Intra-Asian Chinese Migrations: A Historical Overview

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INTRODUCTION

International migration among Chinese people is centuries old. Long before European colonists set foot on the Asian continent, and before the formation of modern nations there, the Chinese moved across sea and land, seasonally or permanently, to the outside world, Asia in particular, to pursue opportunities and alternative means of livelihood. The world has witnessed various flows and patterns of emigration from China and remigrations from its diasporic communities to other parts of the world, by the migrants themselves or by their descendants (Poston et al. 1994; Poston and Wong 2016; Ma 2003; Ma and Cartier 2003; Zhuang 1989). It is estimated that, as of 2011, more than 40 million overseas Chinese (*Huaqiao*) and people of Chinese ancestry (*Huayi*) lived outside mainland China (including Hong Kong and Macau) and Taiwan, and *Huayi* had spread to 148 countries (Poston and Wong 2016).[1] The top five countries with the largest number of ethnic Chinese (exceeding 4 million) are Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and the USA, and other countries with more than 500,000 *Huayi* (according to official figures) include Canada, Myanmar, Vietnam,

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Peru, Australia, and Japan (Poston and Wong 2016). Nearly three-quarters are in Southeast Asia.

This chapter addresses a key issue from a sociological perspective based on a review of existing literature: How does the centuries-old Chinese trade diaspora and its emerging migrant networks interact with broader structural factors—colonization or decolonization, nation-state-building, changes to political regimes, and globalization—and how do these interactions alter the course and pattern of Chinese migrations?[2] We argue that distinct streams of emigration from China and intradiasporic migrations are shaped by special circumstances and influenced by the intersection of nation-state policies, global economic forces and diasporic networks. We also discuss the implications of contemporary Chinese emigration for socioeconomic development in countries of origin and destination.

THE CHINESE TRADE DIASPORA AND *HUASHANG*-DOMINATED INTRA-ASIAN MIGRATION

The Chinese have migrated differently in different periods and places, and the role played by the Chinese state in their migrations has varied. Their ways of trading, the pattern of their movements and the networks they form have changed according to time and circumstance. Large-scale international migration across Asia and the globe came, in modern form, in the mid-nineteenth century. Before then, the Chinese moved from their places of birth in search of means and opportunities for survival and betterment selectively and seasonally, mostly to neighboring towns and cities. Between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries, numerous migrations happened across Eurasia, and within Asia and Africa, but few Chinese ventured off shore or went far from home before the nineteenth century. The main exception was the Fujianese (Liao 2002), who migrated to Southeast Asia as *Huashang* (Chinese traders and merchants) and helped build the regional trading system (Wang 1991). In this section, we focus on how Chinese maritime commerce shaped migration to and from China and how the resulting trade diaspora in Southeast Asia affected patterns of international migration in general and intra-Asian migrations in particular.

Pre-Nineteenth-Century Maritime Commerce

International migration before the nineteenth century was closely linked to tribute missions to China, which imported tropical goods and exported Chinese manufacture. In the Tang (618–907), China was the world's largest, richest and most sophisticated state. Its maritime trade was already well developed, and the Chinese were referred to overseas as Tang people (Zhuang 1989, 2001). During the 1100s, the Chinese extended their trade routes from the South China Sea to other parts of Southeast Asia, which they called the Nanyang (the Southern Ocean).[3] They had formal trade relations with Korea, Burma, Siam, Vietnam and the Ryukyu (Okinawa) Kingdom, while local officials and private traders conducted informal trade with foreign merchants through port-states, such as Ayudhya, Malacca and Brunei (Reid 1996). The Philippines and Borneo were, at the time, run by chieftains struggling to turn their territories into states (Pan 1999).

Overseas trade had its heyday in the Southern Song (1127–1279), when porcelain, textiles and lacquer production flourished, and printing and publishing technologies were well developed. Depictions of Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean from a Chinese perspective appeared in books (Liao 2002; Pan 1999; Zeng 1998; Zhuang 2001). Trade continued to flourish and expanded into Russia and Persia under the Mongols, who conquered China and set up the Yuan (1279–1368). The Mongols promoted trade with the Arabs and allowed Islam to take root in China, while sponsoring expeditions to Japan, Java, Vietnam, Cambodia and Burma (Pan 1999). After the fall of the Yuan, the Ming (1368–1644) banned private overseas trade in an attempt to tighten its grip on maritime commerce and curb foreign influences. It sought to incorporate Southeast Asian states into the tribute system that defined China's relations with its neighbors.

Long before the arrival of the Europeans in large numbers in the sixteenth century, the Chinese dominated trade in most of the Nanyang. Chinese traders turned many Southeast Asian port-cities into entrepots through which they channeled silk, porcelain, and other manufacture. By the early fifteenth century, Chinese commercial communities had established a strong presence in Java and Sumatra. In 1567, the Ming government legalized informal trade, which gave rise to new Southeast Asian port-cities such as Manila in the Philippines, Hoi An in southern Vietnam, Phnom Penh in Cambodia, Patani in Malaya, the pepper port in West Java and the Batavia in the Dutch East Indies (Pan 1999; Purcel 1965; Reid 1996). Early trade often required that merchants and traders physically

traveled from one place to another or settled temporarily overseas (Zhuang 2001). This was because of poor communications and transportation. Circular migration from China to the Nanyang became the norm. *Huashang* took workers with them for a while and then returned home to prepare for the next journey. When the Dutch and English arrived in the region in the seventeenth century, they found large and distinct Chinese communities residing in key ports. Precolonial Chinese emigration was intertwined with trade and was dominated by *Huashang* and their seasonal workers, mostly their relatives or fellow villagers (Wang 1991). Those who settled overseas acted as middleman minorities, turning their places of settlement into bustling markets and using their economic muscle to dominate trade (Zhuang 2001). In the process, they developed migration networks and planted the seeds for further Chinese trade and emigration.

