CHAPTER 11

New Chinese Immigration to New Zealand: Policies, Immigration Patterns, Mobility and Perception

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Introduction

In the New Zealand context, large-scale Chinese immigration started very recently. The country's immigrant selection was based on racial preference until 1986 when a major immigration policy review was enforced (Ip 1995; Trlin 1992). The 1986 Immigration Policy Reviews that abolished the traditional source-country preference (such as the Great Britain) and proclaimed a liberal philosophy of selecting immigrants based on "criteria of personal merit without discrimination on grounds of race, national or ethnic origin" (Burke 1986: 11) resulted in a dramatic increase in the number of new Chinese migrants to the country (Ip 1995).[1] The new policy was further refined by the introduction of a points-based system in 1991, which accentuated the human-capital factor of recruiting talent and economic investment (Trlin 1997). These changes brought in a large influx of new Chinese migrants. Of the new Chinese intake, Hong Kong, Taiwan and the People's Republic of China (PRC[2]) are the three main contributing sources (Ho 2003).

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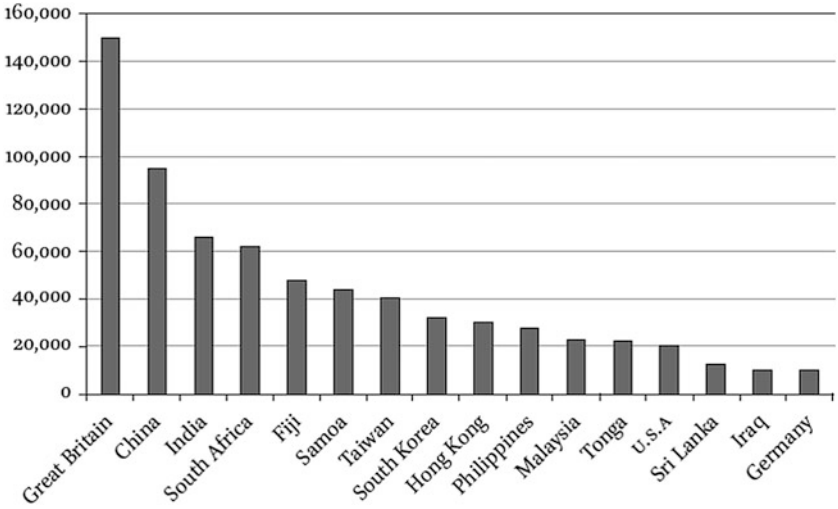

Fig. 11.1 Top 16 countries of origin for New Zealand permanent residents, 1987–2015

Immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan started arriving in the early 1990s, but PRC immigrants started coming in significant numbers at a later date (Ip 2006b; Liu 2011). Most started to arrive in the mid-1990s, and their numbers increased rapidly in the late 1990s, making the PRC a major immigrant source for New Zealand. The PRC became the second largest source country for New Zealand in 1997 and it has remained the second-largest source for residence approvals in New Zealand (94,859), just after the Great Britain (149,969) (see Fig. 11.1).

Given the significance of the PRC's migrant population in New Zealand, it is important to study this new Chinese immigration. Much attention has been given to the Chinese diaspora in other traditional immigration-based "New World" countries whose geopolitical and economic positioning in the world migration system is much more visible and is closer to the center of global politics. Although new Chinese migrants in New Zealand contribute greatly to the global Chinese diaspora population, this group has often been overlooked in Chinese diaspora studies. This chapter sets out to remedy this gap. It focuses on the changing patterns of immigration, routes and trans-national mobility in the context of New Zealand's changing immigration policy and the geopolitical positioning of both China and New Zealand in

the global system. It distinguishes PRC migrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan Chinese migrants because the latter two groups differ from PRC Chinese in terms of time of arrival, migration incentives and patterns, and demographic structure.

Studying new Chinese immigration in the New Zealand context has far-reaching implications for Chinese diaspora studies. New Zealand is more likely a destination for short-term or mid-term immigration settlement than it is for long-term settlement (Bedford et al. 2000). To study new Chinese migrants to this traditional "land of immigration" that is geographically far away from the world center and Asia can help us understand the changing themes, patterns and circulation of the contemporary Chinese diaspora in a changing world migration hierarchy.

I first provide a brief historical overview of early Chinese immigration to New Zealand. I then contextualize the new wave of PRC immigration against the background of New Zealand's changing immigration policy after 1986 and China's economic and social transformation. The transformation of China after the early 1990s speeded the new Chinese immigration wave. This second section addresses how policy and the social, political and economic environment of both immigrant-receiving and immigrant-sending countries conditioned new Chinese immigration. I focus on immigration policy in New Zealand and its impact on the volume of this inflow. The third section focuses on the immigration categories under which PRC migrants arrive. Other immigrant groups will be used as benchmarks to show the distinct pattern of PRC migrants. The fourth section looks at the general profile of the PRC migrant population in New Zealand and their settlement, indicated by participation in the labor market. The last section touches on the transnational migration and mobility of PRC migrants, a theme of research on new Chinese immigration everywhere. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how new Chinese migrants are perceived by the host society, especially Maoris.

Setting the Scene: Early Chinese Immigration to New Zealand

Early Chinese immigration to New Zealand was part of a broad pattern of early Chinese migration to various immigration-based "New World" countries in the Pacific Rim (e.g., the USA, Canada and Australia) during the mid-nineteenth-century gold-rush period (Eng 2006a, b; Ip 1995; Skeldon

1996). This immigration was driven by push factors, such as China's internal poverty, natural disasters and warfare, and pull factors exerted from New Zealand, where gold was found in the Otago region (Ng 1993; Ip 1995).

