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Motivations and Obstacles on the Long Walk to Integration: Determinants of Six Cape Town Chinese Immigrants' Political Participation

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Motivations and Obstacles on the Long Walk to Integration:
Determinants of Six Cape Town Chinese Immigrants'
Political Participation

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Abstract

Political participation is a fundamental component of democracy. But the level of immigrants' political participation is generally lower than for people who are perceived as natives. This paper identifies the determinants of six Chinese immigrants' political participation in Cape Town, part of a group that has a long history of political integration but is still often seen as passive and apolitical. It argues and tests the effect of five main determinants related to the length of residence, interaction with the local Chinese association, socioeconomic background, language ability and prior political experience, and social perceptions. Data comes from interviews conducted with Chinese immigrants who are from very different walks of life and have various political experience in Cape Town in the summer of 2017. The empirical results show that, with small individual-level variations, the political participation of Chinese immigrants is a function of a longer period of stay in South Africa, the good language ability, high-level socioeconomic background and membership in the local Chinese association. In addition, prior political experience in China, a non-democratic regime, and the extent to which Chinese immigrants feel welcome in the society also shape the level of engagement in politics.

KEY WORDS: Immigration politics, political participation, low turnout, voting patterns, South Africa, Chinese immigrants

Dedication

This paper is dedicated to overseas Chinese all over the world. For hundreds of years, their Chineseness has motivated them to aspire to a better, higher social position and to overcome the shame and humiliation of being treated as lesser. Studying this study could give all of us a lesson, as in an increasingly globalized world, we are all, to a greater or lesser extent, becoming diasporic.

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Introduction

With the rapid growth of the political, economic, and socio-cultural ties between China and South Africa, the number of Chinese immigrants has a phenomenal increase in the past decade. The total population of Chinese South Africans is estimated at between 300,000 to 400,000 (Liao & He, 2015). The history of Chinese immigrants in South Africa can be traced back to the first colonists settled in the Cape of Good Hope in 1652. Even further back than that. But it is still one of the most politically marginalized groups.

Being repressed and discriminated for centuries, Chinese immigrants in South Africa have a long history of participating in politics. They fought for rights, privileges and better treatment for their community. In 1906, about 1000 Chinese joined Indian protesters on a march against laws barring Asians in the Transvaal Colony from purchasing land (Jain, 2014). Apartheid

South Africa also reinforced groupings of Chinese who share common ancestral experiences, homeland, cultural practices, and language among other things by establishing race as the primary determinant of identity politics, economics and socially (Yu & Vivier, 2015). Meanwhile, Chinese South Africans' strategies of fighting for their rights, are different from the collective action with other ethnic groups to engaging, in diplomacy and negotiations with decision-makers on their own. But despite the long and unique history of striving for integration, Chinese immigrants seem to be very passive, quiet and apolitical to the public since there are no representative Chinese political figures while Gandhi's name is prominent in the history.

In this paper, I examine the level of integration of Chinese immigrants in Cape Town, by looking at political participation of this group. My goal is to better understand the motivations and challenges that Chinese immigrants face on their way to integrating into the society politically. For this research, I drew on qualitative interview data that I conducted with six Chinese South Africans in various locations, including Rondebosch, Salt River, Kenilworth and Century city. I acknowledge that the small sample restricts the conclusions I can draw, but it provides valuable insights into the political lives of the individuals as Chinese immigrants. Although the number of participants is limited, their experiences extend over a lengthy historical period that includes the transformation of the South Africa apartheid context and illuminate why the level of integration may or may not have increased during this time. I explore the relationship between social identities and political participation through these changes and their driving factors.

This paper begins with a brief look at the literature on the immigrants' political participation and representation, followed by a historical review of the political experiences of the Chinese immigrants in South Africa. After that, I present the research methodology and discussion of research ethics. I then explore study subjects' motivation and obstacles of participating in politics through an analysis of several factors that shaped their environment: 1), the residence time; 2), the immigration status; 3), the experience in a highly stratified society; 4), the organization of the Chinese community; 5), socioeconomic status; and 6), family dynamics, resulting in varying degrees of political participation. In the discussion section I elaborate on the implications of this for understanding the determinants of Chinese immigrants' participation, and conclude that some groups of immigrants have relatively high rates of political participation which are mainly

influenced by five factors. They are 1), time they spent in South Africa; 2), their relations with the local Chinese society; 3), their language ability and prior political experience; 4), their socioeconomic background and 5), social perceptions.

Literature Review

i. Immigrants' political participation and representation

Alike any concept within the social sciences, the interpretation of “political participation” is also an undecided matter (Adamson, 2007). The most common view is a joint concept covering “voting,” “nomination,” “representation in public,” which I adopt in the following presentation. In this paper, “political participation” merely signified the act of voting and parliamentary participation.

Political participation is an essential part of modern democracies. However, not all sections of society are equally likely to vote in elections (van Deth, 2014). It is frequently observed that immigrants and individuals of immigrant origin participate less than non-immigrants: a participation gap (Ruedin, 2017). Johannes Bergh and Tor Bjørklund (2010) found that in the case of Norway, voters with immigrant backgrounds tend to have lower turnout in elections than resident citizens. There is, however, substantial variation between groups of immigrants in this respect. A part of these differences can be explained by socioeconomic differences between residents and immigrants, and between groups of immigrants. Lower than average socioeconomic status among minorities leads to lower than average turnout in elections.

In the previous literature, Bergh and Bjorklund (2010) also found that immigrants as elected politicians are under-represented in national politics, but are relatively well served at the local level. Preferential voting by immigrant voters in favor of immigrant candidates seems to account for the success of quite a few

immigrant background politicians at the local level. Also, descriptive representation of immigrants further appears to benefit immigrant turnout in elections. Even if immigrants' interests may be represented by politicians who are not of immigrant origin, the lack of diversity in legislatures sends a message of exclusion and signals a democratic deficit within domestic politics (Philipps, 1995). A lack of descriptive representation could increase political alienation among immigrants (Pantoja & Segura, 2003), whereas an increase in such representation might lead to substantive changes in policies affecting immigrants.

Electoral participation may also be seen as a sign of political integration of immigrants into society (Jacobos & Tillie, 2004; Saalfeld, 2002; Tillie, 2004). However, among scholars of migration, immigrant political incorporation has received far less attention than other integration dynamics, such as incorporation into labor markets or educational systems (Bloemraad & Schönwälder, 2013).

ii. Political experience of Chinese immigrants in South Africa

As the first discriminatory law in South Africa that was passed was the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1904, Chinese South Africans have been discriminated against in various forms since the beginning of their arrivals. However, contrary to the stereotypes: quiet, passive and apolitical, the leadership of the Chinese South African has actually always been quite vocal and quite political. They engaged in constant and solitary battles to regain honor lost as second-class citizens of South Africa, fighting for rights, privileges, concessions, and generally better-treatment for Chinese in South Africa.

