Luo Di Sheng Gen (落地生根):
Early Taiwanese-Chinese Immigrants in Canada and Guam

Lan-Hung Nora Chiang*

Abstract
Recent literature on new Taiwanese-Chinese immigrants to Western countries has focussed on those who have arrived since the late 1980s — but may not be staying permanently in their host countries — and have adopted a transnational residence pattern which requires them to engage in two or more social fields. Using autobiographical interviews, the author reconstructs the lives of early Taiwanese-Chinese immigrants in three different cities in Canada, and in Guam, an Unincorporated Territory of the US located in the insular western Pacific region. The three major research themes in this study pertain to reasons for and processes of migration, lived experiences, and self-identity. For this study, 46 Taiwanese-Chinese immigrants (24 in Canada and 22 in Guam) were selected from the available samples in the two respective regions where the author conducted extensive fieldwork in 2008-2011. Arriving mainly in the 1960s and 1970s, the early Taiwanese-Chinese immigrants to Canada and Guam survived various hardships, worked or established businesses from which they earned a steady income. Diligence, ingenuity and perseverance, as well as skills in entrepreneurship and social capital brought from Taiwan, served them well in their achievements in their new home countries in Canada and Guam. As young, well-educated university graduates or professionals at the time of immigration, sometimes re-migrating from another country, they developed significant language competency, social skills, and local knowledge in Canada and Guam. Having a strong sense of belonging, and identifying with the countries they have moved to, most of the Taiwanese-Chinese of Canada and Guam who took part in this study have become “permanent settlers” and some have even retired and remained in their host regions enjoying the multi-cultural environment. The current inquiry provides a timely case study of the meaningful diversity that is present among Taiwanese-Chinese permanent settlers, who are different from the transnational or circular migrants commonly found in the last three decades.

Keywords
Taiwanese-Chinese immigrants, Home, Identity, Guam, Canada

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I. Introduction

Extant literature concerning the diaspora of Taiwanese-Chinese (henceforth T-C) in overseas locations often highlights their high unemployment rates in Western countries such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand, which attract recent Taiwanese-Chinese immigrants who have gone abroad under business migration programs with their financial assets (Chiang and Hsu 2006; Chiang and Kuo 2000; Hsu and Chi 2004; Chiang 2011b). In spite of their good educational backgrounds and entrepreneurial skills acquired in their home countries, however, overseas Taiwanese-Chinese often have not made good use of these skills in the host countries. Rather, their children’s education being an important reason for them to emigrate, “astronaut families,” split households (Waters 2002; Chee 2005), and dan qi ma ma (單棲媽媽) (Chiang 2006, 2008) are the common outcomes.

The United States and Canada rank first and second, respectively, as the most popular destinations for T-C immigrants. Recent literature on the new T-C immigrants to Western countries has focussed on those who have arrived since the late 1980’s — but may not be staying permanently in their host countries — and have adopted a transnational residence pattern which requires them to engage in two or more social fields. Research on Taiwanese-Chinese immigrants in Canada has focussed on new immigrants who were in most cases transnationals. Thus, they differ from the early T-C immigrants who had adopted a linear movement pattern and had settled permanently. This article focusses on early T-C who arrived in three different cities in Canada and in the U.S. Trust Territory of Guam, to investigate the reasons for and the processes in their migration, their lived experiences including adaptation, and their sense of home and belonging. This article posits that among those who left Taiwan in the 1960s and 1970s, their migration trajectories have taken different paths because of the variety of circumstances leading to their migration decisions.

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1 The term “Taiwanese-Chinese” refers to Chinese who reside in Taiwan regardless of their times of arrival, to differentiate them from Chinese of different origins such as Hong Kong or Mainland China. They include both the Taiwan-born and the China-born before China came under Communist rule in 1949. In Taiwan, they can be categorized as “native Taiwanese” (ben-shengren, people from this province), and “Mainland Taiwanese” (waishengren, people from other provinces). This study includes both groups, regardless of their political stance and self-identification.

2 As coined by Chiang (2006) in her earlier study, this refers to “lone mothers” who stayed with their children during their education in the host countries, while the migrant men relocated back to Taiwan or other countries to make a living.
As early T-C immigrants\(^3\) are rarely differentiated or studied, this research tries to fill a gap, and raises questions which are pertinent to settlers of that time. The following issues are explored: 1) What are their reasons for and processes of migration? 2) Regarding their lived experiences, how do they make a living, and in what ways do they adapt to the new environment? 3) For what reasons do they remain in the host countries, and how do they define “home”? 4) What is the nature of their self-identities, and their sense of belonging to the host countries? Through a qualitative study of T-Cs, who arrived in the 1960s and 1970s before the wave of new immigrants, this paper attempts to address the above issues in depth. In the following pages, I shall briefly review the demographic background of Chinese settlers in Canada and Guam, and examine the theoretical aspects of home. I shall then present my field methodology and the socio-economic profile of the T-C immigrants whom I have interviewed. My research findings will follow, in the course of developing linkages with the theoretical debates that have been posited earlier.

Statistically speaking, the numbers of T-C immigrants have in fact been underestimated in previous studies that depended on statistics relating to the Taiwan-born, who were counted as the only immigrants from Taiwan in the various National Census endeavors (Chiang and Kuo 2000). Those who were born in China, but left after the civil war are not treated as immigrants from Taiwan, and their numbers are difficult to estimate. This study therefore does not exclude any sub-ethnic Chinese groups, despite their places of birth, so that a diversity of experiences and identities can be revealed. Thus, “T-Cs,” for the purposes of this paper, are defined as immigrants from Taiwan, whether of mainland origin or so-called “native Taiwanese” (i.e. of southern Fujian or Hakka heritage but born in Taiwan).

II. Review of Pertinent Literature

1. Changing Picture of Chinese Immigrants to Canada

Chinese constitute the largest number of visible minorities in Canada, arriving from a variety of countries. Chinese who came to Canada in the

\(^3\) “Early Taiwanese-Chinese immigrants” in this study are defined as those who moved to Canada and to Guam (roughly) between 1960 and 1980, to differentiate them from the new Asian immigrants who came to Western countries such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand in large numbers in the late 1980s. They belonged neither to the group of Chinese sojourners and fortune-seekers in overseas countries, nor to the new Chinese immigrants who sustained a transnational/circular migration pattern. This term is used interchangeably with “old-timers” in the text.
19th century originated from a small number of counties in the southern province of Guangdong.

