicht unter-
schätzt werden. Für die chinesische Lebensgemeinschaft in Deutschland werden
die beiden Fälle eher als symbolhafte Erfolge für eine substanzielle Beteiligung
der Auslandschinesen an Angelegenheiten, die ihre eigenen Interessen betreffen,
sowie eine vorbildhafte Selbstpräsentation und Integration in die Aufnahmege-
sellschaft verstanden.

Im europäischen Vergleich zu Fällen politischer Partizipation von Aus-
landschinesen sind in der Praxis in Deutschland folgende Merkmale zu nennen:

---

11 Quelle: Gespräch mit W., gebürtige Chinesin und Vertreterin der politischen Partizipation
der Auslandschinesen in Deutschland am 14. August 2018.

Erstens, die in Deutschland lebenden chinesischen Staatsbürger sind deutlich stärker in den politischen Prozessen vor Ort involviert, auch wenn der Wirkungsraum nur auf Angelegenheiten für Ausländer beschränkt bleibt. Dabei sind die Vertreter der Partizipation dieser Form in der Lage, ihre Identifikation zur eigenen ethnischen Gruppe deutlich zum Ausdruck zu bringen und ihre internationale Perspektive zu betonen, um die Interessen der Auslandschinesen und der internationalen Migranten zu unterstreichen und zu wahren. Tatsächlich tendieren sie dazu, die eigene politische Selbstbehauptung im engen Zusammenhang mit ihrer Selbstdefinition als Ansprechpartner(in) für die chinesische Lebensgemeinschaft zu entwickeln.

Zweitens, die traditionelle institutionalisierte politische Form fand sich in Deutschland bisher ausschließlich auf der kommunalen Ebene, wo Zhang, Xie und Wang jeweils in Kaarst in Nordrhein-Westfallen, Bamberg in Bayern und Schwetzingen in Baden-Württemberg in den Stadtrat gekommen sind. Bei allen drei Städten handelt es sich um Wahlkreise mit geringer Einwohnerzahl. Anders als bei den beiden chinesischen Ausländerbeiräten, die in Hessen berufen wurden, finden sich die Wahlerfolge der drei Stadträte in drei verschiedenen „alten" Bundesländern. Bemerkenswert ist auch, dass die Parteizugehörigkeit der drei Stadträte unterschiedlich ist (FDP, CSU und Grüne). Das heißt, bis zum jetzigen Zeitpunkt gibt es in Deutschland noch keine Berufspolitiker mit chinesischen Wurzeln, die auf Landes- oder sogar auf Bundesebene die politische Meinungsbildung und politische Entscheidungsprozesse bewegen können, wie es in Großbritannien und Frankreich der Fall ist. Es bleibt ebenfalls offen, ob in absehbarer Zukunft auch Vertreter chinesischer Abstammung in den beiden größten Volksparteien CDU und SPD auf die öffentliche Bühne kommen werden.

Drittens, für beide Richtungen der politischen Partizipation rückt die Tatsache in den Vordergrund, dass Deutschland als ein wichtiges Zielland für die neue Auswanderungswelle der Chinesen nach Ende der 1970er Jahre ein aussagekräftiges Bild der Stärkung des Bewusstseins für eine politische Beteiligung der neuen chinesischen Immigranten liefert. Dabei spielen die Hochqualifizierten, die in Deutschland ihre Hochschulbildung absolviert haben, eine besonders wichtige Rolle. Die Hochqualifizierten sind bei weitem motivierter, sich in die Gastgebergesellschaft zu integrieren, und durch ihre beruflichen Profile durchaus befähigt, einer solchen Integration näher zu kommen. Sie sind dank ihrer professionellen Hintergründe eher in der Lage, durch bewusste Anpassung an die sozialen und politischen Regeln ihre eigenen Vorhaben und Ziele zu erreichen.

Viertens, die erfolgreichen Fälle in Deutschland zeigen eine deutliche Diversität an regionaler Herkunft auf, die im europäischen Vergleich eine Besonderheit darstellt. Zwar bilden die neuen Auswanderer aus der Küstenprovinz Zhejiang als eine der wichtigsten Herkunftsregionen einen nicht zu unterschätzenden Anteil

der Auslandschinesen in Deutschland,[12] doch dies findet (noch) keinen Niederschlag im Bereich der politischen Partizipation. Die deutsche Situation stellt in diesem Kontext einen deutlichen Kontrast zu der Situation in Frankreich dar, wo schon mehrere Vertreter der ersten bzw. zweiten Generation der chinesischen Migranten aus Wenzhou bzw. Qingtian der Provinz Zhejiang Funktionen in wichtigen politischen Kreisen gefunden haben.

4 Schlussfolgerungen

Generell erkennt man eine erhöhte Motivation und stärkere Aktivitäten der politischen Partizipation von Auslandschinesen in verschiedenen europäischen Ländern und damit eine grundsätzliche Veränderung der Einstellung der Auslandschinesen in diesen. Ausgehend von der Annahme, dass die aktuellen Formen der politischen Partizipation der Auslandschinesen in Europa in unterschiedlichen Typen kategorisiert werden können, lassen sich einige merkenswerte Tendenzen in der Praxis in unterschiedlichen Ländern aufzeigen.

An den Beispielen in Ländern mit einer längeren Geschichte der traditionellen Einwanderer aus China wie Großbritannien lässt sich eine Tendenz der *Distanzierung zur eigenen ethnischen Abstammung* vor allem bei den Nachwuchsgenerationen erkennen. Das heißt, die Teilnahme an politischen Wahlen wird im engen Zusammenhang mit der Selbstbehauptung als aktives Individuum des Nationalstaats verstanden, um den politischen Prozess des Landes voranzutreiben, in dem man geboren ist und zu dem man ein Zugehörigkeitsgefühl entwickelt hat. Eine solche Tendenz lässt sich ebenfalls in den nordamerikanischen Ländern beobachten, wo die erfolgreichen Teilnehmer an politischen Wahlen mit chinesischen Wurzeln oft zu der zweiten, sogar dritten/vierten Generation der chinesischen Einwanderer gehören.

Am Beispiel der politischen Partizipation von Auslandschinesen in vielen Ländern des europäischen Kontinents wie Frankreich und Italien wird deutlich, dass eine solche Distanzierung zu ethnischen Wurzeln in nicht vergleichbarer Weise vorhanden ist. Ein wichtiger Einflussfaktor stellt dabei möglicherweise der große Anteil der Einwanderer aus der Provinz Zhejiang und deren starke

---

12 Es gab bisher noch keine Statistik über die genaue Anzahl der Immigranten in Deutschland aus der Provinz Zhejiang als die größte Sendeprovinz der neuen Emigranten nach 1978, die sehr beeindruckende Größe dieser regionalen Gruppe lässt sich durch die dominante Zahl der China-Restaurants überall vor allem in großen Städten und der großen Anzahl der Beschäftigten von wenig qualifizierten Berufen deutlich wahrnehmen.

Identifikation zu ihrer regionalen Abstammung dar, die durch hohen Zusammenhalt zwischen Familien- und Clanangehörigen und gegenseitiger Abhängigkeit in diesem Netzwerk gekennzeichnet sind. Ein wichtiger Impulsfaktor für die Motivation der Teilnehmer an politischen Wahlen bildet die Wahrung der wirtschaftlichen Interessen bzw. die Verbesserung der Rahmenbedingungen für die wirtschaftliche und gesellschaftliche Integration der eigenen Community. Daher überrascht es nicht, dass in Frankreich und Italien in den letzten Jahren mehrere organisierte Proteste der chinesischen Community gegen Kriminalität gegenüber Chinesen und ungünstige ordnungsamtliche Regelungen gegenüber chinesischen Kaufleuten zustande gekommen sind. Gerade in den Protesten haben Vertreter der Nachwuchsgeneration der chinesischen Immigranten wie Shi Weiming und Wang Lijie als aktive Organisatoren bei den französischen Parteien Aufmerksamkeit gefunden, wurden später in das Kandidatenteam für die Wahlen aufgenommen und haben nach dem Wahlsieg politische Funktionen auf kommunaler Ebene bekommen. Die Zugehörigkeit zur chinesischen Community bildet daher ein klares Etikett der politischen Aktivisten, die auch bewusst von den Betroffenen zur Stärkung ihrer Verbindung zu chinesischen Gemeinschaften bzw. zur Community der ethnischen Minderheiten genutzt werden, um ihre Funktion u. a. als Ansprechpartner für die internationale Zusammensetzung der Gesellschaft wahrzunehmen.

In Fällen der politischen Partizipation der chinesischen Einwanderer in Deutschland können weder die Tendenz der Distanzierung noch die Tendenz der Verstärkung der Identifikation zur eigenen ethnischen Abstammung festgestellt werden. Eine wichtige Besonderheit der Einwohner chinesischer Herkunft in Deutschland besteht darin, dass eine parallele Entwicklung der hochqualifizierten professionellen und der nicht qualifizierten Arbeitskräfte in Lebenskreisen und Karriereentwicklung besteht (vgl. Liu 2018). In Bezug auf die Motivation der politischen Teilhabe in Deutschland im Gegensatz zu Frankreich liegt es nahe, dass die individuelle Entscheidung die wichtigste Rolle spielt. Darüber hinaus ist der Anteil der hochqualifizierten Angehörigen der neuen Immigranten aus Festland-China, die nach der Öffnungspolitik ausgewandert sind, in den Fällen in Deutschland deutlich höher als in anderen europäischen Zielländern.

Unklar scheint noch zu sein, ob die Schaffung von lockeren und fördernden politischen Rahmenbedingungen für Auslandschinesen als ethnische Minderheit in Deutschland ein ernsthafter politischer Appell wird, wie es bereits in anderen Schlüsselländern in Europa wie Großbritannien und Frankreich ist. Es steht allerdings fest, dass die Entwicklungswege der politischen Partizipation von Menschen chinesischer Herkunft in Europa keinesfalls als eine spätere Kopie der Fälle in traditionellen Zielregionen interpretiert werden sollten, sondern jeweils

unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der länderspezifischen Voraussetzungen und Gegebenheiten hinterfragt werden sollten.

Aus praktischen und objektiven Gründen stand im vorliegenden Beitrag die *aktive* Beteiligungsform an politischen Wahlen bei der Betrachtung in Deutschland und in anderen europäischen Ländern im Vordergrund. Dabei rückten andere Beteiligungsformen wie Gründung von politischen Organisationen, Teilnahme an Demonstrationen, Arbeit in Bürgerinitiativen und passive Partizipationsform wie Abstimmung bzw. Wahrnehmung der Wahlrechte etc. wegen der bisher quantitativ beschränkten Praxis bei der Beobachtung in den Hintergrund. Diese sollten in der zukünftigen Forschung berücksichtigt werden.

Literatur

Bei chinesischen Publikationen ohne Angabe des englischen Titels werden die Überschriften vom Verfasser der vorliegenden Arbeit vom Chinesischen ins Deutsche übersetzt. Es gilt für alle deutschsprachigen Angaben der Literaturen von chinesischen Autoren.

Amenda, Lars. *China in Hamburg*. Hamburg: Ellert & Richter, 2011.
Bade, Klaus J. et al. *Sozialhistorische Migrationsforschung*. Göttingen: V&R, 2004.
Benton, Gregor and Frank N. Pieke (eds.). *The Chinese in Europe*. London: Macmillan, 1998.
China Miniutes. "史上第一个华裔英国国会议员：我代表的不是华人." 09. Mai 2015.
    http://www.oushinet.com/news/qs/qsnews/20150509/192717.html (31. Dezember 2018).
China News. "法国市镇选举尘埃落定 大巴黎 6 华裔步入政坛." 10. April 2014.
    http://www.chinanews.com/hr/2014/04-10/6049791.shtml (31. Dezember 2018).
China News. "法国华人参政转折年 华埠成竞选人必拜'码头'." 29. Dezember 2016.
    http://www.chinanews.com/hr/2016/12-29/8108486.shtml (31. Dezember 2018).
China News. "欧洲时报：法国华人当选议员，天时、地利、人和." 20. Juni 2017.
    http://www.chinanews.com/hr/2017/06-20/8255570.shtml (31. Dezember 2018).
Generalkonsulat der Volksrepublik China in Frankfurt am Main. "顾裕华女士入选法兰克福市外国人代表机构." 11. November 2010. https://www.mfa.gov.cn/ce/cgfrankfurt/chn/zxxx/t769630.htm (31. Dezember 2018).
Jin, Zhengkun and Lingfeng Zhu. "The Modes of Political Participation of Overseas Chinese: Examples from the US, Malaysia and the UK." *Southeast Asian Studies* 6 (2016): 92–100.
Jin, Zhengkun and Bingbing Sun. "New Characteristics and New Trends of Chinese Americans Political Participation in Recent Years – An Analysis Based on the 2016 US Election." *Overseas Chinese History Studies* 6 (2017): 27–34.
Johanson, Graeme, Russell Smyth and Rebecca French (eds.). *Living Outside the Walls: The Chinese in Prato*. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009.
Kang, Yibo. "Die aktuelle Lage der politischen Partizipation der Auslandschinesen in den USA." *International Study Reference* 4 (2010): 15–18, 48.
Landesregierung Hessen. "Staatssekretär Kai Klose bei Plenarsitzung der Ausländerbeiräte Hessen." 15. September 2018. https://integrationskompass.hessen.de/pressemitteilungen/staatssekretär-kai-klose-bei-plenarsitzung-der-ausländerbeiräte-hessen (01. Dezember 2018).

Latham, Kevin and Bin Wu. "Chinese Immigration into the EU: New trends, dynamics and implications." *Europe China Research and Advice*, 2013.

Li, Minghuan. *Interanationale Migrationspolitik*. Xiamen: Xiamen University Press, 2011.

Li, Qirong. "Die Entwicklung und Probleme der Gesellschaft von Auslandschinesen in den USA." *Overseas Chinese History Studies* 1 (1996): 34–46.

Liu, Hong. "Transnationale Chinesen: Empirische Analyse und theoretische Überlegungen." *21th Century* 6 (2002): 120–131.

Liu, Hong and Jiaqi Hou. "Chinese Society and Political Participation in Contemporary Britain: A Case Study of the 2010 Election." *Southeast Asian Studies* 4 (2010): 49–61.

Liu, Yue. *Chinese Immigrants in Germany: characteristcs of social groups in historical process*. Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press, 2018.

Massey, Douglas S., Joaquin Arange, Graeme Hugo, Ali Kouaouci, Adela Pellergrino and J. Edward Taylor. "Theories of international migration: A review and appraisal." *Population and development* 4 (1993): 431–466.

Song, Quancheng. "Chinese Immigrants in Europe: Scale, Characteristics, Problems and Prospects." *Annual Report on Chinese International Migration (2014)*. Hg. Huiyao Wang. Beijing: Social Science Academic Press, 2014.

Wan, Xiaohong. "Analyse über die aktuelle politische Partizipation der Auslandschinesen in Kanada." *World Ethno-National Studies* 4 (2011): 56–65.

Wang, Huiyao and Lü Miao. *Report on Overseas Chinese Professionals (2014)*. Beijing: Social Science Academic Press, 2014.

Wu, Chao and Wangsen Zhou. "A Study on the New Migrants from Zhejiang." *Overseas Chinese History Studies* 9 (2001): 21–26.

Pan, Shaohong. "On the Process of the Thai Chinese Participation in Political and Government Affairs After World War II and their Reasons." *Around Southeast Asia* 3 (2004): 62–66.

Platonova, Anna and Giuliana Urso. "Asian Immigration to the European Union, United States and Canada." *Journal of global policy governance* 1 (2013): 143–156.

Statistisches Bundesamt (2016a). *Bevölkerung und Erwerbstätigkeit. Ausländische Bevölkerung 2015*. Wiesbaden: Statisches Bundesamt, 2016.

Statistisches Bundesamt (2016b). *Bildung und Kultur. Studierende an Hochschulen. Wintersemester 2015/2016*. Wiesbaden: Statisches Bundesamt, 2016.

Vetter, Angelika und Uwe Remer-Bollow. *Bürger und Beteiligung in der Demokratie: Eine Einführung*. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2017.

Wan, Xiaohong. "Political Participation of Chinese Canadian Elites." *Overseas Chinese History Studies* 3 (2012): 23–34.

Wang, Chunguang. *Immigranten aus Wenzhou in Paris: ein intersozialer Konstruktionsversuch einer Immigrantengruppe* (übersetzt von Guo Yi). Nanchang: Jiangxi People's Publishing House, 2000.

Wang, Zichang. "Chinesische Immigranten und die Entwicklung der US-amerikanischen Politik." *World Ethno-National Studies* 1 (2005): 42–47.

Xia, Fengzhen. *Illegale Migranten aus dem Süden der Provinz Zhejiang aus der globalen Perspeitive*. Tianjin: Nankai University Press, 2008.

Yu-Dembski, Dagmar. *Chinesen in Berlin*. Berlin: Berlin Edition, 2007.

Zhou, Long: "Von Era 1.0 zu Era 4.0: Über soziale Entwicklung und politische Integration der Auslandschinesen in Großbritannien." *World Ethno-National Studies* 1 (2016): 50–60.

Zhu, Huiling. "The Developing Trends of Overseas Chinese Societies in the Developed Countries in the First Half of the 21th Century." *Overseas Chinese History Studies* 2 (2002): 28–34.

Zhu, Lumin. "Möglichkeiten der politischen Partizipation in Malaysia aus der institutionalen Perspektive." *World Ethno-National Studies* 2 (2005): 44–51.

Zhuang, Guotu. "Historical Changes in Numbers and Distribution of Overseas Chinese in the World." *World History* 5 (2011): 4–14.

Zhao Jing

Knowledge, practice and emotion in migration: The lifeworld of Chinese migrants in Germany

Abstract: Migration has broad consequences for three affected communities: the society of origin, the society of destination and the migrants themselves. Chinese migrants are the biggest Asian group in Germany with their numbers increasing rapidly in recent years. This research investigates the daily lives of Chinese immigrants in Germany with a focus on their daily activities across socio-cultural borders. Drawing from empirical fieldwork, this article delves into the complex lifeworld of Chinese immigrants in Germany. Qualitative methods involving a combination of multi-sited ethnography and participant observation are employed to discover how these migrants cope with the differences between China and their host country as transnational actors. This article also examines the manner in which they find diverse resources (e.g. legal context in Germany, social network, ethnicity etc.) and use them in order to optimize their living situations and the implications for their self-perception.

1 Research context

After the Implementation of China's Reform and Opening-up Policy in 1978, many Chinese left their hometown for Europe, the United States of America and many other countries, especially from China's coastal areas such as Zhejiang, Fujian and Guangdong. There are several major reasons why people moved: to look for better jobs, to join their family abroad or simply to pursue new experiences. This emigration out of China has not come without broad consequences for the societies of origin, the societies of destination and the migrants themselves. Global economic development is expected to continue to encourage the movement of Chinese seeking economic, social and cultural opportunities in new places in the future.

An individual's lifeworld is comprised of a complex spectrum of various aspects. When it comes to issues regarding the manner in which migrants navigate between two (and sometimes more) cultural realities in the various domains of their lives, including family roles and responsibilities, parenting, work, their work ethic, and their relationship with authorities, many questions come to

mind. This article investigates the complex lifeworld of overseas Chinese in Germany: How do they cope with the differences between China and their host country? How do they find diverse resources (e.g. legal context in Germany, social network, ethnicity etc.) and take advantage of these in order to optimize their living situations and what are the implications for their self-perception? Based on these questions, I conducted a survey in Germany among the overseas Chinese to find the answers from their unique transnational biographies.

1.1 State of research

The lifeworld of overseas Chinese in Germany is a relatively new and under-explored field of research. Researchers have given this subject scant attention – both in Germany and in China. There are numerous monographs, articles and websites about overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia (Wang 2001; Huang 2005; Ju 2006; Li 2007; Liu 2010), in Canada (Wang and Liang 2003), in some European countries such as Great Britain, Italy, France (Li 1995; Wang 2001; Zhang 2002; Fu 2006) and the USA (Cheng 2000; Wu 2002; Zhao 2003; Zeng 2005) as well as about Turkish migrants in Germany (Atabay 1998; Schulz and Sackmann 2001; Diehl 2002; Gestring et al. 2006). However, a fairly small number of articles about overseas Chinese in Germany exist (Song 2002; Liu 2009; Wang 2009; Zheng and Wu 2010). The existing literature mainly focuses on the historical development of overseas Chinese in Germany (Wang 2009), the immigration policies of Germany (Song 2002; Zheng and Wu 2010), and the education of children with Chinese immigrant backgrounds (Liu 2009). Research on the lifeworld and the specialized cultural realms of the overseas Chinese however in Germany and in China is still in its infancy.

It is evident that migration makes it possible for the migrants to achieve a broader worldview, or in other words lifeworld. A linear relationship between migration and multi-leveled participation in the origin and/or host society, between the lifeworld of migrants and their specific heritage cultural items has not been revealed. The related literature is sparse and frequently has to resort to English literature and newspaper articles in order to make use of secondary sources. Some English literature regarding the lifeworld of other migrant groups: Arabs in America, migrants in Slovenia, Senegalese living in Italy, young Somalis with Dutch passports living in the UK etc. (cf. Nagel and Staeheli 2004; Pajnik 2007; Riccio 2011; Van Liempt 2011) are worth mentioning in this context. But this literature often concentrates only on the perspective of the migrants' perception and adaptation to the host society through migrant associations, remittances, youth groups and the like. The cultural

characteristics of the country of origin and the migrants' transnational habitus are often ignored.

The current trends of migration research have led to new preferred terms such as *transmigration*, *transnationalism* and *diaspora* in the studies that have been conducted. These concepts suggest paying more attention to the dynamic characteristics of transnational migration (Dimock 2006; Bauböck 2008; Schönwälder 2009; D'Amato 2009; Hanrath 2012). It is therefore necessary to emphasize this strong connection to China and overseas Chinese should not be regarded as a homogenous group. The differences due to social, regional and ethnic origin, political opinions, legal status in the host country and the purpose of stay must be taken into consideration. In this context, empirical studies with a focus on overseas Chinese and their lifeworld will always make sense.

1.2 The lifeworld approach

In *The Theory of Communicative Action*, Jürgen Habermas reconstructs earlier social theories and arrives at a two-leveled social theory, which explores the tensions and interconnections between system and lifeworld as two faces of the social world.

Seen from a lifeworld perspective, modern society encompasses the dynamics by which culture, social order and individual identity are secured. Habermas develops an extensive conceptualization of the social matrix of lifeworlds, identifying three *structural nuclei* of the lifeworld – culture, society, and personality – which are "made possible" by three enduring and interacting sets of processes – cultural reproduction, social integration and personal socialization. These relationships are summarized by Habermas in the following Figure 1.

Structural components: Reproduction processes:	Culture	Society	Personality
Cultural reproduction	Transmission, critique, acquisition of cultural knowledge	Renewal of knowledge effective for legitimation	Reproduction of knowledge relevant to child-rearing, education
Social integration	Immunisation of a central stock of value orientations	Coordination of actions via intersubjectively recognised validity claims	Reproduction of patterns of social membership
Socialisation	Enculturation	Internalisation of values	Formation of identity

Fig. 1: Contributions of reproduction processes to maintaining the structural components of the lifeworld (Habermas 1987, 142).

To Habermas, culture is the store of knowledge from which communicative actions draw interpretations, which is then open to consensus as the communicators come to an understanding about something in the world. Society, as a component of the lifeworld, refers to the legitimate orders from which those engaged in communicative action gather a solidarity based on belonging to groups, as they enter into personal relationships with one another. Personality serves as a term for acquired competences that render a subject capable of speech and action and hence able to participate in processes of mutual understanding in a given context. It also allows the individual to maintain his or her own identity in shifting contexts of interaction. The symbolic reproduction of the lifeworld is a circular process. The structural nuclei of the lifeworld are "made possible" by their correlative processes of reproduction, and these in turn are "made possible" by contributions of communicative action (Habermas 1987, 142–143).

Cultural reproduction, social integration and personal socialization ensure that newly arising situations in the semantic, social space and historical time dimensions, can be connected with existing conditions in the world: Cultural reproduction secures the continuity of tradition and a coherency of knowledge sufficient for the consensus needed for everyday practice. Social integration takes care of the coordination of action by means of legitimately regulated interpersonal relationships and lends consistency to the identity of groups. The socialization of members secures the acquisition of generalized capacities for action for future generations and enables a harmonization of individual life histories and collective life forms (Habermas 1987, 144–146).

Thus, interpretive schemata susceptible of consensus, legitimately ordered interpersonal relationships and capacities for interaction are renewed in these three processes of reproduction (Habermas 1987, 343–344). During fieldwork, I noticed that these three reproduction processes could be traced back to three influencing domains of the behavioral agent in their migration permeated daily practice. I summarize these three domains as knowledge, practice and emotion, which will be further discussed below. Concerning the lifeworld of Chinese migrants in Germany, questions driving the study at hand are:

- How does the migration process work and what roles do existing transnational connections play?
- How do the Chinese immigrants in Germany orient themselves and how do they find support (knowledge of the German legal system, social resources etc.)?
- What do the daily lives of the immigrants look like? Where, with whom, in which language do they communicate?

- How do their daily routines look like? How is their lifeworld informed by the migration process and what are the factors that determine this?
- How do the overseas Chinese in Germany adapt to new living conditions? What circumstances are perceived as advantageous and/or a hindrance?

These questions create a brief framework for the fieldwork. Since the research is conducted in an inductive way according to grounded theory, all these questions are not directly posed to the interviewees and have been modified over time during the research process.

1.3 Theoretical framework

1.3.1 Knowledge

Polanyi (1966) identified the classic division between tacit and explicit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is the one the user is not easily – or not at all – able to express in explicit forms. In relation to migration studies, knowledge has to be taken into consideration, because on the one hand, international migrants are potentially significant as knowledge brokers. Building bridges across boundaries and between different communities is an important source of new perspectives (Wenger 2000). Boundaries can be constituted in many different ways, but international migration traverses boundaries that have juridical, cultural, and sometimes professional meaning (for example recognition of qualifications). Individuals are potentially significant knowledge carriers both as migrants and returning migrants, although the opportunities and barriers they face at different levels mediate this.

On the other hand, "knowledge is learned and accumulated through personal and social life experiences. [. . .] being shaped by both personal inner factors and outside environmental factors" (Yang 2003, 108). Considering that learning is a never-ending process, the knowledge and skills that a migrant draws on do not only come from paid employment, but also from all areas of his/her everyday life. Thus, a biographical perspective reinforces the importance of a multi-level perspective on migration that looks beyond the immediate workplace to view how knowledge is socially situated, and how it changes over time for individuals.

This paper shows how knowledge as a noticeable aspect relates to international migration research.

1.3.2 Practice

Practice is the acting out of social life. It takes place within communities and involves aspects we might recognize as structures – codes, rules, regulations, procedures – but also implicit understandings, rules of thumb, established sensitivities, shared worldviews, and underlying assumptions (Wenger 1998, 47). A community of practice may be a family, a school, one's peer group, the workplace, or any group where members interact. These groups are best understood by taking part in them. Members have, and acquire, different roles, backgrounds, identities, histories, goals, statuses, and differing amounts of power. Broad political, economic, social and cultural structures thus frame this migration process, leading to an understanding of why people might move as individuals (Wenger 1998, 53). But it remains necessary to be more explicit in delving into how these structures, conditions of action at time, relate precisely to this trend.

   This article not only explores individual, rationally made choices in the context of wider cultural change, but also tries to depict how migration unfolds through practice, its various causes and their long-term effects.

1.3.3 Emotion

Emotional reactions are part of human life and therefore never absent from the migration process. The terms emotion and feeling are closely linked. For example, one of the Oxford English Dictionary (OED) definitions of "feeling" is "the condition of being emotionally affected", and one of the definitions of "emotion" is "to excite or move the feelings of". This suggests an overlap between these terms, both of which suggest stimulus and movement. Emotion is also defined in the OED as "a moving out" and/or "migration", thus tying emotion to the physical movement of the migrant from one place to another makes sense. It is noteworthy that the relationship between movement and attachment is implicit in emotion. Moreover, it is often in the movement of emotions that distinctions are produced between the individual and the social. Raymond Williams' (1977) notion of structure of feeling is also helpful here because it locates feeling in the particular culture of a period. For Williams, the structure of feeling is about "meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt, and the relations between these and formal or systematic beliefs are in practice variable" (Williams 1977, 132). This is similar to what Bourdieu calls the habitus, i.e. patterns of durable 'dispositions' that emerge as the individual or a group internalizes social structures through experience. However, while habitus emphasizes the rule structures that give rise to certain dispositions, Williams' structure of

feeling privileges lived experience and feeling, even as these are structured by formal beliefs. Meanings and sentiments, as taken for granted aspects of social life, are privileged by Williams because, although feeling is structured, it works in all aspects of social activity and therefore includes migration.

In order to examine how emotion interacts with and reproduces material structures, social relations and dominant ideas, "an attentiveness to others [informants] and an openness towards them rarely met in everyday life" (Bourdieu 1996, 23) is required in the process of conducting migration research.

2 Research method

As migration and lifeworld are both very complex issues, the method applied to address the above-mentioned issue is qualitative. I chose a combination of multi-sited ethnography and semi-structured interviews based upon several open-ended questions constructed prior to the interviews. The participant observation complements the other methods, so that both 'a perspective from inside' and 'a perspective from outside' are taken into consideration.

2.1 Sample of migrants

The sampling plan (cf. Kelle and Kluge 1999) included the following diversity criteria: country of origin, gender, education level, current occupation, age, marital status, and duration of stay in the host region. The sample includes various biographic backgrounds and motivational patterns, e.g. former asylum seekers, family-related chain migrants, as well as highly skilled professionals. The survey started in 2011 in various regions in Germany; more than 60 overseas Chinese have been interviewed. For this article, 15 of them are selected as samples, 3 of their biographies are presented in the next section. Among the 15 selected samples are 7 women. The age of the migrants ranged from 23 to 61 years, with most of the interviewees being between 30 and 50 years old. Twelve interviewees are married and five of the interviewees have children. Of them, two interviewees are married to a German partner. Six of the 15 migrants are high-skilled, having achieved at least a university degree or in some cases even doctoral degrees. The migrants are mostly working in managerial positions (e.g. managing directors of restaurant, professors, real estate agents, international travel agency, medical doctors, etc.). Three migrants could be classified as non-skilled migrants, having only attended minimum levels of schooling in China and not having participated

in further professional training. Four migrants are low-skilled, having attended some form of professional training.

These non- and low-skilled migrants are either working in secondary service positions (such as waiters in diners or housemaids) or they are unemployed. One migrant is unemployed due to health reasons. She is participating in a professional requalification according to her physical abilities. In another case, unemployment is a long-term pattern of the migrant's biography with the individual's story being that of a political asylum seeker.

Only 2 of the 15 migrants are currently self-employed: one is running two restaurants and the other one works as a manager of an international travel agency. The majority of the highly skilled migrants have permanent contracts for work, whereas the less skilled migrants are employed temporarily or in limited schemes. One of the migrant workers decided to attend a German university in order to retrain for a different profession.

2.2 Interview design

The data collection followed a qualitative approach, using interviews that were a mixture of biographical narratives and problem-centered interviewing. A set of questions guided the interviews covering the following topics: the migrant's knowledge of the country and region prior to arrival; the motivation to come to the region; the current working situation in the region; the professional experience before and after arrival; the general living situation; the family background and social networks; the first experience upon arrival in the region; future plans; satisfaction with the overall situation in the region; and suggestions for improvements regarding the situation of other migrants in the region. On average, the interviews in Chinese were one to two hours long. The interviews were audio-taped and transcribed.

2.3 Analysis of the interviews

In order to analyze the interviews, a typology of international migrants was developed. According to Kluge (2000), typification is generally done by using categories by which one can analyze the single cases and group them into clusters with internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity. Traditional typification in migration studies mainly uses the motivations for migration as well as the moments of arrival as categories for typification (Lederer and Currle 2004; Geis 2005). However, these approaches are oriented to historic aspects of the migrants' lives.

The author's assumption is that once migrants have stayed long-term in their host region and begin to be integrated into the societal and institutional structures of the host region, everyday life takes precedence in the migrants' mind over their migration history. Consequently, migration motives might not offer the best insights into the current lifeworld of the migrants in the host region.

For the analysis of the 15 interviews, I used the concept of lifeworld as an alternative category for typification. According to Kraus, lifeworld is the individually constructed reality of the everyday life (Kraus 2006, 125). This means we should ask for the migrants' perception and experience of his- or herself in a given socio-spatial context. Only using this approach, it is possible to address the three nuclei of knowledge, practice and emotion of a migrant's lifeworld, as it provides insights about the migrant's openness and optimism towards the host region and the fact of *being there* as well as the migrant's perception of the openness of the host community towards him- or herself. Hence, the interviewees were typified according to their individual everyday lifeworld orientations.

3 Main findings

In this section, three of the biographies of interviewees are presented in order to provide an overview of the lifeworld of Overseas Chinese in Germany. Several transcript excerpts are cited for further interpretation.[1] The use of direct quotations should reduce the bias by the researchers to a minimum.

Ms. Lu: A Roles-Rules case
Ms. Lu is in her mid 60s. She comes from Guangdong and has lived in Germany since 1979. She married a chef in Guangdong in 1970 and four years after their marriage, her husband came to Germany with a couple of other cooks in order to make a better living. She worked as an accountant in Guangzhou before and made up her mind to join her husband and to live in Germany one day.

> According to the German labor law at that time, as a cook, one has to work in Germany for more than five years, after that he/she is allowed to invite the family to join them in Germany. At the end of 1979, he was finally able to bring me and my elder daughter to Berlin.

---

1 Pseudonyms are used for the interviewees throughout the article.

The differences between Guangdong and Berlin went beyond job availability and financial security.

> Soon after I arrived in Germany, we realized that it was so difficult and complicated to stay, of course I had to learn the German language, my elder daughter had to go to kindergarten, I got pregnant in the meantime and needed to take care of myself and of my little baby. With the baby everything changed all of a sudden, I was totally confused, how to handle all these things. What was even worse, we couldn't afford our living… at the end of 1980, I got divorced from my former husband, long time working in the kitchen and apart from the family for several years, he got used to go to casinos, drinking alcohol the whole night, a world of bad manners, turned into an odd guy whom you couldn't communicate with.

Yet the divorce was a shock for Ms. Lu:

> The two daughters lived with me, (my ex-husband) he worked in an Asian restaurant where they cheated while reporting the tax, e.g. in fact he got over two thousand D-Mark monthly, but reported that he only earned several hundreds, as a kind of tax avoidance. Actually his salary was triple of mine, but at the time of the divorce, I was informed that I had to give him financial support, because my income had been higher than his. I was totally surprised, shocked and disappointed, but I couldn't tell my lawyer the truth…neither could I tell my family in China, my parents wouldn't let me go back and as a divorced woman with two young children abroad, if I was to go back to China, people would laugh at me, my parents and many other relatives. They might feel awkward, they would even blame me for making them lose face.

Ms. Lu struggled to find a housekeeping job in a hotel that did not require German language proficiency, and began to learn German and sewing from the very beginning in a vocational school in the evening. There she met several Chinese and Vietnamese migrants, who later introduced her to the Chinese Christian Association in Berlin. From then on, she got in contact with many other overseas Chinese and got a variety of information and advice from them for her orientation in Germany. With these experiences in mind, Ms. Lu looks upon her language learning and skill training as a gateway to a better future in Germany, a way out of poverty, despair, and the difficult life of migration.

> Well, it's a gateway to a better future, I guess. It's a way out of poverty and suffering. I was an accountant in China, and I used to be good at my job. Because of the lack of language skills and the professional training, I could do nothing but suffer from the physical hard work and the psychological burden day by day in Germany. I missed my life in China so much, but couldn't go back. Language plays an important role because without it, without a new skill you can't really do much. And then you won't be able to get any good job or anything. It's been really important to me and my daughters.

Ms. Lu's migration involves acknowledging the general awareness, personal judgement and emotional involvement she has. Although her thoughts on

Chinese migrants, especially on cooks, are to some degree prejudiced, these prejudices find their way into the horizons of all understanding and are how tradition and history orient us toward life in particular ways, allow us to form authoritative preconceptions that make the unfamiliar familiar, and thereby form a route for the past to play a role in the present. The feelings with which Ms. Lu confronts migration are a part of the way she understands both migration and herself and can be reconfigured in such realms like doing her beliefs, desires, self, other, and the world around her.

Ms. Lu describes herself nowadays as a so-called "chameleon":

> I think I have the ability to adapt to every place in a very short time through this migration, because I have to stick to the rules all the time in order to become one with the mass around me... like, in Germany I might dress myself in different colors, drive carefully and pay a lot of attention to table manners if I eat outside. But at home or in China I behave differently so that my relatives and friends won't distance themselves from me due to my 'foreign' style. Still, I did grow up in China and to be honest, I got more easily attracted by Chinese men after the divorce, that surprised me as well.

One way to look upon her lifeworld is through the totality of roles she lives in relation to specific others. As a wife, a mother of two daughters, a divorced woman, an accountant, a trainee etc., Ms. Lu follows the rules of the society she lived in. These rules form part of the new human capital which affect the relations in which she stands to others directly, that is her role in everyday life.

Mr. Gao: A Moved-Move case

Mr. Gao is about 40 years old and has been living in Germany for almost 15 years. He speaks German fluently and now works as a department manager in an automobile company in Stuttgart. He talked to me proudly about being a German citizen:

> I graduated from a very good university in Shanghai and then worked there for my company for over two years, my boss knew me well and spoke very highly of me in front of our German partners. [...] Then I got a chance to come to Germany for a business trip, I was so impressed by the people and the culture here, so I decided to live in Germany for the rest of my life. I made a very good decision, I'm so proud of that!

With a EU blue card Mr. Gao spent his first five years in the company as an assistant to an engineer, but living in a new country is never easy for migrants since they face a new environment, new culture and quite often a foreign language completely different from their own. As Schott and Henley (1996, 23) state:

> For many, life outside the security of the home becomes a series of exhausting *compromises* and adjustments, many of them touching people's deepest feelings and undermining their confidence. The personal and social skills that worked in their own culture may no longer be effective. And it can be hard for them to understand those that are effective in the new culture and harder still to adopt them.

Mr. Gao was not satisfied with his position at that time, and realized language could be a very important bonus for his future living and working in Germany:

> I still remember the day I told my mother on the phone, I said, if I thought English was important all over the world before, now I think German is super important for my world, a lot of technologies in my company are in German, even the instruction of the coffee machine is in German, and I always felt isolated during the coffee time, when my colleagues talking to each other in German, or they told a joke, everyone was laughing without me. [. . .] I have to learn German, I must try my best.

In order not to disturb the job he had at that time, Mr. Gao made his every effort in his spare time to learn German, he went to the bookstore every Saturday with a thick dictionary in his hands, and he was looking for people who are also reading books about electronic/engineering. He then took the courage to speak to them. This way he got to know his wife Laura who was a student major in economic engineering at that time.

> Laura is a very nice girl, as I was looking around in the bookstore, she came to me and asked if there was anything she could help me with. We then began talking to each other in English. I told her that I'm trying to learn German and narrated the whole story of how I came to be in Germany. She was very excited and agreed to be my study buddy. She helped me a lot and after a couple of times I realized I fell in love with her.

After the marriage in 2004 Mr. Gao and his wife lived in a small house near Stuttgart. As his German was getting better, thanks to his German wife and his job in a German company, Mr. Gao gave up his Chinese citizenship and applied for a German Citizenship in 2005.

> At first, I dilly-dallied. My parents were still in China and as the only child in my family, I was not sure whether it's a clever decision to do this. As I was hesitating, I got a chance to change to the sales department of my company, I cherished the opportunity a lot and realized that with a German passport I would get promoted. Laura supported me as well. But now, I'd like to say, of course, I'm German. If one day in the future I return to China, maybe I'll say I'm Chinese. It's just a kind of secure feeling, to be the majority in a country.

Mr. Gao's identity as a highly skilled Chinese migrant in Germany is located in the working practices in a German company, in his mixed marriage as well as in his German citizenship which made it easier for him to establish a new home

in Stuttgart. He did not intend to be an assistant and by the same understanding it is not an identity or space he wishes to occupy. Therefore, Mr. Gao looks upon his German language learning as the means by which he can leave the identity as Chinese/foreign assistant in a German company behind.

This shows all of these spaces that connect with Mr. Gao as an individual, including his identity as a Chinese assistant and his multiple role as the only son in the family, husband, male, assistant and so on. Events of migration are influenced by his cognitive perceptions but also his emotional predispositions, his sensibilities, and his emerging sense of personal identity (cf. Hogan 1998). In this sense, Mr. Gao's identity in relation to migration is grounded in culturally normative and changing views of himself, which encompass the implicit values and understandings about what it means for him to be a person (cf. Hoffman 1998). Identity involves self-interest and the way of perception. It can be transformed in the process of migration to a certain broader visions of the self, in addition to the emotional and social elements that play a part in a larger interaction between self and the other.

Mr. Yan: A Roots-Routes case

Mr. Yan is in his early 50s. He has been living in Kiel since 1979 and owns a Chinese restaurant and an Asian shop there. He speaks fluent German and Chinese Mandarin.

Talking about his own identity, Mr. Yan exhibits a sense of pride:

> We are Chinese here in Germany, we should try to spread our culture to others, and nowadays a lot of foreigners are learning Chinese, they are interested in Chinese culture to some degree, hmm, well, I think. Eating is the most important part of our everyday life, so running a restaurant is a direct way to get into contact with German society and make it possible for Germans to learn something about China and Chinese people. [...] Many guests are satisfied with our dishes, some even came to our restaurant to celebrate spring festival and the mid-autumn with us, sometimes they are more Chinese than I am.

During the survey I noticed the Chinese decorations in Mr. Yan's restaurant and the clothes of his waitresses which were all of a traditional Chinese style. Mr. Yan is also the chairman of a Chinese association in Northern Germany. His family and he celebrate Chinese festivals and observe traditional customs.

> I have organized several Spring Festival galas in recent years, and our performances have attracted a lot of people every time. I have participated in Tai-chi. [...] Chinese calligraphy and the dragon dancing etc. I really enjoyed myself.

Mr. Yan has retained his Chinese citizenship but conversed with me in fluent German:

> For me, it's very important to learn German here, I'd like to use every chance to practice my German here. If you live here, you have to communicate with your friends, with all the bureaucrats…On the one hand, you might feel discriminated against and ignored by the foreigners [Germans], if you can't speak the language and when you go back to China for a visit, you'll lose your face, because you live in Germany without speaking German, oh my god, you are kidding! On the other hand, I want to tell my guests something about China […] even, if I just want to introduce a typical dish to them, I wouldn't be able to do this if I couldn't speak a single German word.

Strict language-learning policies favor younger immigrants, especially those exposed to the dominant language before puberty – the critical period after which language acquisition is considered to be tougher. Mr. Yan benefitted from his early immigration to Germany when he was 14. He learned the language quickly and speaks it almost as fluently as his mother tongue.

Mr. Yan involves himself in the expat Chinese community in Northern Germany by organizing and participating in many activities. He considers this connection to China and Chinese culture to be indispensable. Such connections to the native culture allow for a continuation of social, economic and cultural linkages between migrants and their country of origin while living abroad (Schiller et al. 1995; Portes et al. 1999; Vertovec 1999). This understanding is considerably more intricate and richer than the way in which migratory connections were considered in previous centuries when they were commonly perceived as one off physical movements and often defined in terms of loss and gain. Mr. Yan generally feels more comfortable connecting with the local Chinese community than with the German and international community in everyday life.

> It's hard to say. […] I don't know why, there were times you talk to people, you try to make friends with them, it's just like kind of strange, you can't get a deep, stable friendship with them. Sometimes foreigners [Germans] are so direct, it hurts me a lot, like I came home a little bit late, took a shower and went to bed, then my neighbor came and shouted at me 'No bathing after 10 PM, you disturbed me a lot, you broke the house rules, I could call the police. […] What? You didn't know that?' or several times in the hospital, you wait for such a long time although you made an appointment in advance, it's finally your turn to see the doctor, but you were sent home several minutes later still not knowing what the problem exactly is, how is it happen, a series of question marks behind you. […] Yeah, awkward.

Although – from the researcher's perspective – Mr. Yan's behavior does not seem different from that of a native German, he admits that there are still some moments in which he struggles to understand the people and the culture of the host society and would rather be a Chinese than a German. The constant interplay

between China and Germany in Mr. Yan's everyday life is very obvious; connections are active, connecting the real life and the virtual. This seems to be consistent with a statement by Portes who says, "common people [...] have created communities that sit astride political borders and that, in a very real sense, are 'neither here nor there' but in both places simultaneously" (Portes 1997: 3).

Mr. Yan is not the only Chinese immigrant who behaves like a German from the perspective of the researcher. Yet, through conversations with them, we found evidence of a kind of self-disappointment.

> We live here in Germany, of course we wish to make every contribution to this society, however it's not easy to realize, I know how to organize some events for the overseas Chinese association, I know exactly how to talk to other Chinese to convince them or to motivate them, e.g. I just invite them to my restaurant for dinner and we build several groups, for each group we choose a leader, then we discuss several items regarding the foundation of an international campus in Rendsburg, everyone is happy and active to join in, the campus is settled in three months, it always works. But it doesn't quite fit a German group, yeah, you want to do something here, to participate more, but you don't know how, what a pity!

Although many overseas Chinese, like Mr. Yan, live good lives in Germany – running their own businesses and not having to work too hard to make their living – they are still not satisfied with their living situation abroad. They express a desire to be better integrated in the host society, to understand the culture better and to participate in more public activities, including voting in elections. However, their Chinese origin and their general adhesion to a Chinese way of thinking and behaving is often not conducive to achieve a high level of integration. In this sense, their Chinese roots can be the most influential and/or baffling component of their migration routes.

4 Conclusion

This article discusses the lifeworld of Chinese immigrants in Germany in connection with the interactions among the three important issues in the migration process: knowledge, practice and emotion. In order to understand this, conversations with respondents, listening to their perspectives, analyzing their stories, discovering the meaning underlying their actions through ethnography, participant observations and interviews was required. Ultimately, the summarized results of this article can be displayed in the following Figure 2.
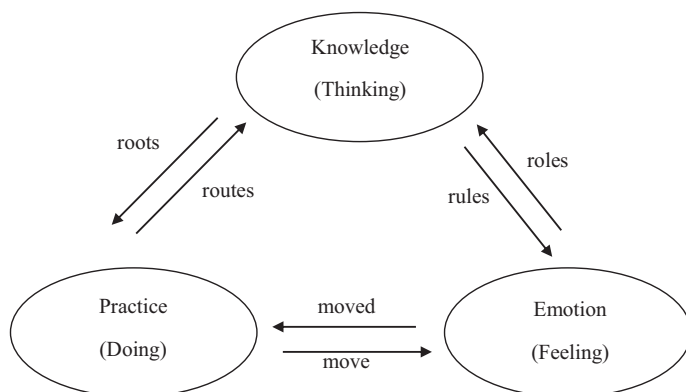
Fig. 2: The interaction of knowledge, practice and emotion in migration (created by Zhao Jing).

As shown in the chart, knowledge, practice and emotion are three crucial domains which refer to a migrant's thinking, acting and feeling in the context of migration. There are intersectional influences among these three factors throughout the migration process: A migrant's tacit knowledge and explicit skills acquired in the country of origin are the roots of their everyday routes in the host country, and through their everyday practice acquired new knowledge might lead a migrant to leave the original roots behind. In other words, the migrants *root* their roots. In this way, migrants often described their new way of life in terms of new beginnings and how they have been able to shake off old ties, revealing that they are subconsciously enacting a broad cultural shift.

However, freedom from constraints and obligations is still tempered by internal constraints in the shape of the habitus and the norms of those around us, or by practical constraints. Migrants have to figure out the rules in order to orientate their roles in the country of origin and/or the host society. It is clear that the migration itself is an entity with emergent properties, creating opportunities for new migrants through networks, friendships, business opportunities, and so on (cf. Williams and Hall 2002). Witnessing the need for diverse services by previously settled Chinese, others started to migrate in order to establish Chinese restaurants, estate agencies, car rental services, bars, supermarkets, laundries, and other services. There is now a tendency towards businesses and services provided by and for the Chinese-speaking community, from alternative therapies to dental clinics, from pool cleaning to pet hairdressing. As migrants move across contexts, they bring with them both the tacit knowledge they acquired in other settings as well as implicit understandings of the rules about how to apply their tacit skills (Peixoto 2001; Poot et al. 2009). To this extent, understanding the rules helps the migrants to know more about the roles they

could play in the host society. In the meantime, the roles migrants are confronted with in their everyday life also give them a broader understanding of new regulations and rules.

Emotions have a great influence on people who move abroad. Situated within a migrant lifeworld, emotional orientation towards the world and the resulting judgements about it can motivate action. While Bourdieu tends to see emotion as keeping the body within the frame of the habitus, in fact, it is the feeling body that can push the boundaries of the habitus, that feels anger, rage and thus asks questions. For, as Adkins argues, "affects have interests and interests matter" (Adkins 2004, 15). Different emotions produce different relationships to action; for example, emotions of shame or sadness may lead to retreat or a sense of paralysis. Moreover, when action produces no results, a slow acceptance of what appears inevitable can set in. Emotions therefore produce different orientations to one's way of thinking, attitudes towards others and interpretive framing. This can be seen from the perspective of Chinese immigrants in Germany: many of them moved to Germany and were moved by different aspects in Germany, thus they decided to stay. Others were moved by the narratives around Germany and made a move to migrate to this dreamland.

