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EXILED TO THE ANCESTRAL LAND: THE RESETTLEMENT, STRATIFICATION AND ASSIMILATION OF THE REFUGEES FROM VIETNAM IN CHINA

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Based on published sources as well as information gathered through observations and interviews, this article intends to provide a general account of the adaptation of the Vietnamese refugees in China since the late 1970s. The description and analysis are focused on three aspects of the social-political life of this community, namely, its initial resettlement, its subsequent division, dispersion and stratification, and the process, problems and prospects of its assimilation. The article argues that whereas Western countries adopted the International Refugee Regime – primarily a European product – in resettling the Vietnamese refugees, China's resettlement policies reflected her experience in handling the returned overseas Chinese from Southeast Asia in the 1950s and 1960s. Although the relocation temporarily reduced all migrants to refugees, the diverse nature of the migrant community, the different local conditions in China, as well as China's official policies contributed to the reemergence of social-economic stratification among the migrants, and this was accompanied by their geographic dispersion. Though assimilation has been going on ever since they entered China, the migrants have managed to maintain their group identity, which, however, is not sustainable.

Keywords: refugee; returned overseas Chinese; migration; adaptation; resettlement; China; Vietnam

Over thirty years have passed since nearly 300,000 residents of Vietnam, most of whom were ethnic Chinese, left for China as a result of the deterioration of Sino-Vietnamese relations. Their migration was widely covered in Chinese and international media and attracted much scholarly attention in the late 1970s and 1980s.[1] Since then, the scholarly

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1 Chang 1982; Godley 1980; Ly 1978; Nguyen 1979; Porter 1980; Unger 1987.

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circle has maintained its interest in this community. Numerous studies have been conducted on the history of the Chinese community in Vietnam,[2] the adaptations of Vietnamese refugees in Hong Kong and Western countries,[3] as well as individual communities of former Vietnamese refugees in China.[4] However, there has not been any general study on the experience of this migrant community.

This article intends to provide a broad account of the adaptation of the Chinese from Vietnam in China since the late 1970s. My description and analysis will be based on published sources as well as information gathered through observations and interviews during my recent visits to over thirty state farms for returned overseas Chinese, as well as to numerous cities in China. I will focus on the social-political life of this community, its initial resettlement, its subsequent division, dispersion and stratification, and the process, problems and prospects of its assimilation. I argue that whereas Western countries adopted the International Refugee Regime, which was primarily a European product, in resettling the Vietnamese refugees, China's resettlement policies were mainly based on her experience in handling the returned overseas Chinese from Southeast Asia in the 1950s and 1960s. Although the relocation temporarily reduced all migrants to the status of refugees, the diverse nature of the migrant community, the different local conditions in China, as well as China's official policies contributed to the reemergence of social-economic stratification among the migrants, and this was accompanied by their geographic dispersion. Assimilation has been going on ever since the migrants entered China but throughout this they have managed to maintain their group identity, which, however, is not sustainable in the future.

RESETTLEMENT

The migrants from Vietnam in China are often described as *Yuenan nanmin* 越南难民 ('refugees from Vietnam'), *Yuenan huaqiao* 越南华侨 ('overseas Chinese from Vietnam'), *Yuenan guiqiao* 越南归侨 ('returned overseas Chinese from Vietnam'), or *Yuenan guinanqiao* 越南归难侨 ('returned overseas Chinese and refugees from Vietnam'). All of these phrases conceal both the relatively local geographical origins and the social-cultural diversity of that community. Although there were a few Chinese from southern Vietnam among the refugees, most of those who moved to China were from northern Vietnam. Their local geographical concentration, however, did not reduce their social-cultural plurality in any way. Among the refugees were residents of large cities as well as small or large villages and towns. Some were from coastal regions, whereas others came from interior areas. Some came from areas with large Chinese concentrations, while others had lived among the Vietnamese. There were people of different occupations with disparate levels of education.

Ethnically, most of the refugees were Han Chinese, but there were also members of such non-Han groups as Zhuang, Yao, Miao (Hmong), Dong, Jing (Vietnamese), and others among them. The Han Chinese can be further divided into at least four sub-groups:

2 Chau, 1992; Chau, 2004; Han X., 2009, pp. 1–36; Li B. 1990; Marsot, 1993; Xu and Lin 2011; Yi Yuan 2011.

3 Chan 1987; Chen X. 2007; Davis 1991; Desbarats 1985; Hawthorne 1982; Knudsen 1988; Gold 1992; Thomas 2000; Robinson 2000; Chan Y. ed. 2011.

4 Chen Y. 2010; Jiang 2009; Yao 2009; Qu 2008; Zeng 1988; Han S. 1999; Nagura 2008; Kong 2010.

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Cantonese, Ngay (Hakka), Danka fishermen, and Bianmin, or frontier dwellers. Linguistically, most refugees could speak multiple languages or dialects, but the combinations were different, and so were their levels of proficiency. For instance, most of those who lived in big cities and Vietnamese-dominated rural communities could speak Cantonese and Vietnamese, Ngay and Vietnamese, or all three, and those who had attended Chinese schools could also speak standard Chinese. Many of those living in Chinese-dominated rural communities in eastern Quang Ninh could speak Ngay and Cantonese, or Ngay only. In those areas, only those who had attended regular Vietnamese schools or had worked and lived in other parts of Vietnam were able to speak Vietnamese. The non-Han minority people were usually able to speak both Vietnamese and their own language, and some of them could speak one or two Chinese dialects as well.

Though the breakdown of Sino-Vietnamese relations was the ultimate reason for their exodus, the immediate causes of their migrations to China were divergent. Some left Vietnam voluntarily, albeit under indirect pressure, and others were expelled by the Vietnamese government. Among those who acted of their own will, some left because of their concerns about the consequences of Sino-Vietnamese hostility, some moved to escape military conscription or for imagined better life conditions in China, and still others viewed China as a stepping stone to a third destination. Their methods of migration also varied markedly. The city dwellers would usually take trains to Lao Cai and then walk across the border. Though a train ride from Hanoi to Lao Cai took as many as eighteen hours and the trains were usually very crowded, railway transportation was still the safest and most convenient means of migration at that time. Some refugees travelled to Dongxing and other border towns by automobile, but many villagers had to walk all the way from their home to the border, and their journey on foot could take as long as a week. The fishermen from the islands and coastal areas, and some of the other people as well, would sail in boats, both large and small, to Qisha, Beihai and other harbors in China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. While some carried official travel documents and were able to pass through the checkpoints along the border legally, most of the others had to wade across the narrow rivers separating the two countries and enter China without lawful approval from either China or Vietnam.