Peter S. Li wrote that throughout the latter half of the 19th and the early part of the 20th centuries, the Chinese in Canada were viewed by the white population as aliens who could be utilized in menial jobs but were not to be trusted as equals. Anti-Orientalism was particularly strong in British Columbia where the Chinese tended to congregate. Virtually every social evil was blamed on them at one time or another including epidemics, overcrowding, prostitution, opium smoking, and moral corruption. The Chinese were also accused by the laboring class of depressing wages, since they were generally paid less than the white workers and at times were used as scabs in labor disputes (The Encyclopedia of Canada’s Peoples).

Since 1967, the universal points system of the Canadian immigration policy has favored applicants who are young and well-educated, who have English/French language proficiency, and who have the occupational skills that are in demand in Canada. In the last few decades, with the intensification of economic globalization, Canada has developed new immigration initiatives to select the highly-skilled as well as business immigrants to Canada. Between 1968 and 1984, 170,720 Chinese are estimated to have entered the country from Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. In the next seven years, another 176,197 individuals came from these areas; they made up about 16 percent of the total immigrants for the period. By 1991, an estimated 388,651 Chinese had immigrated to Canada since the Chinese Immigration Act was repealed in 1947 (The Encyclopedia of Canada’s Peoples).

In 1978, Canada amended its immigration policy to allow the admission of entrepreneurs as immigrants without assessment on the basis of occupational demand or arranged employment. The volume of business immigration to Canada continued to increase. In 1989 alone, Canada admitted 17,564 business immigrants and their dependents about 30 percent of whom coming from Hong Kong and 13 percent from Taiwan. In that year, business immigrants from the two areas constituted about 43 percent of all immigrants admitted under this category, and in 1990 they made up about 50 percent (The Encyclopedia of Canada’s Peoples).

In the 1990s the term “new Asian immigrant” was conceived to describe the middle-class professionals and entrepreneurs who were arriving in large numbers in the United States, in contrast to the working class laborers of the older Asian migrants. The Taiwanese have since participated in a global immigration marketplace where there is competition primarily among Australia, New Zealand, and Canada, as reflected in those countries’ respective business migration policies, which are receptive and welcoming. The migration outcome of new immigrants which may result in a transnational family is
different from the early immigrant family that made a linear movement pattern and settled permanently. Subsequent to immigration, the “astronaut strategy” has been adopted by many Taiwanese immigrant families; typically, men return to work in their country of origin but their wives remain abroad while the children complete their education (Chiang 2008). As the children’s education came foremost in the families’ decision to emigrate from Taiwan, the completion of tertiary education is a critical time for the parents: some return to their base in Taiwan, while others choose to stay on in the destination countries (Chiang 2011a). While parents re-unite and live in the same country, the younger generation disperses over more than one country (Chiang 2011b) as in the case of Hong Kong. Because of the high levels of uncertainty and insecurity about future employment prospects among this generation of immigrants, many are prepared to leave the destination country and go back to their country of birth, or even re-emigrate to countries where they could find work (Ho and Bedford 2008). This so-called “astronaut strategy” results in transnational arrangements that sustain social fields in both the countries of origin and destination, a phenomenon which is quite different from the early immigration in the 1960s and 1970s.

Between the last two censuses (2001, 2006), the number of immigrants from Mainland China grew most rapidly among the three Chinese-speaking groups from Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. From 1996 to 2006, Mainland Chinese immigrants doubled (from 231,055 to 466,940), while the Hong Kong-born declined from 241,100 to 215,430. The 2001 Census records 70,790 Taiwan-born immigrants living in Canada: Vancouver (64%), Greater Toronto (22%) and Calgary (2.2%). In 2006, the number declined to 65,205. Table 1 shows that the number of Taiwan-born entering Canada (Hsu and Chi 2004) in the 1960s and 1970s was much smaller than in the following two decades. Approximately one-half of the Taiwanese immigrants to Canada in recent years came as business immigrants while the other half came via the categories of independent skilled worker or family.

One should also note that the background of Taiwanese emigrants differs from that of Hongkongers and Mainland Chinese. Taiwanese emigrants have been engaged in three waves of immigration to Canada. Since 1979, a year before the United States severed diplomatic relations with Taiwan, Canada had implemented the business migration program to attract wealthy entrepreneurs and investors, a program that led to the first wave of migrants there. A second wave of increased migration from Taiwan to Canada culminated in 1997 at the time of the handover of Hong Kong to China. Before the turn of the century, a third wave of skilled migrants resulted from the political instability caused by Mainland China’s political stance toward Taiwan.
Previous research on Taiwanese immigrants in Canada has focused on New Taiwanese migrants who were in most cases transnationals living in two social fields. While the transnationalism paradigm seems to dominate the literature on Asian or Taiwan immigrants, there is a research gap in addressing the situation of the early migrants who were settled permanently, which forms a significant part of the migration history of the Taiwanese in Canada, despite its smaller number.

As the year 2008 marked the 150 anniversary of the founding of British Columbia as a Crown Colony, people had cause to reflect on the social, economic and political history of the province including the first permanent Chinese settlement in Canada. Henry Yu, a History Professor, developed a Pilot History Program with the aim of recovering the long-ignored voices of Chinese Canadians. Yu notes that it is particularly meaningful for young students whose families have lived in BC for five generations to take part in the project, and take pride in the fact that their ancestors helped to build the province.

While it is important to know the notable dates, facts and figures, such as the number of immigrants that came each year, it is also necessary to look at the human details, i.e. the personal stories that make up real history (Worall 2008).4

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4 My study is inspired by a short article entitled “Recovering the Lost Voices” that describes Henry Yu’s project (Worall 2008).

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### Table 1: Trend of Population Increase of the Taiwan-Born in Canada, 1961-2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period of immigration</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total population</td>
<td>70,790</td>
<td>36,770</td>
<td>34,020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2001)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2006)</td>
<td>65,205</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before 1961</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961-1970</td>
<td>1,255</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>610</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971-1980</td>
<td>3,540</td>
<td>1,990</td>
<td>3,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-1990</td>
<td>8,530</td>
<td>4,655</td>
<td>3,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-2001</td>
<td>53,750</td>
<td>27,600</td>
<td>26,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-1995</td>
<td>23,405</td>
<td>11,885</td>
<td>11,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-2001</td>
<td>30,345</td>
<td>15,715</td>
<td>14,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant population</td>
<td>67,095</td>
<td>34,905</td>
<td>32,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-immigrant</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-permanent residents</td>
<td>3,525</td>
<td>1,755</td>
<td>1,770</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Likewise, it would be meaningful to study immigrants who arrived at different
time periods, as the context of migration varies, leading to different migration
outcomes.

