Rediscovering the New Gold Mountain: Chinese Immigration to Australia Since the Mid-1980s

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INTRODUCTION

Graeme Hugo, an Australian demographer, wrote in 2012 that in the post-war shift of Australian economic, political and social attention to Asia, one of the major elements has been "an increased level of population movement in both directions" (Hugo 2012: 20). He defined the 1970s as a significant turning point because of the official end to the "White Australia" policy in 1973 and the acceptance of large groups of Indochinese boat people after 1976. According to James Jupp, a British-Australian political scientist, the concept and practice of multiculturalism were also introduced in Australia in the 1970s, and multiculturalism was endorsed by the Racial Discrimination Act of 1975 (Jupp 1995). The 1970s were a decade of crucial social and political transformation in Australia. Australians' views on war, the role of women, immigration, labor rights and many other social issues underwent far-reaching changes (Viviani 1996). As a result, hundreds of thousands of immigrants from Asia and the Middle East were allowed to migrate to Australia in the late 1970s and 1980s.

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During the 1970s, when Australia opened its doors to large numbers of immigrants from Asia and the Middle East, China's door was still largely closed to the outside world. Australia received few immigrants from China before the mid-1980s, with the exception of a few thousand Chinese nationals from Xinjiang, allowed in under the Australia China Family Reunion Agreement initiated by Prime Minister Gough Whitlam and Premier Zhou Enlai in early 1973 (Woodard 1985). Other immigrants of Chinese descent who arrived in Australia during the 1970s and 1980s were mainly Indochinese boat people or remigrants from other Asian countries. Their arrival helped change the Chinese community in Australia dramatically. The ethnic Chinese population, fewer than 10,000 in the late 1940s, grew steadily to about 50,000 in 1976 and 200,000 in 1986 (Kee 1992). According to the 1986 Census, the Chinese population experienced the largest increase in the late 1970s and early 1980s. While not ranking high in terms of wealth accumulation, they already displayed significant educational achievement. For example, 13 % of first-generation, 16.4 % of second-generation and 10 % of third-generation Chinese settlers had a tertiary education compared with the Australian average of 5.4 % (Kee 1992).

As shown in Fig. 10.1, Australia mainly attracted migrants from the UK and other European countries before the early 1970s. At the end of World War II, the country was seriously short of labor, and there was a growing awareness that population growth was the key to future prosperity. The government implemented a new large-scale immigration program. However, the "White Australia" policy resulted in post-war immigrants still
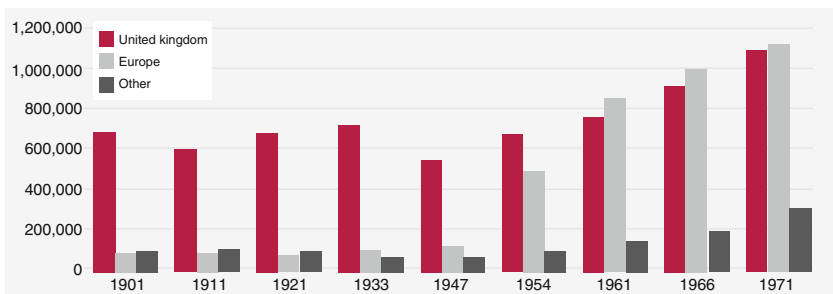

Fig. 10.1 Foreign-born population in Australia, 1901–1971 (Source: DIBP 2015)

being recruited from the UK, Ireland and continental Europe. Chinese and other "non-whites" were excluded.

Australia's ethnic Chinese population grew suddenly and significantly in the late 1980s and early 1990s as a result of the settlement of 45,000 or so Chinese students living in the country. Since then it has seen a rapid increase. The 1996 Census recorded 343,523 Australian residents identifying themselves as Chinese speakers, and in 2001 the number claiming to be of Chinese origin rose to about 555,500 (Gao 2015). According to the 2011 Census, around 866,200 Australian residents claimed Chinese origin and as many as 74 % were first-generation immigrants (ABS 2012a). The settlement of 45,000 or so Chinese students in the late 1980s and early 1990s not only reactivated direct immigration from the Chinese mainland to Australia but renewed Australia's status as the "new gold mountain," a preferred destination for new Chinese immigrants.