It is said that "emotions are a private matter and knowledge a public affair" (Probyn 1993, 88). Indeed, emotions involve practices of interpretation, argumentation and judgement (cf. Nussbaum 1996). The historically, socially and personally located memory of migration from China connects personal empathic identification with the injustices and inequalities that arise from the wider political and social context. Helms (1998) discussed the self as not solely rooted in what a person does, in his or her affiliations, but also in what a person values, believes, and wants to become. From overseas Chinese in Germany, the self was an experienced self in context from where the search for meaning in migration begins with identity, allowing it to become a part of the way to know themselves, the world around them, and thus their lifeworld. It ends in a central sense of self as individuals negotiating the structures and contexts amid this larger world.

Bibliography

Adkins, Lisa, and Beverley Skeggs. *Feminism After Bourdieu*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004.
Atabay, Iihami. *Zwischen Tradition und Assimilation: die Zweite Generation Türkischer Migranten in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*. Freiburg i. Br.: Lambertus-Verlag, 1998.
Bauböck, Rainer. "Ties across Borders: The Growing Salience of Transnationalism and Diaspora Politics." *IMISCOE Policy Brief* 13 (2008). http://dare.uva.nl/cgi/arno/show.cgi?fid=138152 (14 October 2017).

Bourdieu, Pierre. "Understanding." *Theory, Culture & Society* 13.2 (1996): 17–37.

Cheng, Xiangwen. "The View of Chinese Culture of the Overseas Chinese in America."
Bagui Qiaokan 4 (2000): 19–22.

D'Amato, Gianni. *Transnationale Staatsbürgerschaft und Globale Perspektive*. Tagung der
Eidgenössischen Kommission für Migrationsfragen, 29. October 2009 http://www.ekm.
admin.ch/content/dam/data/ekm/aktuell/Veranstaltungen/Archiv%20Veranstaltungen/
ref_D_Amato.pdf (18 October 2017).

Diehl, Claudia. "Die Partizipationsmuster türkischer Migranten in Deutschland: Ergebnisse
einer Gemeindestudie." *Zeitschrift für Ausländerrecht und Ausländerpolitik* 21.1 (2001):
29–35.

Dimock, Wai Chee. "Scales of Aggregation: Prenational, Subnational, Transnational."
American Literary History 18.2 (2006): 219–228.

Fu, Yiqiang. "State of Research on the Overseas Chinese in Europe." *Bagui Qiaokan* 1 (2006):
33–37.

Geis, Martin. *Migration in Deutschland: Interregionale Migrationsmotivatoren*. Wiesbaden:
Deutsche Universitäts-Verlag, 2005.

Gestring, Norbert, Andrea Janßen, and Ayça Polat. *Prozesse der Integration und Ausgrenzung:
türkische Migranten der zweiten Generation*. Berlin: Springer, 2006.

Habermas, Jürgen. *The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. 2: Lifeworld and Systems: A Critique
of Functionalist Reason*. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. Boston: Beacon Press, 1987.

Hanrath, Jan. *Transnationale Migrantengruppen und der Transport von Konflikten. Am Beispiel
Tuerken und Kurden in Berlin*. INEF-Report 105 (2012). http://inef.uni-due.de/cms/files/
report105.pdf (01 November 2016).

Helms, Janet. E. "The Conceptualization of Ethnic Identity and Other 'Racial' Constructs."
Human Diversity: Perspectives on People. Eds. Edison J. Trickett, Roderick J. Watts,
and Dina Birman. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994. 285–311.

Hoffman, Diana M. "A Therapeutic Moment? Identity, Self, and Culture in the Anthropology of
Education." *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 29.3 (1998): 324–346.

Hogan, Pádraig. "The Politics of Identity and the Experience of Learning: Insights for Pluralism
from Western Educational History." *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 17.4 (1998):
251–259.

Huang, Xingqiu. "New Chinese Migrants in Laos." *Bagui Qiaokan* 5 (2005): 73–78.

Ju, Yuhua. "Japan's New Overseas Chinese Status Quo and Future Development." *World Ethno-
National Studies* 2 (2006): 38–44.

Kelle, Udo, and Susann Kluge. *Vom Einzelfall zum Typus*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für
Sozialwissenschaften, 1999.

Kluge, Susann. *Empirically Grounded Construction of Types and Typologies in Qualitative
Social Research*. Forum: Qualitative Social Research 1.1 (2000). http://www.qualitative-
research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1124/2500 (12 January 2018).

Kraus, Björn. "Lebenswelt und Lebensweltorientierung: eine begriffliche Revision als Angebot
an eine systemisch-konstruktivistische Sozialarbeitswissenschaft." *Zeitschrift für
systemische Therapie und Familientherapie* 37.2 (2006): 116–129.

Lederer, Harald, and Edda Currle. "Vereinigtes Königreich." *Migration in Europa – Daten und
Hintergründe*. Ed. Edda Currle. Stuttgart: Lucius & Lucius, 2004. 123–160.

Li, Minghuan. "Relatively Lost, Chain Effect -Analysis and Reflections on Contemporary
Emigration Waves from Wenzhou Area." *Overseas Chinese History Studies* 5 (1995):
83–94.

Li, Qirong. "Comment on the Research in New Chinese Immigrants." *Southeast Asian Studies* 5 (2007): 58–63.

Liu, Guofu. "Legal Issues of Overseas Chinese." *Southeast Asia Studies* 4 (2010): 67–75.

Liu, Lili. *Education of Children with a Migration Background in Germany*. Beijing: China Social Science Press, 2009.

Nagel, Caroline R., and Lynn A. Staeheli. "Citizenship, Identity and Transnational Migration: Arab Immigrants to the United States." *Space and Polity* 8.1 (2004): 3–23.

Nussbaum, Martha. Compassion. "The Basic Social Emotion." *Social Philosophy and Policy* 13.1 (1996): 27–58.

Pajnik, Mojca. "Integration Policies in Migration Between Nationalising States and Transnational Citizenship, with Reference to the Slovenian Case." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33.5 (2007): 849–865.

Peixoto, João. "The International Mobility of Highly Skilled Workers in Transnational Corporations: The Macro and Micro Factors of the Organizational Migration of Cadres." *International Migration Review* 35.4 (2001): 1030–1053.

Pilat, Dirk, Koen de Backer, Ester Basri, and Sarah Box. *The Development of Global Innovation Networks and The Diffusion of Knowledge* OECD World Bank Forum, 2008. http://www.oecd.org/innovation/41708985.pdf (10 January 2019).

Polanyi, Michael. "The Logic of Tacit Inference." *Philosophy* 41.155 (1966): 1–18.

Portes, Alejandro. *Globalization from Below: The Rise of Transnational Communities*. Princeton: Princeton University Working Papers WPTC-98–01, 1997. http://maxweber. hunter.cuny.edu/eres/docs/eres/SOC217_PIMENTEL/portes.pdf (03 April 2019).

Portes, Alejandro, Luis E. Guarnizo, and Patricia Landolt. "The Study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and Promise of an Emergent Research Field." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22.2 (1999): 217–237.

Poot, Jacques, Brigitte Waldorf, and Leo van Wissen. *Migration and Human Capital*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2009.

Probyn, Elspeth. *Sexing the Self: Gendered Positions in Cultural Studies*. New York: Routledge, 2003.

Riccio, Bruno. "Rehearsing transnational citizenship: Senegalese associations, co-development and simultaneous inclusion." *African Diaspora* 4.1 (2011): 97–113.

Schiller, Nina Glick, Linda Basch, and Cristina Szanton Blanc. "From Immigrant to Transmigrant: Theorizing Transnational Migration." *Anthropological Quarterly* 1.1 (1995): 48–63.

Schott, Judith, and Alix Henley. *Culture, Religion and Childbearing in a Multicultural Society*. London: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1996.

Schönwälder, Karen. "Einwanderer als Wähler, Gewählte und Transnationale Akteure." *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 50. 4 (2009): 832–849.

Schultz, Tanjev, and Rosemarie Sackmann. "Wir Türken…Zur Kollektiven Identität Türkischer Migranten in Deutschland." *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte* 43 (2001): 40–46.

Song, Quancheng. "Problems of Migration in Europe and the European Integration – A Case Study of Germany." *Journal of Peking University (Philosophy and Social Sciences)* 1 (2002): 141–147.

Van Liempt, Ilse. "Young Dutch Somalis in the UK: Citizenship, Identities and Belonging in a Transnational Triangle." *Mobilities* 6.4 (2011): 569–583.

Vertovec, Steven. "Conceiving and Researching Transnationalism." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 22.2 (1999): 447–462.

Wang, Bing, and Xiao Liang. "Social Integration of New Chinese Immigrants in Vancouver." *World Ethno-National Studies* 4 (2003): 30–38.

Wang, Chunguang. *Wenzhounese in Paris – Social Construction of Transnational Migrants Community*. Nanchang: Jiangxi People's Press, 2000.

Wang, Gengwu. "New Migrants: How New? Why New?" *Historical Studies of Overseas Chinese* 4 (2001): 1–8.

Wang, Yihong. "Changing Structure of Oversas Chinese in Germany." *Historical Studies of Overseas Chinese* 4 (2009): 26–41.

Wenger, Etienne. "Communities of Practice: Learning as a Social System." *Systems Thinker* 9.5 (1998): 2–3.

Wenger, Etienne. "Communities of Practice and Social Learning Systems." *Organization* 7.2 (2000): 225–246.

Williams, Raymond. *Marxism and Literature*. Vol. 392. New York: Oxford Paperbacks, 1977.

Williams, Allan M., and C. Michael Hall. "Tourism, Migration, Circulation and Mobility." *Tourism and Migration: New Relationships between Production and Consumption*. Eds. Allan M. Williams, and C. Michael Hall. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2002. 1–52.

Wu, Kaijun. "Analysis of Overseas Chinese in the USA". *Bagui Qiaokan* 3 (2002): 22–26.

Yang, Baiyin. "Toward a holistic theory of knowledge and adult learning." *Human Resource Development Review* 2.2 (2003): 106–129.

Zeng, Shaocong. "Overseas Chinese in the USA and Chinese Community." *World Ethno-National Studies* 6 (2005): 45–53.

Zhang, Zhicheng. "About New Immigrants in Europe." *Bagui Qiaokan* 1 (2002): 21–23.

Zhao, Heman. "Several Changes of New Chinese Migrants in the USA." *Bagui Qiaokan* 1 (2003): 14–21.

Zheng, Lang, and Huiping Wu. "Germany's Integration Policy Analysis of Migrants in the New Century." *Germany Studies* 4 (2010): 12–20.

II Chinese immigrants in France

Wang Simeng

Highly skilled Chinese immigrants in France: Career choices, marriage behavior and political participation

Abstract: This paper focuses on highly skilled Chinese immigrants in France, who were born in China and partly educated there then came to France in the 2000s with the intent of pursuing higher education. Once they graduated, they became migrants when they chose to change their administrative status. Compared with other categories of Chinese immigrants in France, such as undocumented migrants, unskilled economic migrants and political refugees, this group of highly skilled people is rapidly growing in number, although it remains understudied. Based on qualitative fieldwork studies conducted since 2010 in the Paris region, this paper sets out with an introduction to the history of Chinese immigration in France and a presentation of the social characteristics of highly skilled Chinese immigrants. The article is then organized around three thematic parts: career choices, marriage behavior and political participation. Using this three-step analysis, this paper aims to paint a picture of the varied living conditions of highly skilled Chinese immigrants in France and to explore how they interact with other Chinese sub-groups living in France (such as low-skilled economic migrants and French-born Chinese) and with the rest of the French population including other ethnic groups. This paper also examines how these highly skilled immigrants play a role with their transnational practices and contribute to the transformation of Chinese society.

1 Introduction

In the wake of the Chinese economic boom, mobility between China and Europe has been experiencing new developments. Chinese migration has not only become more diversified in its geographical origins, but also in terms of occupations and motives for migrating. An increasing number of Chinese students stay in Europe to pursue their careers after they graduate. This paper focuses on young Chinese migrants of the first generation who came to France in the 2000s, live in the Paris region and have a relatively large amount of educational and cultural capital. Born in China and partly educated there, this social group came to France in the 2000s with the intent of pursuing higher education. Once they graduated, they became migrants when they chose to change their administrative status, from "student" to

"migrant" for "professional" reasons, "skills and talents", or "private and family life". They are skilled Chinese newcomers with economic, social and cultural resources. Compared with other categories of Chinese migrants in France, such as undocumented migrants, unskilled economic migrants, and political refugees, this group of highly skilled young people is growing rapidly in number and yet has been understudied (Wang 2017b).

Based on fieldwork surveys of dozens of such respondents in Paris conducted since 2010, the paper begins by tracing the history of Chinese immigration to France and the social characteristics (number, composition) of this group of highly skilled immigrants. The paper is organized around three thematic parts: career choices, marriage behavior, and political expression and participation. Through this three-step analysis, this paper aims to paint a variegated landscape of the living conditions of this group, and to explore not only how these highly skilled Chinese newcomers interact with other Chinese oldcomers (i.e. shopkeepers and retailers of Zhejiang origin, undocumented Chinese migrants, etc.) and with the rest of the French community (other ethnic groups included) in the host society, but also how the transnational practices of these immigrants contribute to China, their native country. This study based in France provides a comparative perspective with German experiences and touches upon issues such as changes in the structure of Chinese communities across European countries.

2 The Chinese population in France: Migratory waves and literature

Most historians agree that there have been three major waves of Chinese immigration to France (Poisson 2006)[1]. The first wave dates back to the early twentieth century when 140,000 workers were recruited for the labor force during the First World War (Ma 2012). The 1936 census counted just over 2,000 Chinese in Paris, some of who were employed in the leather industry (Guillon and Ma Mung 1991). After 1949, following the foundation of the People's Republic of China, immigration slowed down, but resumed in the 1980s, following China's Reform and Opening up Policy beginning in 1978.

The second wave of immigration began in 1975, after the eruption of nationalist movements and urban riots in former Indochina (Cambodia, Laos and

---

1 For a more detailed literature of existing researches on Chinese immigration in France, please refer to the introduction chapter of this volume.

Vietnam). Refugee immigration soared between 1975 and 1980. Many of the first migrants acquired French nationality. Since the late 1990s, a new migration flow has emerged: immigration from urban areas in Northeast China (the *Dongbeis*). These migrants are often middle-aged women, who come alone and leave their families behind in China. Following the launch of the economic reforms, this region, known for its heavy industry, has undergone social and institutional turmoil. Following bankruptcy and privatization of state-owned enterprises, employees ended up unemployed. Since they were experiencing deep social and economic insecurity, many of them decided to migrate abroad (Cattelain et al. 2005).

Far from being considered a unified *community*, the diverse composition of the Chinese population in Paris, in terms of regions of origin, gender distribution and socio-economic status, is because of the different waves of immigration. The so-called "Wenzhou migrants" – whose migration flows date back to the beginning of the twentieth century before they resumed and picked up again substantially in the 1980s – come from rural areas and have a relatively low cultural capital, and emigrate mainly for economic reasons with their whole family. Often benefiting from a social network based on extended kinship and relationships with compatriots, Wenzhou migrants begin by working within an economic structure owned by a member of their community – the three sectors mostly being catering, tailoring and leatherworking – pursuing the project until they may possibly initiate their own family business via tontine at some point. On the contrary, the Dongbeis, residing in urban areas and belonging to the middle classes before their emigration from China, they experience a social downgrading once they arrive in France.

Despite all the research devoted to first generation migrants, the social trajectories of intellectual and skilled migrants have received little attention. And very few Francophone sociological studies have focused on descendants of Chinese migrants so far (Wang 2012; Wang 2014), particularly in light of the abundant research investigating descendants of African origin. In this article, we delve into the lives of high-skilled Chinese newcomers who immigrated to France after 2000. Their massive arrival marks the fourth and the most recent wave of Chinese immigration in France (Wang 2017b).

3 A very brief history of Chinese high-skilled newcomers' immigration to France

Three migratory flows of Chinese students to France can be identified in the time that followed the foundation of the Republic of China in 1912. The first influx dates

back to the Chinese Work-Study Movement in France which aimed at encouraging young Chinese students to go to France (1912–1925) (Barman and Dulioust 1981). During the Second World War (the Sino-Japanese War), the Civil War of 1945–1949 and the Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), the mobility of Chinese students abroad, especially to Europe, halted. Very few left China during this period because of the wars and the ban on getting in contact with revisionist and capitalist culture. The main destination for those who were allowed to leave was the former USSR, especially in the 1950s. The second wave of Chinese students' migration to Western countries occurred in the early 1980s. This movement coincided with the implementation of the Reform and Opening-up Policy launched in 1978.

The third wave of Chinese students to France and also the most important and significant one – that is the focus of this article – took place in 2005. This wave corresponds to the fourth wave of Chinese migration to France including all social categories. After joining the World Trade Organization in 2001, China wished to promote international economic cooperation. The Chinese government therefore sought to develop cultural and academic cooperation on a global scale through events such as the *Chinese Year* in France and the *French Year* events in China. These cultural exchanges took place in two stages: a Chinese Year was set up from October 2003 to July 2004 in France, and a French Year from October 2004 to July 2005 in China. The *Programme des grandes écoles françaises* (*faguo daxuexiao xiangmu*) was a pioneering initiative for university exchanges within the framework of this French Year in China. Each year, fifty Chinese high school students were selected from all over China and received a five-year grant to graduate from a French engineering school. Even if the program was elitist in nature, the democratization of Franco-Chinese university exchanges has gradually implied less number of future Chinese students going to France. In 2010, during President Hu Jintao's visit to France, the French President confirmed that more than 30,000 Chinese students were residents of France. One year later, China had become the second country, after Morocco, in terms of the number of students present in France. According to *France diplomatie* (French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs 2019), in 2019, nearly 40,000 Chinese students are trained in France. Depending on the study programs, these students have differentiated migration trajectories. At the end of their studies or research contracts, some Chinese chose to change their status from "student" to "salaried or temporary worker", "skills and talents", "merchant or foreign artisan", or to "private and family life" status.

While the recent wave of young Chinese graduates immigrating to France progresses, the flow of unskilled Chinese migrants – like those originating from Zhejiang and Dongbei who immigrated more than a decade ago – is decreasing. France is one of the first destinations for Chinese students wishing to study abroad. According to the *2017 Annual Report on Chinese Youth Study Abroad*

Trends[2] published by two education websites, 544,000 Chinese study abroad and China remains the world's leading country of origin for transnational students. Among students who did not receive any grants, the top seven destination countries/regions were the United States (32.9 %), Canada (12 %), Japan (9.8 %), the United Kingdom (9.5 %), Australia (8.3 %), Korea (6.7 %) and France (2.8 %) for the year 2015–2016. According to the same report, financial costs are the main reason for choosing the destination. The fact that French tuition fees are lower, even for business schools compared with those in English-speaking countries, becomes an advantage (not to mention the rich cultural heritage of France) for these students and their parents when they choose a destination country. Internal statistics of the Chinese embassy in France show that, despite a strong imbalance between the fields, hard sciences (theoretical and applied sciences, including the engineering sciences), business studies, and social and human sciences are the three areas favored by Chinese students.

3.1 From "student" to "skilled migrant": Administrative status change

At the end of their studies (or research contracts), these graduates "become" skilled migrants when they choose to change their administrative status. Under Sarkozy's presidency, the conditions to change one's status were tightened. In a speech given in 2012, Nicolas Sarkozy stated that "immigration is an asset but can be a problem".[3] He thus overhauled the French immigration policy, placing greater emphasis on national identity and the recruitment of highly educated migrants. This restriction has made it more difficult for foreign students to change their status. Applicants for a new status are confronted with a dilemma. On the one hand, employers require a valid residence permit as a prerequisite for granting a permanent contract and on the other, the prefecture requires evidence of work, and in the French case a permanent contract, in order to issue a residence permit for work.

Among the people included in this study, skilled Chinese women who hold residence permits for "private and family life" are higher in number than skilled men. This residence card truly reflects the differences between skilled Chinese men and women in their marital status and the connection it has to their

---

2 Source: http://www.eol.cn/html/lx/report2017/ (3 December 2018).
3 Source: http://www.lemonde.fr/politique/article/2012/03/03/en-direct-nicolas-sarkozy-en-meeting-a-bordeaux_1651572_823448.html (3 December 2018).

residence permit. Skilled Chinese women seem to benefit more from administrative resources based on their matrimonial relationship. In other words, as the wives of French citizens, who they are married to or with whom they have a civil union (Pacs), they qualify to apply for private and family resident cards, which facilitate their access to work and other rights in France. Being the spouse of a Frenchman has benefits for them in the labor market, such as their status favoring the signing of a permanent work contract, whereas generally speaking, few skilled Chinese men are spouses of French women.

3.2 The social origins and sociability of skilled young newcomers in Paris

Among skilled Chinese migrants, there is a considerable diversity in their social backgrounds and in their schooling in China. Some came to France during their secondary schooling with the goal of being admitted in a preparatory class.[4] Sometimes they moved from urban areas, often provincial capitals, because they did not pass the *gaokao* (高考)[5] in China and were therefore never admitted to Chinese universities. Others were admitted into a Chinese university after passing the *gaokao*, but decided to leave China without a diploma before graduating. These migrants include young Chinese from major cities who are dissatisfied by universities in China, often describing them being of "poor quality".[6] Once they enroll in a French university, they arrive in France. Finally, there are also Chinese students who graduated from a Chinese university (bachelor's, master's or even Ph.D.) and come to France to enroll in graduate courses, ranging from master's to post-doctorate degrees. All in all, among the group of skilled young Chinese living in France, some were born in Chinese metropolises while others are from a rural background. Nevertheless, the latter also lived in urban China during their bachelor's, master's or doctorate studies before they traveled to France.

---

4 The preparatory classes are part of the French post-secondary education system. They consist of two very intensive years (extendable to three or exceptionally four years) which act as a preparatory course (or cram school) with the main goal of training undergraduate students for enrolment in one of the *Grandes Écoles*.

5 The Chinese national college entrance examination which is the equivalent of the French *baccalauréat*.

6 On the ranking of Chinese universities, see Wu 2018. According to the evaluation of his team, there are eleven items that help rate a Chinese university, based on a series of criteria, such as the publications of professors, international cooperation, the quality of undergraduate students.

No matter which discipline they study, these skilled Chinese youths get together based on their educational institution and socialize within the associative networks. The networks being the associations of former students of Chinese universities or French schools, also called alumni associations. Within such associations, various forms of friendly activities are organized. One of the objectives is to create a network of mutual support among former students of the same school. Some professional associations are also set up bringing together groups of universities or schools, some examples being The Association of Chinese agronomists in France (AACF) bringing together the alumni association of INRA and Agro-ParisTech, the Association of Chinese scientists and engineers in France bringing together alumni from French engineering schools and Chinese universities, and so on. Cultural interest groups (cooking, art, sports, etc.), economic interest groups (sharing pragmatic information on the economic aspect of migrants' lives, for example, how to invest in real estate in France) and groups based on political interests (forums dedicated to political news) are also networks that exist. These loci of sociability can exist in the real world, implying face-to-face interactions, or on virtual platforms. Registration with these associations and participation in associative events are described by Chinese skilled migrants as a sign of actual belonging to a group and of developing one's social network. This sociability develops from the intra-associative scale to the inter-associative scale. This network of twenty associations was built with the aim of acting as the elitist interface between China and France. However, it remains closed to other sub-groups of the Chinese population, such as the descendants of Chinese migrants, including the most skilled among them as well as low-skilled newcomers.

4 Career choices of Chinese high-skilled newcomers

After graduating, students trained in business schools mostly work in the economic and financial sector as bank employees, tourist guides, import-export traders, investors, sales consultants, and other such profiles. As for those trained in the social and human sciences – history, law, sociology and political science – they tend to work in teaching, research, artistic professions and the media. Some of them decided to go back to China and to try their luck in the Chinese scientific labor market (Guiheux and Wang 2018). Among those graduating from natural and engineering sciences, some work in the public sector (professors, civil servants) while others move to the private sector (finance, IT, environment, etc.). Some of them choose to become self-employed as tourist guides, import-export

traders in luxury goods, investors in Bordeaux wine estates, and the like. The professions that are emerging in the era of globalization contribute directly to the French economy. Some of them choose to acquire French nationality and also participate in French political life. This young generation of overseas Chinese, members of a so-called elite, have caught the attention of the Chinese government. Working on their transnational trajectory thus makes it possible to analyze Franco-Chinese diplomatic relations on a micro-social scale and to understand globalization from below.

For example, we have been interested in a group of commercial agents residing abroad and selling foreign products to Chinese consumers in China via online transaction platforms or software. Named *daigou* (代购) in Mandarin, literally translated as "buying on behalf of someone else", these commercial agents, who are permanent residents in France, act as intermediaries between French manufacturers or traders and Chinese consumers. Our qualitative analysis sheds light on the social profiles and trajectories of the *daigous*. We illuminate how each *daigou* chooses to carry out this activity as well as examining the social conditions at the meso- and macro-levels which allow the emergence of this sector.

4.1 Social conditions allowing the emergence of *daigou* sector: The Chinese economy in the global production chain, the role of new media in economic transactions, and China as a consumer society

A few decades ago, former traders of Wenzhou origin began their careers trading labor-intensive products targeting the French market, manufactured by their compatriots in France or exported from China, especially from the Yiwu region. This was the time when China, considered as the world's factory, offered very cheap labor. As a result, these Wenzhou traders were less specialized in the trade flows of French products sold in China, and even less in e-commerce. Over time, China's economic development has greatly increased the purchasing power of China's middle and upper classes (see the statistics of Ministry of Commerce). Thus, the structure and direction of trade flows between China and France have been profoundly reconfigured.

In addition to the shift in the Chinese economy in the global production chain, there is a growing use of new media in the field of remote economic transactions. Social networking platforms, such as WeChat (created in 2011), offer communication support. Money transactions are easier to operate, instantaneous

and do not require sharing banking data between merchant and customer, thanks to such payment applications as Alipay (created in 2004) and WeChat (in the "portfolio" function). According to a survey conducted by Exane BNP Paribas among 5,500 Chinese e-consumers residing in 48 cities, 35 % of customers buy luxury products via *daigous* compared to 45 % who buy online via Chinese sites, 13 % via foreign sites, and only 7 % who order directly via the luxury brands' site (Solca 2015).

4.2 Becoming *daigous*: Multiple trajectories and relatively homogeneous social profiles

Leiqi decided to become a *daigou* in 2013, two years after her recruitment in an advertising agency, where she was still working on permanent contracts when I last interviewed her. She explains this choice as "good timing": on the one hand, she was able to change her residence permit (from "student" to "employee"), and on the other hand, she was beginning to have greater control over her salaried work, which according to her was "routine" and "not very demanding in terms of time and energy". These working conditions have allowed her to develop her activities concurrently as a *daigou*. Her professional profile is representative of a majority of the respondents, of which some are employees from various sectors (engineers, computer scientists, salesmen,[7] etc.) and who became *daigous* keeping in mind financial interests.

Depending on the time invested in these activities, the type of products marketed and the commission (5 %–15 %, which can be negotiated), *daigous* I have met earn between 1,200 and 5,000 euros per month. The remunerative nature of this activity also appeals to another profile of respondents, who are self-employed workers in the fields of art and culture: performers, artists, bloggers, etc. Since they lack a regular income, these respondents consider their *daigou* activity to be a part-time job.

> Ten years ago, when I came to France for my bachelor degree, I did part-time jobs: washing dishes in a restaurant, being a waiter in a café, picking apples in Normandy... To me, "daigou" is a similar kind of job. You don't need a degree. All young people, even older ones, as long as they have time, a smartphone, a WeChat account and some start-up funds, can do it. If you want to do it properly, it takes time and energy but the advantage is that it pays off much better than other odd jobs. You know, we should be thankful to

---

7 These are salaried salesmen in luxury goods or cosmetics shops who pursue *daigou* activities on the side while continuing to work in their main profession.

the Chinese economy and its many consumers for paying for our food this way [laughs]!

(Aiqiu, 28, singer, interview conducted in May 2015 in Paris)

A third type of *daigous* comprises women in a specific stage of life: young mothers and/or future young mothers. All of them have left their jobs because they are pregnant or take care of their young children. Having spent a lot of time on neonatal and perinatal care forums in Mandarin, they gradually discovered the demand for maternal and infant products such as powdered milk, strollers, diapers and toys, among others, and as a result decided to become *daigous* in this sector. Yue, 36, is an engineer and former employee of a French company. A mother of two children, Yue has resigned from her job and worked full time as a *daigou*:

> I launched this activity by chance. As I was browsing the forums for Chinese mothers four years ago, I realized that these mothers attach great importance to their babies' food products, following the fraught milk crises in 2004 and 2008.[8] Since they knew I lived in France, some of them asked me to send them boxes of milk powder by mail. Thanks to social networks, demand grew. So I said to myself, 'Why not work in this sector?' This sector was not as developed as that of luxury products. In addition, these non-perishable goods are needed over a relatively long period. In the sense that a baby grows and his milk, toys will always have to be changed, so the need is constantly present. And Chinese parents do not hesitate to spend for their children [. . .].
>
> (Interview conducted in April 2013 in Paris)

Since 2016, Yue's sales have experienced an upsurge with the end of the one-child policy in December 2015. Some of her clients are going through a second pregnancy. And in an urban family from the middle and upper class, the child still occupies a central place. This leads to households allocating a relatively high share of the budget to the child.

Overall, it is difficult to estimate the number of Chinese *daigous* in France. Some French journalists speak of "hundreds" of them working in Paris (Fortat 2017). The data I collected during the interviews, which combine the points of view of various actors, offer some additional information on this subject.

> On average, I welcome about 100 Chinese clients, two-thirds of whom are daigous.
>
> (Elsa, 32, Chinese saleswoman at Hermès in the Galeries Lafayette, interview conducted in December 2014 in Paris)

---

8 This refers to the melamine contamination of milk in 2008. Some batches of fluid milk and infant milk produced in China contained toxic melamine for ten months to make them appear richer in protein. Tens of thousands of cases of patients who have been affected were reported.

> To my knowledge, there are thousands of young Chinese, often women, working as dai-gous. They are not competitors to me [...].
>
> (Mr. Liu, 41, of Wenzhou origin, Chairman and CEO of a cross-border e-commerce company in Paris, interview conducted in April 2015 in Paris)

In sum, the examples above demonstrate the capacity of these skilled migrants who are *daigous* "to be from here and from there at the same time" (Santelli 2010, 393). It also illustrates the central role that they play in the process of "globalization from below" (Tarrius 2002) based on the study of intra-professional as well as inter-professional practices (with the oldest Chinese migrants in France, that is, those of Wenzhou origin, including some entrepreneurs and traders) in the *daigou* sector. These skilled migrants, who are endowed with the most social and cultural resources in the host society, foster the circulation of goods, capital, lifestyles, services and knowledge alike (Wang 2017d).

5 The deregulation of the matrimonial market in a transnational context: Marriage behavior of high-skilled Chinese migrants in Paris

Skilled migrants who wish to settle down abroad are confronted with a matrimonial market in France that is very different from the Chinese one, in terms of both representations and actors. In order to speak of a matrimonial market, one must first situate it within the framework of general sociability of these high-skilled migrants. This sociability, as shown above, is mainly one among one's peers. The language barrier – some Chinese have studied in France in English-speaking programs and therefore not all of them can speak French – is one of the main reasons why their sociability and meeting prospective spouses[9] is restricted to a relatively homogeneous population in terms of ethnic origin,[10] which means of Chinese origin. However, language is obviously not the only factor that accounts for choosing the prospective spouse's ethnic origin. To understand the various factors, we first analyze the case of skilled Chinese men.

---

9 None of those interviewers had registered at dating sites.

10 It is also necessary to note the relative homogeneity in terms of social origin, even though there is a segmentation within this population.

5.1 "I'm not meeting anyone [that I want]!" : Men facing the reconfiguration of the matrimonial market

Born in 1978 to parents who were public servants, Libai comes from Beijing. After working in China for three years, he graduated from Beijing University in natural science and came to Paris in 2003 to pursue a master's degree in a business school. Upon graduating, he was offered a permanent position in a Japanese company based in the Paris region. Fluent in French, English and with an intermediate level of fluency in Japanese, Libai explains to me the likely manner in which he will choose his future spouse:

> Anyway, I'll rather take a Chinese woman. [. . .] I am an only child and the eldest boy among all my cousins for my grandparents on both sides. This position of first son, first grandson is oppressive. Every time I go back to China, people ask me when I will offer them a baby Zhang [Libai's last name] and when I will definitely go back to China. I see that my parents are growing old, and I don't know what to do. . . [sighs] In order to make things less complicated in the future, I'd rather find someone who will one day be able to come back with me to China, so I would rather she be a Chinese woman. If she's a foreigner, she has to be ready to leave France with me. It wouldn't be that easy for her! Besides, I don't know what they would think of a Western wife and a Metis baby: if that happened, they'd probably be in a state of shock [laughs].   (Interview conducted in February 2013 in Paris)

The position of "first son, first grandson" within a filiation implicitly implies "procreation". This social representation, which Libai's grandparents and parents passed on to him, conditions the choice of his spouse, by taking into account his potential project of returning to China. Besides, in this interview he also implicitly shares his hypothesis on his parents' view on "procreation", which would probably be based on the category of "race". For them, their son, still single at 36, is a *shengnan* (剩男, "left-over man"). Thus, they set up several arranged Skype dates. Libai's marriage has thus become a source of tension between him and his parents:

> These Chinese women, whom my parents find for me in China, do not correspond to who I expect my partner to be. I'll give you an example. Well, I was attacked once on the street. With one of the girls introduced to me by my parents, we talked about it. She told me right away: 'Why do you want to stay in France? There seems to be blacks and Arabs everywhere!' And I got angry right away because I couldn't tolerate that kind of talk. That girl, for example, never set foot in France. How can she know? Besides, she only wanted to talk about shopping, luxury goods. [. . .] How narrow-minded! Unfortunately, she is not the only one, the other girls I met were all the same, very materialistic and superficial [sighs]. That's why, after a few such experiences, I thought that it should be among Chinese women living in Paris, those more open-minded, those who have already travelled, that I might find my partner.   (Interview conducted in February 2013 in Paris)

When Libai looks at skilled Chinese women in Paris, he realizes that the least "racist" or "materialistic" are either quite happy to be single, or already in a relationship, or do not meet his criteria of beauty. Consequently, he is still single and lonely:

> When I lay in bed at night, I wonder how it is possible that I've ended up like this. If I hadn't set out [emigrating from China], I would be less picky and things would be much simpler. I feel trapped between the two countries, the two mentalities.
>
> <div align="right">(Interview conducted in March 2013 in Paris)</div>

His loneliness is not only because of the fact that he is single, but also is derived from the dilemma between the social norms that he tries to appropriate with his social status as the only child in the family and "first son, first grandson" and the consequences of his transnational mobility. The consequences being the internalization of new social references and the emergence of his own aspirations.

A gender approach appears necessary in this regard, as well as a gendered differentiation of marriage among Chinese skilled migrants. Among migrants, it is expected that men, unlike women, return to China one day to care for their parents. In marital representations, a married woman is expected to leave her family of origin, and thus she constitutes a "lost good" for her parents, whereas a man who gets married is the one who acquires good for his family.[11] A gift is given from the groom's family to that of the bride during the wedding ceremony. This gift is conceived of as a reimbursement of material goods following the departure of the bride from her family: her parents lose not only some workforce, but also a guarantee of future assistance in the symbolic sense, when they become dependent. In this sense, it might be understandable why skilled Chinese women may feel "freer" than men to marry a foreigner, who does not systematically plan to settle in China one day. They are less "concerned" than men by this "duty to return" to China (Wang 2013; 2015). Having witnessed extra-ethnic relationships, skilled Chinese women engage in diverse matrimonial practices such as formation and management of the couple and forms of dyadic practices. An analysis of these practices follows using a social mobility approach and moving from an inherited position to a position acquired in a transnational context.

---

11 About the economic issue of marriage in China and money-proof conjugal relationships, please see Xu 2005; Zheng and Yang 2003.

5.2 The matrimonial practices of Chinese skilled women: Transnational socialization through the prism of intimacy

The economic dimension of married life – who pays what? – can become a source of tension between partners and force skilled Chinese women to adapt new matrimonial norms. Channa, 30, a psychologist, tells us about her socialization process:

> In China, the man pays for everything in a couple. The norm is 'if you love your wife, you must pay for all her expense'. At first, I was disturbed by the fact that here we [with her husband, a French architect] kept separate accounts. The first time he asked me to pay the bill at the restaurant, I said to myself, 'Damn, he doesn't like you that much.' Afterwards, I talked to some French friends and I finally understood that this was not the problem. Money is not the only signal of love. But, well, it took me a while [to figure it out]. [laughs]   (Interview conducted in September 2012 in Paris)

Not all Chinese women make these adjustments smoothly when it comes to intramarital economy. The enduring "it is the man who pays for everything" concept introduces forms of economic-sexual exchange within the couple, with the mobilization of bodily and sexual resources in exchange for economic resources in a relationship. Jiecui's words, as a business school graduate and saleswoman, is revealing in this respect (see below).

5.2.1 Economico-sexual exchanges within the couple

> Thomas [salaried manager in a nightclub] pays for everything when it comes to our expenses. Sometimes, he gives me money to pay for my own errands. I live on his money and he provides me with material comfort and the possibility to stay in France. If I break up with him, I'll be nothing. So I'm afraid he may walk out on me and I'm anxious, all the more so because there are many girls at his workplace.

Beyond the economic interest, Jiecui also benefits from another advantage: according to her, the civil union she contracted with Thomas enabled her to be offered her first permanent job contract:

> The "French spouse" status helped me a lot. On the one hand, I appear credible and stable since I have committed myself here and, on the other hand, my employer knows that I will not use my work to get my papers!   (Interview conducted in November 2012 in Paris)

To keep her relationship intact, she chose to invest in her body through diets, beauty programs, clothing and accessories purchases. As for Thomas, he

admits to deriving rather symbolic benefits from this relationship since he says, "people appreciate it" when you have a Chinese girlfriend because "they are the most fantasized about", but it is also a good "bet" for his own professional career because "the future nightlife and luxury market will be in China!"

If Jiecui mobilizes her bodily resources most of the time, it is because, at this stage, she has no other type of resources. The promise of economic, linguistic, and social benefits for Thomas's professional future in China also contributes to the care for the couple's relationship. Therefore, the scope of economic-sexual exchanges with mixed couples can extend both geographically – affecting several different countries – and chronologically – depending on the migration project that may change over time.

5.2.2 Engagement patterns and the age gap

Beyond this economic dimension, the people surveyed also face a disconnect in other aspects of relationships, such as the modality of engagement, ideas about having children, or the age gap between partners. So Han, 27, a journalist:

> My ex and I broke up because of it. [. . .] I couldn't have sex with him. I wanted to wait until it was serious before we'd sleep together.   (Interview conducted in January 2013 in Paris)

Like some Chinese girls of her age, Han is confronted with the taboo concerning sex before marriage, i.e. the normative prescription to preserve her virginity.[12] Nevertheless, the romantic "schedule" that she internalized appears "incomprehensible" or even "ridiculous" in the eyes of her ex-spouse, a French-Belgian novelist.

In Milu's case, her partner's advanced age and the modality of their engagement – civil union – became the main source of problems in their relationship. She was born in 1982 in a family of storekeepers, in a city in southern China. Milu arrived in France at the age of 21. She earned a Master's degree in Educational Sciences and now teaches Mandarin in a language school. Her husband, Tim, in his seventies, is a French psychoanalyst of Dutch origin who has his own practice.

Milu introduced Tim to her parents by sending a picture of him during a Skype conversation since Tim was absent. According to Milu, her parents were extremely "shocked" by his age. Two seconds after receiving the picture, her father snapped at her: "What on earth [. . .]! He looks older than me! Think

---

12 This representation is not shared by all the girls of her generation.

carefully before you get back to us." And her parents logged off. Milu views Tim's advanced age as a "good point", which accounts for his experience and kindness. But such a relationship with a forty-year gap between a woman and a man is referred to pejoratively in Mandarin as *laoniu chi nencao* (老牛吃嫩草, "an old buffalo eating tender grass").

In addition to this age difference, Milu's parents consider their civil union – there is no equivalent in Chinese society – to be "unacceptable". They demand that she engages in a "real marriage". During a trip to China, after learning that their daughter was living with Tim, Milu's parents were highly critical:

> Father: Now that he has everything he wants, why would he still consider marrying you?

> Mother: What your father means is that you have given up on the things he should get only after marrying you. Besides, I hope it's not only you who does the housework.
> (Interview conducted in May 2011 in Paris)

The discourse of Milu's parents, firstly, expresses an interpretation of the consequences of this cohabitation in terms of sexual capital on her marriage prospects. Unlike in France, where living together can be a first step for a couple before they get married (Derfouli 1996), young Chinese women still suffer from derogatory ideas about cohabitation, which remains an act of "emancipation" from their families (Wang 2007). Their comments also reveal their vision of the significant age gap between the two partners because, given Tim's advanced age, Milu's parents are concerned that their daughter may become her husband's servant.

In the face of her parents' reservations regarding her relationship, Milu tries to convince them with various arguments.[13] She says that the most "effective" argument for them is likely to be the material comfort that Tim provides her:

> I know my parents, they're very materialistic. So I'm blunt and tell them: "You know why I'm allowed stay in France? It is thanks to my residence permit for private and family life. How did I get my permanent job? Thanks to this status, again."
> (Interview conducted in June 2011 in Paris)

It is interesting to mention this discrepancy between Milu's own appropriation of a "deviant" romantic relationship and the argument she uses to justify this

---

13 She referred to the democratization of divorce in China to show that "it is useless to get married if it is not the right person", the material comfort she has with Tim, his qualities, etc. 3,104,000 couples were divorced in 2012 and the "gross divorce rate" was 2.3, up 8 % from 2011. From 2000 to 2012, the number of divorces increased much faster than the number of marriages (average annual growth of 7.5 % and 3.6 % respectively), see Wang 2013, 46.

relationship to her parents. This is due to the difference between the two systems of matrimonial norms. With her parents, she has to emphasize the instrumentalization of her loving relationship in economic, administrative and social terms – everything Tim brings her in the context of transnational migration – to convince her parents that it is a "good" engagement.

It took three years for Milu's parents to finally accept this relationship. However, Milu never introduced Tim to her friends in China, nor mentioned his age for fear of being "judged". She made this choice after people made remarks about her relationship in France – in the street, at the prefecture and even at her workplace:

> When people bump into a couple like ours, they are brutally judgmental and hurl insults at us! Obviously, that hurts Tim's feelings. Now, when we go out, he wears in a leather jacket, with a colorful shirt, well, like a young rocker!
>
> (Interview conducted in April 2012 in Paris)

As a migrant, graduate and skilled young woman, the simple fact that she goes out with an elderly Frenchman means that Milu is subject to being glowered at by others who question her motivation and also her skills. She says: "It seems that a Chinese woman living with an older Frenchman cannot be but a whore from Belleville!" (Interview conducted in April 2012 in Paris)

5.2.3 The different ways of using the romantic relationship for the migration project

Even if Jiecui and Milu both benefit from material comfort and administrative security thanks to their relationships, how they manage this relationship is different. Jiecui invests in her physical appearance to show herself to her advantage and mainly mobilizes her bodily and sexual resources in exchange for economic goods from Thomas at this stage. In contrast, Milu, because of the age gap, gives more importance to cultural and social resources than to bodily resources. Like all migrant women, these Chinese women have learnt to negotiate with their partners according to particular physical, economic, social and cultural resources. We can thus see the effect of social class on symbolic benefits within the relationship since these women construct their romantic relationship differently according to their migration projects.

In this section, by adopting both a transnational and a gender approach, I have focused on the matrimonial trajectories of young skilled Chinese in Paris. Structured by the male social roles – of sons and husbands – and the resulting pressures, mainly coming from their parents living in China, skilled Chinese

men face more difficulties than skilled Chinese women in finding a future spouse. Skilled women tend to integrate the benefits of their marital status into their migration projects. Therefore, they speak about the conflicts that can emerge between partners in terms of sexuality, economy, age and type of engagement. They elaborate on various (sometimes symbolic) prescriptions to maintain their romantic relationship according to the different types of capital at their disposal, not only in the present here in France, but also for the future in China (Wang 2017c).

6 Political resocialization of highly skilled Chinese in Paris and their political expressions

In the last part of this chapter, the process of political resocialization of highly skilled Chinese immigrants in Paris and their expression of political views is analyzed. Compared with other categories of Chinese migrants in France, such as undocumented migrants and political refugees, this group of skilled young people seems open to revealing the process of political resocialization in different political contexts. This is firstly because of the singularity of their perception of citizenship-related issues in a migration context and secondly their relatively high propensity to express their political opinion publicly (Poliak 2002) and finally their capacity of moving between national spaces.

6.1 Ethnography of political speeches: Places of investigation

Using an ethnographic approach, the political expression of the respondents during their everyday sociability, both online and offline namely comments on French and Chinese news articles, online group discussions, demonstrations, public lectures and so on is observed. For three years, the activities of three professional networks and seven interest groups was tracked in three ways: participating in organized events in person, collating exchanges sent by email or posted on forums, and recording instant discussions taking place in chat groups (e.g. WeChat). It should be noted that each network has its mailing list and its chat group with a new online chat group being created and registered participants added prior to an event. The multiplication of these online groups allows us to observe all discussions conducted collectively before and after public debates in the spaces in which they occur. It was notably in professional networks and interest groups that various debates regarding topics that were

on the political news developed namely the future of the European Union and monetary policies, the diplomatic relations between China and Europe, the welcoming policies of migrants in France, the terror attacks against Charlie Hebdo, the terror attacks on 13 November 2015 in Paris, elections and political parties in France, etc.

48 interviewees were contacted over time, with whom semi-directive interviews and participating observations were conducted as complementary material to the data collected during public debates. It was in daily life, during meals, sports activities, tourist visits and conferences not dealing with politics (in total more than 200 hours were spent with these interviewees), that I was able to observe the ways in which political events were discussed by these skilled migrants. The material collected in the informal spaces of everyday life has allowed the description of political discussions produced in spaces not dedicated to political discussion. In other words, "third places" (Oldenburg 1989) and "third spaces" (Wright 2012) are both conducive to the strengthening of citizenship for the individual and therefore for the observation of the process of political resocialization.

6.2 Learning to become active citizens

These skilled migrants gain knowledge on the organization of political life in France and more generally, their experiences in a democratic country, and this contributes to the "development of their political consciousness" (Gamson 1992, 176). In other words, the citizens' attitude is favored. For example, the right to protest is the first element that appeals to skilled Chinese in French society. It is probably because strikes, demonstrations and their consequences are directly related to their daily lives (Wang 2019). Some interviewees commented on the right to protest as a means of contrasting Chinese and French societies. In other words, their political views often stem from a comparison with the Chinese political system. The political assessments by these skilled migrants cannot be detached from their previous politicization in China.

6.2.1 For a global civil society: Intermediaries between French and Chinese political life

Certain respondents comment on Chinese media platforms and play a role as intermediaries between cross-border political news, in addition to their main profession. Their writing, in the form of essays and online reviews, deal with

French and sometimes European political news. For the last two years, the political events these contributors focused their attention on were the terror attack on 14 July 2016 in Nice and the terror attacks on 7 January and 13 November 2015 in Paris. Among the fifteen articles directly addressing these three events, the analysis by these authors have covered numerous topics including Muslim civilization, relations between France and Islam (since the crusades), territorial segregation, the extension of the state of emergency, political parties and elections, support and assistance to the victims of the attacks, migration policies, refugees welcoming policies, among others. Terms such as *anquan / bu anquan* (safety / unsafety) or *kongbu zhuyi / kongbu fenzi* (terrorism / terrorist) are not very present in these contributions, unlike the reports in the Chinese press as well as the comments by Chinese experts living in China when writing about these events.

Regarding cross-border news flows,[14] one interviewee, Qiang, claims to be an expert in French news thanks to the two positions he occupies: first of all, being a resident in France, he can collect first-hand material about the events in question. Secondly, his job as a researcher requires a certain level of unbiased and scientific approach to topical affairs. In his endeavor to distinguish himself from the Chinese experts living in China, Qiang sends his essays to a digital media publication based in Shanghai, which was founded in 2014 and pays great attention to analyses and news reviews made by young Chinese residing abroad. In addition, the site favors contributors trained in the social and human sciences.

The existence of this type of digital sites promoting a scientific outlook on politics favors opinion pieces on foreign news by skilled Chinese residing outside of China. Beyond the motive of "enabling the Chinese of China to hear another voice", as Qiang put it, some interviewees explain their writing by the rights and duties of a transnational citizen. For Tianji, conveying cross-border information without being judgmental or clichéd is part of a collective "social responsibility", reflects a "civic attitude" (Chen et al. 2015) and demonstrates a collective identity (Gamson 1992) which ensures the persistence of the link between the two media landscapes but also the two political spaces. Other respondents report that they publish articles driven by a need to contribute to "advancing" Chinese society and "improving governance" in Chinese society.

---

14 On the intricacies of cross-border information flows and the reception of foreign affairs in the digital age on Sina's microblogs, see Jiang et al. 2016. According to the authors, Chinese elite microbloggers have a good understanding of electoral politics in the United States. Regarding the online political participation of Chinese residing abroad, see for example Parker and Song 2007.

One interviewee, Xueli, compares the governance tools in China and France through her discussion on the state of emergency. If Xueli is able to comment on Chinese politics with French politics as a starting point, it is probably because of her university training (doctorate). She is well-versed with legal and political concepts alike and commands tools to conduct comparative analyses when needed. This proficiency, which is not only theoretical but also methodological, enables her to become an intermediary in cross-border flows of political news, a task that requires intellectual engagement.