2. Background of the Taiwanese-Chinese (T-C) on Guam

Guam, the second site of my study, is an Unincorporated Territory of the US
located in the western Pacific region. Guam is the largest and southernmost
island of the Mariana Archipelago with a land area of some 545 sq. kilometers;
it is also the largest land mass in Micronesia. Geographically, Guam is situated
1,474 miles southeast of Taiwan. Currently, the population of Guam is approx-
imately 175,000, a multi-ethnic, multi-cultural community that encompasses
residents from other Pacific islands, Asia, the US, and elsewhere. It is a com-
plex, cosmopolitan island community, with significant roots in the “islander”
past (Stephenson et al. 1999).

There appears to be no comprehensive studies to date focussing on the
Chinese residents of Guam, and the current total number of T-C residents
on Guam is difficult to assess (Stephenson et al. 2010). Crocombe (2007)
briefly considered Chinese entrepreneurs on Guam, while acknowledging other
Chinese residents of Guam derived from a variety of countries of origin. The
number of Taiwan-born has not shown up as a separate category in the census,
and the estimates range from 2,000 to 3,000, according to informal sources.

Despite a smaller size and smaller number of T-C immigrants compared to
Canada, it would be useful to add T-C immigrants in Guam to this study, as
it would increase the sample size of the generation of migrants who became
permanent settlers, as distinct from the post-1980s new Chinese immigrants
(from China, Taiwan, or HK) who are more transnational.5 Those who moved
between 1960 and 1980 were significantly influenced by shifting global poli-
tics around US-China-Taiwan (namely the alienation of Taiwan from the UN
in 1971 and the recognition of China by the US in 1979). The selection of
Guam as a case study may also provide some clues to stepwise migration, due
to its proximity to Taiwan and ease of immigration compared to the US Main-
land. Stepwise international migration used as a strategy by immigrants who
aspire to move onto the country of their choice should also be studied.

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5 The incentive to study early Taiwanese-Chinese living in Guam started from my first visit to
Guam in 2003 to attend a conference. I had thus the opportunity to be acquainted with the early
Taiwanese-Chinese immigrants living on Guam.
3. Concepts of Home and Roots

“Home” has been an important subject in humanistic geography, and more recently in feminist geography. In the mid-1970s, geographers examined home as an important place of special experiences and meanings (Entrikin 1976). Home is regarded as a haven, a place to relax in, to anchor one's fatigued mind and body after one's travail in the outside world (Tuan 1971, 1975). A spiritual and psychological attachment to a place like home might be considered an important human need which ensures an authentic sense of place (Peet 1998). Blunt and Dowling (2006) presented a critical geography of home by identifying two key elements: home as a place to live, and home as a spatial imaginary that is imbued with feelings, which may be feelings of belonging, desire and intimacy; or fear, violence and alienation. “Home,” more significantly, is the sociological setting in which people build and maintain social relationships, and affirm their identity and connectedness. A home as a physical location and a psychological concept is often a positive one of warmth, security, and a haven from the pressures of paid employment (or unemployment) and public life (Bowlby, Gregory and McKie 1997). A crucial element of the everyday understanding of home is the notion of a place within which children are or will be reared and, therefore, a place of origin, a place of belonging, a place to which to return (p. 344).

In Chinese, luo di sheng gen 落地生根 and luo ye gui gen 落葉歸根 refer to two different types of immigrants who respectively stay to sink roots or return to their origins. All Han Chinese, whether they immigrated to Taiwan in the early 18th century or after 1949, have “roots” back in the Mainland, but most of them do not return for a range of different reasons. In fact, very few have returned there to live, even though they have relatives or a similar cultural heritage as people living in Mainland China. One case study shows that social and political differences have prevented the mainlander Taiwanese and the local mainland Chinese from integrating with each other, and the latter are regarded as “brothers in name” (Lin 2011).

In a pilot study that I conducted on the self-identified Taiwanese-Canadians (Chiang and Huang 2009), the authors found that these “old-timers” were unlikely to go back to live in Taiwan because they had already established themselves abroad, even though they might still consider Taiwan to be their roots (gen). I borrowed the term “reluctant exiles” from Skeldon’s compendium on Hong Kong Chinese (Skeldon 1994) who left before the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997, to describe Taiwanese who went to Canada and have since become settlers in their adopted country. Their experiences were unique at the time, when the Nationalist Government in Taiwan restricted the
freedom of activities of T-Cs abroad, particularly those who were suspected of spreading dissenting ideas. These “old timers” left Taiwan between 1964 and 1979, sometime after living in another country such as Japan or the United States. They have now lived in Canada for over 30-40 years, and most of them have retired. Their social experiences are different from the “new immigrants,” as they identify themselves as Taiwanese-Canadians or Taiwanese, and not as Chinese-Canadians or Chinese. That study was intended to give voice to those who emigrated from Taiwan owing to their dissatisfaction with the political climate at that time, and who had subsequently found ways of establishing a new life in Canada. All of the interviewees were “reluctant” immigrants at some point, as they could not return to Taiwan before the late 1990s, before Lee Teng-hui became President.

In this paper, I focus on the Taiwanese-Chinese Canadians and the Taiwanese-Chinese Americans who have settled “permanently” in Canada and Guam, respectively, for various reasons. While most are Taiwan-born, others are China-born, or born of parents who moved from Mainland China between 1945 and 1949, during or after the civil war in China. These people have also made Canada or Guam their home as permanent settlers. In both groups of early T-Cs, the concepts of flexible families, “astronaut” households (Chiang 2006, 2008), and experiences of lone mothers (Waters 2002) are less apparent for the early T-C immigrants. They have neither totally abandoned their Taiwanese homeland nor their Taiwanese roots as a result of their long stay abroad, nor have they become transnationals who live in two entirely different social fields like the new Asian immigrants. They are “permanent settlers,” encompassing a separate identity from late 19th-century diasporic Chinese who began their immigration to Anglo-America, Australasia and Southeast Asia as fortune seekers and laborers in railroad construction. In those days, the move was almost entirely by men, with the intention of sojourning and returning with saved money, while women and children were left behind in China living on remittances. It was uncommon for immigrants in those days to build social fields that crossed geographic, cultural, and political borders. Seldom was the case in which split household arrangement would be maintained, and the physically mobile existence of today would not have been attained easily. Return visits or migrations, which are common today, almost never took place then.

