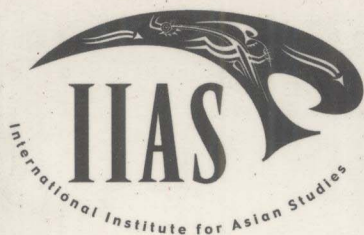


1998年晋江《中国侨乡研究国际研讨会》论文集英文卷



*International
Institute
for Asian
Studies*

**NEW STUDIES
ON CHINESE OVERSEAS AND CHINA**

Edited by
Cen Huang, Zhuang Guotu, and Tanaka Kyoko



Selected papers presented to International Conference
on Qiaoxiang Studies, Jinjiang 1998

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INTRODUCTION

The renewed appeal to *qiaoxiang* ties (the ties of Chinese people in the diaspora to their hometowns) has played an important role in the rapid growth of the economy and the accelerated social change which has recently been taking place in South China. This affect ranges from the restoration of family values, ancestor worship, lineage organizations to the formation and the development of transnational business networks and enterprises in China, Southeast Asia, and other countries with large overseas Chinese populations. There have been numerous research publications concentrating on overseas Chinese business and cultural networks, associations, and the history and development of Chinese diaspora in different countries. This volume hopes to provide some new perspectives on the relationships between the Chinese diaspora and China on the basis of recent research findings in the field of overseas Chinese studies.

This book is an anthology of papers selected from those presented at the 'International Conference on Qiaoxiang Studies' held on 28-31 October 1998 in Jinjiang, South Fujian, hosted by the Research School of Southeast Asian Studies, the Jinjiang City Government and the Office of Overseas Chinese Affairs of Fujian Province. The conference attracted considerable attention from scholars and government decision makers. One hundred and fifty participants from fifteen different countries attended the conference. The scholars presented sixty papers on their recent research findings on related research topics. The current volume is a selection of the papers in English delivered at the conference.

The conference chalked up an important success in an international collaboration project: 'The Social and Economic Development of an Overseas Chinese Hometown County: Jinjiang' (hereafter referred to as, 'Jinjiang Qiaoxiang Project'), which was initiated by the Research School of Southeast Asian Studies of Xiamen University and the

International Institute for Asian Studies (Leiden and Amsterdam) in 1997. The project has carried out comprehensive field surveys covering a random sample of 500 families and 150 enterprises in Jinjiang county of South Fujian. The survey research covered such topics as the composition of *qiaoxiang* households, income structures, relationships with overseas relatives, overseas remittances, donations and investments, as well as foreign-funded and local enterprises. A number of research papers and data files based on the investigations have been compiled and edited into a book on *qiaoxiang* studies parallel to this volume, giving the fruits of the joint research collaboration between the two research institutes. Both volumes are expected to make a major contribution to the theory as well as the methods used in the field of *qiaoxiang* studies.

The twelve papers in this volume have been contributed by scholars from ten different countries, including China, France, Italy, Japan, India, the Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, South Korea, and the United States. Diversity and breadth characterize the nature of the papers. Some papers present new inquiries into the constitution of the 'Chinese diaspora' by exploring both theoretical and empirical conceptions currently employed in *qiaoxiang* studies. Others look at the new trends in the Chinese diaspora in the countries where the academic attention may not have been particularly engaged by this topic, such as in France and India. Several empirical case studies raise an important point by focusing on the effects of the Chinese in the diaspora and their associations with both economic and social development of China, for instance by making use of 'historical capital' to ease their way into successful investments and the use of 'cultural capital' in the management of their enterprises in China. The case study of Chinese female students in the United States presents a picture of the role played by these students in the historical evolution of Sino-US relations a process which began in the nineteenth century. Studies of historical figures such as the 'Captain China,' of the Singapore Chinese view of China, and on genealogy and tradition among the Chinese in Malaysia and Singapore add fresh views to this research topic, revealing the different sides of Chinese in the diaspora in connection with their ancestral hometowns. Finally, an introduction to the Jinjiang Qiaoxiang Project provides a concluding remark to the volume. As a whole the papers present multiple perspectives and

interdisciplinary approaches in the studies of people in the Chinese diaspora, which enable us to understand the phenomenon of the Chinese in the diaspora in broader conceptual and global terms and to explore the possibilities for further investigation in the field of this research.

