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## A STUDY OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHINESE DIASPORA OF NEW ZEALAND FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GLOBAL HISTORY

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The paper translated below represents the preliminary outcome of the important Innovation Project undertaken at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and entitled “Research in the History of the Chinese Diaspora of New Zealand.” It was published in *Lanzhou xuekan* 兰州学刊 [Lanzhou Academic Journal], No. 1 (2020): 5-16, and has been translated in the hope that it may be of some interest to readers of this journal. To help place it in some sort of local context, the translators have also provided a brief introduction to the article.

### **Abstract**

For a hundred and fifty years, the love for New Zealand on the part of its diasporic Chinese community has certainly not been at all diminished by either the smallness of New Zealand or its distance from China. With the arrival in recent years of a large number of new immigrants from various parts of China, and with the continued focus of the academic community on the history of the Chinese diaspora, the study of that of New Zealand manifests both a practical utility and the promise of excellent future prospects. From the perspective of global history, the motivations underpinning the immigration of the Chinese diaspora of New Zealand and the manner in which this immigration has taken place, the emergence and diminution of racial discrimination against Chinese in New Zealand society, changes in the occupations and the rising economic status of Chinese New Zealanders, the shift from the Cantonese hometown sense of identity of the early Chinese immigrants to their subsequent assimilation with and integration into the local society, and changes in the daily lives of the Chinese diaspora of New Zealand, are themes that reflect both the commonalities between the history of the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand and the mainstream development trends of diasporic Chinese communities throughout the world, and the unique characteristics of New Zealand’s national conditions and the development of the China-New Zealand relationship. Such issues are worthy of in-depth discussion and reflection.

**Keywords:** global history, New Zealand, diasporic Chinese, assimilation

### Translators' Introduction:

“The 150-year plus Chinese voice in New Zealand is a muted one.”

K. Emma Ng, *Old Asian, New Asian*  
(Wellington: Bridget Williams Books, 2017), p. 39

In September 2019, the New Zealand government announced the decision that New Zealand's histories would be taught as a compulsory component of the curriculum in all schools and kura from 2020. Announcing the decision, Chris Hipkins, the Minister of Education, spoke about our history as a “continuous thread.” “Our diversity,” he continued, “is our strength, but only when we build connections to each other. We can move forward together, stronger when we understand the many paths our ancestors walked to bring us to today.” Whilst generally the announcement has been welcomed, others have warned that much work will need to be undertaken both in order that we better understand our various pasts, and then that on this basis a curriculum might be developed that will encompass something of the complexity of these pasts in an inclusive and interesting manner.

In this context, it is heartening to reflect that recent years have seen some exciting work (scholarly, creative and commemorative) enhance our understanding of one vital (if muted) skein of these histories, that of the Chinese pasts woven into the fabric of this nation's history. The Chinese Poll Tax Heritage Trust, for instance, established in 2004 following the formal apology to poll-tax payers and their descendants for the legislative discrimination faced by the early Chinese New Zealanders and delivered on behalf of the government by the then Prime Minister Helen Clark in 2002, has supported and commissioned a series of histories covering particular institutional (David Fung's *Turning Stone into Jade: The History of the New Zealand Chinese Association*, published in 2014) or occupational (Ruth Lam, Beverly Lowe, Helen Wong, Michael Wong, and Carolyn King, *The Fruits of Our Labours: Chinese Fruit Shops in New Zealand*, for example, published in 2018, and Joanna Boileau's 2019 *Starch Work by Experts: Chinese Laundries in Aotearoa New Zealand*, published with the design and layout assistance of Steele Roberts Aotearoa) aspects of Chinese New Zealand history. Work on further volumes (dealing with Chinese New Zealand merchants and the important role played by the Chinese churches in New Zealand) in this series is underway. Work continues also on the restoration of and research into the type collection owned by the Dominion Federation of New Zealand Chinese Commercial Growers and used to produce the *New Zealand Chinese Growers Monthly Journal* between the years 1952-1972, undertaken by Sydney Shep and Ya-Wen Ho at Victoria University of Wellington's Wai-te-ata Press now that the type set, New Zealand's only such set, is under the guardianship of the Press. In Dunedin, the New Zealand Chinese Heritage Collection was recently established at the Presbyterian Research Centre of Knox College Archive by James and Eva Ng. This treasure trove of material will keep researchers busy for many years to come and was recently added to UNESCO's Memory of the World Register. In Wellington, and with the support of the New Zealand Chinese Association, the country's earliest-established national Chinese community organisation and one that is involved in the discussions that will result

in the national history curriculum, Kirsten Wong and Nigel Murphy are developing a Chinese New Zealand history website that will provide both a community focus for the sharing (and preserving) of stories and a reliable online reference tool for those wishing to better understand this dimension of our shared New Zealand story. And, Wellington-focused again, one hopes that Lynette Shum will soon be able to make her study of Haining Street, perhaps New Zealand's closest approximation of a "Chinatown," available to a wider audience than those who have already enjoyed her layered story. Two conferences held in Wellington late in 2019, the 23rd Biennial Conference of the New Zealand Asian Studies Society, in part, and the first hosting of the Dragon Tails conference on this side of the Tasman, served to both disseminate new research findings and encourage further work in this field.

In other domains of our cultural life, too, engagement with the particular and specific history of Chinese New Zealand has much enhanced our lives in recent times. Two retrospective exhibitions of the work of the eminent and Wellington-based artist Guy Ngan (1926-2017), "Guy Ngan: Habitation," curated by Sian van Dyk at the Dowse Art Museum and "Guy Ngan: Either Possible or Necessary," curated by Remco de Blaaij and Lachlan Taylor at Artspace Aotearoa, reminded us of the power and variety of the work of this polymathic second generation Chinese New Zealander.<sup>1</sup> In association with two recent exhibitions, "Terracotta Warriors: Guardians of Immortality" at Te Papa and "Being Chinese in Aotearoa" at the New Zealand Portrait Gallery, for instance, the artist Kerry Ann Lee was commissioned to produce two resplendent evocations of aspects of the material and emotional dimensions of Chinese New Zealand community life. In a similarly autobiographical vein, both Helene Wong and Paul Wah have explored what it means to have grown up Chinese in New Zealand, whilst the work (as both novelist and poet) of Alison Wong and (as poet) Chris Tse serves, in part, as a literary archaeology of aspects of this often troubled history. Rose Lu's recent set of essays, *All Who Live on Islands* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2019), brings a fresh and linguistically invigorating perspective to bear on issues of the evolving nature of Chinese New Zealand identity, as does the poetry of, particularly, Gregory Kan and Nina Powles.

Commemoratively, perhaps the most resonant of developments will be the installation later this year of a monument in the Hokianga to honour the souls of those some 500 Chinese whose disinterred bones were lost when the SS Ventnor sank in 1902 as it was taking them on their final journey back to their home villages in Canton. When bones from the ship began to wash up on the shore, the local iwi, Te Roroa and Te Rarawa, reinterred them and cared for them until such time as their descendants might turn up, as happened in 2007.

Meanwhile, researchers elsewhere, too, understandably, are attending to the textured histories of the Chinese communities of Aotearoa | New Zealand, and this "outsider's" perspective is much to be welcomed as, at its best, it will serve to draw the history of Chinese New Zealanders into a global story of diasporic migration and

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1 A catalogue produced to accompany these two exhibitions, *Guy Ngan* (Te Awakairangi Lower Hutt: The Dowse Art Museum, 2019) contains a photo essay (by Annie Lee) of one of Ngan's most remarkable art works, his family home in Stokes Valley.

settlement. In particular, for some years now a team of scholars at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) in Beijing have been exploring the topic, under the auspices of a project entitled “Research in the History of the Chinese Diaspora of New Zealand.” The project was inspired by a visit paid to the Lakes District Museum in Arrowtown by the CASS president, Wang Weiguang 王伟光. Moved by the stories of the Chinese miners who had once labored there, Wang decided that his academy had a responsibility to study the history of this first phase of New Zealand’s Chinese diaspora. Between 2014-2016, a CASS team visited Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong and Taiwan, conducting archival research and interviewing a number of Chinese New Zealanders. This team is soon to produce, we are told and in Chinese, both *A History of the Overseas Chinese in New Zealand* and *The Oral History of Overseas Chinese in New Zealand*, along with an album of historic photographs. The preliminary findings of two members of this team, Du Jidong and Wu Minchao, based on their chapter in the first of these books, was published recently in an academic journal in the People’s Republic of China. Duncan Campbell and Peng Lifang, a recent PhD graduate of Victoria University of Wellington, offer the following translation of this article in the hope that it might assist to overcome some of the linguistic and ideological barriers that continue to inhibit research into this particular aspect of the endlessly fascinating history of this nation as it evolves and to encourage a greater dialogue between researchers here in New Zealand and beyond. Emma Ng ends the essay that lends this introductory paragraph or two its epigraph in this manner:

My own grandfather, who died long before I was born, was buried in Mangere. All my life we have visited him there. It’s my grandma who decides when we’ll visit, according to significant days in the Chinese calendar—although no matter what the date, it always seems to be drizzly or raining. Walking the rows of headstones, with their litany of Asian, European, Māori and Pasifika names, tells the story of an Auckland for whom ‘diversity’ is not a new challenge but a longstanding condition of everyday life. When we are there, there are often Pacific Island families, too, also tending to their relatives. And as we burn incense and joss paper for granddad—in a cemetery 9,000 kilometres from where he was born—it feels natural in a way that things you have never known any alternative to feel absolutely ordinary.