The Role of the Imperial Chinese State

The imperial Chinese state had long been ambivalent about international migration. Sometimes it allowed migrants to go overseas but discouraged their return, at other times it favored out-migration for its remittances, and at still other times it prohibited international migration (Zhuang 1989). Whether in prosperity or decline, the Chinese state played, and has continued to play, a paramount role in shaping the Chinese diaspora.

In the early Ming, private trade and trade outside the tribute system (e.g., with Japan) was banned, making it difficult for merchants to move to and from China freely. Later on, the imperial state relaxed its constraints on private and localized maritime commerce but it largely banned overseas residence (Zeng 1998). The Qing (1644–1911) inherited the Ming's hostility toward emigration and, for a long time, made overseas travel and residence a capital crime (Liao 2002; Zeng 1998; Zhuang 1989). Trade with foreigners was restricted to the port of Guangzhou. So as early as the late fourteenth century, when restrictions were in place, traders developed ways of bypassing them. These strategies were later institutionalized to facilitate migration and the formation of communities overseas. The Ming government's efforts to stop trade with Japan drove Chinese seasonal traders, mostly Fujianese, to seek permanent refuge in Nagasaki and other Japanese ports. These Chinese settlements resulted in the establishment of new routes between Fujian, Taiwan and Manila (Kyo 1999; Zeng 1998).

Most of the bans on private trade abroad were revoked in 1727. In 1754, the Qing began allowing law-abiding emigrants to return home and guaranteed their property (Reid 1997). However, even during the sea ban, overseas and overland private trade in South and Southeast China boomed. The Chinese saying, "the mountain is high and the emperor is far away," accurately described the attitude of local officials and traders to the ban.

The relaxation led to a booming junk trade and an outflow of traders, miners, planters, shipbuilders, mariners and adventurers of all kinds (Reid 1996, 1997). At the peak of China's prosperity and peace, the imperial government took over neighboring states. It incorporated Korea into the tribute system in the 1630s, then invaded Burma in 1766 and Vietnam in 1788. In the last decade of the eighteenth century, tribute missions from Korea and Southeast Asia were visiting the Chinese emperor two, three or four times a year (Reid 1997).

Intra-Asian trade and tribute missions to China peaked in 1790, despite Western colonialism, and continued to thrive until China's decline in the mid-1840s. Trade and tribute missions stimulated emigration. During what Anthony Reid has called the "Chinese Century" (1740–1840), nearly a million Chinese settled in Southeast Asia, amounting to 3 % of the population (Reid 1996; Trocki 1997). An estimated 30,000 the Chinese lived in Bangka in the mid-1700s (Andaya 1997). In Batavia, the Chinese accounted for around 10 % of the population in the early 1810s (Abeyasekere 1983). Siam, Java and Borneo each had some 100,000 the Chinese, representing between 46 % and 65 % of the population in the early 1820s (Blythe 1969). Diasporic communities formed as a result. Merchants and traders, both sojourners and settlers, dominated these communities (Reid 1996). Almost all of the 11,500 seafarers engaged in Bangkok's maritime trade were of Chinese descent (Reid 1999). Not all were merchants or traders. As merchants and traders started to invest in agriculture, mining and other land-based ventures, they brought in workers from their ancestral villages to staff them.

Most of the early emigrants came from coastal regions of Fujian or from Chaozhou (Teochiu) in southeastern Guangdong. They worked primarily in cash-crop farming (of sugar, pepper, gambier and rubber, etc.) and in tin or gold mining. Most products were destined for the Chinese and international markets (Trocki 1997; Wickberg 1999a). The diasporic communities strengthened both formal and informal trade connections, which facilitated subsequent emigration.

The Fall of the Chinese Empire: Semicolonialism and Huagong *Migration*

European colonists arrived in Southeast Asia's continental and island states in the early sixteenth century.[4] The Spanish occupied the central Philippine archipelago, captured Manila, and extended their control to Cebu and other islands (Brown 1999). The Dutch East Indies Company turned the archipelago into a colonial empire (Cribb 1999). However, Western colonization and expansion did not peak until the nineteenth century. The Dutch took over Indonesia in 1799. The British occupied and ruled territories on the Malay Peninsula, and they founded a trading post in Singapore in 1819. In 1842 and 1860, the British defeated China in two opium wars, forcing China to open its ports and turn Hong Kong over to British control, and thus become a semicolonial state (Li 2002; Zeng 1998).

The French annexed Cochinchina in 1864 and the whole of Vietnam in 1885, and it formed the Union Indochinoise, which included Cambodia and Laos (Smith 1999). Colonial expansion allowed Western private enterprises to develop plantation agriculture and mining, extract petroleum and other natural resources, and expand the market in the new colonies. European colonists began importing *Huagong* (Chinese contract labor), often referred to as coolies, from China and neighboring states (Wang 1991). The new geopolitics transformed the nature and course of migration. Two distinct streams of Chinese contract labor emigration formed: one to European colonies in Southeast Asia and another to the Americas.

