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Between mobility and integration

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- ¹ In 2003, according to Japanese government figures, 462,396 Chinese people were living in Japan, making up a quarter of its foreign residents. Although Koreans make up the country's largest foreign community, the Chinese are by far the most numerous new arrivals since the end of the 1970s. This article deals with these Chinese newcomers, who differ from the traditional image of immigrants in two ways: they are exceptionally well qualified, enjoying high socioeconomic status—12% belong to the most favoured social classes while nearly all could be counted as middle class; and, having created flourishing and active ethnic business activity, the Chinese newcomers are not observed to have segregated themselves economically or residentially as they have in Europe.
- ² This situation is partially explained by Japan's policy on immigration. This has been modified since the end of the 1980s but remains very restrictive, allowing only a small number of qualified workers to come in. There is a significant gap between this immigration policy and the presence in Japan of a large number of unskilled or semi-skilled workers¹. The gap is explained by the recourse to roundabout methods of importing low-skilled foreign labour, such as running trainee programmes, opening the borders to people of Japanese descent in Latin America (the Nikkeijin) or issuing student visas. Faced with industry's labour requirements, "the government consciously resorts to side door or back door [immigration] policies"². In this context, the plan to bring the number of foreign students up to 100,000 by the year 2000 (a project first announced in 1983), provided a privileged immigration route for the Chinese. Chinese students accept unskilled employment: for many, the jobs are temporary, lasting just long enough to fund their studies. Once they have graduated from Japanese universities, those deciding to stay on generally attain skilled posts, even highly skilled posts. The temporary nature of unskilled jobs helps perhaps to explain the low level of segregated activity. And access to skilled employment explains the wide residential

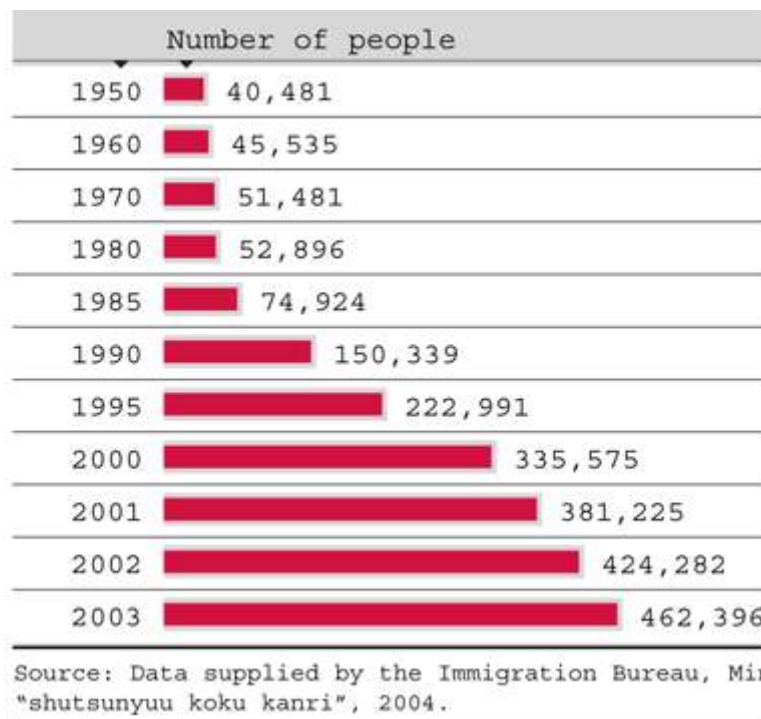
dispersal. Above all, the fact that a large number of Chinese immigrants should have come in via the selective route of study accounts for their social mobility.

- 3 In its first part, this article describes the processes by which, as they settled in Japan, the migrants set up networks of student immigrants; it will look at how the new migrant inflows explain the present characteristics of the Chinese population in Japan; and it will seek to explain how its high level of skills and lack of ethnic separatism have favoured social mobility in Japan.
- 4 In the second part, the article looks more specifically at the roles played by transnational entrepreneurs and expatriates, and examines how their sense of place, their connections with their society of origin—China—and of residence—Japan—throw new light on research in terms of returning home or of integration into the host country.

Chinese immigration to Japan: the preponderance of student networks
The old and the new immigrants to Japan: two quite distinct communities

- 5 The Japanese language uses the English terms “oldcomers” and “newcomers” to designate, respectively, immigrants who arrived before 1945 and those who have arrived since the second half of the 1970s. The oldcomers are, in the main, Koreans, but also include a small number of Chinese people, mostly from Taiwan. This article is concerned only with the newcomers, originating mostly from mainland China. These two inflows of Chinese immigrants have few features in common.
- 6 Unlike other countries in the organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Japan carried out its reconstruction and launched its post-war economic take-off without recourse to immigration. It was not until the mid-1970s that the government began opening its frontiers to foreign workers. China, for its part, liberalised its emigration policy only from 1978 onwards. So the inflow of Chinese migrants to Japan was halted for more than thirty years.
- 7 The very slow rise in Japan’s Chinese population between the 1950s and 1980 contrasts with the constantly increasing inflow over the past twenty-five years (see Table 1). Chinese residents numbered 52,896 in 1980; the figure rose to 150,339 in 1990, and reached 462,396 by 2003³. When one takes into account those people in irregular situations, estimated by the Ministry of Justice at some 30,000 in 2004, together with those who have taken Japanese nationality, the total number of Chinese people or people of Chinese origin is up around 600,000⁴. Before the 1980s, the number of long-term immigrants was about 50,000 people; it cannot have increased by very much, given the low birthrate of the Japanese. So we may estimate the number of Chinese people (or people of Chinese origin), who have arrived in Japan since the end of the 1970s and living in Japan, at 550,000 people.