Early Chinese migrants to New Zealand in the mid-1860s entered mainly as itinerant gold miners and were mostly uneducated male peasants from rural Southern China, especially Guangdong. In Australia, a "White Australia" policy was officially sanctioned, but New Zealand never had an explicitly anti-Chinese policy. However, legislative discrimination against the Chinese also happened there and ensured that the Chinese population remained at just a couple of thousand (Ip 1995). The Chinese Immigrants Act of 1881 introduced a "Poll Tax" of NZ£10 aimed at restricting Chinese entry. The act imposed a restriction on ship passengers: one Chinese passenger per 10 tons of cargo. In 1896 the ratio was reduced to one passenger per 200 tons of cargo, and the poll tax was increased to NZ£100. The rationale for this was New Zealand's settlement policy, which aimed to create a "fairer Britain of the South Seas." In such a nation, non-white migrants would be undesirable (Murphy 2003).

Besides the poll tax a series of anti-Chinese laws were passed. The "Reading Test" in 1907 required the Chinese to read 100 English words picked at random. The 1920 Immigration Restriction Amendment Act required every aspiring immigrant (other than people of British and Irish descent) to apply for a special permit which, in effect, severely restricted the number of Chinese. Applicants not admitted were given no reason (Ip 1995, 1996). Legislation discriminating against Chinese also affected those already in the country. In 1908, naturalization of Chinese stopped, and it did not resume until 1952. Chinese women seldom immigrated to New Zealand before World War II and the sex ratio of the early Chinese community was extremely unbalanced (Ip 2002b). Chinese male migrants immigrated to New Zealand primarily for reasons of economic survival. They were "sojourners"—a word used of overseas Chinese in the gold-rush years. They made a living overseas and earned income to support their families in China as long-term laborers without permanent residence, expecting an eventual return (Yang 2000).

Despite these official barriers, the Chinese still managed to develop their community, especially during World War II. With China's fight against Japanese, wives and children of Chinese men were allowed temporary entry to New Zealand for humanistic reasons in 1939. This bolstered the number of Chinese there, and the Chinese community got the chance to

sink roots. In 1947 the New Zealand government granted permanent residence to migrants' wives and children. These changes eventually turned the "sojourner" paradigm into a "settler" model (Ip 2006a).

The depletion of the goldfields in the late 1880s resulted in Chinese drifting from rural areas to towns and cities looking for work. Like Chinese in other countries, many of those in New Zealand worked in fruit shops, laundries and stores. They also found a niche in market gardening, starting in the late 1920s (Ip 1995, 2008). During the post-war period, the Chinese community remained largely self-contained and low key. The label "model minority" describes the marginalized social status and painful assimilation of early Chinese migrants (Ip 1995, 1996). The local-born descendants were educated in New Zealand, and some climbed into the professions. In general, the descendants of early Chinese migrants were lawful, hard-working, rarely lived on welfare and were invisible. The "model minority" label sounds positive but it is a tool of social control created by the dominant white supremacy through racial profiling.

Alongside natural increase, the community grew through chain migration. The period from the 1950s through to the 1980s is viewed as the assimilation phase (Ip 1995; Ng 1993). Connections with China loosened, mainly because China's isolation from the West and the Cold War mentality that prevented the Chinese nationals from emigrating until the 1980s. The ten-year Cultural Revolution further isolated the PRC from the rest of the world and prevented Chinese descendants in New Zealand from staying in touch with China.

New Chinese Immigrants in New Zealand

The Homeland Factor

New Chinese migrants have no strong affiliation with early migrants from Guangdong, given that the homeland connection had been cut. The presence of new Chinese migrants in New Zealand is a result of the changing social, economic and political conditions in China. People from Hong Kong and Taiwan started moving overseas in the late 1960s, but PRC migration came into emigration arena later (Skeldon 1996, 2004), in the early 1990s. The reason was mainly geopolitical (Liu and Norcliffe 1996). The Cold War led the PRC to close its borders and remain largely closed to the West until the late 1970s. Overseas travel was only possible if officially sanctioned. These controls blocked nearly all direct international emigration (Luo et al.

2003; Xiang 2003). There were no official channels to link the PRC with immigrant-receiving countries (Liu and Norcliffe 1996).

The situation started to change in the late 1970s. The PRC government allowed students and scholars to study overseas in 1978, in the expectation that they would return to China (Gittings 1989; Luo et al. 2003). Throughout the early 1990s, it initiated a series of policies aimed at relaxing border controls. In 1981 it recognized self-financed overseas study. This recognition produced a wave of student migration (Luo et al. 2003; Xiang 2003), which led to permanent settlement in the host countries. The official trigger for the increasing migration flow was the Emigration and Immigration Law of 1985. This guaranteed the right of Chinese citizens to travel outside China and allowed those who wished to leave the country for private reasons to do so (Liu and Norcliffe 1996; Skeldon 1996). The political ideology that viewed international emigration as a political "betrayal" was on its way out (Xiang 2003: 22): international emigration was accepted as a matter of individual choice. All these factors combined to increase the scale of Chinese international migration in the late 1990s.

The "Open-Door" Immigration Policy in New Zealand

The conditions under which new PRC migrants arrive at New Zealand now are remarkably different from those encountered by early Chinese migrants. New PRC migrants to New Zealand meet a largely favorable social and political environment. The Immigration Policy Review 1986 introduced an open immigration policy to welcome immigrants with financial and human capital. This review and its implementation (in the Immigration Act of 1987) was part of the Fourth Labour government's efforts to embark on a radical path of economic deregulation to revitalize the economy (Trlin 1992).[3] Immigration was encouraged, especially by skilled and business migrants with "ability and investment capital" who could contribute to the process of "economic restructuring and … the development of new competitive industries and markets" (Burke 1986: 19). Immigration was seen as a positive means of attracting foreign investment and stimulating domestic growth. The new policy sought to use immigration to remedy the "brain-drain" (owing to the out-migration of educated New Zealanders) (Henderson 2003: 143; Kasper 1990). There was also a desire to use immigration to link up with Pacific Rim countries and the "Asian Little Dragons" (Henderson 2003: 143; Ip 1995: 188; Trlin and Kang 1992: 49).[4] Seeing a competitive global economy that was increasingly influenced

by Asian industrial production and markets, New Zealand realized the importance of integrating more closely with Asia. To establish business links, human capital is essential. The new policy in New Zealand was a way of acquiring human capital (Trlin 1992).