The Chinese Century was followed by a century of humiliation for the Chinese, who were forced to sign unequal treaties, pay a large indemnity, open ports to foreign trade and residence, cede Hong Kong and grant rights conferred by China on one foreign power to other foreign powers. The Taiping Rebellion and a series of peasant uprisings further weakened the power of the state and accelerated its decline.

In the nineteenth century, Japan rose from centuries of national seclusion and began to pursue industrialization and modernization. In 1894 it won the Sino-Japanese War, forcing China to cede the island of Taiwan and the Liaodong Peninsula in South Manchuria (Storry 1999). The UK, France, Germany and Russia then forced China to grant more trading rights and territory. China would probably have been divided up into colonies by Japan and the Western powers but for a growing nationalism among the Chinese and rivalry among foreign powers (Pan 1999). The Qing

government promoted Japanese-type reforms, but they came too late and the dynasty fell in 1911.

The republic that then formed, initially under the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, KMT), was too weak to unify the nation and lead it out of distress. In 1921 the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was established to challenge the new regime. Warlord rivalries and civil wars became widespread. In 1931, Japan occupied China's northeast, leading in 1937 to the Sino-Japanese War, which lasted until 1945. This split the short-lived coalition between the Nationalists and the Communists. After 1945, civil war broke out in China and was later won by the Communists, who established the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949.

China's lapse into semicolonial status and the colonization of the Asian Pacific region by the West and Japan profoundly influenced Chinese emigration. Western economic power broke the Chinese dominance over intra-Asian trade and made Asia's export economy part of an East–West trade in manufactured goods, food products and industrial raw materials. *Huashang* became agents or partners of the European traders and colonists, and they later played a major role in recruiting contract labor (Zhuang 2001). On the other hand, agricultural and industrial developments in the new colonies opened up new opportunities for Chinese diasporic communities to expand into the plantation economy and mining, hence creating a tremendous demand for labor (Pan 1999). This demand was fed by China's vast population and its centuries-old migration networks.

In China, foreign aggression and internal rebellions disrupted normal life and routine sources of livelihood. The country had a strong tradition of out-migration as a household strategy to combat poverty and turmoil. When war broke out or a dynasty fell, people fled, either from the villages to the cities or, in a small minority of cases, to the port-cities of Southeast Asia, where the Chinese had traded (Pan 1999).

Huagong *(Chinese Labor) to Southeast Asia*

In the century starting in the 1840s, the Chinese left China in one of two ways: as free migrants, along networks, roughly on the precolonial *Huashang* pattern, or as *Huagong* (Wang 1991), as part of the new coolie trade. The latter greatly outnumbered the former.

Most *Huagong* worked for Westerners, but some worked for other Chinese who owned plantations and mines in the Western colonies (Zhuang 2001). Precolonial and colonial emigration mostly originated in

and headed for the same sets of places. Colonial-era emigration from China was based on dialect groups and traced its origins to the same regions as the maritime trade in its heyday. The new emigration was closely linked to the old trade diasporas that originated in Guangdong and Fujian. In the mid-1950s, of the 12 million ethnic Chinese living in Southeast Asia, 68 % (8.2 million) were of Guangdong origin and 32 % (3.7 million) of Fujian origin. They were not evenly distributed in destination states (Zhu 1994). In the Philippines they were almost entirely Fujianese in 1800, whereas 100 years later between 85 % and 90 % were Fujianese and the rest were Cantonese (See 1960; Wickberg 1999a, b). In Cambodia, Cantonese dominated the early Chinese community but were later overwhelmed by the ethnically distinct Chaozhounese from eastern Guangdong (Wickberg 1999b). In Malaya, Hakkas were among the dominant groups. In contrast, almost all (99 %) Chinese in North and South America and the West Indies in that period were from Guangdong (Pan 1999), although these included some Cantonese Hakka concentrations.

Within a particular province, emigrants tended to come from just a few places. For example, most emigrants to Southeast Asia were from eastern Guangdong (Chaozhou and Shantou [Swatow]), while most emigrants to the Philippines and the Americas were from the Sze Yap (Siyi) region of southwestern Guangdong. In Thailand (Siam before 1939), 95 % of ethnic Chinese or Sino-Thais could trace their origin to the Chaozhou-Shantou region (Burusratanaphand 1995; Chan and Tong 2001). In the Philippines, nearly all Cantonese were from Sze Yap. In the USA, close to 75 % of the Chinese in San Francisco in the era of the Chinese Exclusion Act were from Toishan (Taishan), part of Sze Yap.

Most Chinese migrants in the colonial era went to parts of Southeast Asia where diasporic communities were already established. Between 1801 and 1850, 63 % went to Southeast Asia compared with 6 % to Hawaii and the USA, 5 % to the West Indies and 8 % to Cuba and Peru.[5] Between 1851 and 1875, record numbers went to Hawaii, the USA, and Canada (17 %), Cuba (11 %) and Peru (9 %) (Stewart 1951), but far greater numbers continued to head for Southeast Asia: about 27 % went to the Malay Peninsula, 20 % to the East Indies and 4 % to the Philippines. Between 1876 and 1900, the period of Chinese exclusion from the USA, the Malay Peninsula received 48 % and the East Indies 43 % of Chinese migrants, while Hawaii, the USA and Canada received less than 3 % (Zhu 1994). In Southeast Asia, most worked for plantations, mines and other businesses owned by coethnics.