This chapter asks how and why the settlement of Chinese students affected immigration from China to Australia from the mid-1980s onwards, and examines its patterns, trends and characteristics from the mid-1980s to the present. It offers an analysis in political-economic terms of immigration and diasporic development as impacted by contemporary inflows of migrants, students, tourists and investors from China, and explains how and why Chinese, once seen as aliens, have now become an integral part of contemporary Australia. The chapter goes on to take a brief look at the literature on Chinese immigration to Australia. This is followed by a section that looks at how the tightly closed doors to China and Australia were opened in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and another that examines major changes in the ethnic Chinese population in recent decades and their current socioeconomic status in Australia. The chapter concludes with some thoughts on how Chinese migrant experiences can be analyzed in future research.

PERSPECTIVES ON CHINESE IMMIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA

Because of Australia's long history dating back to the gold-rush years of the 1850s, the Chinese community there and the experiences of new migrants from China have been considered from a number of perspectives, resulting in quite a large number of scholarly publications. This literature can be divided into two main types, depending on the focus of research.

The first type is oriented toward mainstream society or studies of the dominant group. It focuses on documenting and analyzing how Chinese in

Australia were mistreated in the nineteenth century, and draws on accounts of the early Chinese experience in a range of genres and social contexts (e.g., Cronin 1982; Fitzgerald 2007; Ryan 1995, 2003). Some studies have related Chinese experiences in Australia to broader issues, including racism and its global and historical contexts, capitalism and multiculturalism (Fitzgerald 2007, 2012; Lake and Reynolds 2008; Jakubowicz 2011). According to Tung (2005), many studies look at specific geographical regions, smaller localities, family networks, Chinatowns and the trade activities of earlier groups of Chinese (e.g., Atkinson 1995; Couchman 1995; Fitzgerald 2001; Lydon 1999; McGowan 2004).

The second type is more concerned with the Chinese community itself. A variety of studies look at the premigration experiences of new migrants and the factors that affected their decision to come to Australia (Kee and Skeldon 1994; Ho and Coughlan 1997; Wang and Lai 1987). A small number of publications document how Chinese students obtained the right to stay in Australia after 1989 (Birrell 1994; Gao 2006a, 2009, 2011). Since the mid-1990s and especially the 2000s, more researchers have turned their attention to post-arrival experiences of Chinese immigrants to focus on settlement-related issues (Chan 2005; Kee 1992, 1995; Khoo and Mak 2003). These topics include changing perceptions of Australia and China (Fung and Chen 1996; Ip et al. 1998); family life (Crissman 1991); identity and transnationality (Ang 2000; Fung and Chen 1996; Ip et al. 1997; Tan 2006); media consumption and cultural life (Gao 2006c; Sun 2005; Sun et al. 2011); and social mobility (Wu 2003; Wu et al. 1998). Also explored are gender (Hibbins 2006; Ho 2006); health and aging (Lo and Russell 2007); and intergenerational issues and education (Dooley 2003).

Publications in the second category include some that look at issues specifically related to the occupational adjustment of Chinese immigrants (Wu et al. 1998; Hugo 2008) and their family businesses and entrepreneurship (Collins 2002; Ip 1993; Lever-Tracy et al. 1991; Yu 2001). These focus on a crucial aspect of post-migration life—that is, the means of livelihood of new migrants—and have continued the scholarly tradition of studying the entrepreneurship of overseas Chinese. In more recent years, owing to Asian economic development, the topic of migrant entrepreneurship has since the mid-2000s attracted more atention than before, and a large number of studies have examined the causes and consequences of ethnic Chinese entrepreneurship and related conceptual issues (Li 2007; Zhou 2004). As part of this worldwide trend, researchers have sought to

explain Chinese immigrant entrepreneurship in Australia, including the impact of social and human capital (Collins and Low 2010; Lund et al. 2006) and the relationship between them (Peters 2002; Zolin et al. 2011); the integration experience of Chinese entrepreneurs (Liu 2011); intergenerational succession (Ye et al. 2010); Chinese entrepreneurs' role in trade and commerce (Tung and Chung 2010); and transnationalism and dynamism (Gao 2006b; Hsu 2009).