It is important to clarify of some of the terms used in this volume. The definitions of 'overseas Chinese,' 'Chinese overseas,' and the 'Chinese diaspora' have been frequently debated in the past decade. Scholars with different research agendas use these terms differently in their research context. 'Overseas Chinese' (*Huaqiao*) originally referred to those Chinese who left China temporarily to spend some time abroad. It is also defined as the Chinese who have the permanent right to reside in their host countries, but retain their Chinese citizenship (Li 1999). The term 'Chinese overseas' (*Huaren*) was proposed by Wang Gungwu, a well-known scholar in this field. Wang (1998, p.12) defines that 'Chinese overseas' as including ethnic Chinese who are foreign nationals, and do not attempt to distinguish between those who identify themselves as members of a Chinese minority community and those who believe they are foreign nationals of Chinese descent. In recent years, the term 'Chinese diaspora' has been used to describe the multiplex and varied connections of family, kinship, commerce, sentiments about native places in China of the people in the diaspora (Li 1999). In this volume, these three terms are interchangeable and they may refer to both ethnic Chinese who are foreign nationals and Chinese who live outside the jurisdiction of the People's Republic of China, like the Chinese in Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan. The reason for this is because the editors respect the complexity of the meaning of the terms adopted by the authors in their papers.

The editors

Cen Huang
Zhuang Guotu
Kyoko Tanaka

INTRODUCTION

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DIASPORAS AND TRANSNATIONAL INSTITUTION- BUILDING: SOME RESEARCH QUESTIONS

LEO DOUW

During the 1990s, the term diaspora has become one of the key words in the academic discourse on globalization and transnationalization. Since the late 1960s, the term has begun to assume a new meaning, in the sense that positive ideals of state-building have been attached to it (Toeloelyan 1996:24-6; Cohen 1997). The editor of the academic journal *Diaspora*, the Armenian Toeloelyan, may be cited as a representative example of this trend (1996). Toeloelyan speaks of 'the diasporic project,' which intends to 'remake the nations of the world in the image of the diaspora' (1996:6, 28-31). There are also advocates of the Chinese variety of diaspora building. Ong and Nonini, despite their critical attitudes towards the Chinese 'ungrounded empires,' show a measure of diasporic idealism: '...we would argue for the need to develop a new utopian imaginary that combines the experiences of displacement, travel, and disorientation, which many Chinese transnationalists have successfully negotiated, with an emergent sense of social justice. ... A self-critique is necessary for a cosmopolitan sense of social justice to be fully articulated within the diasporic transnational experience' (Ong and Nonini 1997:330).

In the present chapter, taking a slightly different tact, it is argued that diaspora formation may be important in particular historical situations in which unstable international political conditions prevail, but that it has limited functions for long-term institution-building.¹ For the Chinese case this hypothesis seems valid, because as a national state China is not

yet strong enough and economically sufficiently developed to guarantee a smooth integration into the world economic order without endangering domestic stability. China in this respect belongs to a much broader category of countries which encourage their expatriates to form 'ungrounded empires' (Ong and Nonini 1997), or 'de-territorialised nations' (Basch, et al. 1995, 1997), in order to attract investment and donations to invigorate the local economy. The argument in this chapter is that appeals to ethnicity and cultural affinity are a convenient way for politicians to explore the possibilities of co-operation with foreign investors and to figure out how longer-term institution-building should be initiated, and integration into the world economy achieved. It is acknowledged that diaspora communities may organize on the basis of interests and emotions which are different from the most pressing interests of the mother country, and also that any government which involves itself actively with its expatriates must be supposed to have an important influence on the formation of diasporic life. There is an assumption that particularly in the case of business relations, ethnic appeals are principally of a political character, designed to accommodate conflicting interests between officials and expatriates of different nationalities, regarded as the major actors in finding ways to link transnational enterprises up with the system of domestic industrial relations.