Much of the migration continued to be circular, given the high rates of return migration. Most merchants, traders and workers were sojourning men. The patriarchal family system and the practice of partible inheritance facilitated the formation of bachelor societies abroad, since sons, regardless of birth order, could claim an equal share of patrimony. Daughters, however, were largely forbidden to leave home. The male sojourner typically left his family behind, or returned home to get married and then left his bride behind to take care of his parents and raise his children. He routinely remitted, and hoped to return himself at some point. Merchants and traders, who usually spent time overseas in temporary homes, traveled frequently between China and abroad. Workers, especially those employed on plantations or in mines, were less likely to make frequent home visits. Nonetheless, return rates were high. In Thailand, for example, the return rate was 57 % between 1882 and 1905, 78 % between 1906 and 1917, and 68 % between 1918 and 1945, although it dropped to 40 % between 1946 and 1955 (Skinner 1957).

Precolonial vs. Colonial Chinese Migration

Huagong migration during the second half of the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth centuries highlighted the historical relationship between the centuries-old Chinese trade diaspora and emigration. However, Chinese migration in the colonial period differed in several ways from that in the precolonial era. Most *Huagong* still originated from Guangdong and Fujian, but they were relatively diverse and more often worked for Western colonists rather than for the Chinese. In precolonial times, most migrant workers were kinsmen or fellow-villagers of the merchants or traders in whose shops, farms or mines they were employed. In the colonial era, most were indentured.

Chinese migrants headed primarily for the same destinations as in precolonial times, but they were more responsive to labor demand at these destinations. Previously, trade and local investment in destinations by the Chinese had created a demand for labor in the investors' places of origin. In that sense, workers followed the trade diaspora. In colonial times, the plantation economy, mining and infrastructural development led to a less well-balanced demand for contract labor across the region, even in destinations with well-established diasporic communities. For example, the Philippines, the East Indies and the Malay Peninsula attracted more than 95 % of all Chinese contract labor in Southeast Asia. In the peak years

(1851–1875), 350,000 laborers arrived in British colonies in the Malay Peninsula, 250,000 in the Dutch East Indies and 45,000 in the Spanish-ruled Philippines (Zhu 1994). Between 1923 and 1951, 1.2 million Chinese went to Vietnam to work as contract laborers (but 850,000 returned).[6] In contrast, few went to French-ruled Cambodia and Laos. The means of labor export had also changed.[7]

In the past, merchants and traders set up migration networks in their home villages. In colonial times, labor migration was facilitated by the credit-ticket system and labor contracts. Merchants and traders brokered labor, and agents recruited workers not only from their own villages but from among fellow dialect-speakers. Most *Huagong* were poor, unschooled and unable to fund their own migration. Some received advances from their labor brokers (at home or overseas) while others contracted to repay their ticket from their future wages. So only those with direct connections to the centuries-old diasporic communities or to labor migrant networks were likely to leave.

Colonial labor migration was highly organized, and large numbers of migrants sailed from a small number of ports. For example, most Chinese labor migrants to Malaya sailed from Macao. As a result, Chinese in the Malay Peninsula were often known as Macaos to local people, even though they were Chaoshanese, Fujianese, Hakkas, Cantonese or Hainanese (Blythe 1969). British labor agencies also ran operations in Hong Kong, Guangzhou and Shantou in consultation with the Chinese authorities (Pan 1999). Most migrants to Hawaii and the Americas assembled in Hong Kong, whence they were shipped across the Pacific.

Even though they reached destinations with longstanding Chinese communities, many *Huagong* lived on plantations and in work camps, and had little to do with their established coethnics. The poorest workers were unable to send money home, let alone find a bride. Intermarriage with indigenous women became increasingly common in certain destinations. The descendants of this mixing were known as *mestizos* in the Philippines, jeks in Thailand, peranakans in Indonesia, babas or nyonyas in the Malay Peninsula and Sino-Viets in Vietnam. Some were assimilated into local cultures while others remained Chinese (Pan 1999).

In the colonial period, China was Asia's largest labor exporter. Nearly two-thirds of Chinese migrants went to Asian destinations, usually as contract laborers. Most in Southeast Asia returned home when their contracts ended, but some stayed and integrated into local Chinese communities. Countries in Southeast Asia ruled by Western colonists both received and

sent migrants. The Dutch East Indies received more than 300,000 Chinese labor migrants, while the colonial government sponsored the dispatch of 30,000 migrants from Java to the sparsely populated outer islands (Zhu 1994). The Philippines under Spanish rule received more than 65,000 Chinese laborers between 1850 and 1900, and continued to receive Chinese migrants even after Spain ceded the colony to the USA in 1898 and after restrictive anti-Chinese immigration legislation was implemented. Meanwhile, thousands of Filipino laborers were sent to Hawaii and the US West Coast to replace Chinese and Japanese labor (Melendy 1977).

Large-scale emigration from China to Southeast Asia testified both to the weakness of the Chinese state and to the resilience of the centuries-old trade diaspora. Though never colonized by a single nation, China had only limited control over the contract labor demanded by Western colonists in Southeast Asia and the Americas, and it did next to nothing to protect its nationals from harsh exploitation and mistreatment. The apathy and incompetence of the Chinese state indirectly strengthened the cohesion and organization of the diaspora. Its communities were initially established to provide aid to sojourning workers, protect them against competing or threatening outside forces and anti-Chinese laws, and enhance profit-making and economic opportunities for the ethnic Chinese elite. The latter played a more active role in labor migration than the Chinese state.