Once in China, they all became refugees and were granted the same status and received the same treatment. It seems then that the major differences existing among them suddenly disappeared and, for a brief moment, their exodus rendered them all equal. China's policies toward the refugees, which differed greatly from those of its Asian neighbors as well as Western countries, contributed to their equality. Whereas most Asian countries and regions were only willing to offer first asylum to the refugees and did not permit all, or indeed any of them, to live in their territories permanently, China allowed all the refugees that entered the country to remain living there. In some of the first asylum ports, refugees had to wait for as long as four or five years in refugee camps before being relocated to a third country. This gave the various agencies and governments sufficient time to examine the refugees' backgrounds and skills, but in China, all refugees were taken to their new homes after only a brief stay in these camps, and the government simply had no time to inspect those refugees individually. In Western countries, refugees would gradually settle in urban areas and were permitted to disperse and live among local

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residents,[5] whereas in China, the policy was to send most refugees to rural areas and to settle them as communities rather than individual families. In the United States and some other Western countries, voluntary agencies played an important part in the resettlement of the refugees, allowing more variation and flexibility,[6] but in China the entire process was strictly managed by the government, which applied a unified policy to all refugees. In many aspects, whereas most Western and Asian governments adopted the techniques and policies that constitute the International Refugee Regime first developed in post-WWII Europe,[7] China used its own measures based primarily on her experiences in resettling the returned overseas Chinese in the 1950s and 1960s.

Almost all refugees entering China were taken to the various state farms in southern China, and only a tiny minority was permitted to stay in the cities. According to China's official statistics, over 270,000 refugees entered China from Vietnam in the late 1970s, making China one of the top destinations for Indochinese refugees.[8] One difference between the refugees in China and those in other countries is that the percentage of ethnic Chinese among the refugees in China is higher than that in most other countries. Among the refugees in China, 160,000 were relocated to the 86 state farms for returned overseas Chinese in six provinces in southern China; 70,000 were settled on 147 regular state farms in the same provinces; and over 30,000 were permitted to stay in the two fishing communities (Qisha and Qiaogang) in southern Guangxi. Among the six provinces, Guangdong (including Hainan) received 110,000 refugees, Guangxi 90,000, Yunnan 40,000, Fujian 30,000, and Jiangxi 1,300.[9] In other words, almost all refugees in China became either farmers or fishermen.

Many former refugees remember their relocation from Vietnam to China as a loss of not only property but also status. Initially the Chinese government made no distinction between city dwellers and villagers and did not recognize either the positions formerly held or the credentials obtained by many refugees when they were in Vietnam. Mr. Li in Guangzhou considers himself a very lucky man because he was one of the very few migrants who have not spent a single day on a farm. A graduate of Chinese schools in Vietnam, he was sent to study at a university in China in the late 1950s and early '60s. After graduation, he went back to Vietnam and became a professor of Chinese language at a university in Hanoi. Upon returning to China in 1978 he was taken to the campus of a university in Guangzhou, then a temporary refugee camp. He assisted in managing the camp for its officials, who appreciated his education and experience as a teacher. He was then recruited to teach in a newly created Chinese language training program and permitted to stay in Guangzhou.

Xie Ziwei, another Chinese who had worked as a professor at a Vietnamese university, was offered a teaching position by Jinan University in Guangzhou. Local newspapers listed

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5 Robinson 2000, pp. 127–59.

6 Desbarat 1985, p. 526; Robinson 2000, pp. 127–59.

7 Malkki, 1995, p. 498.

8 The number of Indochinese refugees in China is next only to that in the US (1.4 million). Other major destinations for the refugees include Canada (200,000), Australia (185,000), and France (130,000). Robinson 2000, p. 2.

9 Fang and Xie 1993, p. 119.

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the Xie family as the first refugee family from Vietnam permitted to stay in a city.[10] The Chinese government promised to find suitable jobs for the professionals among the refugees, but then added that if there were not enough suitable jobs, then those professionals should be sent to farms to wait for reassignment. Overall, the number of refugees who were allowed to stay in cities was very small. In Fujian, several hundred former farmers from Quang Ninh Province of Vietnam became workers in a beer brewery in the city of Xiamen by pure luck – they came to China late enough for all the farms to have become too crowded to take them. Their relocation to this coastal city caused much distress for a group of refugees from Haiphong sent to a farm near Xiamen. In Guangxi, only 6.5 per cent of the more than 100,000 refugees were assigned jobs in non-agricultural enterprises.[11]

DISPERSION AND STRATIFICATION

The resettlement caused the division of the refugee community into a great majority of farmers and fishermen, and a small group of urban professionals and workers. Many were not willing to move to the farms. The refugees in the two camps in Guangzhou (one at Jinan University, and the other in Sanyuanli) all refused to leave the city, and because of that, came into serious confrontation with Chinese officials. A group of refugees from southern Vietnam even threw their South Vietnam identity cards at the faces of Chinese officials, claiming that they were not Chinese citizens and demanding to be sent to third countries. By order of the offended officials, some of these refugees were transferred to an enclosed camp and were detained there for about a week. Before China's National Day (October 1) in 1978, the police forcibly moved all the refugees from Guangzhou to the farms. One lady, whose husband had been a school principal in Vietnam and whose family had suffered at the hands of the Vietnamese police, recalls that being expelled from Guangzhou brought much bitterness to her heart. "In Vietnam, the police bothered us because we are Chinese. Now we are in the motherland, but the police here did not treat us any better," she said. After the incident, the government closed the two camps in Guangzhou and subsequent groups of refugees were taken directly to their farms. Some refugees from southern Vietnam tried to move to Hong Kong by breaking through the checkpoint at Shenzhen, but failed.