1. Population of Chinese Nationality Officially Registered in Japan



- 8 The gulf between the communities, the oldcomers and the newcomers, has as much to do with the successes of some as with the difficulties encountered by others. In the course of interviews conducted in Tokyo in 2004-2005, the newcomers who have succeeded in society often expressed their respect for the earlier generations of immigrants (whom they currently refer to as old huaqiao, while emphasising the socio-cultural gulf that divides them.
- 9 The President of the Association of Chinese Scientists and Engineers in Japan says: "Relations between one group of Chinese people living in Japan and another are often virtually non-existent. As between the newcomers and the old huaqiao, this is due to differences in education. Ourselves, we're mostly employed in the high-tech sector, while the old huaqiao are very often in trade or catering: these are different worlds"⁵.
- 10 Beginning in the early 1990s, when the inflow of Chinese students swelled rapidly, the newcomers' image deteriorated in the wake of scandals about phoney students, illegal immigrants and criminal behaviour, these various elements becoming lumped together in the media and the public mind. The older generation of immigrants then sought to distance themselves from these newcomers in order to preserve their own image as a model community. Attitudes on both sides hardened, and it is only recently that the communities have come together for common projects. In December 2004 for instance, they set up a joint committee to consider how best to teach Chinese culture and language to children of the second and third generations. The older generation, seeing their community losing its dynamism, became aware that they had every interest in co-operating with the newcomers.
- 11 The two communities had kept apart from each other all the more easily since they rarely had any family connections, and since the old Chinese community offered few work opportunities to the newcomers. Indeed, the latter hardly ever sought to revive former ties. From the 1980s onward, new migrant networks had been established.

Networks of migrant students and insertion into the middle and upper classes

- 12 The community of the newcomers is mainly composed of Chinese students who have arrived since the 1980s. The choice of coming to Japan with a student visa may be analysed in terms of migratory strategy. Those who arrived in the 1980s often had a stable situation in China and reasonably skilled employment. The principal motivation for choosing to leave as a student was the desire to see beyond the frontiers, to seize new opportunities for training and professional experience. The first students to arrive were quick to send for their spouses, their brothers, sisters or close friends, while helping them to obtain student visas. Thus, student migrant networks were formed based on various big Chinese cities, notably Shanghai and Peking, then on the cities of the northeast (Dongbei) such as Shenyang or Dalian, and on the province of Fujian.
- 13 According to the annual report of the Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Justice, in 1999, Japan's Chinese population was distributed as follows: 41,041 people had come originally from Shanghai (15.1%), 38,524 from Taiwan (14.2%), 33,750 from Heilongjiang (12.4%), 25,750 from Liaoning (9.5%), 23,554 from Fujian (8.7%), 18,548 from Peking (6.8%), and 17,522 from Jilin (6.4%). The most recent available figures, for 2003, show an increase in the population originating from the three Dongbei provinces (Heilongjiang, Liaoning and Jilin), representing 36% of all Chinese residents in Japan. Shanghai has fallen to second position and Taiwan to fifth. These figures also illustrate the steadily falling proportion of Chinese immigrants coming in from the traditional regions of origin: Fujian is only sixth and the Canton region is far behind. The new migratory flow into Japan is dominated by people coming from the big cities and the northern regions.
- 14 These 2003 figures also tell us much about the changes in migratory inflows. The role played by the student networks tends to diminish in the big cities where migratory trajectories are increasingly individual; but it continues to be important in smaller towns or in more remote regions. That is particularly the case with the three Dongbei provinces, and also with Inner Mongolia.
- 15 The Mongolian minority within the Chinese community in Tokyo offers an interesting example⁶. This community numbers some four thousand people across Japan, most of whom live in Tokyo. The first students belonging to the Mongolian minority arrived in the second half of the 1990s with the help of contacts, often with university teachers specialising in Mongolian culture. The teachers enabled a number of researchers to come to China by sending them the letter of invitation they needed in order to obtain visas as student researchers. This one- or two-year visa allows the students to study for the university entrance exam. The first to arrive later brought in their relatives and friends, helping them to obtain letters of invitation from teachers at the same university, and then, little by little, from teachers at other universities. In Japan, knowing someone is important if you want a student visa.
- 16 The student network is a powerful mutual aid system, useful for finding work and accommodation. A Chinese musician of the Mongolian minority told us: "This is my sister's old apartment, which she left me when I first arrived. She's living quite close by, and so is my brother. It's good to live near other Mongolians; we see each other often; we can discuss things, and eat together. In the building [where I live], there are eight apartments, all occupied by Mongolians! There are two of us here: I've taken in a nephew who's doing English studies in a language school (he's hoping to be able to move on somewhere else). My eldest son will graduate this year from the School of

Music at the Inner Mongolian University. He wants to come to Japan as well. I shall have to think about that.” (46 year old man)⁷.

