

Recent trends in Chinese migration to Australia

Graeme Hugo, Federation Fellow, University of Adelaide

This paper analyses recent Chinese migration to Australia and shows how they have grown from being the fourteenth most important origin of settlers in the 1980s to be currently the third largest origin. It is shown how the China-born have also become an important component in the massive increase in non-permanent migration to Australia which has occurred since the mid 1990s. There is a nexus between non-permanent migration and eventual permanent settlement in Australia is analysed especially that involving student migration. To illustrate the processes of migration and settlement a particular example of Chinese migration is then examined using both secondary and primary data. The focus is turned on the migration of students, scientists, academics and researchers from China in Australia. The process of engagement of Chinese with Australia is examined with a particular focus on the connection between study in Australia and eventual permanent residency. The linkages which Chinese academics maintain with colleagues and institutions in China are then examined and their implications traced. Some consideration is then given to likely future patterns of Chinese academics moving to Australia and of their return migration to China.

New Pathways or Old Trajectories? The Chinese Diaspora in Australia, 1985 to 2005

Paul **JONES**, University of Melbourne

By 1990, Chinese settlers had arrived in Australia from 30 or more countries. Among those from the principal places of Chinese emigration, fifteen years of Australian migrant selection free of discriminatory criteria had produced broad patterns that were striking in their consistency across settler groups - of steady annual increases in numbers and orderly balances across the skilled and family migration classes. For some observers of Chinese settlement in Australia, the very regularity of the convergent flows seemed to signal a conclusion to diasporic trajectories at play since the mid-nineteenth century. However, if permanent departures by Chinese settlers were a rarity in 1990, by 2002, as many Hong Kong settlers left Australia for good as had arrived during that year. So, too, settlers returning to China and elsewhere constituted an ever-increasing proportion of the growing cohorts of settler arrivals.

This paper reviews the broad patterns of settler arrivals and departures since the 1980s in order to clarify the markedly different engagements of settler groups in the swirls and spectacular expansions to global travel. Of particular interest are social and institutional dynamics whose influence is often lost to sight under the sheer weight of traveler numbers in the twenty-first century: first, the balances struck by the Australian government between 'skilled' and 'family reunion' migrants and second, the shifts in the rules of departure from and return to the principal countries of Chinese migration to Australia, and their implications for settlement and departures from Australia.

Chinese in an ‘Asianised New Zealand’

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The year 2007 is a significant landmark in the development of Chinese immigration to New Zealand. It was exactly 20 years ago, in 1987, when the country adopted a more open and ‘colour-blind’ immigration policy which enabled the Chinese, together with other immigrants from non-European countries, to come to New Zealand which was hitherto a fortress vigorously guarded against ‘coloured migrants’.

Within these recent 20 years, there were numerous visible signs that this remote Anglophile nation has been rapidly ‘Asianised’. This paper looks at what these signs are, and what they mean to both the resident population and to the new migrant cohorts socially and culturally.

More specifically, this paper examines the profile of the new Chinese community which is made up of mainly middle class professionals from major Chinese cities. Data is drawn from the recent census, and from in-depth interviews carried out among the new immigrant community as well as some of those who are ‘transnationals’ and ‘returnees’.

Finally, the paper will look at their self-perceived roles in an increasingly ‘Asianised’ New Zealand.

Varieties of Chinese Experience in the Pacific

Bill Willmott, Canterbury University, Christchurch

The thesis of this paper is that the Chinese in the Pacific are diverse, have been from the start, and have become more so in the last two decades.

My motivation for studying the Chinese in the Pacific Islands stems from a personal interest in Chinese culture and communities in the Chinese diaspora, but circumstances have forced the research towards history rather than sociology.

After the earliest Chinese came into the Pacific with the sandalwood hunters, small traders (Hua Shang) settled in several places in the 1850s, followed by a late-19thC influx of contract labourers (Hua Gong) to Tahiti, New Guinea, and Samoa, some of whom married indigenous women.

A second wave of migration in the early 20thC established Chinese communities (Hua Qiao)—with families, associations and schools—that adapted to their Pacific environment by adopting a narrow economic niche. Most of these were Cantonese, but Hakka predominated in Tahiti.

The third wave (Hua Yi) took shape about 1980 from various sources (China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Southeast Asia) and with a wider variety of business interests some of which conflicted with local aspirations and embarrassed the resident Chinese.

While the recent riots in Honiara and Nuku’alofa had multiple and different causes, resentment over recent changes in Chinese economic behaviour is part of the explanation in each case.

The Fourth Wave: Chinese in the Pacific Islands in the 21st Century

Ron Crocombe, University of the South Pacific

People who came through China at some stage of their multi-millenia journey from the Middle East to the Pacific Islands include four waves who came via what are now China and Taiwan (all of whom also came via many other places). First were Austronesians up to 5,000 years ago, then Chinese who came with Europeans from the late 1700s, then Chinese from Southeast Asia and Taiwan from the 1960s, and in the past 20 years the new influx from China that this paper discusses.