The study of early T-C immigrants in this research was undertaken in four different locations in Canada and Guam. For purposes of comparison, the research questions and methodology were similar, but addressed in different contexts. It is assumed that the meaning of home can be defined differently for T-C immigrants who arrived at different times, as the interpretation of home
from the perspectives of early settlers might be different from that of the transnational migrants. This thought constitutes the background to the conceptual framework of my study as to how T-C have made Canada or Guam their homes for permanent settlement.

In the following sections, I will first discuss the research framework, methodology, and the demographic characteristics of the sample. I will then organize my findings under the topics of reasons and processes of emigration; lived experiences and adaptations; and home, identity and sense of belonging.

III. Research Methodology and Socio-Economic Profiles

My previous studies of T-C immigrants in Australia, New Zealand and Canada (2006, 2008, 2011) based on in-depth interviews have given me ample experiences in studying T-C in a variety of contexts. The excitement of looking for “ground truth” is in the continuous emergence of new research subjects which are meaningful to the T-C community. Reflexivity is exercised when choosing the subject matter, as well as applying the methodology. While focussing on topics such as residential mobility (Chiang and Hsu 2005, 2006), “astronaut families” (Chiang 2006), volunteering (Chiang 2009), the 1.5 generation (Chiang and Yang 2008, Chiang and Liao 2008, Chiang 2011b) and transnational families in my research, I found that T-C immigrants who have settled for more than three decades in the destination countries such as the US and Canada, which have a long history of immigration, have been omitted. Recent literature on T-C migrants has tended to focus on new immigrants who have arrived since the 1980s — but may not be staying permanently in their host countries — and have adopted a transnational residence pattern which requires them to engage in two or more social fields, and be characterized as “astronauts.” Driven by social, economic and political reasons at the time, they may have formed a wave of immigration steeped in a diversity of circumstances, but may not have aroused the interest of policy makers and scholars.

My fieldwork constitutes my main source of information on early T-C immigrants. I use a sensitive micro-level field research design together with multi-method methodologies in the destination cities, analyzing census statistics and surveys as background work. Through the application of ethnographic interpretation with participant observations, I was able to gain an understanding of the “emotions, experiences, and significance” of migration (Graham 1999). Qualitative research methods (Hay 2005, Baxter and Eyles 1997) were employed, using semi-structured questionnaires in my interviews with
the early migrants, who are broadly defined as people who immigrated before the new immigrants from Taiwan arrived in the late 1980’s (Bulbeck, Tseng; Chiang and Hsu 1999).

In this paper, I have combined my fieldwork data gathered in Canada and in Guam. I made two trips to Guam and multiple trips to three cities in Canada between 2008 and 2011, interviewing over 100 T-C immigrants and selecting the responses of 24 and 22 T-C immigrants in Canada and in Guam respectively for this article. The interviews were conducted in Mandarin by the researcher and her assistants. The time spent on each interview was usually 1-3 hours. Friends and respondents in my earlier study of women in Canada provided me with introductions to potential interviewees. Accordingly, the fieldwork proceeded smoothly in Vancouver, Calgary, and Toronto, and also in Guam. I benefited from a relationship of trust using the snowball sampling technique. I was received warmly by my respondents whom I was able to interview one or more times. I was treated occasionally to meals at their homes or in restaurants. Visits to the organizations that they belonged to, such as the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Guam, the Formosa Evergreen Senior Citizen Centre in Toronto, Chinese schools, their places of work, worship and their homes helped me grasp the contexts of their lived experiences. My respondents were friendly, hospitable and flexible in their schedules in general. One notable factor contributing to the successful recruitment of respondents was the connectedness between the immigrants and Taiwan, from where most of them have been gone for fewer than thirty years. Occasionally, some of my friends in Taiwan were known to them as former teachers, classmates, or alumni of the same university. Moreover, being regarded as someone from home, or a fellow Taiwanese (xiangqin 鄉親), I was given instant friendship and trust as an unexpected but not unidentifiable visitor.

Having conducted the fieldwork in four different locations in different time periods, I hope that the samples, although limited, will provide the reader

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6 The interviews in Guam were conducted in two separate trips in 2008-2009: ten were conducted in the period of June 14-22, 2008; 12 took place from Aug 30 to Sept 7, 2008; and three were completed in January 2009. Out of these, I selected 22 samples of those who arrived before 1980 to be considered as “early Taiwanese-Chinese immigrants.” In Canada, I interviewed six persons in April 3-11, 2009 in Vancouver; 14 persons during Aug. 5-20 in the same year in Calgary; and 4 persons in Toronto during Feb. 15-19, 2011.

7 I wish to thank Professor Emerita Rebecca A. Stephenson and Director Emeritus Hiro Kurashina of the University of Guam for introducing me to the interviewees in Guam, their participation in most of the interviews, and sharing of their insights with me regarding the Chinese community of Guam with which they are closely associated. Field assistants Yvette Li and Fendi Chen helped with the recordings in Chinese during our fieldwork in Guam. I am also grateful to Cathy Chu, Josephine Smart, Theresa Barber, and Shirley Chung for introducing to me some of the early Taiwanese-Chinese immigrants in Vancouver, Calgary, and Toronto.
with a diversity of the respondents’ backgrounds and mobility patterns, which cannot be retrieved from the Census. It should be noted that, without visiting the communities, I would not be able to acquire a nuanced understanding of the immigrants, nor would I be able to identify the issues and circumstances presenting the complexities of the immigrants’ lived experiences. Migration studies have recently turned to themes of identity and belonging, placing migrant stories at the root of much of this research, with interviews, focus groups, life histories, photographs and documents to illuminate the experience of migrants, as well as the patterns and processes of migration (Gilmartin 2008).