When the National government came to power in the 1990s, it maintained the previous Labour government's program of economic deregulation and accentuated it by encouraging immigration. In line with countries such as Canada and Australia, a points-based system was introduced in 1991 (Trlin 1997).[5] This had a big impact on the number and composition of new Chinese immigrants arriving in New Zealand, where the Chinese presence grew ever stronger. Of the three main sources, Hong Kong was the earliest and peaked in 1991. It was followed by Taiwan, which peaked in 1996. Migrant totals from China started to catch up with Hong Kong and Taiwan after the 1991 policy change and then increased steadily (see Fig. 11.2).

This sudden influx caused unease and put pressure on New Zealand's immigration system. The immigration policy was tightened up and more challenging criteria for entry were introduced.[6] This tightening-up in 1995, together with the 1997 Asian financial crisis, reduced the number of Hong Kong and Taiwan immigration approvals. However, it had little effect on immigrants arriving from the PRC (Henderson 2003; Liu 2014): applications steadily increased during the following years.

The new Labour government, which returned to power in 1999, was determined to open the door even wider. With a series of policy adjustments and the introduction of a managed entry regime between 2000 and 2002, PRC migrant numbers increased, peaking in 2003 (see Fig. 11.2).[7] Since then the PRC has become a dominant source country.

The latest immigration policy change in New Zealand was a new selection system, introduced in 2003.[8] This focuses on ensuring that migrants with skills are needed rather than merely accepting those who meet a specific target. The minister of immigration announced a new Skilled Migrant Category (SMC) to replace the General Skills Category (GSC). The new SMC shifted the way the points system worked from passive acceptance to active selection. It replaced the "pass" mark system with a process in which people who qualify above a certain level of points submit an expression of interest (EOI) to a selection pool, from which they are then invited to apply. The system came about in a context in which successful settlement outcomes of migrants were recognized by the government as more important than numerical and economic outcomes (Bedford et al. 2005). Approvals

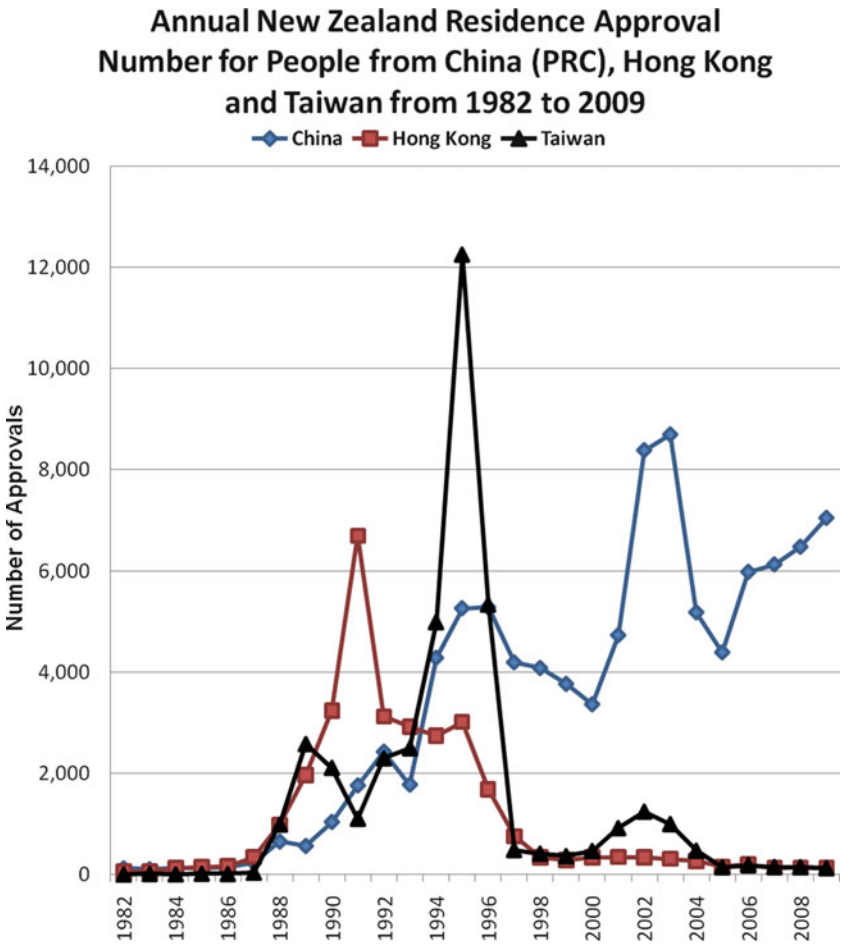

Fig. 11.2 Annual New Zealand residence approval number for people from the PRC, Hong Kong and Taiwan, 1982–2008

for applicants from China fell for a while but started to climb back in 2005 (see Fig. 11.2), though they have not returned to their highest level, which was achieved at the beginning of the new millennium.

The presence of new PRC migrants in New Zealand is a direct result of the "open-door" immigration policy introduced in 1987. The immigration

door swung to and fro as a result of unstable and fluctuating entry criteria over the years. However, the overall policy of encouraging skilled and business immigration was consistently maintained. It is under this policy that new Chinese migrants have arrived and settled in New Zealand.

