

THE CHINESE OVERSEAS

ROUTLEDGE LIBRARY OF
MODERN CHINA

Edited by
HONG LIU

32

THE CHINESE OVERSEAS

Routledge Library of Modern China

Edited by Hong Liu

Volume IV
Homeland Ties and Agencies of Interaction

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2006
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN UK
Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
270 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group

Editorial material and selection © 2006 Hong Liu; individual
owners retain copyright in their own material

Typeset in Times by Graphicraft Limited, Hong Kong
Printed and bound in Great Britain by TJ International Ltd, Padstow, Cornwall

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or
reproduced or utilized in any form or by any electronic,
mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter
invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any
information storage or retrieval system, without permission in
writing from the publishers.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN 0-415-33858-1 (Set)
ISBN 0-415-33862-X (Volume IV)

Publisher's Note

References within each chapter are as they appear in the original complete work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The publishers would like to thank the following for permission to include their material:

AMS Press for permission to reprint Ta Chen, 'Livelihood,' in idem, *Emigrant Communities in South China: A Study of Overseas Migration and Its Influence* (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1940; reprint: New York: AMS Press, 1978), pp. 58–85.

The Association for Asian Studies for permission to reprint Madeline Y. Hsu, 'Migration and Native Place: *Qiaokan* and the Imagined Community of Taishan County, Guangdong, 1893–1993,' *Journal of Asian Studies* 59, 2 (2000), pp. 307–31.

Taylor & Francis for permission to reprint Li Minghuan, "'To Get Rich Quickly in Europe!' – Reflections on Migration Motivation in Wenzhou," in Frank Pieke and Hein Mallee, eds., *Internal and International Migration: Chinese Perspectives* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999), pp. 181–98.

The University of Toronto Press for permission to reprint Paul J. Bolt, 'Looking to the Diaspora: The Overseas Chinese and China's Economic Development, 1978–1994,' *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 5, 3 (1996), pp. 467–96.

The Association for Asian Studies for permission to reprint Michael R. Godley, 'The Late Ch'ing Courtship of the Chinese in Southeast Asia,' *Journal of Asian Studies* 34, 2 (1975), pp. 361–85.

Cambridge University Press for permission to reprint Yen Ching-Hwang, 'Overseas Chinese Nationalism in Singapore and Malaya 1877–1912,' *Modern Asian Studies* 16, 3 (1982), pp. 397–425. Copyright © Cambridge University Press, reprinted with permission.

Otto Harrassowitz for permission to reprint Wang Gungwu, 'Political Chinese: Their Contribution to Modern Southeast Asian History,' in

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Bernard Grossman, ed., *Southeast Asia in the Modern World* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1972), pp. 115–28.

University of Washington Press for permission to reprint Anthony Reid, 'Entrepreneurial Minorities, Nationalism, and the State,' in D. Chirot and A. Reid, eds., *Essential Outsiders: Chinese and Jews in the Modern Transformation of Southeast Asia and Central Europe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), pp. 33–71.

MIT Press for permission to reprint William A. Callahan, 'Beyond Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism: Diasporic Chinese and Neo-nationalism in China and Thailand,' *International Organization* 57 (Summer 2002), pp. 481–517.

Man-houng Lin for permission to reprint Man-houng Lin, 'Taiwanese Merchants, Overseas Chinese Merchants, and the Japanese Government in the Economic Relations between Taiwan and Japan, 1895–1945,' *Journal of Asia-Pacific Studies* 4 (2002), pp. 3–20.

Cambridge University Press for permission to reprint Stephen Fitzgerald, 'China and the Overseas Chinese: Perceptions and Policies,' *The China Quarterly* 44 (1970), pp. 1–37. Copyright © School of Oriental and African Studies, published by Cambridge University Press, reproduced with permission.

Temple University Press for permission to reprint Lucie Cheng, 'Chinese Americans in the Formation of the Pacific Regional Economy,' in Evelyn Hu-DeHart, ed., *Across the Pacific: Asian Americans and Globalization* (New York: Asia Society; Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999), pp. 61–78. Copyright © 1999 by Temple University Press.

Cambridge University Press for permission to reprint Mette Thunø, 'Reaching Out and Incorporating Chinese Overseas: The Trans-territorial Scope of the PRC by the end of the 20th Century,' *The China Quarterly* 168 (2001), pp. 910–29. Copyright © School of Oriental and African Studies, published by Cambridge University Press, reproduced with permission.