The first example of political protest occurred as early as 1906. Large-scale immigration into South Africa during the Anglo-Boer War, fought between 1898 and 1902, was prohibited by the Transvaal Immigration Restriction Act of 1902

and the Cape Chinese Exclusion Act of 1904. A host of discriminatory laws similar to the anti-Chinese laws that sought to restrict trade, land ownership and citizenship were also enacted during this time. These rules were primarily made popular by a general anti-Chinese feeling across the western world during the early 1900s and the arrival of over 64,000 indentured Chinese miners after the second Anglo-Boer War (Park, 2017). The Chinese laborers were restricted to live on compounds, allowed to do only unskilled labor and excluded from 55 types of job. Meanwhile, Chinese South Africans were pushed out of the Witwatersrand and into areas such as Port Elizabeth and East London in the Eastern Cape (Harris, 1994).

In 1906, about 1000 Chinese joined Indian protesters led by Mahatma Gandhi to march against laws barring Asians in the Transvaal Colony from purchasing land (Jain, 2014). In 1907, the government of the Transvaal Colony passed the Transvaal Asiatic Registration Act that required the Indian and Chinese population in the Transvaal to be registered and for males to be fingerprinted and carry pass books (“Asiatic Law Amendment Act”, 1907). The Chinese Association made a written declaration saying that the Chinese would not register for passes and would not interact with those that did. Mahatma Gandhi started a campaign of passive resistance to protest the legislation that was supported by the Indian and Chinese communities. The secretary of the Chinese Association informed Gandhi that the Chinese were prepared to be jailed alongside Indians in support of this cause (Bhattacharjea, 2005). On 16 August 1908, members of the movement gathered outside Hamidia Mosque where they burnt 1,200 registration certificates (“Tracing Gandhi in Joburg”, 2012). The South African government did not change the Act, despite the massive scale of protests, and for almost three decades all new Chinese immigrants were halted virtually to enter the Cape.

By the 1940s, although over forty percent of the almost 3,000 Chinese were born in South Africa, they had no political rights and were restricted in trade, education, public transportation, property rights, and freedom of movement by various laws. According to the Immigrants Regulation Amendment Act 43 of 1953, the door to South Africa was virtually shut to Chinese people. Therefore, only a few isolated cases of Chinese entering South Africa between 1953 and the late 1970s.

As with other oppressed South Africans, the Chinese suffered from discrimination during apartheid and were often classified as Coloureds, but sometimes as Asians, a category that was generally reserved for Indian South Africans (“S Africa Chinese ‘become black’”, 2008). Chinese South Africans, along with Black, Coloured and Indian South Africans were forcefully removed from areas declared “Whites only” areas by the government under the Group Areas Act in 1950. These removals threatened Chinese economic viability as it removed them from their diverse customer base and resulted in the formation of a Chinese township in Port Elizabeth (Saff, 1998). The population Registration Act (1950), the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act (1953), the Prohibition of Mixed Marriage Act (1949), the Group Areas Act (1950), and other legislation encompassing educational and occupational rights affected the Chinese community.

The Chinese in South Africa has the singular distinction of being the only population group in the country which had never been able to vote in any form of government, whether at national, provincial or local level until the end of apartheid.

In the late 1960s, the Chinese Association started lobbying for their right to live among other races. Under the loose coordination of the Central Chinese

Association of South Africa, the Chinese around the country sent letters, memoranda, and other submissions advocating for the right to anyone with influence. They argued that Chinese communities in South Africa were too small to warrant their separate areas and that they could not survive by trading amongst themselves. Eventually, the government relented, because of the high cost of creating separate areas for the small and widely scattered Chinese population. Also, the negotiation was on the basis of their general acceptance within white society; their record as a quiet, law-abiding community; and their high standard of living (Park, 2008). They were allowed to live and work in specific areas subject to approval by the surrounding white communities. Thus the Chinese created what was arguably apartheid's first mixed-race areas ("The People of South Africa", 2013).

What is more: in 1964, non-white South Africans could purchase alcohol, but not drink in white areas. In 1976, the law was amended to allow Chinese South Africans to drink alcohol in white areas (Osada, 2002). The Chinese Association of South Africa remains an active member of the national representative body for the community.

From the late 1970s onwards, Taiwanese started migrating to South Africa because apartheid South Africa and Taiwan (officially the Republic of China) established ties. Due to apartheid South Africa's desire to attract their investment in South Africa they were exempt from many apartheid laws and regulations. This created an odd situation whereby South Africans of Chinese descent continued to be classified as Coloureds or Asians, whereas the Taiwanese Chinese were considered "honorary whites" and enjoyed most, if not all, of the rights accorded to white South Africans ("Premier Sun", 1980; Leonard, 2008; Canaves, 2008).

The arrival of the Taiwanese resulted in a surge of the ethnic Chinese population of South Africa, which climbed from around 10,000 in the early 1980s to at least 20,000 in the early 1990s (Yap & Man, 1996).

In 1984, the Tricameral Parliament was established by the government to give colored and Indian South Africans a limited influence on South African politics. The Tricameral Parliament was criticized by anti-apartheid groups as it still excluded black people. The Chinese South African community refused to participate in this parliament (Dubin, 2012). The Chinese Association's response was that the Chinese would only consider that if it was a constitutional solution acceptable to all South Africans, as this was the only long term solution. Previously, the Chinese Association had expelled a member who had been appointed to the President's Council, a body established to advise on constitutional reform (Harrison, 1983).

Following the end of apartheid in 1994, mainland Chinese began immigrating to South Africa in large numbers, increasing the Chinese population in South Africa to an estimated 300,000-400,000 in 2015 (Liao & He, 2015). In the post-apartheid South Africa, foreign workers are no longer in high demand on the mines as the country has to tackle its own growing unemployment. In this context, the migration discourse has become strongly selective (Tati, 2008). Therefore, the first group arrived after the end of apartheid were wealthier, better educated and very entrepreneurial. The latter one began coming after 2000 and primarily made up of small traders and peasants from Fujian province.

In 2004, several decades after the apartheid-era victory, Ethnic-Chinese civic engagement reached new heights when it was announced that the newest members of parliament included four Taiwan-born South Africans. Some regard such

inclusivity in the political institutions of South Africa and the higher-level engagement of Taiwanese in those institutions as evidence of the increasing integration and acceptance of Taiwanese (and therefore other Chinese) residents, both citizen and immigrant (Park, 2017).