Seeking "Greener Pastures"? Reasons for Immigrating

Unlike earlier Chinese immigrants to New Zealand, who were mostly peasants from South China and forced to leave their homeland because of disasters and warfare, most new PRC migrants are highly educated and have specialized skills and financial capital, which allows them to meet the entry criteria (Friesen and Ip 1997). Looking for economic opportunities overseas is no longer the primary reason for new Chinese migrants to immigrate; rather, they are often motivated by non-economic reasons, including searching for "greener pastures". A better lifestyle, an advanced education system and the securing of foreign passports have propelled this migratory movement (Liu 2011, 2014).

In the years 2007–2009 I conducted multisite interviews with 47 new PRC migrants in New Zealand, Australia and China to find out about their transnational mobility.[9] Socially, they see New Zealand as safe, liberal and easy-going. Politically, its democratic and stable government is perceived as better than China's. In practice, the entry criteria and living costs are lower than those of the USA, Canada and Australia. The natural environment, the advanced education system and the welfare system are also attractive (Friesen and Ip 1997; Ip 2006b; Liu 2011).

These findings coincide with the data from *Longitudinal Immigration Survey: New Zealand*, which shows that the attraction of New Zealand is often environmental, educational and social (Department of Labour 2009). This suggests that the country occupies a unique position in the world migration system. With competition for skilled migrants from the USA, Canada and Australia, New Zealand is not the first choice for many PRC migrants. According to one survey, the favorite destination is the USA, followed by Canada and Australia (Luo et al. 2003). New Zealand ranks fourth.

Another factor that causes PRC immigrants to choose to go to New Zealand is the country's historical ties to Britain, which gives it the image of a Western society. This is important for many PRC migrants. Quite often, interviewees see going to New Zealand as "going to the outside world to have a look," "an eye-opening experience" or "getting a gilded

wrapping for myself (镀金)". The "outside world" and "an eye-opening experience" refer to experiencing life in Western countries, and "getting a gilded wrapping" means that an overseas experience or degree can give someone a valuable credential and an international outlook. These help on China's job market (Liu 2011).

More recently, wealthy Chinese have turned moving to New Zealand into a social phenomenon. They are labeled as "lifestyle migrants" (Spoonley et al. 2009) who possess great financial assets and whose immigration is generated by the desire to secure their wealth, a different education for their children, less air pollution and greater food safety. Liu-Farrer (2016) suggests that the most recent wave of emigration from China is a form of class consumption, a strategy of class reproduction, and a way of converting economic resources into social status and prestige. My New Zealand studies confirm this trend. My research on the transnational migratory mobility of PRC migrants shows that New Zealand citizenship, which immigrants can obtain after a five-year stay, gives the Chinese greater transnational mobility. With improved mobility, they can move to a third country and reach their goal—not necessarily New Zealand (Liu 2011, 2014, 2015).

Diversified Immigration Paths

The way in which new PRC Chinese migrants use the New Zealand immigration program differs from that of other migrants. To show the distinct immigration pathways of PRC migrants, one must see their migration in a comparative framework. Recent data show that in 1997–2015, China was one of the top eight immigrant source countries for New Zealand. Table 11.1 shows that the number of residence approvals under the New Zealand Residence Programme was 765,179, of which 13.7 % (104,484) were for PRC migrants. This puts the PRC second after the UK, which had 17.8 % (136,384) approvals.

As the table shows, South Africa and the UK have the greatest number of residence approvals under the skilled category (78.8 % and 65.3 %, respectively) of residence approvals, while China has 35.3 % approvals.[10] However, China has a large percentage of residence approvals under the business category (10.3 %), which is much higher than the figure for the UK (2.2 %) and South Africa (0.7 %).[11]

Table 11.1 also shows that China has the greatest number of residence approvals under the parent category (22.8 %; 23,799), followed by the Fiji

Table 11.1 Residence approvals by nationality (top eight immigrant source countries) and immigration stream/category, 1997–2015

Nationality	*Total approvals*	*Total family sponsorship*	*Family sponsorship subcategories*				*Skilled*	*Business*	*Other*
			Spouse	*Parents*	*Dependent child*	*Siblings and adult child*			
Asia									
China	104,484	50,478 (48.3 %)	18,688 (17.9 %)	23,779 (22.8 %)	2106 (1.9 %)	4433 (4.2 %)	36,874 (35.3 %)	10,713 (10.3 %)	6419 (6.1 %)
India	80,950	26,473 (32.7 %)	13,292 (16.4 %)	9357 (11.6 %)	932 (1.1 %)	2484 (3.0 %)	43,348 (53.5 %)	346 (0.4 %)	10,783 (13.3 %)
South Korea	23,959	5345 (22.3 %)	3099 (12.9 %)	1045 (4.4 %)	363 (1.5 %)	353 (1.4 %)	11,967 (50.0 %)	5421 (22.6 %)	1226 (5.1 %)
Philippines	39,640	8606 (21.7 %)	5928 (15.0 %)	4413 (11.1 %)	1122 (2.8 %)	392 (1.0 %)	24,865 (62.7 %)	39 (0.1 %)	6130 (15.4 %)
Sub-total	249,033	90,902 (36.5 %)	41,007 (16.5 %)	38,594 (15.5 %)	4433 (1.8 %)	7662 (30.8 %)	117,054 (47.0 %)	16,519 (6.6 %)	24,558 (9.8 %)
% Asia	32.5	34.6	28.3	55.0	24.2	41.6	31.3	58.9	24.3
Pacific									
Fiji	44,753	19,544 (43.7 %)	8262 (18.5 %)	5973 (13.3 %)	1014 (2.3 %)	3046 (6.8 %)	20,236 (45.4 %)	691 (1.5 %)	4282 (9.6 %)
Samoa	35,735	15,190 (14.5 %)	6626 (18.5 %)	1987 (5.5 %)	5557 (15.5 %)	648 (1.8 %)	553 (1.5 %)	0	19,992 (56.0 %)
Sub-total	80,488	34,734 (43.1 %)	14,888 (18.5 %)	7960 (9.9 %)	6571 (8.2 %)	3694 (4.6 %)	20,789 (25.8 %)	691 (0.8 %)	24,274 (30.1 %)
% Pacific	10.5	13.2	10.2	11.3	35.9	20.0	5.5	2.5	24.0
Other									
UK	136,384	37,189 (27.2 %)	25,111 (18.4 %)	9547 (7.0 %)	921 (0.7 %)	1346 (1.0 %)	89,035 (65.3 %)	3013 (2.2 %)	7147 (5.2 %)