One outcome of the renewed focus on New Zealand’s histories as part of changes to the national curriculum, as understood both here and elsewhere, will be, surely, that the hitherto muted history of, in this case, Chinese New Zealand will become less so, and that over time the extraordinary stories of these communities will begin to feel ordinary to all New Zealanders.

In the course of preparing this translation, the translators are grateful particularly for the care with which it was read and commented upon by their colleague Malcolm McKinnon. Malcolm has questioned the accuracy of the 1867 Otago Province population figures given in the article; under present circumstances, however, it has been impossible to consult library resources in order to check the reference given in this instance, J. MacKay, *MacKay’s Otago Almanac* (Dunedin, 1869).

## The Article

Ever since the first Chinese labourers set foot in Aotearoa in 1866,<sup>2</sup> the Chinese diaspora has experienced one hundred and fifty years of development in their new and distant southern hemisphere homeland. During these one hundred and fifty years, once the canon fire of the Opium Wars had forced an age-old China to open up its doors, closer and more frequent exchanges with the world took place, and an ever-strengthening China underwent the 1911 Revolution that ended dynastic rule, the founding of the Republic of China, the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression,<sup>3</sup> the establishment of the People's Republic of China, and the period of Reform and Opening Up. New Zealand, too, changed over this period, from a British colony to an independent and prosperous country, and is now commonly recognised throughout the world as a commendable country in which its people can live and work in peace and contentment. The 150-year history of the Chinese diaspora of New Zealand has unfolded slowly in the context of the relationship between China and New Zealand and is expressive of a glorious facet of the larger global history of the Chinese diaspora. The lessons to be derived from this historical experience are unique.

The size of New Zealand's Chinese diaspora has increased from around 5,000, mainly labourers, during the gold rush of the late 19th century,<sup>4</sup> to more than 170,000 after the influx of new immigrants in recent decades.<sup>5</sup> Although this diasporic population has grown rapidly, it remains relatively small when compared to the global Chinese diaspora of some 60 million today.<sup>6</sup> For academic research, however, population size

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- 2 "The Pioneer Chinaman on the Otago Goldfields," *Otago Witness*, 10 June, 1871, p. 9
  - 3 Translators' Note: Peng Lifang notes the resonance of the different ways this conflict is referred to in the Chinese- and the English-language literature. For the purposes of this translation, the term used above is preferred to the one most frequently seen in the English-language literature, Second Sino-Japanese War.
  - 4 C.P. Sedgwick, *Politics of Survival: A Social History of the Chinese in New Zealand*, PhD Dissertation, University of Canterbury, 1982, p. 636.
  - 5 This figure is based on the March 2013 New Zealand Census, as found on the website of Stats NZ: <http://archive.stats.govt.nz/Census/2013-census/profile-and-summary-reporst/ethnic-profiles.aspx?request>. Accessed: 18 January, 2018.
  - 6 According to research carried out at the Research School for Southeast Asian Studies of Xiamen University as part of the project entitled "Guoji huaren yimin xianzhuang, qushi, he juzhuo zhence" 国际华人移民现状趋势和居住国政策 [Present Circumstances of Overseas Chinese Globally, Trends, and Governmental Policies of Resident Nations] conducted under the direction of Zhuang Guotu, in 2007-2008 the Overseas Chinese totalled some 45,430,000. See Zhuang Guotu 庄国土, "Shijie huaqiao huaren shuliang he fenbu de lishi bianhua 世界华侨华人数量和分布的历史变化 [The Total Overseas Chinese Throughout the World and Changes to their Geographical Distribution], *Shijie lishi* 世界历史 [World History], No. 5 (2011). Developments since then would suggest that the total has now risen to some 60,000,000. See Qiu Yuanping 裘援平, "Tuanjie, ningju 6000 wan huaren huaqiao tongyuan gongxiang Zhongguo meng" 团结凝聚6000万华人华侨同圆共享中国梦 [Unite, and Consolidate the 60 Million Overseas Chinese to Realise and Enjoy the China Dream], at <http://cpcpc.people.com.cn/n/2014/0307/c376900-24562555.html>. Accessed: 15 December, 2018.

is neither an important criterion nor necessarily an issue to be addressed. What is crucial in this context is to compare the history of the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand with mainstream developments globally, in an effort to understand which aspects of this history are common and which are not, and the underlying reasons for such commonalities or differences. Such research requires that we examine the logic of the relationship between the two countries and focus on the life stories of New Zealand's Chinese diaspora and their historical progression. In light of the issues of topical concern within the global history of the Chinese diaspora, we attempt below to examine a number of aspects of the major characteristics of the history of the Chinese diaspora of New Zealand, for whatever possible unique insights that this history may offer.

### **One: Motivations for and Paths towards Immigration**

Chinese set off to far distant corners of the world as emigrants in order to pursue economic advantage, to avoid domestic warfare, or in search of improved livelihood or educational prospects. Emigration of Chinese people to New Zealand happened in three small waves and involved all three of these motivations.

The first of these small waves occurred in the late 19th century. The Chinese who came to New Zealand as part of this first wave were mainly Chinese gold miners, out to make money and become rich. Their arrival in New Zealand must be understood in connection with the gold rushes of the Pacific Rim during that era (including those in the United States, Canada, Australia, and so on), although the gold rush in New Zealand occurred at a slightly later date than elsewhere. The first group of Chinese miners who arrived in Otago Province in 1866 came on from the goldfields of Victoria in Australia.<sup>7</sup> From 1870 onwards, a large number of Chinese labourers set off from China and chartered boats directly to Dunedin, Otago.<sup>8</sup> How did impoverished Chinese miners pay the fares for such long boat trips, and how did they choose a destination as they embarked upon their goldrush lives? This is inseparable from the organisational efforts of Chinese community leaders. For example, the Chinese businessman Ho A Mee 何阿美 came to Dunedin from Australia in 1865 on an inspection tour, and later paid the travel expenses for a group of Chinese miners to come to Otago's goldfields, equipping them also with the tools they needed for the task. Another example is the Chinese businessman Choie Sew Hoy 徐肇開 and his son Kum Poy Sew Hoy 徐金培 who paid the advance immigration expenses for fellow villagers to help them come to New Zealand to work.<sup>9</sup> That is to say, the vast majority of Chinese miners who travelled to New Zealand did so voluntarily, but due to their economic circumstances, they obtained the expenses required to work overseas through a credit system. After arriving in New Zealand, they needed to work for those who had organised their travel overseas until the expenses incurred were repaid. After that, the money they earned was their own. This

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7 "The Pioneer Chinaman on the Otago Goldfields," *Otago Witness*, 10 June, 1871, p. 9.

8 James Ng, *Windows on a Chinese Past* (Dunedin: Otago Heritage Books, 1993), Vol. 1, p. 164.

9 James Ng, *Windows on a Chinese Past*, Vol. 1., p. 97.

fact serves to illustrate the importance of fellow villager introductions and guarantees in a consociate society and explains the reason why early Chinese immigrants to New Zealand came mostly from districts in Canton such as Seyip. It is obvious from this that this form of immigration is formed through spontaneous grassroots activity, but it should not be underestimated for that reason.