Farming life was as detestable for the Chinese from southern Vietnam as for those from northern cities. A couple who now lives in Yuanjiang in Yunnan remembers their transition from factory work to farming as a very hard experience. In their late thirties, and living then in Haiphong, they left Vietnam with their three children in 1978. The husband had attended Chinese schools and later a professional school. In 1978 he was a metal worker of the fifth rank, which was a well-paid and respectable job. His wife was a factory worker of the fourth rank. After entering China, they were resettled on a state farm in Yuanjiang and became farmers. "I immediately burst into tears when I first saw the farm," she recalled. Most other former city dwellers shared that experience. For this couple, the transition was threefold and thus particularly painful. It was not only a move from Vietnam to China, but also a change from a city to a village, and from well-paid factory

10 Xie 2009, pp. 86–89.

11 Zeng 1988, p. 23.

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work to poor and hard farming life. In Qiaogang of Beihai, a Mr. Zhang, an official of a county government in Vietnam, was reduced to working as a fisherman.[12]

A second division of the migrant community happened during and after their resettlement on state farms, between those who intended or had to stay in China and those who were determined to move to another country and who succeeded in doing so. Among those who did not want to stay were some who had, from the very beginning, taken China to be merely a first asylum country, but there were also people who had planned to stay permanently in China but then decided to leave because of harsh conditions on the state farms, amongst other factors. For some refugees, the attempt to move out of China was a response to China's policy of resettling most refugees on these farms. Though the living conditions there were better than those in ordinary villages in China, they failed to meet most migrants' expectations. When asked whether living conditions on the farms were better or worse than their living conditions in Vietnam at their time of relocation, many said they were worse, but some did believe they were better. However, when asked whether living conditions on the farms were better or worse than their expectations, the migrants unanimously answered that they were much worse. Some complained that they had been deceived by China's propaganda, which always portrayed China as the happy and prosperous socialist motherland. For the majority of the refugees in the camps outside China, the order of preference for countries of asylum was: 1) the USA, 2) Canada, 3) France, and 4) Australia.[13] Many refugees in China also saw those countries as better choices than China.

Since refugees who had already entered China were not permitted to transfer to third countries unless they had relatives in other countries who were willing to sponsor their immigration,[14] those who wanted to leave China but did not have sponsors had to smuggle themselves out of the country, and there were migrants from almost every farm who participated in this illegal movement. Usually the smugglers would first form a secret group, and then put money together to buy a boat and hire a captain, who would take them to Hong Kong or some other destination, or they would simply make a payment to a "snake-head" who would take them by boat to the same places. The illegal journey could be rather costly. A couple in Yunnan paid 500 yuan and two gold rings to a snake-head for their trip to Hong Kong. Considering the fact that most state farm employees earned less than 30 yuan a month at that time, this was a rather large amount. The journey cost much less for those who lived near the coast; a refugee from Guangxi paid only 200 yuan to make the trip.[15] This partly explains why there were fewer escapees from state farms much further away from the coast.

12 Yi 2011, pp. 55–56.

13 Knudsen 1988, p. 42.

14 There were two boat teams (one of seventy people from southern Vietnam and another one of eighty people from northern Vietnam) that were rescued by Chinese vessels on the sea and taken to China. All members of the two teams were later relocated to other countries and it seems that not all the members had sponsors in those other countries. Knudsen 1988, pp. 28–30, 47–49. They were permitted to leave possibly because they were mostly Vietnamese.

15 Chen Y. 2010, p. 23.

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A former refugee from a state farm in Fujian proudly announced that his elder sister was the organizer of the first illegal journey from Mainland China to Hong Kong in late 1978. Her husband was a shipbuilder back in Vietnam, and the couple was able to collect enough money from over 100 people to build a boat and hire a captain, who helped sail all of them to Hong Kong. The sister now lives in New Zealand. It is hard to confirm his claim since the secretive nature of the journeys makes it difficult to determine which one was the first. It is generally agreed, however, that among the refugees in China, those from southern Vietnam and the big cities in northern Vietnam were the ones who began these illegal journeys. Among the refugees taken to a state farm in eastern Guangdong, the first to escape were several Chinese from southern Vietnam, who mysteriously disappeared from the farm the morning after they arrived there. It is believed that those from southern Vietnam could speak the local Chaozhou-Shantou dialect and were therefore able to collect information from the locals, whereas those from northern Vietnam could only speak Cantonese or Ngay and were not able to communicate with them; moreover, those from the south were also better educated and knew more about the world beyond Vietnam and China and, finally, were wealthier and able to afford the payments to the snake-heads. Following the Chinese from southern Vietnam were migrants from big cities in northern Vietnam, who were better educated in general and also wealthier than those from rural Vietnam. However, migrants from villages also participated, and even some of the state farm residents who had returned from other countries in earlier years – and local villagers too – would disguise themselves as Vietnamese refugees in order to take part in these illegal journeys. At the state farm in eastern Guangdong, 320 Vietnamese refugees have remained missing to this day, and it is believed that they all joined the illegal migrations. At another state farm in suburban Guangdong, 869 of 2,221 Vietnamese refugees participated in illegal migrations in 1979 and 1980.[16] Most of the illegal emigrants left China by sailing from Beihai in Guangxi, Zhuhai in Guangdong, or Fuqing and other places in Fujian. It was an underground mass movement and some of those who remained behind now complain that they failed to make the move not because they did not want to, but because they lacked sufficient education and therefore did not know where to go, and moreover were too poor to pay for the trip.

Whereas some complained that China failed to stop the refugees from moving to Hong Kong, others argued that once the refugees insisted on leaving, there was nothing China could do to stop them. China could invite blame for whatever measures it adopted. If China was kind to the refugees and tried to help them move to Hong Kong, it would be blamed for shirking responsibility, but if China tried to keep the refugees in China, it could be accused of forcible detention.[17] There is no evidence that China actually helped the refugees to escape, but it might be true that China did not take strict measures to root out the illegal journeys either.

Not all of those who arrived in Hong Kong succeeded in staying there or moving to a third country. They had to convince Hong Kong officials that they had come directly from Vietnam in order to be permitted to stay or move to another country, and that was not an

16 Yao 2009, pp. 58–59.

17 Davis 1991, pp. 138–39.

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easy task. The officials in Hong Kong were able to design many techniques to expose the lies of the refugees, including making little refugee children identify a popular candy made in Mainland China. Between 1979 and the mid-1990s, about 24,000 refugees from Vietnam were returned to Mainland China by the Hong Kong government,[18] but it is hard to confirm, among the 143,000 refugees who managed to move to other countries through Hong Kong, how many had arrived in Hong Kong by way of Mainland China. Whereas two categories of refugee have attracted much scholarly and humanitarian attention – those who were granted refugee status but had to spend some time in closed camps, and those who failed to pass the screening and had to be repatriated to Vietnam, either voluntarily or forcibly – a third category, those who were returned to Mainland China against their own will, has been largely forgotten. It seems that most people agree that once they had entered China they no longer had the right to move to other countries. Despite all the criticisms laid on how Hong Kong handled the refugees, the colony was arguably more benevolent toward the refugees than most of its Asian neighbors and, partly because of that, it remained one of the most attractive first asylum ports for Vietnamese refugees, and very likely the most desirable port of all for ethnic Chinese refugees from the late 1970s to the 1990s.[19]