(*continued*)

Table 11.1 (continued)

Nationality	*Total approvals*	*Total family sponsorship*	*Family sponsorship subcategories*				*Skilled*	*Business*	*Other*
			Spouse	*Parents*	*Dependent child*	*Siblings and adult child*			
South Africa	61,723	9451 (15.3 %)	3232 (5.2 %)	4413 (7.1 %)	740 (7.8 %)	879 (1.4 %)	48,624 (78.8 %)	444 (0.7 %)	3204 (5.2 %)
Sub-total	198,107	46,640 (23.5 %)	28,343 (14.3 %)	13,960 (7.0 %)	1661 (0.8 %)	2225 (1.1 %)	137,659 (69.5 %)	3457 (1.7 %)	10,351 (5.2 %)
% other	25.9	17.7	19.5	19.9	9.1	12.1	36.9	12.3	10.2
Total 8 countries	527,628	172,276	84,238	60,874	12,665	13,581	275,502	20,667	59,183
% resident approvals	100	32.7	16.0	11.5	2.4	2.6	52.2	3.9	11.2
Total all countries	765,179	262,456	145,019	70,212	18,285	18,413	373,531	28,050	101,142
% resident approvals	100	34.3	19.0	9.2	2.4	2.4	48.8	3.7	13.2
% from 8 countries	69.0	65.6	58.0	86.7	69.3	73.8	73.8	73.7	58.5

Source: Immigration New Zealand

(13.3 %; 5973) and India (11.6 %; 9357). This is probably due in large part because filial piety is an important value in Chinese culture, even today, including among Chinese overseas (Bedford and Liu 2013). Chinese like to live with their parents, either in the same household or in the same locality, so many PRC migrants sponsor their parents to immigrate immediately after they have settled in New Zealand.

New PRC migrants often use other family sponsorship subcategories such as the spouse category. The countries with the largest number of migrants in the spouse category are Fiji (18.5 %) and Samoa (18.5 %), followed by the UK (18.4 %) and China (17.9 %). Samoa, which has relatively small numbers in all the above categories, has the largest number of migrants in the dependent child category (15.5 %).

The data show that new PRC migrants follow various routes to New Zealand. Most are in the skilled and parent categories, and quite a few are in the business category. This reflects the fact that China's growing economy has played an important role in bolstering its nationals' financial ability to obtain permanent residence in New Zealand.

Social Indicators: Age-Gender Pyramid, Educational Background and Employment Status

Unlike some other source countries where the flows are strongly gendered, the age-gender distribution of the PRC population in New Zealand is balanced, as Fig. 11.3 shows. This population is distributed across all age groups, though with smaller numbers among young people (0–15 years), much larger numbers among students and younger working ages (20–39 years), and many people in the middle (40–64 years) and older age groups (66 years and over). The largest groups are aged between 20 and 34. Two factors contribute to this: New Zealand immigration policy targets well-educated young professionals; and Census data include Chinese international students, many of whom remain in New Zealand after completing their education. There is a growing number of international students in New Zealand (*New Zealand Herald* 2015). The most important message one can get from Fig. 11.3 is that the migration process, after about three decades of settlement in New Zealand, has produced a viable multigenerational PRC-born community.

The most recent New Zealand Census data (2013) show that PRC Chinese are one of the best-educated groups in New Zealand: 24.7 % have

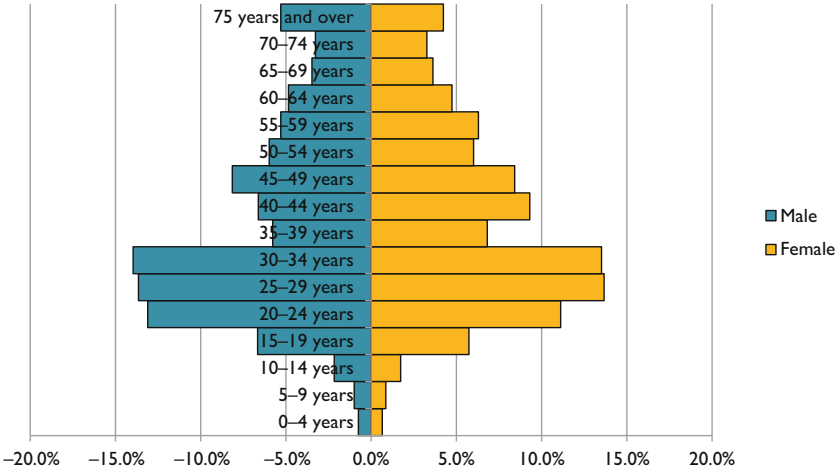

Fig. 11.3 Age-sex pyramid for the Chinese-born ethnic Chinese population in the 2013 Census (Source: Immigration New Zealand)

bachelor's degrees or higher, compared with the New Zealand national average of 14.2 % (Statistics New Zealand 2013a). This is one outcome of immigration selection processes that target highly skilled and educated migrants.

