Crossing Seas

Editors: Henry Yu (University of British Columbia) and Elizabeth Sinn (University of Hong Kong)

The Crossing Seas series brings together books that investigate Chinese migration from the migrants' perspective. As migrants travelled from one destination to another throughout their lifetime, they created and maintained layers of different networks. Along the way these migrants also dispersed, recreated, and adapted their cultural practices. To study these different networks, the series publishes books in disciplines such as history, women's studies, geography, cultural anthropology, and archaeology and prominently features publications informed by interdisciplinary approaches that focus on multiple aspects of the migration processes.

Returning Home with Glory

Chinese Villagers around the Pacific, 1849 to 1949

Michael Williams

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Front cover images:

Top: The Chung Kok village community hall in Zhongshan County was originally built in 1913 as a medical clinic with money from those villagers earning an income around the Pacific. It acquired its Red star in the 1950s but has since been remodelled and is now used to house a display of the history of the village and district. Photo by Michael Williams in 1999.

Below: The family of Chang Yet (seated to the right) on one of his returns home after working in rural Australia. His son Chang Gar Lock (standing smiling) accompanied him back to Australia where he became a prominent citizen. Photo taken in 1935.

Background: Place-name calligraphy taken from the donors' list on the Chung Kok community hall; the three Pacific ports most favoured by the people of the Long Du district were Honolulu (literally "Sandalwood Mountain"); San Francisco ("First Port of America"), and Sydney (a phonetic rendition). Photo by Michael Williams in 2015.

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Foreword

For much of the history of scholarly attention on the Chinese migrants who went outwards from the coasts of Guangdong and Fujian over the last 500 years, the focus has been on what happened in the places they went. What they did to make money, how they created businesses, how they built railways and roads and mined and tilled the earth for wealth, as well as what was done to them in terms of anti-Chinese legislation and discrimination—these were the dominant subjects of scholarship. The scholarship during the twentieth century tended to be bounded by the geographical containers that shaped the scholar's interest—national boundaries around new settler nations such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, or colonies and post-colonial nations such as the Dutch Indies and Indonesia, or French Indochina and Vietnam, or the Philippines during and after Spanish colonial rule. What happened to the Chinese migrants in the places they went, how they became targets for exclusion and overcame discrimination, or tools and brokers for colonial rule, or built enclaves and hybrid societies within other societies—the questions for research generally focused on the spaces at the end of journeys outward. When the places of origin in China were considered, the curiosity usually served to answer questions about what had driven them to leave and what they left behind.

This book, as well as the series that it inaugurates, tries to take a different approach: we are concerned with the journeys themselves, in multiple directions and at different times, between multiple locations, and what these journeys meant to the migrants as they crossed the seas. We want to know what kinds of ideas and goods these people moved between the places they travelled, and how they maintained relationships and networks across space and time. Rather than assuming that where a migrant stopped would define their identity and belonging, we seek to understand the relationships between where they had been and where they might go, and whom they remained connected to in other places as they kept moving. We want to see the world from the perspectives of the migrants as migrants, highly mobile and expansive in their vision of the world and its possibilities. If there were constraints on their mobility created by governments trying to stop them or contain

them, they themselves often imagined a world bounded not by the borders erected against them, but shaped by ambitions that seemed unbounded for themselves and for the families and the communities that they built. They held a boundless belief in the potential that in moving themselves, and in moving the objects they found in one place to another, they could make their lives and those of their families better.

That the families and relationships they made could be dispersed across vast distances—including in villages in China—and that they could endure through generation after generation, reflect the persistent power of a set of practices that overcame the challenges of space and time. We hope that this book, in its attention to how bonds of trust and obligation and reciprocity could be created across the seas and across time, is the fitting start to a series of conversations about what we can learn from understanding Chinese migration in all of the places that these migrants connected.

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1
Destination *Qiaoxiang*

A village community hall

In a modest village in southern China, some 10 km to the west of the modern city of Zhongshan (中山市), itself just 70 km west across the Pearl River Delta from Hong Kong, sits a small community hall built in 1913. Known as Chung Kok in the local dialect and Xiangjiao (象角) in Mandarin, the still traditional-looking village lies on the edge of Zhongshan City's fast-moving urban sprawl. Nevertheless, just to the north of the village, across the nearby Shijiao (獅滘) River, the land is still largely used for growing things and a patchwork of green fields can be seen stretching across the flat landscape until the Pearl River itself is reached.

The Chung Kok side of this local river, however, is hilly, less fertile, part of a ridge of land running back to the old city of Shekki (石岐), now Zhongshan City. It was on the slope above their river that the villagers of Chung Kok erected their new community hall in the second year of the republic. The founding purpose of this community endeavour was to serve as a place for dispensing medicines to the people of Chung Kok village, and since that time the hall has served many purposes. The current purpose of the old hall is as an exhibition space for a display on the history of the village and its region.

While this local, contemporary interest in Chung Kok's history comes with a focus on how deep into China's past that history goes, the building itself is testimony to the fact that this is a history that extends far beyond the Pearl River Delta in which Chung Kok lies, far beyond either Shekki, Hong Kong, or even the provincial capital Guangzhou (廣州, Canton). For in 1913, when the community leaders of the then 11,000-strong village were erecting their hall in order to improve the health of their fellow residents, they were able to draw upon the resources of fellow villagers living and earning in destinations as far afield as Port Darwin and Atherton in northern Australia, Sydney and Melbourne further south, and Hawaii and San Francisco across the Pacific Ocean.

We know this because, at its erection in 1913, the right side of the Chung Kok community hall had two large slabs of black slate embedded into it. Beautifully carved into the first is a list of 222 donors, recorded not only by name but grouped

according to where they were when they donated, along with the amount of their donations recorded in the currency of that place. Thus we have, in the order inscribed, the destinations: San Francisco (literally, First Port of the Land of the Flowery Flag)—25, Port Darwin—24, Sydney—63, West Australia—13, Melbourne—32, Atherton—20, Cairns—13, Brisbane—6, and Honolulu (literally, Sandalwood Mountains)—26.

The second slate slab on the hall's side lists more names without locations (presumably those donors living in the village itself), alongside an account of the plans and intentions that resulted in the building of Chung Kok's fine new community hall. This is an account that ends with the hope that "fellow people will co-operate in maintaining generous donations and support and assist together to promote and maintain honour for the future".

How and why this modest Pearl River Delta village was able to make good on this hope by drawing on resources from around the Pacific to assist it in its modernization is a fundamental question for this study. It is a question that leads back to the establishment of Hong Kong in the 1840s, through the first Californian and Victorian gold rushes of the 1850s, as well as forward into the twentieth century at least as far as the establishment of a new form of government in China in 1949.

This investigation branches into the eighty or so villages of the Long Du (隆都) district of which Chung Kok is a part, villages that also sent numerous of their fellows to far-off destinations. This district of Long Du will constitute a case study whereby the origins and development of the links between families in villages such as Chung Kok and the destinations of Sydney, Hawaii, and San Francisco will be closely investigated. In the process, further questions concerning motivations, mechanisms of travel, the establishment and evolution of links around the Pacific over generations, the choices people had and made, and definitions of success and failure are all explored.

The diaspora business and other transnationalisms

For many, a study such as that embarked on here fits easily or even necessarily into concepts such as diaspora and transnationalism. Certainly, the need to avoid squeezing such a mobile history into national confines would suggest so. However, it will be argued that such notions themselves rely too heavily on nation-state concepts and that it is by tracing origins back to what was important to those who first set out—the family, the home villages, the *qiaoxiang* (僑鄉)—that a more foundational approach can be gained that offers greater opportunities for understanding than the descriptive analyses of transnationalism or even diaspora.[1]

1. For a more detailed argument on this, see Chapter 2, "The Border-Guard View", 15–34. See also page 14, for a discussion on the definition of *qiaoxiang*; for now, read "home villages/districts".

That this history is a transnational one is, on the most basic descriptive level, obvious. Yet also obvious is that, over the period, a group of British colonies became a federation, and an imperial state became a republic, evolving nation-state factors that played only a limited role in the changes influencing the home villages. Why privilege evolving states in a history where choices were influenced but not controlled by these states, choices usually made in spite of not because of their laws and prejudices? Better perhaps to look elsewhere. Here, it is proposed to begin more fundamentally with the family and the village and see where this leads. The result may well be something that looks like a diaspora or a transnational flow, but the journey will have moved through other perspectives and other possibilities that may be of use in future studies.