The Haiphong metal worker and his wife in Yuanjiang tried to escape with their children and some of their relatives. They first travelled from Yuanjiang to Beihai, but shortly after arriving there, the husband was picked up by the police on the street. The wife was able to get to Hong Kong with the three children, however, the officials in Hong Kong were able to prove that they had been settled in Mainland China and decided that they had to return to Yunnan. The family was thus reunited on their farm in Yuanjiang. A certain Mr. Chen from a state farm in Guangxi first escaped to Hong Kong in the late 1970s but was soon sent back to Guangxi. In the 1990s he managed to land himself in Australia, but was again returned to China. Another migrant from the Laibin State Farm in Guangxi made as many as four attempts at escaping, but failed all four times.[20] The large wave of illegal journeys to Hong Kong subsided in the early 1980s, as the United States and other Western countries reduced the number of refugees they took and the Hong Kong government adopted deterrence measures. There was another surge around 1987 due to rumors that Hong Kong would offer amnesty to all illegal immigrants, and minor waves of illegal immigration to Hong Kong and other regions continued till the 1990s.

There was no serious punishment, however, for those who failed in their attempts to emigrate and had to return to their farms, and that was one of the reasons some refugees made multiple attempts to escape. One man from a state farm in Yunnan recalled that his family tried to escape but gave up the attempt once they reached Guangdong. After returning to the farm, he was criticized in his class by his teacher for failing to show his love for the motherland, but that was the only punishment for him. "But not long after that, my

18 Chen 2007, pp. 61–63.

19 For an overview of local and international controversy over Hong Kong's policy toward refugees from Vietnam, see Davis, 1991, pp. 78–159; Thomas 2000; for conditions in the Hong Kong camps and their impact on the mental health of asylum seekers in the early 1980s, see Chan 1987; for numbers of Vietnamese refugees reaching various first asylum ports in Asia, see Robinson 2000, appendix 1.

20 Chen Y. 2010, p. 24.

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teacher migrated to another country," he added. On one farm, the penalty for an unsuccessful escapee was to have the time he or she had spent on the farm before the illegal journey deducted from his or her years of service, which might have a minor effect on his or her salary level and benefit package; on one coastal farm, the escapees would be expelled from the farm and sent to another one in a remote area, but those expelled would reappear on their former farm only a few days after they were taken away, and no effort was made to get rid of them again. On some occasions, these farms had to provide the escapees with extra financial aid to help them buy furniture and utensils to replace what they had sold to pay for their passage to other countries.

Though there are no official statistics available, it is safe to say that a large portion of the refugees from Vietnam who entered China later left for other regions and countries by either lawful or illegal means. On some farms, more than half of the refugees that came in the late 1970s have left China by now. Most of those who have chosen, or been forced, to stay see those who have moved out of China as the lucky ones because of the higher income and better living conditions they will have enjoyed elsewhere. In recent years, as a result of China's rapid economic development and ensuing improvement of living conditions, more and more of those who are still in China have come to realize that it has not been that bad for them to have remained there, and a few of those who moved out in the late 1970s have now returned to China to be reunited with family.

The third major split in the migrant community started in 1985, when the central government of China issued the important Edict No. 26 concerning the affairs of the returned overseas Chinese. According to this document, returned overseas Chinese would be permitted to leave the farms for cities and other places in order to join families and relatives, to take new jobs, or to start their own businesses. For a brief period, the government even offered financial aid to people who were willing to leave the farms. Since then, a large group of migrants has left the farms and settled in other places, including Guangzhou, Kunming, Nanning, Xiamen, and other cities in southern China as well as border towns like Dongxing and Hekou. In a sense, this third split is a continuation of the first, and together they caused the emergence of two major groups within the migrant community, namely, the urban group and the rural group. Most of the elite members of the refugee community became urban dwellers. This elite group was initially very small but it gradually expanded. In Guangxi, by 1987, among the approximately 100,000 refugees in that province, nine had become members of the provincial-level People's Congress or political consultative conference, four had been appointed as officials of the deputy county magistrate rank, six professionals had been promoted to associate professor rank, twenty-six had earned the title of engineer, and thirty-nine had become leaders of state farms or factories.[21] In Qiaogang of Beihai, in 1980, over 68 per cent of the around 20,000 migrants were illiterate, 21.7 per cent had only finished lower elementary school, 6.4 per cent higher elementary school, 3.2 per cent junior high school, 0.51 per cent senior high school, and there was not a single college graduate. By the 1990s, over 1,000 had attained an education above the secondary school level.[22]

21 Zeng 1988, p. 21.

22 Yi 2011, p. 99.

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Whereas the primary cause of the migration of the Chinese from Vietnam to China was political, their migrations from China to other countries and within China were mainly motivated by economic and social considerations. In a way, the split of the refugee community into urban and rural groups is a restoration of the rural-urban dichotomy that had already existed within the community before its departure from Vietnam. From 1954 to 1978, within the Chinese community in North Vietnam, there was a clear-cut division between those living in large cities and those residing in rural areas. The Vietnamese government treated the two groups differently. The Chinese in the three large cities, Hanoi, Haiphong, and Nam Dinh, were considered Chinese citizens, permitted to maintain their own organizations and schools, and exempted from military service, whereas rural Chinese, who made up the great majority of the Chinese community in North Vietnam, were treated as citizens of Vietnam. They were not allowed to join the official Association of Chinese in Vietnam and were required to perform military service. In China, the two groups enjoy the same legal and political rights, but there still exists a social separation between them.

The migrations to foreign countries and other parts of China, together with deaths and other factors, have greatly reduced the number of former refugees on most state farms. For instance, the Zhuba State Farm in Xiamen accepted over 500 Vietnamese refugees in the late 1970s, but only about 100 of them are still living there today. The Wuyishan State Farm took in three groups of refugees in 1978 and 1979. Today all members of the first group, who were mostly city dwellers from Hanoi and Haiphong, have moved away, and only a few of the second group have stayed. Most of those who are still on the farm are members of the third group. Among the over 900 refugees who settled on the Honghe State Farm in Yunnan, only about 300 are still there today.