However, few studies analyze overall patterns, trends and key features of new Chinese migration to Australia, and political economic analyses of the emergence and growth of new Chinese immigration to Australia in the context of what has happened in both China and Australia as the host country are fewer still. Although a few scholars have pointed out that the new Chinese migration has to be considered in the context of "the global economic restructuring process" (Lo and Wang 1997: 49) or "within the political economy of the nation state" (Jakubowicz 2009: 115), little attention has been paid to such analysis. Researchers have focused instead on the post-arrival experiences of new Chinese migrants and a number of settlement-related issues, and the growing body of such studies has further blurred our understanding of the socioeconomic circumstances in which the new Chinese migration to Australia has taken place and in which migrants have lived and worked. Without taking into account sociopolitical and socioeconomic transformations in China and Australia in recent decades, researchers fail to provide a fuller and clearer picture of this fastest-growing immigrant community in Australia.

To address this major gap in the research literature, this chapter analyzes Chinese migration to Australia at the intersection of two rapidly changing contexts of exit and reception, from China to Australia. While both countries are undergoing a sustained period of economic growth and social transformation, they are doing so in distinctive ways that have contributed to shaping patterns of immigration and adaptation or integration. These patterns are not adequately explained by existing theories and models. While Australia has been 'in the process of becoming more Asian' (Katzenstein 2002: 106), China has become more open and globalized. By examining relevant aspects of political-economic conditions in China and Australia, this chapter offers an explanation of how recent Chinese immigration to Australia happened and what factors affected the overall patterns, trends and characteristics of the new generations of Chinese migrants.

Opening Two Tightly Closed Doors

The discussion about the resumption of Chinese immigration to Australia in the mid-1980s has to start with a brief mention of the fact that both Australia and China were famous for their closed-door policies. The resumption of direct immigration from China to Australia was a result of the efforts of many young Chinese who took advantage of the changing policy environments in both China and Australia and facilitated the opening of two tightly closed doors: China's to allow its populace to migrate and travel internationally, and Australia's to allow in Chinese migrants, students and tourists. China officially reopened its door after the end of the Cultural Revolution in the late 1970s, but only gradually. China first opened its door to inbound tourists and then sent many young students to developed countries.

However, Australia resumed significant direct immigration from China in the late 1980s and early 1990s in a rather abnormal fashion. Many young Chinese students came to Australia under its English Language Intensive Course for Overseas Students (ELICOS) scheme in the mid-1980s, and some 45,000 were given a four-year temporary residency after the June 4 incident of 1989 (the Tiananmen Square Massacre). They were allowed to stay permanently in 1993 (Gao 2006a, 2009). As a direct result, Australia has seen a rapid increase in its Chinese-speaking population.

The Joint Effects of International Education Policies

The major push factors behind the arrival of Chinese students in Australia emerged out of changes in China in the early 1980s, especially the country's new strategy of sending thousands of young Chinese to study abroad (Orleans 1988). A social craze emerged, the so-called "tide of going abroad," which swelled even further after the first major setback to China's reform in 1984. At the time, the USA was the favored destination, but it took mostly graduate students or visiting researchers. Other countries, including Canada, Germany, Japan, Australia and New Zealand, quickly identified a new market in language education.

International education in Australia has its origins in the 1950s, when the Colombo Plan was launched as a postcolonial or post-war initiative to maintain British influence in South and Southeast Asia (Oakman 2004) and brought tens of thousands of Asian students from Southeast Asia to the country. However, international education only became one of Australia's

economic sectors of importance in the mid-1980s, after economic restructuring in the 1970s and 1980s failed to introduce new industries and jobs (Gao 2015). The ELICOS scheme was therefore introduced to earn foreign currency (Marginson 1997). It started in 1986, when a few hundred Chinese arrived to take the courses.

Despite the ELICOS scheme, Chinese students had yet to dominate the overseas-student market in Australia in the mid-1980s. However, their strong interest in studying overseas and Australia's efforts to attract more students from Asia resulted in a steady inflow of young Chinese. China was relatively poor, but it was potentially the biggest market in the world and became a prime target for Australian language-teaching. A number of ELICOS colleges promoted their courses in Chinese cities, and the pull factor from Australia started to take effect in 1987 and 1988. An "Australia fever" thus emerged in China.

While "the tide of going abroad" was in full flow in China, the "Australia fever" spread from more globalized places in Guangdong to others elsewhere in China. The attention of a large number of Chinese turned to Australia, one of several countries offering language courses. Known as the "new gold mountain" in the 1850s, as against San Francisco's "old gold mountain," Australia, was rediscovered by young Chinese. In 1988, Chinese students recruited by ELICOS colleges flocked there, and their numbers doubled shortly before June 1989. It was estimated that more than 100,000 Chinese students studied in Australia from 1986 to 1989 (Fung and Chen 1996).