This work is a single case study with the narrow focus that this implies. As such, its theoretical underpinnings are necessarily unsophisticated until future comparisons with similar case studies are made. Instead, this research relies on detailed fieldwork, including oral histories and local archives, to build up a picture of a single district of some eighty villages, within a single county, within the Pearl River Delta region of southern China. From this study, a number of themes of significance are developed that may provide foundational elements of significance to transnational and diaspora studies of the overseas Chinese and perhaps other groups as well.

By adopting a case-study approach and in-depth investigation of a single district, motivations, choices, origins, representativeness, and even the varying perspectives through which such seemingly clear concepts as success and failure are evaluated can be illuminated. Here, the geographical range adopted is Long Du district and the three Pacific Ports to which so many travelled from this *qiaoxiang*. Along with the reasons for selecting Long Du, it is also necessary to discuss the reasons for adopting such terms as *huaqiao* (華僑) and *qiaoxiang*, the time period—1849 to 1949—to be investigated, and the sources utilized.

Selecting a *qiaoxiang*

In order to achieve a comprehensive *qiaoxiang* perspective, a single *qiaoxiang* has been chosen, that of the Pearl River Delta county of Zhongshan and, within this, the district of Long Du.[2] By focusing on the limited scope of one *qiaoxiang*, the aim is to provide depth and sufficiently detailed analysis to allow a range of participants to be embraced. Through this approach, those often neglected, such as women in the villages, those who returned permanently, and those who did not attain or aspire to

2. Zhongshan County, or *xian* (縣), was known as Xiangshan (香山) until 1925. Long Du district has also undergone many name changes with the present-day township of Shaxi (沙溪鎮) covering much of the Long Du area. To avoid confusion, Zhongshan and Long Du will be the terms used throughout this book. For a complete list of these changes for Long Du from 1152 to 1986, see Zhongshanshi Shaxizhen Renmin Zhengfu bian 中山市沙溪鎮人民政府編, *Shaxizhen zhi* 沙溪鎮志 [Shaxi town gazetteer] (Zhongshanshi: Huacheng chubanshe, 中山市：花城出版社 ， 1999), 56. *Xian* is usually translated as "county" but can also be translated as "district". Here, *county* is used and *district* (*zhen* 鎮) only for an area within a county.

attain merchant status can be more readily included. A single *qiaoxiang* also enables time-consuming oral history to be utilized effectively. In keeping with the logic of a *qiaoxiang* perspective, it follows that Sydney, San Francisco, and Honolulu and their respective hinterlands are the main destinations to be investigated, just as they were the main destinations for the people of Zhongshan and Long Du between 1849 and 1949.[3]

Long Du has many interesting features that make it a suitable choice for in-depth research into a *qiaoxiang*. Long Du is a distinct and easily identifiable *qiaoxiang*. The people of this area speak a dialect separate from the surrounding Cantonese speakers of most of Zhongshan and usually formed their own distinct organizations in the destinations. Long Du was also a *qiaoxiang* that sent a high proportion of its people to the destinations and whose records and oral testimony can therefore be easily compared to records in the destinations. Records in the immigration files of Australia and the United States, for example, regularly mention Long Du villages such as Long Tou Wan (龍頭環) and Shen Ming Ting (申明亭).

While Pacific destinations are the focus of this study, in reality the majority of travellers from Guangdong or Fujian provinces went to Nanyang (南洋, Southeast Asia). In comparison, the role of Australia and the United States (including Hawaii) in the movement of people from the Pearl River Delta was, in terms of numbers, relatively minor. Chinese people in Australia were overall no more than 5% of the total movement, and the United States with Hawaii not more than 15%.[4] However, figures at the provincial level can be misleading; Australia's proportion of a county such as Zhongshan may have been over 15% and, within Long Du and villages within this district, much higher. Zhongshan was the county of origin for nearly 80% of Hawaii's Chinese and Long Du provided around 25% of these.[5] At times, from 20% to 40% of Sydney's Chinese population were from Zhongshan, with most of these from Long Du. Zhongshan people in San Francisco ranged from over 30% to 10% of the total Chinese population over the period under examination, with Long Du people also a significant proportion of these.[6] Such figures make the *qiaoxiang* of Zhongshan and Long Du sufficiently prominent players to make their study a worthwhile contribution to this overall history.

Finally, Zhongshan is not Taishan (台山) County or even part of the Siyi (四邑) group of Pearl River Delta counties.[7] This additional reason for focusing on

3. Pacific destinations such as Peru, Canada, and Mexico were also of major significance to people of Zhongshan; by the 1920s, there were probably many more Zhongshan people in Peru than in the United States and Australia combined. However, these destinations did not have continuous links from the mid-nineteenth century and all were of much less significance for Long Du people. Comparative studies involving these destinations would be of great value.
4. Lynn Pan, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Chinese Overseas* (London: Curzon Press, 1999), Table 2.2, 62, and Zhu Guohong, "A Historical Demography of Chinese Migration", *Social Sciences in China*, No. 4 (Winter 1991): 57–84.
5. Based on figures in *Chinese of Hawaii* (Honolulu: Overseas Penman Club, 1929).
6. See Table 3.2: *Qiaoxiang* distribution as percentage of total *huaqiao*, 39.
7. See Map 3.2: Pearl River Delta counties, 38.

Zhongshan and Long Du is due to the relative abundance of studies on people from the Siyi and Taishan in particular.[8] This abundance has been because people from these counties predominate in the United States, especially California. The people of Zhongshan County and Long Du district, while a relatively small *qiaoxiang* group in the United States, are not insignificant, and their presence in larger proportions in Hawaii and Sydney make them an excellent choice for "trans-Pacific" research.

Definitions

Before investigation of the history and pattern of *qiaoxiang* connections can proceed, it is necessary to define a number of terms used. First, who was it that did the moving? A *qiaoxiang* perspective suggests that generalizations about "the Chinese" should not be made too freely. Among people from ten or so counties (out of ninety), from a single province (out of eighteen), and for whom dialect, village, and family groupings were considered of prime importance, how accurate or useful is a label such as "Chinese"? A Chinese word for those that travel and live outside their native place is *huaqiao* in Mandarin or *wah kiu* in Cantonese. *Huaqiao*, or "Chinese who reside away from home", is the word that most closely corresponds to the English phrase "overseas Chinese".[9]

Another term, one that people used to refer to themselves, was simply *lü* (旅), to travel or be a traveller. This term, with its implications of temporary absence from home, was used to describe oneself, as in "a Sydney traveller", or to describe others, as in "Luson traveller".[10] *Lü* was also used to describe the places to which people went, as in "traveller's residences", to head a list of overseas locations, and in titles of associations as in "Sydney Merchant Travellers Association".[11] However, to use the word *traveller* to refer to people living for decades in one place may, at

8. For example, Madeline Hsu, *Dreaming of Gold, Dreaming of Home: Transnationalism and Migration between the United States and South China, 1882–1943* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000); Woon Yuen-Fong, "An Emigrant Community in the Ssu-yi Area, Southeastern China, 1885–1945: A Study in Social Change", *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1984): 273–306; Yu Renqiu, "Chinese American Contributions to the Educational Development of Toisan 1910–1940", *Amerasia Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (1983): 47–72; Lucie Cheng and Liu Yuzun, "Chinese Emigration, the Sunning Railway and the Development of Toisan", *Amerasia Journal* Vol. 9, No. 1 (1982): 33–39. These do not include studies based on Taishan sources that simply refer to them without distinction as "overseas Chinese".

9. Huang Chongyan 黃重言, "Yanjiu huaqiaoshi shang de jidian yijian" 研究華僑史上的幾點意見 [A few comments about researching overseas Chinese history], *Huaqiao lunwen shi* 華僑論文史 [Overseas Chinese history thesis], No. 1 (April 1982): 24–28. Both *huaqiao* and *overseas Chinese* have a variety of meanings with historical and political implications. The best discussion of the general history of the term *huaqiao*, its political implications, and its changing meanings is by Wang Gungwu, "South China Perspectives on Overseas Chinese", *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, No. 13 (1984): 69–84. Also Stephanie Po-yin Chung, "Mobilization Politics: The Case of Siyi Businessmen in Hong Kong, 1809–1928", in *Qiaoxiang Ties: Interdisciplinary Approaches to 'Cultural Capitalism' in South China*, ed. Leo Douw, Huang Cen, and Michael Godley (London: Kegan Paul, 1999), 46–47.

10. *Tung Wah News* 東華新報, 19 July 1899, 2 and Glick Archive, Card file: notes of B. C. Lee, n.d. (c. 1930).