Diaspora building is to a large extent founded on claims of ethnic and cultural sharing. The most important reason academics have suggested that diasporic, cultural, and ethnic solidarity are important to transnational institution-building seems to be that, first, since the mid-1980s, it was an acknowledged fact that in East and Southeast Asia a new economic growth engine had emerged in the form of transnational ethnic Chinese business networks. This acknowledgement revolutionized development theory, and seemed to many a most obvious and imperative object of study. Part of the revolution in thought was the assertion that Chinese culture had contributed to the new growth. Contrary to the Weberian assertions then current, the claim was made, even from the late 1970s onwards, that Confucianism and Chinese culture did not necessarily inhibit economic growth, as had been widely assumed during most of the twentieth century, but that they could stimulate growth efficaciously. It is important to note

that these claims originated from the area itself, and were quickly picked up in the West (Kahn 1978). The gradual re-appreciation during the early 1990s at the latest by the ideologues in Beijing of Confucianism as a dynamic element in Chinese culture, and the immense bureaucratic apparatus that had come into being by that time to expedite economic diplomacy on the basis of the re-enactment of *qiaoxiang* (hometown) ties, posed a challenge not only to those academics who would not be swayed by Weberian claims at all (Dirlik 1996), and who from the beginning had been suspicious of the sudden role assigned to Chinese culture as the engine of economic growth; but also to those who wanted to support these claims, but wished to revise them (Hamilton 1984).

Apart from this revived interest in culture and ethnicity, in the case of the NIEs, the apparent recession of the national state in other parts of the world must have played a role as well. It has been argued that the success of the state Israel to establish itself as a national state, and the ongoing integration of the European Union contributed to the feeling that national state-building would soon be replaced by the building of transnational institutions, and that the 'stateless power' of transnational communities would be translated into the building of 'transnations' (Toeloeayan 1996; Basch et al. 1995). The question to be addressed is how the norms and values which must underlie the formation of those new institutions are to be determined. In view of the increased internal social inequality, plus the inequality among nations which has resulted from the global spread of capitalism since the 1970s, these institutions would have to be grounded in a solid programme for the improvement of social justice. This is what the 'diasporic idealists' quoted above are also aiming for, but the question remains what role do diasporas have to play in the process.

In order to discuss the relationship between diaspora formation and the building of transnational institutions, I shall commence with the definition of institutions by Manuel Castells, who is basing himself partly on Nicole Biggart, an important representative of the institutional economic theory of the 1980s. In this approach, organizational logic, in contrast to market rationality as understood in classical economics, stands central. Biggart argues that organizational logic is, '...a legitimating principle that is elaborated in an array of derivative social

practices. In other words, organisational logics are the ideational bases for institutionalised authority relations' (1992:49). It is, moreover, based on a broadly shared consensus about behaviour, norms and values, in short: culture. Institutions, defined as 'organisations invested with the necessary power to perform some specific tasks on behalf of society as a whole' (Castells 1996:152) are the materialization of this consensus, and are thereby infused with it (cf. also Hsing 1998:8, 183 n. 9). Even though the part played by politics ('power') is explicitly acknowledged in this definition, it seems that politics are usually not considered to be very central to the functioning of institutions (or at least in the analysis of their functioning), a point to which I shall return. Before doing so I shall discuss the links between diaspora and institutions, and try to explain why I feel that diaspora formation may be important in particular historical situations, especially so at times when unstable international political conditions prevail, but that it has a limited function in long-term institution building.

DIASPORAS AND TRANSNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

There are several reasons why the current enthusiasm about the potential of diaspora formation should be restricted. In the first place, focusing now on the Chinese case, *qiaoxiang* ties as transnational linkages are informal and low-profile; this is so because the political conditions which would make their formal institutionalization possible (if that would ever be desirable) have not yet been met. The nation-state is still needed too much, not only for the purpose of maintaining domestic peace, but also because other international actors have to be accommodated. The course of the 1997-8 Asian economic crisis and China's efforts over the past decade to enter the WTO have demonstrably shown that the dialectics of national interest representation and powerful international actors, such as the IMF and the World Bank, the US and Japanese economic lobbies, and the big multinationals are at least as important as the interactions between national states and their diasporas in determining the course of the transnational institutionalization process. In the second place, diasporic ties of the character that we are discussing here originate from conditions which by

themselves are undesirable: the continual ethnicization of cultural minority groups and the unequal distribution of wealth among nations. Outside the Chinese case, the most dynamic diasporas are found among emigrants from less-developed and underdeveloped countries in Latin America, southern Europe and Asia, who reside in the US, Western Europe, and Australia. Their visibility as ethnic minorities, and their continued economic disadvantage is a major stimulant to their elites to engage in contacts with their home governments, who in their turn have an interest to cajole the successful migrants for donations and investment back home (Basch et al. 1995; Douw 1999b; for China, see Li 1996).

