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The changing landscape of *qiaoxiang*

Yow Cheun Hoe



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Guangdong and Chinese Diaspora

China's rapid economic growth has drawn attention to the Chinese diasporic communities and the multiple networks that link Chinese individuals and organizations throughout the world. Ethnic Chinese have done very well economically, and the role of the Chinese Diaspora in China's economic success has created a myth that their relations with China is natural and primordial, and that regardless of their base outside China and generation of migration, the Chinese Diaspora are inclined to participate enthusiastically in China's social and economic agendas.

This book seeks to dispel such a myth. By focusing on Guangdong, the largest ancestral and native homeland, it argues that not all Chinese diasporic communities are the same in terms of mentality and orientation, and that their connections to the ancestral homeland vary from one community to another. Taking the two Cantonese-speaking localities of Panyu and Xinyi, Yow Cheun Hoe examines the hierarchy of power and politics of these two localities in terms of their diasporic kinsfolk in Singapore and Malaysia, in comparison with their counterparts in North America and Hong Kong. The book reveals that, particularly in China's reform era since 1978, the arguably primordial sentiment and kinship are less than crucial in determining the content and magnitude of linkages between China and the overseas Chinese. Rather, it suggests that since 1978 business calculation and economic rationale are some of the key motivating factors in determining the destination and degree of diasporic engagement.

Examining various forms of Chinese diasporic engagement with China, this book will appeal to students and scholars of Chinese Diaspora, Chinese culture and society, Southeast Asian culture and society and ethnicity.

Yow Cheun Hoe is Assistant Professor at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

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This book is about homelands in Guangdong, where many Chinese diaspora trace their kinship and ancestral linkages. It is largely based on research I carried out for my doctoral dissertation at the East Asian Institute, National University of Singapore, from 1999 to 2002. In retrospect, the institute was more than a learning station for me. A home in all senses of the word, the institute was where I stayed until late at night almost every day, mingling with foreign researchers and students. It was also at this same institute that I had the best of academic guidance. My most heartfelt thanks go to my main supervisor, Prof. Wang Gungwu, whose supreme scholarship and care guided me through my three years of doctoral research. My appreciation also goes to my two other supervisors on the dissertation committee, Prof. Zheng Yongnian, now the director of East Asian Institute, and Prof. Liu Hong, currently the chair of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Nanyang Technological University.

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Yow Cheun Hoe
Singapore

Notes on names, translations, and currencies

Chinese terms and words are rendered in *Hanyu pinyin*, with brief translations where possible. There are, however, two exceptions. First, some Chinese personal names are retained in the form more commonly and widely used; Sun Yatsen, for instance, is used instead of Sun Zhongshan. Second, Chinese names, of persons, organizations, and institutions, will only be rendered in the form normally adopted in the Chinese diasporic communities when the sources do not provide the corresponding Chinese characters and hence the names in *Hanyu pinyin* cannot be established. Chinese characters for the Chinese terms and names, where possible and necessary, are provided in Glossary.

All currency references are to renminbi (RMB), Hong Kong dollar (HK\$), US dollar (US\$), Singapore dollar (S\$), and Malaysian ringgit (MR), according to how they appear in the primary and secondary sources without conversion.

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