- 17 In some districts of Tokyo, such as Tobu-Nerima and Sugamo, Chinese people belonging to the Mongolian minority are especially numerous. Mongolian students succeed one another in the same apartment. When one of them goes back to China or moves on to better accommodation (because in many cases the apartments are in dilapidated buildings), he passes the lease on to someone else. The students generally work for Japanese entrepreneurs. They advise each other on finding employment or introduce new arrivals to their bosses. One young woman of 28 says that she worked for three years in a hospital canteen; she had replaced her own husband there and worked with two other Mongolians. Later on, she found a job in an izakaya (a traditional Japanese bar) where she had been introduced by a Mongolian friend who was cooking there.
- 18 As with the students coming from other Chinese regions, the educational level of these Mongolians is high. Many are teachers at secondary level or higher; and the great majority are university graduates. Those who stay on after their studies in Japan are the most highly qualified and some obtain posts as university teachers. The fact that education has been the immigration route favoured by the Chinese has imposed a strong element of educational selection on the newcomers. Once they have graduated from Japanese universities, those able to stay and work in Japan have often obtained skilled employment in the best Japanese enterprises. Many others have taken on temporary jobs before starting their own enterprises or businesses. In the space of one generation, these Chinese people who came in as students and who suffered a temporary drop in social status just long enough to pay for their studies have quickly gone on to highly skilled posts and to a stable social situation.
- Socioeconomic diversification and stratification of the new Chinese immigrants
- 19 Of course, all the Chinese students and former students in Japan cannot claim the same success. The selection criteria for obtaining a student visa have been by-passed by some immigrant candidates, whose main aim in coming was to earn money quickly. Other students, once they were in Japan, realised that following courses in the Japanese language and sitting the entrance exams for universities or vocational schools was beyond them. Many found themselves in irregular circumstances. Others found alternative solutions for staying on, such as marrying a Japanese person, or finding a counterfeit contract in a Chinese enterprise. Quite often, success in Japan depends on the educational level students have acquired before leaving China. Within the Chinese population now settled in Japan, one can observe the diversification of socioeconomic status: some have benefited from rapid social advancement, while others have suffered a drop in status compared with what they enjoyed in China.
- 20 The stratification of the Chinese population in Japan arises from the diversity of the careers they have followed in Japan, and also from the diverse range of entry procedures. Figures provided by the Immigration Bureau enable us to observe the variety of migratory trajectories. In 2002, entry by means of a visa for the spouses and children of Japanese citizens went up to 4,572 and the number of residents with this status rose to 53,126 (see Table 2). Those holding this type of visa include some descendants of the Japanese wives and children who stayed on in China after the Japanese were defeated in 1945. But their numbers are falling as they obtain permanent residence visas or Japanese nationality, and this type of visa corresponds today to marriages between Chinese women and Japanese men. The cases of Filipino wives of

Japanese men have come under intense media scrutiny, and it is true that, as a proportion of the Filipino population in Japan, their number is significant. However, in strictly numerical terms, Chinese wives of Japanese men are more numerous. Figures for 2003 put the Chinese wives at 10,242, as against 7,794 Filipino wives (see Table 3).

- 21 We do not have any figures relating to the origins of Chinese women married to Japanese men, but two tendencies can be detected. Both are explained by new migratory inflows from the northeast of China. Firstly, whereas up to now these marriages were the result of meetings in Japan between Chinese women students and Japanese men, it seems that the proportion of marriages organised on the Chinese mainland is growing significantly. Secondly, while the practice of making arranged marriages has for a long time been more prevalent among Fujian women, today the women of Dongbei are in first place. Inter-ethnic marriages of this kind have been going on ever since the new Chinese immigration began, but only these past few years can one speak of a real migratory strategy. Matrimonial agencies, more or less official, have become as active in the great Japanese cities as on the Chinese mainland; the evidence can be seen by browsing their numerous websites or by looking through the small ads in Japan's Chinese newspapers. Similar agencies are particularly numerous in Dongbei⁸. While one cannot speak of a network in this instance, one can imagine that Chinese women will more readily embark on this venture if they have acquaintances already living in Japan. Moreover, most of the matrimonial agencies in Japan were founded by Chinese residents, in co-operation with old acquaintances in the cities they came from. In very many cases, the Japanese applicants for arranged marriages are either old men, or farmers, or low-paid workers. Their Chinese wives find themselves isolated in their homes, or obliged to take low-skilled jobs. Many of these women suffer a drop in social status by comparison with their situation in China.

2. Distribution of Foreign Population in Japan by Residential Status in 2002

(number of people)

	Total population	Chinese	Korean	Brazilian	Filipino	Thai	American
	1,851,758	24,282	625,422	268,332	169,359	33,736	47,970
Spouse and children of Japanese	271,719	53,126	21,868	90,732	45,510	12,838	9,021
Students (college and graduate)	110,415	73,795	17,011	378	598	1,760	1,263
Students (language school)	47,198	35,450	7,236	55	420	445	302
Students able to exchange student-visa for work visa		1,933	581	6	26	42	33
Trainees	39,067	26,945	185	143	2,329	1,421	18
Engineers	20,717	11,433	2,682	39	759	-	644
Specialists in humanities, international services	4,044	3,509	71	460	-	-	6,987
Entertainers	58,359	2,762	777	241	46,547	216	374
Residents	243,451	35,020	9,091	139,826	18,246	2,011	1,583
Permanent residents	223,875	70,599	37,121	31,203	32,796	3,913	7,348
People in irregular situation, estimated January 2004		33,522	46,425	4,728	31,428	14,334	-

Source: Taken from statistics provided by the Ministry of Justice. *shutsunyuu koku kanri*: 2004 (with the exception of the residents in irregular situations, estimated on January 1st 2005; *honpou ni oke

- 22 Another entry mechanism that has developed over recent years is the acquisition of visas for work in the entertainment industry. The number of residents who came in

with this type of visa went up from 931 in 1998 to 2,762 in 2002. Despite this official increase, the proportion of Chinese people living in Japan with this status remains small (see Tables 2 and 4). For a long time, Filipinos have had the highest representation. This type of visa applies mainly to women employed as bar hostesses, even as prostitutes. Employees in this sector are not all necessarily in possession of entertainment visas and it is difficult to measure how quickly things are developing; even so, Chinese female prostitution is certainly more and more visible in Tokyo. Even more than the proliferation of arranged marriages, the increasing numbers of entertainment visas indicates a lowering in the social status of new Chinese arrivals, a step down for some individuals, at any rate the casualisation of their jobs.