The Chinese Student Issue of 1989

A few days after the June 4 incident, the Australian government published figures showing that 15,405 Chinese nationals lived in Australia on June 4, 1989 (Birrell 1994; Jupp 1991). Australia decided to join several Western countries to offer temporary protection to Chinese nationals, who were given temporary protection visas several times a year after that (Cronin 1993; Gao 2013). However, the number of Chinese nationals in need of Australia's protection increased significantly because none of the ELICOS colleges wanted to refund the tuition fees that thousands of Chinese students had already paid, though they had not yet arrived in Australia by June 4, 1989. To help ELICOS colleges keep the money, as well as the job opportunities for thousands of Australians, the Australian government made a number of changes to tighten the screening procedures for visa

applications and allow more than 25,000 Chinese students to come to Australia to start courses a few months after the June 4 incident. These late arrivals were called the "post-20 June [1989] group" and their number was considerably larger than that of the "pre-20 June group." The pressure from the small but growing education export industry gave the impression that Australia could further open up its border to Chinese if other sectors required a similar policy response.

The June 4 incident changed the nature of the "tide of going abroad" and turned the great majority of Chinese students studying overseas in the late 1980s and early 1990s into a new generation of Chinese migrants. In the course of dealing with the Chinese-student issue in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Australian government had three ministers look after the immigration department. Gerry Hand, representing the left faction of the Australian Labor Party (ALP), once used the number of students and the low level of their qualifications to argue against a blanket approach to handling the student issue. He was "dumped" soon after making the comment on the grounds that it might weaken the ALP's "ethnic" support. However, Hand's successor, Nick Bolkus, publicly praised the Chinese students as an enormously talented group (Gao 2015). He later recalled that his department carefully went through the profiles of these students, and discovered that "we had within our shores some of the crème of young China" (Bourke 2009: 1).

The policies and actions of the Australian government in response to the Chinese student issue, and the students' demand to stay permanently in Australia, were contradictory, dictated by both national interests and humanitarian concerns. The students were allowed to stay permanently as a result of the so-called "1 November [1993] decisions" made by the Paul Keating Labor government. The decisions honored a promise made by the previous Labor prime minister, Bob Hawke, that none of the Chinese students would be forced to return to China against their will. In addition to the students who were allowed to stay under these decisions, about 4000–5000 did not meet the criteria for residency. Fortunately for them, Australia was a rather different place by the mid-1990s. After the federal election in March 1996, the newly elected Liberal-National Coalition government abandoned the tough stance on the Chinese-student issue and adopted a more pragmatic approach to solving the problem left unsolved by the 1993 decisions.

China's Post-Deng Reform and Australia's Responses

The 1993 decisions to allow 45,000 or so Chinese students to stay permanently were not made without consideration of Australia's long-term and strategic interests. As a strong advocate of integration with Asia, Paul Keating made the decision, flawlessly timed to coincide with a new phase of China's reform after Deng Xiaoping's famous inspection tour of southern China in early 1992. Despite the humanitarian nature of the student issue, Keating's "Asianization" policies (Cotton and Ravenhill 1997: 12) not only included an understanding of the potential of human capital for Australia's future relations with China and other Asian countries but re-emphasized education and skills in the selection of immigrants.

A number of published studies on the topic, including some of my own, have failed to consider the dynamism behind the resumption of direct immigration from China. As mentioned earlier, both China and Australia were undergoing socioeconomic transformation at the time. If one considers the resumption of Chinese immigration to Australia from a different perspective, the 1993 decision to allow the students to stay permanently was part of Australia's historic shift toward Asia. This shift was initiated by the Whitlam Labor government and the Fraser Liberal government in the 1970s and early 1980s, and was advocated by the next two Labor prime ministers, Bob Hawke and Paul Keating.

Australia saw greater trade potential in China than in other regions. In 1980 the volume of trade between Australia and China already "amounted to US$1.27 billion, and Australia was China's fifth biggest trading partner' (Huan 1985: 124). In 1980, Australia had a trade surplus of more than AUD650 million with China, much larger than its surpluses with Taiwan and Hong Kong (Fung and Mackerras 1985), and "the annual growth rate averaged 24.5 %, almost twice Australia's total export growth rate" (Woodard 1997: 147–148). By the mid-1980s, Australia had integrated itself into the Asia-Pacific economy, and more than 60 % of its total trade was conducted with Asia and the Pacific (Humphreys 1985).