Naturally it is to be hoped of course that the fundamental inequality which gives rise to diaspora building will disappear in the course of time and the obvious conclusion is that as soon as these conditions no longer prevail, the *raison-d'être* of diaspora building will have evaporated as well, and institutions will have established that will at the most have absorbed only part of diasporic values and norms. Even given this, our research on the Chinese diaspora suggests that the cultivation of *qiaoxiang* ties does have a positive function in the somewhat subtler sense that it serves to explore the conditions under which the institutionalization of transnational linkages within the Chinese cultural area becomes possible. It will be shown immediately below, how, during the past century, culture has played an initiating role in the building of transnational institutions in the penetration of foreign capital into South China (Douw, Huang and Godley 1999).

The diasporic trajectory of the Siyi businessmen at the beginning of this century is striking in more than one respect (Chung 1999). The Siyi region, a poor mountain area to the west of the Pearl River Delta, produced emigrants who were remarkably successful in the United States, but after the adoption of immigration laws in the 1880s saw themselves forced to return to China, and settle in Hong Kong, where their competence as business people placed them in a competitive position with those already present. Neither the closeness of their hometown nor their obvious Chineseness prevented them from being treated in Hong Kong as a marginal community that was discriminated against, just like any Chinese community might be in its existence abroad. Under the circumstances the Siyi community in Hong Kong was readily prepared to react to the appeal to their *Huaqiao* status by the

Qing government in Beijing, and later by Sun Yat-sen's government in Guangzhou, and built itself a powerful position as economic and political brokers in the Guangzhou-Hong Kong region. Its position became so strong that it kept the Canton government in virtual custody, a situation that came to an end only in 1928, when Chiang Kai-shek rose to power as the head of the Nationalist government in Nanjing. The material backgrounds of diaspora formation, as well as the importance of strong political institutions to its smooth functioning are plainly revealed in this case.

From their early beginnings at the end of the nineteenth century, the initiative of successive Chinese governments has been important in the construction of Chinese transnational linkages. The methods used to involve the Chinese business communities overseas in the economic development of China did not vary much over time, and show striking parallels to similar attempts in other parts of the world. In all these cases, the creation of informal circuits of ethnic-based voluntary associations of businessmen and specialized state institutions exhorted by hometown rhetoric is central to the effort to mobilize entrepreneurs abroad. Formal diplomatic channels shade over into the links established with the expatriate communities abroad, in particular their successful members, through the exchange of honorific titles and economic privilege for representative services in the foreign country and, of course, investment and donations back home (Basch et al. 1995; Douw 1999b; Smith and Guarnizo 1998; Yen 1970). In overseas Chinese studies, the Tan Kah-kee type donations and investment projects are often presented as an example of uniquely Chinese patterns of behaviour. But very similar patterns may be found elsewhere, to name but one instance the waterworks installed in a poor Mexican village, Ticuani, where donations collected for their building extended over a period of more than twenty years (Smith 1998:196-7).

There is no denying the dynamic interaction between the counterparts in these diasporic circuits, the relative autonomy of the various actors, the outspokenness of their various interests, and their potential for economic, social, and political development. Chinese governments since the closing decades of the Qing dynasty have maintained bureaux for the handling of affairs of Chinese residing abroad. Since the 1980s, the creation of a huge bureaucracy of Overseas Chinese Bureaux, coupled

with the united front strategy and related organizations which conveniently served to accommodate the political differences among those who became newly involved in China's social fabric, may be viewed as a conscious revival of old practices which had already shown their usefulness in the past (Cheng and Ngok 1999). The history of the voluntary hometown associations in Singapore since the 1920s, and similarly, of the Hong Kong-based Samshui *Huiguan* show how dynamic and apparently mutually profitable these activities were (Sinn 1997; 1999; Liu 1998; 1999). The re-establishment of religious rituals could be useful for the creation of new transnational ties, as is illustrated by the restoration of the link between segments of a lineage that had been split up between Singapore and Anxi county in southern Fujian (Kuah 1999). This use of religious practices had its predecessors in the pre-war burial industry. The publication and distribution of *qiaokan* (sojourners' newsletters) may be viewed as a conscious effort to create the imagery necessary to binding the emerging transnational communities together. Historical study of the changes in the character of *qiaoxiang* ties remains imperative because Chinese overseas have very differently linked up with their hometowns and the mother country.