A second wave of Chinese immigration to New Zealand occurred during the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. In 1938, when the home villages of the Chinese New Zealanders in Canton and surrounding districts were occupied, the Chinese already in New Zealand were concerned for the safety of their family members still in China and petitioned the New Zealand government for temporary refuge in New Zealand on their behalf. Adopting a humanitarian stance on the issue, the New Zealand government agreed to the request of the diasporic Chinese but stipulated that asylum seekers must pay a security deposit of £200 and that the temporary residence period for entry be two years.<sup>10</sup> Hundreds of overseas Chinese women and children left their war-torn hometowns and villages as refugees, risked their lives crossing occupied areas, waited for ships in Hong Kong, before sailing for two or three weeks, arriving in New Zealand after transiting through Sydney, Australia, and reuniting with their husbands and fathers. The promotion and realisation of this asylum measure depended on the friendly attitude of the New Zealand government to the Chinese at the time, the solidarity and repeated appeal of the entire Chinese diaspora in New Zealand, and the indefatigable efforts of Wang Feng 汪丰 (terms of office: 19 February, 1935-17 May, 1939; 17 May, 1939-June, 1946; 24 February, 1953-19 September, 1953) the Consul General of the Republic of China in New Zealand, and Yue Henry Jackson 余職慎 (term of office: 1946-1953), the Consul.<sup>11</sup> The arrival of women and children changed the demography of New Zealand's Chinese diasporic population, which had hitherto been predominantly adult and male, and inaugurated the era of Chinese family life in New Zealand. The Chinese diaspora of New Zealand was gradually taking root and was about to usher in a new era.

The third wave of Chinese immigration to New Zealand is the new immigration wave that emerged after 1987. It originated from the New Immigrants Act implemented by the New Zealand government. This bill overturned the tendency towards racial discrimination of previous laws governing immigration. Race and nationality were no longer to be the criteria upon which the New Zealand government would select prospective immigrants, and the country of origin of immigrants shifted from Europe

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10 “Zhu Huilingdun zonglingshiguan tonggao” 駐惠靈頓總領事館通告 [Notice: Consul General in Wellington], in *Zhongguo dashi zhoukan* 中國大事週刊 [New Zealand Chinese Weekly News], No. 92, 22 May, 1939, p. 13. The New Zealand government at the time also stipulated that children needed to be 16 and younger. See “Entry into New Zealand—Wives and Children of Chinese Residents,” National Archives of New Zealand (Wellington), R 3800945.

11 Wu Minchao 吴敏超, “Cong linshi nanmin dao luodi shenggen—Erzhan qianhou de Xinxilan huaqiao nüxing” 从临时难民到落地生根—二战前后的新西兰华侨女性 [From Temporary Refugees to Settlers—Chinese New Zealand Women in the Post World War II Period], *Jindai lishi yanjiu* 近代历史研究 [Modern History Research], No. 6 (2008): 90-94.



to Asia. Those from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and mainland China who had received higher education and developed professional skills, or who were investment and entrepreneurial personnel, attracted by New Zealand's excellent education resources and beautiful ecological environment, applied for immigration to New Zealand, and obtained the approval of the New Zealand government. The source of new immigrants from mainland China was no longer confined to Canton, but expanded to Shanghai, Beijing, and other parts of the country.

It can be seen that, at different historical stages, the decision of Chinese people to leave their homeland and travel thousands of kilometres to settle in New Zealand was made for different reasons. What can be affirmed, however, is the continuous attractiveness of New Zealand to Chinese people over the course of these one hundred and fifty years. In particular, the first and third waves of Chinese immigration to New Zealand, on the part of the goldminers and the new immigrants, respectively, took place in a global context, and both the motivations for and the path towards realisation of immigration to New Zealand on the part of Chinese people were similar to those who emigrated to the United States of America, Canada, Australia and so on, requiring of us a degree of further comparative investigation. The second wave of Chinese immigration to New Zealand that took place in the context of the outbreak of the total war in China that occurred during the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, on the other hand, and which resulted in many Chinese women and children coming to New Zealand and eventually settling there, represents a phenomenon that is unique to the China-New Zealand relationship, having not happened to any great extent elsewhere, thus requiring of us an especial level of attention.

## Two: Ethnic Relations—Changes and Reflections

When a large number of Chinese miners came to Otago in New Zealand in the 1870s to join the goldrush, the attitudes towards them on the part of the local community were complex. On the one hand, officials and businesspeople believed that the Chinese were peaceable and law-abiding, long-suffering and hardworking. As such, they would be capable of mining Otago's already mined goldfields, thus serving to revive the industry. On the other hand, European miners regarded hard-working and low-wage Chinese miners as strong competitors for job opportunities. They quickly became disgusted with the large number of Chinese workers who arrived and began to consider them to be both pagans and dishonest. Gradually, this intensification of conflict in terms of both economic interests and cultural practices resulted in a united exclusionary force. The Chinese Immigration Act of 1881 stipulated that each Chinese person was required to pay a poll tax of £10 upon entry, and that there be a relationship between the tonnage of arriving vessels and the number of Chinese immigrants permitted entry.<sup>12</sup> Soon

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12 Zhang Li 张丽, "19 shiji houbanqi Xinxilan huagong taojinre de xingqi yu paihua lifa de chutai" 19世纪后半期新西兰华工淘金热的兴起与排华立法的出台 [The Rise in Numbers of Chinese Goldminers in New Zealand in the Later Part of the 19th Century and the Promulgation of Chinese Exclusionary Legislation], *Shixue yuekan* 史学月刊 [Historiography Monthly], No. 4 (2017): 103-106.

thereafter, the New Zealand government's impositions, in terms of both amount of poll tax to be paid and tonnage restrictions became increasingly onerous. For example, in 1896 the poll tax was increased to £100, and the tonnage limit was raised to one Chinese per 200 tons.<sup>13</sup> It can be concluded that the immigration policy implemented by the New Zealand government during the decades from the late 19th century to the early 20th century was extremely unfair to the Chinese. What is even more distressing is that during this process, the image of Chinese people became completely deranged, becoming daily more distorted and humiliating. The Chinese communities suffered many completely unjust accusations and wanton insult.

New Zealand's unfriendly attitude towards Chinese and its immigration restrictions did not change fundamentally until World War II. In 1944, New Zealand officially cancelled the poll tax imposed on the Chinese,<sup>14</sup> and after the war, discrimination against Chinese in New Zealand society began to abate. In an interview conducted in 2016, Dr James Ng 伍德明, who had arrived in New Zealand as an asylum child in the 1940s, said that he had not suffered any racial discrimination in his life.<sup>15</sup> New immigrants who have arrived in New Zealand since the 1980s, too, generally believe that there is no significant racial discrimination in either their job searches or day-to-day lives.

An examination of the changes and reasons for these changes in New Zealand's ethnic relations may require thinking from the following three dimensions.

First, the internal driving forces of New Zealand's anti-Chinese policy involved multiple factors such as race, economics, politics and religion. New Zealand is a country of immigrants with a relatively small population. In 1866, when the Chinese first came to New Zealand, there were only 200,000 people living in the country. By 1877, this population had only increased to 410,000.<sup>16</sup> When a large number of yellow-skinned Chinese miners poured in, the predominantly white Pākehā population suddenly felt a sense of crisis, and they strongly hoped to build a purely white New Zealand nation (apart for the indigenous Māori people). This is similar to the implementation of the White Australia policy in Australia, a country close to New Zealand both in terms of geographical proximity and history. Politicians, in order to meet public opinion and improve their political fortunes, increasingly resorted to radical anti-Chinese exclusion bills. At the same time, the business sector's willingness to hire Chinese to work as cheap labour and thus to promote economic prosperity, waned in the face of wave after wave of anti-Chinese public sentiment. Whenever there was an economic downturn

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13 Nigel Murphy, *Guide to Laws and Policies Relating to the Chinese in New Zealand, 1871-1997* (Wellington: New Zealand Chinese Association, 1997), p. 148.

14 Nigel Murphy, "Introduction," *The Poll-tax in New Zealand: A Research Paper* (Wellington: New Zealand Chinese Association, 1996).

15 "Wu Deming (James Ng) koushu fangtan shilu" 伍德明 (James Ng) 口述访谈实录 [Transcription of an Interview with James Ng] (unpublished), interview conducted on 11-12 December, 2015, in Dunedin. Interviewers: Qiu Zhihong 邱志红, Wu Minchao, and Zhao Qingyun 赵庆云. Translation: Du Jidong.