Despite being frequently distracted by pessimistic comments about China, Australian policy-makers have found China's potential as a trading partner too good to ignore. Keeping the door open was in the interests not only of ELICOS colleges but also of many other industries. While Australia was making efforts to adjust its economy to the rapidly developing Chinese economy and to connect its economic restructuring to China's modernization, the renewed interest of young Chinese in studying abroad and the
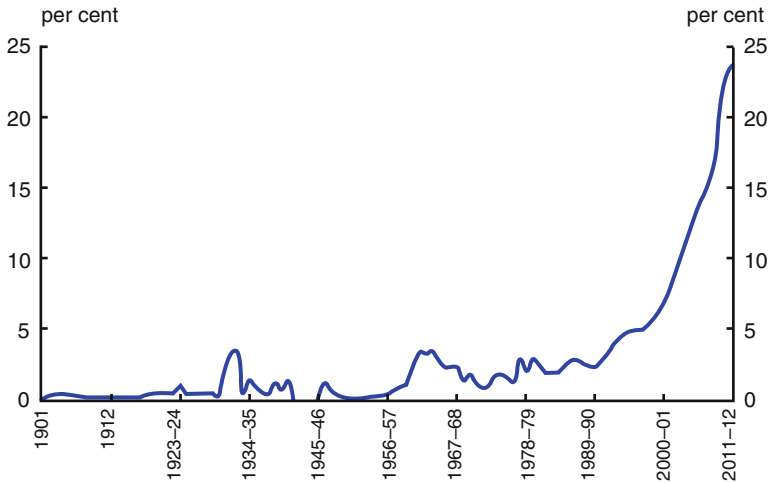
Fig. 10.2 China's share of Australia's total merchandise trade, 1901–2012 (Source: The Treasury 2012)

establishment of Australia's ELICOS program brought thousands of Chinese to Australia.

As a direct effect of the settlement of 45,000 or so Chinese students in the early 1990s, many thousands of Chinese students and migrants have arrived every year since, and Australia has seen a rapid increase in the Chinese-speaking population. As shown in Fig. 10.2, the settlement of the students coincided with, if not resulted in, a turning point in Australia's trade history: a big and growing proportion of this trade has since been conducted with China.

The latest wave of Chinese migration to Australia has significantly influenced present-day Australia. The early debate about whether to accept the Chinese students was part of a learning process. Since June 1989, two parallel processes had been going on at the same time. The Chinese students were seeking opportunities to stay, and some dominant sections of mainstream society, especially government institutions, were experiencing a long and onerous learning curve with regard to an increased intake of Chinese immigrants and its policy implications. The focus of the rethinking was on whether it was worth allowing the students to stay because, at the time, many Australians were still influenced by the stereotype of the poor Chinese diggers who arrived in the country during the gold rush. As shown in
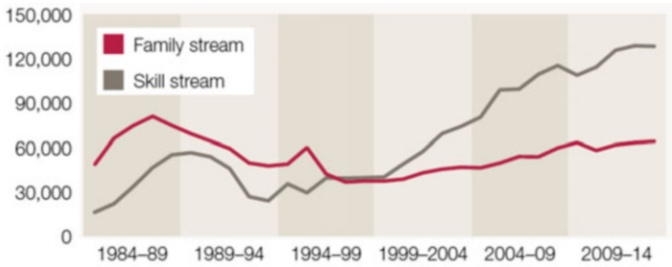
Fig. 10.3 Migration program outcome by family and skill stream (Source: DIBP 2015)

Fig. 10.3, the settlement of the large group of Chinese students in the early 1990s also coincided with another vital turning point in Australian immigration history: the decision to admit more skilled than unskilled migrants. The arrival of hundreds of educated Chinese from Hong Kong and Taiwan in the 1980s and the settlement of the students in the early 1990s had helped Australia to renew its policy emphasis on immigrants' education, skills and contribution to the local economy, which had also gone through a prolonged period of restructuring.

