

Chinese Migration to Europe: Identities and Belonging

This panel session brings some recent topics on identity and belonging of Chinese immigrants in Europe. The idea that migrants' identity is under construction between two or more places that transform their worldviews is generally accepted. The papers included on this session focus precisely on how ethnic identity is a relational category in constant dynamics, which can be transformed and negotiated over time by transnational mobility and the social conditions lived by Chinese migrants. A particular emphasis is given to Chinese younger generations, mainly on their identity and socialization processes as children and adolescents.

Organiser: Sofia Gaspar (Lisbon University Institute)

Chair: Mette Thunø (Aarhus University)

Discussant: Amelia Saiz Lopez (Autonomous University of Barcelona)

Participants: Laura Abaira, Joaquín Beltrán Antolín, Xinrong Ma, Irene Masdeu Torruella, Zhenjiang Zhang

Laura Abaira (Autonomous University of Barcelona)

Are They “Left-Behind” Children? Chinese Minors’ Agency and Transnational Growing Up Experiences between Zhejiang and Spain

Large-scale Chinese immigration in Spain emerged in the 80's. Unable to combine productive and reproductive tasks as a result of intensive work schedules, young Chinese couples often decided to partly raise their children in China with extended family members while they remained working in Spain. Nowadays these practices have become highly institutionalized and have a continuity for later migrants as well as for wealthier families.

Nevertheless, very little is known about how children and adolescents undergo these circumstances. Built upon semi-structured interviews and child-friendly methods resulting from a multi-sited ethnography (Spain-China), this paper aims to inquire into the experience of these Chinese minors: members of transnational families who grew up in China. Based on the data, we point to the active agency of minors in migration affairs, in contrast with the mainstream view of children as passive agents. Furthermore, we argue that the concept of “left-behind”, which remain central in children-migration nexus studies, fail to capture the essence of family care logic among Chinese transnational families. Finally, minors' active consciousness of being part of a transnational family is key for articulating their sense of belonging and wellbeing. This consciousness is built upon the daily display of multiple levels of transnational care across borders, which reinforces their vision of boundaries as permeable and their (stand-by) agency to cross them.

Joaquín Beltrán Antolín (Universidad Autonoma de Barcelona)

Chinese Youth in Spain. Education, Work and Identity

Spain has a very young Chinese population. The average age of the Chinese residents in Spain is around 30 years old, and almost 25% of the total Chinese population is less than 16 years old (50.120 of a total 203.400 Chinese residents at the end of 2016). The academic year 2016-2017, 38.384 Chinese students were enrolled in the Spanish education system (excluding University level). There are also 8.342 Chinese with foreign student resident permits, most of them in graduate and postgraduate studies (93% are 16-29 years old). Chinese children and teenagers are born in Spain or arrive to the country through the official procedure of family reunion. Some of them are, or has been, sent to China for

childcare after birth in Spain waiting for a later family reunion. Therefore they have different life experiences, also marked by the local place where they are settled –urban co-ethnic residential concentration, or not- and by different socialization processes, as well as by their families' socio-economic situation and expectative. All these variables, among others, have impact on their identity in flux and under construction. Chinese young besides work in the Chinese ethnic niches in Spain, are also employees and self-employed outside the ethnic economy. Sometimes they strategically use their social and cultural capital as a comparative advantage, but they are also engaged in new ventures and occupations in the mainstream labor market. The paper will address the Chinese young identity question in relationship with their studies and work.

Irene Masdeu Torruella (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona)

**Identities on the Move:
Chinese Migrants Descendants and Identity Change Over Generations**

Chinese migration in Spain is gaining generational depth that needs researchers awareness. After three decades of unceasing arrival of Chinese people in Spain, migrants' descendants in their youth and adult ages are nowadays emerging as new actors in this transnational field, bringing new needs, inputs, directions and values to the migration-based mobility between the two countries. However, these transformations are not implying a sudden change but are instead embedded in a longstanding and enduring logic of migration and mobile lifestyle that is transferred over time and generations by means of socialization processes, which are embedded in different types of mobile itineraries and backgrounds.

This paper aims to analyze the changing characteristics of mobilities and transnational practices in the context of Chinese migration in Spain over time and from an intergenerational point of view. The paper seeks to discuss the relevance of a longitudinal perspective in the study of mobilities in order to analyze new movements towards China undertaken by Chinese's migrants' descendants who grew up in Spain. First, this paper analyzes identity changes and belonging across generations taking a relation perspective and will discuss how mobility matters in the construction of identities and production of otherness. Secondly, the paper examines the agency of migrants' descendants in the transformation of migration habitus and the emergence of new directions of mobilities between China and Spain.

Zhenjiang Zhang (School of International Studies/Academy of Overseas Chinese Studies)
Xinrong Ma (University of Leiden)

Less for More: Non-Han Chinese Migration in Europe

Over the past decades, China's development has given rise to massive flows of international emigration to Europe. Considerable scholarly attention has been paid to the dynamics, conditions, and socio-economic efforts of overseas Han Chinese migrants in Europe. However, few studies on overseas ethnic minorities in Europe have been conducted. The overseas Chinese ethnic minorities in this study particularly refer to the ethnic groups officially recognized by Chinese state, among which the most visible groups are ethnic Uyghur. To fill this gap, this research focuses on Uyghur in two countries - the Netherlands and Germany. Based on interviews and participate observations of their everyday lives, this paper in particular focuses on people of Uyghur Chinese who either work in factories owned by Chinese investors and seek for the citizenship as political refugees in receiving countries. In this study, we examine how these Uyghur Chinese perceives the development of China in the recent years and how the China' raising power in the international arena shapes their national identities and social integration in Europe.