16 Alfred Simmons, *Old England and New Zealand* (London: Stanford, 1879), p. 55.

or a surplus of available labour, Chinese New Zealanders became the scapegoat. For example, in 1919 after the end of World War I, a large number of returned servicemen regarded the Chinese as competitors for whatever job opportunities existed, and so anti-Chinese sentiment arose again. Most Chinese people did not believe in Christianity, and continued to work hard on Sundays, for which they were often attacked and regarded as alien. In this way, the internal causes of anti-Chinese sentiment and exclusionary demands proved complex and ever changeable.

Second, New Zealand's immigration policy towards China was closely related to China's position in the world and the state of the relationship between China and New Zealand. The late 19th century was precisely a period when China's national strength was much weakened, and the processes of semi-colonisation were intensifying daily. When dealing with the issue of Chinese immigration, New Zealand often adopted unilateral legislative measures, and unscrupulously targeted the Chinese community. Even when the Qing (1644-1911) government realised the need to protect the overseas Chinese, it found that it did not have the means to effectively negotiate with the relevant countries on the anti-Chinese exclusionary legislation. At the very end of the Qing Dynasty, in 1908, the Qing government appointed Hwang Yung-liang 黄荣良 (1867-?) as the first Chinese Consul in Wellington. Hwang Yung-liang had studied in the United States and was a knowledgeable diplomat who, on behalf of the Chinese government, attacked New Zealand's Chinese exclusion legislation.<sup>17</sup> Unfortunately, he did not remain Consul for long. In May 1911, he was transferred to the Consul General in Australia. After the 1911 Revolution, the Republic of China was established, but the domestic situation remained turbulent. Successive Chinese governments proved incapable of defending their own interests, let alone to protect the interests of the overseas Chinese. After the establishment of the National Government in Nanking, the Republic of China attached great importance to overseas Chinese affairs, and successively assigned Wu Qinxun 吴勤训 (term of office: 31 December, 1929-12 June, 1934), Bao Junhao 保君皓 (term of office: 26 July, 1934-19 February, 1953), and Wang Feng as consuls in Wellington. The work of all of these men proved very effective. After the outbreak of World War II, China's international status was greatly improved. China and New Zealand become allies against the fascists in the South Pacific battlefield. Leaders of the New Zealand government repeatedly attended "Double Tenth" Chinese community events and delivered speeches to emphasise the importance of China-New Zealand relations. For the first time, Chinese New Zealanders experienced a sense of pride. The New Zealand government, too, one by one abandoned their earlier and unfair policies with regard to Chinese people. It is obvious from this that the comprehensive national strength of China, the attention the Chinese government paid to both the plight of the overseas Chinese and the China-New Zealand relationship, had a direct impact on the plight and status of the overseas Chinese in whatever nation they lived.

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17 Zhang Li 张丽, "Haiwai she ling yu huaqiao baohu—yi zhongguo zhu xinilan lingshi de sheli ji lingshi Huang Rongliang de huodong wei zhongxin" 海外设领与华侨保护——以中国驻新西兰领事的设立及领事黄荣良的活动为中心 [The Establishment of Consul Offices Overseas and the Protection of the Overseas Chinese—Focusing on the Establishment of the Consul General Office in New Zealand and the Activities of the Consul General Hwang Yung-liang], *Jinan xuebao* 暨南学报 [Journal of Jinan University], No. 7 (2018): 126-128.

A final factor to consider is the changing circumstances of ethnic relations on a global scale. The laws enacted in New Zealand that sought to restrict Chinese Immigration were promulgated in 1881, at a time too that the United States, Canada, and Australia were acting in concert to exclude Chinese.<sup>18</sup> In particular, as New Zealand and Australia inhabit the same region, the impact was especially great. In 1880, the Australian colonies held a joint meeting in Melbourne and recommended that the colonies unify legislation to restrict the entry of Chinese. New Zealand's first Chinese Immigration Restriction Act was introduced in 1881. The U.S. Congress passed the "Chinese Exclusion Act" in 1882, stipulating that Chinese workers (with or without skills) would be prohibited from relocating to the United States within the next ten years. There were certain exclusions (teachers, students, businessmen, tourists, diplomats), but at the same time the immigration authorities were granted very considerable discretionary powers. As a result, the United States began the formulation and implementation of a series of Chinese Exclusion Acts.<sup>19</sup> After several extensions and amendments to the 1882 Act, a treaty passed in 1902 made the law banning Chinese labour permanent.<sup>20</sup> Canada introduced a new immigration law restricting the entry of Chinese in 1885, requiring that each Chinese person pay a Canadian tax of \$50 at the port or other point of entry when entering Canada. This charge was increased to \$500 in 1903.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, from the late 19th century to the early 20th century, the number of Chinese in New Zealand, Australia, the United States and Canada showed a downward trend. Just as outlined in the first part of this article, in the context of the goldrushes that occurred around the Pacific Rim, Chinese workers first went to New Zealand too in search for gold, and so too was the rise of New Zealand's Chinese exclusionary legislation and changes in ethnic relations not an isolated phenomenon in a particular country. It is worth noting that the situation of the early Chinese immigrants in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and other places manifests both similarities and differences. From the time when Chinese labourers entered the above-mentioned areas on a large scale in the 1850s until the introduction of anti-Chinese legislation in the 1880s, these countries experienced a process whereby free entry of Chinese immigrants had changed to restricted entry. It has also been a very common practice to set up a commission of inquiry to investigate the issue of Chinese immigrants, but it has only been in New Zealand that this process has resulted in a relatively positive affirmation

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18 Wang Xiaoxun 王孝洵, "Aodaliya paihua yuanyin chutan" 澳大利亚排华原因初探 [A Preliminary Investigation into the Causes of the Anti-Chinese Legislation of Australia], *Shijie lishi*, No. 2 (1994): 64.

19 Chen Yifan 陈依范, *Meiguo huaren shi* 美国华人史 [A History of the Chinese of America] (Shijie zhishi chubanshe, 1987), p. 185; Chao Longqi 潮龙起, *Meiguo huaren shi (1848-1949)* 美国华人史(1848-1949) [A History of the Chinese of America (1848-1949)] (Shandong huabao chubanshe, 2010), p. 52.

20 Kong Feili 孔飞力, *Tazhezhong de huaren: Zhongguo jin xian dai yimin shi* 他者中的华人: 中国近现代移民史 [The Chinese Other: A History of Migration in Modern China], Li Minghuan 李明欢, trans. (Jiangsu renmin chubanshe, 2016), p. 222.

21 Li Quanen 黎全恩, Ding Guo 丁果, Jia Baoheng 贾葆衡, *Jia'nada huaqiao yimin shi (1858-1966)* 加拿大华侨移民史(1858-1966) [A History of the Overseas Chinese Migrants to Canada (1858-1966)] (Renmin chubanshe, 2013), pp. 132, and 137.

of the existence of the Chinese community. When Chinese labourers first entered the United States, Canada, and New Zealand, they were welcomed by the local community, but the confrontation between Australian and Chinese miners in Australia was obvious from the beginning, and many incidents of violent exclusion of Chinese workers took place on the goldfields of Victoria and New South Wales. However, no matter how the Chinese were treated initially, North America, Australia, and New Zealand eventually formed a concerted anti-Chinese coalition, and the local communities in these countries aroused a torrent of anti-Chinese sentiment that evolved into national-level anti-Chinese legislation.

Looking back at history from the perspective of today, one feels profoundly that ethnic relations are an inexhaustible topic. Among the various driving forces that have caused the change of the situation of the Chinese, assessing the relative importance of racism, conflicts of economic interests, cultural and religious differences, and other factors remains an issue that requires continued research and which manifests aspects of universality.

### Three: Occupational and Economic Status

It can be said that economic factors are the fundamental reason for pushing Chinese people out into the world. Generally speaking, the biggest wish of an adult Chinese male after arriving in a country of residence was to make money as soon as possible and send it home. The Chinese labourers who went to New Zealand in the late 19th century made a living by mining for gold. When they arrived in Otago, the goldrush was actually receding. In 1864, the population of Otago Province was 67,000, and this total fell to 47,000 in 1865<sup>22</sup> and further to 9988 in 1867, of whom 4,414 were miners.<sup>23</sup> The arrival in Otago of large numbers of Chinese labourers, having been invited there, coincided with the rapid decline of various industries in the province that had been developed in tandem with the gold rush. They laboured mightily, mining the abandoned pits of white miners. By 1870, there were 2,640 Chinese in Otago and nearby mining areas.<sup>24</sup> According to research, from 1873-1885, Chinese labourers accounted for about 40% of the total number of Otago miners and produced 30% of the province's gold output.<sup>25</sup> This shows that Chinese miners played an important role in the gold rush industry in Otago. The wages of Chinese miners were about one-third to two-thirds that of white miners, giving an annual income of between £50-100, a sum considerably greater than the incomes earned by these men in China.<sup>26</sup> However, the cost of paying off the credit

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22 Zhang Li, "19 shiji houbanqi Xinxilan huagong taojinre de xingqi yu paihua lifa de chutai," *Shixue yuekan*, No. 4 (2017): 101.