If the number of ethnic Chinese living in Australia in 1986 was only about 200,000, ten years later the Census recorded as many as 343,500 Chinese-speakers. Since the mid-1990s, the number of residents claiming Chinese origin has increased rapidly, especially in the decade since the mid-2000s. In 2006 the number of people claiming to be of Chinese origin rose to about 669,900 (ABS 2007). The 2006 Census revealed that the largest group of overseas-born in Australia were still from the UK and New Zealand, but the Chinese-born population had moved up from seventh place on the list in 1996 to third place. Given problems with the Census design (e.g., listing Australia as a country of ancestry and excluding birthplaces of grandparents), the Chinese population in Australia is believed to be much larger than the 866,200 recorded by the 2011 Census. A big factor in this increase has been the inflow of students and migrants, which started with the acceptance of the students in the early 1990s. Since then, the Chinese community in Australia has entered its current model-community phase, as we shall see in the following section.

SETTLING DOWN IN THE NEW GOLD MOUNTAIN

As an essential part of Australia's nation-building, post-1993 immigration to the country has been guided by more selective policies than in the past. In addition to increases in the number of highly qualified immigrants, the number of skilled immigrants has also increased steadily. In March 1996, the Labor government was replaced by a Liberal-National coalition government led by John Howard, and within a few months the newly elected coalition government "shifted the focus of the Migration Programme from family towards skilled migration" (DIBP 2015: 71). In 1997 the Howard government announced that greater priority would be given to business and skilled migrants, with the skill stream being rapidly increased to about 37 % of the total immigration intake, as against 29 % in the previous year (DIBP 2015: 71).

The New Demography of the Chinese Community

Post-1993 Chinese immigration to Australia has been managed by more selective policies than before, especially the inclusion of two new selection criteria: skills were added to the list, followed by the capacity to invest in the Australian economy. Obviously, the Chinese student issue of the late 1980s and early 1990s helped Australia to develop its new emphasis on educational qualifications, skills and the capacity to invest.

China's reform and open-door policy has been further liberalized and some new policy initiatives, such as its "going out" strategy, have been implemented. To benefit from China's booming economy, the Howard government (1996–2007) allowed a large number of overseas students to seek residency after their study under an onshore skilled-migration scheme. This policy initiative has not only helped Australia's universities but has radically reshaped the demographic structure of the Chinese community and completely transformed it in terms of levels of education and family wealth. As a result, immigration from major Asian countries to Australia, as shown in Fig. 10.4, has increased rapidly since the 1990s, but immigrants from China have been the largest group.

Australia's Liberal-National coalition was in government from 1996 to 2007, when immigration policy became even more central to the country's nation-building and economic growth strategies. In addition to the above changes, special attention has been paid to new business migration schemes. By the late 1990s about 80 % of business migrants were of Chinese origin
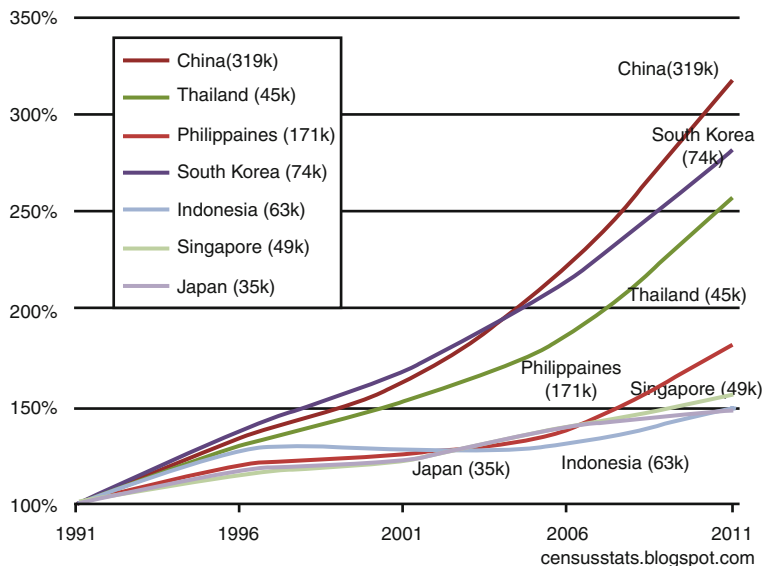
Fig. 10.4 East-Asian sources of migrants relative to 1991 levels (Source: Australian Census Stats 2012)

(Jordens 2001). This trend has continued in the past 20 years since the mid-1990s. For example, around 84 % of sponsored business migrants in Victoria in the mid-2000s were from China (Murphy 2006). Since the financial crisis of 2008, "almost two-thirds of Business Skills visas went to nationals from the People's Republic of China" (DIAC 2013: 34). All this happened while the Chinese in Australia were becoming more visible among professionals, and the ethnic Chinese community's capacity to invest and run businesses has improved beyond recognition.