During the process of political resocialization, transposing political topics through writing is less frequent the other way round: few educated Chinese publish their comments on Chinese policy in French in the French media. There are two main reasons that came up during the interviews. Firstly, French linguistic proficiency not being high enough in order to do so and secondly, the preparation for future professionalization in China. Since some interviewees plan to return to China, they consider it best for them to begin publishing in Mandarin. It is thus essential to take into account the situations in which the actors' communication is produced (Cardon et al. 1995), especially in the case of transnational migrants circulating in different political spaces.

6.2.2 The differentiated processes of political resocialization

Within the group of skilled migrants, it is the very same group of the most politicized Chinese – intermediaries in the cross-border flows of political news – who organize political rallies in France and public conferences and debates in Chinese. While those close to the pole of economic dominance seem less interested in Chinese politics, particularly in terms of democratization, advocacy and civil society, they spend more time reading French news on security-related issues in particular.

A public conference devoted to analyzing the attacks on 13 November 2015 hosted five young Chinese graduates in social and human sciences. Among the 68 participants, more than half work in the private sector: banks, insurance, consulting, fashion and luxury, import-export, hotels, trading, among others. The reasons given for participating in this conference include: "It concerns our daily life!", "the opportunities to exchange our opinions on the matter in Mandarin are scarce."

Generally speaking, within the group of skilled migrants, differentiated processes of political resocialization take place. These respondents reconstruct their relationship to politics and have different opinions on political subjects because of their distinct social characteristics. Some of them, often trained in

human and social sciences, act as intermediaries in the flow of cross-border political information and in that way actively participate in the democratization of Chinese society. Others, especially those working in the economic sector, show their disinterest in democracy-related topics in Chinese society. It seems illusory to analyze the political comments of these skilled Chinese migrants without taking into account the composition of the group, the interaction between its members and their heterogeneous politicization.

Finally, the Chinese migrants that were studied are educated with an average level of post-graduate education. They are not only individuals occupying dominant positions in the economic sector, such as multinational companies or finance executives, but also people with distinctive social and cultural traits. The spatial and temporal dimensions of the political expression of these migrants needs to be highlighted. When changing their living environment and political regime, these respondents learn to become active citizens and appropriate various online and offline forms of expression of political opinion including public debates, rallies, demonstrations, online publications, etc. The temporality, especially between the emigration from China and immigration to France and all the phases of resocialization that accompany this migration process, is a central element in the evolution of their political speech.

Following the interviewees in various places of social encounters (political in large part) – events, public conferences, comments of French news for Chinese Internet users, among others – allows the observation of the complexity of their political expression: the conditions of expression and the political speeches of interviewees are marked by the plurality of their intellectual, professional, emotional and humanitarian engagements (Wang 2017a).

7 Conclusion

Beginning with a historical account of Chinese high-skilled immigration to France, this chapter analyzed the living conditions of this group through three points of entry: career choice, marriage and political expression and participation. Being transnational migrants with distinguished resources (of economic, cultural and social nature), these young skilled Chinese migrants contribute to a globalization from below through their economic activities such as intermediates trading between French producers and Chinese consumers living in China. With regard to marriage, facing a deregulation of the matrimonial market in a transnational context, women and men have different matrimonial choices. Men often suffer from the challenges in meeting a prospective spouse. Skilled

women, for their part, tend to integrate the benefits of their marital status into their migratory projects. They thus are more exposed to extra-ethnical conjugal relationships and demonstrate differences in terms of sexuality, economy, age and mode of engagement. Regarding their political expression and participation, the respondents reconstructed their relationship to politics by learning about citizenship. Interviewees also have different opinions on political issues depending on their previous social trajectories. The figure of the *transnational citizen and intermediary between French and Chinese political news* is identified among these high-skilled newcomers, usually trained in social and human sciences.

Through a three-step analysis, this chapter draws a differentiated landscape of the living conditions of the group of highly skilled Chinese immigrants in France and explores how these newcomers interact with not only other Chinese migrants (such as shopkeepers and retailers) and their children, but also with the French indigenous community (other ethnic groups included). With regard to methodology, collection of the empirical material was possible thanks to both the ethnographic approach and the social proximity between the author and her interviewees. Group dynamics – generally speaking the sociability modality of staying among them – also undoubtedly made it easier for respondents to speak.

Bibliography

Barman, Geneviève, and Nicole Dulioust. *Étudiants-ouvriers chinois en France, 1920–1940*. Paris: EHESS, 1981.

Cardon, Dominique, Jean-Philippe Heurtin, and Cyril Lemieux. "Parler en public." *Politix* 8.31 (1995): 5–19.

Cattelain, Chloé, Marylène Lieber, Claire Saillard, and Sébastien Ngugen. "Les déclassés du Nord." *Revue européenne des migrations internationales* 21 (2005): 27–52.

Chen, Hsuan-Ting, Sun Ping, and Gan Chen. "Far from reach but near at hand: The role of social media for cross-national mobilization." *Computers in Human Behavior* 53 (2015): 443–451.

Derfouli, Noah. "La voie du compromis: le concubinage européano-maghrébin en Lorraine." *Environnement et Société* 17 (1996): 33–44.

Fortat, Vivien. "A Paris, les 'Daigou', assistants shopping 2.0 des Chinois." 2 August 2017. https://asialyst.com/fr/2017/08/02/paris-daigou-assistants-shopping-2-0-chinois/ (3 December 2018).

French Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs. "«1000 stagiaires» programme de mobilité pour effectuer des stages entre la France et la Chine." 25 March 2019. https://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/dossiers-pays/chine/evenements/article/1000-stagiaires-programme-de-mobilite-pour-effectuer-des-stages-entre-la-france (1 April 2019).

Gamson, William. *Talking Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Guiheux, Gilles and Simeng Wang. "A Case of Double Socialisation in the Social Sciences. The Experience of Chinese Researchers Trained in France." *China Perspectives* 4 (2018): 21–30.

Guillon, Michelle, and Emmanuel Ma Mung. "La diaspora chinoise en France." *Administration* 150 (1991): 108–113.

Jiang, Min, Richard W. Leeman, and King-wa Fu. "Networked framing: Chinese Microbloggers' framing of the political discourse at the 2012 Democratic National Convention." *Communication Reports* 29.2 (2016): 87–99.

Ma, Li (ed.). *Les travailleurs chinois en France dans la Première Guerre mondiale*. Paris: CNRS éditions, 2012.

Oldenburg, Ray. *The great good place: Cafes, coffee shops, community centers, beauty parlors, general stores, bars, hangout, and how they get you through the day*. New York: Paragon House, 1989.

Parker, David and Miri Song. "Inclusion, participation and the emergence of British Chinese websites". *Journal of ethnic and migration studies* 33.7 (2007): 1043–1061.

Poisson, Véronique. "Des réseaux transnationaux: le cas des Chinois du Zhejiang." *Outre-Terre* 17.4 (2006): 421–430.

Poliak, Claude. "Manières profanes de 'parler de soi'." *Genèses* 47 (2002): 4–20.

Santelli, Emmanuelle. "Entre ici et là-bas: les parcours d'entrepreneurs transnationaux. Investissement économique en Algérie des descendants de l'immigration algérienne de France." *Sociologie* 1.3 (2010): 393–411.

Solca, Luca. "Digital China Leaving Ostrich Brands Behind." *Business of Fashion*. 16 April 2015. https://www.businessoffashion.com/articles/professional/digital-china-leaving-ostrich-brands-behind (3 December 2018).

Tarrius, Alain. *La Mondialisation par le bas. Les nouveaux nomades des économies souterraines*. Paris: Balland, 2002.

Wang, Simeng. "Cohabitation of college students: for sex or for love?" *Sexual intelligence instead of sexual injuries*. Ed. Yunqing Zhou. Wuhan: Wuhan University Press, 2007. 24–40

Wang, Simeng. "'Une vie qui est ailleurs': Une sociologie des troubles mentaux à travers le parcours d'un adolescent d'origine chinoise à Paris." *Lien social et politiques* 67 (2012): 233–248.

Wang, Simeng. "L'institution du mariage: réflexions générationnelles, une enquête (Réflexions à partir du Rapport annuel 2012–2013 sur les points de vue matrimoniaux des jeunes Chinois)." *China Analysis* 45 (2013): 44–48.

Wang, Simeng. "'Enfant abandonné en Chine puis domestique en France? Que suis-je pour eux?!' Obligations familiales à rebours des enfants migrants d'origine chinoise à Paris." *Enfances, Familles, Générations* 20 (2014): 21–44.

Wang, Simeng. "Des 'soucis matrimoniaux' dans le contexte transnational: Le cas des migrant-e-s chinois-es qualifié-e-s à Paris." *Migrations Société* 27.157 (2015): 149–166.

Wang, Simeng (2017a). "La resocialisation politique de migrants internationaux et leurs prises de parole politiques: Le cas de jeunes Chinois qualifiés à Paris." *Participations* 17 (2017): 155–176.

Wang, Simeng (2017b). *Illusions et souffrances. Les migrants chinois à Paris*. Paris: Editions rue d'Ulm, 2017.

Wang, Simeng (2017c). "The Gendered Transformation of Matrimonial and Family Norms in the Context of International Migration. The Case of Chinese 'Spouses of French' Residing in the Paris Region." *Revue européenne des migrations internationales* 33.2–3 (2017): 273–300.

Wang, Simeng (2017d). "Une mondialisation par le bas. Les *daigous* à Paris, des agents commerciaux intermédiaires entre producteurs français et consommateurs chinois." *Cultures & Conflits* 108 (2017): 107–128.

Wang, Simeng. "Quand les 'Chinois de France' manifestent." *Plein droit*, 121. 2 (2019): 37–41.

Wright, Scott. "From 'third place' to 'third space': Everyday political talk in non-political online spaces." *Javnost – The Public* 19.3 (2012): 5–20.

Wu, Shulian. *Classification of China's Universities* 2018. http://edu.sina.com.cn/gaokao/2018-02-25/doc-ifyrwsqh9613316.shtml (3 December 2018).

Xu, Anqi. "Evaluating Indexes of Husband and Wife's Power and Woman Status in Family: Reflection and review." *Sociological Research (China)* 4 (2005): 134–152.

Zheng, Dandan, and Shanhua Yang. "Marital relation 'formulary' and marital power." *Sociological Research (China)* 4 (2003): 96–105.

Li Yong
The identity crisis of Chinese graduates in France

Abstract: This paper focuses on the mutation of personal identity in the migration process in order to understand the international mobility experience of today's Chinese students. Considering the myth of self-starters and the ideals of success that are at the origin of the mobility project of young Chinese, the new social conditions that they face in the new country to which they migrate to, in this case, France, often render their project ineffective, causing an identity crisis. This chapter analyzes the causes, the forms of expression and their attempts at resolving the identity crises through a study on the biographies of Chinese graduates working in France after their university training.

1 Introduction

China experienced a phase of *chuguore* (出国热, "fever of studying abroad") in the 1990s when the government relaxed the restrictions on self-funded studies abroad (Xiang 2003). This international educational movement continued in the following decades, and today Chinese students are systematically among the top three nationalities in the academic systems of almost all OECD countries. This large-scale movement is producing its "perverse effects" (Boudon 1979) on Chinese students on the move, particularly the aspect of finding jobs in the labor markets, both in their host country and in their home country. Consequently, for Chinese students who arrived in France in the early 2000s, recent changes in the socio-economic contexts of migration undermine their old patterns of social success as well as their old forms of identification, forcing them to reexamine their life goals and their personal identities. These readjustments are not without their consequences and in this case bring about "identity crises." This study analyzes the causes and forms of expression of these identity crises among Chinese graduate migrants, as well as their efforts and strategies to overcome them. The empirical data for this study is from a thesis in sociology on the professional integration of Chinese graduates in France (Li 2016).

The article begins with setting the societal context of Chinese student mobility, the theoretical perspective on migration and identities, as well as the research methods. Adopting the conceptual framework of Claude Dubar (2004) about identity construction, the identity crises are analyzed in two stages: (1) the main sources of the crises with a focus on the social causes of the feeling of

failure are examined; (2) the identity adjustments of Chinese graduates are studied, by examining intrapersonal processes alongside interpersonal dynamics.

2 Student mobility, a migration traversed by problematic tensions

Since the beginning of the third millennium, France has experienced an upswing in the number of Chinese students in its higher education system. Apart from a small group of scholars who came to the country through the exchange programs, France attracts a population of mainly self-financed Chinese who have not been able to pursue higher education in their countries in a prestigious university or discipline and who seek to increase their value through a foreign diploma. In the context of the establishment of a professional immigration policy in France (Charles et al. 2013) this migratory trend has led to the entry of a large number of Chinese graduates into the French labor market. However, for young Chinese in France, the quest for employment responds above all to Chinese norms of social success.

2.1 The genesis of a self-transformation project

The Chinese migrants in the study arrived in France in the last wave of student migration in the 2000s, funding themselves in order to pursue their own projects. In many ways, these young people were already part of a privileged minority in Chinese society: They are graduates of a "school marathon" since most of them have passed the *gaokao* (高考)[1] and have started part of their schooling in Chinese universities.[2] However, my respondents do not belong to the dominant elites who have a relatively smooth path because of their privilege. Nor do they come from the lower classes. They are part of the educated middle classes (managers, technicians, administrative staff, entrepreneurs, etc.)[3] who support the education of their children but cannot afford the tuition fees of Anglo-

---

[1] *Gaokao* is China's National Higher Education Entrance Examination.

[2] Among the 38 people who have completed part of their schooling in the Chinese higher education system, 22 universities are attached to the "211" program (13 of which are included in the "985" program). These are institutions of excellence that receive priority funding from the state and they aim to become world-class universities in the twenty-first century.

[3] More than half of the 45 respondents have a parent who has received higher education.

Saxon universities. The social and financial gamble undertaken by these migrants is enormous.

In post-socialist China, the reforms of the 1990s in various fields (higher education, work, health, housing, etc.) accelerated the process of individualization of Chinese society (Yan 2009, 2010). This almost totally constrained individualization accompanies an ideology that is aligned with the cult of excellence through the sense of academic achievement and social success (Roulleau-Berger and Yan 2017). The Chinese family of the urban middle classes became the site of an "enterprising self" (Hoffman 2006; Zhang and Ong 2008). While family education differs from case to case, the parents of respondents have a common focus on success in school, autonomy and the ethics of the incessant effort.

In the context of increasing competition, goals of studying abroad are envisaged by young people and their families as a rational investment in human capital to meet the demands of the labor market. Through migration, the students want to be stimulated, to forge themselves through trials, to become more efficient, and hope to be rewarded upon their return to China by gaining access to promising professional positions. While migration is framed by students as an expression of their desire to discover, their studies abroad almost always require a significant financial investment by their families. While some parents have used their entire lives' savings, others have sold their apartment to fund their children's international studies. The family's financial and emotional investment in the migration project is therefore particularly important and weighs on migrants as an obligation to succeed on their journey.

2.2 From the myth of the foreign diploma to the myth of foreign professional experience

The historical contexts connected to the mobility of Chinese students have changed dramatically. In the years following the reform and opening-up of China (since 1978), a simple return with a foreign diploma was enough to ensure the foreign graduate a good job. However, with the increase in students returning with an international graduate degree and rising unemployment among graduates (Lian 2009; Rocca 2007), simply obtaining a foreign degree is no longer enough. Today, the Chinese labor market has adopted a much more "mature" and discriminating attitude towards recruiting international graduates (Hao and Welch 2012, 243).

Educational mobility paths tend to be hierarchical in China. Foreign-trained students divided into two groups: graduates from renowned foreign universities

with foreign professional experiences, known as *great haigui* (海归),[4] and those of less well-known establishments, with no professional experience, referred to as *small haigui*. The myth of the foreign diploma has been replaced by the myth of foreign professional experience in the Chinese labor market. The official narrative is that Chinese students abroad should ideally acquire their first professional work experience in the host country before returning to China. Intimidated by dramatic stories of the *haigui remaining* unemployed in major Chinese cities, Chinese graduates trained in France increasingly strive to improve their employability by putting themselves through the French labor market.

In many respects, Chinese students find themselves in a *double bind* situation (Roulleau-Berger 2007). To be able to reintegrate successfully into the Chinese labor market, they must first demonstrate their employability in the French labor market, which is notoriously exclusionary and currently hit by the crisis. With the overall decrease in the volume of work in the French labor market, many students have no chance of finding a job corresponding to their initial training despite their good intentions. Some cannot even find an internship in the country of training and are forced to look for opportunities in China. And even if they find work in France, before closing this migratory cycle (China-France-China), they are exposed to a multitude of risks. Their paths are strongly marked by uncertainties.

The young Chinese place themselves under tremendous pressure to avoid failing because their parents underwent great personal sacrifices to send them abroad. And this injunction to success does not only concern studies and work, it also extends to areas related to marriage, family life, the upbringing of their children, and so forth. As a result, many migrants are regularly confronted with internal contradictions and normative dilemmas. Faced with the gap between the social norms of success they have internalized and the practical impossibility of complying with them, crises is bound to emerge during the process of migration.

3 The theoretical perspective: Migration and identity dynamics

Migration involves many transitions in different areas of individual existence and can trigger important questions around identity. Historically, the transition from a *community-based* society to a *societally-dominated* society has created acute

---

4 In Chinese, *haigui* means: Chinese graduates returned from abroad; literally: the sea turtles (*haigui*, 海龟).

identity crises[5] among immigrants. It is no coincidence that during the origin of the sociological traditions of Chicago, there have been numerous analyses of migratory trajectories through the stories of immigrants (Thomas and Znaniecki 1998). In this vein, Camilleri et al. studied the dynamics of transmission processes and the adjustments between the prescribed, desired and acquired identities, the renegotiation of identities with the population of the host country and the implementation of the "identity strategies" by immigrants (Camilleri et al. 1990).

In an intrapersonal model, Baumeister (Baumeister 1986; Baumeister et al. 1985) distinguishes two categories of identity-related problems: First, *identity deficits* emerge, when the individual is unable to establish personal goals and values or maintain commitments to them. The formation of a well-defined sense of self is inadequate, and the individual engages in self-questioning to seek new sources of meaning and fulfillment. Second, *identity conflicts* occur, when a person has difficulties in reconciling different components of personal identity that prescribe behaviors which are incompatible between them. In recent decades, the bulk of research on identity crises of migrants has been focused on the issue of identity conflicts. Situated implicitly in a social identity framework, this body of research examines the process of ethnic and cultural identity shifts among immigrants and their children, in relation to the processes of acculturation and interethnic contacts (Leong and Ward 2000, 763–764).[6]

On the other hand, the issue of identity deficit has received scant attention from migration scholars. During migration, the value that migrants attach to ideas of success can become problematic, especially when they are weakened by a multitude of difficulties that they face, finding it challenging to achieve their initial objectives. Sociologists are quite familiar with the process of "globalized individuation from below" (Roulleau-Berger 2007, 2008) in which migrants experience social disqualification and downward social mobility during migration. Many migrants undergo social and professional downgrades in the host country, due to ethno-racial discriminations or unfair immigration policies (Cattelain et al. 2005; Lévy 2005; Mahut 2017; Zhao 2009). In ethnic enclaves, some Chinese migrants suffer extreme economic exploitation at the hands of their fellow Chinese and are confined to "survival circuits" (Chuang 2013; Yun

---

5 The term "identity crisis" was coined by E. H. Erikson in his book Childhood and Society (1950), inspired by the experience of emigration, immigration and Americanization. Although the author applied his concept mainly in the study of adolescent development, it has been used in the context of immigrant adaptation in this research.

6 Such conflicts can be experienced differently across generations. While first-generation migrants remain mostly loyal to their culture of origin, immigrant children are frequently torn between two sets of identities and commitments (Sommers 1969; Wang 2016b).

et al. 2006); The uncertainty of their legal status in the country condemns some Chinese migrants to extreme precariousness in all aspects of their lives, with no hope of success in their host country or returning to their country of origin. These social trials can lead to disillusionment, the loss of self, breakdown of personal identity and mental suffering emblematically manifesting as mental illnesses (Wang 2016a, 2017).

But the identity deficit is not only a question linked to the loss of motivation or blurring of objectives. More often, migrants remain attached to the norms of social success inherited from their social milieu, but these norms lose their practical relevance in the context of migration and appear gradually as "misleading norms" (Widmer and Spini 2017) that penalize the migrants. The migrants experience a growing dissonance towards their old forms of identity. Consequently, during migration individuals and groups often display *hysteresis*,[7] a profound discrepancy between internalized social norms and the new objective conditions in which they are located. Bourdieu and Sayad (1964) discuss the hysteresis in relation to the problems of disorientation that many Algerian peasants faced when they had to live in the city. Even after years of urban life, some individuals could not adapt to their new life context, because they continued to refer to the norms and ways of thinking that were characteristic of their lives in the countryside (Chudzikowski and Mayrhofer 2011). This phenomenon is common among Chinese graduates in France. The historical context of educational mobility has changed dramatically, but the ideal of social success, inherited from a period of strong economic growth, continues to set the standard for migrants and their families.

Thus, in the case of Chinese student migrants in France they display both identity deficit and identity conflicts and these identity deficits bring about identity conflicts. Transitions in relationships and the changing situational contexts are likely to provoke identity crises. It is necessary to take into account the dual change inherent in migration: not only are migrants dealing with the transition from one country to another (hence from one system of cultural references to another), but also the transformation of socio-economic contexts in the country of origin during the stay of migrants abroad, making reintegration of migrants in their country of origin problematic (Sussman 2011). Identity crises are therefore not synonymous with social marginalities or passing crises. They potentially concern all student migrants, during their entire migratory journeys. Regarding self-construction in migration, these are two hypotheses:

First, the construction of personal identity is an articulation of two heterogeneous processes: on the one hand, a biographical process by which the

---

7 *hysteresis* means *looking back* in ancient Greek.

Chinese students build their "self-images for themselves" from their "inherited" identities, but also from their "lived trajectories" during their studies and their work in France. The so-built "identities for oneself" are nothing but "the story they tell themselves about what they are" (Laing 1991, 114) and what Goffman calls "real" social identities. On the other hand, a relational process by which students are assigned "virtual" social identities in their interactions with significant others: the institutions and their "identity-giving" agents, but also the group of peers, relatives, etc. Identity-based configurations are relatively stable, but still evolving forms of compromise between the results of these two variously articulated transactions (Dubar 2004, 112).

Secondly, the construction of the life-course of the Chinese student migrant is part of a reflexive process that implies changes in his personal identity. The term "reflexive" means that in the migration process, the migrant continues to modify his life plans to adapt to new situations; it also means that the biographical process is accompanied by a profound change in self-identity.

4 Methodology

Questions of Identity are basically questions of language: to be able to identify oneself or to be identified means to describe oneself in words. In order to capture this narrative identity (Ricœur 1985),[8] the author used the life story that assumes the establishment of a particular relationship between the researcher and the person then considered as a subject (Bertaux 2010).

During the years 2007–2016, I studied a group of Chinese graduates who remained in France after their university training, mainly for work reasons. The field survey took place in the Normandy region and in Île-de-France. In total, I have interviewed 45 migrant students working in different segments of the French labor market: 23 employees, five researchers, nine entrepreneurs and businessmen and eight who are in other professions. My respondents are between 25 and 36 years old. Nearly half of them are women (20 out of 45). The research also includes accompanying respondents in the evolution of their life project, through second or third wave interviews, observations and informal contacts. The repeated narratives allow me to compare the self-analyzation of my respondents over time and better understand their identity adjustment operations.

---

8 "Narrative identity" is to be understood as an ability to recite one's own existence (Ricœur 1985).

Claude Dubar, speaking of the difficulties of studying the identity formation of our contemporaries has remarked that speaking of one's life is a high-risk exercise: "not only does one not tell his intimate life to anyone, but it is only told when it goes wrong and to therapists. Therefore, it is unlikely that sociologist can easily collect relevant materials." (Dubar 2010, 209) However, some interviewees seem to grasp the interview situation as an opportunity to be heard and explain themselves, "to build their own point of view on themselves and on the world" (Bourdieu 1993, 1407). It was not uncommon for my respondents to tell me intimate details that affect their personal identities. My listening stance, the social proximity between me, the researcher and my respondents and my interviewing strategies (such as disclosing information about myself) have certainly fostered this accompanied self-analysis (Bourdieu 1993, 1408).

5 Identities under threat

We can distinguish two main sources of identity crises among migrants: the first is related to the risks and uncertainties inherent in the migration process, to incidents perceived by migrants as "biographical accidents," for example, unemployment and subsequent marital or family conflicts; the second is an experience shared among a generation of migrants, such as feeling a gap between themselves and their peers, reported by many respondents.

5.1 Ideal of success in a crisis

The ideal of social success has played an important role in the genesis of international studies projects for young Chinese today (Li 2015). For migrants who are engaged in such a strong mobility project, migration is envisaged primarily as a way to improve their access to opportunities. The success of their project is measured by a double comparison: first, a comparison with themselves, because through their studies abroad the respondents wish to obtain a more favorable position compared to the one, they would have occupied, if they had stayed in China. Second, a comparison with others, because the migrants are expected to surpass non-migrant members of their original social milieu: childhood friends, university classmates, former work colleagues, for example.

For Chinese students, the ways in which they attempt to fulfil this ideal are largely inherited from their Chinese experience, particularly in the (secondary) school system. Thus, the arrival in France implies for these young Chinese a

change of "cultural model." It is necessary to be strong, hardworking, but above all to be oneself. It is this imperative to find their path in an uncertain environment that can be difficult for many young migrants.

During the interview, Sun (25 years old, Master Global Management, trainee) was seized with a sense of confusion and loss. She regretted not having worked hard enough in her MBA training in France to optimize her performance: the hours of training were light and the level of supervision was low. She did not exhaust her energy to pass the exams. At the same time, Sun feels a certain nostalgia for her "fighting state" when she was in her last year of high school, during the preparation of the *gaokao*. Her dissatisfaction is all the greater as her Chinese friend in Australia seems to have shown a greater personal performance, since he always seemed to be busy with his homework:

> Sun: "according to my friend in Australia – he studies law there. He will die! Each time I call him, he is very busy: he has to work his paper, study the files, prepare the projects, make presentations. But he is very satisfied. He often told me that he must go to the library. I said, why you have to go to the library and I'm always at home?"
>
> Interviewer: "Hey!"
>
> Sun: "Because he went abroad at the same time as me, but he has to study a few more years. Why is he still in the library and I always at home? It's very different! I thought at first that it's like the United States, we work like crazy every day for memoirs and projects. But it's okay, we're not pushed that far!"
>
> Interviewer: "You are not pushed to a state like you imagined."
>
> Sun: "It's okay. A little below this state. I spent one or two nights for presentations, otherwise, it's OK! I have once or twice reviewed my courses before exams. But I do not read everything, because no one does it. What's the point of reading everything?"
>
> Interviewer: "There is no longer this feeling of competition for good will!"
>
> Sun: "No. I felt that I am not adapted. [...] I am a little disappointed."

In France, it is Alain Ehrenberg (Ehrenberg 2008, 2010, 2011) who has correctly diagnosed this "weakening of the ego" that affects many of our contemporaries. According to the author, this malaise results from the inability of the individual to cope with the change of the cultural model: in recent decades, there has been in France a transition from the individual conforming to the norms of his social milieu to "the individual-trajectory to the conquest of his personal identity" (Ehrenberg 2008). The transition to a "new model" is particularly difficult for adult generations, given their past experiences and the persistence of their values. In the case of the Chinese student migrants we studied, it is the migrants themselves who embrace the model of the individual as a "self-sculptor". By committing themselves to international mobility, they pursue the ideal of self-realization, self-surpassing, and being efficient. However,

when "personal adequacy" is highly dependent on the individual's competitive performance, it is not surprising to find that some respondents experienced a "feeling of inadequacy," an impression of "not being up to the mark", when they did not fully devote their time and energy to "productive" activities.

Thus, the transition from one cultural model to another is likely to create identity crises, which result in a "feeling of loss," an impression of "maladjustment," a "disappointment," as Sun put it in her narrative. If migration is conducive to the emergence of identity crises, there are small depressions related to the "misery of the position" (Bourdieu 1993) and big depressions caused by ordeals of rupture: the impossibility of finding a job corresponding to the quality of the obtained diploma, dismissal, unemployment, and correlatively, the threat of losing the right of residence, conflicts with relatives, etc. Crises, because they concern "vital beliefs, strongly internalized values, models underlying ordinary existence" (Dubar 2010, 167), can be experienced in dramatic ways. The individual "suffers from himself". The self-image turns negative, foremost "in one's own eyes" (Dubar 2010, 167). It becomes difficult to bear. These trials can lead, in some cases, to withdrawal and attempts to escape. On this subject, the following experience of a young engineer is very illustrative.

In 2008, I interviewed an unemployed young engineer in Paris. A few months after our interview, this young man developed a gastric ulcer that was probably related to his anxieties and his unregulated single life. During his hospitalization in Paris, won by a feeling of shame and a desire for introspection, he decided to cut off unilaterally all contact with the outside world. His parents in China, having no sign of life from their only son for several weeks, began to look for him everywhere. After having exhausted their personal contact directories, they contacted the Chinese embassy in France. The latter finally found him through the Chinese student associations.

This individual story illustrates how employment in France represents a crucial identity issue for young Chinese graduates and how its absence is fraught with psychic and relational consequences. In short, the ideal of social success is called into question, either because the individual blames himself or herself for not having known how to give the best of oneself, or because he or she is unable to achieve this ideal in its prescribed form. It follows identity crises that disturbs the self-image, self-esteem and the very definition that the person gives "from self to oneself." But identity crises also result from the gap that migrants experience when comparing their situation with those of others, especially their non-migrant peers.

5.2 A double gap

In the context of student migration, because most of my respondents plan to return to China, the students tend to view their peers in China as a point of reference to evaluate the success or failure of their project: childhood friends, high school and university classmates, former colleagues at work, etc. The migrants constantly wondered if they "made it." This is not only a question of whether they have achieved the targets they had set for themselves when they left their country, but also if they are "doing better" than others, especially better than those who have not emigrated.

For the respondents, reflections on this subject are often a source of disappointment, since the most successful people are always used as a benchmark. Migrants agree that in comparison to themselves, their peers advance faster on family and professional levels and enjoy more favorable living conditions. The feeling of lagging behind is sorely felt, especially when students have arrived in France a long time ago. In fact, this malaise, commonly shared by this generation of Chinese student migrants, has deeper objective reasons.

Firstly, to achieve the same degree of social mobility, migration almost always imposes an additional investment on migrants in terms of time compared to non-migrants. For example, by coming to France, Chinese students spend a substantial amount of time learning a foreign language in order to adapt to an education system different from the Chinese system and to complete their training. This investment in terms of time is all the more important as the student's career is part of the logic of conversion: the change of discipline, the reorientation towards another specialty considered as more rewarding, the "refreshing in training in France after having already worked in China", as my interviewees said, etc.[9] This extension of schooling has multiple consequences on the subsequent life-courses of the Chinese graduates:[10] The entry of the migrant into working life is postponed, as well as his or her access to more stable administrative status in the host country (for example, a residence card rather than a student residence permit). Romantic relationships are often destabilized or relegated to the second level for the benefit of a professional career; entry into married and parental life is delayed, and so on. As a result, the migrant feels that

---

9 It is significant that the average age of foreign students in France is higher than that of French students (25.8 years versus 22.1 years) (Paivandi and Vourc'h 2005).

10 In an analysis in terms of cost-benefit, we can surmise that the prolongation of schooling imposes on individuals the economic and non-economic costs that are non-negligible, for an uncertain benefit in terms of social mobility (Boudon 1973, 209).

he or she is lagging behind in different areas of life compared to his or her peers who remained in their country.

Thinking of his six years spent in France, four years of graduate studies and two years of work as a programmer, Zheng (32 years old, Master of engineering, programmer) considers that he is late compared to his friends in China from the professional and family point of view. In addition, his living conditions in Paris are not better than those of his friends in China. His fiancé, Hong (30 years old, Master of management, employee in a financial management company) shares his observation:

> Zheng: "For me, the biggest question faced by Chinese in France is knowing where we are going. [...] This is a question mainly asked by those who have worked for one or two years in France. If you came to France after *gaokao*, you completed your Master training and worked for one or two years, it's been already six or seven years. For me, it's been almost six years. You must spend seven years to have a stable status. You must spend six or seven years to become a real employee, to have a place in French society. Meanwhile, your friends in China have advanced to a certain level. For example, my classmates."
>
> Hong: "They have all bought their houses and their cars."
>
> Zheng: "Not for all, but even for those who have not yet had them, they are very successful in their careers. Those who are in the business, they are already directors of their companies; those who are in the political world, they are already section chiefs or department heads. They can rise in rank step by step. They already have their families, their children. The housing, yes; the car, not for everyone. They are entering the middle class. Because they have worked for six years, their savings are much higher than ours. We spent six years in France to study at the university, to returning to the engineering school,[11] to work. In fact, we have no advantage over them."

Secondly, on a global scale, there are high-speed lanes that accelerate the tempo of individual life, as well as slow tracks that "slow down" the pace of the development of individual life (Urry 2005). When Chinese students came to France, they felt as if they were being captured in a slow path of social life: economic growth is almost nil, social changes are not visible to the uninitiated. However, during their stay in France, the socio-economic landscape has changed radically in China. With an annual growth rate approaching 10 %, China's GDP doubles every seven years with multiple consequences for Chinese nationals:[12] modification of urban

---

11 Before coming to France, Zheng worked for two years as a programmer in Chongqing, China.
12 After a period of strong growth (1991–2011), Chinese growth has been slowing down in recent years. In 2015, China's growth was 6.9 %, the lowest rate ever recorded in a quarter of a century. The Chinese government lowered its growth forecast for the years leading up to 2020 to 6.5 %. A sufficient rate in the eyes of Chinese leaders to fulfill their promise to the people: a doubling of the average income of Chinese between 2010 and 2020 (Harold 2016).

landscapes, general increase in incomes, expansion of the labor market, emergence of new sectors of activity, transformation of consumption patterns, access of the middle classes to property, etc. The young graduates who have stayed in the country are driven by this dynamic. They are therefore part of a rapid path of social mobility: they must act quickly, seize opportunities that are available, make bifurcations, move quickly from one place to another. In the manner of an astronaut for whom space travel has had a slowing effect of time, Chinese migrants experience a sense of immobility in time when they return to the country of origin: The outside world has radically changed without them.[13]

Chinese development has led to the trivialization of "foreign things" and "experiences abroad." The gap in income levels between Europe and China has been reduced. There is a demystification of life abroad through the intensifying exchange of goods and information between China and the rest of the world as well as the development of mass tourism. The way Chinese look at their compatriots abroad has changed and in turn, the ways in which overseas Chinese perceive and define themselves has evolved as well. Today, many Chinese migrants in France experience a sense of relative deprivation, bitterness or even feeling ashamed of themselves when comparing their living conditions with those of their better-performing peers in China. On this subject, Zheng commented:

> In addition, China today is very open [the English term is used]. Everything that can be found abroad can be found in China. But everything that can be found in China is not necessarily found abroad. The pace of development in China is well above the French pace. [. . .] On the other hand, this can create a feeling of [. . .] gap that the older generations of Chinese students abroad hardly experienced. At the time, for those who stayed in France after their training, whatever job they did, they had a much better life than those who worked in China. Because in the 1980s and 1990s, or at the beginning of the years of reform and opening-up, the level of income in China was very low, and people did not have as much freedom as today. Today we do what we want, don't we?

> Now, China has become much better. This created a feeling of . . . how to say it in Chinese? [. . .] *miwang* (迷惘, "puzzlement") among Chinese students abroad. That is, we do not know how to work toward our future. First, there is this sense of gap in terms of success at work; for those who have never worked, they have experienced an even greater sense of gap. We have the feeling that we have ruined our lives, spending our money in France without having the least result. We're ashamed of ourselves by comparing ourselves with others.

> [. . .] For those who work abroad, they also have this feeling of injustice. Especially for those who did not have good results after a few years of work. You have to find your

---

13 The intensity of this feeling may vary depending on individual characteristics and individual experiences.

place [in society]. [. . .] It takes ten years to know what we can really do: five years of study and five years of work. It was after ten years of stay that we finally improved our French to a level somewhat comparable with that of the French. At first you had the ideal of life; after all that time, it is very difficult to always stay true to your ideal.

The acknowledgment of delay thus creates a *double gap* in migrants: first, a gap with oneself because of the ideals of success to which one clings. In the words of Paul Ricœur (1985, 422), we can talk about "the distance from the horizons of expectation" (*"After all that time, it is very difficult to always stay true to your ideal"*). The migrants have difficulties imagining their future life, which feels both opaque and uncertain *("We do not know how to act for our future"*). Then a gap with others: We can talk about the "narrowing of experience space." The more the migrants feel that they are lagging behind their peers in China, the more they experience a sense of disconnection from the social reality of their homeland. They struggle to "give meaning" to their interactions with their compatriots. "As a result, the double transaction, with others and oneself, is hurting. Words are lacking to make it work and each is thus referred to the close management of its daily life and to very contextual, diverse and shattered identifications." (Dubar 2010, 208–209)

6 The reshaping of identity and its resistance

When student migration leads to increasingly uncertain horizons, it does not automatically imply the recognition of others. Migrants experience a double gap, with themselves and with others. This double gap is at the beginning of a crisis of the modes of identification and thus of the identity forms *for others* but also *for oneself*. But it is necessary to postulate that the migrant, with intensive work on himself or herself, can get out of these crises by changing his or her life goals and by assigning meaning to his or her lived experiences. This work on oneself can lead to an identity reshaping, when the situation expresses an important change, a conflict or significant contradictions. However, this reshaping is not without resistance, especially from the migrant's native environment.

6.1 Identity reflexivity : The rise of identity for oneself

For Giddens (1987, 64–77) dissonance is at the origin of individual reflexivity. The reflexive consciousness is needed when the practical consciousness embodied in the routinization of existence is disrupted, blocked, ineffective. For Chinese student migrants, when their stay in a foreign country is prolonged,

the merely instrumental reflexivity of practical sense (how to do it?) is coupled with a more fundamental reflexivity (what should I do? what do I want to do?), which in turn leads to the identity reflexivity (what am I? who am I?) (Le Bart 2008, 225). In many respects, the importance of reflexivity is directly proportional to the tensions and dissatisfaction produced by the various findings of practical impotence (Martuccelli 2002, 525). Therefore, migrants who have experienced vicissitudes during their stay in France are also developing great insight into their own journeys.

By listening to the retrospective narratives of our respondents and interviewing them several times, we can identify the traces of their identity reshaping. The self-questioning, the redefinition of one's migratory experience, the claim for uniqueness of self and the distancing of self from one's social role constitute all forms of expressing this identity reshaping.

When discussing the feeling of success, we can see that the narratives of the respondents are often characterized by critical attitudes and detachments to one's social roles. Indeed, to distance oneself from threatened forms of identity is a way of overcoming an identity crisis. This is particularly the case for the category of *haigui,* who are sometimes glorified, sometimes discredited by the Chinese media or in ordinary conversations: as the success of some arouses admiration and jealousy and the failures of others make them objects of scorn and mockery. This is why Xin (28 years old, Master of engineering, programmer) does not support this caricatured labeling. During his stay in China, he chose not to highlight his *haigui*-identity. When some parents openly praised him as a role model for family juniors, Xin tried not to enter the game.

Interviewer: "How do you feel about the perceptions of others during your stay in China?"

Xin: "I remember that during a family meal, the parents of my cousins said: You must follow the example of your big brother. I blushed to my ears and said to myself: 'Do not follow my example.' If a young person in the family did not study well, people will say, "Don't be like him." I am afraid that after a few years, people will say: 'Do not be like him' by pointing fingers at me. There are even pressures like that."

Interviewer: "You want others to say: Be like you. You're afraid that others will say: Don't be like you."

Xin: "Neither. I just want the others to ignore me and eat their meals. I don't want to be the center of attention. It's too tiring. You live well, you have to do even better. When you live badly, others will say: Do not be like him: before he lived well; now he can't do it anymore. This is especially the case when you were born in a big family and you have many cousins. At a family meeting, all parents talk about their children, what they do, how much they earn, etc. And we young people run away from such a conversation."

Interviewer: "And you, young people, do you discuss these topics between yourselves?"

Xin: "Never. It's too tiring to discuss these topics with each other."

When studies abroad no longer automatically lead to a *status*, they become an *experience* whose meaning remains to be defined by everyone him- or herself. Thus, faced by my question "why stay in France," the respondents seek to justify their prolongation of stay in France (or abroad in general), by referring to personal histories and according to the resources that are most accessible to them. One thing is for sure: for the respondents, the justifications for their stay abroad are situated increasingly in the realm of self-cultivation rather than that of personal performance and self-improvement. It is no longer a question, or at least not primarily, to seek a greater social success in France – a higher income or a material comfort higher than what they can obtain in China – but to enjoy a quieter living environment, a possibility to discover oneself. The identity challenge is important. It is precisely this unique experience that gives the migrants *identity matters* for their self-construction. The remarkable success of friends in China can make migrants envious, but they can be comforted by their personal enrichment through their international mobility.

It is surprising to find important changes in migration and professional plans of the respondents during their stay in France. Very often, a nomadic and ambitious career gradually gives way to a more modest project rooted in the reality of the host country. At the same time, the individual measures the gap between his or her ideals of success and his or her real situation and tends to critically evaluate those same ideals.

Xin, who tells his story in these terms, is one of those. Before coming to study in France, this young engineer had already worked for two years in a telecommunications company in China. His initial project can be described as a strong mobility project, as he considered his studies in France as a way of accelerating his professional career. After training as an engineer, Xin found a job in an IT services company and was fired a few months later following the outbreak of the financial crisis. When I met him for the first time in July 2009, Xin worked in a Chinese restaurant to provide for his needs. He was planning to move to Canada with his Chinese girlfriend the following year. For this, he applied to the Quebec Immigration Office in Paris.

What transforms a temporary stay into a sustainable life abroad? The meeting with his Chinese girlfriend, a student of literature at university, certainly played an important role in the decision of non-return. Since she left China at the age of 18, Xin's girlfriend has always preferred living abroad to staying in China. But more importantly, it is the will to live far away from the country of origin that underlies the choices of my interviewee. In our interview Xin describes China as a country beset by the vanity of comparison, by fierce interpersonal competition. He kept on joking about the Chinese obsession with their "face", their strong attachment to the superficial signs of social success (house, car, watch, trendy

smartphones, etc.), the outbidding of Chinese parents in educational investment for their children. In this situation, for the Chinese who have gone abroad, the identity of *haigui* has become too heavy to bear. Especially since Xin feels ashamed to mention to his friends in China his experiences of unemployment and difficulties in France. Above all, the remoteness of the country of origin allows him not to suffer excessive social pressure. We see how Xin articulates his narrative around the ideal of emancipation, as opposed to the ideal of success. It is also in this perspective that Xin plans to educate his future child abroad:

> Xin: "Yes. What we appreciate most here is the pleasant environment."
>
> Interviewer: "You mean France or Canada?"
>
> Xin: "I mean foreign countries in general. The second thing is the education of children. If our future children are educated in China, there will be too much pressure for them. And then it'll be too hard for them. You can imagine, studying from morning until the end of the day. Not to mention all the courses added after classes. Chinese children are too tired. They're not like the kids here. The kids here are really happy. We are already very tired, it would be worse for our children. [...]"
>
> Interviewer: "These are your own experiences [that help you forge this idea]?"
>
> Xin: "Since I was a kid, I saw that everyone was so tired. I was perhaps among the least tired. The kids here ... I remember in my neighborhood there are rugby and hockey fields. On Wednesday the children do not work. They can develop their interests – make music, for example. The children are not very busy. They're very relaxed. But in China, if you want to play football, you'll have trouble finding a lawn. Here, you can find lawns everywhere as soon as you want to play sports. My girlfriend always said, she wanted to stay abroad. I thought at the beginning that China and abroad were both good for me. After I left, I found that foreign countries are more developed than China in many aspects. So, I wish to stay there if possible. I'll also bring my parents there one day."

Very schematically, we can consider that the reflexivity of the migrants leads to a reorganization of their personal identity around the identity for oneself. This identity dynamic is palpable in the various practices of self-expression (life stories, intimate conversations, mini-blog, etc.) that migrants use to depict who they really are. In doing so, they also hope that others will recognize them as they are.

6.2 Identity negotiations: between singularization and conformity

The construction of identity results not only from a personal history but also from social interactions. We have analyzed the ways in which the subject manages intrapersonal contradictions and in this section we examine how the individual manages interpersonal contradictions. The concept of identity negotiation

deals with identity dynamics generated by the interaction between the subject and other individuals, especially in the individual's family and social interaction networks.

Observing the interactions between Chinese graduates and their peers in China, it is to be noted that most of the respondents maintain contact with their peers during their stay in France: university classmates, high school classmates, childhood friends, etc. Friendship is maintained through the "virtual mobility" of migrants, almost instantaneously, thanks to communication and information technologies (messaging, email, telephone, blogs, online social networks, etc.), but also through physical mobility during their trips back to China.

According to a hypothesis already formulated by Simmel (1999), there is a specific tension in the modern individual between differentiation phase and dedifferentiation phase. This tension is at the root of the ambivalent relations the respondents have with their peers in China. Depending on personal situations and contexts of interactions, migrants oscillate between the desire to get closer to their Chinese peers and the desire to maintain a distance with them. Chinese migrants wish to receive signs of approval from their friends, but they are aware of the objective differences that separate them (from the point of view of social status, family situation, etc.). They wish to assert their singularities but fear the negative judgment of others. They want to maintain useful relationships with friends in the home country but are tired of the superficial and utilitarian aspects of sociability. The question then is how to preserve self-esteem in interactions. In this regard, the respondents' answers oscillate between conformity (being like them) and differentiation (being oneself). They cannot indulge in total conformity because it amounts to self-denial and to the admission that their project of emigration is a failure. They must beware of total differentiation, which will lead to identity wandering and marginalization in relation to their reference group.

Thus, some actions of my respondents can be read as identity strategies (Le Bart 2008, 220). For example, migrants take care of their image on the Internet. The personal spaces of migrants (mini-blog, QQ, personal portals of alumni networks, etc.) become aesthetic performances of describing (and depicting in images) oneself. Some of them regularly publish journals, photos on the themes of travel or cooking. Some women shopkeepers are connected almost permanently during their working days. They chat via instant messengers with their friends in China. The topics of discussions are rarely about work, career or income, but about fashion, cosmetics, children and the like. These themes that have the advantage of being light and serve as points of convergence between two very different social worlds.

Compared to remote communications, face-to-face interactions have a heavier identity dimension. Trips to China are opportunities for migrants to see their friends and acquaintances. My respondents commonly say that they prefer to meet friends with whom "we feel good," who "bring us something." Some respondents avoid superficial or utilitarian sociability, such as alumni meetings, which have become avenues for networking and staging the success of some former classmates in some cases.

The taste of "Chinese" for comparison is a phenomenon reported by many respondents who criticize this "vanity" of their compatriots. Zheng states that he avoids engaging in income discussions which he considers futile. When asked to compare their personal situations with those of their comrades who remained in China, my respondents gave me two typical answers: the first is to deny any interest in comparison; the second is to deny any possibility of comparison.

The comparison is at the very foundation of the identification process. According to Lemaine and Kastersztein (1972), when the individual who compares himself to others perceives a devaluation, a handicap, he will at first try to make himself incomparable to, or at least, not be inferior (Kastersztein 1990, 40). Indeed, the circumvention of the comparison can be the first step of a singularization strategy. The perception of devaluation (e.g. the comparison of income) leads the respondents to search for strategies of compensation and originality. They managed to move the criteria of comparison, to invent new dimensions of judgments or evaluation of the ways of doing things and of being with others (Kastersztein 1990, 37).

During their stay in France, the interviewed Chinese student migrants are increasingly attached to an ideal of personal emancipation: they want to exist as singular individuals, irreducible by nature to any other. At the same time, they face the imperative of social success in a competitive environment. Where they think they exist for themselves, they are immediately caught by social pressures since others remind them of their position on a social scale of success. Thus, even if Zheng has only disdain for comparisons of income, he constantly faces the same question when he meets other Chinese: "How much do you earn?":

> In Paris, when you meet Chinese people, the first question many people will ask you is: "how much is your salary?" I have the impression that the French are less likely to ask a question like that. Some will still ask for your salary, but not so often. It is truly a cult of wage comparison: those who have a high salary are very satisfied with themselves and place themselves above others; those with lower wages have their heads down.

For some respondents, the use of anonymity or even invisibility can be a way of avoiding devaluation. Despite these strategies, migrants cannot escape the judgments of others as long as they are not out of the world. Moreover, thanks

to new information and communication technologies, especially the Internet, migrants continue to live and be aware of every moment in their home environment, regardless of their physical location. This configuration increases identity pressure, especially regarding social success. Indeed, some interactions between Chinese migrants are tainted by rivalry. The respondents are sometimes targeted by their friends in a pride contest. Qian told me a "story between girls" on this topic:

> Some time ago, a college classmate felt good. She found, I don't know how, my phone number. She asked me a lot of questions on the first day, knowing that we respect the privacy of others abroad. She started by asking me questions: Do you have a boyfriend? Is he Chinese or French? How much do you earn? Did you buy a condo? Are you married? Do you have any children? [. . .] I was really embarrassed by these questions. But I realized that she felt good. Otherwise, she wouldn't ask me all these questions.