Toward the end of the first decade of the new millennium, the Chinese South African community presented a legal and political challenge to the government while simultaneously making history and claiming its rightful place in South African society. On this most recent occasion, they were initially excluded from the specific language of two pieces of post-apartheid affirmative action legislation – the Employment Equity Act (No.55 of 1998) (EEA) and the Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment Act (No.53 of 2003) (BBBEE). After years of internal discussions and debates, meetings with government officials, presentations to parliament, and years of government indecision and inaction – all to seek clarification on their position vis-à-vis affirmative action legislation – the Chinese Association of South Africa (CASA) decided to press ahead with a court case. In December 2007, CASA launched a legal challenge against the South African government; specifically, the Minister of Labor, the Minister of Trade and Industry, and the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development (Park, 2017).

In June 2008, the Pretoria High Court issued an order that Chinese South Africans who were South African citizens before 1994, as well as their descendants, qualify as previously disadvantaged individuals as Coloureds, and therefore are eligible to benefit from affirmative action policies and programs (Park, 2017).

This is not to say that the Chinese are welcomed with open arms into general South African society. Even 23 years after the end of apartheid, South Africa continues to be extremely divided along the lines of race, ethnicity, and class. The

negative reaction to the initial announcement of CASA's victory in their affirmative action case against the South African government is one indication that most South Africans remain highly confused and conflicted about how the Chinese fit into South African society. While their court battle ended successfully, the media fallout was replete with scathing headlines: "What color are Chinese South Africans?", "So, now the Chinese want to be black?", and "Only in South Africa: Chinese are classified as black (Park, 2017)."

It is important to note that the percentage of South African Chinese that would benefit from this ruling was marginal. As one journalist aptly responded: "There are only about 10000 in this country, including children. That's hardly an army capable of invading the empowerment opportunities". But the strong negative public response provided further evidence of their marginal and tenuous position in South Africa, despite their efforts to integrate (Harris, 2010).

The Chinese population of South Africa is by no means homogeneous. There are considerable differences in social integration between the various groups. Ranging from wealthy Taiwanese industrialists to educated middle managers from Beijing and Shanghai, poor migrants from rural Fujian province, and a mostly professional class of local second-, third-, and fourth-generation Chinese South Africans, the various communities of Chinese currently residing in South Africa apparently have different experiences in social integration. But as a whole, it has a long and unique history of striving for integration. Strategies change from the collective action with other ethnic groups (passive resistance campaign) to engaging, in quiet diplomacy and negotiations with decision-makers on their own. However, despite the fact that the constitution guarantees rights for all its residents, social and political perceptions of the Chinese raise more questions about will they

ever truly fit in. National laws undoubtedly have a significant impact on whether or not migrants will have access to certain right or privileges; however, as indicated by the ambiguous results of Chinese South African strive for integration, social perceptions may ultimately determine the levels of acceptance of any ethnic minority or new migrant group (Park, 2017).

South Africa, 24 years after its first democratic elections, is still struggling with the unequal access to rights. Therefore, it is essential to find out the reasons that deter from or motivate Chinese immigrants to participate in the politics and integrating into the society.

Methodology

This paper, on the one hand, discussed the history of immigration in the South African society based on several authors' discussions in different books, journals, and academic papers. By reviewing the previous literature about political experiences of Chinese immigrants all around the world, I gained the necessary background knowledge to understand the interviewee's perspective prior to conducting the interviews. On the other hand, the qualitative data used for examining voting of immigrants in the South African elections were collected through interviews with six members of the Chinese communities in the Cape Town.

During these interviews, participants had complete control over the location and time of the meeting. I met them at their offices, familiar restaurants and houses. We participated in guided conversations because I believed that a guided conversation is better than a preset question as it allows us to build a double-sided relationship and to foster an open atmosphere. Therefore, an "honest" interaction between two human beings came up. I was willing to deviate from the topic such

as sharing my own experience as an immigrant in the US in order to have a dialogue where both two parties receive knowledge. Kvale in “InterViews”, specifically the section “The Interview Conversation”, expressed that the interview is based on human interaction and mutual interest between two partners that will engage in an evolving dialogue, which have to take into consideration on the positionality of each in the “lived worlds” (Kvale, 2008). As a government major student at Smith College, I have involved many political activities such as forming student of color associations and protesting against sexism in Boston. However, as a foreigner, I am not enfranchised therefore I cannot participate in formal politics such as voting or running for office. So I decided to investigate the obstacles and motivations of the political participation of Chinese immigrants in order to vocalize their achievements and show the burdens that still exist in order to highlight the unique experience of this group that is often-unwelcoming in the mainstream society.

i. Ethical reflexivity

But even our “lived worlds” have similarities; I have to acknowledge the obvious difference. I recognized my positionality as an American college student which may lead the relationship between audience and communicator power dynamic. To avoid the power imbalance, I used Racine’s “postcolonial feminist theoretical perspective” in the interview. I recognized my privileged position. Therefore, I critically analyzed the questions I ask and all the messages my participants convey, verbally or behaviorally. Besides, I carefully phrased my questions and try to avoid complicated sentences and sociology jargons because one of my interviewees only had limited language ability. I also let my interviewees choose whether they feel more comfortable to communicate with me in English or Mandarin. In order to not build a single-sided relationship where only do they

provide information that I need, I shared my background stories about living in the United States as a new immigrant. My interviewees were all very interested in the difference between residing in the US, in South Africa, and in China. By doing this, the process of interview geared toward a friendly information-sharing chatting which provides comfortable atmosphere and reduced the power dynamic between the interviewees and me. On the other hand, since some of my interviewees were prominent politicians who I admire and who identify themselves as successful during the interview, there was no power dynamics that interfere with my study. However, under this circumstance, I occasionally brought up some representative Chinese South African figures' names which I familiarized myself with prior to the interview to support and validate that I had enough context and respect despite the fact I am only a student.

I understood that my past experience and the intersectionality of my social identities could impact my conclusions, just as Maxwell, Abrams, Zungu and Mosavel (2016) argued, the ways in which I identify myself affect how I communicate and interpret the data in addition to what I communicate. Therefore, in order to realistically record the experiences of my interviewees, I was very cautious not to make any judgment or have any expectation before the interviews.

ii. Setting and participants

I conducted my research in multiple locations in Cape Town. I interviewed six participants from different walks of life: third-generation office worker, third-generation independent photographer, second-generation student, new immigrant businessman, undocumented Chinese restaurant owner and the chairman of a large Chinese association in South Africa.

I chose them because they are the representative of three Chinese communities in South Africa. The Chinese in South Africa comprises three broad groups based primarily on the place of origin and period of migration. These include Chinese whose ancestors arrived in the late 1870s and now comprise third or fourth generation South African-born Chinese; Taiwanese who began immigrating in the late 1970s and 1980s under the apartheid government's industrial development policy; and the newer migrants that have been arriving since the mid-1990s, and especially after 2000, mainly from the PRC. This latter group consists of middle managers, professionals, and small traders (Vivier, Yu, Wentzel & Houston).

