

## **Panel Proposal**

### **Diversities and Similarities of Chinese Overseas Society: A Comparative Perspective**

James K. Chin  
Research Fellow at the University of Hong Kong

#### **Paper One**

#### **The Current State of Chinese America: International Migration, Modes of Incorporation, and the Challenges of Success**

**Min Zhou**  
Professor of Sociology & Asian American Studies,  
University of California, Los Angeles, USA

**Abstract:** Chinese Americans are the oldest and largest ethnic group of Asian ancestry in the United States. They have endured a long history of migration and settlement that dates back to the late 1840s, including 60 years of legal exclusion. With the lifting of legal barriers to Chinese immigration after World War II, the enactment of a series of liberal immigration legislation since the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments of 1965 (also called the Hart-Cellar Act of 1965), and economic and political changes in the People's Republic of China and the greater Chinese Diaspora, the Chinese American community has increased more than ten-fold: from 237,000 in 1960, to 1.6 million in 1990, and to 3.8 million in 2010 by the official census count. Much of this tremendous growth is primarily due to post-1965 immigration as foreign born Chinese account for more than two-thirds of the Chinese American population and more than half of the foreign born arrived after 1990. This paper examines the key historical and contemporary features that shape Chinese immigration, settlement, and integration in the United States. I specifically address three questions: 1) How are contemporary patterns of immigration, settlement, and integration compared with those of the past? 2) What is the current state of Chinese America? 3) How are Chinese Americans perceived and positioned in 21<sup>st</sup>-century American society? In particular, I compare historical and contemporary trends and patterns by examining both historical and contemporary contexts of international migration and host society's reception for Chinese Americans and by analyzing the internal ethnic factors and external structural factors on their acculturation and integration. I will also discuss the challenges of success for Chinese immigrants and their offspring, tackling the paradox of "the model minority" v. "the perpetual foreigner."

## Paper Two

### **Brain Circulation and Transnational Chinese: Highly Skilled New Migrants in China, Singapore, and Britain**

**Liu Hong**

Professor of History and Asian Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

**Abstract:** The past three decades have witnessed rapid growth of new Chinese international migrants, estimated to be over 6 million. A significant portion of the new migrants is highly educated professionals who possess portable skills and have actively taken part in the global trend of “brain circulation.” By placing new Chinese diaspora in the context of both sending (China) and receiving societies (Singapore and Britain), this paper considers complex patterns of local adaptation and their interactions with China in the social, economic and political arenas. It also examines the significant role of the nation-state in shaping not only migratory trajectories but also changing ethnic identity and homeland linkages.

## Paper Three

### **当代“地缘组织”的精英模式：日本华侨社会个案研究**

**廖赤阳 (LIAO Chiyang)**

日本武藏野美术大学造型学部教授

**Abstract:** 地缘组织曾经是华人社会的基本支柱之一。江户时代的唐寺是地缘组织之蒿矢。开港以来的福建会馆实际上是商会。而二战后的福建帮，已是一般意义上的同乡团体。不过，最近成立的一个以福建为媒介的社团，却是新型的精英组织，刚成立就迅速成为具有指标性的地缘团体。本文拟以该团体为个案探讨当代所谓“地缘组织”的新变化及其历史特征。

## Paper Four

### **The Transition and the Transformation of Chinatowns in Japan**

**WANG Wei**

Professor of Anthropology at Department of Economics,  
National University of Kagawa, Japan

**Abstract:** The formation of Chinatowns in Japan was accompanied by the development of maritime trade in East Asia and the rise of trade ports in Japan. Unlike what experienced in the Chinatowns of the United States and Europe, Chinese merchants were always the migrant pioneers actively involved in the East Asian business network. As a result, Chinatowns of Japan have been closely intertwined