Chinese migrants, because their departures are part of an aspirational project, automatically draw the attention of others when they return to China. They are subject to an obligation to demonstrate their exceptional qualities. If many young Chinese graduates no longer support this ambient pressure, is it because their personal identity built on the logic of differentiation during their years of residence in France, stumbles against a normative and binding vision of social success when they return? Xin says he's tired of living constantly under the eyes of others:

> When you come home from abroad, people look at you differently. You must be like this, you must not be like that. Basically, you have to be different from the others. Regardless of the looks of others, you have this requirement for yourself. It's as if I do not live for myself, but for others. I have to prove something to the others. It's very tiring.

Let us now consider identity negotiations between migrants and their parents. These negotiations take a different turn since parents are both relentless judges and stakeholders of the social mobility project of the student migrants. The role of parents is not limited to preparation for their child's departure. Chinese parents continue to support their children throughout their migration path despite the geographical distance between them. The intensity and importance of these gifts tend to generate a sense of obligation in the migrants toward their parents. For their part, Chinese parents not only hope that their children will succeed in their studies and their career, but also that they will make the transition to parental life "in time" in the new context. This causes great anxiety for young Chinese people, especially women (Wang 2015). Some then try to escape this injunction to succeed by evoking an ideal of Western emancipation, claiming fidelity to oneself. But this reorientation, relatively easy to live as long as one stays abroad would be available to a lesser degree for those who return to their home country.

The young graduates who have returned from France, like other *haigui*, want to make use of their foreign training. It is not only a question of making a particularly important human and financial investment profitable, but also of preserving a sense of biographical continuity. Many respondents say that it is unthinkable for them to have a job that has nothing to do with their French training. In addition, the desire to surpass non-migrant peers is still the focus. However, the statutory exceptionality of foreign graduates is being challenged today in the Chinese labor market. Unless they have a particularly interesting profile, repatriated Chinese graduates are unlikely to be paid much higher than the local average.

But for young graduates, the hardest experiences to face are the reactions of their loved ones. When the period of inactivity continues, the halo of *haigui* gradually turns into a stigma of *haidai* (海待),[14] Parents who rejoiced at the return of their children are beginning to worry. They also witness a profound disillusionment. The hope that their offspring will become *ren shang ren* (人上人, "the man above men") fades. Also subjected to a great deal of pressure from all sides, parents hope that their children come out of a deviant situation as soon as possible. With goodwill, parents do not hesitate to advise their children to revise their expectations downward: before finding an ideal job, it is better to seize what is immediately available and roughly correct with respect to the local standard. This is what is meant by *qi lü zhao ma* (骑驴找马, "looking for the horse on a donkey"). Hong knows the weight of this parental pressure. She explains that it was this pressure that pushed her to give up her plan to return to China:

> Hong: "Because we are used to taking the pressure on our own abroad. We are no longer used to endorsing pressure from others. And the pressure exerted by the family is not the same as the pressure of others. If it was a friend who was pressing you, you can give a damn. You do not contact him for 10 days, and you will contact him later. But it's not the same for the family. If you do not want to contact them, they will come to see you directly! Your mother will shout: That's good, you have strong wings now. You don't want to listen to me anymore!"

> Interviewer: "You can't escape!"

> Hong: "Impossible. In fact, this pressure concerns you directly, especially during the period when you have trouble finding a job. That's why I was afraid to find myself unemployed in the home country. That is why some do not want to return to China without having negotiated the salary beforehand. Because 'it's still something' [in French]. If you don't have a job for a month or two months, your parents can understand you. But if you've been unemployed for more than three months, your parents cannot forgive

---

14 That is to say: the job seekers coming from abroad, literally: algae (*haidai*, 海带).

you. I insist on this point: Your parents cannot forgive you, if you do not find work for more than three months."

Interviewer: "No, I think [...]"

Hong: "Why don't you go take this job? You can 'qi lü zhao ma'! That is what my parents told me directly. Anyway, you have to live with your parents. You cannot rent an apartment without having found a job; you cannot move every three days either. [...] If a haigui cries when he cannot find work, people will comment as follows: 'Because you are too hard. How can you not find a job? Look at this company in the village, it is big, and it recruits, why don't you go there?' But if you really go into this business, you will realize that you can never get away with it. Because they can never satisfy you, and you can never satisfy them. What you have learned is of no interest to anyone, and what your employer is looking for, you don't know how to give it to him."

Everyone has his or her own way of coping with this social pressure during the job search according to their resources, their experiences and their personality. Some give in to the pressure of their families by accepting a job below their expectations or even completely uninteresting to them with regard to their previous career. Other graduates, in anticipation of conflicts, choose not to live with their parents, for example by settling in a Chinese city far from that of their parents. Geographic distance saves *haigui* a lot of trouble with their parents related to face-to-face interactions. Other graduates, faced with relatives who suffer more from their inactivity than from their absence, decide to flee to distant countries. Several scenarios exist with the first being that of the "tragic hero": the *haigui*, humiliated by his family and wounded in his self-esteem is on self-imposed exile in order to restore his pride in a new adventure. Thus, Wen (31 years old) a young electronic engineer, after six months of unsuccessful search in the Chinese labor market, went to the Republic of Congo to set up his hardware trade.

The second is that of a "fleeing individualist": The graduate who had just returned to his country of origin seeks to emigrate to a new country with this decision speaking of his desire to live for himself, putting a distance between him and the pressures of his social environment of origin, rather than the desire to achieve greater success. This is the example of Zhang (26 years old, Master of engineering), who did not find a permanent contract in France at the end of his training and was forced to return to China. This young engineer justified his decision to emigrate to Canada by speaking of his love for nature, his "taste for elsewhere" and even his love of loneliness.

The third is that of a "neurotic": After several years of residence in France, the graduate on his return to China finds a job in a Chinese company. But he feels unsuited to his new environment. The pace of work, the busy schedules and the complexity of interpersonal relationships makes him anxious. The more

time passes, the more unbearable life in China seems to him until this anxiety brings out somatic symptoms: insomnia, endocrine disorders and so on. At the same time, the graduate idealizes his country of formation and develops a nostalgia for his years lived in France. In some situations, the individual ends up resigning from his company in China and returning to Europe to find a job there.

7 Conclusion

Identity crises today affect many young Chinese who came to France with a project of self-transformation. These crises are rooted in personal experiences of break-up, such as integration difficulties and unemployment. But they are rooted more deeply in the difficulties of the respondents to find a comfortable positioning of their identity in a context of high-speed social changes: the rise of China, the gentrification of a fraction of the Chinese population and the trivialization of international mobility seem to invalidate the very foundations of the emigration projects of the respondents. The result is a widespread malaise in this generation of young migrants who experience a "double gap": a gap between the *self* and the *ego-ideal*, and a gap between the migrant and his reference group, including his peers who have remained in the society of origin.

We also showed how Chinese migrants try to overcome their crises by moving away from their original plans and asserting a unique self. During their stay abroad, the different dimensions of personal identity are recomposed in favor of an *identity for oneself*, which tends to take precedence over the *identity for others*. But our graduates cannot easily escape the injunction to succeed. Their identity adjustment operations are only half effective in the best case, and the ideal of a triumphal return cannot be dismissed by any degree of assertion of self in France.

By focusing on individuality and its modifications during migration, this study sheds new light on student migration since inter-ethnic relations have been studied more frequently than the long-term experiences of individuals. If immigration trajectories appear as "trajectories of suffering" (Riemann and Schütze 1991), this suffering must also be understood in the structural disorder of the trajectories of migrants and in the widening gap between the experiences of migrants and their ideals of success. Migrants appear from this point of view as actors who evaluate their situations through outdated categories thereby experiencing multiple gaps. More generally, to describe this dynamic of personal identity among Chinese migrants and overseas Chinese allows us to better understand both the particular experiences of the Chinese subject in mobility and the main expressions of modern distress (Martuccelli 2002, 479–482).

Bibliography

Baumeister, Roy F. *Identity: Cultural change and the struggle for self*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Baumeister, Roy F., Jeremy P. Shapiro, and Dianne M. Tice. "Two kinds of identity crisis." *Journal of Personality* 53.3 (1985): 407–424.

Bertaux, Daniel. *Les récits de vie* (3e ed.). Paris: Armand Colin, 2010.

Boudon, Raymond. *L'inégalité des chances: la mobilité sociale dans les sociétés industrielles*. Paris: Armand Colin, 1973.

Boudon, Raymond. *Effets pervers et ordre social* (2e ed.). Paris: PUF, 1979.

Bourdieu, Pierre. "Comprendre." *La misère du monde*. Ed. Pierre Bourdieu. Paris: Seuil, 1993. 1389–1447.

Bourdieu, Pierre, and Abdelmalek Sayad. *Le déracinement: La crise de l'agriculture traditionnelle en Algérie*. Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1964.

Camilleri, Carmel, Joseph Kastersztein, Edmond-Marc Lipiansky, Hanna Malewska-Peyre, Isabelle Taboada-Leonetti, and Ana Vasquez (Eds.). *Stratégies identitaires*. Paris: PUF, 1990.

Cattelain, Chloé, Marylène Lieber, Claire Saillard, and Sébastien Nguen. "Les déclassés du Nord. Une nouvelle migration chinoise en France." *Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales* 21.3 (2005): 27–52.

Charles, Nicolas, Cécile Jolly, and Frédéric Lainé. "Etudiants étrangers et marché du travail. Une comparaison Allemagne, France, Royaume-Uni" *Rapports & Documents*. Premier Ministre, 2013.

Chuang, Ya-Han. "Les 'aventuriers' et les 'naufragés': deux types d'immigrés chinois à Paris, ou une face cachée du miracle chinois." *Migrations et Société* 149.25 (2013): 179–191.

Chudzikowski, Katharina, and Wolfgang Mayrhofer. "In search of the blue flower? Grand social theories and career research: The case of Bourdieu's theory of practice." *Human Relations* 64.1 (2011): 19–36.

Dubar, Claude. *La socialisation* (3e ed.). Paris: Armand Colin, 2004.

Dubar, Claude. *La crise des identités: L'interprétation d'une mutation* (4e ed.). Paris: PUF, 2010.

Ehrenberg, Alain. *La fatigue d'être soi: dépression et société*. Paris: Odile Jacob, 2008.

Ehrenberg, Alain. *La société du malaise*. Paris: Odile Jacob, 2010.

Ehrenberg, Alain. *Le culte de la performance* (3e ed.). Paris: Hachette Pluriel, 2011.

Erikson, Erik Homburger. *Childhood and Society*. New York: W. W. Norton, 1950.

Giddens, Anthony. *La constitution de la société* (1re ed. 1977). Paris: PUF, 1987.

Hao, Jie, and Anthony Welch. "A tale of sea turtles: Job-seeking experiences of Hai Gui (high-skilled returnees) in China." *Higher Education Policy* 25.2 (2012): 243–260.

Harold, Thibault. *La croissance chinoise à son plus bas depuis 25 ans*, 19. January 2016. http://www.lemonde.fr/economie/article/2016/01/19/la-croissance-chinoise-tombe-a-6-9-en-2015_4849455_3234.html (2 May 2016).

Hoffman, Lisa. "Autonomous choices and patriotic professionalism: on governmentality in late-socialist China." *Economy and Society* 35.4 (2006): 550–570.

Kastersztein, Joseph. "Les stratégies identitaires des acteurs sociaux: approche dynamique des finalités." *Stratégies identitaires*. Ed. Carmel Camilleri. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1990. 27–41.

Laing, Ronald David. *Soi et les autres* (L. Gilberte, Trans.). Paris: Gallimard, 1991.

Le Bart, Christian. *L'individualisation*. Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2008.

Lemaine, Gérard, and Joseph Kastersztein. "Recherches sur l'originalité sociale, la différenciation et l'incomparabilité." *Bulletin de Psychol* 25 (1972): 673–693.

Leong, Chan-Hoong, and Colleen Ward. "Identity conflict in sojourners." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 24.6 (2000): 763–776.

Lévy, Florence. "Les femmes du Nord, une migration au profil atypique." *Hommes & migrations* 1254 (2005): 45–57.

Li, Yong. "A risk perspective on Chinese student migration in France." *Chinese educational migration and student-teacher mobilities: Experiencing otherness*. Ed. Fred Dervin. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. 106–126.

Li, Yong. *Condamnés à réussir. Insertion professionnelle des diplômés chinois en France, nouvelles dynamiques migratoires et identitaires*. Rouen: Université de Rouen, 2016.

Lian, Si. (ed.). *Yizu: Daxue biyesheng jujucun shilu (Ant Communities: Description of the Village of University Graduates)*. Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2009.

Mahut, David. *Le déclassement dans la migration. Ethnographie d'une petite bourgeoisie bamakoise installée à Paris*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2017.

Martuccelli, Danilo. *Grammaires de l'individu*. Paris: Editions Gallimard, 2002.

Paivandi, Saeed, and Ronan Vourc'h. Profils et conditions de vie des étudiants étrangers, 1ère partie. *OVE Infos*. 2005. http://www.ove-national.education.fr/medias/files/ove-infos /oi12_oi_12_050705_basse_def.pdf (13 December 2018).

Ricœur, Paul. *Temps et récit* (Vol. 3). Paris: Seuil, 1985.

Riemann, Gerhard, and Fritz Schütze. "'Trajectory' as a basic theoretical concept for analyzing suffering and disorderly social processes." *Social Organization and Social Processes. Essays in Honor of Anselm Strauss*. Ed. David R. Maines. New York: De Gruyter, 1991. 333–357.

Rocca, Jean-Louis. "Quand la Chine redécouvre la question sociale." *Le Monde diplomatique*, May 2007, 10–11. http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/2007/05/ROCCA/14698 (3 December 2018).

Roulleau-Berger, Laurence. "Introduction: Nouvelles migrations chinoises et marchés du travail européens." *Nouvelles migrations chinoises et travail en Europe*. Ed. Laurence Roulleau-Berger. Toulouse: Presses universitaires du Mirail, 2007. 9–16.

Roulleau-Berger, Laurence. "Individuation 'située' et 'globalisée', grammaires de la reconnaissance et du mépris en Europe de l'Ouest et en Chine continentale." *La reconnaissance à l'épreuve: explorations socio-anthropologiques*. Ed. Jean-Paul Payet and Alain Battegay. Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2008. 287–294.

Roulleau-Berger, Laurence, and Jun Yan. *Travail et migration. Jeunesses chinoises à Shanghai et Paris*. La Tour d'Aigues: Editions de l'aube, 2017.

Simmel, Georg. *Sociologie: études sur les formes de la socialisation*. Paris: PUF, 1999.

Sommers, Vita S. "Resolution of an Identity Conflict in a Japanese-American Patient: A Contribution to the Treatment of 'Psychocultural' Neurosis." *American Journal of Psychotherapy* 23.1 (1969): 119–134.

Sussman, Nan M. *Return Migration and Identity: A global phenomenon, a Hong Kong case*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011.

Thomas, William, and Florian Znaniecki. *Le paysan polonais en Europe et aux Etats-Unis. Récit d'un immigrant* (first edition: Chicago, 1919). Paris: Nathan, 1998.

Urry, John. "Les systèmes de la mobilité." *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie* 118.1 (2005): 23–35.

Wang, Simeng. "Des 'soucis matrimoniaux' dans le contexte transnational: le cas des migrants et des migrantes chinois qualifiés à Paris." *Migrations et Société* 27.157 (2015): 149–166.

Wang, Simeng. "Entre stratégie et moralité. Des migrants chinois en situation irrégulière face à la 'clause de maladie'. *Politix* 114.2 (2016a): 205–227.

Wang, Simeng. "Souffrances psychiques et mobilité sociale ascendante. Le cas des adolescents français d'origine chinoise à Paris." *Hommes & Migrations* 1314.2 (2016b): 11–18.

Wang, Simeng. *Illusions et souffrances. Les migrants chinois à Paris*. Paris: Editions Rue d'Ulm/Presses de l'Ecole normale supérieure, 2017.

Widmer, Eric D., and Dario Spini. "Misleading Norms and Vulnerability in the Life Course: Definition and Illustrations." *Research in Human Development* 14.1 (2017): 52–67.

Xiang, Biao. "Emigration from China: A sending country perspective." *International Migration* 41.3 (2003): 21–48.

Yan, Yunxiang. *The individualization of Chinese society*. Oxford and New York: Berg publishers, 2009.

Yan, Yunxiang. "The Chinese path to individualization." *The British Journal of Sociology* 61.3 (2010): 489–512.

Yun, Gao, Florence Lévy, and Véronique Poisson. "De la migration au travail. L'exploitation extrême des Chinois-e-s à Paris." *Travail, genre et société* 16.2 (2006): 53–74.

Zhang, Li, and Aihwa Ong (Eds.). *Privatizing China: socialism from afar*. Ithaca, NY: Cornelle University Press, 2008.

Zhao, Yeqin. "Les illusions perdues d'une Chinoise du Nord à Belleville." *Terrains & travaux* 2 (2009): 195–211.

Li Zhipeng

The rearticulation of the links between the Chinese diaspora and receiving countries as well as sending regions in China: The case of Wenzhou migration to France

Abstract: The objective of this paper is to demonstrate the manner in which the development of China is connected to the rearticulation of economic and political links of the Chinese diaspora with France and also with China. The economic reforms in China since the late 1970s took place with the concurrent liberalization of the conditions of emigration abroad. It resulted in a resumption of migration from China, in particular from historic regions of departure – especially the Wenzhou region. These migrants arrived in France to sustain the Chinese ethnic labor market and led to the growth of businesses in various sectors. Rising imports of Chinese products led to the emergence of new Chinese commercial districts in France as well as the transformation of a few older ones. On the political level, too, links began to be rearticulated with new links developing with the diplomatic corps that were quasi-non-existent before.[1]

1 Introduction

The economic reforms in China since the Reform and Opening-up Policy in 1978 took place at the same time as the liberalization of the conditions of Chinese emigration. It resulted in the resumption of migration from China, in particular from its historic regions of departure – including the Wenzhou region. In France, these migrants sustained the Chinese ethnic labor market and brought about the expansion of businesses in various sectors (including catering, garment industry, leather goods industry and others). This economic development was reflected by an exceptional increase in Chinese imports. Rising imports of Chinese products led to the emergence of new Chinese commercial districts and the transformation of a few older ones. These districts appeared as trading

---

posts, or emporiums, which enabled the distribution of the Chinese production. On the political level, links were also redeveloped. In France, the formerly 'invisible' overseas Chinese came to the forefront in the public sphere: firstly, at the end of the 1990s, in demonstrations with other undocumented migrants asking for the regulation of their position; and later, in 2010, 2011 and 2016, as they participated in significant mobilizations against the insecurity and aggressions of which they had been victims. Furthermore, formerly nearly non-existent links with the diplomatic corps developed.

Representatives began participating in the celebrations and ceremonies organized by the Chinese diaspora in France, and maintained relations with associations such as entrepreneur associations. In China, at the local level, the *qiaolian* (侨联，Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese) in Wenzhou endeavors to establish relationships with entrepreneurs' associations in France by inviting and encouraging them to invest in Wenzhou and proposing support to those who wish to restart their business in China. In addition, the federation encourages the teaching of the Chinese language to the younger generation of Chinese immigrants in France and encourages the development of cultural projects.

2 The formation of the Chinese diaspora from Wenzhou: A rapid growth since the 1980s

The Chinese diaspora began forming around the world because of mass emigration at the beginning of the late sixteenth century. With the numbers of migrants increasing in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Chinese now have a presence on all continents (Trolliet 1994a; Ma Mung 2000; Zhuang 2011). When China launched its Reform and Opening-up Policy in 1978, the number of overseas Chinese was estimated at twenty million, the majority (85 %) being concentrated in Southeast Asia (Poston et al. 1994; Li 2011; Zhuang 2009, 2011). Over thirty years, the numbers of Chinese living abroad have increased rapidly. In the worldwide diaspora, Chinese were estimated to be around 45 million in the year 2010, whereas the proportion of overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia decreased to 75 % of its total (Ma Mung 2015; Li 2011; Zhuang 2011). There is an acceleration in migration from China and an expansion in the number of departure areas. This is because of the Reforms and Opening-up Policy, which led to a gradual liberalization of emigration conditions, including the authorization of Chinese exits and the issuance of passports (Pina-Guerassimoff 2012; Li 2014). This upswing began with the annual number of Chinese migrants increasing from 57,000 to 756,000 between

1982 and 2000 (Ma Mung 2015). According to the same sources, the annual inflow of Chinese nationals into OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries rose from 140,000 to 539,000 between 1995 and 2008 (335,000 in 2000, 483,000 in 2003). Secondly, even though provinces with a migratory tradition (such as Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang) continue to guide migrants to countries where their compatriots have already settled, new departure areas are expanding to include other provinces and cities, such as the northeastern provinces of China (Heilongjiang, Jilin and Liaoning), Henan, Hebei, Guangxi and the urban areas of Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and Chongqing.

This rapid growth in the number of Chinese emigrants is also reflected in an expansion of migration destinations, to include new continents such as Africa. However, the presence of Chinese there remains rather low, with the number being less than 1 million (Ma Mung 2009). The growth of Chinese migration is accompanied by a concurrent increase in immigration to developed countries. Chinese migrants who move to these countries are Chinese who have already moved and settled in Southeast Asia and are then remigrating as well as Chinese migrants from mainland China who began migrating from the 1990s onwards.

2.1 The main departure areas in China and regarding international migration of Wenzhou

Historically, the regions from which Chinese migrations began have numerous groups speaking diverse languages or dialects, including Wenzhou, Cantonese, Hakka, Teochew (Chaozhou), Hokkien and Hainan. The coastal provinces of China (especially Guangdong, Fujian and Zhejiang) are the main points of departure. Migration flows have formed distinctly along these different groups and their spoken dialects in China. These different migration flows form separate groups that each constitute their own relational, migratory and economic networks (Trolliet 1994b). Other provinces that did not have a migratory tradition became departure points from the 1990s such as the Heilongjiang, Jilin and Liaoning provinces (Gao and Poisson 2005; Lévy 2015). These various migration flows have led to the creation of the Chinese diaspora around the world.

The launch of China's Reforms and Opening-up Policy in 1978 led to the resumption of migration as well as expansion of China's regions of departure. This period was marked by the globalization of the Chinese migratory field and the strengthening of emigration towards industrialized countries. Migration is mainly carried out by migrant (proletarian) workers, but the profiles of migrants are

diversifying to include women, students and skilled workers (Ma Mung 2009). A new form of commercial migration is emerging around the world with the wholesale distribution of Chinese products. In this context, because of their historical presence and networks, subgroups of the Chinese diaspora have reproduced themselves as social bodies (Li 2017).

Focusing on the particular case of Wenzhou, three waves of international emigration can be identified. The first is a wave of emigration to Japan in the years 1910 and 1920; the second to Europe between the 1920s and the mid-1930s; and the third wave is organized around a movement of rapprochement emigration during which the Wenzhou join their relatives settled abroad since the 1980s (Zhang 1999). Consequently, the number of people from Wenzhou who have settled abroad has soared thanks to migrants since the 1980s. According to several sources, the number of people from the region has increased from 70,000 in 1980 to around 650,000 in 2010 (Xu 2015; Li 2017).

2.2 Geographical distribution: Internal differences and the question of a "Wenzhou diaspora"

There are clear differences between the spatial distribution of the Chinese diaspora and that of the Wenzhou diaspora. The Chinese diaspora is spread over more than 140 countries, with most of them being located in Southeast Asia, and the remaining being in the Americas, Europe, including the Russian Federation, and the rest of the world (Ma Mung 2015; Li 2017). As for the Chinese of Wenzhou, they are mainly settled in Europe and also in North America and Latin America (Li 2002).

This spatial preference developed among the migration networks that historically operated from Wenzhou (Poisson 2006). As Pierre Trolliet (1994a) has pointed out, "geo-dialectal sectors" have played a vital role in the establishment of the diaspora, both in its geographical distribution and in the constitution of commercial monopolies (example: for Chaozhou rice in Thailand). In other words, there are distinct migratory flows within the Chinese diaspora. Most of these diasporic groups are linked to departure areas in China, which are characterized by a number of extremely diverse Chinese languages.

Beginning with the analysis of the geographical distribution of the Chinese diaspora as well as the assessment of the number of Chinese in the diaspora, this paper studies migrants from Wenzhou in particular and examines the extent to which the term *diaspora* is relevant to describe this specific Chinese diasporic group and its practices. In this context, Emmanuel Ma Mung's description of "a network of networks, a diaspora of Diasporas" (Ma Mung 2009) is applicable. Indeed, within the Chinese diaspora, several groups of Chinese migrants can be
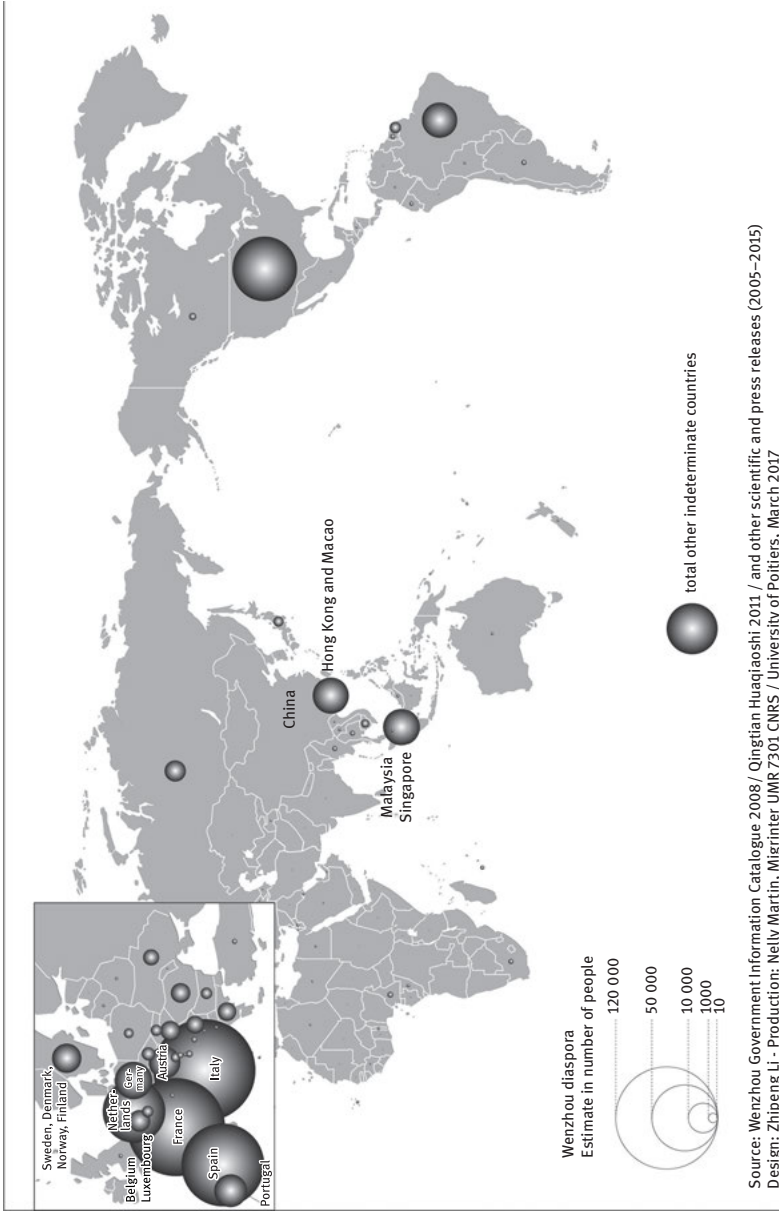
Fig. 1: The Wenzhou diaspora in the world in the years 2005–2010.

Source: Wenzhou Government Information Catalogue 2008 / Qingtian Huaqiaoshi 2011 / and other scientific and press releases (2005–2015)
Design: Zhipeng Li - Production: Nelly Martin, Migrinter UMR 7301 CNRS / University of Poitiers, March 2017

distinguished according to their geographical origin and their spoken dialect. As a matter of fact, it is these characteristics of a common geographical origin and a dialect that organize the relational, migratory and economic networks specific to each group of Chinese migrants.

The group of Wenzhou migrants is distinguished firstly by its use of the same language (the dialect of Wenzhou); secondly, by the collective identity of people from Wenzhou belonging to the same group; and finally, by the reproduction and reinforcement of this identity, that of the Wenzhou, reflected in the migratory, financial, commercial and emotional networks that are perpetuated. As a result, the segment of the Chinese diaspora from the Wenzhou region will be referred to as the *Wenzhou diaspora*.

3 Chinese diaspora in France: A minority group

Throughout the twentieth century, the geographical origin of immigrants in France has diversified considerably. The history of immigration in France is marked by the diversity of immigrants' origins. Compared to other groups, the history of Chinese migration to France is ancient, however, the first settlements were small in numbers. The 1911 census shows 283 Chinese in France, including 166 in the Paris department (Live 1991; Pairault 1995). Until today, Chinese immigration has remained relatively low. The number of Chinese immigrants never exceeded 15,000 between 1911 and 1970. In 2010, according to Emmanuel Ma Mung (2015) the Chinese diaspora accounted for 450,000 people in France, representing a small segment of migrants in France (only 8.4 % of all immigrants).[2]

3.1 Chinese immigration from Wenzhou: The oldest Chinese group

The Chinese diaspora in France, as in the world, is made up of different linguistic and regional groups. In France, there are two major groups that are distinct because of their geographical origin and their migratory path:
- Post-colonial Chinese immigrants who came to France from different countries of Southeast Asia (Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos). The arrival of refugees from South-East Asia in 1975 (Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam) involved

---

2 In 2010, the immigrant population consisted of 5.4 million people, that is 8.6 % of the total population (62.8 million individuals) (Simon 2015).

about 150,000 persons of Chinese origin according to Thierry Pairault (1995) and 120,000 according to Jean-Pierre Hassoun (1993).

– Chinese immigrants who come directly from mainland China, including people from the Wenzhou-region (including Qingtian),[3] and from the cities of the Zhejiang Province (Poisson 2006; Auguin 2009). This population has been growing steadily with more recent immigration from northern China, the Dongbei (Heilongjiang, Liaoning and Jilin), as well as the cities of Beijing, Tianjian and Shanghai and other provinces.

Chinese migrants from mainland China have been living in France for a longer time than migrants of Chinese origin from Southeast Asia. Commercial activities by the Chinese and the establishment of Chinatown in Paris dates to the beginning of the twentieth century (Live 1992; Poisson 2004). Students, journalists, anarchist intellectuals, some merchants of Chinese artifacts, two or three restaurateurs, a handful of people doing pedicures, workers of an artificial silk factory, a soy factory, and diplomatic representatives of the dynasties of Qing represent a Chinese micro-society that was certainly embryonic but already forming in Paris (Live 1992). It is difficult to specify the nature of the business activities of Wenzhou entrepreneurs, but the aforementioned authors indicate that the entrepreneurs of Wenzhou and Qingtian played a key role in the development of ethnic Chinese businesses in Paris.

During World War I, 140,000 Chinese laborers were recruited in China to work in weapons factories, do earthworks in the trenches, and transport ammunition (Poisson 2004; Ma 2012). At the end of the war, the majority of them were sent back to China. However, between 2,000 and 3,000 of them (mostly from Qingtian) stayed in France (Archaimbault 1952). These people were part of the oldest group of Chinese immigrants in France. They were quickly joined in the 1930s by compatriots from Wenzhou and the neighboring city of Qingtian. Wenzhou and Qingtian immigration continued during the interwar period. It disappeared almost entirely during World War II, and remained at very low levels during China first communist period (1949–1978) (Ma Mung and Li 2017). Migration resumed strongly from the late 1970s onwards thanks to the launch of China's Reform and Opening-up Policy. Although it is difficult to accurately

---

3 From a historical and cultural point of view, there is no particular distinction between the migrants from Wenzhou and those from Qingtian. They are all indifferently named Wenzhou. Thus, in France, the majority of overseas Chinese from Qingtian know how to speak the "dialect" of Wenzhou and often indicate that they are from Wenzhou instead of saying they come from Qingtian.

estimate the population of the Wenzhou diaspora, they are a significant group among Chinese immigrants in France.

The Chinese diaspora from Wenzhou is estimated to be between 150,000 and 200,000 individuals in France.[4] However, this estimate does not take into account the mobility of people in the Schengen area, since based on observation, there is often a movement of people between France, Italy, Spain and other countries in the Schengen region. The majority of them are located in the Paris region. However, Chinese immigrants from Wenzhou have begun to settle not only in large cities such as Lyon, Marseille and Lille, but also in medium-sized cities like Poitiers for example.

3.2 A lack of research for the Wenzhou diaspora

While the Chinese population in France has increased significantly since the 1990s, studies on Chinese migrations originating from Wenzhou remain incomplete. The phenomenon of the Chinese diaspora caught the attention of several disciplines (Zhou 1992; Trolliet 1994a; Pan 2000; Ma Mung 2000; M. Li 2002; G. Wang 2006; Kuhn 2008; Zhuang 2009; Ma 2012): sociology, geography, history and anthropology in particular. Despite the number of disciplines that have researched Chinese diaspora with the research originating from a number of countries,[5] the literature on the Chinese diaspora question has a fragmented character. In Europe, research on the Chinese diaspora is lacking (Li 2002; Thunø et Pieke 2005; Polyzos 2014). Chinese migrants in France have been the subject of several studies that have focused on the historical dimension of their location, their economic activities as well as the relationship of Chinese migrants with French society (Poisson 2004; Auguin 2009; Pina-Guerassimoff 2012; Ma Mung 2014; Le Bail 2017). More recently, early-career scholars have engaged with the topic in three PhD dissertations, that of Wang Simeng in 2017, and those of Ya-Han Chuang in 2015 and Florence Lévy in 2015. Several studies have been conducted by Jean-Philippe Béja on Chinese immigrants since the 1990s (Béja 1991) and by Chunguang Wang on migrants from Wenzhou in France (Wang and Béja 1999). Chinese migration from the Wenzhou region has been studied by Véronique Poisson (2004) and Estelle Auguin (2009). Recent studies suggest that Chinese migration from Wenzhou and the local economic development are interdependent processes (Wu and

---

4 Wang, Chunguang (2000) estimated 130,000 Chinese people living in Wenzhou in France in 2000. He took into account the clandestine situation.

5 United States, Canada, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Netherlands, Great Britain, Italy, Spain, France.

Wang 2009). Nevertheless, these studies are still scarce, and the Chinese diaspora in France remains understudied. There are few works that not only examine the causes and consequences of migratory phenomena, but also deal with the economic organization of international migrations originating in Wenzhou and its relationship with its place of departure. This indicates the need for this research and its objective to analyze the manner in which the development of China leads to the redevelopment of the economic and political links of the Chinese diaspora, within France but also with China.

3.3 Survey methods mobilized and the delimitation of the spaces studied

Several field studies were carried out in the places of departure and installation in order to capture the multiple points of view of the actors that are part of this diaspora. Most of the data presented in this research comes from the surveys that were conducted. For this field research, the applied methods include business surveys and field observations (2012), semi-structured and open interviews (64 interviews) and participant observation (2011–2015) as well as questionnaire surveys. This article includes only some of the major results from the PhD dissertation (Li 2017).

In the Paris region, the location of ethnic Chinese businesses is distinguished according to whether it is marked by "dense concentration" or "broad dispersion" (Ma Mung and Simon 1990). "Dense concentration" corresponds to some districts where the majority of Chinese businesses are located, such as the Arts et Métiers-Temple district (between the third and fourth *arrondissements*), the Sedaine Popincourt district in the eleventh arrondissement, the warehouses of Aubervilliers, the Belleville district (straddling the tenth, eleventh, nineteenth and twentieth *arrondissements*), the Triangle de Choisy district in the thirteenth *arrondissement*, and the Rue Montgallet in the twelfth *arrondissement*. Other areas where ethnic Chinese businesses are concentrated include Place de Torcy in the eighteenth *arrondissement*, Rue de Joinville in the nineteenth *arrondissement*, main settlements of ethnic Chinese businesses in the cities of Torcy and Lognes, and in the new city of Marne-la-Vallée in Seine et Marne. *Broad dispersion* indicates the presence of ethnic Chinese businesses (often catering) throughout the territory. It should be emphasized that it is impossible to count all ethnic Chinese businesses characterized by broad dispersion. There are no official statistics or existing research that could be relied on for an estimate.

The research was focused in dense concentration districts of ethnic Chinese businesses, in particular because it enabled the number of ethnic Chinese

businesses to be estimated and the spaces studied could be outlined clearly. Through visible elements (such as commercial sign, marketed products, customers, interior decoration) and invisible ones (migratory and professional routes), we can identify ethnic Chinese businesses and reveal the economic and spatial strategies that they follow. Since ethnic Chinese businesses in high concentration districts are only a section of ethnic Chinese businesses in the country and also because not all Chinese merchants are Wenzhou merchants, this research has a few constraints.[6]

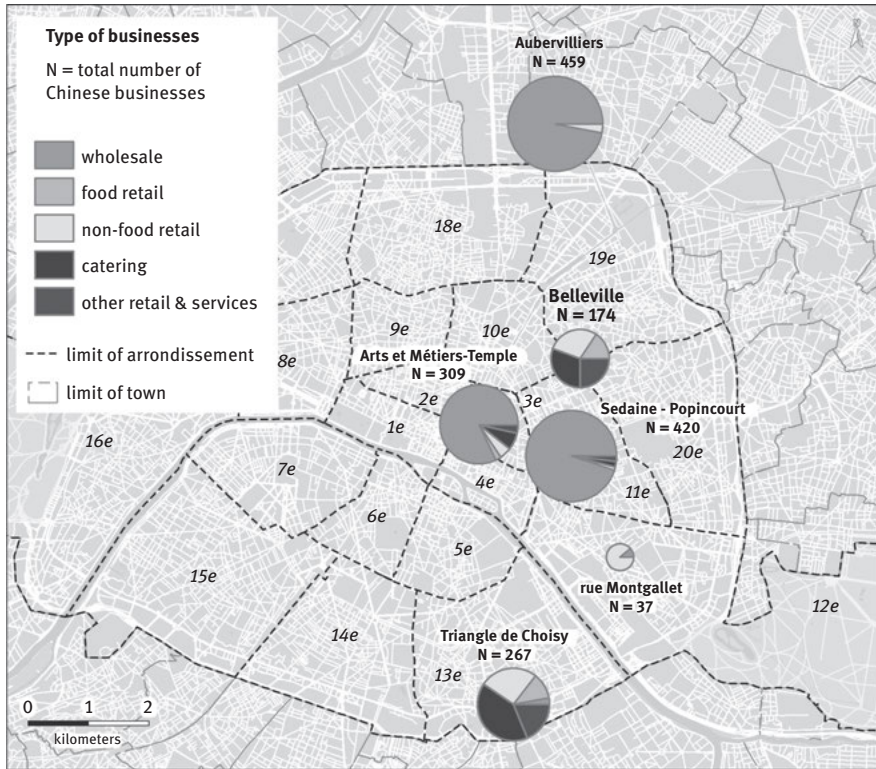Source: Personal investigation 2012 - Map background: APUR 2016
Design: Zhipeng Li - Production: Nelly Martin, Migrinter UMR 7301 CNRS / University of Poitiers, December 2016

Fig. 2: Location of the main Chinese districts studied in the Paris region.

---

6 There are also other Chinese traders (not from Wenzhou), especially those from Southeast Asia (e.g. Chaozhou), as well as other parts of China.

Among the districts with a dense concentration of ethnic Chinese businesses in the Paris region, this paper focuses on six districts:

The district of Arts et Métier-Temple, which is the oldest *Chinatown* location, characterized by the prosperity of the traditional wholesale trade in leather goods; the district of Sedaine Popincourt and the district of Aubervilliers, which have developed since the end of the 1990s and represent the new expansions of import wholesale trade in the sectors of ready-made clothes; the district of Triangle de Choisy, which is characterized by the presence of ethnic Chinese traders from Southeast Asia stemming from a wave of arrival of Indochinese refugees in the 1970s; Belleville, which is an old immigration district marked today by the presence not only of Chinese but also Maghrebi, Jewish and Muslim businesses; and the Rue Montgallet, which is known to be an exclusive market for computer products primarily run by Chinese traders.

4 The driving role of the ethnic Chinese labor market

The ethnic Chinese labor market is a constituent element of an "entrepreneurial diaspora" (Ma Mung 2009). It is entrepreneurial because it comprises of businesses that ensure its expansion as a social body. This does not mean that individuals are mostly entrepreneurs. This entrepreneurial diaspora plays a central role in terms of employment but also in terms of identity reproduction by providing the services and products that promote it.

With regard to the Chinese diaspora, the role of ethnicity in the choice of economic partners has been previously discussed. A worker seeks to be employed in a company run by a fellow Chinese, as this can help him easily access initial resources (financial, networks, etc.) in order to become an entrepreneur. As a result, Chinese employees work mainly for compatriots and these entrepreneurs employ mainly Chinese workers. Within this context, an economic opportunity might arise easily, changing one's social status from employee to entrepreneur. This opportunity often results in the creation of small businesses, made possible by the mobilization of the ethnic Chinese labor market. Compared to the general labor market, an ethnic labor market has an observable economic circuit where supply and demand is essentially dependent on the ethnic origin of those who seek and offer employment. We contend that there is an ethnic Wenzhou labor market within the Wenzhou diaspora. The link is essentially maintained by a system of circulation of job offers from ethnic Wenzhou companies and the ethnic orientation of Wenzhou workers' job applications. This pattern of strengthening

the ethnic Chinese labor market is linked to the fact that few workers leave ethnic Chinese companies for French companies, especially because of the informal nature of the work, particularly in the clothing, leather goods and catering sectors. The conditions are difficult there, wages are low, employment is precarious and prospects for promotion are almost non-existent because of the size of these small Chinese companies. However, the fact that despite these workers do not leave ethnic Chinese companies can be explained by several factors.

Language barrier in intercultural communication, community solidarity, the proximity to information in Chinese communities, as well as possibility of racial discrimination in the host society are the factors why workers do not leave Chinese businesses, according to the various studies devoted to ethnic enterprises (Ma Mung and Li 2012). Other reasons why workers choose ethnic Chinese companies to work for include the small number of jobs available in the general labor market, lack of fluency in the language of the host country and the absence of valid documents for residence as a foreigner. If the worker chooses to stay in the company of a compatriot, it allows him to remain in a system of social relations (information, tontines, etc.) and the reasoning is that he can use the system to begin his own business when the right moment arrives.

Thus, almost all Wenzhou contractors surveyed (especially import wholesalers), worked in the sectors called *three knives* (catering, leather goods and clothing)[7] when they were employees because it was seen as a necessary step for the accumulation of initial capital (Wang 2000). Furthermore, the workers trust their families or compatriots to provide mutual aid or financing, through the practice of the *tontine* or a simple loan from the family. Through this, they can easily secure initial funds. Several respondents emphasized the importance of being able to raise funds through the tontine. Staying in the ethnic Chinese labor market means the assurance of always remaining in their system of personal social relations for the workers. Through this system, they can acquire information; for example, on how and where to start a business, how to choose the right economic sector (especially the sector where you can most easily make money). The access to this information available only within the social relations systems of our respondents were very often the basis of the decision to set up a type of business (especially in the *three knives* sector and the wholesale trade). With the emergence of the diversification of professional and economic activities, and particularly with the emergence of wholesale import trades, the ethnic labor market is undergoing upheavals.

---

7 The *san ba dao* (三把刀, "*three knives*") refer to: *caidao* (菜刀, "the kitchen knife"), *pidao* (皮刀, "the knife of the leather worker"), and *jiandao* (剪刀，"the scissors of the tailor").

5 The boom in wholesale trade and the importation of Chinese products

The districts in the research are characterized by a concentration of ethnic Chinese businesses in their commercial businesses. Ethnic Chinese businesses are distinct from other businesses. The three districts Rue Montgallet, Sedaine Popincourt and Aubervilliers are those in which the highest density of ethnic Chinese businesses can be observed. This high density often reflects the concentration of retail outlets for wholesalers sourced from retailers in the region or country, whether they are ethnic Chinese or not.

On one hand, shopping centers for wholesale trade almost exclusively have only Chinese shops. For example, the presence of the International Franco-Asian Center (CIFA) is closely linked to that of Chinese traders in Aubervilliers. Their presence in the import wholesale trade, especially in footwear and leather goods, is very significant. On the other hand, a high density of traders of Chinese origin are part of the economic sector of wholesale distribution. Businesses focused on wholesale distribution are concentrated in certain streets of the Arts et Métiers-Temple and Sedaine Popincourt districts, with a virtual monopoly of Wenzhou wholesalers in leather goods and ready-to-wear clothes.

5.1 The current situation of the concentration of ethnic Chinese businesses

Among the districts in which ethnic Chinese businesses are located, two characteristics emerge clearly according to the proportion of each type of businesses: One, an absolute preponderance of wholesalers in the Arts et Métiers-Temple district, in the Sedaine Popincourt and Aubervilliers district and non-food retail businesses in the district Rue Montgallet. In all of the ethnic Chinese businesses in the districts studied, wholesale businesses are by far the most numerous, accounting for 66.6 % of establishments (Li 2017). And two, the focus on food retailing and catering businesses that exists in the Triangle de Choisy and Belleville districts. According to the COMET Program (2012–2015)[8] survey result, the district Belleville

---

[8] Belleville and Triangle de Choisy were also studied in the context of the Paris 2030 call for projects of the Paris City. COMET – Ethnic food businesses between community practices and living together: a comparison of Parisian districts (2012–2015). The team consisted of: Hadrien Dubucs (ENeC, Paris IV Sorbonne) and Lucine Endelstein (LISST, CNRS), coordinators of the project, and Marie Chabrol (Living the World, University of Picardy), Martine Cohen (Group
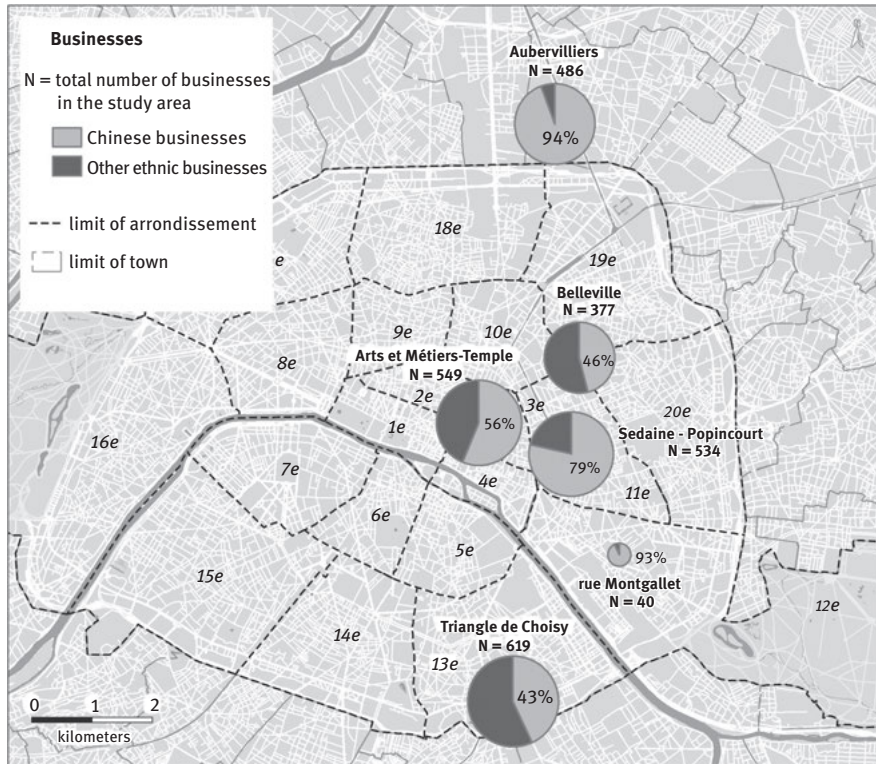
Source: Personal investigation 2012 - Map backgrounde: APUR 2016
Design: Zhipeng Li - Production: Nelly Martin, Migrinter UMR 7301 CNRS / University of Poitiers, December 2016

Fig. 3: Part of the ethnic Chinese businesses in the total of businesses of the districts.

appears to be perceived as more *Chinese* than the Triangle de Choisy of the thirteenth *arrondissement*, which would be perceived as *Asian*. This difference in the visible cultural reference carried by the commercial offer is partly due to the migratory history of each of these districts. In contrast to the Triangle de Choisy whose businesses display signs referring to Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos or Thailand, those in the Belleville district more willingly refer to China, or even to Wenzhou.

A qualitative survey along with field observations (Li 2017) confirm the type of specialization of each district: Arts et Métiers-Temple is focused on leather

Source: Personal investigation 2012 - Map backgrounde: APUR 2016
Design: Zhipeng Li - Production: Nelly Martin, Migrinter UMR 7301 CNRS / University of Poitiers, December 2016

Fig. 4: Location of shops by type of business in the Paris region.

goods and costume jewelry and hardly sells any clothing or footwear products. However, the districts of Sedaine Popincourt and Aubervilliers sell these products almost exclusively. In these three districts, the Chinese wholesalers are almost all from Wenzhou. Findings show that the products distributed by these Wenzhou immigrants correspond mostly to the development of the economic structure of the region of origin.

The "catering and retail" group represents 556 establishments (33.4 % of the total). Restaurants dominate this group: 29.0 % of the total and 34.8 % if we add the caterers (Li 2017). However, it should be noted that the 193 restaurants present in commercial concentrations represent only a small part (23.4 %) of all 824 restaurants held by the Chinese in intramural Paris (Ma Mung 2012). In the restaurant sector, the majority of businesses are scattered over the whole city.