The Centre for Migration Studies for permission to reprint Xiang Biao, 'Emigration from China: A Sending Country Perspective,' *International Migration Review* 41, 3 (2003), pp. 21–46.

Taylor & Francis for permission to reprint Hong Liu, 'New Migrants and the Revival of Overseas Chinese Nationalism,' *Journal of Contemporary China* 14, 43 (May 2005), pp. 291–316.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Disclaimer

The publishers have made every effort to contact authors/copyright holders of works reprinted in *The Chinese Overseas*. This has not been possible in every case, however, and we would welcome correspondence from those individuals/companies whom we have been unable to trace.

CONTENTS

VOLUME IV HOMELAND TIES AND AGENCIES OF INTERACTION

Acknowledgements

vii

PART 13

Qiaoxiang and beyond

1

54 Livelihood

3

TA CHEN

55 Migration and native place: *Qiaokan* and the imagined community of Taishan County, Guangdong, 1893–1993

27

MADELINE Y. HSU

56 “To get rich quickly in Europe!”: reflections on migration motivation in Wenzhou

57

LI MINGHUAN

57 Looking to the diaspora: the overseas Chinese and China’s economic development, 1978–1994

76

PAUL J. BOLT

PART 14

The state, local politics, and overseas Chinese nationalism

105

58 The late Ch’ing courtship of the Chinese in Southeast Asia

107

MICHAEL R. GODLEY

CONTENTS

59 Overseas Chinese nationalism in Singapore and Malaya 1877–1912	137
YEN CHING-HWANG	
60 Political Chinese: their contribution to modern Southeast Asian history	163
WANG GUNGWU	
61 Entrepreneurial minorities, nationalism, and the state	177
ANTHONY REID	
62 Beyond cosmopolitanism and nationalism: diasporic Chinese and neo-nationalism in China and Thailand	212
WILLIAM A. CALLAHAN	
 PART 15	
The ethnic factor and the political economy of diplomacy	251
63 Taiwanese merchants, overseas Chinese merchants, and the Japanese government in the economic relations between Taiwan and Japan, 1895–1945	253
MAN-HOUNG LIN	
64 China and the overseas Chinese: perceptions and policies	274
STEPHEN FITZGERALD	
65 Chinese Americans in the formation of the Pacific regional economy	310
LUCIE CHENG	
 PART 16	
Chinese new migrants at the turn of the century	327
66 Reaching out and incorporating Chinese overseas: the trans-territorial scope of the PRC by the end of the 20th century	329
METTE THUNØ	
67 Emigration from China: a sending country perspective	352
XIANG BIAO	
68 New migrants and the revival of overseas Chinese nationalism	379
HONG LIU	

Part 13

QIAOXIANG AND BEYOND



LIVELIHOOD

Ta Chen

Source: Ta Chen, *Emigrant Communities in South China: A Study of Overseas Migration and Its Influence* (New York: Institute of Pacific Relations, 1940; reprint: New York: AMS Press, 1978), pp. 55–85.

Types of community

At first glance the culture pattern of the region under investigation may seem homogeneous, but the seeming similarity of community life even within the confines of the narrow strip of coastland in Fukien and Kwangtung covers important differences; and these differences almost always can be traced to the diverse character of the peoples' principal occupations. Often, it would be difficult to point with certainty to any particular local advantage for this rather than that source of livelihood. Even an adventitious start of an industry—such, for example, as the introduction of a style of embroidery by a mission school—or a successful experiment with a new crop or a new method on the part of a single individual or family, may produce innovations which seem to have little relation to any important general factor in the life of the community. The explanation, as in natural evolution, is that conditions happen to be favourable to the particular development in that place and at that time, so that the pioneer at once finds imitators, and a new element is added to the pattern of the community's livelihood.

Underlying this process is, of course, the assumption that local resources, whether material or social, are rich enough to permit of variation, that the skills with which individuals exploit their opportunities are complex enough to permit of experiment and invention and that the economic structure of the community as a whole is flexible enough to permit considerable substitutions of new forms of livelihood for customary ones. These conditions unquestionably exist in the region under survey. However severe the struggle for existence, the culture is so highly developed as to make possible a circular current between changes in the pattern of livelihood, which is primarily an economic phenomenon, and changes in the mode of living, which is primarily a social one.