Almost all of those who left the farms or fishing communities would immediately give up farming and start to take on other jobs. Some of those who stayed on the farm also managed to shift from farming to other professions. In other words, diversification and stratification occurred not only between those who left the farms and those who stayed, but also among those who stayed on the farms. Although at the beginning the government did not recognize the differences among the migrants, partly because of their large numbers and the urgency in moving all of them to the farms, once the migrants settled down, the authorities soon realized that it was beneficial both to the migrants and to society if the special talents of individual migrants were recognized and utilized.

It did not take long for the officials of the state farm in Yuanjiang to discover that the fifth rank metal worker from Haiphong was a very awkward farmer but a very experienced mechanic. They then decided to transfer him from the farming team to the mechanics team. At a state farm in Guangdong, Mr. Chen, a former principal of a professional school in Vietnam, was made a teacher at the farm's middle school. The Haiyuan State Farm in Guangxi received a large group of ethnic Yao refugees. When the farm's officials found that Jiao Ruxiang, one of the Yao refugees, was very poor at manual work but was the only high school graduate amongst the refugees there, they immediately offered him a teaching position at an elementary school on the farm. The nearby Pingjiang State Farm had nearly 1,300 Yao refugees, and among them were 459 school-age children. Initially the local government sent some Han teachers to teach them, but it was very hard for these teachers to communicate with their Yao students since the Han teachers could

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only speak Cantonese, Zhuang and standard Chinese, whereas the Yao students could only speak Yao and Vietnamese. The government was then able to identify twelve Yao migrants who had received some education in Vietnam and who could speak some Chinese as well, and then provided those migrants with special training before appointing them as school-teachers.[23] For Jiao Ruxiang and the other Yao teachers, their transition from farming to teaching was a significant promotion since they had never been teachers before. For Mr. Chen and the Haiphong metal worker, the new appointments represented only partial restoration of their former status, since although they were now permitted to return to their former profession, their years of service performed in Vietnam and the ranks and positions they had attained there were not restored. The Haiphong worker, for example, was reduced from a fifth rank metal worker to a first rank mechanic.

Occupational diversification was an important factor causing social economic stratification among those who stayed on the farms. Mechanics and teachers held a more respectable status than farmers and their pay scales were usually higher. Another factor in the internal stratification on the farms is remittances from foreign countries; those who regularly receive financial aid from their relatives in foreign countries understandably have an easier life than others.

Stratification occurs even among the farmers themselves. In addition to offering freedom of movement to the migrants, Edict No. 26 called for two other important reforms. One was the localization of state farms for returned overseas Chinese, with the ultimate goal of transferring responsibility for managing the farms from central and provincial governments to local prefectures, counties, or even townships. The other was the introduction of the household responsibility system. Both reforms contributed to enhancing economic stratification among the farmers. In the old system, every farmer received the same salary, but in the household responsibility system, the farmers ceased to receive salaries from the farm, and individual households became the basic units of production. The more efficient producers naturally earn more than those who are less hardworking or possess less expertise in farming. When the state farms were under the control of the central and provincial governments, the salary and aid level for every farm was about the same. After localization, regional differences in economic development began to create gaps between the farms, and farms in prosperous regions have become better off than those in impoverished areas. For instance, Shenzhen is able to offer a monthly pension of over 3,000 yuan to each retired farmer of the former Guangming State Farm, but in most other regions, a retired farmer of a state farm can only earn between 1,000 and 1,500 yuan a month or even less.

Those migrants who have stayed on the farms and are facing economic hardship are among the most distraught within the migrant community. Some perceive themselves to be "losers" in comparison with their reference groups: their fellow migrants who have moved to other countries, the cities, and the border areas; the migrants living on other farms; the villagers who live around the state farms; and the Chinese who chose to stay in Vietnam in the late 1970s. Most of those who are on the farms believe that those living in foreign countries and in Chinese cities are better off than those staying on the farms. When asked whether or not they feel that the migrants living on other state farms, the

23 Qu 2008, pp. 21, 26–27.

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Chinese villagers living around the state farms, or the Chinese who have stayed in Vietnam are also better off, they would offer disparate responses. Some of their comments are justifiable, but others are not. For instance, when migrants from other farms remarked that, on average, those living on the Guangming State Farm in Shenzhen were more prosperous than most others, they were merely stating a fact. However, when some of the migrants from suburban Guangzhou claimed that their living standards were lower than those living on a state farm in a remote rural area in Guangxi, their claim was not true, and their assertion was immediately challenged by a migrant who had grown up on that remote farm but was now living in suburban Guangzhou. Many migrants feel that the villagers living around the state farms are now better off than the state farm residents. This is true in some areas (for example, suburban Guangzhou and some of the farms in northern Guangdong) but not in others (for instance, Wuyishan in Fujian and Xinglong in Hainan).

FACTORS FOR AND AGAINST ASSIMILATION

Whereas most refugee studies literature lists the loss of national and cultural identities as a striking feature of refugee experience,[24] the Chinese from Vietnam in China suffered no such loss. Most of them were Chinese both politically and culturally before moving to China. However, it would be wrong to assume that since they were already Chinese before entering China, they would be able to integrate into the host society immediately without going through the process of assimilation.

The refugees moved from Vietnam to China either because they considered themselves citizens of China or because they were perceived to be citizens of China by the Vietnamese government. In the disputes between China and Vietnam, the refugees either sided with China or were perceived by the Vietnamese leaders to be supporters of China. The Chinese government recognized the Chinese in Vietnam as not just ethnic Chinese but also Chinese citizens and therefore was willing to take them. From the mid-1950s to the late 1970s, the Vietnamese government made repeated attempts at transforming the Chinese in North Vietnam from Chinese citizens to Vietnamese citizens, which yielded limited success. In the late 1970s, the Chinese in North Vietnam were on their way to becoming Vietnamese citizens, and if Vietnam and China had continued to maintain friendly relations, eventually the Chinese would have been integrated into Vietnamese society and become an ethnic group of Vietnam. The deterioration in Sino-Vietnamese relations suddenly interrupted the process of assimilation, and when the Chinese had to make a choice between China and Vietnam, most took China's side and moved to China.