11. *Long Du Qiao Bao* 隆都僑報 [Long Du overseas Chinese news], No. 4, May 1947, 15 and Tan Renjie 譚仁杰, "Guo Shun zhuanlüe" 郭順傳略 [A brief biography of Guo Shun], *Zhongshan wenshi* 24 (1992): 88.

least in English, be stretching the point a little. Instead, *huaqiao* is used in its literal meaning, without regard for its historical and/or political usage, to refer to people of Chinese origin, largely from the Pearl River Delta, who moved to overseas destinations in the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries.[12]

A feature of Australia and the United States is that they are and consider themselves to be "immigrant" societies. People who step onto their shores are described as "migrants" and most activities associated with their presence are perceived in these terms, including those of Chinese people. The assumption in this work, that there was an intention to return to the *qiaoxiang*, does not easily fit within this traditional migrant/settler framework.[13] These considerations make the use of the term *migration* and its associated terms *immigration* and *emigration* problematic. These terms often carry with them images derived from European migration, of family movement, permanent settlement, assimilation, and nation-building. To use the same terms to discuss people not necessarily involved in any of these things is to begin with too many assumptions.

People who came from south China were, however, not the only ones to return to their places of origin after a period of time in the United States or Australia. At the same time, many *huaqiao* from the earliest period did settle permanently in the destinations. Nevertheless, the intention of the majority of people, it will be seen, when departing their Pearl River Delta villages, was permanently to return at some point. While it is difficult and perhaps pedantic not to use the term *migration* when discussing large-scale movements of people, here it will be used only as an equivalent to movement; in general, the term *movement* is preferred. The terms *immigration* and *emigration* will not be used at all.

Problems associated with the use of nation-state concepts, raised earlier, include, as one researcher has stated, the "inability to go beyond nationalist concepts".[14] In an attempt to go beyond these concepts and in keeping with the *qiaoxiang* perspective, ports and their hinterlands will be the main conceptual focus in dealing with the Pacific destinations. The period 1849 to 1949 was dominated by ships and ports; it was to the *bu* (埠, port), or *fow* in Cantonese, that the *huaqiao* travelled. All eight of the destinations listed on the Chung Kok community hall, for example, are *fow*, including the entire state of West Australia and the landlocked town of Atherton.[15] The term *Pacific Ports* is used to refer to the three main destination ports and their hinterlands of the Long Du *huaqiao*: Honolulu (檀香山, *Tanxiangshan*) and the

12. An objection to a literal use of *huaqiao* is the political overtones it carries due to its use by the Nationalist government of China. However, this could also be said of the term *overseas Chinese*.
13. The validity of this framework has been challenged; see, for example, Dirk Hoerder and Leslie Page Moch, eds., *European Migrants: Global and Local Perspectives* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996).
14. Adam McKeown, "Chinese Migrants among Ghosts: Chicago, Peru and Hawaii in the Early Twentieth Century" (PhD thesis, University of Chicago, 1997), 9.
15. Other examples are Samfow (三埠, No. 3 Port or Sacramento) and even Wahfow (華埠, Chinatown). Modern Mandarin defines *bu* as "port", but Cantonese, certainly in the nineteenth century, defined *fow* more broadly as "mart" or "place".

Hawaiian Islands; San Francisco (舊金山, *Jiujinshan*, or Old Gold Mountain) and California; and Sydney (雪梨, *Xueli* or *Syutlei*).

Time frame

The time frame investigated here is the one hundred years from 1849 to 1949. That is, from the first major movements of Pearl River Delta residents to the Pacific Ports that began with the Californian gold rush to the first major limiting of this movement. Both ends of this movement, it should be noted, arose from the *qiaoxiang* themselves, or at least in China, rather than in the destinations' circumstances. The emphasis here is always on choices and decisions directly related to the *huaqiao* and their *qiaoxiang*, not those of the destinations and their restrictive laws, which have tended to determine the time frames of most studies.[16] Such destination or nation-state time frames assume the primacy of their laws and so have a tendency to downplay the role of *qiaoxiang* and other factors. Also, as the gradual evolution of *qiaoxiang* links is the subject and this occurred over several generations, a long time frame therefore allows generational and *qiaoxiang* patterns to be adequately explored.

Sources

A work spanning a long time period and many locations necessarily utilizes a wide range of sources. From the mid- to late nineteenth century, mainly European observers in both the *qiaoxiang* and the destinations must be relied on for information about the *huaqiao*. Sources based on the *huaqiao* themselves in this period are usually limited to occasional witness testimony in government inquiries. From the late nineteenth century to the end of the period, Chinese-language sources become more plentiful, beginning with Chinese-language newspapers published in the destinations and then local newspapers published in the *qiaoxiang*. Around 1920, *qiaokan* (僑刊), magazines published in the *qiaoxiang* and aimed specifically at the *huaqiao*, become a major source.[17] Also from this period are extensive archives generated by the administration of restrictive immigration laws of the white-settler nations of Australia and the United States, as movement in and out of the destinations is monitored and regulated. These provide not only evidence of bureaucratic procedures but glimpses of private aspects of the *huaqiao* not available elsewhere

16. This period also covers the core period of "labouring" *huaqiao* as defined by Wang Gungwu. According to Wang, previous to this period, merchants dominate and, subsequent to this period, migration begins in the "traditional" sense. See note 9.
17. Sydney's *Tung Wah News* is the earliest complete example of a Chinese-language paper from one of the Pacific Ports, although there are scattered examples of papers published in San Francisco as early as 1854. For titles of these and Zhongshan newspapers and *qiaokan*, see the bibliography.

due to the existence in the files of letters, interviews, and various other randomly collected individual materials.

There are also many sources that can be described as oral history, including the field notes of two representatives of the Chicago School of Sociology, Paul Siu and Clarence Glick.[18] In the 1920s and 1930s, both these researchers took verbatim notes of their conversations with many *huaqiao* then living in Hawaii, in addition to making use of social welfare interview notes and other similar sources. Oral history interviews were also obtained between 1997 and 2001 with many sons and daughters of *huaqiao* in the villages of the *qiaoxiang* and in the destinations. In addition, oral sources are also available in many *qiaoxiang*-based journals published since the late 1970s in contemporary *qiaokan* and local *wenshi* (文史, cultural history) journals.[19]

Together, these sources provide evidence of *qiaoxiang* links stretching over generations and around the Pacific. Some have been used before and interpreted within the framework of nation-state histories. Interpreted from a "*qiaoxiang* perspective", these sources can be used to develop a picture of intentions and motivations focused on the *qiaoxiang* and of choices and opportunities made available through the existence of *qiaoxiang* connections or links. Thus, sources embedded in a nation-state perspective can be placed in a broader context and re-interpreted to provide a better understanding of the history of the *huaqiao* and their *qiaoxiang* links.

Argument

Returning Home with Glory is a case study in the history of the connections established and maintained between villages of the Pearl River Delta and various Pacific Ports from 1849 to 1949. It investigates this history from the perspective of the *qiaoxiang* and, as such, provides an alternative to, or at least a variation on, nation-state, diaspora, and transnational perspectives. This work will explore such elements in the *qiaoxiang* links as family ties and family breakdowns, local and national conditions in China, restrictive immigration laws, the impact of growing wealth, the desire for prestige, and fear of shame. These are all elements that played a dynamic role in determining what people did, why they did what they did, the choices they had and made, and what constituted success and failure in their lives.

The following chapter, "The Border-Guard View", explores how the concerns of nation-states have dominated previous studies of what have come to be known as the overseas Chinese. This is a perspective that is characterized as a border-guard view, dominated as it is by those concerned with getting into and settling within a nation-state. It is a view that is examined in many governmental reports and national

18. The Chicago School of Sociology emerged in the 1920s and 1930s and pioneered a combination of sociological theory and ethnographic fieldwork, of which both Siu and Glick are exemplars.
19. See bibliography for details.

histories. However, it is also one to be found even in studies by Asian American historians, such as an excellent work on the history of Angel Island, which, despite drawing on good oral history, is forced by its underlying assumptions to neglect the original intentions of participants in favour of a deterministic focus on their final settlement in the United States. Such perspectives not only very often neglect original intentions but also the role of those who never left the villages and, very often, of those, the majority throughout most of the period, who returned to those villages.

A time period of a century is a long one; "Wading 10,000 *Li*" (Chapter 3) reviews the entire period in order to provide context for the chapters that follow. The significance of the role of Hong Kong, in particular, is seen as the first villagers make their way through the destination ports to the Californian and Australian goldfields, though the earlier beginnings of movement to Hawaii are not neglected. From this point in the mid-nineteenth century, the *qiaoxiang* links grew and evolved over the generations, with chain migration and increasing family and village dependence on remittances a key factor. This last was a feature of special importance as the Japanese War commenced and one which is explored in detail in subsequent sections.