Over the past two decades since the mid-1990s, China has rapidly moved from being Australia's fifth-largest trade partner to its largest, and Australia has become China's first foreign direct-investment destination, while China has been at the top of Australia's list of incoming tourists, international students and new immigrants. Therefore, apart from many jobs created by governments and companies, only a small fraction of which are offered to people of Chinese origin, the continuing growth and massive scale of trade and people-to-people exchange between Australia and China have provided many Chinese immigrants with more opportunities than non-Chinese Australians have.

China-Related Businesses and the Community's Prosperity

A free-market economy like that of Australia is often dominated by a few big companies. When new Chinese immigrants started importing in the late 1990s and early 2000s, they could only import products that the purchasing managers of big Australian companies did not purchase. There has been an invisible competition for market share between the purchasing managers and ethnic-Chinese business people in the past 20 years since the mid-1990s. While Chinese have slowly taken a larger market share than ever, they have also played a more vital role than other Australians in activating and maintaining people-to-people exchanges between China and Australia, while also exporting.

As illustrated in Fig. 10.5, international tourism and education have developed at a phenomenal rate in Australia since the 1990s, making them the country's second and third largest foreign-currency earners. Without its Chinese community, Australia would almost certainly never attract so many tourists and students from China and persuade so many Chinese to purchase Australian goods and services. For these reasons, the Chinese community has taken up a large share of some markets and earned a large slice of the total incomes from them.
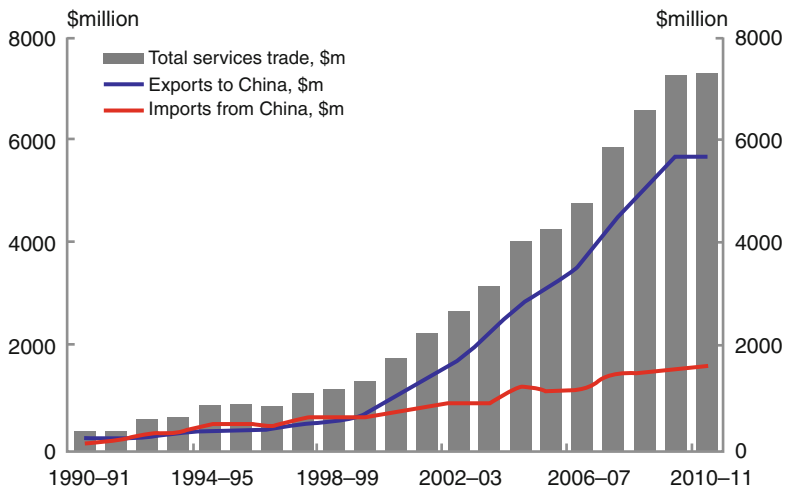

Fig. 10.5   China is Australia's largest services (tourism and education) export market (Source: The Treasury 2012)

Australia is one of the few countries that have greatly benefited from China's socioeconomic development and integration into the world economy, and especially from the increasing size of the Chinese middle class and its enthusiasm for international travel. In 2015, Australia received more than a million short-term visitors from China, out of a total of 120 million Chinese outbound tourists, and it earned USD7.7 billion of the USD215 billion that they spent (Freed 2016; Petroff 2016). The number of Chinese tourists to Australia has increased steadily since the mid-1990s, and now China is the second-largest source of tourists for Australia, behind only New Zealand, although the spending of Chinese visitors in Australia has ranked first for almost a decade. Australia's international education was worth about USD1 billion in the early 1990s. In 2007, when the country attracted around 0.5 million overseas students, education became the second-largest export sector behind mining, worth around USD13 billion (Tsukamoto 2009). Total earnings from the sector peaked in 2009, reaching about USD19 billion, with international students accounting for 22 % of the total university student population (ABS 2012b). Despite the fall in earnings after 2009, the sector is still Australia's largest service export, worth USD15 billion in 2012, several billion more than its tourism revenue. For many years, since the late 1990s, China has been the largest national contributor to the foreign-student population in Australia, and the proportion of Chinese students in the past decade has been about 30 % (ACPET 2013: ii).