Many refugees recall that when they were in Vietnam, they never doubted their Chinese identity despite the fact that they were born and raised in Vietnam and their families had been living there for generations. It was not until after their entry into China that some of them began to have doubts about their Chineseness. They like to summarize their change of perceptions and feelings by saying "we were Chinese when we were in Vietnam, and we became Vietnamese after we moved to China," or "the Vietnamese called us Chinese when we were in Vietnam and the Chinese call us Vietnamese after we moved to China." In China, some of the migrants encountered differences between

24 Malkki 1995, p. 509; Malkki 2002, p. 12.

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the Chinese in China and those from Vietnam, and in many cases, the migrants were unable even to communicate with the Chinese in China due to the language barrier. As mentioned earlier, many migrants also found that China as a country was poor and backward and conditions on the state farms were far from satisfactory. A former refugee from a state farm in Fujian remembers that shortly after he settled down on his farm, he went to a local cinema to see a film one evening. There were both migrants and local people in the audience. Most people came to the cinema on foot, and only about a dozen, all migrants from Vietnam, came on their bicycles. That showed him how poor the local people were. "They were even poorer than we refugees!" he exclaimed. Observations like this might have served to shake their pride in being citizens of China, and many realized that China was not the country where they wanted to live. A small number of refugees even discovered after returning to China that they actually loved Vietnam so much that they would rather consider themselves Vietnamese than Chinese. A certain Mr. Guo in Qisha of Guangxi was born in Vietnam and moved to China in 1978 when he was nearly sixty years old. Although he considered himself Chinese when he was in Vietnam, he started to realize that he was more Vietnamese than Chinese after moving to China. He made several visits to Vietnam to see his old friends in recent years, and shortly before he died, he told his relatives that he wished he could die in Vietnam and be buried there.[25]

Some Chinese from Vietnam argue that their interest in moving out of China does not mean they are no longer Chinese patriots. "Are we not happy with our country (China)? No! We all love our country, but at the same time we have to live.. . .We joined the illegal migrations in the 1970s . . . and we have been so 'unscrupulous' (in seeking ways of leaving China) only because we want to live better lives."[26] The many patriotic articles and poems written by former refugees from North Vietnam who now live in Western countries show clearly that many of those who succeeded in moving to other countries from China still see China as their motherland and strongly identify with it. Some of them now visit China regularly.

The doubts of some migrants over their Chineseness was echoed and reinforced by the reluctance of some of the local Chinese to recognize the migrants as genuine Chinese. Some local Chinese even showed open hostility toward the Chinese from Vietnam. Disputes between the state farms and the surrounding villages were common, and the local villagers tended to see the state farm residents in general, and the migrants from Vietnam in particular, as intruders. On a state farm in Jiangxi, local students often bullied their classmates from Vietnam, calling them "Vietnamese ghosts." In Binchuan of Yunnan, some local villagers would chase them, calling them "Vietnamese," and their hostility toward them intensified during the 1979 war between China and Vietnam. In Shenzhen, even today some local Chinese still refer to the Chinese from Vietnam as "Vietnamese."[27]

The official ambiguity over the status of the Chinese from Vietnam possibly served to enhance confusion over their national identity. Were the Chinese from Vietnam refugees, or returned overseas Chinese, or both? If they were returned overseas Chinese, then they

25 Jiang 2009, p. 23.

26 Chen Y. 2010, p. 40.

27 Li X. M. 2001.

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were just like the Chinese who had returned from Indonesia and other countries, so were certainly Chinese citizens, but if they were refugees, then they could become citizens of any country that was willing to take them. It seems likely that the Chinese government treated the Chinese from Vietnam as both returned overseas Chinese and refugees. On one hand, it immediately granted most refugees from Vietnam full citizenship as well as returned overseas Chinese status. On the other hand, the Ministry of Civil Affairs in Beijing created an office for resettling Indo-Chinese refugees to manage the relocation of the Chinese from Vietnam. This office opened a branch in each of the six provinces that took in refugees from Vietnam, and these branch offices are still functioning today. Some Chinese officials argue that the Chinese from Vietnam were refugees when they first entered China, but once they were settled, they ceased to be refugees and became returned overseas Chinese. If that is indeed the case, why do all six provinces continue to maintain these refugee resettlement offices, in spite of the fact that the only sizable group of refugees not yet granted Chinese citizenship is in Yunan? There has been speculation that China has attempted to persuade the Vietnamese government to allow the Chinese from Vietnam to move back to Vietnam if they so wish, but to no avail.[28] If that is true, then it means that although the Chinese from Vietnam have all become Chinese citizens, the Chinese government still wants to offer them the choice of returning to Vietnam, a right all refugees deserve according to international law.

It is not certain how many former refugees would be willing to move back to Vietnam if allowed to do so. A researcher who recently conducted interviews among the Chinese from Vietnam in a state farm in suburban Guangzhou found that, among all the migrants from Vietnam, those who have the strongest Chinese national identity are the former city dwellers and young people in their thirties.[29] Officials of various state farms agree that even those who claim that they are not happy in China would not be willing to move back to Vietnam if permitted to do so, implying that sometimes the former refugees voice complaints in order just to get attention.

There is no question that most if not all former refugees now consider themselves Chinese citizens and are also considered Chinese citizens by others. However, to have become Chinese citizens does not mean they have also become like all other Chinese in all respects. Their social and cultural assimilation has been developing ever since they entered China, but at least for some members of the community, a complete social and cultural integration has not been achieved. There have been factors for and against a total merge with the host society. On one hand, their preservation of Chinese cultural traits, their ability to speak some variants of the Chinese language, and their perception of being Chinese all slant them in favour of a complete merge with the larger Chinese society. On the other hand, their unique experience as a Chinese community in Vietnam, and then a community of refugees in China, their close connections with Vietnam, their hybrid culture, and their special interests, all work against a total assimilation.