Having surveyed the overall period and grasped the general detail of the *qiaoxiang* links, it is possible in "Because in the Tang Mountains We Have a Big House" (Chapter 4) to examine in detail the single *qiaoxiang* of Long Du as a case study in the impact of these links. In doing so, concrete examples are discovered of what constituted the *qiaoxiang* links in terms of both *huaqiao* and non-*huaqiao* elements. Details of family life, contributions to the villages, the significance of prestige, and dangers from bandits are just some aspects that are explored. Drawing on interviews in the village, the range of individual variation is also comprehended, while *qiaokan* provide insight into the shifting relations between the *huaqiao* and village elites, among other factors of interest.

Further dynamics are revealed in Chapter 5, "He Would Have to Send Money", where the investigation turns to the nature of the *qiaoxiang* links in terms of their tangible mechanisms over both distance and time. The credit-ticket system, the return of the bones of the dead, and the evolution of the gold mountain stores are discussed. The role of these last in building up a merchant elite, in facilitating the continued flow of remittances, and helping the development of a *huaqiao* lifestyle reaches its peak in the 1920s and 1930s.

Tangible elements, however, can never explain everything; in "Returning Home with Glory" (Chapter 6), the motivations for maintaining these links that are to be found in income and prestige, the one sustaining and the other justifying efforts over generations, are investigated. The result of this investigation is the revelation that issues of prestige and shame are as important as simple income in the development of the *qiaoxiang* links. Such factors can be seen to play an equivocal role, sometimes maintaining the links and sometimes cutting others off from their *qiaoxiang* forever. Despite this, income continues to play a major role and an analysis of differing rates of income that could be earned in the destinations, compared

to the villages or Hong Kong, tells us much about the incentives this aspect played over the period.

After motivation, it is the choices that people have that are most significant. That we all have choices would appear to be obvious, but too often histories, particularly those that rely on concepts such as diaspora and transnationalism, can seem to impose an inevitability on their subjects that negates the concept of choice. That choice and changes in choices over time are core features of any history is more easily seen in individuals, such as when Arthur Lowe stated that he "always intended [his children] to get some schooling in China, he said, but things did not work out that way, and then it was too late".[20] Similarly, Sam Chang had not expected "he would stay in the United States as a farmer and never go back to China, even for a visit".[21] Both men were referring to choices they made or did not make in the 1930s, and both suggest the gap that often exists between intention and result. While historians generally deal with results, it is useful to remember that such results are not necessarily proof of intentions.

The *qiaoxiang* links developed over generations. Naturally, their very establishment began a series of changes that in turn created further choices and opportunities for the participants. Thus, in "Things Did Not Work Out That Way" (Chapter 7), the discussion turns to how these developing opportunities and choices drove the evolution of the *qiaoxiang* links themselves. These choices ranged from return to the villages to remaining in the destinations, with many variations in between. Such choices raise the question as to what constitutes success in the life of a person who set out to support a family in the village. This aspect is explored in detail through the differing manner in which destination administrators treated merchants and others with wealth and resources, and is an aspect of their perceived "success" or "failure". Such border-guard definitions of success or failure are usually adopted by diaspora and transnational studies, thus imposing an essentially nation-state view that is external to that adopted by the majority of those who left their villages, those who never left, and those who returned.

Nevertheless, the choices and opportunities encountered often did result in settlement in a destination and even the complete severing of links with the *qiaoxiang*. Such "normal" migrant outcomes need to be seen in the context of the reality that there were always other choices and opportunities, a context much wider than nation-state perspectives usually permit. Family options, conditions in the *qiaoxiang*, responses to the laws, opportunities presented or denied by success and failure, and by destination-birth are all factors that operated within the context of the *qiaoxiang* connections. Within this context, it will be seen that choices about maintaining *qiaoxiang* links or settling in a destination involved much more than overcoming legal barriers or problems of assimilation.

20. Shirley Fitzgerald, *Red Tape, Gold Scissors* (Sydney: State Library of NSW Press, 1997), 53.
21. Liu Haiming, "The Trans-Pacific Family: A Case Study of Sam Chang's Family History", *Amerasia Journal* 18: 2 (1992): 13.

Success and failure are also important in presenting people with choices and opportunities. But what those choices and opportunities are can perhaps be better, or at least differently, understood when success and failure are seen from a *qiaoxiang* perspective. This is a perspective that was adopted not for the purposes of supplying a respectable theme for a cultural history, but because, when all is said and done, it was the perspective adopted by most people most of the time from the beginning, and when and if they ceased to have a *qiaoxiang* perspective or began to adopt another, it was as an evolution from this initial standpoint.

While most chapters focus on the *huaqiao* in both the *qiaoxiang* and the destinations, "Anglo-Saxonizing Machines" (Chapter 8) argues that awareness of the *qiaoxiang* links also contributes to an understanding of the history of the Pacific destinations themselves, an understanding that differs from those based on nation-state perspectives alone. These range from the role of stereotypes to the relative uniqueness of San Francisco's Chinatown, despite it commonly serving as the "standard" Chinatown.

"You Have Been Loyal *Wah Kiu*" (Chapter 9) concludes that a *qiaoxiang* perspective provides a more comprehensive understanding of a history of multi-generational mobility than nation-state and nation-state–related concepts such as diaspora and transnationalism. The *qiaoxiang* has been seen not only as a geographic location, a place to be privileged over the nation or other locality, but also as an ideal around which revolved, at least in the beginning, the motivations and choices people made over time and generations. Of especial significance is that the very concepts of success and failure, so often seen in terms of wealth and choice of permanent settlement, are transformed when a *qiaoxiang* perspective is embraced.

By beginning with the villages and the families in the villages, it is possible to go beyond references to debts and credit-ticket systems and to see that family support, prestige, and honour also play a role in the ties that linked a young man sent out from his family and village to live and work for years before, hopefully, returning to marry and establish a family in his *qiaoxiang*. Such considerations allow motivations to be incorporated into history that are not solely dependent upon money, business networks, and an apparent desire to establish a future diaspora or transnational flow.

Chung Kok village hall today

When the author visited Chung Kok village in December 2014, it was difficult to recognize the same building first seen when doing fieldwork around 2001. Stripped of its red star, freshly painted and no longer empty and neglected, the building seemed to the author at first a similar but different example of a community building erected with the support of fellow villagers from the destinations.

Certainly, the community hall of Chung Kok is by no means unique, as the following chapters will confirm. However, the Chung Kok hall does stand as an

illustration of a lifestyle and *qiaoxiang*-centred effort that persisted for many generations. Yet the historical display mounted in 2014 within the Chung Kok hall itself makes no mention of this history. Like the nation-state–related histories of the white-settler nations, the preference is to place Chung Kok's history within that of a single region and of a single nation. Prominent merchants and economic links stretching back to the twelfth century are proudly highlighted, while the efforts of average villagers working as market gardeners in Sydney or laundrymen in San Francisco to support their families in the village are absent.

This preference for large-scale or top-down history over the efforts of a majority of humbler individuals is of course all too common. It is the argument of this work that the people of the villages of the Pearl River Delta developed, over the generations between 1849 and 1949, organizations and patterns of communication linking their families and *qiaoxiang* to the destinations to which they moved in search of income. These links were created not to "migrate", to build up a "Chinese diaspora" or to establish "transnational" families, but to ensure the survival and prosperity of the family in the *qiaoxiang*. While a diaspora and transnational flows are undoubtedly part of this history, to return was the goal for most on setting out—and return, over the greater part of the period, a majority of people did. Research based on nation-state concepts and their concerns with migration, national identity, racism, and associated legal and social responses, it is argued, has obscured much about the movement of people and the *qiaoxiang* links. Additionally, the narrow scope of nation-state perspectives means that a range of issues significant in the history of Chinese people overseas has been neglected. This is because such nation-state perspectives are dominated by a view of the movement of peoples from the Pearl River Delta *qiaoxiang* as a process of "getting in" and "staying in", the viewpoint of a border guard. Efforts to keep people out and efforts to settle permanently loom large, while efforts to return or to maintain links with the *qiaoxiang* are minimized or ignored. By adopting a *qiaoxiang* perspective, it is hoped that the view through which nation-state and diaspora studies have seen the history of the movement of Pearl River Delta people between 1849 and 1949 will be broadened. It is also expected that nation-state and border-guard preoccupations with restrictive laws and levels of entry can be more helpfully seen within a context of personal motivations and long-term intentions, focused not on nation-states but on the *qiaoxiang*.