23 J. MacKay, *MacKay's Otago Almanac* (Dunedin, 1869), p. 177.

24 C. P. Sedgwick, *Politics of Survival: A Social History of the Chinese in New Zealand*, p. 90.

25 James Ng, *Windows on a Chinese Past*, Vol. 1, p. 348.

26 James Ng, *Windows on a Chinese Past*, Vol. 1, pp. 349-350.

they owed, paying the poll tax, and providing for their daily living expenses was still a heavy burden. Therefore, Chinese labourers generally lived frugally in order to save money, either to be repatriated on a regular basis or to be accumulated until it reached a certain total, at which point the miners would return home in glory.

With the exhaustion of the goldfields of the South Island of New Zealand at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century, Chinese labourers gradually turned to vegetable growing, operating fruit and vegetable shops, and laundry shops. China is a large agricultural country. Most of the Chinese men in New Zealand at this time were from rural Canton. They were experienced in agricultural labour and intensive farming techniques. With its fertile land and growing North Island population, there was an ever-greater demand for vegetables, and it seems only logical that the Chinese migrants took up this task. Running a fruit and vegetable shop or operating a laundry are industries that require intensive labour and low capital and technical requirements. They were suitable occupations for hard-working but economically poor Chinese with poor standards of English. Chinese-operated stores usually worked long business hours and rarely closed for the weekends, a circumstance that caused considerable dissatisfaction among their Pākehā competitors, but this is also the operating advantage of Chinese stores. Furthermore, the career of a miner is resource-oriented and unstable and unsustainable in the long run. The tenacious adaptability that saw Chinese New Zealanders undertake this change from lives as gold miners to growing vegetables and operating stores should not be ignored. After the outbreak of the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression in China, women and children who came from the home counties of Canton as refugees to reunite with their New Zealand families took their places in these family stores. Small family operations can reduce operating costs, reduce the instability of labour supply and labour conflicts that may arise from hiring workers, and are conducive to the stable development. In addition, with large numbers of US soldiers stationed in New Zealand during World War II, the demand for high-quality vegetables and fruits grew strongly, both promoting the Chinese vegetable planting and management industry, and serving to raise the economic status of the Chinese New Zealanders further. In 1943, Chinese New Zealanders established the Dominion Federation of New Zealand Chinese Commercial Growers and formed a central council committee with the Farmers Union founded by Pākehā to maintain communication with the government and assist in presiding over national agricultural planning.<sup>27</sup>

Chinese people attach great importance to education. A new generation of Chinese children born and raised in New Zealand before and after World War II had the opportunity to receive primary and secondary education with Pākehā children. Hardworking and intelligent people further received university education and became

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27 “Xinxilan huaqiao nongyehui chengli yilai gongzuo gaishu” 新西蘭華僑農業會成立以來工作概述 [Report on the Work of the Dominion Federation of New Zealand Chinese Commercial Growers Since its Establishment] and “Quan Niu qiaonong daibiao dahui zhi juean” 全紐僑農代表大會之議決案 [Resolutions of the Delegates at the Congress of the Dominion Federation of New Zealand Chinese Commercial Growers], Alexander Turnbull Library, Documents of the Commercial Growers, 97-050-1/07.

doctors, accountants, lawyers, and engineers after graduation. Since the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the occupational structure of Chinese New Zealanders has undergone another major change. Young Chinese New Zealanders have become professionals in various industries and have moved into the upper and middle classes in society. At the same time, traditional family-run businesses, such as fruit and vegetable shops and grocery stores, are waning due to their lack of attractiveness to young Chinese, which makes their parents happy for the excellence of their children and saddened by the fact that no one inherits the family business.

In the past two or three decades, new immigrants with advanced education and professional skills have come to New Zealand to become professionals, managers, technical and trade staff, sales staff, staff and administrators in various industries, which has further improved the occupational status of the Chinese community. This occupational distribution reflects the social and economic development of New Zealand, and it also shows that the employment distribution of Chinese is not significantly different from that of Pākehā New Zealanders.

From gold rushes to growing vegetables, operating fruit and vegetable shops, to becoming professionals, the career advancement of Chinese New Zealanders is evident. This change is in line with New Zealand's industrial structure and economic development stage, and it is also inseparable from the diligence and indomitable adaptability of the Chinese. Whether it was the reworking of abandoned goldmines, the arduous labour of bringing land into cultivation, planting and selling vegetables, and undertaking higher education and entering into the ranks of the professional classes, the Chinese have experienced more hardships than their contemporary Pākehā counterparts, and eventually have taken their place in equal standing. Today, new immigrants to New Zealand have established a new image of high-quality immigrants with professional skills. Of course, the occupational change of the Chinese diaspora has also led to changes in their geographical distribution and living conditions, which has led to the decline of some overseas Chinese groups. For example, by the end of the 1960s, the Dominion Federation of New Zealand Chinese Commercial Growers had begun to experience difficulties and could survive only with the greatest of efforts. By the 1980s, the branches of the New Zealand Chinese Association, which had played an important role in the War of Resistance, had declined from twenty-eight to twelve.<sup>28</sup> This was related to the concentration of overseas Chinese in large and medium cities. History has shown that only when the Chinese have a foothold in the economy can they gain a place to live on this land, take root, reproduce, and maintain a presence. Over the past 150 years, the Chinese have changed their careers and their status in New Zealand, showing the excellent quality of diligence and enthusiasm of the Chinese people. It is a source of pride and is a phenomenon that is shared with Chinese people all over the world. It is a circumstance that deserves attention.

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28 Yu Qipan 余其泮 (Yee Kee Poon), "Niuxilan huaqiao lianhe zonghui wushi zhounian jinian wuci" 紐西蘭華僑聯合總會五十週年紀念蕪詞 [Thoughts on the Commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Founding of the New Zealand Chinese Association], in Zhou Yaoxing 周耀星 (Joe Yue Sing), ed., *Niuxilan huaqiao shilue* 紐西蘭華僑史略 [A Brief History of the Overseas Chinese in New Zealand] (Xinxilan shuangxing chubanshe, 1996), p. 82.

#### **Four: From Identification with Chinese Native Place, to Chinese National Identity, and to Assimilation**

Faced with powerful anti-Chinese sentiment and a new living environment, Chinese migrants tended to embrace solidarity and mutual assistance in the early phase of their arrival in New Zealand. These early migrants were not well-educated, and they knew little about the world beyond their homeland. Thus, they often identified with fellows from the same native places, with men who spoke the same local dialect. Various native place associations (*tongxiang hui* 同鄉會) were founded, namely the Poon Fah Association (番花會館), Tung Jung Association (東增會館), Kwong Cheu Club (岡州會館), Seyip Association (四邑會館).<sup>29</sup> Thanks to these associations, Chinese migrants living in the same regions of New Zealand were able to help one another. They recommended jobs, shared news of their relatives and friends, settled disputes, and raised money to help the old or the weak (with payment of medical expenses or return to China). In addition, these associations also provided for the spiritual and emotional sustenance of Chinese immigrants. The Chinese couplet that hung on the door of Poon Yu Association 番禺會館 (the predecessor of Poon Fah Association) read:

*All here are friends from the same hometown.  
All talk and laughter is conducted in the same dialect.*

It is a couplet that expresses strong feelings of homesickness on the part of these Chinese migrants who continued to identify with a homeland that was a thousand miles away. This identification with their homeland was further strengthened in practical terms as Chinese New Zealanders asked their fellows to take money and letters back to their Chinese hometowns and who in turn received news from them of their Chinese families when they returned.