Developments After World War II

Decolonization, Nation-State-Building and Restrictive Immigration

From the late Ming through to the end of World War II, more than 10 million Chinese emigrated across the world. About two-thirds settled in Southeast Asia. World War II shattered direct colonial power in most of Asia. The Japanese lost the war along with their Great East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere and all their colonies. The British gave up the Indian subcontinent but resumed their control over Malaya and Hong Kong, the French regained control over Indo-China, and the Dutch struggled to take back the East Indies with British support (Azuma 1999; Cribb 1999). Inspired by nationalist and Marxist ideologies, Asian leaders in the former colonies led independence movements. The USA also opposed European colonialism in the region. Within a decade of the war, nearly all the colonies—in the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaya, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos—had collapsed (Brown 1999; Cribb 1999). Indigenous

nationalist and socialist factions in newly independent nations competed for power and struggled to rebuild their countries while exercising stricter control over their borders, greatly stemming Chinese immigration.

The slow-down in Chinese immigration during the three decades following World War II was also a result of developments in East Asia. The Japanese surrender in 1945 left China deeply divided between the ruling KMT and the CCP. After the USA failed to mediate, civil war broke out. The CCP armies fought well and gained support from the peasants and the urban working class, while the KMT armies had little will to fight. The crumbling economy, record inflation and widespread corruption alienated all social classes, even the capitalists (Fitzgerald 1965, 1999). In 1949, the Communists won power at the national level, despite massive US arms supplies to the KMT, and the KMT's full control of the air and vastly superior numbers. The KMT retreated to Taiwan with about 2 million supporters, mainly soldiers and their families, marking the start of a bitter standoff between the Republic of China (ROC) and the PRC. Soon after its founding, the PRC was forced into the Korean War and then the Cold War, which isolated it from the West and from Chinese diasporic communities until the late 1970s. Beijing largely prohibited migrations to and from China. Border crossing became a crime and those with overseas connections could be denounced as spies.

In Taiwan, the KMT rejected demands for Taiwanese independence, but with US help and protection it implemented programs of land reform, industrialization and state-sponsored education, and it rapidly turned Taiwan into a modern industrializing nation. However, the fear of a Communist takeover remained, and in the 1950s large numbers of mainlanders remigrated from Taiwan to the USA. In the 1960s, the children of mainlanders and islanders, having benefited from the reformed school system, began arriving in the USA to study as one of the largest groups of international students. In the 1960s and 1970s, most stayed in the USA after graduating. The ousting of the ROC from the United Nations in 1972 and the normalization of Sino-US diplomatic relations in 1978 set off a big brain drain and capital drain to the USA, Canada and Australia. In some senses, Taiwan acted as a skilled labor exporter, with the USA as its primary destination.

Economic Development and Contemporary Migration Trends

Nation-state-building in Southeast and East Asia since the end of World War II has significantly reshaped the region's political economy. Nation-states in the region have protected their sovereignty by controlling population flows internally and internationally (Hugo 1998), while pursuing agricultural reform and industrial development (Abella 1992). Many have rapidly integrated into the Western-centered world economy and the newly formed Asian core. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), founded in 1967, allied Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines into a system aimed at further developing their economies. Brunei joined in 1984, Vietnam in 1995, and Myanmar (Burma until 1989) and Laos in 1997 (Turnbull 1999). Japan emerged as Asia's industrial and financial locomotive in the 1970s, and Asia's "Four Little Dragons" (South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore) achieved impressive economic growth and prosperity a decade later. Malaysia and Thailand rose rapidly to Newly Industrialized Country (NIC) status. The new Asian alliance, led by Japan and comprising Taiwan, Hong Kong, South Korea and the ASEAN countries, challenged the single-core world system and brought unprecedented economic growth to the region.

The development of the regional trade and investment alliance set off massive state-sponsored intra-Asian labor migration in the 1980s. Japan, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Brunei imported labor: the Philippines, Indonesia, and China exported it (Hugo 1998; Martin et al. 1995; Tyner 2000).[8] South Korea, Malaysia and Thailand both imported and exported labor owing to domestic labor-market segmentation (Hugo 1998; Martin et al. 1995). Japan had the largest pool of foreign workers absolutely, but slightly fewer proportionately than South Korea (whose economy was a 13th of the size) (Martin et al. 1995). Foreign workers made up 5 % of the labor force in Taiwan, 13 % in Hong Kong and 18 % in Singapore (Hugo 1998). Since the turn of the twenty-first century, however, the role of the state in regulating migration flows in these fast-developing Asian nations has been undercut by longstanding migration networks and a rising migration industry consisting of both legal and illegal businesses, and of agencies catering to labor demands and individuals' desire to migrate (Bretts 2012; Gammeltoft-Hansen and Sørensen 2013).