Histories of Chinese people in the destinations have placed emphasis on the processes of settlement within the territories of nation-states and on the role of the attitudes, prejudices, and laws of those nation-states. That destination laws and attitudes had a significant role is not denied. However, it is argued that, unless the *qiaoxiang* and links between the destinations and the *qiaoxiang* are included in such histories, the context in which the impact of destination laws and attitudes are interpreted will be too narrow. Naturally, for many people and for many reasons "things did not work out" the way they were originally intended. These reasons cannot be satisfactorily understood unless a *qiaoxiang* perspective is considered along with

that from the destinations. Options and complexities rarely seen in studies based on nation-state–related perspectives become easier, it is argued, when seen from a *qiaoxiang* perspective.

Destination qiaoxiang

The Chung Kok community hall represents, therefore, more than just a starting point for asking questions of how and why some villagers travelled overseas. The recording in what is a characteristic *qiaoxiang* of a list of destinations provides an apt illustration of the idea that is this chapter's title—destination *qiaoxiang*.

The concepts embedded in the phrase "destination *qiaoxiang*" involve a complex mix that goes beyond the mere fact that it is composed of words from two very different languages and cultures. The English word *destination* is straightforward, connoting as it does the final object of a journey, the journey's end. *Qiaoxiang* is more complicated, made up of two Chinese characters—僑鄉. The first—*qiao* (僑) refers to one who is away, overseas perhaps; while *xiang* (鄉) indicates the village or home town of such a person. Thus, *qiaoxiang* can be translated as the "native place of one who is away". The place itself can be a person's home village, district, or county, depending on which one chooses to identify as one's place of origin.

Placed in conjunction with *qiaoxiang*, *destination* can therefore mean that one's native place is the final destination, no matter how long one is away. At the same time, from the perspective of those in the native place, the destinations are those places to which one travelled to earn and from which one ultimately returned. The phrase "destination *qiaoxiang*" can therefore describe a circular journeying; a shuttling back and forth, with perhaps the journey's ending not so clear as it might have been at the beginning.

"Destination *qiaoxiang*" therefore has an equivocal meaning, a practical one of movement between an overseas destination and a home one, and an ideal meaning, a "returning home with glory" to one's origin that is the designation of this work. Such a conceptualization suits, I believe, those men and women who are the subjects of this study. It encompasses their motivations, their struggles, and their failures, this last something historians and others often neglect in studies based on records left more often by the "successful". These struggles within the context of destinations and *qiaoxiang* are the subject of the chapters to follow.

9

You Have Been Loyal *Wah Kiu*

One of the many telegrams that passed between the Zhongshan village of Buck Toy and its fellows in Hawaii during the 1920s and 1930s included the comment, "You have been loyal *wah kiu*."[1] The loyalty of the *huaqiao* is usually seen as national loyalty to the Chinese motherland, but for those of Buck Toy as well as many in the *qiaoxiang* this loyalty had a narrower focus. Despite this, not everyone who moved between the Pearl River Delta and the Pacific Ports in the generations after 1849 had been "loyal *wah kiu*", and it has not been the purpose of this study to argue they were. It has been argued, however, that a concept such as "loyal *wah kiu*" and the history of the movement of people from the Pearl River Delta over the period are best understood within the context of the *qiaoxiang* connections. It has also been argued that a nation-state perspective and the conceptions and assumptions that have been characterized as "border-guard views" have failed to understand the significance of the "loyal *wah kiu*" and the role played by the *qiaoxiang* links. By interpreting the history of the overseas Chinese, the *huaqiao*, through the perspective of their places of origin, the *qiaoxiang*, it is hoped that a successful attempt has been made by this study to improve this understanding.

Huaqiao developments

The history discussed here has been that of the *huaqiao* of the Pearl River Delta and their movements to the Pacific Ports of Sydney, Hawaii, and San Francisco between 1849 and 1949. Chapter 3, "Wading 10,000 *Li*", described the basic movement of people from the Pearl River Delta around the Pacific Ports in the century after 1849: where people came from, why they left, their numbers and proportions, and some of the major fluctuations and interactions that constituted the movement over this century. Particular attention was paid to the reactions of those who dominated the societies of the Pacific Ports and the restrictive laws they imposed. Chapter 4, "Because in the Tang Mountains We Have a Big House", described a

1. Glick Archives: Note 3, Bung-Chong Lee, 16 June 1936. *Wah kiu* is the Cantonese pronunciation of *huaqiao*.

single *qiaoxiang*, the impact upon it of the movement and its links with the Pacific Ports. This detailed understanding of a *qiaoxiang* made it possible to build up a picture of the *qiaoxiang* links. This picture was begun in Chapter 5, "He Would Have to Send Money", which investigated what the links consisted of, how they were established, and what were the mechanisms for maintaining them not only over distances but also over generations. Such tangible elements could not explain all there was to the *qiaoxiang* links, so Chapter 6, "Returning Home with Glory", discussed the significance of income and prestige in providing motivation for establishing and continuing the *qiaoxiang* links.

Not everyone who set out for the destinations maintained links with their *qiaoxiang* in the same way or at all. The existence of the links themselves provided or broadened opportunities that could lead to a diminution or even the loss of the *qiaoxiang* links. Chapter 7, "Things Did Not Work Out That Way", discussed the range of factors operating within the context of the *qiaoxiang* links that could bring about outcomes such as permanent settlement in a destination as well as "return with glory". Finally, "Anglo-Saxonizing Machines" discussed the three Pacific destinations themselves, in order to demonstrate how the *qiaoxiang* perspective provides a wider range of interpretations and explanations of *huaqiao* involvement in their history than is possible within nation-state–related perspectives alone.

This study has presented a picture of the *huaqiao* and their history in the roughly four generations from 1849. After the initial "rush" generation of 1849 to around 1877, the following generation was able to take advantage of the connections that had been established with the Pacific Ports. More permanent *qiaoxiang* links were gradually established, based on destination businesses and access to passage money through relatives who were themselves *huaqiao*. As this occurred, more family-orientated sponsorship tended to replace large-scale labour recruitment through brokers. This generation was hampered by the imposition in the 1880s of major restrictions to their movement by the white-settler–controlled destinations. Despite this, further *huaqiao* generations were able to establish themselves and it was in these following generations that the *huaqiao* lifestyle reached a peak of organization in the 1920s and 1930s. They survived the Depression and even the Japanese War, despite reduced incomes and the increasing vulnerability of the *qiaoxiang* due to dependence on outside income. Major changes to the *qiaoxiang* links sufficient to diminish or end them occurred only with the establishment of the new Communist government in 1949.

This chronology is built not around destination laws or major events in the nation-states but on developments in the *qiaoxiang* links themselves. Within this time frame, one of the most significant developments was the growth of a specialized lifestyle in the *qiaoxiang*, based on expectations that the *huaqiao* would achieve certain levels of income and status. Much about the *huaqiao* lifestyle and these expectations revolved around money: money to repay debts, money to support the family, to sponsor others, or for donations in the *qiaoxiang*. Money and its uses,

however, cannot be understood separately from the family and cultural networks of the *qiaoxiang*. From the first contracting of the debt enabling an individual to leave the village and travel to a Pacific Port, the *huaqiao* became part of a network of obligations and dependence that kept the majority focused on the *qiaoxiang* and eventual return there.

These networks determined such matters as which destinations and *qiaoxiang* became linked and the numbers of people that moved. The obligations enforced lengthy initial periods of absence before a first return, and also tied people to their *qiaoxiang* fellows in the destinations. As the generations passed and *huaqiao* returned, they had the means and the incentive to assist the next generation. Sponsorship, both legal and illegal, support with paperwork, and help in dealing with administrators was needed with the growth of restrictive laws. These changes encouraged some to remain in the destinations while narrowing the range of people that could participate in the movement.

The continuing dependence of the *qiaoxiang* on *huaqiao* earnings in the destinations and consequent vulnerability to outside factors meant that the *qiaoxiang* links and the *huaqiao* lifestyle were themselves, in a sense, a dead end. That is to say, the links were a cycle of dependence that could not be escaped without a change in the nature of the *qiaoxiang* links themselves. Such change could only come about if the *qiaoxiang* became economically independent of outside income or if individual villagers left the *qiaoxiang* and settled in Hong Kong, Shanghai, or one of the destinations where productive occupations were more viable. The majority of *huaqiao* were neither able nor willing to take either of these options; instead, from 1849 until 1938, most *huaqiao* continued to send their remittances and ultimately retire to the *qiaoxiang*. By doing so they fulfilled intentions that had taken them from their villages, in some cases, forty or fifty years earlier.