I sent participants email to ask if they are interested in participating. I met one time with each of them who consented to be interviewed for my research. At the beginning of each interview, I introduced myself and my research. Then I explained the consent form to interviewees and encourage them to tell me whenever they feel uncomfortable. After I received the approval from them, the conversation started and lasted from 30 minutes to three hours. Instead of recording it, I listened carefully and wrote down bullet points. At the end of the interview, I expressed my gratitude by giving them souvenirs that I brought from China. I also promised them I would not reveal their names or the name of their business in order to protect their identities. Therefore, I provide context on their identities as well as professions but I will refer to them under pseudonyms.

Chi Chi (Participant #1): This interviewee was born in China and moved to South Africa as a young child in the early 1990s. She grew up in a small town and moved to Cape Town later in life. She is in her early 30s. She lives in a shared accommodation and freelances in the creative sector. She speaks English,

Afrikaans and limited Mandarin. She just finished her Master of Fine Arts in Europe this year.

Sherry (Participant #2): This interviewee is an older third generation Taiwanese South African born in Cape Town. She works full time in an office and shares a big house with family. She adopted two children and both of them got married and moved out recently. She speaks English and Hakka.

Dylan (Participant #3): This interviewee is a young third-generation Chinese South African who was born in Johannesburg. His grandparents moved to South Africa in 1940s to open a business because at that time China was very communist. He is an independent photographer and running a small studio in Cape Town with his wife, who is a second-generation Taiwanese South African. He speaks English and just starts learning Mandarin.

Daniel (Participant#4): This interviewee is a new immigrant from Southern China. He moved to South Africa in early 2000s to expand his business. In South Africa, he rents a house in downtown Cape Town. He has multiple house properties in China in which his two daughters live. He travels for business between China and South Africa very often. He speaks Mandarin and English.

Patrick (Participant #5): This interviewee is the current chairman of one of the largest Chinese associations in South Africa. He is a second-generation South African businessman. He owns several shops, restaurants, bakeries and consulting firms. He lives with his wife because their daughters and sons all moved out of South Africa to Europe and North America. But they come back once a year. He has multiple house property in Cape Town and Johannesburg.

Chan (Participant #6): This interviewee is an undocumented immigrant who owns a small Chinese restaurant in Cape Town. He came to South Africa 6

years ago when he was in his 20s from Southern China to seek a better life. He has two sons who were born in South Africa but do not have legal immigration status either. His family lives in a rental housing near a township in Cape Town. He speaks Mandarin and very basic English. He works 364 days a year to make money in order to go back to China as soon as he can.

iii. Limitation and biases

Given the short time period, a month, to develop this research, it is inevitable to have limitations and biases. For example, the small sample size restricted the conclusions that I could draw from the data. The diversity of my participants' backgrounds made it hard to consolidate their answers. In addition, my background as a new immigrant in the U.S. might skew my findings and analysis. I recognized that my experiences as an unenfranchised foreigner in the U.S. knowing the difficulties of participating in politics could alter my conclusion. In order to counter this, I focused primarily on the participants' stories and challenges they have experienced coupled with South African literature. I tried to be fully aware of my identity and the potential power dynamic I may bring to the interview. As an immigrant, I thought my participants would identify me similarly. However, one of them told me that how the level of freedom of speech is different between the U.S. and South Africa. Thus, I recognized that there many ways that people identify themselves, and although sometimes I am not able to fit in, I am still appreciative of their background and interested in their personal narratives and stories.

Despite these limitations, I am able to identify six different immigrants not only in terms of their origins but also in terms of their political experiences and social identities. I am fortunate to have interacted with Chinese immigrants in various parts of Cape Town, ranging from a representative of what westerners

perceive as “model minority” immigrants to a lower-income undocumented person who is struggling to keep head above water. The information I extract during the interviews will help me in analyzing and answering my research question.

Research Findings

In this section, I will discuss the findings that emerge during the six interviews I conducted with the Chinese immigrants. In order to fully understand the participants’ political experience as Chinese immigrants in South Africa, I decided to begin with their past, more specifically, their immigration process. This major theme includes subthemes that aim at investigating the family background, years of residence, current immigration status, and language ability.

i. Family background

The reasons for moving to South Africa vary from political prosecution, seeking better opportunity in business to only means of survival. Chi Chi’s family moved to South Africa to avoid the penalty of breaking the one-child policy; Sherry, Dylan and Patrick’s family moved to South Africa mainly because they wanted better opportunities that were incentivized by the old government to grow and develop the local manufacturing industry. China, at that time, was a communist regime with unstable politics, floundering economy and little private business opportunity. Seeking better economic opportunities has always been the primary driving force for Chinese immigrants. Daniel recently moved to South Africa by himself because, as he claimed, “investment in South Africa offers better returns than in China.” As for Chan, he started considering relocating to South Africa when his friend who had moved earlier described the enormous economic opportunities to do business.

Acquiring the reasons for their moving is of importance for this study because the motivation of immigrating alters their political experiences in South Africa. Also, participants talked about years of residence which may affect their level of integration. To understand their level of integration, I asked about their immigration status and language ability.

ii. Immigration status and language ability

Five of them have South African citizenship while Chan is undocumented. But his wife holds legal working visa.

All of the interviewees speak at least basic English. Four of them who went to school in South Africa can speak Afrikaans since it was compulsory. Only two of them, Daniel and Chan, who were not born and grew in South Africa, speak fluent Mandarin. Dylan believes that language is everything and is an integral part of one's identity and how one perceives the world.

iii. Political experience

After knowing their background, I asked about participants' political experience, both formal and informal forms. Results are four of them have voted before. Both Chi Chi and Dylan have voted in presidential elections twice and intend to vote every time in the future; Patrick and Sherry vote in presidential election every single time; Daniel and Chan have never voted. Daniel joined a Chinese trade union in Cape Town. He claimed that the newly immigrated Chinese people are more business-oriented and have less sense of ownership than local Chinese South African; Chan is not enfranchised and does not have the interest in participating in South African politics.

Sherry and Patrick participate in formal politics the most. Sherry is a crucial member in a large Chinese association in Cape Town and also a South African

political party. She attends the political party's meeting regularly. Patrick is the chairperson of one of the largest Chinese associations in Cape Town. He is very active in politics, not by running for office, but by negotiating with decision-makers to fight for the rights of the Chinese community. He was the representative of his association in the court against the South African government who denied to let Chinese South African benefit from the Employment Equity Act and Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act.