The mode of living, then, is influenced on the economic side by the income which the people derive from their various occupations, and on the social side by the nature of these occupations; and both influences are basic. In the present study, three types of community are under investigation, each with a particular pattern of livelihood conditioned by the main source of income on which the majority of the inhabitants depend. Naturally, our interest will mainly centre on the emigrant communities; but in order to throw their characteristics into greater relief, comparative data will be introduced where necessary from non-emigrant communities in the vicinity and, to a lesser extent, from Chinese communities overseas.

The non-emigrant community. About sixty *li* (35 km.) to the northwest of emigrant community Z lies our non-emigrant community. Judged from the natural and socio-economic facts, the non-emigrant community may be considered a typical South Chinese farming village. The principal occupation is the cultivation of rice. This is supplemented by many subsidiary occupations, including poultry raising and fruit growing. After the harvest, men and women of the poorer classes pick fuel and burn charcoal in the mountains, for sale in the village market. This simple pattern of livelihood, which is dominated by agriculture, may be duplicated indefinitely in other parts of rural China and needs no elaborate analysis.

The emigrant community. Here the majority of the inhabitants depend for their living in part on remittances that come from members of the family who are abroad. As will presently be shown, the people in the emigrant community have a variety of occupations, but these do not yield them a sufficient income to maintain the present level of their living. To quote an experienced physician with Western training who has for many years resided in such a community:

The children of well-to-do emigrant families are well fed and clothed. They are easy-going and usually without a definite occupation. If by mischance the family's business in the Nan Yang should go bankrupt, these people may be obliged to support themselves by begging!

This statement is rather exaggerated, but it reflects the principal variant in the pattern of livelihood in the emigrant community, as further described below. There are, of course, also families in the emigrant community which have no sons abroad. In these families the pattern of livelihood is by and large the same as that found in the non-emigrant community.

The overseas Chinese community. A common fact, often overlooked by writers on immigration problems, is that those who emigrate usually do so to improve their economic status. They do not simply transplant from the home country to another the accustomed standard of living of their class with all that it implies in tastes and aspirations, but are definitely intent on

advancing to a higher status. To the South Chinese emigrant the surest way of reaching this goal normally is through trade, and trade thus becomes the centre of his life activities. Some young emigrants may be penniless when they leave home and must start life abroad as labourers. They tend to save as much as possible of the money they earn and in this way hope to ascend the social ladder. Almost invariably they look forward to owning a business some day on the main street of a commercial city. Although not all realize this ambition, merchants usually constitute the most important class of any Chinese community in the Nan Yang, and their economic influence on other classes, both in the place of their residence and in the home village, is admittedly preponderant. In Netherlands East India, business men of all classes form the largest occupational group in the Chinese working population; according to the 1930 census, it includes 36.6 per cent of the total—171,979 among 469,935 usefully employed.

From this appears the great economic importance of the Chinese in the general social upbuilding of the Netherlands Indies, as a link between the small consumer of the hinterland and the small producer in remote regions on the one hand, and the foreign trade of the country on the other. In the industrial occupations the Chinese form the middle class, although among them—especially those born elsewhere—many ordinary labourers are also to be found. In all, 93,988 Chinese are engaged in industrial pursuits.¹

On a visit to Java in 1935 the writer was one day told by a Peranakan friend, a business man of outstanding experience:

The Chinese here (i.e. both Singkehs and Peranakans) usually occupy the intermediary position in both import and export business. Perhaps nine-tenths of the adult male Chinese in Java are engaged in commerce. Formerly, all the retail trade was in their hands. Since the boycott of Japanese goods in China, Japanese retailers are beginning to come in here as competitors.