with the host society since the very beginning. Three major traditional Chinatowns of Japan can be found in Yokohama, Kobe and Nagasaki. Shops, staff and residents in the three Chinatowns are consisted of not only ethnic Chinese but also the Japanese. Moreover, most of the tourists visiting Chinatowns are Japanese. The design and rebuilding of Chinatowns are thus targeted at Japanese tourists. One of the key characteristics that distinguishes Japanese Chinatowns from their counterparts in other parts of the world is the collaborations between the ethnic Chinese and Japanese in rebuilding the cultural landscape of Chinatown. Exotic culture exhibited in the three traditional Chinatowns is the selling point in developing local tourism, which in turn becomes part of the vital cultural resource in local social and economic development. With the inflow of new Chinese immigration waves initiated in late 1980s, Ikebukuro and Shinjuku of Tokyo have gradually become the commercial enclaves of Chinese migrants, especially the Ikebukuro region which is called the new Chinatown of Japan. There is no doubt that the history of Chinese migrant society in Japan could be observed in the three Chinatowns, which also function as a key bridge in promoting the cultural, economic, social and personal exchanges between Japan and China. The arrival of new Chinese migrants has had both positive and negative impacts on the traditional Chinatowns, such as internal friction, economic vitality and changes, and such changes could mirror the relations between the old and new Chinese migrants. The emergence of new Chinese districts in Tokyo and a number of the problems arising from the debate over the so-called new Chinatown have actually underlined the difficulties being faced by the Japanese government in its effort to build up a multicultural and coexistence society. In this sense, Chinatown could be perceived as both a stopover and a continuation, or described as a cultural conflict zone and a platform for communication and understanding. This paper tries to examine the old and new Chinatowns in Japan from the perspectives of history and locality while making a preliminary comparative study in the hope to explore further the transition and transformation of Chinatowns in Japan and their cultural implication.

## **Paper Five**

### **Multi-stream Flows Re-shaped Chinese Communities in Canada**

**Kenny ZHANG**

Senior Research Analyst at the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada

**Abstract:** The Canadian census (2006) reported that over 1.3 million people in Canada self-identify their ethnic origin to be Chinese. This makes the Chinese community the eighth largest in Canada in terms of ethnic origin, and the largest of Asian origin. China has become the top source country of immigrants to Canada since 1998, and the Chinese communities in Canada continue to increase. The turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century also witnessed growing multi-stream flows of people from China to Canada. Therefore, the image of Chinese Canadians today is vastly different than it was in the last two centuries when Chinese immigrants were stereotyped as railway coolies, laundrymen and waitress. The importance of Chinese communities in Canada has been underestimated for a long time. As a country of immigrants, Canada has been accustomed to looking at immigrants from an economic perspective. Chinese

immigrants, like all immigrants, have traditionally been seen as suppliers of needed manpower. This paper will discuss how the multi-stream flows of people from China to Canada have changed the Chinese communities in Canada in various ways. It will also emphasize on the importance of understanding that Chinese communities not as a distinctive group, but as part of Canada's multicultural society.

## **Paper Six**

### **New Chinese Migrant Community in Cambodia: A Fieldwork Report**

**James K. CHIN**

Research Fellow at the University of Hong Kong

**Abstract:** The ethnic Chinese in Cambodia formed the country's largest ethnic minority with 60 percent of the Chinese are urban residents engaged mainly in commerce and the other 40 percent in the rural area. Since the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime, the once stricken or even perished Chinese community under Pol Pot has been rejuvenating with large number of new Chinese migrant influx from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. Companies set up by Chinese migrants from Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China can now be seen almost in every sector of the Cambodian economy, particularly in Phnom Penh. Chinese entrepreneurs own, operate, and built factories, banks, hospitals, restaurants, hotels, discos and casinos in the country. In the meantime, a great many of Chinese skilled labours have been recruited to work in the garment factories owned by migrant entrepreneurs. Even the triads, mafia and prostitutes from Taiwan and the Chinese mainland have managed to settle down in Cambodia. Why suddenly did large number of new Chinese migrants move into Cambodia over the past two decades from the Chinese mainland, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan? What are the social, cultural and historical factors, if there is any, that can be advanced to account for the new Chinese emigration to Cambodia? What are their major businesses in Cambodia? How do Chinese private entrepreneurs achieve success in a transnational context? How could we identify and mapping out the ethnic Chinese business networks in Cambodia? And what are the main features of Chinese new migrant community in the country? Based on the fieldwork conducted in Cambodia over the past six years, this paper tries to re-conceptualise the subject against the background of the increasingly rise of China in the international community and the significant Chinese globalization processes, examining the dynamics of Chinese business migrants in the less developed country and their connections with both homeland and other ethnic Chinese communities overseas.