However, I am aware of the limitations of the chain referral strategy, which may have omitted people who either did not want to be interviewed, or were not available at the time of my fieldwork. Since the interviews took place

Table 2: Profiles of the Early Immigrants in Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Age/sex</th>
<th>Place of birth</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Year of migration to Canada</th>
<th>Self-Identity</th>
<th>Return to Taiwan or not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EVAN#1</td>
<td>60/M</td>
<td>Macau (ETW)</td>
<td>B.A.</td>
<td>Financial Advisor</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Canadian; Taiwanese</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVAN#2</td>
<td>63/F</td>
<td>TW</td>
<td>B.A. (ETW); Further Studies (U.S.)</td>
<td>Student/Arithmetic Teacher</td>
<td>1971 (re-migrated from U.S.)</td>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVAN#3</td>
<td>58/F</td>
<td>TW</td>
<td>B.A. (ETW)</td>
<td>Accountant</td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Taiwanese-Canadian; Taiwanese</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVAN#4</td>
<td>76/M</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>B.A. (ETW)</td>
<td>Accountant (Retired)</td>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Canadian; Chinese-Canadian; Chinese</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVAN#5</td>
<td>65/M</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>B.Sc. (ETW); M.Sc. (U.S.)</td>
<td>Student/Car Repair Manager</td>
<td>1972 (re-migrated from U.S.)</td>
<td>Chinese-Canadian; Taiwanese; Chinese</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVAN#6</td>
<td>62/F</td>
<td>TW</td>
<td>B.A. (ETW)</td>
<td>Student/Designer</td>
<td>1973 (re-migrated from Hong Kong)</td>
<td>Canadian; No Taiwanese; Chinese</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Age/sex</td>
<td>Place of birth</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Year of migration to Canada</td>
<td>Self-Identity</td>
<td>Return to Taiwan or not</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECAL #7</td>
<td>66/M</td>
<td>TW</td>
<td>B.Sc. (ETW); Ph.D. (CDN)</td>
<td>Student/Manager</td>
<td>1968</td>
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<td>Plant Manager/Deputy Process Systems Manager</td>
<td>1975</td>
<td>Taiwanese-Canadian</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>72/F</td>
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<td>Kindergarten Teacher/Day Care Manager (Retired)</td>
<td>1971 (Re-migrated from Thailand)</td>
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<td>B.A. &amp; M.A. (CDN)</td>
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<td>ALL</td>
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<td>B.A. (ETW)</td>
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<td>1967</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>Return to Taiwan or not</td>
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<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>Technical College (H.K.)</td>
<td>Air Force Technician/ Air Canada Mechanic (Retired)</td>
<td>1988</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>73/M</td>
<td>TW</td>
<td>Vocational School (ETW)</td>
<td>Engineer/ Engineer (Retired)</td>
<td>1966</td>
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<td>1976</td>
<td>Canadian; Taiwanese-Canadian</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>TW</td>
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<td>1967</td>
<td>Canadian; Chinese-Canadian</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>China</td>
<td>B.A. (ETW)</td>
<td>Student/ Accounting Clerk (Retired)</td>
<td>1975 (re-migrated from U.S.)</td>
<td>Chinese-Canadian</td>
<td>No</td>
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<td>EVAN#19</td>
<td>58/F</td>
<td>TW</td>
<td>B.A. (ETW)</td>
<td>General Office Clerk/ Realtor</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
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<td>64/M</td>
<td>TW</td>
<td>B.A. (ETW)</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant/ Financial Advisor</td>
<td>1982 (re-migrated from U.S.)</td>
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<td>ETOR#21</td>
<td>62/F</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>B.A. (ETW)</td>
<td>Bank Clerk/ Bank Clerk</td>
<td>1970</td>
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Table 2 (cont.)

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<td>58/F TW</td>
<td>B.A. (ETW)</td>
<td>Student/Restaurant Manager</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Canadian; Taiwanese-Canadian; Taiwanese</td>
<td>Winter in TW; summer in Canada</td>
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<td>48/F TW</td>
<td>Elementary School (ETW)</td>
<td>Pianist/Chinese Natural Herbs</td>
<td>1988 (re-migrated from Singapore)</td>
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<td>ETOR#24</td>
<td>63/M China</td>
<td>B.Sc. (ETW); M.Sc. (U.S.)</td>
<td>Company Employee/Company Employee</td>
<td>1974 (re-migrated from U.S.)</td>
<td>Chinese-Canadian</td>
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Notes:
- EVAN: Interviewed in Vancouver
- ECAL: Interviewed in Calgary
- ETOR: Interviewed in Toronto
- ETW: Educated in Taiwan
- US: Educated in the United States
- CDN: Educated in Canada
- ALL: Canadian; Taiwanese-Canadian; Taiwanese; Chinese

During the summer, or semester breaks, I could only undertake short field trips of uneven durations, usually for less than two weeks. However, conducting fieldwork at different times and in several places has in fact helped me with reflexivity of the issues concerned. I also tried to replicate the research design in each of the separate research endeavors, but found it necessary at times to modify some of the research questions posed to suit the contexts.

Table 2 identifies the socio-economic profile of the 24 T-C who were interviewed in Canada. The group included eleven males and thirteen females. Fifteen were born in Taiwan, and nine were born in China and other countries. The four earliest arrivals in Canada were in 1966, the rest arrived before the new wave of T-C immigrants, and six arrived in the 1980s. One-third of them had lived in another country before immigrating to Canada because of
<table>
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<td>G#1</td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
<td>1984</td>
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<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>College (TW)</td>
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<td>Early 1970's</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
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<td>G#4</td>
<td>52/M</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>B.A. (US; unfinished)</td>
<td>Car Dealer</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Global</td>
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<td>G#5</td>
<td>48/M</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>BA (US)</td>
<td>Real Estate</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>American; Taiwanese; Chinese</td>
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<td>65/M</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>BA (TW)</td>
<td>Accountant/ Enroll Agent (Retired)</td>
<td>1971</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
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<td>G#7</td>
<td>65/M</td>
<td>Taipei</td>
<td>Vocational School (TW)</td>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>1978</td>
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<td>China</td>
<td>Ph.D. (US)</td>
<td>Investment</td>
<td>1972 (Remigrated from U.S.)</td>
<td>American; Taiwanese Chinese</td>
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<td>G#9</td>
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<td>China</td>
<td>M.A. (US)</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
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<td>Furniture Store Owner</td>
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further studies after their tertiary education and their work in Taiwan. These countries include the US, Thailand, Hong Kong and Singapore.

Most of them had been well-educated, and had varied working experiences before migration. With three exceptions, all of them had completed their tertiary and vocational education in Taiwan, while six migrated to pursue further studies in the US and Canada. One had obtained a Ph.D. degree, three had a Master's degree, and 15 had obtained a Bachelor's degree. Their migration categories included “independent,” “skilled,” “family,” and “student.” A majority of them changed their professions after their arrival in Canada. The details of how they looked for employment in Canada as a living will be discussed in the following section.