Four of them have been to at least one political protest. Daniel has never been to because he does not often follow the South African domestic news. He also revealed that in the Chinese society, people do not have the habit of participating in politics. Protesting against the government is a crime in China. Therefore, he is still learning how does a democratic society function. Chan has never been to any protests because he has no time for it. He works 364 days a year. Also, he does not perceive South Africa as home, so he does not want to pay much attention to South African politics. In addition, his limited English ability prevents him from acquiring first-hand political news. His news resource is Wechat, a Chinese social media.

Three of them agreed with the stereotype that Chinese people are passive and apolitical whereas Chi Chi, Patrick, and Sherry had different opinions about it. Patrick stated that before 1994, the biggest challenge for Chinese people to participate in politics was that they were prohibited from voting in any form. But since the end of the apartheid, local Chinese South African, especially second-, third-, fourth-generation Chinese immigrants, are not very different in their levels of political participation from other racial groups. Chi Chi said that Chinese people are not apolitical. They are just not very passionate about involving in politics in

the formal forms because many of them find that the previous Chinese or Taiwanese politicians in the parliament did not represent the best interest of the community. So people decided to change the strategy to negotiate as a group directly with the decision-maker instead of running for office.

iv. Racial discrimination

All of them claimed that they have experienced racial discrimination throughout their life in South Africa, especially Chan, who has been through a hard time when he first arrived in South Africa. He suffered both verbal abuse and physical violent based on his race, but he remained quiet since he did not want to stir up troubles as well as he did not know how to battle in English. Dylan got a sense that Chinese are still not fully accepted as part of the cultural spectrum in South Africa and still very much the minority. In his childhood, his parents worked hard to provide him with the opportunity of tertiary education, but even with that privilege, he struggled to have a “normal” childhood. He struggled to understand why people treated Asians like they were beneath them. He struggled to blend in because of how he looks, and he struggled to understand why it was that way. He said almost every second-generation Asian in South Africa has had a similar experience. Even nowadays many Chinese are labeled as job stealers. Sherry, whose family has been here for almost 100 years, is still asked “where are you really from” all the time. People’s first impression of Chinese immigrants is still foreigners instead of South Africans.

Chi Chi said the problem with growing up as an immigrant in South Africa is that they were taught to tolerate the discriminative behavior; to be submissive, understanding and avoid unnecessary confrontation. But those childhood traumas left her uncomfortable, depressed and anxious, shaping the conflicted immigrant

she is today, also left deep scars that make them an angry and bitter generation. As she grew up, she gradually realized that as a group, Chinese immigrants have unknowingly formed their own “new” culture. In the local Chinese association, they have shared similar negative experiences in post-apartheid South Africa, and as a group they are invisibilized in the country they call home. They conclude that the only way to move forward is to be part of the movement to change a mindset that shouldn't have been tolerated in the first place.

v. Parents' influence and generation gap

All of the participants agreed that in general, Chinese immigrants are more passive and apolitical comparing to other racial groups. But five of the participants agreed that there is a generation gap in the level of political integration of Chinese immigrants. Comparing to other ethnic groups, younger generation of Chinese immigrants does not have much difference in the level of political participation. Comparing to their parents, young Chinese immigrants, especially second-, third-, fourth-generations, are having more interest in participating in South African politics, such as voting and protesting. But still, not many of them have the intention to join a political party or work for the government formally.

Two of them, happen to be the only two third-generation Chinese immigrants, Sherry and Patrick, discuss about politics with their parents. Sherry's parents were very politically active and built good relations with the Taiwanese government. Patrick's parents encouraged him to fight for the rights of the local Chinese community. But rest of them do not discuss politics with their parents for varied reasons. Such as Chi Chi, the language barrier is her main reason. She could not communicate with her parents deeply because she only speaks basic Mandarin while her parents English is also not sufficient to support them have anything

beyond a basic idea of what is happening. Almost all of them claimed that even though they have very different attitudes towards and opinions about politics from their parents, family environment definitely shaped their political experience in one way or another.

vi. Apartheid and the Chinese association

Apartheid established race as the primary determinant of identity politically, economically and socially. This racial identity in many cases reinforced ethnic groupings of those who share common ancestral experiences, homeland, cultural practices, and language among other things. The Chinese in South Africa is no exception (Yu & Vivier, 2015). All of the participants agreed that apartheid brought the Chinese immigrants closer together. Subject to discrimination and spatial segregation over the course of the twentieth century, the Chinese in the country exemplify an immigrant community's struggle to negotiate competing identities (Yu & Vivier, 2015).

Four of the participants joined a Chinese association in Cape Town. This organization runs a number of sporting, cultural and religious activities. Apart from support in the form of discussion groups and representing the indigent Chinese in the area, creating and sustaining a Chinese school is a vital responsibility of the association to maintain the Chinese language. The origins of the Chinese Associations in South Africa date back to 1902. Born out of necessity during the apartheid years, the association has continued to provide a platform for the continued support and development of the Chinese culture in Cape Town and the greater environment.

It also continues to promote and protect the physical, economic, social, intellectual and educational welfare of the Chinese community. All of the

participants gave praise that central role that The Chinese Association played in correcting the position of the Chinese during the apartheid years. Except for Chan, rest of the participants all claimed that they are benefit from the BEE and Employment Equity Act to some extent.

Patrick, the chairman of the association, clarified that the association as an organization is apolitical, yet it does encourage and offer help to its members to participate in politics.

Chan, however, revealed that the new immigrants, on the other hand, rely much more on informal social networks. But sometimes new immigrants also approach established associations to get advice and assistance on issues such as how to purchase a house or how to register a business.

Discussion and Analysis

Political participation is a fundamental component of democracy. On the one hand, it is a right that offered to people to influence the outcome of the decision-making process and defend their interests. On the other hand, it is a practice that enhances the legitimacy and stability of the political system. For any minority or group that wants to gain political representation, the first step is always to take part in the political process at a lower level such as to vote in elections (Togebly, 2003). The level of a groups' electoral participation can be seen as a sign of political integration of that group into society. However, as we have known from the previous literature, there are clearly some significant barriers prevent or retard the full political incorporation of minority groups such as immigrants. Chinese South Africans have no exception. My research findings are in line with the result from the literature on the level of immigrants' political participation. It is revealed in my findings that some groups of Chinese immigrants in South Africa are less involved

in politics and the level of political integration is mainly affected by the following variables:

i. Length of residence

Prior to the interview, I hypothesized that the correlation between years of residence and electoral turnout is high. In the Norwegian case, the electoral turnout is higher for the more established immigrant groups. Among Norwegian citizens with backgrounds from Asia, Africa, Latin America and Eastern Europe, the most established immigrant group (30 years of residence or more) has a 21-point higher electoral turnout than the group with the shortest residence (0 to 9 years) (Aalandslid, 2008).