A change from identification with the native place of Canton to identification with the Chinese nation took place amongst Chinese New Zealanders around the early twentieth century when the Qing government posted a Consul to New Zealand. Once Hwang Yung-liang, the first Consul posted to New Zealand by the Qing imperial government, had taken up his post he enthusiastically advocated for the establishment of the Chong Wah Hui Guan or New Zealand Chinese Association (Zhonghua huiguan 中華會館).<sup>30</sup> This association was a nation-wide organisation for Chinese New Zealanders. Hwang served as chairman of the association and all Chinese who then resided in New Zealand were eligible for membership. Unfortunately, during the Warlord era (1912-1928), Chinese New Zealanders split into two factions—one group supported Yuan Shikai 袁世凱 (1859-1916) and the other group supported the revolutionary Kuomintang (later on, there occurred a further split between those who supported Sun Yat-sen 孫逸仙 [1866-1925] and the other faction who supported Chen Jiongming 陳炯明 [1878-1933]). As a result, the Chong Wah Hui Guan exerted less, and less influence

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29 Zhou Yaoxing, ed., *Niuxilan huaqiao shilue*, pp. 41-46.

30 Zhang Li, “Haiwai she ling yu huaqiao baohu—yi zhongguo zhu xinilan lingshi de sheli ji lingshi Huang Rongliang de huodong wei zhongxin,” *Jinan xuebao*, No. 7 (2018): 130.



and it was eventually disbanded. The high tide of diasporic Chinese identification with the Chinese nation occurred during the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. Following the Marco Polo Bridge Incident (7 July 1937), Chinese New Zealanders' concern for their homeland saw them establish the New Zealand Chinese Association (紐絲綸華僑聯合總會) and its journal *New Zealand Chinese Weekly News* (中國大事週刊). The Association called for donations, and during the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, it convened ten conferences. Chinese New Zealanders generously donated their money, being one of the most generous Chinese diasporic communities in the world.<sup>31</sup> Given that there were very few major business or enterprise owners amongst the Chinese in New Zealand and that the majority were either greengrocers or small-business owners, the generous donations on the part of Chinese New Zealanders is very affecting. The War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and World War II saw the Chinese diaspora throughout New Zealand work together more closely regardless of differences in where they came from or of regional dialect. In this way, the Chinese diaspora developed a stronger sense of identification with the Chinese nation. In general terms, although during the course of fund-raising certain disputes arouse, nonetheless the relationship between the various regional Chinese associations continued to develop harmoniously and no serious factionalism or conflicts occurred. During the war years, Chinese nationalist sentiment in New Zealand reached its apogee, and once the war was over the rate of assimilation of the Chinese New Zealanders accelerated, marking a fundamental change, in Chinese idiom, from “Fallen leaves return to their roots” to “Roots grow where leaves happen to fall.”

The year 1949 saw the establishment of the People's Republic of China on the mainland while the Kuomintang government retreated to Taiwan. Both the People's Republic of China and Taiwan took a series of measures to win the support of diasporic Chinese communities whose identity and relationships with China became more and more complicated and tangled.<sup>32</sup> Influenced by Taiwanese propaganda, some members of the Chinese diaspora were suspicious of both the newly-established People's Republic of China and of patriotism, but there were also many Chinese New Zealanders who were proud of the “New China” established by the Chinese Communist Party. Throughout the Cold War, many members of the Chinese diaspora continued to worry about their motherland, and unofficial connections and interactions between them and people in mainland China continued to be pursued enthusiastically. In 1972 the People's Republic

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31 Wu Minchao 吴敏超, “Kangri zhanzheng yu huaqiao shehui de yanbian—Yi Xinxilan huaqiao juankuan fengbo wei zhongxin de tantao” 抗日战争与华侨社会的演变—以新西兰华侨捐款风波为中心的探讨 [The War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the Evolution of the Overseas Chinese Communities—A Study Focusing on the Dispute over Donations among Chinese New Zealanders], *Kangri zhanzheng yanjiu* 抗日战争研究 [Studies in the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression], No. 1 (2016): 119, 124-125.

32 Zhao Qingyun 赵庆云, “1950 niandai Zhongguo dalu yu Taiwan dangju dui Xinxilan huaqiao de zhengduo” 1950年代中国大陆与台湾当局对新西兰华侨的争夺 [The Struggle in the 1950s between Mainland China and the Authorities of Taiwan over the Loyalties of the Chinese Diaspora of New Zealand], *Shixue yuekan* 史学月刊 [Historiography Monthly], No. 6 (2018): 110-116.

of China and New Zealand established formal diplomatic relations. Meanwhile, as the older generations of Chinese immigrants passed away, the Chinese communities in New Zealand gradually became more and more estranged from the government of Taiwan led by the Kuomintang. Many of the younger generation of Chinese New Zealanders tended to have a positive view of a People's Republic of China that was daily growing in strength. Throughout these years, because the chance to return to China was slim, the vast majority of Chinese New Zealanders concentrated their attentions on their own families and their jobs. Thereafter, the trend towards assimilation into local communities became more and more obvious. The new generation of Chinese New Zealanders, born in New Zealand, spoke English from the day they were born and were the recipients of higher levels of education, their daily habits of life became gradually indistinguishable from those of the Pākehā mainstream. In the 1963 election, for instance, Ron Ng-Waishing (吳偉成) became the first ethnically Chinese person to stand for parliament,<sup>33</sup> and in 1968 George Gee (Luey Lowe Geor 呂劉佐) became New Zealand's first Chinese mayor when he was elected mayor of Petone.<sup>34</sup>

In 1996, Pansy Wong (Huang Xu Yufang 黃徐毓芳) was successfully elected as the first Chinese Member of Parliament in the history of New Zealand. The past decade has seen greater levels of political participation on the part of the new generation of Chinese immigrants and the rise of three Chinese MPs, respectively—Kenneth Wang (Wang Xiaoxuan 王小选), Raymond Huo (Huo Jianqiang 霍建强), and Yang Jian 杨健. In addition, various forms of Chinese organisation have developed rapidly, totalling over 200 presently, ensuring that the Chinese communities have a growing influence on the local society. New immigrants lead an active transnational life, some members of these communities flying back and forth between China and New Zealand or between New Zealand and Australia, but others preferring to reside in New Zealand. In a similar vein, the sense of identity of these new immigrants is characterised by diversity. Those who have lived in New Zealand for a long period and who have merged into mainstream society often highlight their identification with New Zealand. Those immigrants who frequently fly between China and New Zealand feel the pull of a dual identity that entails allegiance both to China and New Zealand.<sup>35</sup> In actual fact, more and more diasporic Chinese are transcending national boundaries to some considerable extent and embracing globalisation, cognisant with and in pursuit of humankind's shared history and common values.

Looking back upon this one-hundred-and-fifty-year-long history, early Chinese migrants to New Zealand experienced powerful feelings of homesickness, always

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33 Yang Tangcheng 杨汤城 (Young Tong Sing), narrated, and Ding Shenzun 丁身尊, arranged, *Xinxilan huaqiao shi* 新西兰华侨史 [A History of Overseas Chinese of New Zealand] (Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe, 2001), p. 110.

34 Zhou Yaoping, *Niuxilan huaqiao shilue*, p. 73.

35 Qiu Zhihong 邱志红, "Xinxilan huaren xin yimin de kuaguo shijian" 新西兰华人新移民的跨国实践 [The Transnational Experiences of New Chinese Immigrants in New Zealand], *Jinan xuebao*, No. 12 (2017): 93-97.

expecting to be able to return to their native places. This affinity with their homeland, however, developed into a strong Chinese national identity and Chinese patriotism during the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression. Later on, Chinese immigrants gradually assimilated into the countries where they lived. As they settled there, they ultimately began to embrace globalisation. The story of the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand reflects how history evolves and how individuals interact with a particular period of time in history. Overall, the trajectory along which the Chinese communities in New Zealand developed was in line with that of the Chinese diaspora in other parts of the world.