Table 3 indicates the socio-economic profile of the 22 Taiwanese-Chinese who were interviewed in Guam. They included 14 males and eight females. The men were aged between 45 and 67 at the time of the interviews, while the females were aged between 48 and 65. With reference to the place of birth, 17 were Taiwan-born, and five were born in China. The occupations for male T-C immigrants included real estate, auto industry, accountancy, construction, insurance, college professor, business management, and shop owner. The occupations of T-C women included shop owner, secretary, insurance, real estate, librarian, and sales. The longest term resident had lived in Guam since 1967. Others came to Guam in the 1970s and 1980s. Four of them identified themselves as re-migrants from the US. Their migration categories included “family,” “employment,” “investment,” “professional,” and “student.”

IV. Research Findings

After interpreting the narratives derived from face-to-face interviews conducted in four locations of two political entities, the research findings are reported in this section.

1. Reasons for and Processes of Emigration

Political Situation

1971 was a critical year with the withdrawal of Taiwan, Republic of China from the UN. There was an influx of Taiwanese-Chinese to Canada and to the US in search of a politically stable environment. Some had even left earlier:

We left Hong Kong in 1967 because there were riots by leftist students at the time. It was not safe to stay there because my husband’s father is a member of the
KMT. My husband immigrated to Canada in 1967 as an “independent.” I came to Canada as a tourist, got married, and stayed (ETOR#21).

ECAL#17 was an exception among the early migrants: he emigrated with his family of six members when he was finishing high school as a teenager in 1967. His father’s reason for leaving Taiwan was fear of the communists from whom he had fled in 1949. Similarly, EVAN#1 left Macau for Taiwan where he completed his undergraduate education and finished his military service. He decided to leave for Canada which he liked as a place to live in his search for political security:

“It was much easier to immigrate to Canada than to the US where everyone wanted to go at that time” (EVAN#4). Likewise, it was easier to get a visa to immigrate to Guam than to the US Mainland, apart from considering Guam as being closer to Taiwan than the US.

Speaking from his own experience and his observation as an “old-timer,” G#2 analyzed the situations as follows: “For some, Guam was used as a stepping stone. Seventy percent had the intention to move on to the US. Thirty percent who stayed were engaged in real estate businesses and trades. Only ten percent from those times stayed on, as kids left for the US for education, while wives also moved as they did not want to stay back in Guam by themselves.”

In this study, I have not been able to capture stories of “stepwise migration” from Guam to the US Mainland, or from Canada to the US. In fact, four of my respondents moved from the US Mainland to Guam, and six to Canada.

**Following Family Members or Friends**

Knowing someone such as a friend or a relative in Guam or Canada often triggered the move and led to the decision on the destination, as in the cases of G#8 and G#13 in Guam, and ECAL#8, ECAL#16, ECAL#17 in Canada.

In various circumstances, following the husband, father, or a family member has been the path commonly taken. While studying at the university in Taiwan, ETOR#22 was introduced by a match-maker to her [future] husband who had come to join his brother-in-law earlier to establish a restaurant business in Montreal in 1982, at a time before the new immigrants came in large numbers. He simply left Taiwan to see “what the world was like outside.”

ECAL#18, a well-educated lady, finished her tertiary education in Taiwan, studied educational psychology in Japan, and immigrated with her family to the US where she did her further studies. She met her husband who got a Master’s degree in the United States, and re-migrated to Canada where he preferred to stay.

In Guam, G#1 and G#17 took similar paths. G#1 came with her husband whose father was an American Professor in Guam. Later, when she was divorced, her parents came to join her in Guam in 2005. G#17, whose husband is a retired
Commander in Guam, went to the US as a student as early as 1971. She explained: “I came to Guam as a military spouse in 1991, when my husband was re-located from the US. We moved every two years before we came to Guam.”

Sometimes, one can observe strong parental influences in one’s decision to emigrate, as in the case of G#5 and G#15 in Guam. G#5 came to Guam with his parents and three brothers at the age of ten, when he was in Grade six. By 1979, the US had severed ties with Taiwan and recognized China leading to a slump in the housing market in Taiwan and causing some alarm to investors in Taiwan.

Like other Taiwanese, G#15 and his wife came to pursue the “American dream,” being influenced by the media at that time:

We came to Guam in the E-2 Category as Skilled Migrants. It was purely a coincidence that we immigrated. My father was a tailor for the US Military in L City. During the Vietnam War, the Governor of Guam visited Taipei, and invited my father to visit Guam as a tourist. Thinking that his children should see the world (皇上天下), my father suggested that we relocate to Guam which is close to Taiwan.

Some emigrated to serve the interests of the younger generation, as in the case of G#5, although immigrating for the sake of the children’s education was not common with early T-C immigrants in Canada:

We came to Canada because we did not want our daughter to be educated in Taiwan or Hong Kong. We could not do what other Chinese parents did in not permitting their children to study the subjects of their interest and require them to fulfill the wishes of their parents.

Fate
In the case of ETOR#23, whom I interviewed in her herbal store, it was “fate” that had decided where she moved:

In 1988, I went to Canada at the age of 28, working as a pianist. Before that, I had never thought of immigrating to Canada, until I met my future husband. It must be due to fate that I stayed…. I was guided by Master Lu, a Taoist who lived in the Tang Dynasty, also by Kuan Yin Buddha who led my way. I prayed to her for a place to let me settle down; then when I was working as a pianist in Singapore, I got the work permit to immigrate to Canada. Later, when I was about to sell my house and leave Canada, I met my future husband who came to support me in all my performances. We got married and had a son who is now 18 years old.

Change from Student Status to Immigrant Status
As a student in the 1960s, one could change one’s student visa to immigrant status quite easily. This included a few who re-migrated from the United States. For example, ECAL#7 earned his B.Sc Degree in a leading University
in Taiwan in 1965, served in military service for two years, came to Canada to study for a Ph.D. in 1968, and worked in Calgary for 30 years until retirement. For him, to change from student to immigrant status was a “normal” process. This was the same for another respondent’s (ECAL#13) husband who earned his Ph.D. in Vancouver and taught at a university in Calgary.

Work-Related Reasons

Work was the main reason for some to move to Guam. G#2 explained to us that two types of T-C came to Guam in the 1970s: First, construction professionals as represented by Veterans (RESA)8 and second, T-C who came with E-2 Investor Visas. In the meantime, the First Commercial Bank was established, and China Airlines started to link Taiwan with Guam.