5.2 The evolution of the districts studied: A comparison between 1985 and 2012

In the following comparative analysis, the objective is to present the current situation (b) and compare it to that of the 1980s (a).

Tab. 1: Evolution of trade in three districts 1985–2012.

	AMT			Belleville			Triangle de Choisy			Total		
	1985	2012		1985	2012		1985	2012		1985	2012	
	a	b	b/a	a	b	b/a	a	b	b/a	a	b	b/a
Restaurants, caterers, fast food	16	22	1.4	17	53	3.1	41	109	2.7	74	184	2.5
Wholesale	103	254	2.5	6	1	0.2	10	8	0.8	119	263	2.2
Food retail	4	7	1.8	20	27	1.4	25	31	1.2	49	65	1.3
Non-food retail	2	15	7.5	29	50	1.7	33	69	5.3	64	134	2.1
Other retail and service	0	11		6	43	7.2	11	50	4.5	17	104	6.1
Total	125	309	2.5	78	174	2.2	120	267	2.2	323	750	2.3

Sources: Ma Mung and Simon 1990 and own field survey 2012

These districts have had a strong growth rate since 1985: the number of stores multiplied by 2.3 in the three districts. All categories of trade grew, except the *wholesale category* in Belleville (0.2) and in Triangle de Choisy (0.8). These changes are due to the spectacular development of *import wholesale* in recent years. In 1985, there were no Chinese merchants in the Sedaine Popincourt district, in Aubervilliers, or in Rue Montgallet, where they are present today.

Beside the *three knives* activities, import trade has gained importance. Chinese imports compete with ethnic Chinese local production. The import trade is a traditional area of work for Chinese people in France. The main transformation of these last years is the growing share of products from China, notably textile products, clothing, shoes etc. This business developed considerably after the textile importation quotas were lifted in 2004. This development gave rise to the

creation of new ethnic Chinese commercial concentrations like that of the town Aubervilliers or the district Sedaine Popincourt. A new field of work has also emerged: the import of IT products. This dominates in the Rue Montgallet where more than thirty shops are run by ethnic Chinese (none from Wenzhou). In other words, the wholesale trade is almost exclusively an import trade. However not all Chinese merchants are Wenzhou merchants.

5.3 The emergence of new commercial concentrations

In the Arts et Métiers-Temple of the third *arrondissement* of Paris, wholesale dealers in leather goods are numerous. The traditional manner in which these wholesalers functioned was through the local manufacturing of products in numerous small workshops of the district that were then sold by wholesalers to French tradesmen. Workshops and wholesales stores were part of the same system, where the owner of a store was often managing one or several workshops. Today the manufacturing of leather goods has completely disappeared. The main reason for this is the competition from products imported from China since the end of 1990 (Ma Mung and Li 2012). The ready-to-wear industry (workshops manufacturer of clothes) remains an important business sector but this sector is in steep decline. There are still workshops but they work in a very specific niche: women's ready-to-wear fashion that does not allow the delocalization of the manufacturing in cheap labor countries. Workshops catering to other sectors of the clothing industry (more traditional women's ready-to-wear fashion, men's ready-to-wear fashion, and hosiery) have all closed. The main reason is the competition of products imported from China. It is worth noting that many former owners of workshops have since moved into the textile import sector.

6 The development of formerly quasi-non-existent links with the diplomatic corps and the political level

In France, overseas Chinese who formerly seemed to be *invisible* have come to the foreground in the public sphere. At first, their involvement corresponded to the participation in demonstrations with other undocumented migrants asking for the regulation of their position toward the end of the 1990s. This movement played a key role because a part of the population that was often presented as

discreet, without stories, and perfectly integrated suddenly began getting featured in the news (Ma Mung and Li 2017). Apart from these protests, the presence of the Chinese diaspora in the public sphere manifested itself by the display of Chinese symbols indicating their belonging to an original collective, real or imaginary, and by commercial and residential concentration in certain districts. Added to these elements, parades and dances of the dragon on the occasion of the Chinese New Year began in several Parisian districts and in other French cities, all of which contributed towards creating a continuity of Chinese presence in certain places. But in the more important mobilizations in Belleville in 2010 and 2011 against insecurity and against the aggressions, Chinese protesters denounced classic snatch flights for mobile phones and handbags, and physical assaults to steal cash Chinese entrepreneurs were suspected of carrying. The demonstration of 2016 against the insecurity experienced by Chinese people in Aubervilliers is another recent example. It was less to do with the fact that this kind of violence existed, but that it spread, that motivated these demonstrations in the public sphere. These demonstrations undoubtedly mark an important turn in the way that the Chinese diaspora was represented and is perceived in the French news (Ma Mung and Li 2017). Furthermore, diplomatic links developed that were non-existent before. Embassy representatives began participating in the celebrations and ceremonies organized by the Chinese diaspora in France and maintain relations with associations in particular those of entrepreneurs.

6.1 Types of Wenzhou diaspora associations

Diasporic Wenzhou associations are created mainly by *diasporic entrepreneurs* from the Wenzhou region. They grouped themselves according to different areas of interest in order to establish economic ties with China. In France, there are several types of Chinese associations: traders' associations, cultural associations, religious, professional, and educational associations, compatriots, etc. Among these different types of associations, the most important one is that of the Chinese traders. According to our survey and the available statistics obtained, we estimate that there are more than fifty Chinese merchant associations (Li 2017). Among these fifty associations, there are thirty Wenzhou trade associations. The most important of these associations are: the Association of Chinese Residing in France (ACRF), the Association of French-Chinese Traders and Industrialists (ACIFC), the French-Chinese Association of Commerce (AFCC), the Association of Chinese Traders Ready-to-Wear in France, and the French-Chinese Association of Shoe, the Merchants Association of Wenzhou in France, and the Sino-French Association of Mutual Aid and Friendship. The

names given to associations always indicate the fact that they belong to the same sector of activity, such as ready-to-wear or shoes commercials, which suggests that they are professional associations.

According to our observation in the field, it appears that the Wenzhou trade associations are mainly divided into two categories: Initially, entrepreneurs from different sectors come together in associations named to indicate the political or economic significance of their commitment. Their goal is mainly to maintain official ties with China. This is the case, for example, with the ACRF and the ACIFC. The role of this type of association is to maintain links with the region of origin. Since the administrative statute gives them legitimacy, they can enjoy a certain political reputation and thus maintain a relationship of mutual trust. This status and the political recognition that being official confers is presented as essential in the establishment of the privileged contacts in order to foster economic relations. This type of association is, in other words, characterized by the political objective of establishing an official link with the Chinese authorities in order to facilitate the realization of economic interests.

The second type of association is based on their belonging to the same sector of activity or the same profession. This is the case of the French-Chinese Shoe Association or the Association of Chinese Trade Ready-to-Wear. The role of this type of association is mainly to defend the interests of companies in the same sector and to share information that will guarantee financial security. Thus, the French-Chinese Association of Shoes was founded because all entrepreneurs in this sector had the common need to defend their interests. For example, if a customer's cheque has been dishonored, his or her name is registered in a black list to which all the merchant members of the association have access, thereby enabling themselves to be protected from a customer considered undesirable. Associations work as facilitating platforms for the transnational business affairs of their members, in particular when it comes to trade with their region of origin. The role of these associations is characterized by an informal policy. This form of organization then makes it possible to strengthen official exchanges with the Wenzhou authorities.

6.2 Actions carried out by the Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese (*qiaolian*)

In 2013, the Wenzhou *qiaolian* made a foreign investment amounting to 1,014,210,000 USD (Wenzhou Yearbook 2014). This federation received donations from overseas Wenzhou entrepreneurs totaling 43,680,000 yuan (7,280,000 USD), including 10,650,000 yuan (1,775,000 USD) for education. 12,931 people benefited

from the donations for education. In another example, on 15 February 2013, 107 Chinese entrepreneurs were invited to participate in the *shijie wenzhouren dahui* (世界温州人大会, "World Wenzhou Conference") 2013 organized by the Wenzhou Federation as members of the executive team of Wenzhou Diaspora Chinese Associations Abroad (Wenzhou Yearbook 2014). Twenty-two sessions entitled *qiaoshang huijia* (侨商回家, "welcome entrepreneurs back to Wenzhou") were organized (Wenzhou Yearbook 2014). Based on these activities, the Federation has introduced foreign capital for a potential investment project in Wenzhou, amounting to 370 million yuan (61,7 million USD). This capital originated from *deguo huaqiao lianhehui* (德国华侨联合会, "Association of Overseas Chinese in Germany"). Another investment project of 150 million yuan (25 million USD) was developed to support the development of education in Yongjia[9] in the Wenzhou area. The Federation also made a call for investment amounting to 200 million yuan (US\$ 33,3 million) to support the development of the new industrial zone for micro enterprises (Wenzhou Yearbook 2014). All these activities led by the *Wenzhou qiaolian* (温州侨联, Wenzhou Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese) reveal the role of *intermediaries* to maintain a link – in particular between Wenzhou and its diaspora – through the introduction of foreign capital of the diaspora.

The activities of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Department also manifest themselves on a more intangible level, reflecting the feelings of affection and nostalgia of the diaspora for their region of origin. Thus the *qiaolian* organizes educational and cultural activities aimed at improving the international consciousness of overseas Wenzhou entrepreneurs. Activities that, for example, teach entrepreneurs how to deal with international conflicts in foreign trade. In order to learn about the international rules, the federation invited foreign researchers and academics to give lectures to heads of companies with diaspora capital or companies held by relatives of the diaspora in Wenzhou. This way, the Chinese state aims to appeal to the diaspora and encourage Chinese to serve the country from abroad (Ma Mung 2015). These measures are based primarily on an economic objective. In order to encourage diaspora investment, the Chinese authorities initially wanted to generate political confidence in the Wenzhou diaspora. The implementation of official actions was thus done in order to protect the interests of investors (Wenzhou entrepreneurs overseas). This reinforces the patriotic inclinations of overseas entrepreneurs. The link between the Wenzhou Federation and Wenzhou diaspora associations rests on a spirit of nostalgia.

It is important to emphasize that the actions carried out by the Federation are mainly characterized by unofficial exchanges with overseas entrepreneurs. The

---

9 Yongjia is a county in Wenzhou in the southeast of the Zhejiang province.

Federation plays a more practical role in maintaining links with merchant associations. In China, organizations dedicated to the return of overseas Wenzhou entrepreneurs are integrated into the *qiaolian*. The French example reveals a reciprocal link between these two types of organizations (the Federation and associations of the diaspora).

6.3 The functioning of overseas Wenzhou associations

The actions carried out by the *qiaolian* are closely linked to the functioning of the associations. Over the past three decades, the Wenzhou diasporic associations have experienced a significant revitalization in their desire to establish and maintain a connection with China. The renewal of their participation in the political life of their region of departure is linked to obtaining a certain status within the association. In particular, the status of president of a diasporic Chinese association makes it possible to establish an official link with the Chinese officials and possibly even with the political authorities of other provinces in China, and thus enhance their political reputation.

According to interviews and observations in the field, the majority of overseas Wenzhou entrepreneurs place more importance on gaining political recognition than on their economic success. That is to say, they seek above all to benefit from the *trust* of the government, and especially the authorities of their region of departure. Thus, these entrepreneurs come in direct contact with the departments in charge of the affairs of overseas Chinese (e.g. the *qiaolian* in China). Chinese entrepreneurs from overseas establish links with these services through their associations, rather than focusing on individual links. They do so in order to carry out economic affairs and increase their political reputation.

It is worth mentioning that the majority of the members of these entrepreneurial associations benefit from several political titles in China. Some members are assigned titles at the center of the official system for overseas Chinese affairs in China. In fact, these associative actors provide political activities in the Wenzhou region. For example, the Wenzhou Federation appointed representatives to the local people's congresses and the local CPPCC[10] committee to conduct surveys in the Wencheng and Dongtou[11] emigration homes in April and September 2013. They proposed a draft resolution concerning the protection of the interests of

---

10 Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.
11 Wencheng County is located in the southwest of Wenzhou city. Dongtou is a district in the prefecture-level city of Wenzhou.

children of Chinese diaspora in the field of education. This proposal was considered by the Wenzhou Education Department. The service dealt with the inequality of the Chinese children of the diaspora and the children of people who returned from the diaspora to Wenzhou. In 2013, representatives of CPPCC assemblies and committee members at various levels made 176 proposals, including 26 proposals for overseas Chinese affairs (Wenzhou Yearbook 2014). Through these events, we can see that political participation and discussion are more fruitful when it comes to the interests of the Chinese diaspora. Wenzhou entrepreneurs from overseas want to participate in political activities, with the aim of improving their own performance through exchanges between the associations which they have joined and *qiaolian*. On the one hand, these entrepreneurs have an economic objective. Through the participation of associations, the support of *qiaolian* triggers the interest of entrepreneurs. These associations can boast about having an official influence to forge political ties with the Chinese authorities and facilitate investments. On the other hand, Wenzhou authorities appeal to former presidents of associations of the Chinese diaspora to be honorary members or to occupy functions in services dedicated to overseas Chinese affairs. It should be noted that the activities of overseas Wenzhou merchants' associations have only weak links to local authorities in France. The main reason is that the status of association presidents as defined the legal framework of France does not have the same positive affect on a person's social status as it does in the Wenzhou region of China.

In the end, the case of the Wenzhou diaspora shows that China's diasporic policy only allows contacts with diasporic entrepreneurs. This research set out to decipher the economic and social relations Chinese abroad have with China. Working on the Chinese diaspora from the Wenzhou region, the economic relations of the diaspora with the region of origin and its links with China were discussed. In the Chinese diaspora, the Wenzhou community stands out by the singularity of the entrepreneurial organization of their diaspora. It is important to emphasize here that the economic activities of the Wenzhou diaspora are linked to continuity in the internationalization of the economic development of the Wenzhou region, but they are also closely related to the different hubs where their own transnational networks are located.

Bibliography

Archaimbault, Charles. "En marge du quartier chinois." *Bulletin de la Société d'Etudes Indochinoises* 17.3 (1952): 275–294.

Auguin, Estelle. *L'éthique chinoise et l'esprit du capitalisme: la diaspora chinoise originaire de la région de Wenzhou*. Sociology PhD Dissertations. Paris: Paris Descartes University, 2009.

Béja, Jean-Philippe. "De Tian'anmen à Paris: la longue marche de l'exil." *Hommes et migrations* 1142.1 (1991): 40–48.

Chuang, Ya-Han. *Migrants chinois à Paris Au-delà de l'"integration": la formation politique d'une minorité*. Sociology PhD Dissertation. Paris: University of Paris IV, 2015.

Gao, Yun, and Véronique Poisson. *Le trafic et l'exploitation des immigrants chinois en France*. Geneva: International Labor Office, 2005.

Hassoun, Jean-Pierre. "Des patrons 'chinois' à Paris." *Revue française de sociologie* 34.1 (1993): 97–123.

Kuhn, Philip A. *Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2008.

Le Bail, Hélène. "Les trottoirs de Belleville." *La Vie des idées* 30 May 2017. http://www.laviedesidees.fr/Les-trottoirs-de-Belleville.html (4 December 2018).

Lévy, Florence. *Entre contiraintes et interstices, l'évolution des projets migratoires dans l'espace transnational: une ethnographie des migrants de Chine du Nord à Paris*. Sociology PhD Dissertation. Paris: School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences, 2015.

Li, Minghuan. *A history of Chinese Immigrants in Europe*. Beijing: The Chinese Overseas Publishing House, 2002.

Li, Minghuan. "The Trend of International Migration and the Recent Changes of Overseas Chinese Development." *Annual Report on Overseas Chinese Study*. Ed. Jin Qiu, Yudong Zhang, Keren Luo, and Minghuan Li. Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2011. 1–37.

Li, Zhipeng. "Review of *Carine Pina-Guerassimoff, La Chine et sa nouvelle diaspora: la mobilité au service de la puissance*." *e-Migrinter* 12 (2014): 103–107.

Li, Zhipeng. *La diaspora Wenzhou en France et ses relations avec la Chine*. Geography PhD Dissertation. Poitiers: University of Poitiers, 2017.

Live, Yu-Sion. *La diaspora chinoise en France: immigration, activités socio-économiques, pratiques socio-culturelle*. Sociology PhD Dissertation. Paris: School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences, 1991.

Live, Yu-Sion. "Les Chinois de Paris depuis le début du siècle. Présence urbaine et activités économiques." *Revue européenne des migrations internationales* 8.3 (1992): 155–173.

Ma, Li (ed.). *Les travailleurs chinois en France dans la Première Guerre mondiale*. Paris: CNRS Alpha, 2012.

Ma Mung, Emmanuel. *La diaspora chinoise: géographie d'une migration*. Paris: OPHRYS, 2000.

Ma Mung, Emmanuel. "Le prolétaire, le commerçant et la diaspora." *Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales* 25.1 (2009): 97–118.

Ma Mung, Emmanuel. Enquête de Restaurants chinois à Paris. Unpublished document. 2012.

Ma Mung, Emmanuel. "La diaspora chinoise en France." *Migration et mutations de la société française*. Ed. Marie Poinsot and Serge Weber. Paris: La Découverte, 2014. 121–129.

Ma Mung, Emmanuel. "Chine." *Dictionnaire des migrations internationales*. Ed. Gildas Simon. Paris: Armand Colin, 2015. 758–769.

Ma Mung, Emmanuel, and Zhipeng Li. "The Transformations of the 'Ethnic Chinese Economic Device' in France." The 5th Chinese in Prato Symposium and 3rd Wenzhouese Diaspora Symposium. Wenzhou, 2012.

Ma Mung, Emmanuel, and Zhipeng Li. "The Chinese diaspora in France." *International Migration and overseas Chinese (2016)*. Ed. Qirong Li. Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2017. 222–239.

Ma Mung, Emmanuel, and Gildas Simon. *Commerçants maghrébins et asiatiques en France*. Paris: Masson, 1990.

Pairault, Thierry. *L'intégration silencieuse la petite entreprise chinoise en France*. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1995.

Pan, Lynn. *Encyclopédie de la diaspora chinoise*. Paris: Les Editions du Pacifique, 2000.

Pina-Guerassimoff, Carine. *La Chine et sa nouvelle diaspora. La mobilité au service de la puissance*. Paris: Ellipses, 2012.

Poisson, Véronique. *Franchir les frontières: Le cas des Chinois du Zhejiang en diaspora*. Anthropology PhD Dissertation. Paris: School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences, 2004.

Poisson, Véronique. "Des réseaux transnationaux: le cas des Chinois du Zhejiang." *Outre-Terre* 4. 17 (2006): 421–430.

Polyzos, Iris. *Parcours des migrants et mutations sociospatiales à Athènes: le cas des commerçants chinois à Metaxourgio*. Geography PhD Dissertation. Athens: National Technical University of Athens – University of Poitiers, 2014.

Poston, Dudley L., Michael Xinxiang Mao, and Mei-Yu Yu. "The Global Distribution of the Overseas Chinese Around 1990." *Population and Development Review* 20.3 (1994): 631–645.

Simon, Gildas (ed.) *Dictionnaire des migrations internationales Approche géohistorique*. Paris: Colin, 2015.

Thunø, Mette, and Frank N. Pieke. "Institutionalizing Recent Rural Emigration from China to Europe: New Transnational Villages in Fujian." *International Migration Review* 39.2 (2005): 485–514.

Trolliet, Pierre. *La diaspora chinoise*. Que sais-je? Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1994a.

Trolliet, Pierre. "Peut-on parler d'une diaspora chinoise?" *Espace géographique* 23.2 (1994b): 97–105.

Wang, Chunguang, and Jean-Philippe Béja. "The people of Wenzhou in Paris: a particular model of integration." *Social Sciences in China* 6 (1999): 106–119.

Wang, Chunguang. *Wenzhou people in Paris: Cross social constructing action of an emigratory group*. Nanchang: Jingxi people press, 2000.

Wang, Gungwu. "Patterns of Chinese Immigration in Historical Perspective." Ed. Hong Liu. *The Chinese Overseas*. London: Taylor & Francis, 2006.

Wang, Simeng. *Illusions et souffrances. Les migrants chinois à Paris*. Paris: Editions rue d'Ulm, 2017.

Wenzhou Yearbook 2014. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 2014.

Wu, Bin, and Wang Huiyao. "Preliminary study on the development and impact of international migration from Wenzhou." *The International Journal of Diasporic Chinese Studies* 1.2 (2009): 29–47.

Xu, Huabing. "Research on the ancient family of Wenzhou overseas." *Zhejiang Academic Journal* 4 (2015): 53–62.

Zhang, Zhicheng. *History of overseas Chinese from Wenzhou*. China Today Press. 1999.

Zhou, Min. *Chinatown: The Socioeconomic Potential of an Urban Enclave*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992.

Zhuang, Guotu. "A New Estimation of the Ethnic Chinese Population in Southeast Asia." *Journal of Xiamen University (Arts&Social Sciences)* 3.193 (2009): 62–69.

Zhuang, Guotu. "Historical Changes in Numbers and Distribution of Overseas Chinese in the World." *World History* 5 (2011): 4–14.

Liu Ruoxi

Achieving better structural integration? Evidence from the career pathways of second-generation Chinese immigrants in France

Abstract: Sociological discussions regarding the structural integration of immigrant descendants has gained increasing academic attention in recent years. Migrants around the world are experiencing inter-generational development in the societies to which they migrated, and this pattern is also evident among overseas Chinese. This research explores the structural integration of children of Chinese immigrants in France by examining their career development paths. The article begins with an analysis of the influence that various socialization factors have on the career development of second-generation Chinese immigrants. While the family serves as the most fundamental socialization agent in early individual development and primary education, the education system then begins to be a determining factor in individual development. During adulthood, the broader social sphere has a stronger impact than the education system and family. Delving into the characteristics of the career development of second-generation Chinese immigrants in France, the differences between the first generation and the second generation become apparent, with Chinese migrant youth more professionally adept in the French job market and enjoying higher mobility between France and China as middle men/women. This has resulted in multiple modes of structural integration that have been better than those of the previous generation.

1 Introduction

Migrants around the world are experiencing intergenerational development in the societies to which they migrate. Generational differences in their career paths have also become evident. Compared to the first generation, the structural dimension of the younger generations' lives, which relates to the structural aspects[1] of wider

---

1 Integration refers to the status of consolidation and incorporation of a group, a community or a society composed of different individuals. If a society is integrated, there is a close and deep

society, such as the individual's participation in administration, organization and other organized groups, are highly diversified.

France is the second most populous country in the European Union and has the third most powerful economy. France has approximately 6.5 million immigrants, accounting for 9.7 % of the total population (INSEE 2018). France has the largest Chinese group of around 600,000–700,000 (La Croix 2016) among European countries, making it an important part of the overseas Chinese [2] population.[3] The Chinese, like other migrant groups, have also generally experienced the adaptation to, the development within and the integration into French society. Compared to the Chinese communities in Southeast Asia and North America that have histories of over 100 years, the second generation of overseas Chinese in France (most of them are the children of Chinese immigrants who arrived in France after 1970[4]) is relatively young and has been developing.

This research studies the structural integration of second-generation Chinese immigrants in France by focusing on the intergenerational transitions of immigrants' career paths. Drawing from secondary data analysis and one year of field research, this paper explores whether second-generation Chinese

---

link between its various components (individuals or groups) (Entzinger and Biezeveld 2003). Throughout academic discussions, integration has been divided into several dimensions, of which structural and cultural dimensions are the two main strands. The cultural dimension mainly focuses on the values and identities of the immigrants themselves. The integration of immigrant children discussed in this study is limited to its structural level. As one of the other integration dimensions and indicators (Johnston 1974), structural integration specifically refers to deep, intimate interactions between immigrant groups and the society to which they have moved (Gordon 1964).

2 As this article makes use of the term overseas Chinese, an umbrella term that includes the related concepts *huaren* (华人), *huaqiao* (华侨) and *huayi* (华裔), we have to clarify their definitions: (1) *Huaren*: *Huaren* can be divided into domestic Chinese and overseas Chinese. Among them, domestic Chinese refer to Chinese in mainland China, Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and other traditional Chinese territories; overseas Chinese frequently refer to those overseas. (2) *Huaqiao*: *Huaqiao* applies to Chinese citizens who have not joined foreign countries but have lived abroad for quite long. *Huaqiao* includes those who have obtained permanent resident status in the country of residence. They still retain their Chinese citizenship and are also protected by Chinese laws. (3) *Huayi*: *Huayi* are descendants of *huaren* and *huaqiao*.

3 There are about 45.43 million overseas Chinese located in 161 countries (National Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs 2010) Compared to the Chinese in Southeast Asia and North America who account for the total number of the global overseas Chinese amounting to 73 % and 12 % respectively, the migration history of European Chinese is relatively recent. The total number of European Chinese (about 2.15 million) and their percentage (5 %) is comparatively low (National Office for Overseas Chinese Affairs 2010).

4 A large part of the immigration is from South-East Asia.

immigrants in France have achieved better structural integration considering the perspective of segmented assimilation.

2 Models of integration and the perspective of segmented assimilation theory

Western research on integration includes assimilation theory (classical integration theory), pluralism theory (multiculturalism theory) and differentiation theory (segmentation assimilation theory) (Xu and Shao 2012). The objectives and models regarding the study of integration and especially structural integration have been expanding and developing since the 1960s. While pluralism theory focuses on cultural aspects, assimilation theory and segmented assimilation theory focus on the level of acceptance and the participation of migrants in the economic, social and cultural realms in the country of migration.

While assimilation theory asserts that migrants should adapt completely to the mainstream cultures of their host countries (Park 1950), segmentation assimilation theory takes into account the differences in the integration patterns of immigrants' descendants (Portes and Zhou 1993). With the persistence of ethnic differences and the diversification of integration patterns among descendants of migrants, classical integration theory is ineffective in explaining the process of integration for new migrants and descendants of migrants.

So far, different approaches to integration describe both the process and the result of the integration. Segmented assimilation theory specifies three possible ways for integration to occur, including upward integration, downward integration and segmented assimilation (Portes and Zhou 1993). Among the three, upward assimilation corresponds to the process described in classic integration theory, in which immigrants achieve social mobility and gain upward mobility.

However, even when immigrants do achieve upward mobility, they stagnate at a certain point in their journey due to "social discrimination" (Li 2019), i.e. downward assimilation. Downward assimilation refers to the integration of migrants into the social structure and culture of urban poverty. Finally, segmented assimilation describes migrant groups fully dedicated to upward mobility, especially with regard to their socio-economic status, while never pursuing full integration into the society to which they have migrated. They choose to continue to preserve ethnic characteristics in some respects (mainly cultural traditions) so as to achieve better integration (Portes and Zhou 1993) and rising social mobility (Alba and Waters 2011).

It is to be noted that the three modes of integration mentioned above are based on a broad and universal understanding of integration and cannot be directly applied to the analysis of structural integration.[5] Nevertheless, the multi-integration model developed by segmented assimilation theory can inspire the expanded understanding of the structural integration model, which is discussed in this article.

3 Methodology

In order to situate this research in a specific context, this article references quantitative data including demographic data, data related to education as well as economic data related to employment. France's domestic and European transnational statistics for immigrant populations (census and surveys), employment (rate, duration, earning), professions (type, level, training) and family (location, marriage, health) are referred to, including those from the INSEE,[6] OECD and World Bank, as well as related datasets and projects including COMPAS,[7] TeO,[8] MPI.[9]

In addition to secondary data analysis, the contradictions and conflicting factors related to the development of the careers of second-generation Chinese immigrants in France are delved into using qualitative methods. Qualitative methods can better present some personal experiences based on diversity and differentiation. The field research conducted in Paris over one year offers nuances in personal experiences based on diversity and differentiation for the study. I specifically selected Paris, the most significant Chinese cluster in Europe as a site for the field research. Data collection in the form of observations and interviews was later analyzed qualitatively to understand and explain the phenomenon of social research methods. Observations in the field survey used in this study includes participatory observations and external observations in places of

---

5 However, in the French context, the assimilation model, consistent with the French Republican model, has been challenged in recent decades in scientific discourses (Brinbaum et al. 2015; Héran 2017; Simon 2017; McAvay and Safi 2018).

6 INSEE (Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques): National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies.

7 COMPAS: The University of Oxford's Centre on Migration, Policy and Society.

8 TeO: Trajectoires et Origines is a survey on population diversity in France designed and conducted by Institut National d'Etudes Démographiques.

9 MPI: Migration Policy Institute.

socialization of children of Chinese immigrants in France. In addition to observation, this article also uses semi-structured interviews with respondents that were based on pre-designed interview outlines.

The largest group of Chinese migrants in Europe reside in Paris.[10] Participatory and external observation in schools and places of socialization was conducted to gain a perceptual understanding of the socialization experiences of the second generation of Chinese immigrants there. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews[11] among interviewees, including first-generation immigrants, second-generation immigrants and scholars were conducted.

Nine key respondents from the second generation of Chinese immigrants in France are representative in gender, place of birth,[12] education and professional field. Details are provided as follows (Tab. 1).

Based on secondary data analysis and fieldwork, and drawing upon the theory of structural integration and the perspective of segmented assimilation, this research attempts to determine whether the continuous, changing and deepening process of integration by the second-generation Chinese immigrants has achieved better structural integration into French society and, if so, the manner in which this has occurred.

---

10 I mainly used a network of undergraduate and graduate alumni resources in the process of entering and deepening the field and snowball sampling was used to understand the target group. Key research organizations including ACRF (Association des Chinois Résidanten France) and ACWF (Association des Commerçants de Wenzhou en France) were contacted.

11 Each interview delved into (1) the respondent's family history and experience of migrating to France; (2) career decision and process of development; (3) factors considered in the selection and development of careers and considerations for future career development. First-generation immigrants had an additional question: (4) expectations for children's education and careers.

12 It is to be noted that most of the interviewees have their cultural roots in Zhejiang and Guangdong. The birthplaces include Wenzhou in China and Paris, Le Havre, Tahiti, Guyana, La Reunion in France. It should be noted that, although the number of Chinese ethnic groups in France is large, the ethnic Chinese originating from Southeast Asia and China (especially from Zhejiang and Guangdong) still constitute the majority. Their descendants constituted the main body of the current French-Chinese generation. Other subgroups, such as Northeast immigrants, Taiwanese immigrants, Sichuan immigrants and Tibetan immigrants have a relatively small group of descendants, whose numbers have not scaled up enough to become significant.

Tab. 1: The nine key information providers from the second generation.

Name	Gender	Age	Place of Birth	Professions of parents	University	Diploma/Major	Field/Profession
Julia	female	22	Le Havre	Merchants	Grande école (in France)	undergraduate student/ Economics Management	Fast Moving Consumer Goods (prospective profession)
Eric	male	24	La Réunion	Customs/ Teacher	University (in France)	master student/ International Trade	Digital Media/ Marketing Assistant
Cindy	female	22	Le Tahiti	Merchant/ Teacher	University (in France)	Bachelor/ Anthropology	Tourism/ Marketing Manager
Ines	female	27	Wenzhou	Merchants	Grande école (in France)	master student/ Engineering Management	Consulting/ Business consultant
Lin	male	29	Wenzhou	Merchants	University (in France)	Master/ Economics Management	Real Estate Agent/ Consultant
Yann	male	24	La Guyane	Merchants	University (in mainland China)	Bachelor/ International Trade	Foreign trade/ Merchant
Julien	male	31	Paris	Merchants	Grande école (in France)	Doctor/ Mathematics	Academics & Research/ University teacher
Serge	male	32	Wenzhou	Merchants	Grande école (in France)	Bachelor/ Computer	Internet/ Entrepreneur
Rae	female	26	Wenzhou	Merchants	Grande école (in France), University (Oxbridge in the UK)	PhD in Progress/ Chemistry	Academics & Research/ University researcher (prospective profession)

4 A better structural integration achieved? A panorama of the career pathways of second-generation Chinese immigrants in France

The first generation of Chinese immigrants in France was mainly engaged in professions within the service and commerce industries related to catering, supermarkets, clothing, leather goods and tourism. The second generation of Chinese immigrants in France who continue to engage in commerce, tend to develop, upgrade or renovate the traditional businesses that their parents own (cf. Wang 2019). Some expand the business into red wine and other forms of consumables, such as cafés and tobacco shops (instead of just traditional restaurants), while a few help their parents manage the capital and the real estate of their businesses (by transferring wineries and residences, etc.).

However, the second generation has gone beyond these traditional fields with an increasing number of second-generation Chinese immigrants choosing to expand their family businesses or work in French companies as consultants, lawyers, engineers and the like. As shown in the above chart, the interviewees' occupations include marketing managers, consultants, foreign trade commissioners, real estate consultants, teachers/researchers, self-employed individuals and entrepreneurs. The industries they have previously and currently engage in include FMCG (fast moving consumer goods), new media, tourism, consulting, real estate, foreign trade, colleges and entrepreneurship.

A few of the respondents have gradually entered politics and participate in a wide range of social activities. However, this number is relatively small, with politics being a sphere that is yet to be fully explored.

> Nowadays, the Wenzhou people, especially the older generation [...] hope that their children can be politically active. This is also true for some second-generation Chinese. However, I think that around 95 % or even 99 % of the first generation of overseas Chinese did not understand French politics. As for the second generation of Chinese people, which is my generation, they are still relatively young and they still need to cultivate this knowledge. (Lin)

Chinese or Asian ethnicity is considered to make a Chinese politician representative of a district stand out in the city or parliament. However, individuals who have mastered French, understand the culture and who are familiar with the French political discourse system can successfully become politicians. However, merely entering politics or becoming a public figure is not yet considered to be an expression of the breadth of career expansion, since the definition of work can

depend on whether it provides a fixed salary. Nevertheless, this phenomenon re-flects the expansion of careers in French society with regard to the second genera-tion Chinese immigrants in France.

Furthermore, with the second generation of Chinese students achieving higher education and having different career experiences, the difference between occupa-tion and career development[13] within this group has become increasingly evident. There are also some second-generation Chinese immigrants who have entered the field of scientific research and teaching, while this population is still limited (Chuang 2016). Some of them have entered politics by participating in a wide range of activities related to social work. However, this number is relatively small and the path towards politics is still nascent (Xinhua News Agency 2015).

Overall, the breadth and depth of the current career development paths of second-generation Chinese immigrants in France, including the diversity of their own socialization experiences, has deeply changed the coherent and corre-sponding meaning in terms of the professions of overseas Chinese. As one re-spondent says:

> There are two kinds of overseas Chinese. A group of them no longer stay within the comfort zone of the Chinese community and integrate further into local society. However, the other group of them progress as their parents wish and do not fully step out of the Chinese com-munity to which they belong. In fact, this group of China's second-generation migrants often do not go to college and most of them have worked with their parents since child-hood. Their family business model has been in use for so many years that they have not been in contact with mainstream society and have not integrated into this society.   (Serge)

5 Segmented assimilation: The second generation as middle men/women

While the previous section specifically illustrates how second generation Chinese immigrants are more fully integrated into the process of entering the French job market, the following section reveals the manner in which the second generation of Chinese migrants have maintained some of the common ethnic characteristics and what these common characteristics indicate.

---

13 In this article, career development is broadly defined as a continuous lifelong professional activity in which individuals are dedicated to the exploration and the achievement of career paths. It comprises both career decisions as well as career development: (1) career decision: the decision that people make regarding the occupation to follow based on their own interests, expectations, abilities and characteristics; (2) career development: the process in which people continue to study, accumulate experience and improve technology to become experts in the professional field that they previously chose.

In fact, as the socialization experience of the second-generation Chinese immigrants mainly took place in the French system, integrating into the French market is a natural choice.

> For my parents' generation, integrating into French society and becoming French was an expected outcome. Therefore, our upbringing has been mostly French-oriented.   (Julien)

Despite this, through the years when they were being educated, the second generation Chinese immigrants in France received comments and suggestions stressing the advantages and benefits of their Chinese characteristics, for example when preparing for the oral *prépas* exam.

> When I prepared for the oral exam at my high school, I always encountered topics concerning the Second World War or alike. At first, I tried to tell the story from the European perspective. My examiners and tutors felt that my storytelling is not vivid. Indeed, it is quite dull. Compared to my peers whose grandparents had even joined the army during the wars, I certainly don't have such direct experience. However, I found that whenever I commented or added information from the Chinese perspective (such as how China was like during the Second World War) or made some comparisons between two continents, the examiner would be much more interested in it.   (Julien)

A similar situation occurred during Julia's preparation for her business school interview:

> Back in *prépa*, we had a group of Chinese-born children in France for a business school interview simulation. There was a question posed to me related to my future goals and ambitions. A standard answer is to contribute to exchange, communication and business between France and China. (…) Since we are Chinese, we are born with this opportunity.   (Julia)

Along with the messages received from the French, the rapid development of the Chinese economy also encourages second-generation Chinese immigrants to focus on the Chinese labor market. All nine interviewees have returned or gone to China as students or workers in higher education or later. Julia did her first formal internship in Shanghai and plans to go back at a later stage in her career. Lin completed his first assignment in Guangzhou and later began working at a Chinese real estate agency in Paris. Eric, Cindy and Rae participated in study exchange programs in China and continue to deal with Sino-French business. Julien, Ines and Serge chose to work temporarily or part-time in China.

Regarding the reason why the respondents maintained these connections, Ines, who once worked for a French consulting company says:

> It seems that some companies do need people like me. […] During my first working experience, I gradually realized that I am not exactly the same as other French colleagues.   (Ines)

Chinese working habits, ways of thinking and expressions are sought by French companies. Therefore, after graduation, Ines joined a French company in southern China. Similarly, Julien and his brother are consultants and agents between France and China in their own specialized fields, mathematics and nuclear energy:

> My brother and I are quite similar. We consider ourselves French when we are in China, while we feel Chinese sometimes when we are in France. Our nationality is French, while our parents and ancestors are Chinese. For us, working between the two cultures as the point of connection is not difficult, since we have known enough about both countries. […] In a way, both my brother and I think that we can benefit from being agents. (Julien)

Other second-generation Chinese immigrants like Serge, who has been involved in a number of entrepreneurial projects, have noticed the great potential of the Chinese market and think that they can be involved.

> So far, I have contributed to this association[14] for two years. Most recently, I came into more contact with China and have slowly learned about its 'The Belt and Road' project. […] A question that keeps coming to me: what should be the position for the second generation in this macro situation? Getting to know China and its realities better has altered my own professional and cultural ambition somehow. […] I think I have transformed from a second-generation French Chinese who has already integrated into French society to someone who is also concerned about the domestic situation in China. I think I am also overseas Chinese. (Serge)

Overall, the second-generation Chinese immigrants have received an excellent education in the French education system and speak good French. It is easier for them to integrate into their parents' generation, and they have not ignored or given up their advantage in the original language and culture. It must be mentioned that Wang (2016) also provides a substantial basis for this related topic by studying forty Chinese American who went back to China. Most of her interviewees have made good use of the bicultural resources during their upbringing – more specifically, their management of two languages and two cultures.

The reproduction strategy proposed by Bourdieu consists of economic capital (substantial gain) and social capital (social network) when integrating into the professional market. In terms of the tendencies shown in structural integration, the family plays a fundamental role in offering immigrant children the ability to transfer their language ability and cultural background according to the context. Furthermore, family heritage also refers to the resources within the

---

14 AEEJC (Association d'Entraide à l'Entreprenariat Des Jeunes Chinois): Association of Second-generation French-Chinese Entrepreneurs. Established in 2015 in Paris, AEEJC aims to encourage entrepreneurship among French-Chinese as well as intercultural communication and business between France and China.

Chinese group and the Chinese system. In addition, the cultural capital of the family and the broad employment environment in China and France, which are under development and change, also affect the second generation of French Chinese in that they switch between employment systems in different countries. To benefit from their position in the Chinese market or to take into account the employment systems of the two countries, the second generation of Chinese immigrants in France needs to adapt, transform and integrate in order to meet the markets and systems of the two countries.

6 Conclusion

This article defines segmented assimilation of structural aspects as the selective use (actively and passively) of the occupational resources, occupational information and culture of the immigration country and the emigration country. The research shows that the French education system based on meritocracy provides the children of Chinese immigrants in France with possibilities to choose the career to which they aspire. Their families, as their primary socialization agents, often urge them to look for positions as middle men/women and coordinators between the two countries while building their careers. This influence of the family is primarily represented in business-related professions.

In conclusion, the segmented assimilation model applies to the process of career development for second-generation Chinese immigrants in France, where they have mainly experienced socialization: on the one hand, the structural integration of the second generation has gradually strengthened and improved. Specifically, the breadth and depth of the professions they engage in have increased, with Chinese immigrants entering social and public organizations and communities. The analysis of the career development of second-generation Chinese immigrants in France shows that, in order to achieve a structural upward integration, the second generation of Chinese migrants often need to go through the French higher education system (especially elite education) and enter into French companies to work.

On the other hand, second-generation Chinese immigrants in France have shown some similar ethnic characteristics and tend to act as the middle men/women. However, it should be noted that segmented assimilation orientation is not necessarily successful and there are often difficulties in this process. For example, some groups in the Franco-Chinese second generation group are faced

with the paralysis of bottom-level integration.[15] Compared with second-generation Chinese immigrants who received an elite education, those who arrived in France during a later period of socialization or have not had the opportunity to study in elite universities lack competitiveness in the labor market and are likely to work in small and medium-sized legal enterprises. However, due to economic pressure and limited job opportunities as well as the appeal of economic capital and the family business tradition, it is very likely that they either choose to return to their hometown after working for a period of time or return to the traditional family business (although it may have expanded).

Previous academic discussions concerning segmented assimilation have been generalized or have mainly focused on its cultural aspects including language, customs, traditions, etc. (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Hao 2002; Portes et al. 2009). However, through the analysis of the interviews of nine respondents, the career paths of second-generation Chinese immigrants in France seem to reflect the characteristics of a structural segmented assimilation mechanism or at least predicts this potential: on the one hand, they will achieve considerable social and economic status in French society; on the other hand, they seek career opportunities and professional experience in China. With a comprehensive acquisition of information and resources on the workplace in France and China, these Franco-Chinese *middle men/women* have benefited from this highly mobile state based on a selective use of resources.

Bibliography

Alba, Richard, and Mary C. Waters (eds.). *The next generation: Immigrant youth in a comparative perspective*. New York: NYU Press, 2011.

Brinbaum, Yaël, Mirna Safi and Patrick Simon. "Les discriminations en France: entre perception et expérience". *Grandes Enquêtes*. Paris: INED éditions, 2015.

Chuang, Ya-Han. "Grandir dans une communauté commerçante." *Hommes Migrations* 2 (2016): 53–61.

Entzinger, Han, and Renske Biezeveld. "Benchmarking in immigrant integration." 2003. https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/e-library/documents/policies/legal-migration/pdf/general/benchmarking_final_en.pdf (21 March 2019).

---

15 In the era of the knowledge-based economy, if immigrant children do not receive the highest education, they may not be able to obtain employment tickets that are typical for the middle and upper class, stagnating in the artificial, low-paying or traditional (similar to parental occupations) occupations (Gans 1992). The structural "downward integration" usually occurs in some lower education levels (such as only obtaining junior high school or high school diplomas), inheriting family business after finishing school, or helping and working in the family business.

Forrest, James, and Weronika Kusek. "Human capital and the structural integration of polish immigrants in Australia in the first, second and third generations." *Australian Geographer* 47.2 (2016): 233–248.

Gans, Herbert J. "Second-generation decline: Scenarios for the economic and ethnic futures of the post-1965 American immigrants." *Ethnic and racial studies* 15.2 (1992): 173–192.

Gordon, Milton M. *Assimilation in American life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Héran, François. *Avec l'immigration. Mesure, débattre, agir*. Paris: La Découverte. 2017.

INSEE. *Immigrés, étrangers*. 2018. https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3633212 (8 October 2019).

Johnston, R. J. *Urban Residential Patterns*. London: Bell. 1974.

La Croix. *Repères: Histoire de la migration chinoise en France*. https://www.la-croix.com/ Journal/Histoire-migration-chinoise-France-2016-09-20-1100790475 (21 September 2016).

Li, Yong. "La confrontation des diplômés chinois au marché du travail français: une insertion incertaine." *Connaissance de l'emploi* 145.1 (2019): 1–4.

Liu, Cheng. "Research into Developmental Thread and Latest Trend of Western Migrants' Integration Theories." *Journal of Hehai University (Philosophy and Social Sciences Edition)* 2 (2015): 33–39.

McAvay, Haley and Mirna Safi. "Is there really such thing as immigrant spatial assimilation in France? Desegregation trends and inequality along ethnoracial lines". *Social Science Research* 73. (2018): 45–62.

National Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs. "*Exploration into Chinese Communities in France*." (Translated by Liu Ruoxi). 2010. http://qwgzyj.gqb.gov.cn/hwzh/119/518.shtml (22 March 2019).

OECD/European Union. *Indicators of Immigrant Integration 2015*. Settling: OECD Publishing, 2015.

Park, Robert E. *Race and culture*. Glencoe, Ill: The Free Press, 1950.

Portes, Alejandro, and Lingxin Hao. "The price of uniformity: Language, family and personality adjustment in the immigrant second generation." *Ethnic and racial studies* 25.6 (2002): 889–912.

Portes, Alejandro, and Min Zhou. "The new second generation: Segmented assimilation and its variants." *The annals of the American academy of political and social science* 530.1 (1993): 74–96.

Portes, Alejandro, Patricia Fernández-Kelly, and William Haller. "The adaptation of the immigrant second generation in America: A theoretical overview and recent evidence." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 35.7 (2009): 1077–1104.

Simon, Patrick. "Les descendants d'immigrés et la question de l'intégration". *Regards croisés sur l'économie* 20.1 (2017): 81–92.

Wang, Leslie K. "The Benefits of in-betweenness: return migration of second-generation Chinese American professionals to China." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 42.12 (2016): 1941–1958.

Wang, Simeng. "Les mobilités de Français d'origine chinoise en Chine: une enquête qualitative (2010–2016)." *Les migrations des Nords vers les Suds*. Eds. Giulia Fabbiano et al. Paris: Karthala, 2019. 95–119.

Xinhua News Agency. "Literature Review: Participation in political development of French Chinese to create a favorable development environment." (Translated by Liu Ruoxi). http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2015-12/20/c_1117519971.htm (20 December 2015).

Xu, Xiaojun, and Zhanpeng Shao. "Unbalance: The Dependence of Subject Presupposition on the Type of Object Interpretation: A Path Analysis of Social Integration Research." *Journal of Learning and Practice* 4 (2012): 95–100.

III Chinese immigrants in Europe: New dynamics

Tu Mengwei, Daniel Nehring

The moral grammar of Chinese transnational one-child families: Filial piety and middle-class migration between China and the United Kingdom

Abstract: This essay investigates the experiences and practices of transnational mobility among Chinese middle-class people. It examines the extent and manner in which such mobility is related to shifts in the socio-cultural organization of Chinese intergenerational family relationships. In doing so, it develops the concept of moral grammar to draw attention to the culturally situated negotiation of norms, values and beliefs pertaining to family life, and highlights the ways in which such normative systems may be transformed in the context of families' changing structural situation. The essay's argument is grounded in a qualitative case study, involving 40 in-depth interviews with young Chinese middle-class professionals in the UK and their parents in China. Participants in the UK were between 22 and 38 years old and had originally moved to the country to pursue higher studies at British universities. The parents who were interviewed were between 51 and 68 and employed in white-collar jobs. Most of them had not yet reached retirement age. The evidence from these interviews indicate the persistence of filial piety as a shared frame of reference to make sense of parent-child relationships. At the same time, they point to complex modulations of understandings of reciprocal support and care, to account for the transnational extension of family life.

1 Introduction

Chinese transnational migration has attracted considerable attention from scholars with published research about the topic being substantial. Previous studies have examined the patterns and trends of the movements of the Chinese between China and Europe, and about migrants' attendant experiences and practices (Baldassar et al. 2015; Benton 2007; Christiansen 2003; Nyíri 2007; Lu and Zhang 2015). However, notable gaps remain in this literature. These gaps in the research can be attributed to a significant degree to the precipitous transformation of Chinese society over the past three decades (Keith et al. 2014; Goodman 2008; C. Li 2010a; Yan 2010) and the resulting changes in the form of Chinese migration to Europe. In this essay, we explore specific aspects of these changes that have

received scant attention. Specifically, we shed new light on the experiences and practices of transnational mobility among China's new middle class, and we illustrate how transnational mobility may be deeply connected to transformations in the moral grammar of intergenerational family relationships.

Studying transnational migration between the United Kingdom (UK) and China among young adults from middle-class one-child families, we analyze the extent and manner in which this migration is linked to the reorganization of norms, values, and beliefs that organize the relationships between children and parents in Chinese families. In this context, we focus on how normative structure of filial piety connects with family practices.

This study emerged in response to significant changes in family relationships in mainland China across the latter part of the twentieth century. The "post-socialist reforms" of Chinese society since the Reform and Opening-up Policy from 1978 onwards (Keith et al. 2014) have had significant consequences for the social, cultural, and economic dynamics of family life. This period has witnessed the development of a large middle class of well-educated and affluent families (Tsang 2014; C. Li 2010b). At the same time, the partial withdrawal of the state from Chinese people's private life, the privatization of economic activity, and the absence of any noteworthy large-scale welfare state provisions (Yan 2009, 2010) have intensified the competition for social status and mobility, and, in this context, families' pursuit of educational opportunities for their children. The reduction in family size that resulted from the implementation of the One-child Policy between 1978 and 2015 has further intensified this competition. It has rendered the three-member nuclear family, composed of two parents and one child, the norm in urban China. At the same time, it has reinforced parents' efforts with regard to the educational achievements of their only children (Beal-Hodges et al. 2011; Deutsch 2006). Overseas education is a significant part of attendant strategies, which may explain the considerable growth in the number of Chinese overseas students in recent years (Fong 2011; Tu 2017).