### Five: Gender, Family, and Daily Life

The Chinese who migrated to New Zealand in the early period were predominantly adult males, a combination of factors accounting for this phenomenon. Migrants had to pay the poll tax and cover their own living expenses. In addition, wives needed to look after their parents, parents-in-law, and children in their hometowns and villages. Without the means of earning their own living, therefore, Chinese women tended not to accompany their spouses to New Zealand. This situation was similar to that of America, Canada, and Australia during the same period. Among the 4816 Chinese migrants to New Zealand in 1874, only 2 were women. In 1891 only 18 of the 4444 Chinese migrants were female.<sup>36</sup> Obviously, in the age of the gold rush, gender imbalance was a serious problem among the Chinese communities in New Zealand. Although from the twentieth century the number of female Chinese migrants increased, women were still far outnumbered by men. In 1921, only 205 of the 3110 migrants were women, making up 6.6% of the total Chinese diaspora in New Zealand.<sup>37</sup> What is undeniable is that throughout these years, the overwhelming majority of Chinese migrants were unable to be reunited with their spouses and children and all they could do was send their love to their families from a distant ten thousand miles away. This shows that in addition to facing racial discrimination, the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand was also afflicted by the bitter emotional suffering of loneliness and separation. As the number of single Chinese men far outnumbered the number of single Chinese women during this period, a few Chinese men married local Pākehā women, mainly from the lower class and ill-educated or who had previously been married and then divorced. Many of these Pākehā women regarded Chinese men as good partners because they were diligent, and they were not addicted to alcohol. On the whole, however, it was rare for a Chinese man in New Zealand to be married either to a Pākehā or a Māori woman. The overwhelming majority of Chinese men led single lives in New Zealand. The life of the Chinese migrants was very simple. Early migrants lived in small huts often made of stones, Kerosene tanks or steel cans. Some even lived in caves. The food they ate was simple, too. They mainly lived off rice, vegetables, and pork transported from their native places in China. Being bachelors, these migrants paid little attention to

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36 Yang Tangcheng and Ding Shenzun, *Xinxilan huaqiao shi*, p. 19.

37 James Ng, *Windows on a Chinese Past*, Vol. I, p. 210.

personal hygiene and they were slovenly dressed. Moreover, they worked long hours every day to earn as much money as possible, therefore having few opportunities to amuse themselves. Occasionally, some laborers played chess, card games, or traditional Chinese musical instruments such as the flute or the two-stringed fiddle. Others either gambled or took opium to pass the time.<sup>38</sup> The old and weak who could not return to their homeland tended to take opium to alleviate their sadness and homesickness. It is worth noting that at the time Pākehā often exaggerated the phenomenon of opium abuse among Chinese communities, giving people the impression that almost every Chinese migrant was an opium addict. We believe that further research needs to be conducted to investigate specific cases and reasons why Chinese migrants took opium, and that a distinction needs to be drawn between the taking of opium and the taking of other drugs.

The arrival of female refugees and their children during China's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression significantly changed the structure of the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand. A total of some 249 Chinese women with 244 children arrived in New Zealand at this time. These women reunited with their husbands and were later to give birth to a total of 437 children within several years of their arrival. This additional total of some 930 Chinese women and children ushered in an age of family settlement in New Zealand. According to the statistics, at the conclusion of World War II in 1945, there were 3414 male Chinese migrants and 1526 female Chinese migrants in New Zealand with a ratio of 2.2 to 1. By 1951, the ratio was 1.7 to 1.<sup>39</sup> With the expansion of household size, Chinese migrants began to build new homes for their families. They also came to attach importance to diet, hygiene, and child growth and development. All these changes allowed the Chinese diaspora to start to enjoy the joys of family life. Moreover, an increase in the number of children during and after the World War II gave rise to the emergence of part-time Chinese-language education. Chinese parents hoped that their children would receive English-language education whilst at the same time be able to preserve Chinese culture and traditions.

In the history of the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand, the key characteristic of the period from 1950-1970 may well be "assimilation," with this trend becoming an irresistible one for Chinese New Zealanders then settled in New Zealand. The Chinese scholar Manying Ip (Ye Song Manying 葉宋曼瑛) who herself immigrated to New Zealand in 1970, found that by the time that she arrived, Chinese immigrants could speak fluent English, were law-abiding, and earned high salaries, and thereby had

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38 Zhao Xiaoyang 赵晓阳, "19 shiji zhonghouqi haiwai huaren de 'bei yinxiang' fenxi—Yi Xinxilan huaren huaqiao wei zhongxin" 19世纪中后期海外华人的被印象分析—以新西兰华人华侨为中心 [An Analysis of the Stereotyped Overseas Chinese in the Second half of the Nineteenth Century—Focusing on the Chinese Diaspora in New Zealand], *Shixue jikan*, No. 4 (2017): 50-51.

39 Ye Song Manying 葉宋曼瑛 (Manying Ip) and Mai Lizu 麥禮祖 (Nigel Murphy), eds., *Niuxilanren kan yayi: Tongzhuoyike 紐西蘭人看亞裔: 同桌異客* [Aliens at My Table: Asians as New Zealanders See Them], Yin Ping 尹萍, trans. (Auckland: Penguin Group, 2005), p. 6.

become a “model ethnic group” in New Zealand.<sup>40</sup> The young generation played a more and more important role in Chinese communities. Activities they organised were mainly physical, social, and cultural. It is worthwhile to mention that during the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, the New Zealand Chinese Association usually organised a big sports event with the participation of all Chinese immigrants following the celebration of the Double Tenth Day, the National Day of the Republic of China. As World War II came to an end, Chinese immigrants further developed this tradition. The first formal Chinese New Zealand sports meeting was held in 1948. Up until 2012, the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand had held sixty-four sports meetings. At the 2012 sports meeting, over 2000 contestants played basketball, volleyball, rugby, badminton, and table tennis. The year 2012 also marked the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between the People’s Republic of China and New Zealand, and the 2012 sports meeting proved to be the largest such event held so far.<sup>41</sup> Evidently, sports events have become important occasions for the Chinese diaspora to strengthen their friendships and develop interpersonal networks. This is a distinctive feature of Chinese communities in New Zealand.

The majority of new Chinese immigrants chose to live in big cities such as Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. This was because they generally came from big Chinese cities, and were therefore used to metropolitan lifestyles. As many new immigrants had obtained qualifications in China which were not recognised by New Zealand, many of them found it hard to find employment. Hence, some Chinese immigrants became blue-collar workers. Others decided to pursue their education in New Zealand in order to improve their English, earn New Zealand qualifications and begin their new professional lives.<sup>42</sup> As regards the gender ratio, Chinese women and children who are long-term residents in New Zealand now outnumber Chinese men. Male Chinese immigrants needed to travel back and forth between their native places and New Zealand, earning money to provide for the whole family. Accordingly, these men were called “astronauts.” In Chinese families, it was usually the women who took responsibility for looking after the children and ensuring that the next generation would have access to the good education and resources available in New Zealand.

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- 40 “Ye Song Manying koushu fangtan shilu” 叶宋曼瑛口述访谈实录 [Transcription of an Interview with Manying Ip] (unpublished), interview conducted on 6 December 2015, in Auckland. Interviewer: Qiu Zhihong 邱志红.
- 41 Zhonghua renmin gongheguo waijiaobu 中华人民共和国外交部 [Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China], “Zhu Aokelan zonglingshi Liao Juhua chuxi Xinxilan huaqiao lianhui di 64 jie fuhuojie tiyu jinbiaosai kaimushi” 驻奥克兰总领事廖菊华出席新西兰华联会第64届复活节体育锦标赛开幕式 [Consul General Liao Juhua Attended the Opening Ceremony of the 64th Easter Championship of the New Zealand Chinese Association], accessed 3 December 2018, [http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/gjhdq\\_676201/gj\\_676203/dyz\\_681240/1206\\_681940/1206x2\\_681960/t921517.shtml](http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/web/gjhdq_676201/gj_676203/dyz_681240/1206_681940/1206x2_681960/t921517.shtml).
- 42 Li Hairong 李海蓉 (Phoebe Li), “Xinxilan Zhongguo dalu xinyimin chutan” 新西兰中国大陆新移民初探 [A Preliminary Study of New Zealand’s New Immigrants from Mainland China], *Huaqiao huaren lishi yanjiu* 华侨华人历史研究 [Research into the Overseas Chinese], no. 1 (2011): 26-27.

The historical gender ratios of the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand over more than a hundred years serve also to reflect the various immigration motivations and China's changing political and economic status.

### **Six: Typical Overseas Chinese in New Zealand—The Characteristics and Contributions of Chinese New Zealanders**

History is created by human beings. The stories and experiences of a number of typical Chinese New Zealanders reveal in part the characteristics of the Chinese people who transcended national and cultural boundaries, showing how a closed society developed towards assimilation and integration. Chan Dah Chee (Chen Dazhi 陳達枝; 1851-1930), Yue Henry Jackson (Yu Zhishen 余職慎; 1881-1955), and Young Tong Sing (Yang Tangcheng 楊湯城; 1908-2000) were three typical overseas Chinese whose stories illustrate the changing landscape of the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand.