3. Mixed Marriages, Numbered by Nationality

	Total	Chinese	Korean	Brazilian	Filipino	Thai	American
Total number of mixed marriages	36,039	11,132	7,563	560	7,911	1,507	1,685
Japanese men/foreign wives	27,881	10,242	5,318	295	7,794	1,445	156
Japanese women/foreign husband	8,158	890	2,235	265	117	62	1,529

Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, "Jinkou doutai toukei", 2003. <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/>

- 23 The diversification of the migratory trajectories of Chinese people in Japan goes hand in hand with the social and cultural stratification of the newcomers' community. The latter is still dominated by students. The acquisition of a student visa is still the main entry procedure for medium- and long-term residence. The number of Chinese people living in Japan with secondary school or training college (or language school) visas is even rising regularly: from 32,370 and 20,050 respectively in 1998 to 73,795 and 35,450 in 2002. Students make up more than a quarter of the Chinese residents, a far higher proportion than for other foreign communities (fewer than 4% of the Korean residents, 0.16% of the Brazilians and 0.6% of Filipinos). So the student visa is still a favoured means of entry among Chinese would-be immigrants.
- 24 The second most common type of status among the Chinese is that of resident or permanent resident. These would be people who have been in Japan for at least three years. According to surveys carried out in the mid-1990s among Chinese people employed in Japan, Wang Jin estimated that 75% were former students⁹. According to figures from the Immigration Bureau on work permits issued to recent graduates from abroad, Chinese people are strongly represented (see Table 2). There were 1,933 in 2002; over the past decade, more than 1,500 each year have obtained work visas at the end of their studies. Wang Jin reports that 92% of the Chinese people employed in Japan in 1996 were university graduates: it seems quite clear that a large proportion of the Chinese population in Japan is highly qualified despite the tendency towards diversification of socioeconomic status.

4. Number of Foreign Residents Holding an « Entertainment Industry » Visa

	Total	Chinese	Korean	Brazilian	Filipino	Thai	American
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Source: Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, "Jinkou doutai toukei", 2003. <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/toukei/>

25 Of course, the population of Chinese people newly arrived in Japan includes people in a variety of different situations. However, within that overall category, a type of resident does emerge: people whose way of life, and whose connection to their roots, their identity, and their societies of residence and of origin contrast sharply with the image of the immigrant worker or the diaspora. These residents would be more like the Hongkongers as described for example by Aihwa Ong¹⁰.

The transnational entrepreneur and the Chinese expatriate: a new sense of place

26 It is not uncommon these days to hear of Chinese people living abroad now choosing to return home, because China offers more in the way of professional opportunities and social mobility, to some, than do their countries of residence. This change in migratory choices based on strategies of accumulation confirms the fact that one can no longer study migration in terms of outflows from countries known as peripheral towards developed countries. Today, migratory flows run across each other and become more complex. In Japan, the Chinese-language press is much exercised by the subject of Chinese immigrants moving back to China; but the numbers of such people are apparently still quite small. The December 2003 issue of *China Scholars Abroad* (Shenzhou xueren)¹¹, a review connected to the Chinese Education Ministry, proposed to keep a special dossier on returning students, with the title: "From the fever to go abroad to the fever to come home: the brains are coming back". In the same issue, however, an article stressed how small was the returning inflow from Japan: "Amongst this incoming tide of Chinese people returning home, why so few from Japan?" Chinese people do express great uncertainty about how long they will stay in Japan¹², as though they were keeping a close eye on the Chinese market. Yet, the vagueness surrounding their future plans does not impede the process of adapting to their host country. By examining the figures of the transnational entrepreneur and the expatriate, both very prominent among the Chinese community in Japan, we hope to describe how the links to the society of origin and to the host society are changing, and what that implies in terms of integration and the concept of citizenship.

Transnational entrepreneurs and regional living space

27 The role expressed by the term "transnational entrepreneur" has been much studied since the 1990s¹³. Transnationalism relates back to the process whereby migrants, in their daily activities, forge and maintain social, economic and political relationships linking their societies of origin and residence and enabling the formation of transnational social fields to extend beyond frontiers. By "transnational Chinese entrepreneurs" we mean those people at the head of enterprises who connect the Chinese and Japanese societies and form, through their professional activities, a transnational social field—which, in this particular case, is a regional social field given the close proximity of the two countries.

5 Number of Naturalisations

	Total	North and South		
		Koreans	Chinese	Others
1996	14,495	9,898	3,976	621
1997	15,061	9,678	4,729	654
1998	14,779	9,561	4,637	581
1999	16,120	10,059	5,335	726
2000	15,812	9,842	5,245	725
2001	15,291	10,295	4,377	619
2002	14,339	9,188	4,442	709
2003	17,633	11,778	4,722	1,133

Source: Ministry of Justice, <http://www.moj.go.jp/TO>

- 28 Transnational entrepreneurs bring to bear the complementary capacities of their adopted country and their country of origin, and sometimes of a third country too. Wang Jin's article, in the same issue, illustrates the case of Chinese entrepreneurs in Japan in the information technology (IT) sector—probably their most favoured sector in that country. The IT company EPS illustrates very well how those Chinese students who arrived in the 1980s, graduated from Japanese universities, succeeded in Japan and then extended their activities back to China. EPS was founded in 1991 in Tokyo by a newcomer from China. Today the company has over 1,000 employees; it was floated on the Stock Exchange in 1998; and it has opened branches in Peking and Shanghai¹⁴. There are admittedly many Chinese transnational entrepreneurs in the IT sector, but they are also involved in a wide range of other activities. We shall borrow from Tajima Junko the example of M., who founded the first Chinese television channel in Japan¹⁵. She arrived in 1988, entered a language school and then attended a short university course in accountancy. Having graduated in 1992, she founded a Chinese newspaper that was the second of its kind in Japan. Its range of activities has widened to include travel services, property and administrative services. In 1997, she launched Japan's first Chinese-language television channel: today it has more than 20,000 subscribers. In the same period, she founded in Shanghai a business also aimed at supplying the needs of migrants in Japan: supplying news via the Internet or organising events to reunite families still in China with their relatives in Japan.
- 29 This kind of extended space for professional activity, reaching out from Japan towards China, is not limited to those few people who, as in the two preceding examples, have succeeded particularly well. There are many Chinese people who have started small businesses offering translation services, employment agencies for recruiting skilled labour from China, or matrimonial agencies. These more modest transnational entrepreneurs are helped in expanding their activities by the growing strength of China's economic resources; and they travel frequently between the two countries.