Many studies have found that immigrant performance in the labor market is an important indicator of how well immigrants adapt to a host society (Baker 1994; Winkelmann and Winkelmann 1998). Examining the labor market participation of PRC Chinese, one can conclude that prospects for this group in terms of settlement are not good. Their advanced qualifications and educational background do not appear to be an advantage in the job market. The 2013 Census shows that the percentage of PRC Chinese employed full time and those employed part time is smaller than the New Zealand national average, and their unemployment rate is higher than the national average (Table 11.2). Immigrant labor market performance closely relates to immigrants' educational level. However, there is a serious mismatch between the educational profile of PRC Chinese and their performance in the labor market.

More PRC Chinese are self-employed or not employed than the national average (Tables 11.3). Among those not in the labor force, most are studying full time. The PRC group has the largest percentage of people

Table 11.2 Labor market participation by New Zealand residents born in the PRC compared with the national average

Labor market participation	*%*	
	PRC	*NZ national average*
Employed full time	30.7	50.1
Employed part time	15.3	14.9
Unemployed	6.8	3.5
Not in the labor force	47.1	31.5

Source: Statistics New Zealand (2013b)

Table 11.3 Employment status of New Zealand residents born in the PRC compared with the New Zealand national average

Employment status	*%*	
	PRC	*NZ national average*
Employee	70.6	76.1
Employer	8.3	7.2
Self-employed without employees	12.5	11.8
Unpaid family worker	2.8	2.0
Other	5.7	2.9

Source: Statistics New Zealand (2013b)

studying full time among adults over 18 (33.7 %), more than six times the national average (5.1 %) (Statistics New Zealand 2013a).[12] However, not all are students and, in common with many immigrants from other countries, not all are employed in roles commensurate with their qualifications, often out of necessity (Jansen and Grant 2012). This is true of many new PRC migrants. Rejected for employment, many realize that obtaining a recognized local qualification could give them a better chance of getting work. Retraining is perceived by many as a way of getting a job.

Here and There: Transnational Migratory Mobility

Transnational migration is a remarkable feature of new Chinese migration, including from the PRC (Liu 2011). A recent report on long-term absentees puts China sixth on the list, with 20 % (8450) of the total approved permanent residents (41,577) (New Zealand Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment 2013) (see Appendix).[13] These absence rates might

reflect the transnational character of PRC migration. Return-migration, step-migration and commuting between home country and destination country are typical of their transnational mobility (Liu 2015; Liu and Lu 2015).

There are various reasons for the PRC migrants to make return journeys to their homeland. The strength of the Chinese economy and the potential of China's market help propel them homeward. The desire for career development and business opportunities is a key reason. Professional satisfaction in China is an attraction. Compared with China, the job market and entrepreneurial opportunities in New Zealand are limited. With China's market booming, many overseas Chinese want to return (Liu 2009a).

Some non-economic factors also drive the return. In-depth interviews I conducted in 2007–2009 reveal that many PRC migrants return to take care of aging parents. Reunion with the family is also an important reason. Like Chinese immigrants in other countries, New Zealand's PRC migrants and their family members are strategically positioned along the Pacific Rim. When one stage of the life cycle is completed, they move to another stage using different strategies. For example, the "astronauting" technique is often applied to meet family needs.[14] Later, its goal achieved, "astronauting" is discarded, and returning to one's original place is a choice for many (Liu 2011).

The idea of a comfort zone also promotes return. This includes a familiar language and social environment, and closeness to family and friends. Some interviewees revealed how the emotional link brought them back (Liu 2009a).

Step-migration is another manifestation of PRC migrants' transnational mobility. Motivated by similar pulls, there is no fundamental difference between step-migration to a third destination and returning to the homeland. Both stem from migrants' wish to seek opportunities to maximize their social, human and financial capital in order to achieve a better migration outcome. Special in the case of New Zealand is that step-migration is often in the direction of Australia, because of the close relationship, especially the bilateral immigration arrangement, between these two countries. Based on the Trans-Tasman Travel Arrangement, citizens of each country are free to work and settle in the other without a visa and to get almost all the educational and welfare benefits available to permanent residents (Birrell and Rapson 2001).[15] In the late 1990s, the immigrant influx from Asian countries to New Zealand coincided with a sharp increase in trans-Tasman migration, heavily criticized by Australia.

The Australian government introduced stricter control over access to welfare provisions by New Zealand citizens in 2001 (Hugo 2004). However, this has not diminished Chinese migrants' desire to reimmigrate to Australia. Many PRC migrants see crossing the Tasman as logical after a few years in New Zealand (Liu 2011, 2015; Liu and Lu 2015).

PRC migrants harbor complex and unfinished plans for their future movement. Returning to China is not the end of their transnational journey; many interviewees plan to go back to New Zealand for their children's education or retirement. Many leave their children in New Zealand because of its good education system. On reaching retirement age, people want to move away from bustling metropolitan urban centers to a quieter environment with enough savings to sustain a good quality of life (Liu 2011, 2015). Returning to New Zealand is a strategy of double return (Ley and Kobayashi 2005), from New Zealand to China for work and career development, and then to New Zealand for its lifestyle. The transnational longing of PRC returnees leads to a novel trajectory through a seamless social space that crosses oceans and national borders, passing from their native place as a place for work and securing financial assets to their adopted place for lifestyle and leisure. While some returnees want to return to New Zealand, others have plans that may involve a move to a third country. Although many trans-Tasman interviewees give long-term residence in Australia as their first choice, they are also attracted to the idea of staying in China, largely for economic reasons. The potential for business success in China could result in another relocation or more frequent travel across the Pacific Ocean between the second immigration destination and the homeland. For many, returning to China would be only temporary, long enough to accumulate sufficient capital. Binational residence was an option for some when economically viable.