Many migrants harbor ambivalent feelings toward Vietnam and the Vietnamese. They resent the then Vietnamese government, particularly its leader Le Duan, for turning against

28 Lan 2004.

29 Yao 2009, p. 60.

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the Chinese in Vietnam, but most remember Le Duan's predecessor Ho Chi-minh as a great leader who was very friendly and protective toward the Chinese in Vietnam. Some have unhappy memories of interactions with Vietnamese police and officials, but many have pleasant and moving words to say about their Vietnamese neighbors and friends. Some feel deeply attached to Vietnam simply because they have spent part of their life there and their ancestors are buried there. In recent years, more and more former refugees have been making trips to Vietnam to renovate family graves, to visit relatives and friends, to tour the country, or to do business there. In fact, largely due to their familiarity with Vietnam, their connections in Vietnam, and their ability to speak Vietnamese, the Chinese from Vietnam are playing an important part in the expanding economic relations between China and Vietnam.[30]

When they were in Vietnam, the Chinese tried hard to maintain their Chinese cultural traits. After moving to China, many of them have consciously or unconsciously maintained some of the Vietnamese cultural traits, making their differences from other Chinese more visible. The migrants like to listen to Vietnamese music, watch Vietnamese shows, and eat Vietnamese food. Some still speak Vietnamese in everyday life. Their wedding ceremony is a mix of Chinese and Vietnamese customs, and unlike local Chinese weddings, which usually last one day, for the Chinese from Vietnam a wedding can last as many as three days. They spend so much money on the ceremony and gifts that some local Chinese jokingly comment that they could never afford to marry a Chinese from Vietnam.[31]

Other Chinese have not failed to notice that the Chinese from Vietnam form a unique group with its own "culture" or features. However, several of their perceptions of the Chinese from Vietnam can be better described as stereotypical. For example, a number of officials and scholars in China believe that the Chinese from Vietnam are not as well educated as returned overseas Chinese from other countries, and because of that, even describe them as people of low qualities (*suzhidi* 素质低). It is also believed that the Chinese from Vietnam are not as hygienic and hardworking as the Chinese from Indonesia and some other countries. Certain officials believe that one of the problems affecting the adaptation of the Vietnamese Chinese in China is their mentality of "waiting for, relying upon, and asking for" government aid. A young official, himself a migrant from Vietnam, remarked that the Chinese from Vietnam are also handicapped by "the mentality of the nomads," which prompts them to spend all the money they earn on banquets. Another frequently heard comment about the Chinese from Vietnam is that they are not as obedient as the Chinese from Indonesia and other countries, and that "they always stick together." An official in charge of refugee affairs lists their belief in absolute egalitarianism as another flaw of their cultural tradition. He explains that it is official policy that every year before the Spring Festival the government provides money to each migrant community as special aid for impoverished families. Instead of handing the money directly to the needy families, the officials give the funds to the leaders of the community and entrust them to identify the families that deserve the aid. Most of the time, however, the leaders simply divide the money equally among all the migrant families.

30 Chau 2000.

31 Jiang 2009, pp. 17–18.

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It is apparent that most of these perceptions are based on outsiders' experiences of migrants on the state farms rather than those elite migrants in the cities. On one farm, the officials deliberately dispersed the migrant families from Vietnam among different production teams rather than allowing them to stay together. The purpose was to enable the Vietnamese migrants to learn from the other Chinese so that they could overcome their "backward habits." Many Chinese from Vietnam living on the state farms are aware of such perceptions and stereotypes. Some admit that they are not well educated but refute the perception that they are lazy. They argue that some of them have to stay at home not because they do not want to work but because they cannot find decent jobs. They do not deny the existence of their group solidarity and egalitarianism, but do not see these as problems or flaws – in fact some of them are proud of them. Such perceptions and stereotypes can have the effect of strengthening these migrants' group identity and working against their social assimilation.

Some of China's official policies toward the migrants have also contributed to the preservation of their cultural tradition and group identity. Resettling most refugees in groups in relatively isolated state farms helped keep them together and reduce their contact with other Chinese, which worked against their assimilation. Scholars have discerned causal relationships between the ecological distribution of immigrant groups and the speed and extent of their assimilation, and segregation is considered a sign of failed assimilation.[32] The special rights and aids granted to the returned overseas Chinese and refugees served to enhance their consciousness of being different from other Chinese. Their complaints about certain official policies such as the family planning program, the recent land enclosure, and localization of state farms further united the Chinese from Vietnam as a group with common problems, interests, and goals.

The formal and informal networks and organizations of the Chinese from Vietnam have also played an important part in preserving their group identity. For the elite, the associations of returned overseas Chinese from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos in various provinces provide very important networks. These associations, initially created in the 1950s and 1960s by Chinese who had returned from Indochina, have been closely affiliated with the official associations of returned overseas Chinese in those provinces. Among the three countries in Indochina, Chinese from Vietnam far outnumber those from Cambodia and Laos and therefore have been the dominant force in such associations. Though the senior leaders are mostly "old" overseas Chinese who had returned in the previous period, former refugees who moved to China in the late 1970s are becoming more and more active and influential within these organizations.

The various associations formed by alumni of the Chinese schools in Vietnam are also important networks for elite migrants. Among the alumni of all Chinese schools, the graduates of the Chinese High School in Haiphong (Haiphong Huaqiao Zhongxue 海防华侨中学) and the China High School in Hanoi (Henei Zhonghua Zhongxue 河内中华中学) have been the most active. These two schools were both founded in the 1930s and were the most prestigious Chinese schools in northern Vietnam from the 1930s to their demise in the 1970s. Graduates of these two schools formed an important part of the

32 See Desbarats 1985, pp. 524–25 for discussions on this topic.

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elite of both the Chinese community in North Vietnam before the late 1970s and the communities of Chinese from North Vietnam in various parts of the world today. Unlike students and alumni of other top pairs of schools who tend to see the other school in the pair as a rival to their own, graduates of these two schools see their alma maters as sister schools. In recent years, graduates of the two schools have founded regional alumni associations in many places, including Guangzhou, Nanning (Wuming), Kunming, Toronto, Vancouver, San Francisco, Southern California, England, and elsewhere. The Guangzhou association of the alumni of the two schools was founded in 1985 and currently has nearly 500 members, who hold two formal gatherings every year and publish a journal as well. The associations hold frequent gatherings, and the numerous meetings held in Guangzhou and Nanning were attended by alumni from all over the world; some alumni have also considered holding gatherings in northern Vietnam.

At their gathering in Los Angeles in 2007, leaders of several associations decided to create the International Association of Chinese from Vietnam, intended to be the mother organization of all associations of Chinese from North Vietnam. The Internet has made communication between migrants from different parts of the world easy, and they have created several popular websites where they can share photos, memories, literary works, as well as exchanging information about social activities. It is notable that in the rather prolific literary works posted on those websites, "the motherland" is a constant theme, and for all the authors, no matter where they live now, the motherland is always China, not Vietnam. Migrants who live in Western countries are also much more concerned about events in China than in Vietnam.