Similar statements are frequently heard and roughly correspond to the truth. If one may generalize from many observations, it would seem that a successful emigrant usually starts his career at scratch and becomes a merchant of at least moderate means in his old age. He may begin as a labourer or as apprentice in a retail store if he is poor, or he may start as a hawker if he has some small savings to begin with. With additional savings, he may then set up a stall on a side street. Then he rents a store. Each time he opens a new store, it is in a slightly better position than the last. Finally, he establishes a store in the business centre of a city and becomes recognized as a prominent merchant. As a typical case, the life story may here be given of

a successful Chinese merchant in the Philippines, as told ten years ago to a student in the commerce department of the national university:

I came to the Philippines in 1901, when I was fifteen years of age. I entered a drygoods store in R. where I worked as a "newcomer". I used to get up at five o'clock, then immediately went to the kitchen to heat some water which was to serve the master for his morning wash. Then I prepared and served him tea. After that I swept the floor, dusted the cases, and opened the store at six o'clock. My companions and I had to take our meals by turns. Being an employee of less importance, I had to take my meals at the second or third sitting, when the soup and rice were cold and sometimes the dishes were almost empty. We had hardly enough food or soup to eat with the cold rice which was as hard to swallow as iron bullets. At the store we had to attend to every minor matter, such as wrapping the goods, delivery and checking goods sold or purchased, and packing goods for shipment, besides the usual routine duties of cleaning and sweeping. In spite of my youth, I often had to carry ten or fifteen heavy pieces of cloth on my shoulder to make a delivery. Sometimes I had to walk many streets to do this.

Among other things, I learned to sell, and gradually I began to get acquainted with our customers, with creditors and others who came to our store. I had almost no chance to learn English or Spanish. I only knew enough "Chinese tagalog" which I learned from some of the salesmen whom I served and treated well. My salary was advanced from the zero point to five pesos a month after the first year, to ten pesos after the second year, and to fifteen after the third. Of course, I could get along with so small a salary because I had practically no expenses, as the employer supplied food, lodging, laundry, haircuts, and practically everything else that was needed. The only expense I had was that of sending money to my parents in China. I could have no treats and could attend no shows or any sort of amusement. I was practically shut off from the outer world. It was nothing but work, and again work. We did not have Sundays off or holidays or even "Fourth of July." The only holiday in the whole year was Chinese New Year, which we enjoyed immensely.

After the fourth year, I was promoted to the position of salesman, and my salary was increased to twenty-five pesos a month. I began to make more sales and gradually made more acquaintances. I learned how to speak more Tagalog and even a very little Spanish. I learned how to use the abacus. Later I was promoted to the position of buyer. My employer began to send me to the wholesale houses and large firms where I got into contact with big

merchants and other prominent business men. From them, every day I learned more about business and its methods and tricks. With the better salary I now received, I was able to accumulate a reserve.

With this reserve I invested a thousand pesos in partnership with a relative who had a business in Calle Tabora where many small stores are located. However, I did not give up my job because I could not be sure of the success of our new enterprise. My partner took charge of the new store. Everything we used here was very simple. Our first set of stands consisted of petroleum crates; and we found wooden cases a very good thing for making a counter. We did not have a desk either. In other words, we did not have any equipment, only merchandise for sale. In this way we ran our business for two years, and we found it to be successful. Of course, with the profits we gradually replaced our "furniture" until at the end of the sixth year we had a complete store equipment.

At the beginning of our business we employed few persons, in order to keep down our expenses and to keep selling costs as low as possible. Our men had to work twelve or fourteen hours a day. With these economies, the diligence of our employees, and above all the credit which we were able to secure through a reputation for honesty and keeping of promises, we soon jumped from our original capital investment of two thousand pesos to a big store which at present is worth about a hundred thousand pesos. Among the reasons for this success, I would place first in importance honesty.

With the increased goodwill and the expansion of our business, we then looked for other opportunities of development. First we found a better location to make possible the expansion of our business. This is the store in R. which we still have. With new equipment, we were able to do a nice turnover. We employed more persons and greatly increased our stock. Our stock now is always complete. Our trade from that time on increased almost from day to day until, when we took our last balance sheet last year, we found that our net worth was about a million.²

As to the question, how and why the Chinese in the Nan Yang become influential in commerce, a number of reasons have been suggested: that the Chinese have business acumen "by nature", that from early boyhood they receive fundamental training in business, that the social environment in the Nan Yang is in their favour. As other factors will be discussed below we shall consider here a little more fully that of the favourable social environment.