According to the interview that I conducted with six Chinese immigrants, Sherry's and Patrick's family are the two that have the longest average lengths of residence and meanwhile they have the highest level of political integration. Chan and Daniel are newest immigrants, and they have the least interest in South African politics. This finding reveals that the exposure may be a critical ingredient which echoes my hypothesis that the longer Chinese immigrants have lived in South Africa, the more likely they are to vote in national elections.

In addition, there is a generation gap in the Chinese immigrants' political participation level. The first generation Chinese immigrants tend to be less politically active than their offspring, and among the first generation new immigrants, the more time they spent in South Africa, the better political integration do they have. The time they spent in South Africa helps them to accustom to the new political system that allows meaningful participation.

Sometimes the first generation new immigrants are not well enough assimilated into the world of work and the community to be able to get fully

involved in politics. The primary goal for many of them to move to South Africa is to seek a better economic life. Therefore, the first generation Chinese immigrants are very business-oriented. So they adapt to their new economic environment in time, and then to the political climate, while their descendants are more fully adapted. Even though some of the first-generation immigrants have heightened interest in politics in the new country, being an immigrant can create structural impediments to involvement. As we all know, being an immigrant implies being a newcomer to the political institutions and norms of South Africa. For the first-generation Chinese immigrants, developing the necessary skills to participate in the political system takes time. Therefore, it leads to another explanation for the higher levels of civic participation for second-, third-, and fourth- generation immigrants: maybe the first-generation Chinese immigrants attempt to engage in political behaviors but cannot easily to do so, and that they strongly encourage their offspring to get involved in politics too. Just like Richmond and Verma (1978) have argued that the tendency toward comparatively strong economic achievement by immigrants' children may be indicative of high assimilation aspirations on the part of parents, whose aspirations are passed on to their offspring. As for the latter generations, without the same problems of getting settled economically, may find participating in politics easier.

Furthermore, as Patrick says that compared to other racial groups in South Africa, the second-, third-, and fourth-generation are not very different in their levels of political participation; this is because those Chinese immigrants who have lived for a longer period of time in South Africa society have developed stronger social, economic and political interests. In turn, these interests are drivers for

political participation, thereby the gap between second-, third-, and fourth-Chinese immigrants' political participation level and other groups is significantly reduced.

ii. Interaction with the local Chinese association

Forming associations is a common way through which diasporas establish communities in order to preserve identity and culture, support the arrival of new immigrants, and promote social and economic opportunities. In a 2010 publication, Huynh, Park and Anna Ying Chen estimated that there might have been more than 120 different Chinese associations throughout South Africa. These included associations of the earliest immigrants that have been maintained by their descendants, as well as various associations established by and for the Taiwanese community, and groups formed by the most recent post-2000 immigrants from the mainland China (Vivier, Yu, Wentzel & Houston). The latter organizations are often based on village or province of origin, such as the Fujian association, boasts a membership of nearly 70,000 across southern Africa. One of the major obstacles of interaction among these three groups is language. The oldest group speaks Cantonese, English, and Afrikaans, but not Mandarin. Many of the Taiwanese speak Mandarin and English, and the new migrants speak Mandarin, and some speak minimal English (Vivier, Yu, Wentzel & Houston).

These Chinese associations play crucial roles in the political integration of Chinese immigrants. According to my research findings, when people have high involvement in the local association, they are often more willing to participate in politics. This is because in the association, shared migration experiences, common mother tongues, cultural practices, religious affiliations and other ties create strong group consciousness and institutional bonds which are essential for collective

actions. It is true that to most people that the range of apparent benefits that motivate people to participate in associations are new social and economic networks, employment opportunities, religious fulfillment, education, Chinese/English language learning, preservation of culture and identity, belonging to a community, etc. (Vivier, Yu, Wentzel & Houston) Also, there is no political incentive for many people to join the association, and the constitution of associations claims that they are all apolitical. But the discussions with other members may have a political dimension. Chinese immigrants are less involved in politics because newcomers are less knowledgeable about South African politics norms and value than native-born South Africans. But my research participants all agree that the Western Province Chinese Association (WPCA) serve as a facilitator in newcomers' attempts to learn the norms of the South African political system. Daniel, as the representative of the new immigrants, indicates that the needs for information about their new social environment are quite high and the trade union is the place where he acquires the first-hand information about South African economic and political news. At the same time, Patrick who is in charge of a large Chinese association admits that many Chinese associations will encourage their members to get politically involved in one way or another. Therefore, immigrants with a greater stake in the local community are more interested in politics and thus participate more.

Moreover, social stability and social connectedness, which are brought by the local Chinese associations, act as catalysts for political participation of Chinese immigrants. Chinese associations in South Africa provide its members social connections with other immigrants that share similar background and interactions expose immigrants to varied and greater supplies of information. In turn, broader

social networks are conducive to higher levels of political participation, and the information-sharing facilitates the understanding of politics and enhances the possibilities to get involved. (Huckfeldt and Sprague, 1995; Huckfeldt, 2001). The contact with peer immigrants with similar ethnic background can foster a better understanding of how things work. This was demonstrated in a positive relationship between consumption of ethnic media and political participation. Chan, the least politically active person among all participants, gains information from Wechat, a Chinese social media. When this information is of political nature, people are likely to become more active in politics. Within the network from South African Chinese associations, Chinese immigrants gain more access to different sets of politically-relevant information compared to that achieved on their own.

iii. Socioeconomic background

A number of researchers (e.g., Wright & Hyman, 1958; Orum, 1966; Welch et al., 1975; Milbrath & Goel, 1977; Kelly & McAllister, 1984; Haas, 1987) have discussed patterns among minority-majority group membership, socioeconomic status, and political participation in the United States. Each of these studies concludes that the lower socioeconomic status levels of immigrants dampen their political participation (Chui, Curtis & Lambert, 1991). My finding is in line with the result of previous researches.

Members in the Chinese community who are less successful in the world of work, such as Chan, tend to believe that they are irrelevant to the political process. For this reason, they are more likely to identify as Chinese, with their ethnic group, and less likely to participate in politics, than their successful peers. In the case of Chan, the alienation and lack of political involvement are attributed to the intersection of lack of legal immigration status and the lower socioeconomic status.

Without citizenship, one's sense of belonging is apparently less than other immigrants with a legit status. Also, being less educated and having a lower income than citizens are factors that commonly associated with lower levels of political participation. As Price has speculated, "persons primarily concerned with establishing themselves and their families are rarely willing to spend time and energy in the political life of a new country" (1963:305), Chan and his family have to work 364 days a year which leaves them no time and energy for political participation. We have to acknowledge that participating in politics is a privilege and many new immigrants do not have it. After all, Marxist philosophy told us that the economic base determines the superstructure, as a means of superstructure, serves for the economy. Chan represents a group of Chinese immigrants who simply want to use the system and are in it for the money. Politics, to them, never enters the picture. Furthermore, in the case of Daniel, who is pretty high in socioeconomic status but still quite apolitical, I suspect that is because immigration is probably economically disruptive for most immigrants, regardless of their socioeconomic level, so many of them still attach lower priority to the politics of their new country for a time.