30 For transnational entrepreneurs like these, the everyday living space is no longer national but regional. Many newcomers, in their interviews, gave us their impressions of living in a continuous space between China and Japan, its continuity hardly troubled by the formalities of crossing borders. So a Chinese researcher tells us that he often goes to China for his work and that, in fact, Japan is “an extension of China”, a sort of new Chinese province¹⁶. As M. describes it, without actually having “returned home”, her life is lived on both sides of the sea. She goes every month to Shanghai. If she sometimes does think of settling down there again, living in the one or the other city does not seem very different to her. Tokyo is less and less a foreign city. All the Chinese products one could want are available there; you hear Chinese spoken everywhere; and Shanghai is only a two-and-a-half-hour flight away. In a sense, the “return home” is already partially complete, or could be effected at any moment without causing much of an upheaval.

The “expatriate”: a fluid connection with the host society and a partial return home

31 Even though most of the Chinese people living in Japan make the China-Japan trip several times a year to visit their families, they are not for all that committed to activities of a transnational nature. In their jobs or their family lives they do not enjoy the same mobility as the transnational entrepreneurs; even so, their way of life, their attitudes to the host society and the way they see themselves do distance them from the traditional image of the immigrant worker. I would apply to this second group the term “expatriate”¹⁷. It designates someone working or living in a foreign country, but the word also conveys a number of different connotations. The expatriate suggests the image of a foreign resident in a relatively privileged situation; one has the feeling that his or her relationship to the host society is not framed as for immigrants in terms of integration or exclusion: the expatriate has sufficient human capital to be able to leave at any moment. Looked at in this way, the expatriate’s image is different from that of the classic immigrant, who has come from a poorer country planning to make a new life. In a slightly caricatured way, the Chinese expatriate resembles the Western man or woman rather than the immigrants from less developed countries. In Japan, there is a deep divide between Western residents and Asian immigrants. Foreigners from the West are considered as expatriates; Asians look like temporary workers. However, the Chinese people in Japan are looking increasingly like expatriates, in their lifestyle, in the image they have of themselves and in their relationship to the country of residence.

6. Foreign Population in Kawasaki and Number of Applications to the Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents

Nationality	Population					Number of applications				
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
	Assembly 1996	Assembly 1998	Assembly 2000	Assembly 2002	Assembly 2004	Assembly 1996	Assembly 1998	Assembly 2000	Assembly 2002	Assembly 2004
Koreans	9,077	-	9,045	9,445	9,265	72	29	57	32	8
Chinese	3,388	-	4,024	5,346	6,553	102	24	77	53	12
Brazilians	1,784	-	2,074	1,371	1,432	8	6	14	5	1
Filipinos	1,523	-	1,308	2,600	3,183	18	6	7	11	4
Americans	560	-	601	655	695	8	0	8	2	4
Peruvians	532	-	423	-	-	1	2	1	-	-
Thai	379	-	386	-	-	5	3	5	-	-
Indians	-	-	213	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Iranians	215	-	-	-	-	5	1	-	-	-
Indonesians	-	-	205	-	-	-	0	3	-	-
British	197	-	205	-	-	2	1	1	-	-
Canadians	150	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-
Other Asians	929	-	1,062	2,433	2,697	22	9	21	25	8
Africans	101	-	131	197	212	2	3	6	7	2
East Europeans Russians	64	-	104	167	243	3	2	1	4	2
Latin American	211	-	208	727	854	2	2	2	1	1
West Europeans Others	853	-	699	1,085	1,279	5	5	7	7	1
Stateless	27	-	-	-	-	0	0	-	-	-
TOTAL	19,491	-	20,681	24,024	26,411	258	93	211	147	43

Source: Figures drawn from unpublished data made available by Kawasaki City.

NB: The wide variation in numbers from one Assembly to the next is explained by the type of campaign to apply. In 1996, the city organised a significant PR operation by sending an explanatory letter to all foreign residents. In 1998, the city organised a significant PR operation by sending an explanatory letter to all foreign residents. In 2000, the city organised a significant PR operation by sending an explanatory letter to all foreign residents. In 2002, the city organised a significant PR operation by sending an explanatory letter to all foreign residents. In 2004, the city organised a significant PR operation by sending an explanatory letter to all foreign residents.

- 32 According to various surveys of foreign residents, the behaviour of the Chinese in such areas as leisure activities, the company they keep, their civic commitments, is closer to that of Europeans and Americans than of other Asian nationals¹⁸. Quite obviously, this similarity in behaviour reflects the similarity in socioeconomic status and educational levels among Chinese people and Westerners in Japan. The only great difference in behaviour is in their attitudes towards naturalisation: more Chinese people will take this step than will Europeans or Americans, because of the advantages conferred by a Japanese passport in terms of mobility.
- 33 Unlike the transnational entrepreneurs, the professional and everyday living space of the expatriates is Japanese society. However, like them, the expatriates aspire to a partial return to their home country and often achieve it. Indeed, it is not uncommon for Chinese couples working in Japan or the spouses of Japanese people to plan for a partial home-coming to China. Those married to Japanese people, in particular, often make such plans: when the Japanese husband or wife retires, they say, they will switch regularly between China and Japan, “six months here and six months there”. To that end, many have already acquired accommodation in China; those coming from the big cities buy a place back home, while those from small towns prefer some more developed region. This kind of partial return home (or “migratory circulation” as it was defined by a team of French researchers in the late 1990s¹⁹) is a quite different project from the dreams expressed in the Chinese diaspora²⁰, of returning to a more or less mythical homeland.
- 34 When Chinese people arrange this partial return for themselves to China, we may suppose that they have also put down roots to some extent in Japan. The permanence

of their links to their country of origin is not opposed to their integration into the country of residence.