So the return is not permanent, just as step-migration is not permanent. There is no simple one-way cross-border movement for many PRC migrants. It is a movement with multiple ways within a cycle that follows its own logic of arriving, leaving and further movements—so-called "circulatory transnational migration" (Ip 2011: 6). This concept accurately describes an unfinished set of circulatory movements that many PRC migrants engage in between homeland and host countries. As time progresses, those who "return" to their countries of origin do not settle permanently. This may be because they have a different sense associated with their return, or because they don't adjust to changes that have occurred in their absence. Similarly, step migration to a second immigration

destination country is a temporary move for many. However, the foremost factor that propels this unfinished sequence of migration and relocation is the consideration of family members' needs at different life stages. This consideration is central to the decision about whether to stay, return or relocate. The location of family members, especially older parents and school-age children, matters greatly in the decision-making process. Different family members' needs at different life stages can separate or reunite family members. The geographic locations of different family members could either converge or, later, diverge (Liu 2016).

Conclusion: New Chinese Immigrants in a Bicultural New Zealand

Like their historical counterpart, new PRC immigrants are perceived more negatively than positively in New Zealand. An article titled "Inv-Asian," published in the suburban newspaper the *Easter Courier* in 1993, is typical of anti-Chinese/Asian sentiment. Such feelings have been a perpetual theme in New Zealand's ethnic relations, sometimes surging, sometimes ebbing (Liu 2005). The politicization of Chinese/Asian immigration has often been used as a means for political power struggle, subsequently fueling the public's and the media's anti-Chinese/Asian sentiment. For example, Chinese and Asian immigration was exploited by politicians such as Winston Peters, leader of the New Zealand First Party. He used an anti-Chinese/Asian strategy in the 1996 election. By playing the race card, he ensured that his party gained enough seats to secure a coalition with the National Party. His anti-immigrant rhetoric stirred up social tensions. Support for New Zealand First increased from less than 3 % in February to 28 % in July (Ip 2002a).

Ironically, New Zealand is multiethnic, and multiculturalism is promoted in public and political discourse. Why can a multicultural country that embarks on a neoliberal immigration policy not accommodate and tolerate its immigrants? One answer may lie in the demographic composition of New Zealand. The most recent Census data (2013) shows that New Zealand Europeans (1,969,391) account for 74 % of the population (4,242,048). Indigenous Maori (598, 605; 14.9 %) and Pacific islanders (295,944; 7.4 %) come second and third (Statistics New Zealand 2013b), while Chinese are the fourth largest and fastest-growing group (171,411; 4.0 %) (Statistics New Zealand 2013c). Maoris, too, are uneasy about new

Chinese and Asian immigrants, and in some cases they express hostility (Liu 2009b).

The unresolved problem surrounding the settlement of the Treaty of Waitangi is perhaps at the root of Maori racial tension. New Zealand is a bicultural country built on the basis of a treaty signed by "white" European settlers and Maoris (Mutu 2009). Maoris have always had a difficult relationship with *Pakeha* (New Zealand Europeans), a legacy of disputes over interpretation of the treaty. The status of Maoris was acknowledged in the 1980s, so any new groups, including the Chinese, remain the "classic essential outsiders" (Ip 2009: 2). Maoris feel that they are not consulted enough about the "open-door" policies that invite "outsiders" into New Zealand. A popular Maori perception is that Chinese immigration could compromise the Maoris' struggle to reassert their prestige and sovereignty.

This socially and economically disadvantaged group is often subjected to political and cultural marginalization. Maori anti-immigration sentiment is also driven by insecurity over resource allocation (Ip 2009; Liu 2009b). New Chinese immigrants are perceived by Maoris as competitors for jobs and business opportunities, and as a threat to Maori culture (Ip 2009). Many new Chinese immigrants are well off, and this makes Maoris feel insecure and disadvantaged. Many Maoris think that new Chinese immigrants are pushing them to "the bottom of the economic heap" (Ip 2009: 2). Therefore new Chinese immigrants have become a target of jealousy and criticism from Maoris and mainstream *Pakeha*. On the other hand, new Chinese immigrants believe that the Maori people's status grants them too many privileges. They feel vulnerable and insignificant. Therefore they criticize the Maoris' relative dependence on social welfare and association with crime (Liu and Lu 2008).

New Chinese immigrants are thus opposed to Maoris in a bicultural New Zealand that is actually multicultural. The majority *Pakeha* act as gatekeepers without consulting the Maoris. The Maoris see this as a denial of their rights. The victims are the new Chinese immigrants, who are viewed as gate-crashers. After satisfying the immigration criteria, they find they are not welcome because of a historical quarrel between *Pakeha* and Maoris. The racial dynamics in New Zealand have major implications for the new Chinese immigrant community. The *Pakeha* look on while the two big minorities fight each other over resources. The future and wellbeing of new Chinese and other immigrants will depend on how the New Zealand government deals with the unresolved tension between biculturalism and

multiculturalism (Bartley and Spoonley 2004). Addressing biculturalism within a multicultural framework is perhaps a solution. However, how to implement this conceptualization is a real challenge. A successful multicultural society is based on all ethnicities receiving equal recognition and developing relationships of collaboration and appreciation instead of competition.