In the process of opening up both the tourism market and the international student market, hundreds of Chinese operators, big and small, have worked in the industries at both ends of the markets, in Australia and China. Operators providing services to Chinese tourists and students have taken up large shares of the market since the late 1990s. Onshore services alone, such as travel, shopping, food and accommodation, have brought hundreds of millions of dollars a year into the Chinese community. Thus the ethnic Chinese community as a whole has become well settled economically.

A huge amount of Chinese earnings has been spent on further developing the community's economy and cultural activities, important mechanisms for making the community sustainable and prosperous. Two often mentioned examples are the Chinese-language schools that the community has established in Australia since the early 1990s and an unusually large number of newspapers, magazines and even radio stations. The Chinese in Sydney and Melbourne have never had fewer than ten Chinese newspapers, including weeklies and dailies, and magazines since the 1990s (Gao 2006c). Back then, new Chinese migrants stopped being consumers of and became

participants in the community media market. The competition has not deterred new players from entering the media market. The reason behind the significant expansion is the growing scale of the community-based economy. The community media market has grown in response to the increasing demand for advertisements. This media surge is an indicator of a high level of economic activity.

Another indicator of a thriving community is the educational success of Chinese children and intergenerational upward social mobility. Well-off or not, almost all Chinese families put much effort and money into their children's education. The publication of Victorian Certificate of Education results in Victoria and Higher School Certificate results in New South Wales in daily newspapers has helped the Chinese community enormously because Chinese names take up much of the lists. This has not only further refined the image of Australian Chinese and new migrants in Australians' eyes but has shown that students of Chinese origin are not only good at mathematics, physics, chemistry and Chinese but also top the tests in English. Their academic performance has long been reflected in university enrolment. An increasing number of Chinese take degrees, especially in law, medicine, pharmacy, engineering, architecture, accounting and finance. This has been a trend for more than two decades, and many have completed university courses and entered the professions. The success of the second generation is normally the main indicator of satisfaction for migrant families.

The attendance of a large number of Chinese at university has helped to remove another hurdle in the way of the community, now widely regarded as a middle-class or "model" community (Ho 2007: 1; Pung 2008: 4). These achievements have resulted from changes in both China and Australia, but this new chapter in Australian history and Chinese migration history started with the settlement of Chinese students in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has analyzed a number of socioeconomic and political factors shaping Chinese migration and settlement in Australia and has explained how the Chinese, once "undesirable aliens" (Chan 2005: 643), have become an integral part of society. Although there are many publications on the Chinese in Australia, the depth and scope of research lag behind the rapid expansion of the community, and research outcomes are insufficient to offer guidance as to how to understand it. This chapter analyzes Chinese

immigration from a political and economic point of view and considers the socioeconomic circumstances in which it has taken place.

This approach is constructive in at least two ways. First, the community cannot be analyzed or understood from the point of view of the host country alone, especially a point of view based on the old international economic system and geopolitical order. The changes in post-1978 China are so profound that one cannot consider the community from an Australia-centric perspective. This is particularly true of new Chinese immigrants, whose home country has recently provided many with the opportunity to be economically successful. Their decision to leave China has confused researchers unfamiliar with the new transnational perspective and unable to comprehend what has happened outside their own sphere of research. This chapter has shown how Chinese in Australia have responded to the transformations in China and used the chances created by China's economic growth and Australia's historic shift towards Asia, thus offering a new perspective on the Chinese in Australia.

Many members of the community are engaged in China-related businesses. The emergence of this sector has profound implications for immigration, for the adaptation or integration of individuals, and for community-building because the nature of such type of the ethnic economy is both local and transnational. As the world economy becomes highly globalized, the business activities of the Chinese community help Australia to open up new markets in Asia and bridge the gaps between Chinese immigrants and other Australians. Chinese families in Australia have become more prosperous by utilizing their China-related resources. This has not been happening in all sectors but it has in most. The Chinese success is, increasingly, a result of their links with China and its economy, and their efforts to reposition themselves in the course of developing Sino-Australian business relations. Their role in Australia's nation-building has only recently become public knowledge, aided by Australians with a clearer idea of Australia's nationhood and its identity as an Asia-Pacific nation. As a direct outcome of the maturing of Australia, and especially of China's globalized economy, Chinese settlers and new migrants now contribute significantly to Australian prosperity.

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