These alumni associations have little involvement with migrants remaining on the state farms, most of whom had not had the opportunity to attend these elite schools. The farmers have their own informal networks, based on kinship, their affinity to a particular settlement and farm, as well as their former connections in Vietnam. In the early years the migrants in rural communities tended to marry among themselves, but the younger generation is now abandoning this tradition of endogamy.[33] Whereas being together with other migrants may have diminished the desire of rural migrants to form formal associations, being dispersed among others may probably have prompted urban elites to create associations so that, in their imagination at least, they can remain together with their fellow migrants.

CONCLUSION

There were good reasons for expecting refugees from Vietnam in China to adapt easily. Most of them were ethnic Chinese familiar with Chinese culture, and who had perceived China to be their motherland and considered themselves citizens of China long before their relocation there; besides, most of the refugees were from northern Vietnam and thus familiar with China's political and economic systems, which were similar to those of North Vietnam. The refugees' connections and familiarity with China had convinced many refugees and others that the migration of ethnic Chinese from Vietnam to China would be just like going home.

33 Jiang 2009, pp. 15–16; Chen Y. 2010, pp. 28–29.

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For some Chinese from Vietnam, living in China has indeed been like moving home to live, but for many others, it has not been easy to call China their home. Most of the difficulties that the migrants have encountered in China can be attributed to three major factors. One is the gap between China and the West in economic development and living standards. In the late 1970s, China was a typical third world country with a very low per capita GDP, and as a result, although the Chinese government tried hard to assist the migrants, what it could actually offer them was limited. Since China's cities were underdeveloped and unable to provide enough jobs for them, almost all of the migrants were sent to state farms in rural areas where living conditions were not very attractive, leading to widespread dissatisfaction. Since the migrants in China kept close contact with their relatives and friends in other countries, they were fully aware of the gap between China and the West. Although their living standards were higher than those of most Chinese villagers, the migrants in China were far from content because their reference group at that time was not that of the Chinese villagers, but that of fellow migrants who had resettled in developed countries, and that of urban Chinese. Their disappointment derived largely from a sense of relative deprivation arising out of their inability to be allowed to stay in Chinese cities or join their relatives and friends in other countries. The hardships they encountered on the farms and the news about Western countries' prosperity made the migrants from Vietnam in China a restless group. Many refused to call China home and tried every means possible to move away.

Another factor affecting these refugees' adaptation to China was their lack of education and skills at the time of their relocation. It appears that refugees from Vietnam in Western countries overall were better educated than those in China. For example, Australia has largely selected an elite of middle or lower-middle class people from among the Vietnamese refugees.[34] Those who moved to Norway before 1977 were mostly well-educated middle-class people, though Norway did take in some rural people after that.[35] Most Vietnamese refugees in France were members of "a certain class," and children of farmers, fishermen and micro-business people did not start to appear until 1987.[36] In the US, Vietnamese refugees arriving between 1980 and 1982 had an average of 7.05 years of education.[37] In comparison, most of the refugees from Vietnam in China were villagers from northern Vietnam who in general did not possess as much education as the refugees who relocated to Western countries. The lack of education and skills has made it difficult for some of them to venture into non-agricultural sectors of the economy. When the reform of the state farms started to threaten the existence of their farms and force state farm employees into fierce competition in the market, many of them felt inadequate and became distraught.

The third major factor affecting the refugees' adaptation in China is cultural disparity between the migrant community and the host society, as well as the political and economic differences between Vietnam and China. As mentioned earlier, although most refugees are

34 Hawthorne ed. 1982, p. xv; Robinson 2000, p. 153.

35 Knudsen 1988, pp. 28–31; p. 161; pp. 164–65; p. 181.

36 Robinson 2000, pp. 145–46.

37 Gold 1992, p. 62.

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ethnic Chinese, their culture is still somewhat different from that of the Chinese in China. For many migrants the most destructive cultural difference was probably the language barrier. At the time of their relocation, only a small group of them could speak standard Chinese and read Chinese characters, and it took years for many of them to overcome the language barrier in their ancestral land. Although China and Vietnam had similar political and economic systems, there were also some important policy differences between the two countries. For instance, collective farming was still prevalent in Vietnam but was declining in China in the late 1970s. In the villages around the state farms, the commune system was rapidly dissolved after 1978 and the household responsibility system was adopted nationwide. Even the state farms started to move away from collective farming in the early 1980s, causing confusion and dissatisfaction among some migrants. Another difference between the two countries is in their population policy. China started to enforce a very strict family planning program in the late 1970s, but in Vietnam, population control was not yet a concern to the government after the loss of many lives during the long wars. Many migrants found it hard to accept the one child policy and some received fines or even lost their jobs for breaking the rules regarding family planning.

Initially all of those who entered China from Vietnam became refugees of equal status, but soon the differential policies of the government and the divergent actions and skills of the migrants caused the community to stratify, diversify and disperse. The official policy of sending most refugees to state farms but keeping a small minority of professionals in the cities gave rise to the first split in the refugee community. This was followed by a second split between those who chose to, or had to, stay in China and those who moved to foreign countries by either legal or illegal means. These two splits were exacerbated after 1985 when the government legalized and encouraged the free movement of migrants on state farms, which led to the further reduction in the number of former refugees on those state farms. Stratification and diversification have even occurred among the migrants who still live on the farms, as some of them have moved into non-agricultural sectors and as the economic reforms have generated disparate responses from the migrants.

Economic survival forms only one aspect of the migrants' adaptation, which also involved political, cultural and social adjustment. Their national and ethnic identities went through no fundamental changes. Most migrants saw themselves as Chinese citizens and ethnic Chinese while they were in Vietnam. In this regard, the experience of the Chinese from Vietnam in China is very different from that of the Vietnamese refugees in Western countries: ethnically, whether Han or non-Han, these migrants are permitted to maintain their former identities. Whereas there are powerful forces prompting the migrants to completely integrate into the larger Chinese society, there are also factors nurturing a special sub-group identity among some of them. Such factors include the government's policies of settling the migrants as communities in relatively isolated rural areas and of treating them differently from other Chinese; the common experience, interests and problems of the migrants; and their collective memories as well as the cultural differences between the migrants and the other Chinese. However, this sub-group identity is not sustainable. As the number of first-generation migrants has dwindled and is still dwindling, the size of the core membership of this sub-group is becoming smaller and smaller. Increasing contact between migrants and the outside world, the rapid assimilation of the younger generations, the loss of the state farms as their territorial bases, and other factors

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will eventually lead to a complete or near-complete integration of the Chinese from Vietnam into the larger Chinese society.

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