The high wages in Hong Kong and Taiwan drew workers from other Asian countries. However, Hong Kong and Taiwan differed from each other and from other labor-short Asian countries such as Japan, South

Korea and Singapore in the type, number and origin of workers they allowed to enter. Labor importation on a massive scale did not take off until the 1980s. In Hong Kong, the rapid growth in labor-intensive manufacturing, coupled with low fertility, created a severe labor shortage (Skeldon 1995). While Hong Kong was starting to import workers, its middle classes began to leave in accelerating numbers for Australia and North America as a result of uncertainties surrounding the 1997 return of the colony to Chinese sovereignty. Some migrant workers moved to China to work in domestic services, manufacturing and construction, while others filled technical and managerial jobs left vacant by the middle-class exodus. Almost a third of foreign workers in Hong Kong were educated professionals from Japan, the UK, the USA, Canada and Australia (Skeldon 1995). Since the late 1990s, students and highly skilled professionals from mainland China have become increasingly visible (Chiu 2015).

Taiwan, despite strict immigration controls, attracted migrant workers from other Asian countries—mainly low-skilled workers from Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia. Filipino and Indonesian women typically worked as domestic maids, while men worked in construction (Tsay 1995). Taiwan's exodus of people and capital to the USA and elsewhere owing to political uncertainty reversed in the mid-1980s and the 1990s when many migrants returned and the trend towards transnational migration eased the brain drain. Demographic and economic trends, such as decreasing fertility, the switch from labor-intensive manufacturing to capital-intensive high-tech and financial services, and public investment in highway construction (Tsay 1995), created a huge demand for domestic and construction workers. In the late 1980s and the 1990s, Taiwan imported workers mainly from Malaysia and the Philippines to work in manufacturing and construction (Tsay 1995), although only a small number were admitted to perform domestic services. After China opened its door in 1979, Taiwan invested heavily in the mainland, and trans-Strait commerce flourished. Offshore fishing employed a large number of Chinese workers, but they were not allowed to come ashore (Lee 1998).

Singapore is a small island city-state with a population of 5.6 million in 2016. The exceptionally high population density (7797 per sq. km) necessitates a carefully managed development strategy.[9] Becoming an NIC in the 1970s, it faced the challenges of the rising cost of labor, severe labor shortages and near-zero population growth, like other Asian NICs. Importation of foreign labor, both skilled and unskilled, became a priority. The government allowed two categories of guest labor into the country: those

with work permits and those with professional passes. Those holding work permits were barred from bringing in dependents or giving birth in Singapore, and their contract terms were strictly enforced. Those holding professional passes were better treated (Yeoh and Lin 2012). In the mid-1980s, foreign workers comprised only 8 % of the workforce in Singapore, rising to 20 % in the mid-1990s and 38 % in mid-2015.[10] Most were Malaysians and Thais, with a smaller number of Filipinos (Chew and Chew 1995). In the 1990s, highly skilled workers from China began arriving in greater numbers (Liu 2005; Yang 2016).

Before 1990, China exported labor migrants on a much lesser scale than the Philippines and Indonesia, the two major labor-exporting countries. During the Cold War, migration to and from China was insignificant, especially in relation to the country's size, but the potential for labor export was great given its huge domestic labor force (Arnold and Shah 1986; Goldstone 1997). In the late 1970s and at the peak of the Asian boom in the 1980s, China reformed first faming and then the market economy, and then went on to restructure industry with an eye to exporting and to privatizing state enterprises. The country's drive for modernization and industrialization, coupled with its vast population and diasporic ties, has tipped the regional balance in its favor. These developments ushered in the "Pacific Century" (Forbes 1999), which has led to tremendous changes in the pace, extent, direction and nature of human movements.

Much labor migration to other parts of Asia from China in the late 1970s and the 1980s was more or less clandestine, assisted by pre-existing diasporic networks, and was on smaller scale than in the previous 25 years, while some of it happened as an unintended result of the Chinese government's student exchange program. The Chinese authorities continued, under pressure from the West and neighboring countries, to exert tight control on emigration. Most Chinese workers in Korea and Japan were irregular, having entered as students or visitors. Relatively few Chinese worked in other Asian NICs. However, international migration from China to North America surged once the USA and Canada relaxed their immigration policies. The ethnic Chinese population in the USA grew from 237,292 in 1960 to 1,645,472 in 1990, and to nearly 4.76 million (including more than 0.5 million mixed-race persons) in 2015, exceeding 1 % of the US population (Zhou and Liu, see also Chap. 18 in this volume). In Canada, the ethnic Chinese population grew from 58,197 in 1961 to 633,933 in 1991 and to 1.5 million in 2011, becoming the largest non-European ethnic group in the country and comprising 3 % of the total

population, with Chinese as Canada's third language (after English and French) (See also Chap. 17 in this volume; Li 1998). New patterns of intra-Asian migration and transatlantic migration have set Asian nations a new challenge—how to manage migration (Martin et al. 1995).

Undocumented or Clandestine Chinese Immigration

Intra-Asian labor migration is typically recent, short term and circular, with few possibilities for long-term settlement and integration (Battistella 1995). Both sending and receiving states negotiate and manage labor flows. However, the integration of national economies into the world system can undermine a state's capacity to control emigration and immigration. In regulating labor migration, both sending and receiving states create loopholes for undocumented or clandestine migration. China is a case in point. Emigration from China was strictly controlled between 1950 and 1980 (Zhuang 2001). Since China opened its door and implemented economic reform in the late 1970s, it has experienced unprecedented economic growth. In its drive to build a market economy, it encouraged internal migration and international migration, chiefly unintentionally (Chan 1994), but it lacked a sophisticated system of state-sponsored and state-managed migration of the sort that many Asian sending countries had developed. Starting in the late 1980s, and especially in the 1990s and since the turn of the twenty-first century, Chinese immigrants have become highly visible in Asian NICs as well as in Australia, Canada, the USA and many European countries. As many as 10 % are undocumented immigrants who have either overstayed their visas or been smuggled abroad (Chin 1999; Li 2002; Myers 1997; Smith 1997).