Should we take a fresh look at integration and citizenship?

- 35 We may liken the way of life and the sense of place of the Chinese newcomers to that of the other expatriates living in Japan. During the interviews that we conducted, the Chinese do compare themselves to Westerners, but also to Hongkongers in their extreme mobility for professional purposes. Are we witnessing the “Hongkongisation” of the behaviour of Chinese people from the mainland? This question brings us to Aihwa Ong’s work and to her concept of “flexible citizenship”²¹. By this is meant the strategies adopted by and the effects of mobility upon businessmen, technocrats and highly qualified professionals seeking to draw a profit from different nation-states by selecting separate places for their investments, their work and their family lives. Ong develops her theory by testing it against the case of the Hongkongers, but, to some extent, we may find the same phenomenon among mainland Chinese people in Japan.
- 36 The question of naturalisation is perhaps the most meaningful. As we observed earlier, according to studies carried out in the prefectures of Kanagawa and Tokyo, the Chinese have a greater propensity to ask for Japanese nationality than Europeans or Americans. Ministry of Justice figures show that, in numbers of naturalisations per year, the Chinese come second only to the Koreans (see Table 5). The Koreans seeking Japanese nationality are mainly oldcomers, whereas the Chinese applicants are mostly newcomers.
- 37 The interviews we conducted in Tokyo have led us to conclude that, in most cases, naturalisation is clearly seen as a pragmatic step, rather than a search for identity. While the closed nature of Japanese society and historical differences are what still impel many Chinese people to ask for naturalisation, there are many others who do it with the sole purpose of enjoying greater international mobility. In the words of the teacher U (a 57 year-old Japanese man married to a Chinese woman), while for oldcomers nationality was “a question of skin”, for newcomers “it was just a matter of what shirt you wear”. Nationality and identity are increasingly becoming separate things, as W (a 35 year-old woman) puts it: “We don’t attach much importance to nationality, and anyway we’re thinking of changing ours, because Chinese nationality isn’t practical. Perhaps we’ll take Japanese nationality or, preferably, Canadian or American. This certainly doesn’t mean that our cultural identity isn’t important, we will be Chinese whatever happens. Nationality (guoji) and attachment to one’s country (aiguo) are two separate things”²².
- 38 Those for whom Japanese nationality is a problem sometimes plan to go and live for a while in North America, in order to obtain a different nationality, and then come back to work in Japan. Nationality and place of work may be dealt with one at a time. The question of the children’s education is equally indicative of the way in which these Chinese residents take what they can from various countries. It is common for the Chinese to send their children to study in Anglo-Saxon countries at university level; but at the primary or secondary levels they sometimes prefer the Chinese school system to the Japanese.
- 39 In a recent essay, Aihwa Ong speaks of the “flow-through population”, to describe the expatriates in Singapore (among whom the Chinese are ever more numerous), who are free to come and go while enjoying all the advantages of citizenship²³. The expression “flow-through population” reflects the anxiety of the host country on the subject of

integration and civic commitment. Research during the 1990s on the transnational practices of migrants often created the image of migrants who no longer needed to be anchored in the society where they lived²⁴. This absence of anchorage has raised disputes and concerns over what kind of civic commitment such transnational migrants could possibly have, and over the future of national models based on citizenship.

- 40 For some years, researchers have been attempting to show that transnational practices are not necessarily in opposition with being committed to the society of residence. Alexandro Portes and Luis Eduardo Guarnizo, for example, examine how transnational practices can favour social mobility and thus enable immigrants to strengthen their position in the host country by finding ways around some barriers to adaptation²⁵. Even more recently, Christian Joppke and Ewa Morowska demonstrate that the development of transnational practices does not necessarily negate the importance of the nation-state or the anchoring of the immigrant within it²⁶. They assert that developments in various countries of immigration prove that “adaptation and use of host-society resources and the maintenance of ‘transnational’ linkages with the society or origin” go hand in hand. In their view, assimilation—the term these writers prefer to integration—and transnationalism are two simultaneous processes. In the end, the important question is how people living in a transnational or supranational space perform as citizens.
- 41 The case of the Chinese transnational entrepreneurs and expatriates living in Japan illustrates the parallel processes taking place: the widening of their living space—regional, transnational and cosmopolitan—and their adaptation to the host country. Tajima Junko, who has for years been researching the new Chinese immigration to Japan and its transnational character, emphasises that, in contrast with the old huaqiao (she uses huaqiao in its legal sense, namely, Chinese people having permanent residence permits) the new huaqiao often express the feeling of being part of Japanese society²⁷.
- 42 We have shown to what extent the professional and identity practices of some Chinese people in Japan tend to go beyond national frontiers and are part of a process of migratory circulation: over here, and over there, are no longer in opposition, and integration is no longer lived as a necessity, as a choice to be made by those not wishing to return to their homelands. It is true that the concept of migratory circulation has enabled us, now that it is necessary, to envisage migratory phenomena from a different point of view, freed from the dichotomy between integration and return to the homeland. Nonetheless, it is also true that, with time, the process of integration continues inevitably. We understand integration in both its senses: the immigrant adapting to his society of residence and the host country adapting and changing to take account of its new members²⁸.
- 43 It is difficult to measure someone’s level of integration since the process is dynamic and never-ending. However, there is a range of currently accepted criteria by which the integration of migrants into the host society can be estimated: these include mixed marriages, children succeeding at school and participation in political life. If we do apply these criteria, the Chinese newcomers in Japan show a higher level of integration into Japanese society than do many other foreigners. When we consider inter-ethnic marriages, we have seen that Chinese spouses are particularly numerous. Figures for the offspring of these mixed marriages are equally meaningful: in 2003 alone, 3,133

children were born of Chinese mothers and Japanese fathers and 833 children of Chinese fathers and Japanese mothers²⁹. Turning to children's education, most of the children of Chinese nationality, unlike European or American children, are taught in Japanese schools. As compared with the children of Chinese people from Latin America, the Nikkeijin, it would seem that, on the whole, the Chinese children encounter far fewer difficulties with their education. The fact that, at secondary level, a large number of them attend private schools tends to prove their success, given that in Japan private schools are very selective.