In my sample, G#6, G #7, and G#11 were migrants with skills who came to accept gainful employment. At the age of 28 in 1971, G#6 accepted work as an accountant in the US Air Force. He was later employed as Enroll Agent: “I did not have any difficulties in finding work. In those days, it was easy to get a Green Card.” Arriving in Guam in 1969, G#11 considers herself a real “old-timer.” Her husband came as a skilled migrant, hired by the main office in New York to set up a branch office for jade carving because jade products were not allowed to be imported to Guam from Taiwan at that time.

Re-Migrating from the U.S. Mainland

While one might assume that migration from Canada or Guam to the US is commonplace, this study also includes cases where the direction of the move was reversed. ECAL#11 recalled how she re-migrated from the US in 1975:

I taught summer courses at the U. of Calgary in 1974, and found Calgary to be a friendly city. I applied for immigration in the fall of 1974 and came to Calgary in May 1975.

G#8, who obtained his Ph.D. in the US in 1971, came to work in Guam in the construction business because he had many family friends there with similar backgrounds. Having earned a degree in Library Science from the US Mainland, G#9 worked in different libraries for over 20 years, while her husband was re-stationed in the Guam military service from California. G#20 said she enjoyed the multi-cultural environment of Guam much more than living in the US Mainland, where she felt discriminated against from the way people spoke, as well as their body language. She recalled having a tough life in the US Mainland because of her Asian ethnicity. She and her husband

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8 This was a government organization consisting of veterans who were construction professionals.
moved to Guam also because it is significantly closer to Taiwan than the US. They returned to Taiwan three times a year to visit their parents, and do business there.

Other Reasons for Emigrating from Taiwan
(not grouped in any of the above categories) can also be complex, as EVAN#1 vividly commented:

The Taiwanese immigrants were here because they ‘want to have the same piece of cake for Chinese New Year as everybody else’ (nien man chin duei, jen yau ngor yau 年晚煮堆, 人有我有 in Cantonese.) “Professor, you are right, too, in using the Chinese saying in your paper that ‘they came as a swarm of bees (yi wo feng 一窩蜂) in Mandarin.’”

ECAL#15 seemed to support the same point of view, as an outcome of social pressure to leave Taiwan during his time as a university graduate, after completing tertiary education, and having served two years in compulsory military service:

I applied for immigration to Canada (simply) because I wanted to go abroad. It was simply difficult to leave Taiwan unless one did one of the following: pursue further studies, work abroad, have a lot of money, or emigrate. Half of my classmates in engineering went abroad at different times. We have a big alumni association in Canada.

2. Lived Experiences and Adaptation

“Don’t be afraid of speaking English. Canadians don’t speak Chinese. One can learn English from songs and listening to TV. Try to forget about the past and start all over here. Do not refuse low level work” (ECAL#14).

Having worked in various cities in Canada as a technician before his retirement, ECAL#4 summarized what new immigrants should do to adapt, when we asked him what kind of suggestions he would like to offer to new arrivals. Even after studying English for many years in high school and at the university level in Taiwan, many still find the language a challenge. For some, their limited vocabulary made living in either Canada or Guam a hurdle. Originally a high school teacher, ECAL#16 tried very hard to improve his English after immigrating to Canada in 1976. Owing to the difficulties he had with the language, it was hard for him to find work. As a result, he did all kinds of menial work such as painting, cleaning, maintenance and repair.

Similarly, ECAL#17 earned his school fees by working in various part-time jobs such as sweeping buses, working in mines and installing telephones. But
after getting a degree in electrical engineering, he was employed as an engineer, first working in a power company and later running his own company.

A respected philanthropist in the Taiwanese community, ETOR#22 summarized her experiences as follows:

It took me ten years to get used to living in Canada. At the beginning, I walked for one hour each way to buy milk from the store. It took me three years to start learning to drive. Language was a big problem at first, and I was very scared every time the telephone rang. I felt like a deaf person while living in an area with Westerners.

Having graduated from a prestigious vocational college for women, G#19 went to study in the US, but had to quit because she did not understand any of the lectures. For G#11, her difficulty upon arrival in Guam in 1969 two years after her husband was not being able to speak English. She learned English from the Filipinos employed in her husband's jade carving workshop. Fortunately, she learned English fast, even though her children told her that she did not have the right accent. When she first arrived, G#12 could not manage to speak English, and could not find sufficient Chinese food, apart from feeling very homesick.

Even to this day, the lack of proficiency in English is seen as a handicap in social and economic incorporation by the new T-C immigrants, in spite of their high educational levels (Chiang 2004). Only a few lucky ones found that English was not a problem having been trained in foreign languages, worked in foreign firms in Taiwan, or lived in another country, such as G#17, ECAL#13, EVAN#15, and EVAN#5.

Other difficulties reported were related to the differences in the cultural, social and physical environments between Taiwan and the host society. The following remarks are examples of some of the challenges encountered, as reported by Taiwanese-Chinese immigrants residing in Guam: “weather is too hot”; “high cost of food”; “not many Chinese restaurants”; “not getting used to frozen food, not much vegetables, seafood or fruits”; “electricity shortages”; “telephones often not working”; “language problems, cultural differences”; “stores close at 6 o’clock”; “cannot find housekeeper or any type of helper”; “feeling very homesick”; “recovering from devastating typhoons”; “expensive costs of living in Guam”; “having to drive the car myself” (Stephenson et al. 2009).

On the other hand, some of the early migrants who decided to make Guam their home were happy to point out that, despite Guam’s relatively small population, they were able to conduct their businesses profitably in real estates, sales, insurance, travel, trade, and so forth. The advantages of staying in Guam as mentioned by some of the T-C interviewees included: “We have so many
friends here”; “People here on Guam are so nice”; “We are involved in so many charity activities”; “The air is so clean in Guam”; “There are no mobs or gangsters here, no movie businesses here, no gambling, nor public transportation, so that children could not wander around after school” (Stephenson et al. 2009).

Two established T-C immigrants assured us of their decision to stay in Guam:

All four of us [brothers] went to the US for our university education; but my parents always remind us to come back to the place where we were raised (G#5).

Some of my friends cannot believe that I can live on Guam for so long (since 1971). Guam is small, but one does not need to spend so much time traveling like in New York. The air is also cleaner (G#6).

In a different context, the cold weather in Calgary and Toronto was considered a disadvantage of living in Canada, as mentioned by several informants:

It is so cold and dry here in Calgary. I was so scared that my car would stop moving in the middle of the road (ECAL#10).