Roughly 180,000 people emigrated from China annually in the 1990s. Undocumented Chinese immigration grew by a factor of 6 in the early 1990s and by a factor of 10 between 1995 and 2005, which would translate into a net gain of 200,000 to 300,000 annually (Goldstone 1997). Such undocumented Chinese prefer to go to developed countries of the global north, such as the USA, the UK, Australia and, in Asia, South Korea and Japan. However, they are increasingly visible, both as entrepreneurs and as employees of coethnic businesses, in many developing and underdeveloped countries in the global south (e.g., Southeast Asia, Southern and Eastern Europe, Africa and Latin America), as this volume shows. Hong Kong and Macau have traditionally served as entrepots for Chinese immigration. Thailand and Cambodia have recently emerged both as destinations in

themselves and as staging posts to other developed countries in the West (Smith 1997). Latin American countries, particularly Mexico, have also served as staging posts for undocumented Chinese migrants to enter the USA. As of 2015, it was reported that the rate of growth in Asian undocumented migration exceeded that of undocumented Mexican migration to the USA, and many Chinese migrants went to Mexico in the hope of later getting to the USA (Rosenblum and Soto 2015).

Several factors linked to China's economic reform and structural changes in its new political economy help explain the rise of undocumented Chinese immigration. The erosion of the welfare state and the dissolution of food rationing and state welfare benefits, such as housing, removed the incentive to stay put. Workers felt free to consider migration, both domestic and international, as a means of livelihood (Goldstone 1997). Economic development weakened the political and economic power of the central government and strengthened those of provincial and local officials, while corruption at the local level made it easier for well-connected and resourceful individuals and syndicates to engage in smuggling. Long-established diasporic communities throughout the world revived their ties with China and their ancestral places, which in many cases triggered chain migration. Tourists, students and people travelling on business visas were helped by family or other overseas sponsors to survive, initially at least as illegal immigrants. Chinese syndicates and criminals exploited looser borders to traffic migrants to different destinations, either directly from China or with the help of Chinese diasporic communities (Zai 2001).

Receiving countries in Asia generally control migrant inflows, but they vary in their ways of dealing with undocumented immigration (Smith 1997). Repatriation rarely seems to be one of them because it is not in the interests of the receiving countries, especially those in need of migrant labor, legal or otherwise, and because it is discouraged by sending countries, which fear declining remittances and rising unemployment (Lee 1998). Receiving countries find it hard to stop undocumented immigration. Informal migrant networks and the growing migration industry often bypass government control of front-door entry (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Sørensen 2013).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Existing research suggests that intra-Asian and international migrations from China have been closely linked to the centuries-old Chinese diaspora, and that they have been strongly shaped by a range of geopolitical,

economic and sociocultural factors. These include colonization, decolonization, nation-state-building, changes in political regimes, state economic development programs, diasporic networks and the migration industry.

In the precolonial era, China's dominance and the proliferation of Chinese trade routes to Southeast Asia played a major role in intra-Asian migration, primarily by way of tribute missions and maritime trade routes. Native people moved from place to place or island to island in search of new land, fishing and a better living, but rarely in large numbers. The Chinese wrought profound changes in the pattern of regional movement. Their merchants and traders, and the accompanying workers, turned port-cities all over Southeast Asia into trade entrepots where overseas Chinese communities and institutions nestled. Because of the tight control exercised over trade by the Chinese state, Chinese overseas had to find more sophisticated ways of going back and forth between their homes and their diasporic settlements, resulting in a unique pattern of networks.

Western colonization capsized the dominance of Chinese trade and China's geopolitical centrality in the region. With networks of the centuries-old trade diaspora already in place, Chinese merchants and traders turned into agents of labor recruitment, bypassing the state to facilitate mass labor emigration from China to Western colonies in and beyond Asia. Post-World War II nation-state-building and economic development realigned the geopolitical order in East and Southeast Asia, while the Cold War severed China's ties to the world. Newly founded nation-states strove aggressively to develop and modernize. In the process, barriers were set up at the borders. As governments bilaterally institutionalized international migration, diasporic communities, along with their informal networks, and migrant syndicates emerged or were revived in both places of origin and settlement. These networks and institutions sometimes worked in tandem with the state to facilitate migration in response to economic change, but at other times they facilitated migration with little or no state sponsorship or intervention. Where pre-existing coethnic communities were well established overseas, individuals could reactivate longstanding ethnic or kinship connections to evade regulation by the sending or receiving state. Once the migration started, migrants, networks and diasporic communities effectively undercut the power of the states at either end of the migration chain to structure and manage it (Massey et al. 1994).

When China threw open its door to the outside world and reformed its economy, tremendous pressures for international migration rapidly mounted. Patterns of contemporary intra-Asian and international migration

from China show that a direct but unintended consequence of China's economic reform has been network-driven and clandestine migrations, which have often overlapped. Undocumented or clandestine migration is a response to efforts by states to control their borders and curb migration. Current patterns in the 2010s are likely to persist in the following decade and beyond. As China becomes increasingly integrated into the world system, its perpetual marketization, working in tandem with its uniquely extensive (and uniquely developed) diasporic communities, is likely to undermine the power of the state even further.