- 44 When it comes to political behaviour, here again, compared with other foreign communities, the Chinese newcomers demonstrate significant civic participation. Chinese people are deeply involved in local politics, a fact that overturns the stereotypical image of Chinese communities abroad, the idea that they are turned in upon themselves and remain indifferent to the political life of the host countries. Let us take, as an example, the case of Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreigner Residents (Kawasaki-shi gaikokujin daihyô kaigi). We met the Chinese representatives and former representatives, as well as the Japanese managerial staff and the leaders of associations affiliated to the Council. It was set up in 1996, being the first such council in Japan; and it remains today the most active in the country. The selection of Council members is made on the basis of applicants' CVs by a selection committee made up of association leaders and researchers. Ever since it was set up, the number of applications by Chinese residents has always been particularly high, compared with those coming from other foreign communities (see Table 6). At the time of the first session in 1996, 102 Chinese people had sent in their applications, from a total population of 3,388 people, as against 72 Koreans (their community being twice as numerous) and 8 Brazilians from a total population of 1,784 people. With the exception of the 1998 session, Chinese applications have always been the most numerous, which seems to reflect a desire to make an investment in local affairs.
- 45 Integration is a two-way process. Migrants adapt, and become integrated into the host country. But equally, this society must accept them, and must itself change. Even though the Chinese seem to suffer less from public ostracism than did the Koreans ten years ago or than do the Brazilian Nikkeijin today, there is a recent tendency for the press and public opinion to lay responsibility for the rise in criminality at the Chinese door. It is questionable whether they have really been accepted.
- 46 Japanese ethnic and national identity rests today upon a homogeneous concept of the nation. This concept, very widely shared among the people, presupposes that the Japanese people is united by blood and by a unique culture: race and culture are intimately linked. This concept has until recently led the Japanese to reject, even deny, the minorities living in Japan (the Burakumin, the Ainu, the Okinawans, the Koreans) and explains the Japanese people's continuing resistance to changing their ideas of citizenship or, indeed, even the definition of Japanese identity.
- 47 The Chinese population in Japan is growing. And, while it is integrating into the host country, it maintains strong links with the outside world by virtue of its transnational professional practices and expatriate status. To what extent can its presence challenge the Japanese concepts of the nation or of citizenship? Other foreign communities have had contrasting experience. The Japanese researchers Miyajima Takashi and Kajita Takamichi consider that the presence of a growing number of foreign residents has already brought the Japanese to reconsider their concept of citizenship³⁰. The Korean

community, now in its fourth generation and ever more numerous and clearly resettled in Japan, is making a considerable contribution. Today, one can be sociologically Japanese without being so ethnically: that is the case with the oldcomers³¹. As in Germany, the nature of this citizenship/nationality should continue to evolve, from being an ethnic concept to being a civic concept. The work of Tsuda Takeyuki on the Brazilian Nikkeijin—who are ethnically Japanese but culturally foreigners—is more pessimistic as to Japan’s capacity to change. In Takeyuki’s view, Japanese people confronted by the Nikkeijin have become newly aware of their own cultural distinction, which has led them to reaffirm their ethnic and nationalist identity, thus strengthening the hegemonic nature of the Japanese nation-state³². The presence of the Nikkeijin, rather than opening up Japanese concepts of identity, has forced Japanese people back into their entrenched position, a culturalist definition of their identity that tends to exclude the Nikkeijin. The new Chinese immigrants in Japan are neither ethnically nor sociologically Japanese; even though some kind of resocialisation is inevitably taking place, their Chinese references are still strong. Because they are numerous, and because, though making progress towards integration, they keep their strong Chinese cultural identity, they will also contribute towards challenging Japanese concepts of the nation and of citizenship.

48 Translated from the French original by Philip Liddell

NOTES

1. On this subject, see for example Miyajima Takashi, “Is Japan Becoming a Country of Immigration?”, an unpublished account of a lecture at the Maison Franco-Japonaise, June 21st 2003; Kajita Takamishi, *Kokusaika to aidentiti* (Internationalisation and Identity), Tokyo, Mineruba, 2001; or Yamanaka Keiko, “Theory versus Reality in Japanese Immigration Policy”, in Cornelius Wayne A., Martin Philip L., Hollifield John F. (eds.), *Controlling Immigration. A Global Perspective*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1994, pp. 411-414.
2. Kajita Takamishi, *op. cit.* p. 205.
3. Statistics from the Ministry of Justice: <http://www.moj.go.jp/TOUKEI>
4. *Zhongwen daobao*, No. 549, January 1st 2005. By way of comparison, in 2000, the number of Chinese people in the whole of the European Union amounts to 200,000 people, and the European Federation Chinese Organisation put the entire ethnic Chinese population at a little under a million (taking into account naturalised people and their descendants). Cf. “Understanding Migration between China and Europe”, *International Migration*, special issue, Vol. 41, No. 3, 2003, p. 7.
5. Interview conducted in Tokyo, March 1st 2005.
6. Information about Tokyo’s Mongolian minority is based on a dozen interviews conducted in Tokyo with Chinese members of the Mongolian minority and on participation in the activities of Mongolian associations.
7. Interview conducted in Tokyo, March 9th 2005.