Appendix: Rates of Long-Term Absence by Source Country as of June 30, 2013 for Migrants Approved for Residence, 2005/2006–2011/2012

Source country	*Number approved for residence*	*Number long-term absent**	*% long-term absent*
USA	8892	2364	27
Canada	3139	809	26
Singapore	1460	366	25
Taiwan	1019	227	22
Netherlands	2315	522	22
China	41,577	8450	20
Hong Kong	1004	201	20
France	1632	320	20
Malaysia	4506	877	19
Germany	4700	898	19

Note: *Long-term absent in this report is used to describe a migrant who, on the Department of Labour survey day in 2007, had spent a period or periods of time overseas for more than six months after their arrival as a resident

Source: Adapted from Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (2013) *Migration Trend and Outlook 2012/13*, p. 106

Notes

1. "New Chinese migrant" in the New Zealand context usually refers to Chinese who have migrated to New Zealand since the introduction of the Immigration Policy Review in 1986, which abolished the "traditional origin" preference for British migrants. New Chinese migrants are mostly from Hong Kong, Taiwan and the PRC. These three groups plus Chinese from other countries (e.g. Malaysia and Indonesia) are categorized as new Chinese migrants.
2. In this chapter, the PRC, Mainland China and China are used interchangeably.

3. The Labour Party or Labour is a social-democratic political party in New Zealand and one of the two major parties in the country's politics. Another major party is the National Party.
4. The "Little Asian Dragons" are South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore.
5. The National government came into power in 1991 and introduced an even more open policy to welcome migrants from various regions. Its 1991 policy changes primarily featured the introduction of a revised Business Investment Category (BIC) to replace the previous Business Investment Policy (BIP) and the encouragement of skilled immigration via a General Category that involved a points-based selection system (Trlin 1997). While the BIC's aim was to deal with the shortcomings of the BIP, the points system shifted the focus from obtaining immediate economic and financial benefit from new immigrants to a greater determination to secure human capital and "quality" migrants who would make a contribution to the nation's economic growth and strengthen the international links required for that growth (Trlin 1997). It was supposed to be a "key instrument" to attract a greater number of "quality migrants who would make a positive contribution to economic and social development" (Trlin 1997: 5). This new system targeted people with tertiary education who were young and had a track record of gainful employment (Ip 1995).
6. Immigration policy was tightened up in October 1995 as a response to the influx of new Asian immigrants and its negative backlash in the media and among the public (Ip 2001). This raised the bar to entry, especially regarding the English-language requirement for both principal and non-principal (over 16) skilled and business migrants. The language requirement was designed to restrict the entry of migrants from non-English-speaking backgrounds (Henderson 2003). All principal applicants from such backgrounds had to achieve a minimum Band score of 5, and a NZD20,000 language bond was applied to spouses and dependents of 16 years and over if they failed to meet the English-language requirements within the specified time.
7. The most significant immigration policy initiative during the Labour government's first term (1999–2002) was the launch of the New Zealand Immigration Programme in October 2001 and the introduction of a managed entry regime. Within this regime a "skilled/business" stream was allocated 60 % of the government's total target for residence approvals, while a "family sponsored" stream was allocated 30 % and an "international/humanitarian" stream 10 %. This managed entry was designed to regulate the "economic" and "social" streams of immigrants. A series of further policy relaxations took place between 2000 and 2002. The overall permanent residency approval target was raised from 38,000 to 48,000; under the GSC, those who were within five points of the pass mark could

apply for an open work permit, thus making it easier for them to accumulate the points necessary for residence while meeting a demand for labor; applicants' skills and qualifications did not need to have any direct link with the work they were seeking; and the language requirements for principal applicants were reduced from a minimum of five in each of the four International English Language Testing System modules to an average of five across all four modules (Bedford et al. 2005). Apart from the October 2001 package, there were some side-stream immigration channels promoted by the government. The enforcement of the government's initiative of "work to residence" in April 2002 was significant during this period in terms of its potential to encourage highly employable people to become permanent residents.

8. In July 2003 the minister of immigration suddenly announced that a new Skilled Migrant Category would come into force in December to replace the GSC. Overall, this new selection system replaced the pass mark system with a process whereby people who qualify above a certain level of points (at least 100 points) can submit an EOI into a selection pool, from which they are invited to apply for residence. Points are allocated on the basis of age, qualifications, a skilled job or offer, the regional location of the job offer, work experience and identified skills shortage. Bonus points are granted in certain circumstances and partners' employment and experience, New Zealand qualifications and employment outside of Auckland are recognized.
9. Interviews in China targeted returned Chinese migrants, termed "returnees" in the research. The interviews conducted in Australia were done with Chinese migrants with New Zealand permanent residence or citizenship who moved across the Tasman Sea and stayed there long-term. This group of interviewees is termed "trans-Tasman." Interviews in New Zealand collected conversations with Chinese immigrants who are settling in New Zealand but who stay in touch with their homeland or other destinations where family or other personal ties live. This group of interviewees is named "settlers". They have family members who are "returnees" and/or "trans-Tasman" migrants.
10. Total Skilled residency approval is the sum of the number of subcategories, including General Skills, Skilled Migrants and Work to Residence.
11. Total Business residence approval is the sum of the number of subcategories, including Old Business, Employee of Business, Entrepreneur and Investor.
12. PRC-born Chinese studying and categorized as not-in-labour-force in the Census data are Chinese international students. These percentages may indicate a relatively poor performance on the part of PRC migrants in the labor market since self-employment and enrolment on education programs are often strategies among Chinese to avoid unemployment (Ip 2001).

13. "Long-term absentees" are those who, on the survey day, had spent a period or periods of time overseas amounting to more than six months after their arrival as permanent residents.
14. "Astronaut" families are those in which (usually) the wife and children stay abroad while the husband returns to his Asian homeland to work and provide financial support
15. Migration between New Zealand and Australia was less regulated before the 2001 policy change in Australia. Even though this movement is essentially international, "in many respects it is more similar to internal migration within Australia" (Hugo 2004: 35).

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