Those who have settled in South Africa for a long time and are high in socioeconomic status, such as Patrick, feel more efficacious because of their greater economic success, and are, therefore, more likely to become politically active because they have more sense of belonging to this place. He regards his success as the fruit of both his hardworking and South African society's acceptance of a Chinese immigrant family. Thereby, he considers fighting for the rights for Chinese community and creating a better future for South Africa are his responsibility. To achieve this goal, he participates in politics in different forms:

voting, protesting against the discrimination toward Chinese, engaging in diplomacy and negotiations with decision-makers about the Employment Equality Act, etc.

iv. Language ability and prior political experience

It is impossible for an immigrant to participate in politics with an insufficient knowledge of the native language. A considerable amount of new Chinese immigrants in South Africa is not able to participate in politics because of lack facility in English or Afrikaans. Therefore, Chan admits that it is hard for new immigrants who cannot speak English fluently to understand what is going on except reading the second-hand translated news on Wechat which is very limited. Lack of language ability also prevents Chinese immigrants from communicating with local people and integrating into society which may help broaden the knowledge about South African politics and increase the sense of belonging. Language is often seen as an essential symbol and marker of identity. All of the participants agree that language plays a vital role in the formation of their identity. Chi Chi says that speaking Afrikaans helps her interact with black South Africans and meanwhile enhances her sense of ownership of South Africa which motivates her to participate in politics.

The process of immigration produces other disruptions as well, such as the difference from previous political experience. Especially for the first-generation immigrants, prior experience with repressive or democratic regimes can have a significant impact on the propensity to participate in politics. New arrivals like Chan always find it difficult to engage because of their limited knowledge of the new democratic political environment. Especially for Chinese immigrants, having lived in a non-democratic country generates attitudes of distance from the state and

political organizations, a factor that could help explain lower participation rates among new Chinese immigrants. New Chinese immigrants have lived in a regime with a long history of political repression which may result in a mistrust of the political system and therefore less likely to vote in elections. For the first generation Chinese immigrants, they may have difficulty in transferring the communist political lessons learned in China to the new South African polity. Wilson's (1973) research in Australia suggests this interpretation. He studied the levels of political activity (attention to politics, discussing politics, campaign activities, party membership, contacting officials, and voting) on the part of native-born Australians and British and Italian immigrants. He found that native-born Australians were the most active, British migrants had moderate participation levels, and Italians had the lowest participation rates. Wilson interpreted these results to mean that the British immigrants were more likely than Italians to find the Australian political system similar to their country of origin. In the case of Chinese immigrants, the hardship of adjusting in an entirely different new political environment may be an obstacle for new immigrants to participate in politics. As emphasized by Bourdieu (1987: 639-40), political participation – like political interest and knowledge – is dependent on the belief that one may legitimately exercise the “right to politics.” Limited rights and derogatory group images may undermine this belief. Chan and Daniel told me that new mainland Chinese immigrants (the group started moving from early 2000) were never allowed to exercise their political rights when they were in China. Therefore, some new Chinese immigrants do not participate in South African politics either because they lost the interest in politics and it was hard for them to restart learning about a new polity, especially without a sufficient language ability.

Moreover, the prior political experience could even influence political participation among offspring of the first generation. Studies of political socialization have shown that childhood exposure to political activities or discussions by parents has a significant impact on subsequent adult participation (Verba, Schlozman and Brady, 1995). According to the interview with Chi Chi, compared to her native peers, she has less level of political participation which, to some extent, is inherited from her first-generation immigrant parents. Thus, the previous political experience of an immigrant family not only affect on the level of political integration of the first generation, but also impacts the second generation as well, albeit perhaps to a lesser degree.

v. Social Perceptions

Another element strongly affects the level of Chinese immigrants' political participation is the perception of treatment in South Africa. The extent to which Chinese people feel welcome in the society shapes their level of participation. But the result of my research shows two different possibilities.

All of my participants talk about how they are discriminated in South African society. As Patrick said, during apartheid, they were prohibited from voting in any form; they could not purchase any property in white areas; they were unable to enter white government schools; they were unable to sign apprenticeships in most trades; they were restricted access to restaurants and theatres in white areas; they were not allowed to use public transport designated for whites; they were not allowed to marry across the color line; they were subject to job restrictions, resulting in widespread exploitation, etc. In the post-apartheid era, excluding Chinese from EEA and BBBEE legislation was symbolic of the continued exclusion of Chinese within the nation of South Africa. In 2008, the Pretoria High

Court issued an order that Chinese South Africans who were South African citizens before 1994, as well as their descendants, qualify as previously disadvantaged individuals as Coloureds, and therefore are eligible to benefit from affirmative action policies and programs. But the negative reaction to the victory of the Chinese community, in this case, provides further evidence of the extensive xenophobic racism and negative climate for Chinese in South African society. The recent continued media representations of China's "invasion" and "neo-colonialization" and increasing crime against Chinese are also examples of the growing anti-Chinese sentiment.

But my participants represent two different reactions of Chinese immigrants toward the growing anti-Chinese sentiment in South Africa. The first group argues that the perception of discrimination has a negative effect on political participation. Chan, Daniel, and Dylan claim that perceptions of discrimination against Chinese discourage them from engaging in politics. They feel rejected by mainstream society, and this leads to alienation and lack of involvement. Because of the negative attitude towards them, they do not feel welcomed and invest less in local affairs. But Chi Chi has different opinion. She believes that Chinese immigrants who perceive personal discrimination very often get engaged more in political activities. I argue that the perception of discrimination has a positive effect on political participation because immigrants come from a society in which they have been or would be treated as equal citizens. Once arrived in South Africa, they expect nothing less; as soon as they perceive discrimination, they may want to mobilize and alter this situation. One of the most convenient ways to do is through political participation that provides direct access to decision-making. To sum up,

the motivations and confidence of Chinese immigrants can be affected, in two different ways, by their reception by the mainstream society.

Conclusion

This paper aimed to identify the multiple layers of motivations, challenges, and determinants of Chinese immigrants' political participation in Cape Town. It has theoretically argued in favor of the effect of five main effects related to the length of residence, interaction with local Chinese association, language ability and prior political experience, socioeconomic background, and social perceptions. The influences of these determinants were vastly different for first-generation immigrants compared to the second-, third-generation participants that I interviewed. But generally speaking, based on the previous literature and interviews with six Chinese immigrants who are from different walks of life in Cape Town, it discovered that a longer period of stay in South Africa, a membership in the local Chinese communities, a good language ability in English or Afrikaans, and a high-level socioeconomic background explain best the engagement in politics of Chinese immigrants. Prior political experience in China, a non-democratic regime, and the extent to which Chinese immigrants feel welcome in the society also shape the level of engagement in politics.