Chan Dah Chee was amongst the first Chinese immigrants who arrived in New Zealand. In the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, Chen became the most successful vegetable grower and international trade businessman among the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand. He started from scratch. His English was not good. However, Chen always kept improving his skills at business. In addition, he was always awake to opportunities to expand. Ah Chee (Azhi gongsi 阿枝公司) founded by Chan developed from a greengrocer shop into a retailer of fruit, vegetables, and catering. It finally became an enterprise importing and exporting wood-ear, silk, eggs, rabbit skins and bananas. Chan Dah Chee attached importance to traditional Chinese relationships among relatives and fellow townspersons. When the Chung Wah Wui Gun was founded, he donated £25, being the most generous Chinese New Zealander. Furthermore, he also made sure that he got along well with local Pākehā. Once his children were capable of taking charge of the family business independently, he decided to return to China, spending his late years in Canton. Tom Ah Chee (Chen Linzhi 陳麟智), Chan Dah Chee's grandson, was the founder and general manager of the first Foodtown in Auckland.<sup>43</sup> Several generations of the Ah Chee family travelled between China and New Zealand. Each generation assimilated into New Zealand to varying degrees. The story of the Ah Chee family presents a miniature of immigration, trade, technical, and cultural exchanges between China and New Zealand. It should be pointed out that the success of Chan Dah Chee, a representative of Chinese businessmen in New Zealand, has shown the extraordinary talent and ability of the Chinese people to overcome difficulties, doggedly pursue progress and to successfully manage their businesses around the world.

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43 Wu Minchao 吴敏超, "Xinxilan huaren yu haishang sichou zhi lu—Yi Chen Dazhi wei zhongxin de tantao" 新西兰华人与海上丝绸之路—以陈达枝为中心的探讨 [Chinese New Zealanders and the Maritime Silk Road—An Examination Focusing on Chan Dah Chee], *Guangdong shehui kexue* 广东社会科学 [Journal of Social Sciences in Guangdong], No. 2 (2019): 136-141.

A second representative figure is Yue Henry Jackson. His father was Chinese, and his mother came from England. Yue Henry Jackson had lived both in New Zealand and China when he was a teenager. He was fluent in both Chinese and English, being familiar also with the local customs of China and New Zealand. During his thirty years' work at the Chinese consulate in Wellington, Yu served as a secretary, acting consul, vice-consul, and consul.<sup>44</sup> He was gentlemanly and refined of demeanour, always enthusiastic about the affairs of the Chinese diaspora, and on many occasions, he served to protect their interests. During the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, Yue Henry Jackson made full use of his language and interpersonal skills, helping Consul-General Wang Feng and Chiu Kwok Chun 趙國俊 (1884-1957), a leader in the local branch of the Kuomintang, to ensure regular communication with the government of New Zealand. Their work proved fruitful and highly effective and therefore they earned the respect and support of Chinese New Zealanders. After the War, when the Chinese communities planned to build a headquarters for the New Zealand Chinese Association, Yu donated £1000 towards the costs of construction.<sup>45</sup> Once the headquarters was built, Chinese New Zealanders unanimously decided to name the main hall of the building "Henry Jackson Hall" in recognition of Yue Henry Jackson's long-term contribution to the Chinese New Zealand community.

In addition to Chan Dah Chee and Yue Henry Jackson, Young Tong Sing was also a representative figure of the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand. Young came to New Zealand to study when he was a teenager. Later on, he helped his family with the work in a greengrocer shop. In 1927, Young became a member of the Kuomintang, after which he became active in diasporic Chinese affairs. He was enthusiastic about social affairs. Between 1931 and 1933, Young lived in Poon Yu County, Canton, and there he established a standard elementary school. When the New Zealand Chinese Association was founded in 1937, Young was elected a member of the first executive committee. In 1938, when a dispute about donations broke out, Young accompanied the Consul General Wang Feng to the Auckland Branch of the New Zealand Chinese Association in the attempt to mediate and resolve the dispute. During the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, Young himself donated £698 to the New Zealand Chinese Association, making him one of the most generous Chinese New Zealanders in this cause. This evidently showed how patriotic he was. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, Young returned to his homeland. In his late years, Young recalled his thoughts and feelings: "Travelling towards Guangzhou, I formed a very good impression of the discipline of the People's Liberation Army there. They paid for everything they took and did not bully the common people. I felt that a new age had arrived, so I made up my mind to go back to China." Having been a member of the Kuomintang, Young ultimately joined the Communist Party. He invested his money in Canton, building factories and engaging in overseas Chinese affairs. Furthermore, he

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44 David Fung, *Turning Stone into Jade: The History of the New Zealand Chinese Association* (Wellington: New Zealand Chinese Association, 2014), p. 35.

45 Yang Tangcheng and Ding Shenzun, *Xinxilan huaqiao shi*, pp. 63-64.

ensured that family members in New Zealand were able to reunite with him in Canton.<sup>46</sup> In his old age, Young orally narrated the book entitled *A History of the Chinese Diaspora in New Zealand*, a work that helps Chinese people to gain a more vivid understanding of Chinese New Zealanders.

The important figures we discuss above lived at different times, just as their spheres of activity, too, differed. Nonetheless, they shared some commonalities. Although all three of them travelled back and forth between China and New Zealand, they mainly lived in New Zealand. They all had some degree of influence within the Chinese New Zealand community, and were able to represent the Chinese community in its interactions with Pākehā society and even to become part of that mainstream Pākehā society. Persevering in their attempts to realise their aims, they ultimately accomplished prominent achievements with some considerable historical recognition.

On the basis of our experience of the research on the history of the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand undertaken in recent years, we conclude that in order to extend and advance research in this field of study, scholars will need to make further efforts in the following respects. First, any historical study must be based on an extensive body of research material. We should delve into historical materials in both New Zealand and China, especially those held in local New Zealand archives and libraries throughout the country, and comb the local English-language newspapers and periodicals for first-hand material about the New Zealand Chinese diaspora. Naturally, also, we need to go beyond the materials available in either China and New Zealand, for we should also explore for leads to be found in official materials such as those held in the British Foreign Office archives or in reports produced by the colonial government of Hong Kong. Second, if the quality of one's research is determined by the breadth of one's vision, then we must study the history of the New Chinese diaspora in the context of the manifold threads of global history, the history of China, the history of New Zealand, and the history of international migration, paying due attention to the connections between the villages from whence the migrants came and their various national destinations, and to the major events in the relationship between China and New Zealand and the influence of the development of this relationship on the plight of Chinese New Zealanders. We must strive hard to move beyond the existing nation-state bound histories of the various Chinese diasporas and engage in synchronic comparison and analysis from the perspective of global history. Third, we must pay close attention to changes in the historiographical trends of this present age of ours, and the new areas, new trends, and new methodologies that have been opened up in the field of Chinese diasporic history, taking in gender and women's history, the history of everyday life, environmental history and such like as yet under-researched new topics.

From the perspective of the histories of the various Chinese diasporas, once a Chinese diaspora has arrived in a particular country, the trajectory of the development of that diaspora closely correlates with the political and economic development of that

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46 Ye Song Manying 葉宋曼瑛, *Yeshi jiaxiang 也是家鄉* [Home Away from Home: Life Stories of the New Zealand Chinese Women] (Hong Kong: Sanlian shudian, 1994), pp. 69-70.



country. In this sense, the history of each Chinese diasporic community innovatively combines elements of both China and the country of destination, which gives rise to especial experiences and unique charm. For over a century and a half, the yearning for a happy life on the part of Chinese migrants to New Zealand has not at all been attenuated by the relative smallness of the land area of New Zealand in the Southern Hemisphere or the vast distance that separates New Zealand from China. In recent years, New Zealand has attracted a large number of new immigrants and the rate of immigration continues to increase, this serving to inject the history of the Chinese diaspora of New Zealand with new topics and renewed energy. From the perspective of global history, China has developed its economy rapidly, and its relationships with the outside world have become daily more intimate. In March 2017, China and New Zealand signed a non-binding Memorandum of Agreement to develop a pathway for cooperation to support the “Belt and Road Initiative,” New Zealand being the first developed Western country to sign this kind of memorandum. We predict that that levels of trade and cultural exchanges between China and New Zealand will continue to increase, and that in this process the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand will play a more and more important role in the development of bilateral relations and cooperation. We believe that the study of the history of the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand also promises a bright future, like the sun rising in the east.