8. Interview with Professor Tajima Junko, November 18th 2004, following a research visit she made to Changchun and to a little town near Harbin.
9. Wang Jin, “Zainichi Chuugokujin shuushokusha no jittai to ishiki” (Chinese people employed in Japan: realities and identity), Master’s Degree Dissertation, Centre for Japanese Studies at the Peking University of Languages, 1996.
10. Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*, Duhran and London, Duke University Press, 1999.
11. See the website <http://211.151.90.1/newchisa/web/8/2003-12-20>.
12. Uncertainty over plans to return to China was often expressed during the interviews we conducted. It was also stressed in a survey carried out in Kanagawa Prefecture, located to the west of Tokyo: “*Kanagawa ken gaikoku seki jûmin seikatsu jittai chôsa hôkokusho*”, Research Group on Internationalisation Policies of the Kanagawa local authority, 2001, 396 pp.
13. We have borrowed from Nina Glick Schiller, Christina Blanc-Szanton and Linda Basch their definition of transnationalism in *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments and Deterritorialized Nation-States*, New York, Routledge, 1993.
14. *Zhongwen daobao*, No. 537, October 1st 2004, p. 8.
15. Tajima Junko, “Transnational space no shisou – chuugokukei yijuusha to teichaku no puroseshu wo chuushin ni” (The notion of transnational space – how the Chinese came in and put down roots) in Tajima Junko (ed.), *Toushiteki Sekai, Community, Ethnicity*, Tokyo, Akashi, 2003.
16. Interview conducted in Tokyo, August 2004
17. “Expatriate” is used here in the same way as in the work of Aihwa Ong. We are not concerned with employees sent abroad by their enterprise or their administration. “Expatriate” applies to highly qualified workers (executives, engineers, researchers) and also to residents who do not work themselves but who, like the others, have a privileged socioeconomic status (as spouses, for example, of Japanese people). See Aihwa Ong, “Urban Assemblages: an Ecological Sense of the Knowledge Economy”, in Françoise Mengin (dir.), *Cyber China: Reshaping Identities in the Age of Information*, New York, Palgrave, 2004, pp. 237-253.
18. On this subject, see the survey by Kanagawa cited above, as well as a survey carried out in Tokyo in 1997: “*Tôkyô-do zaijû gaikokujinn seikatsu jittai chôsa*”, Tôkyô-do Seikatsu Bunka Kyoku.
19. See Kamel Dorai, Marie-Antoinette Hily and Emmanuel Ma Mung, “La circulation migratoire”, *Migrations Etudes*, No. 84, December 1998, pp. 1-12.
20. The notion of diaspora has been frequently redefined over the past fifteen years. However, taking our lead from Michel Bruneau, we consider that, as opposed to the transnational community, the diaspora is defined by the reterritorialisation of individuals in the place of settlement, who are thus cut off from their places of origin. The place of residence takes precedence over the place of origin; and the connection to that place (real or imagined) is often replaced by the idealisation of the homecoming. This complete separation is not found among the transnational community. The distinction between the diaspora and the transnational community, as proposed by Bruneau, can be extended to the case of the expatriates, as we have defined them. Michel Bruneau, “Pour une approche de la territorialité dans la migration internationale: les notions de diaspora et de communauté transnationale”, contribution to the conference *Circulations et Territoires dans la migration internationale*, March 16th-18th 2005, Toulouse.

21. Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship. The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*, Durham NC and London, Duke University Press, 1999.
 22. Interview conducted in Tokyo, February 3rd 2005.
 23. Aihwa Ong, "Urban Assemblages: An Ecological Sense of the Knowledge Economy", *op. cit.*
 24. See in particular the book by Yasemin Soysal, *Limits of Citizenship: Migrants and Postnational Membership in Europe*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1994.
 25. Alexandro Portes, Luis Eduardo Guarnizo, "Transnational communities", *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2, March 1999, pp. 217-477.
 26. Christian Joppke, Ewa Morawska (dir.), *Toward Assimilation and Citizenship: Immigrants in Liberal Nation-States*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
 27. Tajima Junko, "Toransunashonaru sôsharu speisu no shisô" (The Transnational Social Space), in *Toshiteki seikai, comyuniti, esunishiti* (Urban World, Community, Ethnicity), 2003, pp. 47-79.
 28. On this subject, see Demetrios G. Papademetriou, "Policy considerations for immigrant integration", *Migration immigration source*, October 1st 2003, <http://www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=171>, and also Jacqueline Costa-Lascoux, "Les échecs de l'intégration, un accroc au contrat social", in *Pouvoirs*, No. 111, 2004, pp. 19-28.
 29. *Zhongwen daobao*, September 16th 2004.
 30. Miyajima Takashi, "Immigration and the redefinition of 'citizenship' in Japan: 'One People-One Nation' in Question", in T K Oommen, *Citizenship and national identity: from colonialism to globalism*, New Delhi, Sage, 1997.
 31. Kajita Takamichi, "The challenge of incorporating foreigners in Japan: 'Ethnic Japanese' and 'Sociological Japanese'", in Weiner, Myron; Tadashi Hanami, *Temporary workers or future citizens: Japanese and US migration policies*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1998.
 32. Tsuda Takeyuki, *Strangers in the Ethnic Homeland. Japanese Brazilian Return Migration in Transnational Perspective*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2003, p. 48.
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RÉSUMÉS

Over the past two decades, Chinese students in large numbers have settled in Japan: a rate of immigration recalling that of the early twentieth century. The inflow has brought about the creation of a Chinese community whose members are highly qualified and economically well integrated into society. Japan's new Chinese residents are intellectuals by profession. Their lifestyle and the way they present themselves set them apart from traditional immigrants. The concepts of "transnational entrepreneurs" and "expatriates" are called on here to account for the connections they maintain with China and Japan.