The year 1949 was chosen to mark the end of the *qiaoxiang* links in the form that they had been developing for roughly four generations, because at this point the *huaqiao* could no longer achieve their aims in the *qiaoxiang*. This was not a matter of the cutting off of remittances, which the new government did not do, but more significantly, the end of the *huaqiao*'s ability to turn their efforts in the destinations into prestige and status in the *qiaoxiang*. This was a development imposed on the *qiaoxiang* by the nature of the new China government and one that removed an essential motivation for the *qiaoxiang* links.

Nation-state perspectives

The history of the *qiaoxiang* links developed here is one that is difficult to appreciate within the nation-state perspectives of most studies. It has been argued that understanding of the history of the movement of Chinese people to the Pacific destinations

is limited by conceptions of the nation-state.[2] These limitations allowed the views of what can be termed border guards to predominate, even in studies that sought to refute these views. Studies based on transnational concepts, such as those of the "Chinese diaspora" have also been unable to escape many of these limitations. As a result, continuing links with places of origin, including return, and motivations not centred on one-way migration and settlement are either neglected or interpreted as the result of destination laws and prejudices. Rarely are these actions or choices seen as those people might make according to their own ideals or intentions.

Analyses built around concepts such as nation-states, diaspora, or even transnationalism have a tendency to focus on movement to and outcomes in a specific location. In particular, the crossing of borders and patterns of settlement in a specific nation-state are given great emphasis to the neglect of motivations and relationships with other places, except insofar as they provide background to the history of settlement or border crossings. These emphases did not develop by chance but are an evolution of the views of the border guards, who observed and commented on Chinese people in "their" territory from the first *huaqiao* arrivals.

A significant characteristic of the border-guard view is the assumption that the Chinese were a "problem" in need of a "solution". Missionaries saw the problem as one of conversion, while racists and those with faith in the desirability of an "Anglo-Saxon" society saw the solution as restrictions on entry. Many who have rejected the assumptions of difference and hostility underlying such views and sought non-racist solutions have done so by simply reversing the views, but not the assumptions, of the border guards. The Chinese, in such studies, remain a problem, but the problem becomes "Why didn't they become 'normal' migrants and settlers?" The solution is to deny, minimize, or neglect behaviour outside a narrow definition of migration and settlement, or to attribute blame for such behaviour to destination racism and laws. The problems, as originally defined by the border guards, are not confronted but instead are assumed to have disappeared by shifting blame and ignoring or neglecting what the *huaqiao* themselves intended.

The most prominent of the border-guard views was that which, from the beginning of *huaqiao* arrival in the destinations, defined them as "refractory" migrants. This was not based on ignorance of the *huaqiao* wish to return or of the fact that many did return, rather it was because the possibility of their staying in the destination was what concerned observers the most. Those *huaqiao* who did stay and the fear that new arrivals would wish to stay dominated popular attitudes. These border-guard assumptions about the normalcy of intentions to settle were subsequently taken on by later researchers, but this time as part of an effort to prove that migrating and staying had been the main intention of the *huaqiao* all along, hampered only by destination restrictions and prejudices. In both cases, a basic assumption is that one-way migration and settlement represents normal behaviour.

2. See Chapter 2, "The Border-Guard View".

The histories of Chinese people within single nations have, it has been argued, been too narrow to encompass the *qiaoxiang* connections. However, studies based on broader conceptions, such as diaspora research, suffer from other limitations. A lack of historical context is a primary limitation of diaspora studies, whose contemporary focus usually leads to a view of the diaspora and its economic networks as a conscious intention rather than an outcome of historical factors. This is partly because diaspora studies often go beyond the nation-state simply by multiplying them. That is, the Chinese diaspora is seen merely as Chinese people (usually merchants) outside China with interconnections in many places rather than in a single place, while links to, and motivations based on, the *qiaoxiang* are rarely considered.

Additionally, nation-state and diaspora studies have a tendency to neglect various players in the history of the movement. Most obviously, those who remained in the *qiaoxiang* or who left the destinations and returned to the *qiaoxiang* are rarely mentioned. Nation-state studies neglect these participants because such people are beyond their borders, while diaspora studies do so because it is the creation and existence of the diaspora outside China that is the focus. Much emphasis is also given to merchants and traders by nation-state, diaspora, and transnational studies. Such emphasis is partly a matter of the more obvious evidence that the wealthy and those involved in trade networks left of their activities. It is also because the Chinese diaspora is usually seen as an economic network rather than a social one.

This study is not the first to attempt to escape the limitations of nation-state perspectives. Studies by Madeline Hsu, Adam McKeown, Yong Chen, and James Cook have, in their different ways, attempted to place the history of the Chinese overseas in a wider context.[3] Of these four, only Madeline Hsu has investigated the *qiaoxiang* in any detail.[4] Hsu investigates the connections of people from Taishan County with the United States as an example of "transnational" families, but a nation-state perspective dominates the context of this history. Her Taishan families must choose between places, and it is the nation-state that seems to provide the determining factors in this choice.

Yong Chen gives an account of a community, San Francisco, which he rounds out by emphasizing the importance of "trans-Pacific" connections. However, his work is based on a very limited view of the *qiaoxiang* and ultimately fails to account for what motivates these trans-Pacific links. Nor does the "trans-Pacific" concept allow those who left this destination or those who never reached it to become part of the history. Similarly, Adam McKeown tells us much about *huaqiao* communities and the significance of their links in each of the three places he investigates. However, like Yong Chen, without a full appreciation of the *qiaoxiang*, the result is that much is missed, particularly concerning motivations.

3. See Chapter 2, 30–32.
4. Cook does focus on the Fujian city of Xiamen, but fails to distinguish between this port and the actual *qiaoxiang* of those he is discussing.

While James Cook perhaps focuses the most on a *qiaoxiang* in theory, in reality his discussion concerns only merchants in a single city. Cook never acknowledges that Xiamen is not the *qiaoxiang* of most of his subjects and so fails to see the broader context of their choice to settle in that city. Nor does he acknowledge that merchants were part of a larger movement of people that included not only those who were not merchants but also those who did not settle in Xiamen and even those who never left their *qiaoxiang*.

Qiaoxiang perspectives

In each of the abovementioned attempts to escape the limitations of nation-state perspectives, difficulties have arisen due to a lack of appreciation of the role of the *qiaoxiang*. China, or a location in China, as in the research of Yong Chen or James Cook, is not sufficient, as an appreciation of the specific "native place" within China of those who travelled is necessary. This is why the core of the approach taken here takes the *qiaoxiang*, both as geographic location and locus of identity, as the origin of motivations around which the movement of Pearl River Delta people developed. From this, it follows that movement to the destinations established links, which gave rise to a series of choices and developments played out in both the *qiaoxiang* and the destinations.

Basic to this *qiaoxiang* perspective, therefore, has been the *qiaoxiang* itself, for example the Zhongshan County district of Long Du presented as a case study in Chapter 4. This focus on a single *qiaoxiang* has allowed details to be seen that greatly assisted in interpreting the *qiaoxiang* links. Based on this case study, the impact of links between the destinations and the *qiaoxiang*, including the significance of family, prestige, motivations, and income, was revealed. A great deal of the evidence for this *huaqiao* history is to be found not in the *qiaoxiang* but in the destinations, as well as within research that has been interpreted until now only from a nation-state perspective. Both the *qiaoxiang*-based evidence, and the capacity to reinterpret destination-based evidence, has made it possible to analyse the *qiaoxiang* links, in particular the mechanisms through which they operated and the choices they gave the *huaqiao* over some four generations.

This expanded understanding of the role of the *qiaoxiang* also allowed success and failure to be judged in terms of the *qiaoxiang*. To become an American or Australian, or even simply to remain in those nations, is a measure of success derived from the nation-state perspective, though a measure undoubtedly chosen by some *huaqiao*. Knowledge of the *qiaoxiang* allowed "success" to be seen as the survival and improvement of the family in the village, of houses, lands, education, and a better future for the next generation. This *qiaoxiang* perspective also enabled the movement of most and the migration of some to be seen in a context in which it could be understood that those who did not return to the *qiaoxiang* were "failures".