There is room for error in interpretation as dynamism is not the same as institution-building. The *Huaqiao* bureaucracies in the Chinese fabric of state are marginal to the Chinese state apparatus as a whole; the voluntary character of the hometown association, and its dependence upon private initiative and funding, means that it runs alongside but is not part of official diplomacy, and is no more than a passing interest to be considered in foreign policies as a whole. More can be said about the constraints involved in this type of interaction. Looking at the matter at the level of individual entrepreneurs and how they establish relations with their labourers and with officialdom, it appears that the cultural norms on which these relationships are built may indeed constitute a resource which facilitates investment. But it is exactly because those who take part in the creation of the new linkages are compelled to think of the broader social context of unequal economic situations in a particularistic manner that there is reason to doubt that these norms are really shared, or that the apparent and vocally expressed sharing of these norms is no more than a claim upon which the creation of new, workable norms, values, and, ultimately, institutions is based (Thireau and Hua

1999; Smart 1999). The constraints involved in these transactions are a universal cause for complaint, and often considered in terms of corruption, theft, or at least inappropriate and extra-economical appropriations. Case studies of Taiwanese managers operating in South China (Schak 1999) and among migrant labourers in South Chinese factories (Huang 1999) confirm that sojourner status covers up cultural diversity, not a homogeneity.

This should lead to the conclusion that cultural diversity is more essential to sojourner discourses than homogeneity (for this point see also Dirlik 1996), even though the latter may be the end result. It is worth noting that there has always been a measure of ambiguity in the appeal to the status of emigrants by Chinese governments, before as well as after the 1950s, when it became official Chinese policy to acknowledge *ius soli* as the basis of citizenship of Chinese residing abroad. The emigrants' status of belonging to the mother country is generally emphasized, which implies his return to his home village and makes him into a typical *qiao* (sojourner), but even so the sojourner is stimulated to stay abroad, because his residence there is most profitable to the 'sending' state. A comparable contemporary case outside the Chinese sphere is the legal support offered by the El Salvadorian government to its expatriates in the US who intended to apply for political asylum there (Mahler 1998:70-1). This kind of ambiguity is so fundamentally inherent in diaspora formation that it precludes the building of stable institutions.

THE INSTITUTIONAL ECONOMICS

The rise of institutional economics, since the mid-1980s, can be looked upon as a reaction to the new life blown into free market thinking during the preceding decade. In the West this assumed its most practical and aggressive shape in the politics of Reaganomics and Thatcherism. The notion, promoted by the institutionalists, that free market institutions are not a universal phenomenon, but are embedded in particular social and institutional structures, helped to soften all too rigid market reform policies, and was also cogent to an understanding of why societies which differed as vastly from Western societies as

Japan, China, and Thailand had achieved such high growth rates (Granovetter 1985; Hamilton, Orru, & Biggart 1997; Castells 1996), and it also promoted the legitimization of their peculiar social and political fabrics.

Looking critically at the approach of the economic institutionalists one should question how stable these social and institutional structures are. Most institutionalists claim an ancient pedigree for the basic structures of specific societies, one which tides these societies over the intrusion of world markets and industrialization. In this approach the Korean *chaebol*, the Japanese *keiretsu*, and the Chinese family firm are grounded in institutions dating back to pre-modern times, if not antiquity (Biggart 1997). Korean patrimonialism, Japanese communitarianism, and the Chinese patrilinear family all date back to pre-industrial times, and are supposed to provide the institutional logic for the adaptation of these societies to the requirements of the present times. Therefore they are considered the prerequisites for the ability of their enterprises to compete in the world market. They do so not by acting as autonomous, 'atomized' units, but as thoroughly networked ones.

It is obvious that an all too rigid classification of societies according to their basic institutional structures easily leads to the reification of the latter, and makes it difficult to lay a finger on the changes that inevitably affect societies and their institutions. One way to avoid this pitfall is to think in terms of repertoires available to specific societies for the institutional grounding of patterns of behaviour and social relations, from which a choice may be made according to current needs (Biggart 1992; Castells, 1996; cf also Thireau & Hua, 1999). Nevertheless, it is remarkable how obstinately institutionalists usually cling to their belief in the power of institutions to maintain themselves through the disruptive workings of war, social strife, and marketization. Whitley, for example, postulates that the globalization of the advanced industrial countries (the US, the major European countries, and Japan) during the post-war period has barely affected the institutional build-up of the nation-states involved (1998).

One source for this obstinacy in my view is the belief that the people involved in these institutions consent to their persistence from the moment they were established. As we have seen, institutionalists