Between 1998 and 2014, according to the National Bureau of Statistics of China (2015), the number of Chinese students pursuing degrees at universities outside mainland China has risen from 17,662 to 459,800. Postgraduate students in their twenties were the majority among this group, with the USA and the UK being the two most popular destinations for overseas studies (H. Li 2010). Upon graduation, a large number of these young adults remain in their host country, often for an indefinite period of time. In this decade, the rate of students who have studied abroad returning has marginally increased. This is in part due to stricter migration policies and the scarcity of employment opportunities in Europe and Anglophone North America, following the socio-economic crisis that began in 2008. However, a recent study found that, among graduates who returned to China from universities

abroad in 2012, more than nine out of ten named the desire to be near their parents as a primary reason for their return (Wang and Miao 2013).

In this research, young people from one-child families who have not returned to live close to their parents are studied. We delve into their decision to not return to China and the consequences of this transnational extension of their family as well as the ways in which this has transformed their relationship with their parents. How do these young people and their parents establish and maintain long-distance family relationships? What is the moral grammar of these family relationships? In what ways, if at all, does it depart from socio-culturally established notions of filial piety in Chinese society? In essence, this study focuses on the re-interpretation of filial piety in the context of the transnational extension of family life.

Our investigation is supported by empirical research among Chinese transnational middle-class families in the UK and China. Specifically, we draw on 40 in-depth interviews conducted in 2014, including 27 interviews with one-child migrants, 6 with migrants from multiple-child families, and 7 interviews with their parents (see below). Chain referral sampling (Biernacki and Waldorf 1981; Noy 2008) as well as advertising through Chinese online social networks helped to recruit participants for the study. Initial interviews took place with 27 one-child migrants in the UK, who were then asked for introductions to their parents in China, facilitating the parent interviews. As a result, we interviewed 7 sets of parents (9 participants, including 2 couples and 5 interviews with either the father or the mother). The interviews are between one and three hours long and were recorded with a digital audio recorder. They were transcribed in full and analyzed through thematic coding (Kvale 2007; Alvesson 2010), using the qualitative data analysis software NVivo.

All participants held mainland Chinese nationality at the time of the interview. The one-child migrants were between 22 and 38 years of age and were long-term residents of the UK, having lived in the country between 1 to 13 years. Nearly a third of them had British-born children at the time of the interview. Among them, 20 of the migrant participants were women and 13 men, a balance that may reflect the gender ratio among Chinese overseas students. Participants hailed from across China, including both coasts which have a long history of overseas migration, as well as inland provinces that have historically not been centers of migration overseas. Five participants were postgraduate students, 27 were post-education migrants who had remained in the UK after their graduation. Fourteen were married and 19 were unmarried.

The parents who took part in interviews were between 51 and 68 years old and lived in China. Most of them had not yet reached the age of retirement when the interviews were conducted. Most of them were either white-collar,

middle-class professionals, or were self-employed, owning their own businesses. The majority of these parents were neither elderly nor unwell enough to require substantial care on the part of their children, even though prospective future arrangements were given some thought during the interviews.

2 The moral grammar of family relationships

In classical Western social theory (e.g. Parsons 1991), family was taken for granted as a largely static institution, reflecting prevalent assumptions about marriage and family formation as compulsory elements of individuals' biographical trajectory. Our conceptual point of departure in this article is an alternative, more recent account that foregrounds the everyday practices and relationships that sustain family life (Morgan 1996, 2011b; Smart 2007). Central to this account is the term family practices, as developed by David Morgan (1996). One way to define the concept would be to state that family practices refers to the everyday actions of individuals towards their family members, to the interactions between family members, and to the culturally shared meanings that are attached to these actions and interactions.[1]

For the purpose of our research, this is analytically useful in several ways. First, family practices draw attention to the ongoing reproduction – or, perhaps equally often, transformation, discontinuation, crisis, rupture, and so on – of family life through everyday actions (Morgan 2011a). Second, the concept highlights the fluidity of families, in terms of their capacity to reorganize and restructure themselves over time, both within the life course of individual families' members and across historical time (Morgan 2011b). Families are comprised of a complex and often ambiguous web of intimate relationships, the meaning of those relationships and the way they are practiced are anything but static (Smart 2007).

Here, we focus on the normative organization of family practices. Everyday interactions among family members are informed by a moral grammar of culturally situated norms, values, and beliefs – assumptions about kinship, marriage norms, attitudes towards sexuality, and so on (Nehring and Kerrigan 2019). The term moral grammar foregrounds the localized negotiation of these norms,

---

1 Morgan himself remains somewhat reluctant to formulate a concise definition of the sort we offer here. However, he does summarise the central analytical dimensions of family practices, and carefully maps the development of the concept (Morgan 1996, 2011a). As the concept does not seem to have travelled far beyond British sociology, it seems necessary to briefly define Morgan's work for the international audience of this book in order to draw from it.

values, and beliefs within particular families. It asks how individuals draw on broader, societal normative systems to account for their experiences and interactions with family members. In doing so, it draws attention both to the reproduction of these normative systems in everyday life and their creative modifications, in response to particular families' changing structural situation.

The one-child transnational families between China and the UK provide a unique case to examine the dynamics of family's moral grammar across time and space. We are particularly interested in the ways in which the transnational extension of family life may entail both continuity and transformation in its moral organization. As Sue Heath and her colleagues suggest, current research has placed a strong emphasis on the transformative and sometimes disruptive consequences of family migration:

> Transnational family researchers, then, look for *continuity of experience* [. . .] whereas dominant theoretical models and frameworks within migration studies more generally tend to point researchers towards seeing *disjuncture.* There is an interesting parallel here with Smart's advocacy of a 'connectedness thesis' within British family studies, in contrast to the dominance within much contemporary theorizing of personal of accounts which privilege individualization [. . .].   (Heath et al. 2011, 3)

In keeping with the analytical stance adopted by Heath and her colleagues, we consider how historically deeply rooted notions of filial piety are renegotiated between Chinese parents and their children in the context of the long-term migration of the latter to the UK. To what extent and in which ways is there continuity of experience in our participants' practices of filial piety? To what extent and in which ways has the transnational mobility of adult children transformed the ways which filial piety is understood, experienced and practiced?

3 Filial piety in Chinese society: Then and now

The term filial piety is frequently used to describe the moral organization of the relationships between parents and their children in East Asian societies (e.g. Kim et al. 1991; Lai 2010; Maehara and Takemura 2007). In China, filial piety has deep historical and philosophical roots. Across large parts of the country's history, Confucianism has provided a moral structure to family relationships. Within this moral system, children were educated to place the collective needs of the family before individual interests. More generally, family roles were organized in a hierarchical structure along generational and gender lines, leading to the frequent characterization of Chinese families as patriarchal (Greenhalgh 2012; Lin and Yi 2013). Women occupied a subordinate position within the familial hierarchy and were

expected to adhere to the will of their fathers, husbands, and male children. Residential arrangements were patrilocal, and married women came to be incorporated into their husband's household and family after marriage, especially in rural areas (Cong and Silverstein 2012). Within a patrilineal kinship system, a strong preference for male offspring emerged, and married women might find themselves under considerable pressure to bear a male heir (Deutsch 2006).

In this context, assumptions about *xiao* (孝, filial piety) have long been central to the organization of intergenerational relationships between parents and their children (Barbalet 2014). Filial piety involves respect for one's parents, deference to their wishes, and a pronounced duty of care, in particular in old age: "Sons and daughters should become thoroughly familiar with their parents' personalities in the course of daily contact, and then should try to please them in order to achieve peace of mind" (Fei 1992, chapter 1). Chan and Tan (2012) point to the central role which filial piety has historically played in Confucianism and traced its origins to the times of the Shang dynasty, more than 3000 years ago.

More recently, China's tumultuous history over the past 70 years has profoundly transformed family life. After the Chinese Communist Party's rise to power in 1949, the state challenged some elements of filial piety, in an effort to supplant particularistic family obligations with commitment to state socialism. Work was untied from the family through collective work units, and welfare programs implemented by the government-reduced children's dependence on their parents (Deutsch 2006). The New Marriage Law of 1950 instituted a civil registry for all marriages and prohibited arranged marriages, thus disrupting an entrenched practice that had sustained the marriage-based transfer of women between households and contributed to women's subordinate position in patriarchal families (Johnson 1983). The Cultural Revolution introduced narratives into public life that sought to challenge historically established family values by asking young Chinese to resist their parents (Liu 2011). At the same time, though, the state's programs and policies did not amount to an organized rejection of filial piety. Measures such as the new household registration system, for instance, reinforced intergenerational relationships by tying families to their place of residence (Liu 2011). Thus, the centrality of filial piety to Chinese families was not fundamentally challenged throughout the social, economic and cultural upheaval of the 1950s and 1960s.

The social transformation in Chinese society since 1978 had significant further consequences for Chinese families. Consequential differences in the practices of family relationships emerged between rural and urban settings, due to the growing differentiation of social classes, large-scale internal migration, and the differential application of state policy (Hu and Scott 2014). Notably, the one-child policy, implemented between 1978 and 2015, entailed a shift of parental support towards the only child, in return for the anticipated return of

personal care and economic support from the younger generation in the future (Barbalet 2014; Yeh et al. 2013; Zhang et al. 2014). However, in the early twenty-first century, it is no longer clear when and under what conditions such filial support should occur, especially among the new middle class families whose wealth has created new opportunities and new uncertainties, in a society that is highly competitive while lacking a basic safety net of comprehensive public welfare provisions (Yan 2010, 2011).

Social research has concluded that, from the late 1990s onwards, notions of reverence and obedience towards parents have become less important, while intergenerational exchanges have come to be renegotiated in the context of fil-ial expectations of greater egalitarianism (Barbalet 2014; Ho et al. 2012). At the same time, extant research indicates a shift from gender-specific to gender-flexible notions of filial piety in mainland Chinese families (Ikels 2006; Wang 2004). The progressive urbanization of Chinese society has played a significant role in these developments, in so far as it has reduced the importance of mech-anisms of social control by localized patrilineal family communities (Ikels 2006; Mao and Chi 2011).

Nonetheless, this does not signify an overall decline in the socio-cultural im-portance of filial piety, and social pressure to conform to attendant norms, values, and beliefs is still pervasive in contemporary Chinese society (Hui et al. 2011; Lum et al. 2016). On the one hand, this is due to the active promotion of traditional fam-ily values through the state and public policy, for example through legislation on children's responsibility in parents' old-age care (Feng et al. 2011; Zhan et al. 2008). On the other hand, the absence of comprehensive welfare state programs plays a large role in the continuity of practices associated with filial piety. With regard to arrangements for old-age care, Zhang and colleagues find:

> Despite rapid economic development since the 1980s, data from the 1982 and 1990 Chinese censuses show little change over that period in the proportion of elderly parents (age 65-plus) living with children – remaining at about 68 % for elderly men and 74 % for elderly women. However, between 1990 and 2000, the proportions of elderly people living with their children declined to 59.9 % and 68.7 % for men and women respectively, a de-cline of 11.4 % for men and 7.2 % for women. [...] Nevertheless, the majority of older adults in China still lived with their children; currently, an 80-year-old resident of main-land China will spend two thirds of his or her remaining lifespan in coresidence with adult children and their offspring [...]. (Zhang et al. 2014, 260)

This pattern might be attributed to the larger pattern of China's modernization in the period after 1978. The transition to state-managed capitalism, rapid ur-banization, the partial retreat of the state from citizen's private lives, and pro-gressive individualization have not gone hand in hand with the creation of a social security net of the sort established in some Western societies from the

1950s to the 1970s (Yan 1992, 2009). Consequently, individual resilience and the maintenance of collective, family-based support structures continue to play a significant role in Chinese society.

4 Transnational family migration and the beginnings of the split household

In this scenario, it is pertinent to investigate the extent to which notions of filial piety are maintained, transformed or abandoned in the context of Chinese families' transnational migration in the post-socialist period. In this regard, the shifts and changes that occur when families are split by geographical distance and intergenerational family relationships extend across national and socio-cultural borders, are of particular interest to us.

The cross-border migration of Chinese families is, of course, not a new phenomenon. Extant research points to significant and growing migration of Chinese people between China and Europe from the nineteenth century onwards, including the separation, relocation and transnational extension of families (Benton and Pieke 1998; Benton 2007; Benton and Gomez 2008; Nyíri 1999; Pieke et al. 2004). However, transnational one-child families are a qualitatively new aspect of Chinese migration to Europe. The transnational one-child families we portray in this chapter entail new forms of both intergenerational bonds and intergenerational separation. On one hand, as the 'only hope' in the family, only children are the sole recipients of parents' financial support as well as aspirations. The one-child migrants came to the UK largely funded by their parents for tuition fee and maintenance. On the other hand, these strategies of accumulation of family capital typically involve long-term physical separation. The transnational seeking of higher education and training necessarily entails geographical dispersion of family members. Different from transnational families from Taiwan, Hong Kong and South Korea, mainland Chinese transnational families typically had the adult children leaving home to study abroad.

Research on the cross-border migration of Chinese transnational families has tended to focus on the Pacific Rim (e.g. Huang and Yeoh 2005; Ong 1999; Waters 2005), looking, for example, at child and education-focused migration, such as the emergence of highly mobile split families, labelled with terms like *astronaut families* and *parachute kids*. In such families, one parent might accompany a child for schooling in the host country, while the other parent would remain in the home country to generate an income, while regularly travelling abroad for family visits (Chang and Darlington 2008; Ho 2002; Tsong and Liu 2009).

Relevant literature has largely assumed that parents fulfil a supporting role, with their children being the recipients of personal care and economic support to further their academic and prospective professional development. In this sense, extant research has largely neglected more complex processes of intergenerational transfer, reciprocity, and care, and it has not acknowledged sufficiently the ways in which intergenerational relationships between only children and their parents evolve as both age. Moreover, in this context it is necessary to explore the durability and permutations of transnational family relationships over time, as parents retire and become frail, and children leave home, develop careers, and maybe begin families of their own (Bryceson and Vuorela 2002). In the following we will seek to address some of these concerns.

5 Chinese transnational one-child families in the UK

The education and prospective professional development of only children play a large role in new forms of Chinese migration to the UK. As of 2012, China had become the main non-EU sending country of migrants to the UK (Office for National Statistics 2013b), while students aged 16 and over constituted approximately 45 % of those Chinese who had arrived in the preceding decade, between 2001 and 2011 (Office for National Statistics 2013a). The likely age of these students suggests that they tend to belong to the one-child generation born after 1978, while the high cost of education for overseas students in the UK and the relatively scarcity of fully funded scholarships imply that they will have been of at least middle-class socio-economic background.

The participants interviewed for this study all arrived in the country after 2000, and all were younger than 30 years at the time of their arrival. Most of them extended their residence in the UK by switching from study to work visas and entering employment as professionals in various fields, often achieving considerable upward social mobility alongside their geographical mobility. The transnational split of their families between China and the UK may be explained in two ways. On the one hand, their parents showed a relatively low degree of geographical mobility, having been born and socialized at a time when China's borders were largely closed and private migration tightly restricted (Liu 2006). On the other hand, British immigration policy over the past two decades has restricted family migration to a large degree (Wray 2009; Grant et al. 2015), making it extremely difficult for Chinese parents to join their children to live in the UK. Paradoxically, this increased the value of children's British residency as a family

asset, while at the same time complicating family relationships to a large extent through externally enforced cross-border separation.

6 Time and accumulative decisions

The parent-child relationship remained strong during the migrants' stay in the UK. However, other types of relationships, such as friendships and relations with extended family members, were reported to have become diluted at different levels. In this context, the migrant children's bond with their parents, and the implication of filial piety, was likely to become more significant. The rest of this section will elaborate the process through which this occurred.

The only children we interviewed in this study all had relocated to the UK for the long term. It is through their migration from China to Europe that their family lives acquired a transnational scale. However, to begin with, the decision to move abroad did not involve considerations about residing abroad for the long-term. For example, when Ying decided to study abroad in the UK, she and her parents initially did not consider the possible long-term implications of this choice very much. Their conversation about this subject matter began one day during Ying's high school years, at a dinner gathering with her mother and some of her mother's friends. They discussed overseas education, and the idea appealed to both Ying and her mother. When her mother asked Ying if in fact she would like to study in another country, she simply replied: "Why not?"

Then, once the process started, involving the processing of paperwork, finding a foreign school, and dealing with the attendant visa application, it became difficult to step back from it. As it is a common practice in China, Ying and her parents followed the advice of an overseas education consultant they had hired and it did not matter much to Ying whether she would end up studying in the UK or the USA, the two countries of choice initially. Finally, following advice by her education consultant, she moved to the UK, as the visa application appeared to be easier at the time.

Almost a decade and a half later, Ying's pathway to long-term life in the UK is showcased by various temporary extensions she made at each step of her overseas education, leading, eventually, to permanent residence in her host country:

> I didn't make long-term plans. I just thought I'd complete an undergraduate degree here. After that, I began wanting a Master's degree. When I finished my Master's degree, it [an overseas degree] seemed ordinary in China, so I thought I'd get some work experience before going back. After I started working, I felt the income level here is much higher [than in China], so [I remained in the UK].

Likewise, Yizi, a 31-one-year old media manager who lived in London at the time of the interview, described the initial decision to move to the UK as a series of tentative steps:

> Actually, when I was doing my undergraduate degree in China, my Mum asked me if I wanted to study abroad and I replied that I hadn't made up my mind. I didn't want to study abroad until I figured out what I wanted. Once I began working, I realized that my vision was narrow, the way I see things…not very independent, because I've always lived at home. As for the area of study, I wanted to study something related to the project I was involved in. At first, I wanted to go to north European countries as they don't charge a tuition fee. But considering the language challenge in north Europe, I eventually decided on the UK. It was economical to study in the UK because a Master's degree takes only a year. The university I applied to gave me scholarship funding because of the work experience that I have. It wasn't hard to apply to a university here since I went to a good university in China, I had a good IELTS[2] score and I had work experience. So, the applications took 2 to 3 months.

Ying's and Yizi's examples are characteristic of our only-child participants' gradual transition from overseas education to long-term residency in the UK. In general, they and their parents had planned for a temporary period of study abroad, seeing a British degree as a device to ensure better employment and better living conditions in the future, or looking forward to the experience of living in a foreign country for a while. They did not make the decision to leave China with permanent relocation in mind. Rather, their long-term residency in the UK was the cumulative result of events and decisions made over a number of years, often without their consequences being readily apparent.

7 Selective distancing and the new significance of filial piety

Being physically away from China gave migrant children like Yizi and Ying an opportunity to "selectively distance" themselves from unwanted social relationships in China. Relationships with friends and extended family members tended to grow thin as migrants remained overseas longer. However, some respondents saw this process as a filter which left only "authentic relationships", as well as being a way to disentangle themselves from socially imposed obligations from the extended familial and social networks they were formerly affiliated to.

---

2 International English Language Testing System.

As a result of such a process, the longer migrants settled overseas, their familial and social networks decreased more in China. The one-child respondents revealed a very limited bond with their extended family members, therefore, parents became the strongest bond most migrants have in China. Only a very small number of respondents indicated close ties with relatives (in China and overseas) and an awareness to maintain social ties in China for future career purposes. Meanwhile, most respondents had established a very limited social network in the UK: respondents were hardly involved in any of the local ethnic Chinese community activities; the majority also found it difficult to make friends with the non-Chinese. This profile contradicts the economic Chinese migrants' connections with the "Chinese transnational network" which provided social and material resource for its members (Benton and Gomez 2008; Ong 1999).

In the context of reducing social connections in China and still weak social connections in the UK, the significance of the parent-child relationship was more likely to be recognized among one-child migrants than among those children who live in China. Such a bond became even more significant among those migrants with their own family in the UK and who had decided to settle: the majority said that parents were the only reason that they still identified China as *home*. A small number of respondents were eligible to attain the British citizenship,[3] but their parents' being in China was the main reason why these respondents had not applied for a British passport.

This sense of responsibility towards their parents was particularly pronounced in our conversation with the only children. Ran, a 27-year-old software engineer resident in London, made this clear when he explained how having a sibling might have changed his relationship with his parents:

> There is definitely an impact. A sibling grows up with you so will definitely influence you a great deal. When I was much younger, I wished for a younger brother or sister but that didn't happen. If I had a sibling, my sense of commitment to my parents would be different. I would feel more relieved, but I don't (have a sibling). So, I have a deep sense of responsibility toward my parents.

Although migrants may not *practice* filial piety as often as their counterparts in China, by living overseas, away from their parents, they were less likely to take their intimacy with their parents for granted. In addition to the above-mentioned "intergenerational" closeness as a result of distance, respondents talked about the filial piety in contrast of the intergenerational relationship they observed in British families. Through the comparison respondents showed a sense of pride

---

3 The Chinese government does not approve dual-nationality, so obtaining British citizenship means giving up one's Chinese citizenship.

about the closeness in their (Chinese) families as well as their appreciation of filial piety. In this sense, the abstract notion of filial piety had become a realized part of the migrant's identity, part of their *Chineseness*.

This moral shift can be usefully understood against the backdrop of the children's relatively young age, which enabled them to focus on their own needs and those of their nuclear families in the UK. Many of our participants mentioned that their parents had been, by contemporary standards quite young, i.e. in their early twenties, when they had been born, and only one participant mentioned that her mother had been, at 28 years, older at childbirth. This is significant in so far as it means that the parents had not yet reached an age at which they would actually require substantial economic or personal support from their only child. The allocation of their children's family commitments in our interviews must be interpreted against this backdrop. Nonetheless, for the adult children we interviewed, not being able to reciprocate their parents' investment in their education and care in a meaningful and concrete way often entailed considerable concern.

Alongside the sense of guilt, participants also referred towards the more intangible elements of filial piety, such as the desire to make their parents proud through their own achievements, in justifying their choice to settle in the UK.

> If I'm not happy with my life here, it's impossible for my parents to be happy. This is a certainty. If my life was in a crisis, they would feel helpless. I won't let that happen. So, this is my filial piety to them. (Tian, female, 31, lecturer)

Tian's definition of filial piety, and her projection of what she takes to be its essential element — her own happiness – represented for most respondents an important part of their filial duty.

These notions correspond to the traditional understanding of filial piety, that a child's achievement (including life contentment) is not just a personal matter, but rather contributes to the social and moral standing of the family as a whole (Chan and Tan 2004). However, other central moral dimensions of filial piety, notably spatial closeness and tangible material support, were compromised by the transnational extension of our participants' family life. At the time of the interviews, it was not yet apparent whether the children's commitments might shift again in the future, when faced with parents becoming elderly and requiring extensive care. Both the children and their parents were struggling with a complex array of family relationships and attendant moral obligations, which were organized around the spatial split of these family relationships between China and the UK. When we met our participants, the dilemmas as a result of this distance were still unresolved.

These opinions were expressed by migrants who had a child or children and who were thinking about their British-born offspring's cultural identity. This

reproduction of filial piety within migrants vaguely echoes James Watson's early observation in the late 1960s of how New Territories (Hong Kong) migrants in London became "enthusiastic proponents of traditional values" (Watson 1975, 215) in their home village even more so than the villagers who did not migrate. However, whether these new middle-class Chinese migrants' perception of traditional Chinese family values will follow a similar pattern, remains to be seen. Although the emphasis on filial piety as part of the migrant's ethnic identity may not necessarily transfer to the practical care of their parents in China, nevertheless this study witnessed the early internalization of filial piety among the migrant community.

8 Negotiating the moral grammar of intergenerational relationships

Historically, a central element of the moral organization of filial piety has been the understanding that investment in a child would entail similar investment by children in their parents in the latter's old age. When we discussed this principle of reciprocity with the seven pairs of parents who had agreed to interviews, the commonly expressed view was that it was a thing of the past, ill-suited to the complexities of contemporary life. The middle-class, middle-aged parents we spoke to explained that the adage *yang er fang lao* (养儿防老, "raise children for old age care") belonged to the previous generation, and that they did not wish to become a burden for their adult children. These parents were willing to invest most of their income on their only child, alongside a pensions scheme and a care home for themselves, while not explicitly stating expectations as to a financial return from their children.

These views were exemplified by the way in which Bolin's mother explained the development of intergenerational relationships over time. Bolin, 38, had moved to the UK for 13 years and established her family and career. Her mother, 66 at the time of the interview, had supported her daughter with childcare and financial assistance. In our interview, she argued that traditional notions of reciprocity had been important in her relationship with her own parents, but had become obsolete in her relationship with her daughter:

> Nowadays, filial piety is more one-directional and is from parents to children rather than children to parents. Sounds strange? Think about it, only parents will constantly worry about whether they have supported their children enough, but rarely does this happen the other way around. What we want from our children is not anything material, such as giving us a fancy mobile phone to use, but we would like them to call more often. We

> may be old and might not be able to catch up with the new generation, but it is important for our kids to listen to us and respect us.

Most of these parents were acutely aware of how these views differentiated them both from previous generations and from their own social environment in China. They argued for what they perceived as the "modern elements" of family relationships, such as more open and democratic intergenerational relationships between parents and children and a less dependent parental generation, and they noted how their views contrasted with those of more "traditional" families in their local environment. At the same time, they were aware of the fact that they risked criticism and social pressure in a society in which spatial closeness continues to be central to the moral organization of family. Thus, for example, one mother explained how a work colleague had, only half joking, commented on the negative side effects of sending her only child abroad. In this sense, the parents we interviewed in China experienced the need to negotiate the contradictions between their own moral understandings of family life and the much more conservative moral grammar of intergenerational relationships in their local social environment.

9 Conclusion

Globalization has created aspirations and opportunities, as well as demands, for families to pursue social mobility through transnational migration. In historically family-oriented societies such as China, families thus frequently encounter situations in which parents and children are separated across borders for prolonged periods. In this study, we have documented such situations, looking specifically at the case of one-child families.

In Chinese society, one-child families constitute a minority and an exception, bound up with the implementation of the One-child Policy for nearly four decades between 1978 and 2015. Spatial closeness, proximity of residence, and extensive mutual support still constitute important ideals for Chinese families in the early twenty-first century. Members of cross-border families therefore find themselves under considerable social pressure to make up for their physical separation and demonstrate equivalent emotional closeness and support. In the case of the only children and the parents who took part in this study, such reciprocity was somewhat less visible in their everyday behavior, but it played a large role in the ways in which they expressed their feelings and obligations towards each other.

This ambivalence suggests an important modulation of the moral grammar of intergenerational family relations, in the context of our participants' families' cross-border extension. Three elements of this moral grammar are significant here. First, their commitment to marriages and partners in the UK notwithstanding, the children we interviewed still expressed a fundamental moral commitment to care for their parents in China. Second, their parents found themselves negotiating a relatively traditional reciprocal relationship with their own parents and emergent understandings of reciprocity on the part of their children. Third, both generations – parents and children – constituted a minority in their local social environment, parents by virtue of their status as members of transnational split families, and children by virtue of their status as immigrants. As a result, both generations had to device strategies to cope with localized social pressure in their immediate daily environment. For these reasons, the complex modulations of the moral grammar of filial piety that we have documented might be interpreted as the outcome of both generations' efforts to come to terms with changing family practices in the context of cross-border mobility and the life cycle of family members. The participants experienced family relationships as fluid and changeable to a considerable degree.

Consequently, our participants' use of filial piety as a term of reference in their interview narratives was also fluid. Children who still received economic support from their parents were relatively more likely to profess willingness for future filial support of parents than those who had transitioned into economic independence. The parents we spoke to were largely financially well-off and in sound health, and they had given substantial economic support and personal care to their overseas children. However, our interviews made it clear that future reciprocal support on the part of their children, including a willingness to return to China for the purpose of elderly care, was not a matter of course. This meant that both generations had to construct new rules and understandings for reciprocal intergenerational support, in the context of their current and anticipated future cross-border separation. Moreover, this spatial separation entailed significant challenges, in terms of finances, care arrangements, and so forth.

It is worth noting that among an increasingly diverse Chinese population in Europe this essay focuses on the highly educated and socially mobile cohort of the new Chinese migrants from mainland China to the UK. The relative affluence of the parents' generation has made alternatives to material provision from children possible, hence the relatively flexible interpretations of filial piety. Although the reduced emphasis on material support is also found in middle class families within China (Zhang and Goza 2005), at a transnational level, the reduced financial obligation led to something significant: adult child

migrants in a developed country no longer send remittances to their families at home country.

Furthermore, the implications of study of the one-child migrants goes beyond its current cohort. The year 2016 witnessed the ending of the one-child policy, but the *one-child norm* among Chinese families is not easily erased. With the shrinking family size worldwide, we are likely to see an increasing number of voluntary one-child families in Asia. In addition, Asian children are being sent to study abroad at a younger age (secondary school level) (Wang 2017). It means longer family separation and greater intergenerational uncertainty. This study provides a valuable reference for inclusion in future research on educated-related migration and intergenerational relationship changes.

Bibliography

Alvesson, Mats. *Interpreting Interviews*. London: SAGE, 2010.

Baldassar, Loretta, Graeme Johanson, Narelle McAuliffe, and Massimo Bressan (eds.). *Chinese Migration to Europe: Prato, Italy, and Beyond*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

Barbalet, Jack. "Greater Self, Lesser Self: Dimensions of Self-Interest in Chinese Filial Piety." *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 44.2 (2014): 186–205.

Beal-Hodges, Mary, Chung Ping Loh, and Harriet Stranahan. "The Impact of China's One-Child Policy on the Educational Attainment of Adolescents." *Journal of Interdisciplinary Economics* 23.2 (2011): 201–221.

Benton, Gregor. *Chinese Migrants and Internationalism: Forgotten Histories, 1917–1945*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2007.

Benton, Gregor, and Edmund Terence Gomez. *The Chinese in Britain, 1800–Present: Economy, Transnationalism, Identity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.

Benton, Gregor, and Frank N. Pieke (eds.). *The Chinese in Europe*. Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998.

Biernacki, Patrick, and Dan Waldorf. "Snowball Sampling: Problems and Techniques of Chain Referral Sampling." *Sociological Methods & Research* 10.2 (1981): 141–163.

Bryceson, Deborah, and Ulla Vuorela (eds.). *The Transnational Family: New European Frontiers and Global Networks*. Oxford: Berg, 2002.

Chan, Alan K L, and Sor Hoon Tan. *Filial Piety in Chinese Thought and History*. London: Routledge, 2004.

Chang, M W, and Yvone Darlington. "Austronaut Wives: Perceptions of Changes in Family Roles." *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 17.1 (2008): 61–77.

Christiansen, Flemming. *Chinatown, Europe: An Exploration of Overseas Chinese Identity in the 1990s*. London: Routledge Curzon, 2003.

Cong, Zhen, and Merril Silverstein. "Caring for Grandchildren and Intergenerational Support in Rural China: A Gendered Extended Family Perspective." *Ageing and Society* 32.3 (2012): 425–450.

Deutsch, Francine M. "China's One-Child Policy." *Journal of Family Issues* 27.3 (2006): 366–389.

Fei, Xiaotong. *From the Soil: The Foundations of Chinese Society*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992.

Feng, Zhanlian, Heying J. Zhan, Xiaotian Feng, Chang Liu, Minyue Sun, and Vincent Mor. "An Industry in the Making: The Emergence of Institutional Elder Care in Urban China." *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* 59.4 (2011): 738–744.

Fong, Vanessa. *Paradise Redefined: Transnational Chinese Students and the Quest for Flexible Citizenship in the Developed World*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011.

Goodman, David S.G. (ed.). *The New Rich in China: Future Rulers, Present Lives*. Abindgon: Routledge, 2008.

Grant, Saira, Eleonore Kofman, Charlotte Peel, and Helena Wray. *Family Friendly? The Impact on Children of the Family Migration Rules: A Review of the Financial Requirements*. London: Children's Commissioner for England and Middlesex University, 2015.

Greenhalgh, Susan. "Patriarchal Demographics? China's Sex Ratio Reconsidered." *Population and Development Review* 38 (2012): 130–149.

Heath, Sue, Derek Mcghee, and Paulina Trevena. "Lost in Transnationalism: Unraveling the Conceptualisation of Families and Personal Life through a Transnational Gaze." *Sociological Research Online* 16.4 (2011): 1–9.

Ho, David Y. F., Weizhen Xie, Xin Liang, and Li Zeng. "Filial Piety and Traditional Chinese Values: A Study of High and Mass Cultures." *PsyCh Journal* 1.1 (2012): 40–55.

Ho, Elsie Seck Yee. "Multi-Local Residence, Transnational Networks: Chinese 'Astronaut' Families in New Zealand." *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 11.1 (2002): 145–164.

Hu, Yang, and Jacqueline Scott. "Family and Gender Values in China: Generational, Geographic, and Gender Differences." *Journal of Family Issues* 37.9 (2014): 1267–1293.

Huang, Shirlena, and Brenda S. A. Yeoh. "Transnational Families and Their Children's Education: China's 'study Mothers' in Singapore." *Global Networks* 5.4 (2005): 379–400.

Hui, Eadaoin K.P., Rachel C.F. Sun, Stephen Sau-Yan Chow, and Matthew Ho-Tat Chu. "Explaining Chinese Students' Academic Motivation: Filial Piety and Self-determination." *Educational Psychology* 31.3 (2011): 377–392.

Ikels, Charlotte. "Economic Reform and Intergenerational Relationships in China." *Oxford Development Studies* 34.4 (2006): 387–400.

Johnson, Kay. *Women, the Family and Peasant Revolution in China*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Keith, Michael, Scott Lash, Jakob Arnoldi, and Tyler Rooker. *China Constructing Capitalism: Economic Life and Urban Change*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2014.

Kim, Kwang Chung, Shin Kim, and Won Moo Hurh. "Filial Piety and Intergenerational Relationship in Korean Immigrant Families." *The International Journal of Aging and Human Development* 33.3 (1991): 233–245.

Kvale, Steinar. *Doing Interviews*. London: SAGE, 2007.

Lai, Daniel W.L. "Filial Piety, Caregiving Appraisal, and Caregiving Burden." *Research on Aging* 32.2 (2010): 200–223.

Li, Cheng (ed.) (2010a). *China's Emerging Middle Class: Beyond Economic Transformation*. Washington D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2010.

Li, Cheng (2010b). "Introduction: The Rise of the Middle Class in the Middle Kingdom." *China's Emerging Middle Class*. Ed. Cheng Li. Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 2010. 3–31.

Li, Haizheng. "Higher Education in China: Complement or Competition to US Universities?" *American Universities in a Global Market*. Ed. National Bureau of Economic Research. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010, 269–304.

Lin, Ju-Ping, and Chin-Chun Yi. "A Comparative Analysis of Intergenerational Relations in East Asia." *International Sociology* 28.3 (2013): 297–315.

Liu, Fengshu. "Wired for Fun." *Young* 19.1 (2011): 69–89.

Liu, Guofu. *The Right to Leave and Return and Chinese Migration Law*. Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2006.

Lu, Xiao, and Wenxia Zhang. "The Reversed Brain Drain: A Mixed-Method Study of the Reversed Migration of Chinese Overseas Scientists." *Science, Technology and Society* 20.3 (2015): 279–299.

Lum, Terry Y.S., Elsie C.W. Yan, Andy H.Y. Ho, Michelle H.Y. Shum, Gloria H.Y. Wong, Mandy M.Y. Lau, and Junfang Wang. "Measuring Filial Piety in the 21st Century: Development, Factor Structure, and Reliability of the 10-Item Contemporary Filial Piety Scale." *Journal of Applied Gerontology* 35.11 (2016): 1235–1247.

Maehara, Takeko, and Akiko Takemura. "The Norms of Filial Piety and Grandmother Roles as Perceived by Grandmothers and Their Grandchildren in Japan and South Korea." *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 31.6 (2007): 585–593.

Mao, Weiyu, and Iris Chi. "Filial Piety of Children as Perceived by Aging Parents in China." *International Journal of Social Welfare* 20.1 (2011): 99–108.

Morgan, David. *Family Connections: An Introduction to Family Studies*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996.

Morgan, David. "Locating 'Family Practices.'" *Sociological Research Online* 16.4 (2011a): 1–9.

Morgan, David. *Rethinking Family Practices*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011b.

National Bureau of Statistics of China. "Chu Guo Liu Xue Ren Yuan, Xue Cheng Hui Guo Liu Xue Ren Yuan [Study Abroad Population, Returned Overseas Student Population, 1978–2014]." http://data.stats.gov.cn/easyquery.htm?cn=C01, 2015 (28 January 2019).

Nehring, Daniel, and Dylan Kerrigan. *Therapeutic Worlds: Popular Psychology and the Socio-Cultural Organisation of Intimate Life*. London: Routledge, 2019.

Noy, Chaim. "Sampling Knowledge: The Hermeneutics of Snowball Sampling in Qualitative Research." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 11.4 (2008): 327–344.

Nyíri, Pál. *New Chinese Migrants in Europe: The Case of the Chinese Community in Hungary*. London: Routledge, 1999.

Nyíri, Pál. *Chinese in Eastern Europe and Russia: A Middleman Minority in a Transnational Era*. London: Routledge, 2007.

Office for National Statistics. "Immigration Patterns of Non-UK Born Populations in England and Wales in 2011." https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160107164635/https://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_346219.pdf, 2013a (31 March 2019).

Office for National Statistics. "Migration Statistics Quarterly Report." https://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/migration1/migration-statistics-quarterly-report/november-2013/msqr.html, 2013b (28 January 2019).

Ong, Aihwa. *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1999.

Parsons, Talcott. *The Social System*. London: Routledge, 1991.

Pieke, Frank N., Pál Nyíri, Mette Thunø, and Antonella Ceccagno. *Transnational Chinese: Fujianese Migrants in Europe*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004.

Smart, Carol. *Personal Life: New Directions in Sociological Thinking*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007.

Tsang, Eileen Yuk-Ha. *The New Middle Class in China*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Tsong, Yuying, and Yuli Liu. "Parachute Kids and Astronaut Families." *Asian American Psychology: Current Perspectives*, July 2009: 365–379.

Tu, Mengwei. "The transnational one-child generation: family relationships and overseas aspiration between China and the UK." *Children's Geographies* (2017). DOI: 10.1080/14733285.2017.1393499.

Wang, Danyu. "Ritualistic Coresidence and the Weakening of Filial Practice in Rural China." *Filial Piety: Practice and Discourse in Contemporary East Asia*. Ed. Charlotte Ikels. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2004. 16–33.

Wang, Huiyao, and Lü Miao (eds.). *Zhong Guo Hai Gui Fa Zhan Bao Gao [Annual Report on the Development of Chinese Returnees] 2013 No.2*. Beijing: Social Science Academic Press, 2013.

Wang, Leslie K. "'Leftover Women' and 'Kings of the Candy Shop': Gendering Chinese American Ancestral Homeland Migration to China." *American Behavioral Scientist* 61.10 (2017): 1172–1191.

Waters, Johanna L. "Transnational Family Strategies and Education in the Contemporary Chinese Diaspora." *Global Networks* 5.4 (2005): 359–377.

Watson, James. *Emigration and the Chinese lineage: The Mans in Hong Kong and London*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975.

Wray, Helena. "Moulding the Migrant Family." *Legal Studies* 29.4 (2009): 592–618.

Yan, Yunxiang. "The Impact of Rural Reform on Economic and Social Stratification in a Chinese Village." *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* 27 (1992): 1–23.

Yan, Yunxiang. *The Individualization of Chinese Society*. Oxford: Berg, 2009.

Yan, Yunxiang. "The Chinese Path to Individualization." *British Journal of Sociology* 61.3 (2010): 489–512.

Yan, Yunxiang. "The Changing Moral Landscape." *Deep China: The Moral Life of the Person*. Eds. Arthur Kleinman, Yunxiang Yan, Jing Jun, Sing Lee, Everett Zhang, Tianshu Pan et. al. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011. 36–77.

Yeh, Kuang-Hui, Chin-Chun Yi, Wei-Chun Tsao, and Po-San Wan. "Filial Piety in Contemporary Chinese Societies: A Comparative Study of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and China." *International Sociology* 28.3 (2013): 277–296.

Zhan, Heying Jenny, Xiaotian Feng, and Baozhen Luo. "Placing Elderly Parents in Institutions in Urban China: A Reinterpretation of Filial Piety." *Research on Aging* 30.5 (2008): 543–571.

Zhang, Yuanting, and Franklin Goza "Who Will Care for the Elderly in China? A Review of the Problems Caused by China's One-Child Policy and Their Potential Solutions." *Journal of Aging Studies* 20 (2005): 151–164.

Zhang, Zhenmei, Danan Gu, and Ye Luo. "Coresidence with Elderly Parents in Contemporary China: The Role of Filial Piety, Reciprocity, Socioeconomic Resources, and Parental Needs." *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology* 29.3 (2014): 259–276.

Lü Yunfang

Migration from Jian'ou to Moscow: From market peddling to transnational entrepreneurship

Abstract: In 1992, a group of middle-aged people from Jian'ou, a remote county in South China, entered Russia looking for opportunities for work, which ushered in a migration wave between Jian'ou and Moscow, Almaty and Osh in the decades that followed. This paper discusses their migration experience and tracks the historical development of the migration paths. It also analyses the logic behind the migration practice and the construction of the transnational space. In this space, different forces work together: traditional family networks, female friendships, voluntary associations and the authorities of local and sending societies. Among them, voluntary associations, e.g. the Minbei Chinese Association in Moscow and the Moscow Entrepreneurs' Association in Minbei, have played a critical role by coordinating these forces and constructing the transnational corridor.[1]

1 Introduction

One day in 1992, in Jian'ou, a small county in northern Fujian Province, Wang Mingzhu, a 40-year-old primary school teacher, was reading the local newspaper as usual. An article announced that the labor service company of the county was recruiting 20 people in order to send them to Russia as labor exports. After careful thought, Wang Mingzhu decided to quit her teaching position, which was considered a good, reputable job. She then talked to her friend Ye Deying. Ye recommended Wang contact another friend, Li Rongji. Li had been engaged in retail for years and her business had been going smoothly. Eventually, Ye and Wang, the two middle-aged women, applied for the labor export scheme. When they met the other people registered in this group of ten, they discovered that they were the only two female members. Moreover, since few people in this agrarian county had the courage to go abroad, the labor export scheme was unsuccessful and only managed to recruit ten people. The

ten-person group made its journey to Moscow thanks to the employment invitation letter sent by Ye Lizhen, the first pioneer to Moscow from this agrarian county.

Back then, the two women could not have imagined that their actions would later encourage hundreds and even thousands of families from this small mountainous county to follow the same migration path. One year later, all eight of the men from the group came back for various reasons, but the two women managed to stay in Russia and thus kicked off the migration wave from Jian'ou to Russia and then to Central Asia.

2 The migration wave between Russia and China

The ongoing movement of people across the Russian-Chinese border has been the object of numerous studies since the mid-1990s and reached its peak in the new century. The migration wave between China and Russia started in the late 1980s when Soviet-Chinese relations were normalized under Gorbachev. In the beginning, the Far Eastern and Siberian parts of the Soviet Union began to receive Chinese traders and workers, who were mainly from North and Northeastern China, in large numbers. Later on, Chinese migrants moved west to European Russia. According to a number of scholars (Nyiri 2007; Larin 2009; Chang 2012), most of the Chinese migrants were involved in trade, especially those who stayed in Moscow, while the three most important groups of migrants since 1989 were workers, traders and students.

Not surprisingly, Chinese immigrants attracted a lot of attention across Russia. Especially in the Russian Far East, their presence evoked great concern among the local population. Due to the geopolitical factors and the ethnographic structure and history of the area, this group's presence was even described as "Chinese expansion" (Portyakov 2005) in local media. Chinese scholars continue to research those topics, and in their studies (Wang 2016; Deng and Zhang 2005; Dai 2004; Larin 2005), they examine Russian immigration policies and reinforce that the pull forces of migration from the Russian side have been the economic situation, with immigration policy a reaction to the economic demand in Russia. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation faced an increasing scarcity of consumer goods and labor. Therefore, many laws were passed in order to attract foreign labor, capital and goods, which greatly facilitated the exchange between Russia and China. In the meantime, in China, after more than ten years of Reform and Opening-up, goods for affluent consumers had been produced and a large labor force

from rural areas and small counties was ready to migrate. Furthermore, since the procedure for travelling abroad was simplified, many people began to take the chance to engage in the "shuttle trade" (Nyiri 2007, 51) between China and Russia.

In 1992, a five-year agreement was signed by the governments of the two countries, which allowed Chinese people to work in Russia. According to Russian data, 17,000 to 18,000 Chinese workers lived in Russia in 1992 and 1993 (Nyiri 2007, 51). In 1996, the two countries sought to build a strategic partnership aimed toward the twenty first century. More exchanges of personnel were encouraged between China and Russia. Even the Ruble crisis in 1998 could not stop the migration and trade that most of the Chinese immigrants were involved in.

In 2002, the law of the "Legal Status of Foreigners in the Russian Federation" was implemented in Russia, which sought to classify the incoming migrants in the next decades. The basic principle of the new law was to attract people who were considered useful for the national economy, such as experts and professionals. The law was amended in 2006 and later complemented by a number of related laws, restricting the labor permits quota, forbidding foreigners from engaging in retail business and the like. These laws were meant to discourage foreign labor imports and undocumented immigration. After a series of actions such as the abrupt closure of wholesale markets in Moscow, among which the ACT market closure in 2009 was the most notorious, many Chinese entrepreneurs were forced to leave. But where were they supposed to go? Did they return to their hometowns with substantial earnings or did they expand their transnational network beyond Russia? This question was asked by Yu (2016) too and will be addressed in the case of the migrants from Jian'ou.

3 Entrepreneurial migration from Jian'ou to Moscow

Migration from Jian'ou to Moscow has been a small part of the migration wave between China and Russia. It started in the early 1990s, and the migrant population grew in the early twenty first century. The prosperity lasted for about five years, after which then the population began to decrease. Many people chose to leave after the ACT market in Moscow was closed. But the transnational network remains and continues to develop.

3.1 Creating the migration chain

Philip Kuhn stresses "compatriotism" (Kuhn 2008, 43) in the context of Chinese migration; he uses the term compatriotism to refer to the migrants' links to their place of birth and their moral obligations to their relatives. In most homelands of the new migrants, migration is based on two pillars: one is the traditional connection of family migration, the other one is the better-known form organized through migration agencies and snakeheads (Li 2013). Numerous studies have been carried out on these migration models. In Jian'ou, the two models were combined, with family connections and female friendships playing a central role.

As previously described, the first migration wave was organized by the labor service company, an officially documented agency. Once the pioneers were settled in Moscow, they began to invite family members and close friends to join them in Moscow, without any connection to the labor export agency of the county. The next year, Wang Mingzhu took her husband to Moscow. Wang and her husband generated a deficit of almost three hundred thousand yuan (a big sum in those days) in the first two years as she lacked merchant experience. But she persisted and finally succeeded in the third year. In 1995, she came back to her small home county. Her homecoming could be considered as a "returning rich" in the Chinese tradition, and not surprisingly it encouraged other people to follow in her footsteps to Moscow. After the immediate family members were invited, they began to help close friends to move to Moscow. Wang and Li, as a bridgehead in Moscow, helped many women from their hometown Shuiyuan, a township of Jian'ou, by sending invitation letters from Russia. These women, including Wang Kaiming, Ou Shuihua, Zhou Caixiu, used to be her colleagues or her friends in the village where the two pioneer women were re-educated during the Cultural Revolution. The women soon helped their own immediate family members and close friends. The first one Li Rongji invited the next year was Ye Deying, who recommended her to Wang in the labor export scheme. This invitation enabled the emergence of a new migration chain, i.e. the migration to Almaty and Osh. Here is Zhou Caixiu' story:

> I knew Wang Mingzhu when she came to work in our village as an educated urban youth (in late 1960s). As we were both young and I was the village director of women, we became friends. When she came back from Moscow, I asked her to help me go abroad. But she refused at first. She said that I could not survive in Moscow because I had six children to support. I begged her. I had many years of experience in retail. So she finally agreed. She sent me the invitation after she went back to Moscow. The invitation letter cost 5,000 yuan. She did not make money from sending me the employment invitation because she knew I was not rich. […] Half a year later, I managed to take my husband to Moscow. […] Before I came back, I managed to take more than 20 people, and they are all family and kinsmen. They took other people. So in total, more than 100 people went to Moscow due to my efforts.

This might be the highest number of people taken by one person from Shuiyuan Town. In this way, a migration chain formed. From 1995 to 2005, more than one thousand people from Jian'ou and the surrounding counties were attracted to the trade businesses between China and Russia. The logic behind the establishment of this chain was the sense of family responsibility and female friendship behind *taking somebody to Moscow*.

The term "taking somebody to Moscow" has often been used by immigrants to refer to the migration chain. "Taking somebody to Moscow" not only means issuing an employment invitation; it means complete patronage. Sharing business with somebody was a top priority. As newcomers knew nothing about the local society and the business in Moscow, they relied completely on the person inviting them. The inviting person had the duty to share accommodation, take them to the market, rent a booth for them, train them in every step of the business from picking reliable supplier to techniques in selling, etc. Sometimes the inviting person would have to offer the invitee the most profitable goods with great market potential. As Zhou Caixiu puts it: it is sharing business. That is why they tend to take family members. "Taking somebody to Moscow" also proves what Kuhn explained about compatriotism: "banding together in the venue society for security, business cooperation and moral support" (Kuhn 2008, 43). Ye Chunfei told us that she brought her brother and sisters to Moscow, and her sister-in-law often came to her complaining about everything in her business and daily life including quarrels with her husband. In her opinion, Ye was the person who took her to Moscow, so Ye, as a patron, had to take the responsibility to protect her and solve all the problems in her life.