Probably the most important element in this situation is that the Chinese were the first, usually, to act as middlemen in the Nan Yang, and to enlarge

the areas within which the native people—especially those in the smaller towns and villages of the hinterland—could buy and sell. Throughout the Nan Yang they have for many years occupied the liaison position between European and native in their economic dealings. The Chinese probably were from the start well adapted to play this role, but a fact which is often overlooked is that, debarred from other economic opportunities, they have been more or less forced into the channel of commerce. Under some existing laws, and in some places under a social usage reinforced by public opinion, Chinese are to this day debarred in parts of the Nan Yang region from cultivating land except under restricted conditions. Thus, the Agrarian Law of 1870 in Netherlands India protects the Adat, i.e. customary, right in land on the part of Indonesians by reserving for them the privilege of ownership, and by allowing non-Indonesians only to lease land for use on certain terms. As few European farmers desire to leave the temperate zone to become owning farmers in the tropics,³ and as the Chinese have always constituted the great majority of Oriental foreigners, they have been more seriously affected by this law than any other non-Indonesians. Similarly, in Indo-China, "red" land cannot be alienated to foreigners; consequently few of the Chinese in the colony have become important entrepreneurs of rubber plantations. With the exception of pepper, rice, and vegetable growing, chiefly in Cambodia and Cochin-China, the Chinese there have practically no prospects of agricultural undertakings of any great economic significance.⁴

Moreover, the Chinese in the Nan Yang suffer under yet another civil disability. To this day, Chinese residents in British Malaya are not permitted to take Civil Service examinations and consequently can hold no advanced position with pay under the colonial government. Honorary positions of high rank are occasionally offered to distinguished Chinese in the colony, but the humble worker cannot rise higher than the position of clerk.

Thus, with two great avenues of employment, agriculture and public service, closed to them, it is natural that the enterprising elements in the Chinese communities of the Nan Yang have flocked to commerce as the most promising means of economic advance.

Of special importance for the subject of our study is the fact that these commercial activities are not confined to the internal trade of the Nan Yang but include considerable trade with China. In so far as that trade merely supplies Chinese residents with commodities from their home country it means little more than a natural extension of the market for the products of South China: the same people who would have consumed these goods at home, had they not emigrated, now consume them abroad. Better labour opportunities in the Nan Yang in this way make certain industries at home more profitable. But if the consumers in the Nan Yang are non-Chinese the trade confers even greater benefit on China; not only is the extension of the market for Chinese commodities even more substantially increased,

but the Chinese merchants also reap, and the home community benefits from, the profit on an international trade including both Chinese and foreign products. His key position as the middleman can be used by the Chinese merchant to deflect purchases from other countries to China, and even to initiate a boycott like the recent one against Japanese imports.

According to the reports of the China Maritime Customs, China's more important exports to the countries of the Nan Yang include, among other commodities, fresh and cold-storage eggs, cured eggs, ham, lard, salted vegetables, dried fish, green peas, red peas, wheat flour, bean curd, fresh and dried fruit (lichee, lungnan, pears), cassia lignea, China root, ginseng, liquorice, rhubarb, joss paper. China's chief imports from the Nan Yang include flax, ramie, hemp, rope, cord, gunny bags, tin in ingots and slabs, seaweed, agar-agar, awabi, Bicho de Mar, Compoy, cuttle fish, shark's fin, coffee, rice, cardamoms, betel-nut, pepper, sugar, tobacco, petroleum, hardwood, sandal wood, rattan ware, and rubber.

People's livelihood in the non-emigrant community

After the general picture given on previous pages of the main differences in the pattern of livelihood found in the emigrant and non-emigrant sections of South China and in the Chinese communities of the Nan Yang, we now proceed to a closer examination of the differences found through the more systematic study of particular communities in Kwangtung and Fukien as between the economics of the emigrant and of the non-emigrant communities.

The non-emigrant community chosen for this study consists of two adjoining villages (M and N), with a total estimated population of 4,309 persons in 725 families. The majority of the adult males and females are gainfully employed.

Principal occupations

Rice cultivation. Of the 725 families, 650 are engaged in growing rice. One hundred and thirty of these own the land they occupy, 280 own part of it, and 240 rent all the land they use. Crop sharing is the most widespread form of tenancy: the crop is usually divided equally between owner and tenant at harvest time. In normal years, village N reaps a total of about ten thousand *piculs* (605 tons) of grain, from which four or five thousand *piculs* of rice may be milled. This local product meets the need for local consumption in the village for about nine months in the year; the staple food for the remaining three months must be found elsewhere.

The farm holdings vary in size: a poor family occupies three or four *mow*, a middle-class family from eight to ten, and a well-to-do family about fifteen (1.15 hectares). Chiefly because of variations in location and fertility of soil,