However, the chains established in the colonial era to facilitate Chinese emigration may not be as strong as they once were. Beyond chain migration, people from all over China, including regions with little or no previous tradition of overseas migration, have begun to go abroad in ever great numbers, and they are more likely to rely on formal and informal services offered by the migration industry than in the past. In some overseas destinations, China's *xin yimin* (new migrants) may still have some connection to the old diasporas, but the tie is increasingly tenuous and relatively weak, even among compatriots from the same places of origin, and in many cases there is no tie. This has given rise to coethnic tensions between established and new migrants. Singapore is the most obvious example, but there are many others, including in Africa and Europe (see Chaps. 2, 3, 12 and 14; Yeoh and Lam 2016). Even where tensions are relatively mild, such as in Japan, the relationship between old and new Chinese migrants is far from close. The new migrants differ profoundly and in many ways from the old. They are far more numerous, with a far larger proportion of women and accompanying children. They are geographically more diverse in terms of places both of origin and of destination. They are socioeconomically far more diverse, with widely different levels of schooling and job skills among them. They are also less likely to form old-style Chinatowns or even new-style "ethnoburbs."

Another novel factor in the contemporary equation is the fact that China has now risen and become a center of attraction, far more so than in the past. It is already a country of immigration, not just from neighboring countries but from other continents, including Africa (Li et al. 2008; Zhou et al. 2016). The overseas Chinese attachment to China, at least among first-generation migrants, was always strong, but today the "hometown" tie is wired in by technology, and cemented by ease of travel and communications, as well as by other aspects of globalization, including that

of Chinese culture. As a result, some new migrants have chosen to return to China from overseas, and even some highly assimilated second- or third-generation members of long-established ethnic Chinese communities in some countries have begun to talk of ethnicization and root-searching in China.

Will Chinese emigration, legal and undocumented, define a new Chinese Century, on a scale far greater than that of 1740–1840 (Reid 1996)? Does the potential for emigration from China resemble a "Tsunami on the horizon" (Goldstone 1997)? Tsunami or not, it would be a mixed blessing for China and the receiving countries in Asia and the world. Many countries of immigration would have to find ways of negotiating and managing the potentially large and diverse influxes from China—an endeavor that would greatly tax the Chinese state, which is severely constrained not only by economic and globalization forces but also by the countervailing efforts of migration networks and ethnic institutions.

The notion of an ever-growing Chinese diaspora, fed by natural births and the arrival of new Chinese migrants, has begun to pose a new "Chinese problem" for countries of immigration. Nativist protectionism is growing in both developed and developing countries that receive *xin yimin*. If it continues to grow, the result will be not only a stemming of immigration as a result of policy intervention but possibly also a strengthening of forms of national identity based on the othering, or exclusion, of the Chinese and other migrants. In places where ethnic and migrant Chinese are already vulnerable to discrimination, they would become even more so at a time of troubled international relations between China and migrant-receiving countries, both developed and underdeveloped, and of a possible rightward shift in some nations. In the worst case, the Sinophobia that once rampaged across the West might be revived in the global south as well. In the event of a further rise in xenophobic pressures, the growth and growing sophistica-tion of the Chinese economy could be expected to attract ever more migrants and their descendants to return home, or to begin to operate transnationally by straddling places in China and overseas. Such trends are likely to accelerate, given the current rapid aging of China's population, soon to become the world's oldest and already set on the path to rapid demographic decline. If these various trends continue and combine, the future fate and shape of the Chinese diaspora will become less certain and less predictable.

NOTES

1. Estimates of the total number of people of Chinese descent in the world outside mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan vary widely, ranging from a low of 40 million to a high of more than 50 million (see Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs of the State Council, China, "Demographic Distribution and Development Trends of Overseas Chinese http://qwgzyj.gqb.gov.cn/yjytt/155/1830.shtml, accessed on October 16, 2016). The analysis by Poston and Wong (2016) was based on the extensive data resources collected by the Overseas Chinese Affairs Council in Taiwan (2012) and Overseas Community Affairs Council (2013).
2. This chapter was developed from "The Chinese Diaspora and International Migration" (Zhou 2006).
3. More precisely, the Nanyang refers to the region immediately to the south of China, including the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, Malaya and Borneo, Siam, Burma, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos (Pan 1999: 16).
4. The Portuguese reached China by sea in 1514 and were believed to be the first Europeans to do so (Pan 1999: 365).
5. The total number of emigrants leaving China between 1801 and 1850 was 320,000. Most went to Southeast Asia, less than 6 % to the USA and 9 % to Cuba and Peru.
6. This number probably included the refugees who walked across the border to Vietnam after the Communist takeover in 1949.
7. The credit-ticket system and labor contracts were also the main means of labor migration to South Pacific, Hawaii, the USA and the Americas.
8. Hong Kong became a special administrative district of China when it was returned to China in 1997. Since it is operated under the "one China two systems" policy, it is treated as a nation-state but only in an analytical sense. Taiwan is also treated analytically as a nation-state despite controversy over its sovereignty.
9. Statistics Singapore, http://www.singstat.gov.sg/statistics/latest-data#16, accessed on October 15, 2016.
10. Singapore Ministry of Manpower, http://stats.mom.gov.sg/Pages/Labour-Force-Summary-Table.aspx, accessed on October 16, 2016.

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