People who do not belong to the same family do not have to take on the family responsibility. If they do, the person offering help is considered to be compassionate and generous, and friendship between the two people will undoubtedly be closer. As previously mentioned, Wang Mingzhu and Li Rongji took quite a few women from Shuiyuan to Moscow who used to be friends or colleagues and, even though they charged for the employment invitations and then accommodation, these two women were highly respected in the community. "Wang and Li did us a great favour," they said. The immigrant community organized a grand ceremony to celebrate Wang Mingzhu's sixtieth birthday as an expression of their gratitude. In Zhou Caixiu's case, Zhou generated a deficit in the first half year and when she turned desperate, Wang Kaiming came to help by offering her own goods to Zhou for credit and even introducing her own very reliable supplier to Zhou. After that, Zhou treated Wang Kaiming as an elder sister in later years, and Zhou has always been a strong supporter of Wang's efforts to set up transnational associations – in order to return the favor.

Female friendships play an interesting role in the migration wave. The migrants who arrived later followed the same mode with women arriving earlier than men in each family. Usually half a year later, the husband would follow the wife to Moscow. "Because the first migrants were women, women tend to invite other women. It is impossible for a woman to invite a man who is not part of her family. Men can only be invited by their wife and sisters."[2] There is another explanation for female migration: minimizing risk in an unfriendly society. "Corrupt Russian police are violent. They often beat male migrants for ransom, but don't beat female migrants."[3] It is women who carry the daily earnings from the trade on the way home from the market, just to avoid being robbed and extorted by the police. Consequently, a man would not be successful in migration without his wife or his sister migrating first.

The female friendships also result in a unique characteristic of this migrant group: different from scholars' statistics (Ryazantsev and Wang 2015), there are more men than women among the Chinese immigrants and more women than men among Jian'ou immigrants. Furthermore, women initiated the mass migration movement and remain the most active part in community affairs. For example, Women's Day (8 March) has become a day as important as the Spring Festival and Mid-autumn Festival.

After Wang Mingzhu and Li Rongji established a foothold in Moscow, migration developed in a dual-line chain: line 1) a woman – her husband – their sisters and sisters-in-law, then the sisters' husbands and their children; line 2) a woman – female friend – husband of the female friend – their sisters and sisters-in-law, then the sisters' husbands and their children. This dual-line chain of migration results from female-activated social relationships.

3.2 Creating an ethnic economy

Market peddling and later transnational entrepreneurship are the economic niche (Kuhn 2008, 43) that the migrants carved out in Russia. All the migrants from Jian'ou are entrepreneurs. Philip Kuhn (2008, 47) mentioned four factors in creating a migrant's occupational niche: 1) skills and habitudes brought from home; 2) the existing social distribution of occupations in the host society; 3) the chance availability of viable niches to particular migrants who may help build bridges for their compatriots and kinfolk; 4) the process of recruitment.

---

2 Interview with Wang Kaiming, 6 May, 2018.
3 Interview with Ou Shuihua, 6 May, 2018.

In the case of the Jian'ou immigrants, the availability of opportunities and the process of recruitment have played a critical role.

Unlike the shuttle traders in the earlier stage of Russian-Chinese trade, Wang Mingzhu and Li Rongji started their trade in Moscow by entering the market peddling sector. In the first years, they collected goods from Xiushui Street in Beijing, including clothes, shoes, daily use items and so on, and sold the goods along the six-day train journey to Moscow on the train or at the stations where the train stopped. Locals waited at each station to buy the goods. Knowing nothing about Russia and the Russian language, Wang and Li used a calculator to communicate with the Russian buyers, along with gestures, waving and pointing at the goods. Deals were also made through the train windows, with them inside the train and buyers on the outside. Sometimes they did not have enough time to receive the payment before the train left the station. When they arrived in Moscow, they offered their goods in small open-air markets.

Their business developed quickly and, very soon, the batches they collected were getting bigger, they began to buy or rent containers and did the wholesale business in the open-air market in Moscow. Over time, some of them established stores or trade companies in Moscow and even set up firms back in China to produce what was to be sold in Moscow and other parts of Europe. For instance, Ye Zhenquan, brought to Moscow by Wang Mingzhu in 1995, set up a firm in Xinji, Hebei Province, in the early twenty-first century, producing leather jackets. It was her products that Wang Kaiming purchased and sold at the ACT market in Moscow. So far, in today's Moscow, there are more than one thousand Jian'ou immigrants running stores or companies, and more than 300 companies are owned by Jian'ou immigrants. An ethnic economy has been established.

In the interviews, the term "business opportunity" has been repeatedly used to explain their migration experiences and the founding of their organization. As an agrarian society, Jian'ou had no tradition of business and trade. "It is business opportunity instead of tradition that has brought Jian'ou traders to Moscow one by one."[4] Business opportunity in this context means an environment in which migrants can earn enough money to survive and prosper while at the same time improving their social position.

According to the immigrant traders, the Russian Federation suffered from a great shortage of living goods in the early 1990s and many Russian businessmen poured into Beijing to purchase goods, especially consumer goods. The news spread and the business opportunities were seized by people from Beijing and the bordering provinces in China, such as Inner Mongolia and Heilongjiang.

---

4 Interview with the director of Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese in Jian'ou, 28 July, 2018.

They crossed the border and entered the Russian Far East, and then Moscow, to sell goods produced in China.

When she read the newspaper announcement about the first labor export scheme to Russia, Wang Mingzhu sensed a great business opportunity. She decided to join despite her lack of merchant experience and capital. Li Rongji saw a business opportunity in Kazakhstan during a trip to Almaty. Li invited Ye Deying to Moscow in 1993, and Ye chose to go to Moscow via Xinjiang but became stuck there. Li came from Moscow via Almaty to help. This trip enabled Li to explore Almaty, who then decided to move to Almaty from Moscow a few years later when she planned to expand her business. Together with her, more than 200 traders from Jian'ou migrated to Almaty, and then to Osh, Kyrgyzstan.

The traders from Jian'ou understood the opportunity very well. Faced with language problems, visa problems, rampant corruption, bureaucracy and xenophobia in Russia, they endured, fought and adapted, because the business opportunity was good. When asked about why they left Moscow, they all answered "the business is not good." Zhou Caixiu came back to Jian'ou in 2011 and brought her children back with her. She said "the business was not good" there. After the ACT market was closed, the policy became stricter and seemed more unfriendly towards the wholesale trade. Even before the closure, many traders could sense their opportunities diminishing. The association organized trips to West and Central Asia to examine "business opportunities" there, and some of them chose to move to Central Asian countries. More than 600 traders came back to China because they found more business opportunities in China.

3.3 Transnational associations

In early 2001, on the suggestion of Ye Zhenquan, a couple of pioneer traders including Wang Mingzhu, Tu Shenghui and Wang Kaiming met and decided to form an association of Jian'ou traders in Moscow. In April 2002, the Minbei (north of Fujian) Chinese Association of Moscow (MCAM) was registered at the Chinese Embassy. Tu Shenghui, a member of the group of ten people who were part of the labor export group in 1992 that returned to Jian'ou the following year but went back to Moscow years later, was elected as the director of the association. Wang Mingzhu and Wang Kaiming were among the vice directors. More than 230 documented members and 580 undocumented members joined the association. The membership fee amounted to 100 dollars. At the founding ceremony at the Great Wall Restaurant of Moscow, officials from the Chinese Embassy, leaders of the Jian'ou city government and the Trade Bureau attended and gave speeches.

Directors of other Chinese associations in Moscow were present to congratulate. A couple of local officials were also invited.

The MCAM was meant to facilitate the integration of Jian'ou traders into Russian society. After the founding of MCAM, the interactions between Jian'ou traders and local society have also been streamlined into a community framework. As a marginalized immigrant group, Jian'ou traders found little leeway into local society, even if they tried to make a contribution. But now they could. Jian'ou traders were able to participate in local charity projects via the MCAM who organized activities like visiting orphanages, fundraising for victims of the great fire and ice disasters in Russia. However, as Nyiri (2007, 110) found:

> The new native place associations in Eastern Europe are based on this logic: instead of building loyalty to the state from loyalty to the native place, they use the traditional form of native place association to demonstrate and build contacts with various levels of national and provincial bureaucracies.

This is also true for MCAM, a native place oriented "affinity group" (Kuhn 2008, 374).

3.3.1 Strengthening the community

The founding of the MCAM strengthened community ties based on traditional family connections and female friendship to a great extent; it transmuted into a guild, as a result of which an identity combining native place bonds and occupational communities was created: The *Minbei entrepreneurs*.

The MCAM offered emotional support to members. As an affinity group, MCAM organized gatherings and ceremonies at traditional festivals and special occasions for the associations, such as a Spring Festival, Qing Ming Festival, Midautumn Festival, Women's Day and members' birthdays. For example, they organized a party to celebrate Huang Bin's graduation from Moscow University as a PhD. "We are very proud of Huang Bin."[5] Huang was the first community member to graduate from a Russian University, and he later became the director of MCAM.

The basic function of MCAM has been practically *baotuan qunuan* (抱团取暖, "work together to keep warm"): sharing business information and ensuring the security of the community. The traditional connections and interpersonal friendships represent moral obligations among family members and mutual help between friends, while the MCAM is meant to provide strong institutional support to Jian'ou traders in Moscow, which was viewed as an act to achieve *baotuan*

---

[5] Interview with Deying Ye and Beilin Ye, 28 July 2018.

qunuan. As members are all engaged in market peddling and small entrepreneurship, the MCAM is meant to help and share business information within the association. The MCAM negotiated with suppliers back in China to send goods directly to the traders instead of going via agencies, in order to cut down costs. Also, on behalf of the members, the MCAM is responsible for talking with the local management and other associations for business issues. MCAM also organized a couple of trips to explore the business opportunity in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Dubai, and even Iran.

Efforts that came next to strengthen the community included measures to keep the community safe and provide organizational help to individuals. Dealing with cases of blackmail and robbery seemed most urgent. When asked about the reason for setting up an association, the active members all mentioned "to work together to protect ourselves from being bullied." And mobilizing members to help the members in need has always been the most important. Soon after it was founded, the MCAM called on its members to donate to the family of Jiang Meiying who died from an operation in Moscow. Through practices like these, an emotional belonging developed.

3.3.2 Connecting the native place

The founding of a traditional native-place-based association focuses on loyalty to the native place. Activities would be organized by the MCAM on traditional celebrations in the Chinese calendar, such as the Spring Festival, *Qing Ming* Festival and Mid-autumn Festival. These occasions helped to strengthen the imaginary of their hometown, thousands of miles away.

The consequences of the traditional association are not only emotional, but also practical. It has provided a good channel for the home town government to reach its overseas citizens and vice versa. The MCAM received officials from Jian'ou who usually brought information about hometown policies. Frequent interactions encourage these overseas traders to actively engage with their home societies through charity, political participation and economic involvement, which were especially meaningful to the elite members.

With regard to the economic aspect, some traders invested in Jian'ou, among which some investments such as Dafengche Kindergarten, Zhongyi Paper products etc., were successful, though there were many that were unsuccessful such as the Jintai Department Store owned by Zhou Caixiu. Their involvement in Jian'ou economy has been active.

In terms of political participation, the MCAM offered its members a unique path towards local politics. So far, four members are or used to be representatives

of People's Congress at a county or prefecture level, three are CPPCC (Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference) members, eight are honorary directors of the Federation of Returned Chinese at various levels, and some became leaders of other commerce chambers and female entrepreneur associations.

The involvement in their home society has been facilitated by a sister organization that originated from the MCEM in Moscow: Moscow Entrepreneurs' Association of Minbei in Jian'ou (MEAM). In 2008, when hundreds of MCAM members left Russia and came back to settle in Jian'ou, some active members including Wang Kaiming, and Ou Shuihua set up the Moscow Entrepreneurs' Association of Minbei (MEAM), which was registered in Jian'ou, supported by the local Federation of Returned Chinese. The members of MCAM automatically became members of the MEAM. It was meant to offer a meeting point for returnees from abroad, but it developed into an independent organization involved significantly in their home society. MEAM provides help including business information and investment to members. As expressed in the MEAM charter, MEAM is expected to connect Minbei, Fujian, China and the world.

In 2009, an affiliated charity organization was founded: the Compassion-Hope Fund. The fund has already collected more than 4 million yuan from members in Jian'ou, Moscow, Central Asia and even Africa. It has helped about 200 underprivileged students so far to complete their schooling in Jian'ou and Daliangshan in Sichuan. It has also made donations to help with the building of express roads and rural libraries in Jian'ou. Help also has been offered to senior citizens in communities.

What they have been proud of is that they have associations both in Moscow and Jian'ou, which cover their life from home and abroad. At both ends of the bridge built by the MCAM and the MEAM, a transnational community of Jian'ou entrepreneurs has been created, which inevitably leads to closer emotional ties with the hometown as well as a rise in their social position in the home society.

3.3.3 Bridging the gap between the state and the members

As Nyiri pointed out, "Provincial, county and village identities are firmly subsumed in a single national discourse of patriotism and socialist modernization" (2007, 110). As it was registered with the Chinese Embassy, the MCAM was guided to build and consolidate ties with the home country which leads to loyalty to the state. Their identity as traveling Chinese traders has been molded and strengthened with the guidance of the state.

The MCAM has been supported by the Chinese Embassy with regard to many issues, for example, the election of leading committee of the MCAM,

coordination with other Chinese associations and some activities related to the local society, as the Embassy represents the Chinese state. The MCAM makes it more efficient to deal with local societies. When Moscow was hit by a snow storm, MCAM members made donations to Moscow authorities via the Chinese Embassy. After the ACT market was closed abruptly, Chinese traders were unable to take their goods out. At this critical moment, the Embassy stood out, and worked with the Chinese associations in order to talk with local authorities; in the end, the Russian government allowed the traders to withdraw their stocks and thus prevented further loss.

MCAM and MEAM act as a bridge between the state and member traders. The officials of the Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese (*qiaolian*) and the Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs (*qiaoban*) are invited to visit them regularly, explaining policies to them and listening to their voices via MCAM and MEAM.

Even before it was founded, the prep committee of the MCAM organized Jian'ou traders to participate in the activities sponsored by the Chinese Embassy, for instance, celebrating Beijing's successful 2008 Olympic bid on 13 July 2001. MCAM members organized a dragon dance group to lead the celebration parade. It was the first time for them to become aware of their shared identity: Chinese entrepreneurs in Moscow. Excited by this realization, they were still moved to tears when they recalled their experience in our interviews seventeen years later. Obviously, through an association, the emotional affinity to the nation – a Chinese identity – was aroused.

3.4 A transnational entrepreneurs' network

According to Philip Kuhn, the niche and corridor (Kuhn 2008, 43) that Chinese immigrants have been building is what pushes the migration wave forward and makes it last. By "niche", he refers to the occupational specialty or social role in which a migrant group can survive and corridors indicate connective links and living cultural spaces extended from the home society (Kuhn 2008, 46). Today's corridors built by new immigrants "display a wide variety of types and scales" (Kuhn 2008, 372), combined with some old and new styles. "One notable innovation is large-scale migrant associations on national templates, supported by government agencies, which manage to keep linkages either to particular Qiaoxiang, to kinship or dialect groups, or to the Chinese state." (Kuhn 2008, 372)

In the case of Jian'ou immigrant traders, the basis of the corridors are traditional including the family links and native place bonds. The modern state comes in, represented by the home town government and the Chinese Embassy, coordinated by the immigrant elite via associations. The corridors built by Jian'ou traders

to Moscow have been unique in certain ways. The two ends of the corridor are more open and wide spread. Business opportunities brought Jian'ou traders to the open air markets of Moscow, and it has also brought them beyond Moscow. After their experience and practice of migration to Moscow, some migrants moved on to other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Even during the beginning stages of migration before the turn of the century, Li Rongji transmigrated to find her fortune in Almaty. Following in her footsteps, more than 200 Jian'ou traders set up their business in Almaty and then Osh in the following years. The MCAM organized trips to some countries in order to expand the scope of their business. A few members then established their businesses in Poland, Hungary, and even Africa, which shows that the overseas part of the transnational corridor built by Jian'ou market traders has already become a regional network, beyond a traditional cross-border template. Meanwhile, the domestic side too goes beyond the idea of "roots" which has traditionally been restricted to a person's home town or even home village. The member traders came back to China again to pursue business opportunities. Not surprisingly, Jian'ou was not the only choice of destination. Central cities in the Fujian Province like Xiamen and Fuzhou became places of their investment. Other cities like Shanghai, Beijing and Hong Kong are most attractive to them. The social network created and preserved through the MCAM and MEAM has spread widely beyond the original hometown (*qiaoxiang*).

In this community, the members are no longer engaged in the same occupation, which means the MCAM and MEAM are no longer guilds. Some of them are still engaged in the trade sector, some set up firms to produce goods sold in Russia and Central Asia by their member traders, and some produce goods to sell all over the world. Ye Zhenquan now runs a factory in Xinji, Hebei, producing leather jackets to be sold in Moscow. Wang Kaiming set up a shopping center in Pakistan. Li Rongji has bought a whole street of stores in Osh. Ou Shuihua set up a kindergarten in Jian'ou which is developing very well. Wang Mingzhu is still doing business in Moscow but lives most of the time in Shanghai. Xu Jian came back ten years ago to devote time to his firm Zhongyi Paper Products.

The associations have been transformed into platforms where members may obtain investment support, emotional support and social capital. They are responsible for receiving officials from their home province. On behalf of the association, they make donations to the home society. All these aspects are useful to lever preferential treatment in possible local investment projects. Tu Shenghui, the first director of the MCAM, was elected the first director of the Jian'ou Chamber of Commerce in Beijing. Wang Kaiming, the first vice director of the MCAM, was elected the first director of MEAM. By joining the associations, younger traders have obtained support, financial and social, to start their business and initiated political involvement in society. Huang Bin, the first PhD

graduate from Moscow University in this community, became the new director of the MCAM. Zhang Yuanlan, back from Moscow and then Africa, has been active in the MEAM and set up a new firm to produce traditional lanterns with a very good market abroad. Liu Meifeng, in her 30s, has been elected as a representative of the People's Congress in Nanping City, which would be impossible without the support of the association as, she said, "I was born and raised in a village and did not get much education."

To most members of the MCAM and MEAM, the associations offer a sense of community, while to the active elite members, the associations are more than emotionally relevant: they are a platform leading to the creation of a transnational social space.

4 Conclusion

A ten-strong labor export scheme in 1992 started a lasting emigration wave from Jian'ou, the small agrarian county in Northern Fujian. The migrants followed business opportunities to Moscow, and then Central Asia and Eastern Europe, first as market peddlers in the open-air markets of Moscow and later as members of an active transnational entrepreneurship network.

This unique entrepreneurial migration has relied on traditional compatriotism of familial moral obligations and, interestingly, female friendship. The logic of patronage and the idea of returning favors have played an important role in this migration chain. Apart from traditional compatriotism, female immigrants have given this group special resources to fight against challenging circumstances such as corruption, robbery and blackmail in Russia. Furthermore, as traders, female immigrants were more competitive since they were better at communicating. However, it remains unknown whether this female activated and dominating migration wave would have brought any change or rise in social position of women in patriarchal society. More in-depth research on this topic needs to be done.

The immigrants from Jian'ou carved out an economic niche of entrepreneurship in Moscow and then Central Asia through these decades. According to Kuhn (2008), this occupational specialty has been needed in the host society. Since 1989, when Chinese-Russian relations normalized, the scarcity of consumer goods and labor in Russia attracted Chinese traders and Chinese goods. The policies of both countries encouraged the trade. Significantly, the trade that Jian'ou immigrants have been engaged in has been sustained and fueled by the fact that China as the factory of the world since the

1980s was skilled at producing consumer goods that the migrants could sell in Russia and Central Asia, such as clothes, shoes and small home appliances.

Immigration associations have always played a key role in constructing the transnational corridor. Originally established to work together to keep warm (*baotuan qunuan*) and foster business and community security, the Minbei Chinese Association of Moscow followed by the Moscow Entrepreneurs' Association of Minbei offered the members a platform for business as well as social and emotional support at both ends of the transnational corridor. In the era of globalization and regionalization, both ends of the corridor developed in width and depth. Outside of China, the immigrants have spread their network beyond Moscow to other countries, such as Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan, where they attempt to integrate into local society both economically and socially. Inside China, the returnees have gone beyond their home town, unlike the traditional way, and established themselves in central cities with better business opportunities. At whichever end of the corridor they find themselves, they remain part of the transnational network, with regard to their business, social capital and emotional belonging.

In the process of immigration and transmigration, the traditional compatriotism of family and kinship relations was at play. The unique characteristics of these relations include female friendships and the joint efforts of the associations on both sides of the transnational corridor. Within this corridor between Jian'ou and Moscow, new *logics* behind the migration practice were constructed, from the traditional family and kinship moral obligation, interpersonal friendship, to the loyalty to the native town and Chinese state, by cultural traditions and various levels of state agency. The associations have been acting as a bridge between all these forces and incorporating them into the transnational social space.

A new generation has emerged and already entered the core of the associations and the transnational corridor. Outside of China, some of them have begun integrating to some extent to the host society. Inside China, they are less attached to Jian'ou, their hometown. Also, with the immigrant community and business environment being more secure in Russia and Central Asia, more men have joined this network and the gender aspect may change. Further in-depth research might be interesting.

Bibliography

Chang, Felix. *Chinese Migrants in Russian, Central Asia and Eastern Europe*. London and New York: Routledge, 2012.

Dai, Guiju. "Russia: Population Problem and Immigration Policy." *Journal of Studies on Russia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe* 3 (2004): 15–21.

Deng, Lanhua, and Hong Zhang. "Overseas Chinese in Russia and the Russian Immigrant Policy." *Journal of Overseas Chinese History Studies* 2 (2005): 25–37.

Kuhn, Philip A. *Chinese Among Others: Emigration in Modern Times*. Singapore: NUS Press, 2008.

Larin, Alexander G. "Overseas Chinese in Russia: A Historical Survey." Translated by Yan Guodong. *Journal of Overseas Chinese History Studies* 2 (2005): 1–17.

Larin, Alexander G. "Chinese Migrants: Their Views on the Work, Education, and Living Conditions in Russia." *Studies on Russian Economic Development* 20.3 (2009): 326–341.

Li, Minghuan. *Seeing Transnationally: How Chinese Migrants Make Their Dreams Come True*. Hangzhou: Zhejing University Press, 2013.

Nyíri, Pál. *Chinese in Eastern Europe and Russia: A Middleman Minority in a Transnational Era*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007.

Portyakov, Vladimir. "New Chinese Migrants in Russia: A Phenomenon of Reality and Research Subject." Translated by Chen Xiaoyun. *Journal of Overseas Chinese History* 2 (2005): 18–24.

Ryazantsev, Sergey, and Yi Wang. "Immigrant Labor in Russia and Chinese Immigrants." *Journal of Overseas Chinese History* 1 (2015): 34–44.

Wang, Yi. "An Overview on Chinese in Russia in 2015." *Journal of Overseas Chinese History Studies* 1 (2016): 19–28.

Yu, Tao. *Chinese Businessmen in Moscow: the Survival Behavior of a Transnational Migration Group*. Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2016.

Cao Xu
Kulturelle Identität der zweiten Generation chinesischer Einwanderer in Europa: Eine Fallstudie von Studierenden in China

Abstract: This article illuminates the multiple factors that shape the formation of cultural identity among second-generation Chinese immigrants. The massive movement of migrants from China to Europe began in the nineteenth century and, since then, Chinese migrants to Europe have shaped new migration paths and built their own communities. With a presence in many European countries, Chinese migrants have not only crossed national borders but also overcome a multitude of challenges, including cultural and linguistic differences. This article outlines the long-term impact that these numerous challenges have had on second-generation Chinese immigrants. Though most of these migrants were born in Europe, they constantly face cultural conflicts and experience differences in family structures from the host country that make the process of developing a stable and strong cultural identity for themselves difficult. The shaping of a personal cultural identity embodies self-assertion and is vital to identity formation in cultural and ethnic conflicts, especially in times of globalization. This article delves into the multiple threads of cultural identity formation and the personal lives of second-generation Chinese migrants. Investigating the self-perception of this group, it also delineates their understanding of belonging and cultural difference in Europe.[1]

1 Einleitung

Unter den bisherigen Forschungen zu neuen chinesischen Immigranten in Europa gibt es relativ wenige, die ausschließlich dem Identitätsproblem der europäischen chinesischen Immigranten, insbesondere deren zweiter Generation, gewidmet sind. Die Forschung über die Identität der zweiten Generation von Immigranten fand zuerst in den USA statt. Die Identitätsforschung nutzte den Pragmatismus von William James (1890) und den soziologischen

---

Ansatz von George Herbert Mead (1934). Neben der Soziologie wurde die Identität meistens in der Psychologie erforscht. Erik H. Erikson (1979) entwickelte das Instanzmodell von Sigmund Freud (1923) weiter und erforschte die Bedeutung von Identität in der Psychoanalyse. Ferner lässt sich das Identitätsproblem in der Sozialpsychologie, Entwicklungspsychologie, im Strukturfunktionalismus oder dem strukturellen symbolischen Interaktionismus usw. diskutieren. Unter dem Identitätsbegriff versteht man in einer solchen Diskussion die kategorische Unterteilung in eine soziale und eine personale Identität (Mead 1934, 194–195), und zwar die Identität als die Selbstbestimmung und die Zugehörigkeit zu einer sozialen Gruppe sowie als den Orientierungs- und Bezugsrahmen für bewusst oder unbewusst ablaufende Verhaltensweisen und Einstellungen.

In der kritischen Gesellschaftstheorie von Jürgen Habermas (1994) ist von einem kommunikativen Handeln die Rede. In der Postmoderne kann sich eine stabile Identitätsbildung aufgrund gesellschaftlicher Umbruchprozesse und einer fortschreitenden Pluralisierung der Lebenswelten nicht mehr aufrechterhalten, sondern sie wird immer fragmentiert und pluralisiert. Kulturelle Identität ist ein herausstechender Teil sozialer Identität. Sie ist nicht nur ein psychologischer bzw. sozialpsychologischer Terminus, vielmehr bildet sie den sozialen Hintergrund, vor dem sich das Individuum durch interaktives Verhalten nicht nur aus seiner persönlichen, sondern vielmehr aus seiner sozialen Bedingtheit heraus verstehen lässt. Die kulturelle Identität von Immigranten, insbesondere der zweiten Generation, die in den meisten Fällen im schwierigen Umgang mit den Kulturen aufgewachsen ist, erweist sich als ein bemerkenswerter Sozialisations- und Psychoprozess. Die kulturelle Identifikation ist für die zweite Generation durch kulturbezogene Erfahrungen fast immer eine konfliktreiche Anpassung. Die kulturelle Identität der in einem multikulturellen Kontext lebenden Immigranten entwickelt sich aus Prozessen in Bezug auf interpersonale Beziehungen, gesellschaftliche Integration und persönliche Psychostabilität.

Der hier vorliegende Artikel setzt sich zum Ziel zu erforschen, wie sich die kulturelle Identitätsbildung bei der zweiten Generation der chinesischen Immigranten entfaltet und inwiefern die kulturelle Identität von ihnen durch ihre Selbsterzählungen wahrgenommen werden kann. Auf Grundlage der dargebotenen Forschungslagen zur kulturellen Identität der zweiten Generation von chinesischen Immigranten in Europa ergeben sich folgende Fragestellungen für die vorliegende Arbeit:

Wie sieht die kulturelle Identität der zweiten Generation von chinesischen Immigranten aus? Wie verstehen sie die Probleme sowie die Besonderheiten bezüglich der Zugehörigkeit und kultureller Unterschiede? Welche Beziehung gibt es zwischen der kulturellen Identität und ihren persönlichen Lebensentwürfen?

Um die Fragen zu beantworten, wird die kulturelle Identität als ein kommunikatives Konstrukt behandelt. Die Qualität der Identität enthält praktische, soziale, historische, biographische, kognitive, motivationale, emotionale und imaginative Aspekte konkreter menschlicher Existenzen (Straub 1995, 44). Die zur Sprache gebrachten Beschreibungen, Erzählungen und Hinweise zeigen am Behauptungshorizont die handelnde Natur der Ich-Identität auf, bei der sich Werte, Gefühle, Emotionen, Einstellungen usw. nicht klar unterscheiden und abstecken lassen. Die biographische Erzählung über eigene Erfahrungen und Gefühle gilt bei der Analyse der kulturellen Identität als ein weites Spektrum.

Die Identitätsbesonderheiten lassen sich durch narrative Interviews herausfinden. Bei der Forschung über die Identität geht es um eine Struktur des Selbstverhältnisses von Personen, die in eine entwickelte Einheit mündet. Einerseits scheinen Ausdrücke wie Identitätskrise, Identitätsspaltung oder Identitätsverlust ohne den Konsens, dass Identität in einer Einheitsform entsteht, bedeutungslos, weil kulturelle Identität in einem verflochtenen Aufbau beobachtet werden soll. Andererseits lassen sich kulturelle Identitäten ohne Bewertungsmaximen keinesfalls angemessen qualifizieren (Straub 1995, 46). Kulturelle Identität ist also als eine Hybridität aus gemischten Elementen anzusehen, die im Zusammenhang strukturell analysiert werden.

2 Ausgangsüberlegungen

2.1 Die zweite Generation von Immigranten

Von internationaler Migration spricht man dann, wenn diese über Staatsgrenzen hinweg geschieht (siehe BAMF 2006). Nach der Definition der UNESCO ist ein Migrant „any person who lives temporarily or permanently in a country where he or she was not born, and has acquired some significant social ties to this country".[2] Mit Migration ist üblicherweise die internationale Wanderung von Menschen gemeint, unter deren Begriff gleichsam die Unterteilungen in permanente Migration, internationale Arbeiter, internationale Flüchtlinge und illegale Migranten usw. vorgenommen werden kann. Je nach Datenquelle ist die Definition für Migration sowie Migranten unterschiedlich.

Die Definition für die zweite Generation von Migranten ist ebenfalls unterschiedlich. Eine weit akzeptierte Definition z. B. in den USA ist „born in the

---

2 „Migrant/Migration." http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/migrant/ (9. Februar 2017).

United States to immigrant parents" (Pew Research Centre 2004). Demnach soll die zweite Generation von Immigranten im Empfangsland geboren sein und mindestens einen Elternteil mit Migrationshintergrund haben. Doch hier werden diejenigen, die im Herkunftsland geboren, aber frühzeitig eingewandert sind, außer Acht gelassen. Sie zählen in Forschungen zu jungen Zuwanderern und werden als die „1,5 Generation" bezeichnet (Ellis und Goodwin-White 2006, 3). Aber dennoch teilen diese jungen Zuwanderer viele Gemeinsamkeiten und zeigen ähnliche Identitätsprobleme wie die im Zielland Geborenen. In diesem Beitrag werden Angehörige der Nachwuchsgeneration der Immigranten, die im Zielland geboren oder vor dem ersten Schuljahr eingewandert sind, gleichsam in die Betrachtung der zweiten Generation chinesischer Herkunft einbezogen.

2.2 Kulturelle Identität der zweiten Generation von Immigranten

Die Identitätsbildung fällt Migranten oft schwer, weil sie vor dem komplexen Anspruch stehen, die Multi-Identitäten des Ursprungslandes, des Empfangslandes und ihrer ethnischen Minoritätsgruppe zu kombinieren. Aber diese Komplexität erlaubt es besonders jugendlichen Migranten, sich eine Flexibilität der kulturellen Identität zu verschaffen. Die Zahl der Immigrantenkinder und -adoleszenten nimmt weltweit zu (Adler und Gielen 2003, 25). In Ländern wie Kanada, Frankreich und Deutschland liegt die Prozentzahl von Immigrantenadoleszenten unten allen Adoleszenten bei 15–25 % (Gielen und Chumachenko 2004, 88) und die Zahl wird sogar immer höher aufgrund des anwachsenden Zuflusses in den letzten Jahren. Mit der Globalisierung verdeutlicht das Identitätsproblem der Migranten bei vielen soziologischen Theoretikern in postmodernen Konzeptionen das Kernzeichen des Sozialwandels, leider gibt es noch relativ wenige Forschungen über die kulturelle Identität der Kinder von Migranten (Adler und Gielen 2003, 27–28). Hingegen sind die kulturellen Identitäten der zweiten Generation der Immigranten von großer Bedeutung, weil sie als Faktoren der kulturellen Konstruktion des Empfangslandes gesehen werden können.

Immigration ist ein spezielles Beispiel von Intergruppen-Interaktion und bietet daher einen Zugang zu einer neuen Sicht auf kulturelle Transition in den psychosozialen Theorien (Deaux 2000, 426). Es gibt bisher relativ wenige Forschungen über die kulturelle Identität chinesischer Immigranten weltweit, während einige Forschungen zu asiatischen Immigranten in Europa entstehen, die die sprachsoziologischen Aspekte beleuchten sollen (vgl. Hartmann 2009; Hyun 2012).

Ein Leben im multikulturellen Kontext ist für Zuwanderer- und Migrationsgruppen typisch. Die Identitätsbildung beginnt mit Antworten auf die Fragen:

Wer bin ich? Wer möchte ich sein? Wohin gehöre ich? Phinney (2010) unterscheidet in ihrer Forschung zwischen vier kulturellen Identitätstypen, die für die eigene Identitätserklärung geeignet sind: ethnisch eingebettet oder segregiert; national orientiert oder assimiliert; bikulturell oder integriert; diffus oder marginalisiert. Die ersten zwei bilden jeweils die kulturelle Identität in Bezug auf die Vorfahren und die Menschen in ihrem Lebenskreis, während die dritte eine gewisse Flexibilität aufweist und die Integration der ersten beiden aufzeigt. Bei der vierten kommt es zu Verwirrung und Instabilität. Beim Wahlspiel zwischen Identitäten ist die Zeit der Adoleszenz oder die als junger Erwachsener der entscheidende Zeitraum, in dem junge Menschen sich bemühen, ihren eigenen Platz in der Welt zu finden. Jugendliche handeln und fällen Entscheidungen bei der Entwicklung ihrer Identität, die in der Familie, in der Schule und anderen Zusammenhängen stattfindet. Die Verhaltensaspekte der kulturellen Identitäten sind Teil der kulturellen Praxis, welche die Verbundenheit und Verwicklung mit einer spezifischen Kulturgruppe veranschaulicht. Sie enthält eine gemeinsame Sprache, gleiche Traditionen und Rituale, Unterstützung der Werte und Normen, die Teilnahme an gemeinsamen Treffen und Organisationen sowie die Kenntnis ethnischer und nationaler Geschichte.

Die kulturelle Identität gerät in der Familie in den Punkten in einen Konflikt, wo die elterliche Betonung der ethnischen Tradition und Kultur mit den Bedürfnissen der Jugendlichen, sich in die Gesellschaft zu integrieren (oft politisch), konfrontiert wird. In einer von östlicher Kultur geprägten Familie in einem westlichen Land verlangt man von den Kindern und Jugendlichen, die Familie zu achten, und diese Erwartung kollidiert oft mit der Unabhängigkeit des jungen Zuwanderers.

Die Auslotung der kulturellen Identität hängt davon ab, welche Freundschaften geschlossen werden. Junge Zuwanderer stehen unter dem Druck der Gleichaltrigen, aus dem sowohl die generellen Wahlmöglichkeiten oder auch das Bedürfnis entstehen, einer Gruppe anzugehören. Identitätsoptionen werden von der Größe, Stärke sowie der Verbindlichkeit und dem Zusammenhalt einer ethnischen Gruppe bestimmt. Neben den interaktiven Einflüssen von Bekannten wird die kulturelle Identität auch durch den geschichtlichen Kontext, die Distanz zwischen Herkunftskultur und Aufnahmekultur, durch die Beziehung zur lokalen Gesellschaft usw. geprägt (Phinney et. al. 2001, 501).

Da im Zentrum der kulturellen Identität das Zugehörigkeitsgefühl steht und man im Bezug zu diesem Gefühl oft von einer vermischten Rollenwahl zwischen einem nationalen und einem ethnischen Charakter redet, beinhaltet sie bei Migranten auch einen solchen nationalen und einen ethnischen Aspekt (Phinney et. al. 2001, 502). Ein weithin akzeptiertes Modell besagt, dass nationale und ethnische Identität unabhängig voneinander existieren können. Bei Migranten zeigt

sich das Zugehörigkeitsgefühl zu zwei oder sogar mehreren Kulturgruppen deutlich (Berry 1997, 10). Diese Dualität der Identitätsgestalt oder der Synthese von Identitäten ist das Produkt einer positiven Anpassung während der Immigration.

Akhtar (2007, zitiert nach Bauer et. al. 2012, 38) formuliert die Identitätsbildung von Migranten auf vier Ebenen: „Von Liebe oder Hass zu Ambivalenz"; „Von nah oder fern zu optimaler Distanz"; „Von gestern oder morgen zu heute"; „Von dein oder mein zu unser". Die kulturelle Identität der Migranten liefert einen deutlichen Beweis für die „Einheit der Gegensätze". Bei der zweiten Generation ist nach Meads Modell das „I" eine „Synthese zwischen Herkunfts- und Aufnahmekultur", während das „me" die Orientierung in der Einwanderungskultur darstellt. Das Konstrukt des „me" fordert die Stabilität von „I". Höheres Migrationsalter ist immer mit stärkerer Orientierung an der Herkunftskultur assoziiert. In der Adoleszenz fehlt die Stabilität vom „I", aber die Fähigkeit des „me" ist eine dynamische Anpassung, die mit höherem Alter nachlässt.

Weiterhin spielt die Sprache bei Emotionen und persönlicher Neigungen eine bedeutende Rolle. Die Muttersprache funktioniert hierbei viel stärker als identitätsbildendes Merkmal als die erworbene Zweitsprache. In der Muttersprache sind die Aspekte der sozialen und personalen Identität verankert, während die Zweitsprache nur mit dem „me" zu tun hat. Bei der zweiten Generation entsteht der Konflikt zwischen den Identitätselementen, die sowohl auf sehr guten einheimischen Sprachkenntnissen basiert, wie auch auf der durch die ethnische Kultur geformten Identität (Bauer et. al. 2012, 38).

Die kulturelle Identität der Immigranten, besonders derer der zweiten Generation, steht für die Besonderheit des sozialen Wandels im postmodernen Kontext. Wie eine Person, die in einem multikulturellen Lebenszeitraum herangewachsen ist, ihre eigene kulturelle Identität bestimmt und wie sie darüber berichtet, weckt ein bedeutendes Forschungsinteresse.

2.3 Kulturelle Identität im postmodernen Kontext

Stuart Hall (1996) stellt zwei begriffliche Erfassungen von kultureller Identität fest (Hall 1996, 112). Die erste Position definiert die „kulturelle Identität" in Bezug auf eine gemeinsame Kultur, eine Art kollektives „ein wahres Selbst", welches sich in den vielen anderen oberflächlichen oder künstlich auferlegten „Selbst" versteckt, die alle Menschen mit einer gemeinsamen Geschichte und Abstammung gemeinsam haben. Die zweite Position erkennt an, dass es neben den vielen Gemeinsamkeiten auch kritische Punkte von tiefem und signifikantem Unterschied gibt, die ausmachen, „was wir wirklich sind". Das erste „wahre Selbst" (*one true self*) ist eine essenzielle Identität. Diese betont die kollektiven Gemeinsamkeiten, die eine

Einheit oder die Essenz eines Volks bilden. Die erste Definition beschreibt eine stabile und kontinuierliche Identität, die meistens von vielen oberflächlichen und künstlichen Aspekten gedeckt wird. Jedoch gerät diese Definition für die kulturelle Identität in der Geschichte der Diaspora ins Schwanken.

Die zweite Definition unterstreicht mit Nachdruck die Ähnlichkeiten und Unterschiede unter einer vorgestellten Kulturgruppe. Die kulturelle Identität ist ungewiss in ihren geschichtlichen und sozialen Änderungen. Halls zweite Definition steht im Einklang mit der Identitätstheorie der Postmoderne. Dazu unterscheidet Hall drei Auffassungen von Identität: Die Konzepte a) des Subjekts der Aufklärung, b) des soziologischen Subjekts und c) des postmodernen Subjekts. Das Subjekt der Aufklärung (a) ist mit dem Vermögen der Vernunft, des Bewusstseins und der Handlungsfähigkeit ausgestattet. Die Identität einer Person gilt als das essentielle Zentrum des Ichs. Das soziologische Subjekt (b) besagt, dass „der innere Kern des Subjekts nicht autonom war und sich selbst genügte, sondern im Verhältnis zu bedeutenden Anderen geformt wurde" (Hall 1994, 182), die dem Subjekt die Kultur vermitteln. Mit dem postmodernen Subjekt (c) ist gemeint, dass das Subjekt sich aus mehreren widersprüchlichen oder ungelösten Identitäten zusammensetzt. Hall bezeichnet diese Identität als „bewegliches Fest" und in diesem Sinne wird die kulturelle Identität kontinuierlich gebildet und verändert (Hall 1994, 182). Diese Konzeption der drei Auffassungen zeigt einen Wandlungsprozess für die kulturelle Identität und entspricht den Theorien von Goffman (1972), Stryker (2008), Tajfel und Turner (1986) über die Mannigfaltigkeit und Rollenwahl sowie die Dynamik der Identität.

Weitgehend unterstreicht Hall einige Gesichtspunkte, die mit dem Dualismus von Mead (1934) und Goffman (1972) kollidieren würden, und verschafft Aufschluss über die Identität in der Postmoderne. Das Problem geht über die Beziehung zwischen „I" und „me" hinaus und die dreifaltige Spaltung der Identität gilt bei Diskussionen über die (Post-)Moderne als nicht überzeugend, weil das Subjekt der Moderne immer ein fragmentiertes verwirrendes Bild zeigt. Hall spricht von der „Dezentrierung des cartesianischen Subjekts" (Hall 1994, 193). Moderne Nationen sind kulturell hybrid und die globalisierende Postmoderne untergräbt die Einheitlichkeit und Homogenität der Identität, während nun Identitäten der Hybridität ihren Platz einnehmen.

In dem vorliegenden Beitrag wird die kulturelle Identität in Anlehnung an Halls Definition als eine postmoderne Konzeption angesehen. Kulturelle Identität ist m. E. eine komplexe Hybridität, die hauptsächlich dynamische Zugehörigkeitsgefühle und handelnde Kategorienzuschreibungen zu einer oder mehreren Kulturgruppen einschließlich der verbindenden Werte, Rituale, Symbole usw. verbindet. Die soziale und die personale Identität stehen miteinander in einer Beziehung von Ursache und Wirkung. Zusammen kombiniert die Ich-Identität das Innere und das

Äußere, denn ein Mensch hat ein Bild von sich selbst und das Bild ist wesentlich durch die Interaktion mit den Anderen mitgeprägt. Den (post-)modernen Kontexten wird auch Rechnung getragen, daher stellt folgendes Modell (Abb. 1) eine Mischung von Kategorien und Aspekten anstatt einer Dreiteilung dar.
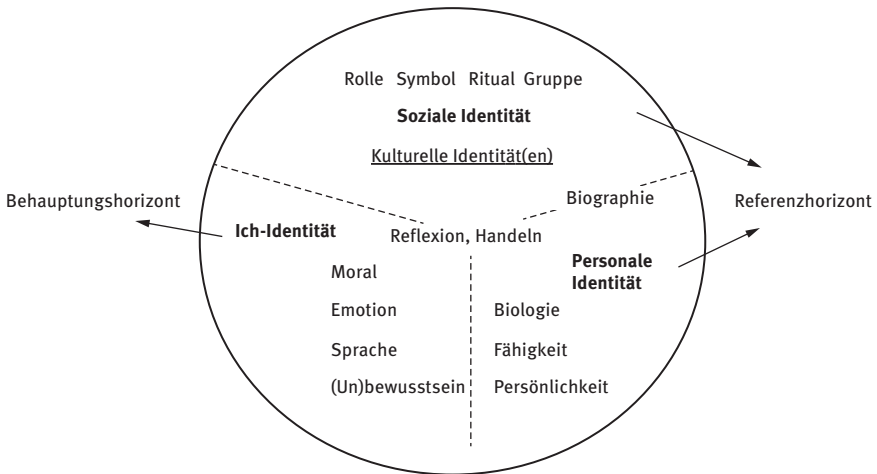
Abb. 1: Ich-Identität, Personale Identität, Soziale Identität.

3 Gegenstand und Durchführung der Untersuchung

Der Forschungsgegenstand dieser Arbeit ist die zweite Generation der chinesischen Immigranten in Europa. Die Befragten sind entweder im Empfangsland geboren oder aber in China geboren und dann im Zielland aufgewachsen. Insgesamt wurden sechs Interviews geführt mit Studierenden aus vier wichtigen europäischen Empfangsländern für die chinesischen Immigranten: Deutschland, Großbritannien, Italien und Dänemark. Die Befragten sind 19 bis 25 Jahre alt und fünf von ihnen studieren in Europa. Sie haben an einem Austauschprogramm der jeweiligen Universität teilgenommen, um in China zu studieren oder selbständig ein Projekt gesucht, um in China Chinesisch zu lernen. Sie bleiben, je nach ihrem jeweiligen Plan unterschiedlich für drei Monate oder ein Jahr, an der Zhejiang-Universität in der Stadt Hangzhou um zu studieren. Sie gehören alle nach der Definition in dieser Arbeit der zweiten Generation von Immigranten an.

Junge Erwachsene bilden bis zum 20. Lebensjahr ihre Welt- und Wertanschauungen aus, wobei sich die Identitätsbildung als schwergewichtig beweist.

Die Befragten erfahren in China vor Ort die kulturellen Unterschiede in Bezug auf sich selbst. Ihre Erzählung der eigenen Geschichte und ihrer Gefühle stimmen in diesem Kontext in vollem Umfang mit der kulturellen Identität überein. Interviews mit ihnen zu dieser Zeit an diesem Ort liefern einen aufschlussreichen und wertvollen Gesprächsinhalt, weil das Unbewusste und Unklare im Zusammenhang mit der kulturellen Identität nach aktiver Überlegung und den vielen kulturellen Umwelteinflüssen besser gedanklich strukturiert und sprachlich formuliert werden kann. Bei der Auswahl von Befragten fand insofern schon ein Ausleseprozess statt, als die zweite Generation, die nach China kommt und die chinesische Kultur und Sprache kennenlernen will, selbst durch viele Besonderheiten charakterisiert wird. Der Gesprächsinhalt wurde aufgenommen und dann wortwörtlich transkribiert. Alle Antworten aus dem Interview wurden in der Analyse berücksichtigt. Mit dieser Zahl von Interviews steht lediglich die Anschaulichkeit des Materials im Vordergrund nicht aber seiner Repräsentativität.

Eine qualitative Sozialforschung über die kulturelle Identität der zweiten Generation von chinesischen Immigranten in Europa wird methodisch durch halboffene narrative Interviews mit Leitfaden durchgeführt. Mit dem Leitfaden im Hintergrund wird die Einzelperson mündlich befragt, wobei die Themenstruktur als ein Grundgerüst zur Datenerhebung funktioniert. Eine Kombination aus Leitfaden und Artikulationsmöglichkeiten ist für diese Arbeit geeignet. Die offenen, halbstrukturierten Befragungen machen auf spezifische Aspekte aufmerksam. Ein solches Interviewverfahren ist die Methodenkombination eines qualitativen Interviews, einer Fallanalyse, der biografischen Methode und einer Inhaltsanalyse. Der Leitfaden wird inhaltlich in Hauptfragen und Detailfragen gegliedert und bildet die Grundlage der theoriegeleiteten Interpretation. Der Leitfaden wird in objektive und subjektive Aspekte aufgeteilt. Der objektive Aspekt umfasst sieben Hauptfragen in Bezug auf „Motivation nach China zu kommen", „Chinesischlernen", „Familie", „interpersonale Beziehung", „Tradition", „kollektive Aktivitäten" und „Medien", während der subjektive Aspekt sich aus fünf Hauptfragen in Bezug auf „Werte", „kulturelle Identität", „Gedanken über sich selbst", „Erzählung" und „zukünftige Pläne" zusammensetzt.

Diese Untersuchung bedient sich der qualitativen Inhaltsanalyse als Auswertungsmethode bzw. dem Einsatz der inhaltlich-strukturierenden qualitativen Inhaltsanalyse. Bei der Erkundung unklarer Sichtweisen, Phänomene und Erlebnisse sowie kultureller Fragestellungen ist es sinnvoll, inhaltsanalytisch vorzugehen. Das Ziel der Analyse ist, das Gesagte in ein Kommunikationsmodell einzuordnen. Die Erarbeitung des Kategoriensystems steht im Zentrum der qualitativen Inhaltsanalyse. Mittels eines Ablaufmodells wird der Text in Analyseeinheiten zerlegt und schrittweise bearbeitet (Mayring 2002; 2007).