Qiaoxiang standards were those by which most *huaqiao* would have judged themselves and *qiaoxiang*-based judgements of success and failure, shame and prestige were how *huaqiao* determined their actions and responses. The fear and loathing of the destination society, concern for restrictive laws, or even the desire for liberty and wealth in the destinations should not be seen therefore as dominant factors in people's responses. The *huaqiao* had their own concerns and issues to deal with, a perspective brought out by the *qiaoxiang* case study and the development of a *qiaoxiang* perspective throughout this study.

The phrase "*qiaoxiang* links" has been used to encompass the connections between the *qiaoxiang* and the destinations that were maintained by Pearl River Delta people over both time and generations. This concept was developed in order to avoid too much emphasis on place and the act of movement in one direction or another. Discussion of the history, not of places but of relationships, allows processes of interaction to be more easily revealed. Interactions are something often obscured by perspectives in which such actions by a nation-state as imposing laws and indulging in racist behaviour are seen to be determining factors in people's lives. The "place" emphasis of a nation-state also leads to a focus on those who are in one place more than another, with inevitable distortions in investigations of people who move from location to location. The concept of "*qiaoxiang* links" was developed to avoid such distortions.

However, as with "transnational" and "trans-Pacific" conceptions, if *qiaoxiang* links are not to be mistaken for intentions rather than outcomes, it is necessary to explain the motives for establishing and maintaining the links. It is in helping to explain motivation that the *qiaoxiang* perspective provides a better scope for interpretation than the more descriptively geographical "transnational" or "trans-Pacific" concepts. Motivations to maintain links with the *qiaoxiang* were not based only on income and a desire to support the family, aims that could also have been accomplished by settling, as many *huaqiao* did, in the destinations. Just as important were motivations based on prestige, a motive not only linked to the *qiaoxiang* and families, but one that was difficult to transfer elsewhere.

Certainly, a major reason that previous researchers have focused on laws and prejudice as determining factors for the *huaqiao* is that, without them, it is difficult to provide motivations for actions or patterns of behaviour. Nation-state studies inevitably look at the entry of Chinese people into a defined territory as the most important aspect of that history, while struggling to explain why they did so in the face of the barriers raised. From a *qiaoxiang* perspective, however, such entry is seen as merely one step in an overall process focused on the *qiaoxiang*. Even when *qiaoxiang* motivations are supplanted by other intentions, they remain important as part of the context in which such decisions and developments took place. A *qiaoxiang* perspective is essential in allowing broader interpretations of motivation, which operated not only in the destinations but also in the *qiaoxiang*.

Motivation can be clarified through a *qiaoxiang* perspective because of the broadening of context that this achieves. It is not that settlement, assimilation, and striving to become American or Australian, as outlined in many nation-state narratives, did not occur. These things existed, but only as part of a broader context encompassed by the *qiaoxiang* connections. For each example of those who chose to settle in a destination, many others made the choice to return to the *qiaoxiang*, based not only on considerations of destination prejudice or restrictive laws but also on success and failure in terms that require an understanding of the role of the *qiaoxiang* in the lives of people.

It is obvious that not all *huaqiao* returned to the *qiaoxiang* and that many remained in the destinations. However, a consequence of a nation-state focus is that the history of Chinese people in the destinations is generally written in terms of the migration and settlement of only those who stayed. A *qiaoxiang* perspective allows such settlers to be seen as part of a broader movement and also reveals that even decisions to stay were very often due to the *qiaoxiang* connections. Many of those who settled in the destinations did so for reasons associated with their *qiaoxiang* links. Destination conditions and laws undoubtedly influenced the *huaqiao*, but in a multiplicity of ways when seen from the *qiaoxiang* perspective.

In similar fashion, *huaqiao* of the diaspora can be understood to represent a minority who failed to return to their *qiaoxiang*, due to various destination and *qiaoxiang* factors. Often missing in discussion of the Chinese diaspora is any acknowledgement that this historical development is only one consequence or result among many. The origin of the Chinese diaspora was largely the consequence of movement during the period 1849 and 1949, and of the choices of a minority of settlers and "non-returners". The overall consequences of the *qiaoxiang* links included destination settlement as well as "returns with glory", diasporas as well as new villages, elaborate towers and destination Chinatowns. The economic focus of many diaspora studies has meant an emphasis on merchants, while a focus on the nation-state has meant a neglect of those who left again or who never came. Yet the role of families in and of cultural and psychological ties to the *qiaoxiang* was significant to the actions and aims of even *huaqiao* who spent most of their lives in a destination. A *qiaoxiang* perspective is especially valuable in encompassing a range of participants regardless of location: women, parents, villagers, *qiaokan* editors, gentry, the poor and those who failed to earn destination incomes, the destination-born and white wives, those who returned and those who stayed. These were all participants in this history who are usually neglected by investigations that use the boundaries of nation-states to determine who is included, and about whom diaspora and transnational accounts have added very little.

An essential aspect of the border-guard view is that border protection and restrictive immigration laws are seen to have determining roles. That is, that the history of the movement of Pearl River Delta peoples is about nation-states, governments, and the powerful building up barriers and controlling people's destinies.

The *huaqiao* and others are inexorably seen as victims of this process, outsiders trying to slip through the cracks. However, when the perspective is changed to the bottom-up approach of the *qiaoxiang* perspective, a very different history is seen in which border controls and restrictive laws are often in fact reactive to the demands and strategies of people in the Pearl River Delta villages. The structure of these laws, the bureaucratic responses, and even to a degree the sense of the nation-state are themselves outcomes of processes and history that can be understood on the level of families and the *qiaoxiang*.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of the *qiaoxiang* perspective is the legitimization of *huaqiao* ideals and intentions. This study has argued that to deny actions of the *huaqiao* that do not fit assumptions about the correct behaviour of new migrants or residents is to deny the legitimacy of the ideals and intentions of the *huaqiao* themselves. The assumption here has been that *huaqiao* efforts to support their *qiaoxiang* are as legitimate as efforts to migrate and settle. It was not assumed that moving to a destination to earn money and then to leave after a period is behaviour for which blame is to be laid or for which an explanation in racism or legal restrictions must be sought.

The *huaqiao* are not assumed, therefore, to be a "refractory" element in need of explanation, but are viewed rather as participants in history with legitimate aims. This capacity to understand and legitimize the aims of the *huaqiao* in their own terms is greatly facilitated, perhaps even only made possible, by the *qiaoxiang* perspective. This legitimization means that return, support for a *qiaoxiang*-based family, and toleration of harsh conditions, as well as efforts to subvert restrictive laws, can be seen in a broader light. Such activities do not have to be explained away, turned into heroics, or blamed solely on destination factors. Instead, they are seen as part of efforts by the *huaqiao* to maintain connections with their *qiaoxiang*.

When the intentions of the *huaqiao* themselves are accepted, then the choices and opportunities they had as the result of their *qiaoxiang* links can also be seen. These choices resulted from the interaction of circumstances in both the *qiaoxiang* and the destinations, leading some to return and some to stay, some to remain sojourners and others to settle in the destinations or in Hong Kong or Shanghai. The *qiaoxiang* connections were a complex interaction in which various choices and opportunities were created. There were factors that limited people's choices and those that widened their opportunities. Some of the choices people made maintained or strengthened their *qiaoxiang* links, while others weakened or ended the connections. There were those who never considered any other choice but to return, and some who perhaps never intended to return once they had left their *qiaoxiang*. Within these extremes lie the bulk of *huaqiao* who made their choices one at a time, seized or neglected opportunities, and found that the choices they made led in unforeseen directions. For some, choices led to a loss of the *qiaoxiang*-destination link and a return to their *qiaoxiang*, as entry to a destination became more difficult or the environment more hostile. The restrictive laws and racism, however, could

also mean profit, obligations to sponsor, or lower incomes, the consequence of which could also be a loss of *qiaoxiang* connection, but with permanent settlement in a destination the result.

Returning Home with Glory has attempted to improve understanding of the history of the movement of Pearl River Delta people around the Pacific Ports through the adoption of a perspective centred on home villages and districts. Such a perspective, it has been argued, widens the context of this history and allows motivations, choices, and opportunities to be better understood. In addition, this perspective provides an overall context to nation-state and diaspora research, while allowing many assumptions of these approaches to be identified and scrutinized. The *qiaoxiang* perspective also enables more adequate explanations for many aspects of *huaqiao* history that allow the ideals and intentions of the *huaqiao* themselves to be incorporated into this history. Such a perspective also allows us to concentrate on motivation over results, to give cultural origins and explanations greater weight, and to see them with more clarity. Finally, this perspective allows the success or failure of the *huaqiao* to be judged in their own terms rather than in terms of assimilation, resistance to racism, or restrictive laws. Thus, merchants and ageing bachelors in the destinations can be seen to be just a minority of a much larger group of China and Hong Kong merchants, women in the villages, and a host of retired market gardeners, laundrymen and others who "returned with glory" to their respective *qiaoxiang*.