Within the recent influx are 15 main occupational categories: women factory workers, fishermen, timber workers, builders, farmers, miners, businessmen, tourists, diplomats and other officials, professionals, military personnel, students and researchers, religious spokespersons, and criminals. A category that is just emerging and may become larger than all the others is (mainly women) in the hotel and hospitality industry. Each category will be examined briefly, and its potential future.

These categories contrast sharply with the Pacific Islanders who go to Asia evangelists, lawyers, accountants, professional sportsmen, students, airline pilots, engineers, and performers.

Part-Chinese Pacific Islanders constitute a much larger and more important category than is usually considered. Their present and potential future role is discussed

Chinese people coming to the Pacific Islands have been more carriers of “hardware” (e.g. trade, technology, investment) and minimally of “software” (e.g. language, religion, philosophy, arts and culture), but that is changing fast, especially in media and education and probably soon in language.

The factors suggest that emigration from China to the Pacific Islands will increase considerably in future, and that from Western nations reduce. The occupational categories of Chinese most likely to increase and decrease are discussed.

THE CHINESE IN PNG: OLD MONEY Vs. NEW MIGRANTS

James **CHIN**, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak

My presentation will trace the ethnic Chinese community in PNG from the late 1960s onwards until the 1990s. It will concentrate on two groups, the PNG Chinese, i.e. those who settled in PNG before Independence, and the New Migrants (NM). The NM can be divided into two segments. The first group came in the late 1970s, attracted by the strong Kina and opportunities in a newly independent country. They came mostly from South East Asia, in particular Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore. The second group arrived mostly in the late 1990s after PNG experienced severe economic downturns. The majority of this group came from Mainland China, especially the region around Hong Kong and some from Shanghai. I will speak about the impact of both groups in the economy and the relationship between them. I will also speak on the relationship between the Chinese community and the wider PNG community.

My conclusion is that on balance, both groups created a positive impact on the PNG economy although the NM will face increasing hostilities from the local population. Anti-Chinese riots are a real possibility in the near term.

China and Taiwan in the South Pacific: Diplomatic Chess versus Pacific Political Rugby

Mr Graeme Dobell, ABC Journalist

The competition between China and Taiwan for diplomatic recognition is destabilising island states in the South Pacific, making Pacific politics more corrupt and violent. Solomon Islands offers the clearest evidence of what happens to an island state that becomes a battleground in the Beijing-Taipei diplomatic war. Australia is in the front line in the South Pacific. (Two Australian officers who had their jaw broken during the Honiara riot bear the evidence of this front line metaphor.) Australia is budgeting billions of dollars for aid and governance in the South Pacific over the decade. Australia's aims in the region will bring it into sharper conflict with the interests being pursued by China and Taiwan.

- Australia's stated aim is good governance in the Pacific; China and Taiwan are more interested in buying governments in pursuit of their diplomatic interests. Australia needs to be explicit in setting out these differences.
- Taiwan is a democracy that has sought to erase corruption – “black gold” - from its domestic politics. Taipei should be held to its own standard, and expected to act as a responsible democracy in pursuing its legitimate interests in the South Pacific. Australia must go public in naming and shaming Taiwan.
- Australia is confronting the reality that its policy interests in the South Pacific clash with China's approach, in areas such as governance, corruption, financial standards, transparency and democratisation. The South Pacific is upsetting Canberra's argument that it can always concentrate on mutual interests with Beijing, not areas of difference.
Australia should make it clear that it sees the South Pacific as a regional measure of whether China will act as a responsible “global stakeholder”. The US did not have the South Pacific in mind when it unveiled the “stakeholder” model last year. But the speed with which China is becoming a major factor in the South Pacific means the region will be an early test case.
- Australia needs to move beyond the automatic line that it is firmly and fervently rusted-on to the “one China policy”. Australia would not put its whole relationship with China at risk over Pacific policy. Thus, the commitment to “one China” will have to be linked to a softly spoken “however”- China should not pursue its interests by destabilising small Pacific states. The reaffirmation of “one China” should be the starting point for a discussion with both Beijing and Taipei about the destructive dynamic of their diplomatic contest in the Pacific - and how a complete victory for China could even make Taipei more unstable and less predictable.

China Looks to the Pacific

Michael Powles, former head of New Zealand posts in China and the Pacific

The paper discusses the main factors that will influence China's probably peaceful rise globally and also its likely objectives in the Pacific vis-à-vis both Pacific Island countries and other powers on the Pacific Rim.

The impact on Pacific Island countries of China's growing role will be significant. Pacific Island states will have no influence on aspects relating to any strategic competition with the United States (or Japan) and the changing strategic environment will challenge both Pacific Island countries and their geographically closest friends, Australia and New Zealand.

But there are important areas on which Pacific countries, including Australia and New Zealand, could influence China's increasing impact in the region. These include resource exploitation, particularly of ocean and seabed resources, the promotion of good governance and the need for better control of harmful foreign criminal infiltration into the region. Achieving influence with China in such areas will require stronger regional cooperation (building on past precedents and existing institutions) and skilful diplomacy and underlines the relevance in a changing region of key objectives agreed by Pacific leaders in their *Pacific Plan*.