In der Analyse wird eine deduktive Kategorienbildung durchgeführt. Deduktive Kategorien sind für die Entwicklung des Leitfadens und die Auswertung des Interviews von Bedeutung. Dieses deduktive Verfahren setzt mit der Definition der Kategorien an. Die Kategorien und Kodierregeln werden im Voraus theoretisch in Strukturierungsdimensionen festgelegt. Die untergeordneten Kodiereinheiten kommen einer inhaltlichen Strukturierung zu. Die Kodiereinheiten werden zusammengefasst und ihre Ergebnisse werden mit den vorab bedingten Vorüberlegungen des Interviewleitfadens verglichen. Die Kodes sowie die Einteilung der Auswertungseinheiten münden in den Kategorien und ihren Sekundärkategorien. Insgesamt werden in der Analyse und der Auswertung sieben Kategorien erstellt, nämlich: „Aufenthalt in China"; „Familie"; „Interpersonale Beziehung"; „Tradition und Aktivitäten"; „Kulturbezogene Erfahrungen und Meinungen im Vergleich"; „Sprache"; „Kulturelle Identität". Die Kodiereinheiten mit der Differenzierung zwischen Erzählung und Meinung entfallen schließlich auf die Sekundärkategorien, die die Analyse der Formulierung des oder der Befragten unterstützen.

4 Ergebnisse und Auswertung

4.1 Motivation für einen Aufenthalt in China

Während des Interviews geben die Befragten bezüglich ihrer Motivation nach China zu kommen alle an, aus eigenem Willen nach China gekommen zu sein. Den Befragten ist neben der Motivation des Sprachelernens und des Kulturerfahrens gemeinsam, dass sie sich über ihre Zukunft unsicher sind. Hier fällt auf, dass schon ein Ausleseprozess stattgefunden hat. Die Befragten, die zu einem bestimmten Zeitpunkt und an einem bestimmten Ort am Interview teilgenommen haben, weisen einen besonderen Zustand der Psyche auf. Zum einen haben alle Befragten eine offene Einstellung zu China und sie sind alle motiviert, sich mit der chinesischen Kultur auseinanderzusetzen und sich so über die Aufnahmekultur Gedanken zu machen. Zum anderen sind die Befragten schon Erwachsene und sie können die auf ihre Welt- und Wertanschauungen deutenden Ansichten und Meinungen relativ klar darstellen.

Der erste Eindruck aller Befragten ist von der schlechten Luftverschmutzung geprägt, weil sie die schöne Natur in Europa längst gewöhnt sind und die Verschmutzung für sie bei dem Gefühl, ob ihnen eine Stadt gefällt, eine wichtige Rolle spielt. Drei der Befragten stellen zusätzlich den Vergleich in Bezug auf das Bildungs- und Sozialsystem auf und bevorzugen das im jeweiligen Einwanderungsland (Befragte A, C und F). Weiterhin haben sie im Leben wenig Kontakt

mit chinesischen Studenten, sie sind eher mit anderen Austauschstudenten zusammen. Die vorgefassten Erwartungen für einen solchen Aufenthalt in China sowie die Sprachfähigkeit bestimmen ihre sozialen Aktivitäten.

Das Alter und die dementsprechende Persönlichkeitsbildung stehen mit Erfahrungen und Studien in Einklang. Diese kulturelle Adoleszenz bezeichnet die Bereitschaft und das Verständnis für Kulturunterschiede und -anpassung und gilt als ein intrapsychischer Prozess der Akkulturation. Ob man einfach nur das Unangenehme in China in Kauf nimmt oder aber versucht, Chinas positiven Seiten zu entdecken, sind völlig unterschiedliche Blickwinkel. Teilnehmerin A ist der Meinung, dass sie die Idee gut findet, in China zu leben und in China etwas lernen zu können, während Teilnehmerin B sagt, dass sie jetzt lediglich „getting used to it",[3] d. h. sie versucht, sich an das Leben in China zu gewöhnen. Und die Letztere meint auch, dass sie nichts Neues hier in China gelernt hat. Die beiden haben im Interview über das Negative in China (Umweltverschmutzung, Erziehungssystem, Manieren) berichtet, aber es besteht ein Unterschied bei der Einstellung und der Vorstellung, der auf ihre jeweilige Persönlichkeit und Erfahrungen zurückzuführen ist.

4.2 Familie

Die Familien der Befragten sind ursprünglich aus Südchina, nämlich aus Hong Kong und der Zhejiang-Provinz. In der Subkategorie „Herkunftsland und Hintergrund" teilen die Migrantenfamilien in verschiedenen Ländern einen ähnlichen Hintergrund. Die erste Generation kam entweder nach Europa, um der politischen sowie der wirtschaftlichen Unsicherheit zu entfliehen oder um bessere Ausbildung und Arbeitschancen zu finden. Sie arbeiteten meistens als Bedienung im Restaurant, als Chauffeur oder als Straßenhändler.

Die Befragten A und E geben an, dass ihre Eltern zuerst auf der Suche nach Arbeit und Studienchancen von Hong Kong nach Europa kamen. Und die Eltern von B, C, D und F sind durch die sogenannte „Migrantenkette" nach Europa ausgewandert. Ihre Eltern arbeiteten nach der „Familienwiedervereinigung" zuerst illegal in Europa und warteten auf die Einbürgerung. Daraus lässt sich folgern, dass sich die Befragten wenig über ihre Familienherkunft und den Auswanderungshintergrund informiert haben. Die Auswanderung passierte vor langer Zeit und sie waren damals kleine Kinder und können sich nur wenig er-

---

3 Im vorliegenden Beitrag werden die Aussagen von Befragten immer in der jeweils verwendeten Interviewsprache wortgetreu zitiert.

innern. Dies liegt auch daran, dass dies in den großen Familien der Migranten die übliche Praxis ist. Es scheint ihnen nichts Außergewöhnliches zu sein und sie fokussieren sich mehr auf das jetzige Leben. Frau C meint, es sei sogar ihr Schicksal, weil die herrschende Kultur der Auswanderung an ihrem Herkunftsort jedem bekannt ist:

> And actually, if you believe in that kind of things like destiny. [. . .] My destiny [. . .], it's like I would never grow up in China. Because when I was born, my family just knew that this child is not going to grow up in China, and that's why I don't have a Chinese name. My name is just Anna.

Und auch Frau A sagt:

> When I was young, I was certain that I would never live in China.

Es fehlt den beiden Interviewpartnerinnen ein klarer Vergleich, eben gerade weil sie in einer solchen Migrationskultur herangewachsen sind. In der Subkategorie „Eltern" wird auch die Hintergrundinformation zusammengeführt, wobei die Codes „Geschichte/Erzählung-Eltern" und „Meinung über die Eltern" zusammengefasst und weiter in der Kategorie „Interpersonale Beziehung" verweisbar angelegt werden. Die Angehörigen der ersten Generation haben in den ersten Jahren der Auswanderung eine schwere Zeit durchgemacht. Über die Lage der ersten Generation haben die Befragten eine ungefähre Idee. Es entsteht hier eine erwähnenswerte Besonderheit in der Subkategorie „Lebensumgebung im Einwanderungsland", die aber bei allen Befragten ähnlich ist. Die Familien der Befragten wohnen nicht in der Nähe von anderen chinesischen Immigranten, nicht in China-Town und haben wenig Kontakt mit anderen Chinesen.

4.3 Interpersonale Beziehungen

Die Identitätsbildung findet zuerst in der Familie statt, wo die Eltern als die ersten Lehrer und Vorbilder den Kindern kulturbezogene Verhaltensweisen mitteilen. Die Beziehung zu den Eltern bildet zum großen Teil die Identitätsbildung in der Kindheit. Einerseits bestehen die Eltern darauf, die ethnischen Traditionen und eine kulturelle Kontinuität fortzuführen. Andererseits erheben die Jugendlichen Bedürfnisse, in der Gesamtgesellschaft neue Richtungen zu erschließen. Die konservativen Gedanken der Eltern üben in der Subkategorie „Beziehung zu den Eltern" auf die Kinder negative Einflüsse aus. Solche Erfahrungen in der Kindheit wirken auf der unstabilen Grundlage der Selbsterkenntnis immer als etwas Unangenehmes.

Die Familie und der Umgang mit Freuden oder mit Gleichaltrigen in der Schule stellen die miteinander verflochtenen personale Identität und soziale Identität dar. Die Familie bildet eine „Innengruppe" im Gegensatz zum Lebenskreis in der Schule oder mit Freunden, wo das Kind auch versucht, seine „Innengruppe" zu erkennen. Die Kultur- und Wertverschiedenheiten zwischen Herkunfts- und Einwanderungskultur können viele Schwierigkeiten erzeugen. Die allgemeinen Gesetze der zwischenpersönlichen Beziehung in der Einwanderungsgesellschaft stehen aber im Widerspruch zu den Verhältnissen in der Familie, weswegen die Befragten in einen Zustand der Verwirrung und der Missverständnisse geraten sind. In ihrem jungen Alter waren sie nicht dazu befähigt, die Kulturunterschiede wahrzunehmen und zwischen den Anforderungen der Eltern und ihrer Identifizierung mit den Mitmenschen zu balancieren.

Dennoch kann man diese Situation später rückblickend gut nachvollziehen und das Verhalten der Eltern in der früheren Zeit verstehen, ob schon die Unzufriedenheit und der Widerwille bestehen bleiben.

> I guess since I was in university. [...] Actually, I really think if they didn't force me that much when I was younger, I'd have done naturally by myself. But the thing is, they did pressure me a lot. So, I was very like against it, even just you show they I wouldn't do what they want me to do, I'll comply but so but I was taking it very seriously.   (Frau B)

Später hat aber doch ihr Vater versucht, die Beziehung zu seiner Tochter zu verbessern, indem er sie umarmte. Körperlicher Kontakt als ein Ausdruck subjektiver Gefühle ist in der chinesischen Kultur sehr ungewöhnlich. D. h. der Vater versuchte auf eine Arte und Weise, die die Tochter möglicherweise akzeptieren würde, die Entfremdung zu lösen. Zu der Umarmung ihres Vaters meint Frau B:

> I really didn't expect it. So, at first it was a bit awkward for me, what should I do, should I hug back? He never did that before.

Hier wird deutlich, dass die Konflikte zwischen den zwei Generationen vielmehr die Konflikte zwischen zwei erlebten Kulturen darstellen. Die kulturbezogenen Verhaltensprobleme konnten die Befragten in ihrer Kindheit nicht so gut nachvollziehen. Die Forderungen der Eltern waren nicht mit denen der Einheimischen zu vereinbaren. Die Eltern spielen eine essenzielle Rolle bei der Entwicklung der Wertanschauung der Kinder. Die strenge traditionelle chinesische Erziehung erschwerte die Kommunikation mit den Kindern und das verschlechterte auch deren Identifizierung mit der Herkunftskultur. Aber mit der Zeit können die Befragten in ihrer Überlegung die Lage der Eltern verstehen, so Frau E:

> Ich bin positiv eigentlich, weil in China [...] viele Leute nie außerhalb China gewesen [sind], und ich finde sehr mutig, dass die erste Generation da ausgewandert ist um

> bessere Chancen für sich selbst zu finden, Zukunftschancen breit, neues kennenzulernen, selbst wenn sie Deutsch nicht kannte. Meine Mama konnte kein Deutsch. Ich fand, ich respektiere das wirklich sehr, dass sie sich es entschieden hat, allein nach Deutschland zu kommen und hier zu bleiben.

Es steht außer Zweifel, dass sich die Kategorisierung, Identifikation und Vergleichung in der Sozialpsychologie für die chronologische Analyse der Befragten eignet. Der Psychozustand sah sich während der Schulzeit mit einem großen Widerspruch konfrontiert, weil die zu Hause erworbene Kultur auf die einheimische stieß. Hier ereigneten sich nach den Angaben in den Subkategorien „Beziehung zu anderen Chinesischen Immigranten, Emigranten aus anderen Ländern und Kontakt mit Herkunftsland" und „Beziehung zu Freunden und Einheimischen" Konflikte beim Ungleichgewicht zwischen der Herkunftskultur und der Einwanderungskultur. Dabei spielt die Lebensumgebung eine entscheidende Rolle.

4.4 Tradition und Aktivitäten

Die in der Subkategorie „kulturbezogene Tradition" dargestellte Traditionspraxis erläutert die Rolle der Tradition der Herkunftskultur in einer Migrantenfamilie. Da sich die Familie in einem kleinen Dorf oder am Stadtrand befindet, trifft man sich wenig mit anderen Chinesen zu Festen und Feiertagen. Man feiert meistens im familiären Kreis zuhause und manchmal mit anderen Chinesen in der Nähe, oder man isst einfach im Restaurant. Die kollektiven Aktivitäten beschränkten sich auf die Familie und das Gefühl von Feiern und Festen als Ritual hat immer mehr nachgelassen. Im Zusammenhang mit traditionellen Festlichkeiten fällt einem im kleinen Familienkreis immer das Essen ein. Zum chinesischen Neujahr, zum Mondfest oder Drachenbootfest meint Frau A:

> Whenever it's like a festival mom would cook a special meal.

Ein anderer Grund dafür ist: zu chinesischen Festen hat man nicht immer frei, sondern man trifft sich eher zu Weihnachten, wenn die Feiertage im Einwanderungsland sind. Diese objektive Bedingung bestimmt die Praxis der Tradition und man soll sich weiter an die Kultur der Einheimischen anpassen. Auf diese Weise ist zwar die Esskultur beibehalten geblieben aber man feiert nicht wirklich die chinesischen traditionellen Feste.

Die kulturbezogenen kollektiven Aktivitäten werden in der Subkategorie „kollektive Aktivitäten" untersucht. In London gab es Feierlichkeiten zum chinesischen Neujahr, aber Frau A meint, es sind immer zu viele Leute da und sie kommt nur mit, wenn andere Freunde es wollen und sie ihnen die Kultur

zeigen kann. In der chinesischen Sprachschule musste man zum Neujahr tanzen und singen, aber sonst hat Frau E an relevanten Aktivitäten wie z. B. von der Studentenunion nicht teilgenommen.

Durch bestimmte Traditionen und kulturbezogene Verhaltensweisen werden diejenigen, die nicht das Gleiche praktizieren, ausgeschlossen. Eine Art symbolische Äußerung bedeutet immer die Nicht-Identifizierung bzw. Negation anderer Werte und deren symbolische Äußerung. Durch ihr Aufscheinen funktioniert die Identität zugleich integrierend wie auch abgrenzend. Mit der Praxis der Tradition wird das Bewusstsein für die Kultur ins Leben gerufen. Wenn aber die Praxis der Herkunftskultur schwach und mit der der einheimischen Kultur vermischt ist, bleibt die von Kultur geprägte Identität unstabil. Daher ist die Ausübung der Traditionspraxis eine Wechselwirkung zwischen der objektiven Umgebung und der subjektiven Anpassung.

4.5 Kulturbezogene Erfahrungen und Meinungen

Die Codes in der Subkategorie „Meinungen über Familien" überlappen sich oft mit denen in der Subkategorie „Beziehung zu den Eltern" und „Eltern". Hier wird zuerst in Anlehnung an die Analyse in der Kategorie „Interpersonale Beziehung" und „Familie" weiter über die Aussagen über die Familie diskutiert. Im Allgemeinen ändert sich die Eltern-Kind-Beziehung einer Migrantenfamilie mit der Zeit. Wie schon präsentiert, wird die Verbesserung der Verhältnisse von objektiven und subjektiven Faktoren von beiden Seiten ermöglicht. In den Erzählungen teilen alle Befragten einen ähnlichen Prozess, den sie nachvollziehen können.

In der Subkategorie „Studien- und Lebenserfahrungen" werden die kulturbezogenen Einzelfälle erörtert. Zusammenfassend hat man keine besonders schlechten kulturbezogenen Erfahrungen, die in rassistischen Ansichten von anderen begründet sind. Dennoch werden viele Kleinigkeiten erwähnt und die Meinungen der Befragten zu diesen Vorfällen zeigen ihr detailliertes Verständnis dazu auf.

Die vergleichenden Analysen in der Subkategorie „Verhaltens- und Denkweise" beschäftigen sich ferner mit den Erzählungen der Befragten, inwiefern sie sich von anderen unterscheiden und inwiefern, ihrer Meinung nach, sich die Kulturunterschiede auswirken. Da die Befragten es schon früh in der Pubertät erfahren haben, entwickeln sie allmählich eine eigene Stellung zu solchen Meinungsäußerungen von anderen. Alle Befragten können die vielen auffälligen Unterschiede zwischen den beiden Kulturen objektiv beschreiben. Zum Vergleich zwischen Kollektivismus und Individualismus sagte Herr D:

> Die Italiener sagen nicht "wir", sondern nur "die Italiener". Die benutzen nicht das Wort "wir".

Im Vergleich zu Verhaltens- und Denkweisen der Einheimischen halten die Befragten die Verwandtschaft in der Familie fest und stimmen einigen der Verhaltensweisen der Einheimischen nicht zu. Z. B. haben sie mehr Respekt für Leute in einer höheren Position und wollen sie siezen. Die Befragten halten einerseits partiell die Herkunftskultur für positiv und andererseits sind sie sich im Klaren über ihre Nachteile. Stereotype, wie dass Chinesen die Verkehrsregeln nicht einhalten, nach kurzfristigen Profiten suchen, immer laut sprechen oder immer kleine Gruppe formen, kennen sie schon. Sie sind der Meinung, dass diese auch nicht unbedingt die Wirklichkeit beschreiben. Diese und die auch in den Subkategorien „Umgebung und Atmosphäre" und „Staatliche Lagen" festgehaltenen Ansichten beweisen ihr Verständnis für beide Kulturen. Sie betonen die Einflüsse von der kulturellen Lebensumgebung und die Dauer der Zeit, die man in einer Kultur verbringt. Inzwischen distanzieren sie sich bei der Erzählung von beiden Kulturen und sind in der Lage, sich ein umfassendes Bild über die kulturbezogenen Aufmerksamkeiten zu schaffen. Über die objektiven Unterschiede zwischen China und dem Einwanderungsland können sie gut berichten.

Die Schulzeit ist eine sehr wichtige Periode, die die Stellung und die Gefühle zur Herkunftskultur prägt. Es geht um die Gegensätze zwischen Gruppenverhalten und individuellem Verhalten. Bei Heranwachsenden haben die Kinder der zweiten Generation wie die der Einheimischen das Bedürfnis, einer Gruppe von Gleichaltrigen anzugehören. Neben den Anforderungen der Eltern standen die Befragten häufig unter dem Druck der Gleichaltrigen. Es entstehen differenzierte kulturbezogene Praktiken, Kognitionsweisen und Fähigkeiten, die zu vielen Interaktionsschwierigkeiten in der Kindheit und der Pubertät führen. Die Formulierung von Frau F. verkörpert den psychologischen Anpassungsprozess der Befragten:

> Kinder können schon sehr gemein sein in der Grundschule, und im Kindergarten wurde ich auch ein bisschen gemobbt, ausgegrenzt. Für Kinder ist es immer so, ok sie ist anders, wir wollen nichts mit anderen Leuten zu tun haben, die anders sind. Das war für mich ganz schlimm, weil für mich [...] alle gleich [waren], aber für sie war ich eine Ausländerin. z. B. wenn meine Eltern mich in der Schule abholten, redeten wir auf Chinesisch einigermaßen, und die Schüler immer so ‚oh sie redet eine andere Sprache' und dann wird man mehr ausgegrenzt. Ja, ich glaube, als Kind ist es immer das Problem, dass man aktiv mit Bewusst ausgegrenzt wird und jetzt habe ich ganz nicht dieses Gefühl.

Bei der Darstellung von sich selbst benennen die Befragten Beispiele von anderen, um sich selbst zu bestimmen. Der Identitätsverlust geht mit der Orientierungslosigkeit einher. Im Anpassungsprozess wankt der Psychozustand zwischen dem Extrem des ethnisch eingebetteten und dem des national assimilierten Extrem. Wenn

das Gleichgewicht verloren ging, kam es zu einer Verwirrung der kulturellen Identität (Phinney et. al. 2001, 500–502). Die diffuse oder marginalisierte Identität ist unstabil und entwickelt sich im Laufe der Zeit zu einem der anderen Identitätsprofil. Das „I", das sich in der Handlung subjektiv bewusst ist, setzt sich zuerst in den Konflikt mit dem „me", das sich als organisierte Gruppe von Haltungen der anderen entwickelt. Die kulturelle Identität als Teil der sozialen Identität (das „me") ist bei den Befragten umstritten und dies führt zu einer verschlechterten Kausalität in der Wechselwirkung zwischen der personalen Identität, der sozialen Identität und der Ich-Identität, weil der Anpassung bei der Bildung der sozialen Identität im niedrigen Alter eine entscheidende Funktion zukommt. Aber wenn man älter wird ist die personale Identität konsolidiert und man bildet eine starke Ich-Identität. Dann ist die Dynamik der sozialen Identität keine gravierende Determinante.

4.6 Sprache

In der Subkategorie „Chinesischlernen" werden Geschichten und Meinungen in Bezug auf das Lernen der chinesischen Sprache dargelegt. Alle Befragten wurden während der Schulzeit in eine chinesische Sprachschule geschickt. Es war die Anforderung der Eltern, dass sie auch Chinesisch sprechen können sollten. Die chinesischen Sprachekurse fanden immer am Wochenende statt und dadurch auf Kosten der freien Zeit der Kinder. Damals waren die Befragen 10–16 Jahre alt. Sie können allgemein gut sprechen und hören, aber ihre Lese- und Schreibfähigkeiten sind schlecht. Die Beziehung zu den Eltern und der Umgang mit Freunden bestimmen die Emotionen, die man mit einer Sprache verbindet, und die Sprachfähigkeit wiederum ermöglicht den Kontakt zu anderen in Angelegenheiten, die die Intimität mit dieser Kultur bekräftigen. Die Interaktion zwischen Kultur und Sprache wirkt sich somit auf das Individuum aus.

Auf die Frage „Welche ist ihre Muttersprache?" antworten die Interviewten entweder mit der Sprache des Landes, in dem sie jetzt wohnen, oder es ist ihnen eher unklar. Die Befragten halten Chinesisch nicht für ihre Muttersprache, nur weil ihr Chinesisch nicht so gut ist. Frau A sagt, dass Chinesisch die Muttersprache ihrer Eltern ist. Frau F bezeichnet Deutsch als ihre Muttersprache. Es sei hier noch einmal klargestellt, dass die Befragten Theorien über den Spracherwerb und besonders zum Konzept von Muttersprache nicht wirklich kennen. Die Muttersprache ist die Sprache, die jeder als Kind von den Eltern oder anderen Bezugspersonen gelernt hat und im primären Sprachgebrauch verwendet (vgl. Meyers Enzyklopädisches Lexikon). Aber ihre Angaben zeigen, dass sie der Sprachfähigkeit in Bezug zur Verbundenheit mit der Kultur und im Vergleich zu der Verwandtschaft mit der Herkunftskultur in der Familie mehr

Gewicht beimessen. Es ist auch zu betonen, dass die Befragten, die eine positive Erfahrung in der chinesischen Sprachschule hatten, eine bessere Sprachfähigkeit haben und sich stärker bemühen, eine Nähe zur chinesischen Kultur und dem weiteren Spracherwerb zu erreichen.

Sprache und kulturelle Identität sind offenbar miteinander verbunden. Die Sprache ist das Organ des Denkens. Die sprachliche Vielfalt ist ein Teil der biologischen Vielfalt. So gesehen ist die Sprache Wort gewordene Kultur. Man muss die richtige Sprache sprechen, um in einer Gruppe dazuzugehören und sich zu integrieren. Laut Frau F ist die Sprache ein Schlüssel zur Erkundung einer Kultur. Obwohl sie sich teilweise als Chinesin sieht, ist sie sich noch durch die Sprachfähigkeit ihrer speziellen Identität bewusst und sie ist der Meinung, dass man eher willig ist, sich in der Einwanderungsgesellschaft zu integrieren, wenn man die dort herrschende Sprache besser spricht.

> When I first came here I was like hey, I could just blend in and no one would think that I'm from anywhere else but then I start speaking, they would be like 'oh you're not from here, where are you from?' So yeah, if I spoke better Chinese, I'll definitely feel like identity in language. (Frau A)

Die Analyse des Mutterspracherwerbs und der zweiten sowie der dritten Sprache setzt sich mit dem psychologischen Zustand der Migranten auseinander (Kohte-Meyer 2006, 2009). Die Befragten lernen gleichzeitig Chinesisch und die Sprache des Einwanderungslands. Kohte-Meyer gelangt in seiner Arbeit über die psychologische Funktion der Muttersprache zu dem Schluss, dass die Muttersprache die Psyche „organisieren" kann, weil die Muttersprache Zugang zu inneren Instanzen, Emotionen, Fantasien und Symbolen bietet.

Bei der zweiten Generation entstehen schon Kontradiktionen der zwei ersten Sprachen. Daher sind die durch Worte, Redemittel oder Sätze ausgesprochenen Bedeutungen der einen Sprache mit denen der anderen koordinierbar. Im Zuge der psychischen Integration kann genau aus diesem Grund vorübergehend zunächst eine verstärkte Verwirrung entstehen. Die einheimische Sprachfähigkeit wird durch pragmatische Alltagsbewältigung herangebildet, während Chinesisch unzulänglich gelernt wird. Daher werden viele Gefühle von der Herkunftskultur auf die einheimische Kultur übertragen. Die Herkunftskultur sowie die Herkunftssprache verlieren an Bedeutung (*identity salience*). Die weniger gebrauchte chinesische Sprache gerät in eine „innere Stummheit", sobald die zweite Generation sich immer mehr in die einheimische Gesellschaft integriert. Aber wenn die Befragten aktiv die Herkunftskultur kennenlernen, ist mit einer dynamischen Gleichgewichthaltung eine Neukonstituierung der sozialen Dimension der Ich-Identität möglich. Sie erreichen so eine Identifikation mit ihrer Ethnie aber identifizieren sich gleichzeitig auch als ein Bestandteil der Gesamtgesellschaft. Ihre Ausführungen über

sich selbst in der Subkategorie „Die Beziehung zwischen Sprache, Kultur und Identität" haben belegt, dass die Befragten eine dynamische bikulturelle Identität besitzen, derer sie sich oft unbewusst sind.

Die Befragten sind typischerweise mehrsprachig und besitzen immer Empathie für andere. Wer eine fremde Sprache lernt, erschließt sich auch eine zuvor fremde Welt. Beim Erwerb mehrerer Sprachen ist immer ein Transfer vorhanden. Wenn die zwei Sprachen einander ähnlich sind, erweist sich der Transfer als positiv, ansonsten wären ein negativer Transfer und Fehler zu erwarten (Huneke und Steinig 2010, 32). Chinesisch hat wenig Ähnlichkeit mit fast allen europäischen Sprachen. Die sprachlichen Schwierigkeiten können dazu beigetragen haben, dass die Befragten das Chinesisch-Lernen als zu schwierig einschätzen und dass sie durch ihre schlechten chinesischen Sprachkenntnisse wenig Interesse an ihrer Herkunftskultur haben.

4.7 Kulturelle Identität

In den Subkategorien „Definition für sich in Bezug auf kulturelle Identität" und „Erzählung und Meinung über sich selbst" werden die Erzählungen über die eigenen Identitäten der Befragten dargestellt. Die Befragten geben Antworten auf die Fragen „Wie definieren Sie sich?", „Halten Sie sich für chinesisch?", „Was ist ihre kulturelle Identität?". Die an den Befragten abzulesende bikulturelle Kondition entspricht der theoretischen Annahme dieser Arbeit. Die Betonung der chinesischen Kultur ist bei allen Befragten graduell unterschiedlich. Frau A, Frau C, Frau E und Frau F behaupteten im Interview, dass die chinesische Kultur ein ausschlaggebender Bestandteil ihrer Identität sei. Herrn D ist es nicht gelungen, eine klare Erklärung zu geben. Das Identitätsproblem scheint ihn zu verwirren und er versucht, den Fragen auszuweichen. Im Gegensatz dazu versteht Frau B zwar die Kulturprobleme, sie will sich aber nicht mit irgendeiner Identität gleichsetzen. Alle Stellungnahmen und Reaktionen zu den Interviewfragen weisen auf die jeweils individuellen Lebenserfahrungen und Persönlichkeiten hin. Je nach Lebensalter und Entwicklungsaufgaben (seitens der Schule und Familie) gibt es unterschiedliche Voraussetzungen für eine Stabilität der personalen Identität, die für die psychische Gesundheit erforderlich ist.

In der konflikt- und krisenreichen Erfahrung sind manche Identitätsfragmente unterdrückt, manche beachtet, aber später werden alle in eine integrative Gesamtgestalt überführt und so bewahrt. Die Fragmente der kulturellen Identität können durch Erzählungen über Tatbestände in groben Zügen angeführt werden. Die Identitätsbildung geht mit dem Bewusstseinsstrom einher. Die kulturbezogenen Aufspaltungen werden schlussendlich in eine Einheit des

Denkens verwandelt. Die Befragten im Interview befinden sich in verschiedenen Phasen dieser psychologischen Wandlung.

Das verborgene Bewusstsein für die kulturelle Identität des Einzelnen wird erst dann geweckt, wenn dieser ein besseres Überlegungsvermögen und eine bessere Kognitionsfähigkeit für herausragende Ereignisse entwickelt. Das Unbewusste wird in Krisensituationen aufgerufen. Ein typisches Beispiel dafür ist die Unzufriedenheit darüber, vom Kollektiv nicht akzeptiert zu werden. Aus Neugier oder von Stereotypen geleitet tendieren die anderen dazu, die zweite Generation anders zu behandeln. Dem Sozialisationsverlauf entsprechend, haben sich die meisten später allmählich angepasst. Die Gewohnheiten, Verhaltens- und Denkweisen sind verändert, bevor man diese Änderung im kulturellen Sinne bemerkt. Die Unsicherheit und Verzögerung der Befragten in den Erzählungen über sich selbst deuten an, dass das Thema der kulturellen Identität ihnen nicht häufig einfällt, wenn sie doch im Alltag mit den anderen zurechtkommen. Kulturelle Identität in diesem Sinne bedeutet bei ihnen eher eine persönliche individuelle Kultur. Daher ist bei den Befragten quasi eine „Subkultur" zu bemerken, sodass sie nicht unbedingt der sogenannten Hauptkultur folgen wollen, sondern selbstständig ihr eigenen Wertanschauungen formen. Die Entscheidungsfreiheit in Bezug auf ihre persönliche Identitätsbildung ist deutlich erkennbar. Diese bikulturellen jungen Erwachsenen wechseln von einem Kontext in einen anderen. Abhängig von der jeweiligen Handlungssituation können sie die jeweils bevorzugte Identität wählen.

> In Deutschland bin ich Chinesin und in China bin ich eine Ausländerin. Ich bin hier also in China, meine ich ok, ich bin keine Chinesin, ich bin eher eine Deutsche. (Frau F)

Mit der Entscheidungsfreiheit kommt die Sinnbildung im (post-)modernen Kontext in Frage. Das Deutungsrecht steht nur den Befragten selbst zu. Hier ist nicht von Identitätsdiffusion oder Identitätsverlust die Rede, sondern die Befragten lösen das Orientierungsproblem durch die Erhöhung ihrer Handlungsfähigkeit. Die ethnische Identität kann mit der nationalen koexistieren, während die Sinne in Bezug auf die kulturelle Identität neu erfunden werden. Der Sinn gilt nicht als etwas Gegebenes und Unveränderliches und ist nicht unbedingt erforderlich. Bei der Identitätsbildung kann die zweite Generation kreativ sein, wobei die Erfindung stärker ist als die Entdeckung.

5 Beschränkungen und Fazit

Sechs Interviews reichen sicher nicht aus, um die gesamte Situation der Zielgruppe zu repräsentieren, und die Forschungsgegenstände selbst sind

zusätzlich durch einen vorbedingten Ausleseprozess an sich beschränkt, daher sind sie nicht unbedingt repräsentativ für die zweite Generation von neuen chinesischen Immigranten in Europa. Die durch die eingesetzte Methode, Vertretern der zweiten Generation aus verschiedenen Einwanderungsländern im Rahmen der Befragung gleiche Interviewfragen zu stellen, erzielten Ergebnisse sollen daher wegen der quantitativen Einschränkung unter Berücksichtigung der individuellen Hintergründe differenziert interpretiert werden.

Für eine Verbesserung dieser Arbeit sollten mehr Interviews einbezogen werden. Wenn auch das Identitätsproblem mit der landesspezifischen Lage assoziiert wäre, könnte die Erforschung der kulturellen Identität durch die Erweiterung von Interviewpartnern vielfältiger und vollständiger sein. Wenn die Interviews in longitudinaler Weise mehrmals mit dem oder der gleichen Befragten durchgeführt werden könnten, könnten die Befragten mehr und bewusster über ihre kulturelle Identität erzählen und die Identitätsentwicklung würde sich in der Forschung chronologisch besser verfolgen und analysieren lassen.

Die kulturelle Identität ist ein wichtiger Teil der sozialen Identität. Sie betrifft die praktische, soziale, geschichtliche, biographische, kognitive, emotionale und imaginäre menschliche Existenz. Die kulturelle Identitätsbildung setzt sich dabei aus vielen Faktoren zusammen: Persönlichkeit, Erfahrung, Kognitions- und Handlungsfähigkeit sowie Sprache. Die kulturelle Identität ist als ein konfliktreicher sowie heterogen konstruierter Prozess anzusehen.

Die kulturelle Identität ist eine progressive Selbstbestimmung bei der Ich-Identität und die Rückversicherung gegen eine Vereinsamung. Der entscheidende Zeitraum für die Entwicklung kultureller Identität ist die Zeit des Heranwachsens (Pubertät). Man bemüht sich, sich in der Welt unter den diversen Anforderungen und Erwartungen zurechtzufinden und seinen eigenen Platz zu finden. Typischerweise gehört zu diesem Lebensabschnitt auch das Erlernen der Aspekte der Herkunftskultur und der Kultur der einheimischen Gesellschaft. Die Jugendlichen handeln und treffen Entscheidungen als Reaktion auf ihre Entwicklungsbedürfnisse. Bei der Entdeckung der Herkunft soll man immer zwischen den Wertidentifikationen entscheiden, daher muss der Verhandlungsakt zwischen der Identifikation und der Negation ständig neu ausgetragen werden, worin sein Dilemma liegt.

Zu diesem Zeitpunkt sollte man der zweiten Generation das Orientierungsproblem vor Augen führen. Die ontologische Unsicherheit verursacht eine *Auflösung des Ich* bei der Identitätsbildung, die nur für einen gewissen Zeitraum andauert. Man will sich nicht mit der Identitätsdesorientierung abfinden. Daher wird dann die Identität im Großen und Ganzen viererlei gestaltet: national, ethnisch, bikulturell oder marginalisiert. Die meisten Menschen können letztend-

lich ein sicheres Gefühl kultureller Identität entwickeln, obwohl sich das im Laufe des Lebens auch ändern kann. Sie erhalten die Identifikation mit ihrer Ethnie, haben aber auch das Gefühl, dass sie Teil der Gesamtgesellschaft sind. Da die Identität ein fortwährend ablaufender Interaktionsprozess zwischen Individuum und Gesellschaft ist, werden die zwei Sphären durch die handelnde Ich-Identität miteinander verflochten. In diesem Interaktionsprozess tritt die kulturelle Identität bei manchen stärker hervor, wenn beispielsweise der Kontakt zur Gesellschaft fehlt oder aber diese nicht im starken Kontrast zur Herkunftskultur steht.

Die kulturelle Identität ist immer eng mit der Sprache verknüpft, die kulturell vorgeprägt ist. Die Sprachfähigkeit gilt bei der Identitätsbildung als das Zünglein an der Waage: Die zweite Generation ist mehrsprachig. Sie fühlt sich in einer kulturellen Vielfalt und im Umgang mit Menschen mit Migrationshintergrund wohl. Die Sprachfähigkeit kann zur psychischen Stabilität beitragen, weswegen der Spracherwerb dem Erwerb einer ganzen Kultur gleicht.

Die zweite Generation hat mehrere kulturelle Identitäten und will sich nicht von anderen definieren lassen. Die Identitätsbildung ist in dieser Generation eine individuelle Neigung, während das Subjekt der Identitätskontexte dezentralisiert wird. Die kulturelle Identität ist somit eine teilbare Mischung von unterschiedlichen, variierenden Komponenten. Identität ist ein kommunikatives Konstrukt. Je nach Bedeutung in einem bestimmten Szenario ist die kulturelle Identität auch eine Rollenwahl. Die zweite Generation hat schon die Kulturen kombiniert und eine Hybridität gebildet. In dieser Dynamik entwickelt sie allmählich eine starke Ich-Identität.

Literatur

Adler, Leonore Loeb und Uwe P. Gielen. *Migration: Immigration and emigration in international perspective*. Westport: Praeger Publishers/Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003.

BAMF. *Integration in Zahlen*. Nürnberg: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge Referat 224, 2006.

Bauer, Susanne, Iris Tatjana Calliess und Katharina Behrens. „Kulturdynamisches Modell der bikulturellen Identität-Interkulturelle Psychotherapie unter Berücksichtigung der Struktur des Selbst." *Psychotherapeut* 57 (2012): 36–41.

Berry, John W. „Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation." *Applied psychology: An international review*, 46.1 (1997): 5–68.

Deaux, Kay. „Surveying the landscape of immigration: Social psychological perspectives." *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 10.5 (2000): 421–431.

Ellis, Mark und Jamie Goodwin-White. „1.5 Generation Internal Migration in the US: Dispersion from States of Immigration?" *IZA Discussion Paper* No. 2274 *(August 2006)*. https://ssrn.com/abstract=928827 (27. Februar 2017).

Erikson, Erikson Homburger. *Identität und Lebenszyklus*. Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1979.

Freud, Sigmund. „Das Ich und das Es." *Metapsychologische Schriften. Einleitung*. Hg. Alex Holder. Frankfurt a. M.: Fischer Taschenbuch-Verlag, 1994. 237–289.

Gielen, Uwe P. und Oksana Chumachenko. „All the world's children: The impact of global demographic trends and economic disparities". *Childhood and adolescence: Cross-cultural perspectives and applications (Advances in applied developmental psychology)*. Ed. Uwe P. Gielen and Jaipaul Roopnarine. Westport: Praeger Paperbacks, 2004. 81–109.

Goffman, Erving. *Stigma. Über Techniken der Bewältigung beschädigter Identität*. Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1972.

Habermas, Jürgen. *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*. Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp, 1994.

Hall, Stuart. *Rassismus und kulturelle Identität* (hrsg. und übers. von Ulrich Mehlem). Hamburg: Argument-Verlag, 1994.

Hall, Stuart. „Cultural Identity and Diaspora." *Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*. Ed. M. Contemporary Padmini. London: Arnold, 1996. 110–121.

Hartmann, A. *Koreanische Migration nach Österreich. Familie, Verwandtschaft und Netzwerke*. Univ. Wien: Diplomarbeit, 2009.

Huneke, Hans Werner und Wolfgang Steinig. *Deutsch als Fremdsprache. Eine Einführung*. Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 2010.

Hyun, Martin. *Ohne Fleiß kein Reis. Wie ich ein guter Deutscher wurde*. München: btb, 2012.

James, William. *The Principles of Psychology*. New York: Holt, 1890.

Kohte-Meyer, Irmhild. „Kindheit und Adoleszenz zwischen verschiedenen Kulturen und Sprachen. Eine interkulturelle Perspektive in der Psychoanalyse." *Transkulturelle Psychiatrie – Interkulturelle Psychotherapie. Interdisziplinäre Theorie und Praxis*. Hg. Ernestine Wohlfart und Manfred Zaumseil. Berlin: Springer, 2006. 81–94.

Kohte-Meyer, Irmhild. „Funktionsstörungen des Ich und die Neu-Orientierung der Ich-Identität im Migrationsprozess." *Klinische interkulturelle Psychotherapie. Ein Lehr- und Praxisbuch*. Hg. Yesim Erim. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2009. 145–157.

Mayring, Philipp. *Einführung in die qualitative Sozialforschung: Eine Anleitung zum qualitativen Denken*. Weinheim: Deutscher Studienverlag, 2002.

Mayring, Philipp. *Qualitative Inhaltsanalyse -Grundlagen und Techniken*. Weinheim: Deutscher Studienverlag, 2007.

Mead, George Herbert. *Mind, Self, and Society*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1934.

Meyers Enzyklopädisches Lexikon. Band 16. Mannheim et. al.: Bibliographisches Institut 1976.

Pew Research Centre. „Generational Differences." 19. März 2004. http://www.pewhispanic.org/2004/03/19/generational-differences/ (7. Februar 2017).

Phinney, Jean S. „Cultural identity formation in multicultural contexts." *Finnish Society for the Study of Ethnic Relations and International Migration* 10 (2010): 34–49.

Phinney, Jean S., Horenczyk, Gabriel, Liebkind, Karmela and Vedder, Paul. „Ethnic identity, immigration, and well-being: An interactional perspective." *Journal of Social Issues* 57 (2001): 493–510.

Straub, Jürgen. „Identität und Sinnbildung. Ein Beitrag aus der Sicht einer handlungs- und erzähltheoretischen Sozialpsychologie." *Jahresbericht 94/95 des Zentrums für interdisziplinäre Forschung der Universität Bielefeld*, 1995. 42–90.

Stryker, Sheldon. „From Mead to a Structural Symbolic Interactionism and Beyond." *The Annual Review of Sociology* 34. (2008): 15–31.

Tajfel, Henri and John C. Turner. „The social identity theory of inter-group behavior." *Psychology of Intergroup Relations*. Ed. Stephen Worchel and Willian G. Austin. 1986. 7–24.

Contributors

Liu Yue, Prof. Dr.
Liu Yue is Professor of German Studies at Xiamen University. She holds a PhD in German as a Foreign Language from the Technical University of Berlin (2009) and was associate Professor of German Studies at Zhejiang University (2011–2019). She is the author of the monographs: *"Kulturspezifisches" Kommunikationsverhalten? Eine empirische Untersuchung für aktuelle Tendenzen in deutsch-chinesischen Begegnungen* (Munich: iudicium, 2010) and 《德国的华人移民：历史进程中的群体变迁》[*Chinese Immigrants in Germany: characteristcs of social groups in historical process*](Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press 2018), and she is the coeditor of 《近现代柏林中国学人考》[*Chinese Students at Universities in Berlin before 1949*] (Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press 2018). Her research focuses on: Chinese Immigrants in Europe; Identity of the younger generations of overseas Chinese; Intercultural and Interlingual Communication. Email: liuyue@xmu.edu.cn

Wang Simeng, Dr.
Wang Simeng is a permanent Research Fellow at The French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) and faculty member at the CERMES3 (Research Centre, Medicine, Science, Health, Mental Health and Society). She holds a PhD in Sociology from the École Normale Supérieure in Paris, France (2014). Her research focuses on Chinese and South-East Asian immigration in France from differing analytical perspectives: health and mental health issues, family and intergenerational relationships, social mobility, politicization and transnationalism. She is the author of *Illusions et souffrances. Les migrants chinois à Paris* (Éditions rue d'Ulm, 2017), the coeditor of *Santé mentale et souffrance psychique. Un objet pour les sciences sociales* (CNRS Éditions, 2018) and of three special issues of scientific journals: "Migrations chinoises et générations" (in *Hommes & migrations*, 2016), "Participer dans le monde chinois: une jeunesse connectée" (in *Participations*, 2017) and "La santé mentale en migrations internationales" (in *European Journal of International Migration*, 2018). She coordinates the research network on East and South-East Asian Migrations in France and co-leads the interdisciplinary research project "Chinese of France: identifications and identities in transition" granted by the City of Paris (2018–2020). Email: simeng.wang@cnrs.fr

Almut Hille, Prof. Dr.
Almut Hille is Professor in German as a Foreign Language at the Free University of Berlin. Her research activities and interests include concepts of identity in modern German literature, concepts of memory and literature, Sino-German relations, global learning and concepts of memory in language education. She is the co-editor of *Generationenverhältnisse in Deutschland und China: Soziale Praxis – Kultur – Medien* (Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter, 2016), *Kulturelles Gedächtnis und Erinnerungsorte im hochschuldidaktischen Kontext. Perspektiven für das Fach Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (Frankfurt/Main u. a.: Peter Lang, 2015); *Globalisierung – Natur – Zukunft erzählen. Aktuelle deutschsprachige Literatur für die internationale Germanistik und das Fach Deutsch als Fremdsprache* (Munich: iudicium, 2015); *Erzählte Städte. Beiträge zu Forschung und Lehre in der europäischen Germanistik* (Munich: iudicium, 2013); and *Deutsch-chinesische Annäherungen. Kultureller Austausch und gegenseitige Wahrnehmung in der Zwischenkriegszeit* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2011). Email: almut.hille@fu-berlin.de

Guo Yi, Prof. Dr.
Guo Yi is Professor of German Studies at Northwestern Polytechnial University (China). He received his PhD in International Politics from the Free University of Berlin (2012). In his monograph *Chinapolitik der Bundesepublik Deutschland 1998–2009* (Hamburg: Dr. Kovac, 2013), he focused on Sino-German relations and politics. He is currently researching German think tanks and has published two books in Chinese: 《德国智库研究： 自我定位与影响力构建》[*German Think Tanks: Self-orientation and Construction of public Impact.*] (Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press, 2020) and《利益与价值观博弈下的德国对华政策》[*Germany's China Policy in the interaction of Interests and Values*] (Beijing: World Affairs Press, 2019). His research focuses are Sino-German relations and German Think Tanks. Email: guoyi@nwpu.edu.cn

Zhao Jing, M.A.
Zhao Jing is a PhD candidate at the Department of European Ethnology/Folklore at Christian-Albrechts-University in Kiel, Germany. She has been receiving federal state funding since July 2015 and is currently completing a study about the lifeworld of Chinese migrants in Germany. This study looks at the changing causes of Chinese migration after the Chinese Opening-up policy in 1978, as well as its consequences for emerging formations of ethnicity, gender, labor, citizenship, healthcare, and culture. Her research focuses on intersectional migration studies, changing frameworks for transnational citizenship as well as migration and health. Email: ruhe110508@163.com

Li Yong, Dr.
Li Yong is a postdoctoral researcher at the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon. He obtained a PhD in Sociology from the University of Rouen Normandy (2016). His doctoral thesis *Condamnés à réussir. Insertion professionnelle des diplômés chinois en France, nouvelles dynamiques migratoires et identitaires* questions the condition of student migrants in the context of globalized risk society. His current research falls under several themes: the life-course of skilled Chinese migrants in France and their transnational mobility; the identities of racialized minorities in France and their experiences of discrimination; social justice in mainland China. Email: yong.li@ens-lyon.fr

Li Zhipeng, Dr.
Li Zhipeng is an associate researcher at the International Migrations, spaces and societies laboratory (MIGRINTER – UMR 7301 CNRS/University of Poitiers), a fellow at the French Collaborative Institute on Migration in France and a visiting Professor at Nanchang Institute of Technology (China). He holds a PhD in Geography from the University of Poitiers (2017). He was a postdoctoral researcher at the Centre of International Studies/Sciences Po Paris (2018) and received the prize "Prix de thése sur la ville 2018" of France. His research focuses on international migration issues, Chinese diaspora, entrepreneurship, the ethnic economy, ethnic media and transnationalism. He has published articles for the magazine *Migrations Société*, the CNRS Magazine *Microscoop* and for *e-migrinter*, in understanding the diaspora Wenzhou in France the relations with China. Email: zhipeng.li@univ-poitiers.fr

Liu Ruoxi, M.A.
Liu Ruoxi is a PhD student in Sociology at the University of Cambridge in the UK. She holds her M.A. in China Studies (Law and Society) from Peking University. Her research focuses on

the intersection of labor and marginalization in a developing context. Her previous works concerns the social mobility and stratification of the descendants of Chinese immigrants in France. Her current PhD project investigates the work of the self-employed people in the cultural industries in China. Email: rl592@cam.ac.uk

Tu Mengwei, Dr.
Tu Mengwei is a Lecturer in Sociology at East China University of Science and Technology in Shanghai. She holds a PhD in Sociology from the University of Kent (2016). Her research focuses on the global movement of highly educated migrants, including both migrants from China and migrants to China. Her book, *Education, Migration and Family Relations between China and the UK* (Bingley: Emerald, 2018) took an intergenerational angle in understanding the human complexity behind overseas education and migration. Email: mtu702@outlook.com

Daniel Nehring, Prof. Dr.
Daniel Nehring is Associate Professor of Sociology at East China University of Science and Technology in Shanghai. He holds a PhD in Sociology from the University of Essex (2008). His research focuses on experiences of intimate life in the context of globalization, transnationalism and rapid social change. He is the author of *Transnational Popular Psychology and the Global Self-Help Industry* (London: Palgrave, 2016) and *Therapeutic Worlds* (London: Routledge, 2019), and an editor of the book series *Therapeutic Cultures*. He is currently conducting research on European academics' experiences of migration and career formation at Chinese universities. Email: dfnehring@hotmail.co.uk

Lü Yunfang, Prof. Dr.
Lü Yunfang is Associate Professor in College of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Xiamen University. She holds a PhD in sociological anthropology from Xiamen University (2009). Her research focuses on the adaptation of immigrants to and from China, the role of religion in immigration and Chinese *qiaoxiang cultur*e. Her doctoral dissertation explored the social space that Western Christian teachers in early twenty-first-century China have developed in their expatriate lives and interaction with local Chinese. She is currently engaged in research projects on the relation of religion and Chinese immigrants in Europe and on the use of new media in transnational migration and social space. Email: lyf@xmu.edu.cn

Cao Xu, M.A.
Cao Xu received his B.A. and M.A. in German Studies at the School of International Studies, Zhejiang University in 2015 and 2018. He finished his internship in FCTC at the WHO during his M.A. studies. After graduation, he joined a start-up company specializing in diabetes management and works as product and marketing specialist. Email: cxrenault@163.com

Index