Further perspectives

The analysis developed in this work is by no means a final step in establishing a *qiaoxiang* perspective over nation-state perspectives. As one researcher has stated:

> By developing a diasporic history of Chinese migration that does not fit into standard American narratives of what immigration should be, and by resisting the racist and nationalist pressure to interpret such practices as undesirable, we will be able to more fully situate the gender and family composition of Chinese migration, and even embark on a coherent alternative to the hegemonic narratives of nationalistic history.[5]

Perhaps the *qiaoxiang* emphasis of this study cannot be described as a "diasporic history", but it has attempted to go beyond the limitations of "standard American narratives" or those of most Australian research. A focus on the legitimacy of *huaqiao* ideals and the *qiaoxiang* perspective has, it is argued, enabled "racist and nationalist" pressures to be resisted. This study has also attempted to escape the "hegemonic narratives of nationalistic history" through its focus on links over places, ports over nations, and, above all, through the use of a *qiaoxiang* perspective. The result is a history where the concerns and issues of nation-states are pushed

5. McKeown, "Transnational Chinese Families and Chinese Exclusion, 1875–1943", 81.

into the background, while factors such as the restrictive laws imposed by these nation-states are seen as less dominating, and even to some degree reactive and conditional, to the concerns and actions of the *qiaoxiang*.

Important to the approach of this study has been the focus on a single *qiaoxiang*. This approach was adopted for many reasons, one being awareness that much previous research has been based on generalizations in an area of great diversity. Many more single-*qiaoxiang* investigations will be needed before the extent and depth of this diversity can be fully known and adequate comparative analysis done. The range and quality of local sources found in Zhongshan County and Long Du district have demonstrated that such investigations can yield a great deal. The archives, local libraries, villages, and personal collections of this Pearl River Delta county contain much of value to the historian of the *qiaoxiang* links. While other Pearl River Delta counties have not been looked at to the same degree, there is every probability that similar if not better sources will be found by future researchers.

Oral history, in particular, in both the Pearl River Delta and the destinations, is of great value in this field. Oral research in the *qiaoxiang* is essential to the *qiaoxiang* perspective and to bring within the history of the *qiaoxiang* the connections of those who returned to the *qiaoxiang* as well as those who never left. Oral history in the destinations is more common but the nation-state perspectives of most studies has meant that oral history research among *huaqiao* settlers and their descendants has focused almost entirely on actions and attitudes in the destinations. Rarely has the concern been with questions of *qiaoxiang* relations. Yet such questions are part of the choices of even those who spent most of their lives in the destinations. Choices made within the *qiaoxiang* context are a significant part of the history of Chinese communities in the destinations and of the development of the Chinese diaspora; these choices require further research, including re-interpretation of much evidence.

A continuing theme identified in nation-state–based research has been the attitude that Chinese migration represents a problem in need of a solution. Central to this has been the concept of the sojourner and sojourning. That people from the Pearl River Delta "sojourned" cannot be denied. The question is, does this sojourning represent something unique in the history of migration? To answer this question, research comparing the movement of Pearl River Delta people to the movements of other peoples is needed. A reconceptualization of sojourning is also needed if the history of Chinese movement is not to be continually seen as a special problem or merely an issue within the racial politics of other nation-states to be explained, defended, or justified.

In the absence of comparative research of the movement of Chinese and other peoples, the focus of much analysis is on the outcomes of migration over its intentions. The results of the movement of the *huaqiao* are given priority over the intentions of the *huaqiao* in moving. An understanding of intentions is necessary to bring out choices and their context, without which outcomes become substitutes for motives. This focus on outcomes is common in destination-based research in

which those who stayed/settled are studied almost exclusively, and so outcomes are assumed to reflect the original intention. The choices leading up to an outcome are rarely considered, while returnees are neglected or interpreted as deviations from outcomes within a nation-state.

This tendency to focus on outcomes can be seen even when sojourning is recognized as a form of migration. Wang Gungwu, for example, has described the existence of a distinct form of migration "featuring 'sojourners' who eventually became migrants".[6] The original intention not to settle in a destination is recognized, yet behaviour aside from when "they eventually settled down" is discounted. In a later study, Wang Gungwu described sojourning as "a distinct form of temporary and experimental migration".[7] Here, the legitimacy of sojourning is questioned in favour of migration that leads to permanent settlement somewhere.

If sojourning is not accepted as a legitimate form of movement in itself, then it will merely be seen as a step towards so-called real migration and the primacy of the concerns of the destination nation-states will be maintained. Migration and the movement of people is not by its nature easily divided into types, but the acknowledgement of sojourning is important and points to possible future research.

Research into Chinese sojourning alone is insufficient, however. Comparative studies of what in European studies is called "return migration" would help to determine if the *huaqiao* differed in quality or quantity in the persistence of their *qiaoxiang* links.[8] Many groups have sojourned in the past and do so today. The nineteenth- and early twentieth-century European missionaries and traders in China were a prominent group of sojourners that are rarely bracketed with the *huaqiao*, for example. Were the *huaqiao* unique or simply uniquely persistent? Does the development of *huaqiao* history have parallels? Was the class nature of *huaqiao* participation in the movement and the relative ease with which those with overseas income could change their family status the most significant factor? Do the answers to these questions lie in the destinations or the *qiaoxiang*?

The three Pacific destinations studied here can be seen as three variations on a theme of white-settler ascendancy and exploitation that were inherently racist in conception and execution. Into this stepped the *huaqiao*, with inevitable consequences for their relations with those who dominated the destination societies. At this point began a problem not just in relations but in perceptions that, it has been argued, has been perpetuated in subsequent research. Nation-state and immigration perspectives, the assimilationalist and racist policies of the post-war period, and the globalizing enthusiasms of the present have all left their mark upon how the movements that took place between 1849 and 1949 are viewed.

6. Wang Gungwu, "Migration and Its Enemies", in *Conceptualizing Global History*, ed. Bruce Mazlish and Ralph Buultjens (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993), 133.
7. Wang Gungwu, "Migration History: Some Patterns Revisited", in *Global History and Migrations*, ed. Wang Gungwu (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 2.
8. For a rare example of such a comparative study, see Franklin Ng, "The Sojourner, Return Migration, and Immigration History", *Chinese America: History and Perspectives* (1987): 53–71.

It has been argued that the aims of the *huaqiao* were quite different from those assumed by their defenders. From a *qiaoxiang* perspective, efforts to prove that racism and the restrictive laws were responsible largely or solely for the low number of women or the high rates of return can be seen as a form of apologetics. Such defences can be seen as based on the assumption that Chinese movement is a deviation from a supposedly standard migration pattern. Instead, the contention is that the *huaqiao* were intent on establishing and maintaining complex links between the destinations and their *qiaoxiang* that necessitated their crossing national borders for purposes quite different from those defined by migration and settlement alone.

The history of *qiaoxiang* links is not merely a history of settlement outside the *qiaoxiang* but a history of efforts to survive away from, return to, retire in, and improve *qiaoxiang* such as Chung Kok, introduced at the commencement of this work. It is hoped that this study contributes to escaping from the Chinese-as-refractory and border-guard–orientated histories of the nation-states. What this research has tried to do is to illustrate a century of links from the perspective of the village and free of the limits of nation-state and border-guard views. *Returning Home with Glory* has not been about proving diaspora, transnational, or even nation-state studies wrong, but about putting people such as the 222 *huaqiao* whose names were inscribed on the side of the Chung Kok village hall in 1913 at the centre of their own history. The perspective of the *qiaoxiang* was adopted because that was the predominant perspective of those involved for most of the time. The loyalty of the *huaqiao* to their *qiaoxiang*, despite the many changes and developments in both destination and *qiaoxiang*, is the key to this history. Overall, it has been argued that the inherent narrowness of nation-state perspectives in dealing with a history dominated by movement, family, and local loyalties has resulted in limited interpretations. The *huaqiao* movement to the Pacific Ports did include migration and settlement. But this movement cannot be understood without an understanding of life in a *qiaoxiang* such as Long Du, and of the aims and ambitions of people there, as well as those in the Pacific destinations. This study has attempted to understand the core of the history of the links between the destinations and the *qiaoxiang* that is summed up in the expression "you have been loyal *wah kiu*".

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