These findings advance the general understanding of political engagement among Chinese immigrants in South Africa. One important observation is that their behavior is driven by similar factors to those revealed in earlier research about immigrants in other countries. The strong ties observed between civic, such as membership in the Chinese association, and political engagement of South African Chinese immigrants with a large body of literature that emphasized their congruence at an individual level. Similarly, the effect of length of stay in the

country of residence is in line with the socialization theories that reveal the involvement that accompanies stability (Gherghina, 2013). Another relevant implication of these findings is that political participation plays a complementary role to immigrants' efforts to be proactive or better understand what happens in the new South African society. Opposed to short-term issues such as the perception of personal discrimination, immigrants' decision to engage in politics is influenced by characteristics acquired in the long-term more, such as social network and language ability.

Political participation is primarily important to immigrants because it plays a crucial role in the process of social integration, cohesion and the development of a dynamic democratic polity increasingly characterized by diversity. By participating in politics, immigrants have the opportunity to influence the outcomes of the decision-making processes and defend their interests. In addition, the 'socialization' function of participation in commonly binding decisions help enrich immigrants' feelings of belonging and shared identities (Lindekilde, 2009). Chinese immigrants' voter registration and participation rates are generally lower than for South African citizens who are perceived as natives. Encouragingly, their participation often increases as they spend more time in the country, have a better language ability in English or Afrikaans, achieve a better level of socioeconomic background.

I was fortunate that I was able to outline six immigrants' experiences and trace the change of their political participation level with their experiences. This research has enabled me to share the obstacles and motivations in the aspect of politics that arise when moving to another country.

Suggestions for future research

After researching and establishing conclusions regarding the determinants of Chinese immigrants' political participation among immigrants in diverse groups throughout Cape Town, I believe that further research should be done on this issue. My findings illustrate the fact that in Cape Town, there are many diverse Chinese communities, each with their own specific background and social identities, which I found to greatly impact immigrant's opportunities and willingness to participate in politics. My study, therefore, exhibited a need for further research on this specific aspect of immigrants' political participation; because I was only able to interview six people in Cape Town, there is still a plethora of communities that could be further researched. I also feel that due to the

In the further study, one should always take caution when making generalizations about the political participation of Chinese immigrants. Not only is the population internally diverse, dispersed, and in flux, but research on Chinese immigrants has significantly varied in study sites, field dates, coverage of ethnic groups, interview language, and interview mode. Even the best studies often have a biased and small sample. These problems create challenges, but they also present attractive opportunities for political scientist seeking to advance the study of Chinese immigrants political participation.

Appendix

This research project idea was inspired from a trip to Apartheid Museum, Johannesburg. I found only a tiny section displayed some items that related to the history of Chinese community in South Africa. But this section introduced a fascinating story of a Chinese immigrant family. Started from then, I kept thinking about what is the life like for South African Chinese who came from the other side of the world. Do they still keep their Chinese traditions or they fully integrate into South African society? How does the foreign relation between South Africa and China impact their racial status? How are they treated by the mainstream society? What are some obstacles or opportunities by having the Chinese identity? What does integration mean for them?... My curiosity drove me initiate this project and supported me go through the whole process. Thanks to the trip to Apartheid Museum, where the journey begins.

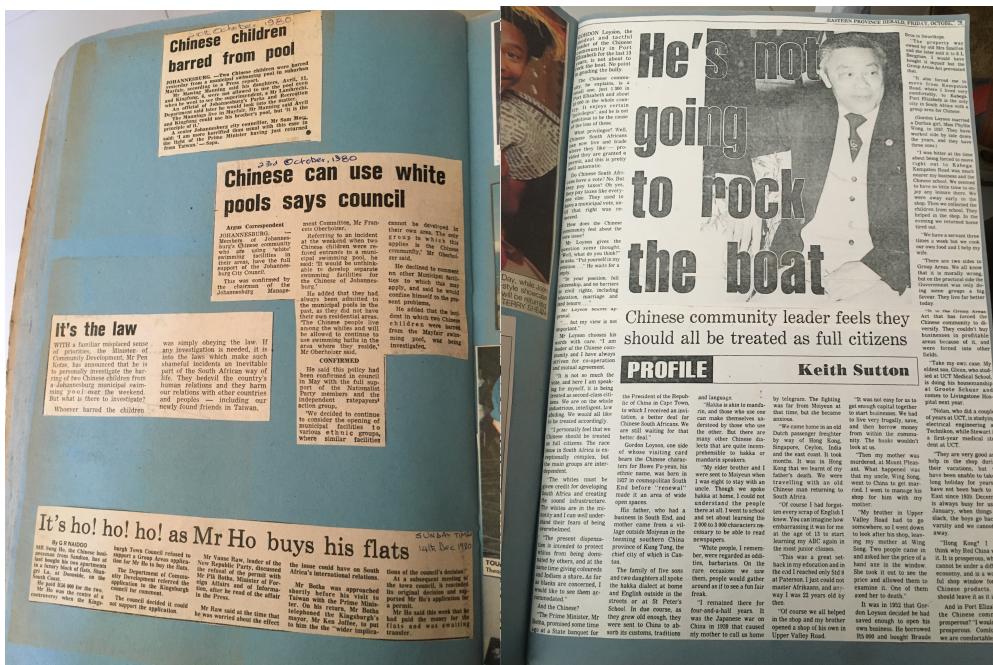


Leslie's family story: *Leslie's grandfather, Tong Wing, came with his wife, Sak See, from Shanghai to Johannesburg in the early 1900s to seek his fortune in gold. When they arrived, they discovered that South Africa's racial laws prevented Chinese people from digging for precious metals and he had to find other work. They had 13 children, including Leslie's father. Anam Wing Fong, who ran a grocery business in Sophiatown, and married Grace Williams Ncume, a Xhosa woman. He was a keen sportsman and the first Chinese man to take up golf in Johannesburg. Of Tong Wing's children, two died, one emigrated and the rest stayed in Johannesburg. Most of their descendants are professionals and still live in Johannesburg.*



Left: "Cape Town Chinese are Good Citizens"

Right: Pictures of Chinese students in University of Cape Town joined the anti-apartheid protest



Left: Newspaper clippings about how Chinese were discriminated under Apartheid years.

Right: "He's not going to rock the boat: Chinese community leader feels they should all be treated as full citizens"



Left: Chinese Protesters showed his wounds which were caused by police dogs during an MDM protest at the Strand beach in 1989.

Right: A third-generation Chinese immigrant keeps the tradition hanging calligraphies on the wall at her house, even though she could not read Chinese and has no idea about what the calligraphy writes about.

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