It is so cold in Calgary that some of my friends left for Vancouver (ECAL#15).

As a researcher, I visit Canada several times in the winter to carry out my fieldwork, and [I] know how cold it can be to live there!

**Overcoming Difficulties of Various Kinds to Make a Living**

Similar to the new T-C immigrants who arrived in the late 1980s, they experienced deskilling with migration, as their foreign degrees or work experiences were not recognized in host societies; they experienced downward social mobility as they took up inferior jobs to those they held before migration; and they struggled in particular to get a cultural foothold in English-speaking, white North American society.

One way to attain financial security was to accept jobs with low pay:

My husband worked as a Calgary duty manager and later in gas piping design. I got a part-time job in food service and was paid 9 Cdn dollars per hour (ECAL#10).

When I first came to Canada, I only brought Cdn $1,200 with me. First, I worked in the garment factory at Cdn $2 per hour for six months. I lost my job, and studied English until I reached the advanced level, and found work in designs. I am now a designer of books, posters, magazines, and clothing. It was not difficult to find work here, as long as you are not picky (EVAN#6).
After quitting her studies on the US mainland, G#19 looked for part-time work but could not find any, not even washing dishes in Chinese restaurants. Later she applied for a job as “a tour guide with Japanese-speaking ability,” and got the job on the phone. She received cash payments because she did not have a working visa. The tour company was willing to pay USD 5 per hour, while the going rate was USD 2.5. Because of her satisfactory performance, her boss helped her in her application for PR (permanent residence) status. She was then able to start her tour company.

ETOR#20 immigrated as an independent and got work in the mills in Vancouver. After obtaining his certificate in finance, he worked as a financial advisor.

Economic pressure was our greatest difficulty at the beginning, as we had only one income. We therefore lived frugally (ECAL#13).

Inevitably, religion has helped some to overcome their difficulties, as in the case of ECAL#19:

I was guided by God in every step; whenever I prayed, God pointed out the way to me. With two children, I worked as a typist in a Japanese company, a clerk in an export company, and later on at the bank. The EXPO was held in Vancouver in 1986 and lots of immigrants arrived in 1987. I decided to study for a certificate in real estate, and worked as a realtor in 1991.

As always, hard work is the norm, as expressed by a T-C immigrant in Guam:

We Chinese work all the time — no Sundays, no holidays. We don’t go to the beach in Guam to swim, barbecue, relax, or have a leisurely chat. That doesn’t accomplish anything (G#21).

G#3 who owned several furniture stores in Guam and in Mainland China told us vividly about her career and how she helped her brothers and sisters to establish their businesses on the US Mainland. Starting to work at age 17 in Taiwan, she never stopped working.

G#7 flew back to Taiwan several times a year arriving in the morning and returning the next day after finishing the business meetings: “I can sleep well on the plane. Sometimes I ask the airline hostesses not to wake me up for meals.” At the age of 62, G#9 seems to be tireless in running her businesses which include a travel agency, an insurance company, and trade.

Even though G#15 comes from a wealthy family before immigrating to Guam, she and her husband worked very hard during their first 10 to 15 years
on Guam, first in their jewelry shop for one year, then in a furniture store for 12 years until 1986, and finally in the real estate business, renting out commercial buildings that they built on acquired land.

Stories of Success

As reported by these early T-C immigrants, many have been successful. EVAN#2 and her husband felt very lucky about being able to get work in Canada on the second day of their arrival in 1971, when he immigrated as a professional architect:

My husband got a job on the second day of our arrival in 1971 after graduating from a vocational college in Taiwan. I was employed as a Mathematics teacher in the supplementary classes for new school-age immigrants.

Having graduated from a good vocational school in Taipei, ECAL#15 worked as a technician in Taiwan. He completed his B.Sc. in Mechanical Engineering in Calgary and worked as an engineer in consulting firms from 1973 to 2002. With a good educational background, EVAN#18 worked continuously in a bank, a duty free shop and an airline company.

EVAN#22 felt very proud in telling her husband’s success story. Being unsuccessful in Montreal at first, the couple came to Toronto to start a buffet business with two other Taiwanese. Rated the best Chinese buffet in Toronto, it now has 21 branches in Toronto. She accepted my interview at home and gave me a ride back to my hotel and told me the details:

We would like to welcome warmly every customer when he/she comes into our restaurant, and to leave with a smile of satisfaction every time. My husband values family life, and comes home for dinner as much as he can; he takes a five-week vacation with our family every year. He is very much into philanthropic work contributing to scholarships for the children of his staff and donating to the Taiwanese associations in Toronto. As an early immigrant, he often gave talks to new immigrants encouraging them to get started in their first jobs with confidence and courage, and to learn to speak English in the first three years.

As a result of his hard work, G#10 was the first T-C immigrant who won an award from the United States Small Business Administration (USSBA) in 2003, representing Guam. His parents first came to Guam in 1967 and started their furniture business. His first job was doing warehouse delivery for four years, as part of his family’s business. His subsequent jobs all came from his own ideas. He was self-employed in 1982-1986 in wholesale, then in retail and wholesale as an owner between 1986 and 2008, while at the same time, working as dealer for BMW automobiles between 1991 and 2008. He found
that the ability to adapt and change according to demand was important. His first sales product was sunglasses, followed by car radios, and now luxury cars. His success story matches what Crocombe (2007) wrote about the Chinese in Guam, that in spite of their recent arrival and small numbers, “their focus on saving, investment, learning and achievement has given them a rapidly increasing share of Guam’s economy.”

Even with a small market in Guam, G#2 seems to be doing quite well:

I remember helping my father with the garment industry in the mid-1970’s importing garments which were forty-nine percent finished from Taiwan. My father succeeded in convincing Washington D.C. that those were imported fabrics to be made into clothes in the US. Even though the market in Guam was small, the Chamorros (indigenous people of Guam) would buy whatever was for sale with whatever money they had, because of their ‘happy-go-lucky-lifestyle’ (G#2).

If we compare these early T-C with the recent Chinese immigrants, we find that the latter have much lower employment rates than the general population in Canada, regardless of age, gender and origins despite their increased human capital (Wang and Lo (2005)). One reason would be the lack of social networks (Salaff et al. 2002; Salaff 2006), especially for the Mainland Chinese, despite being the largest group with a college education compared to the Hong Kong and Taiwan-born. Wang and Lo (2005) shows an improvement in the economic performance of the recent Chinese immigrants (1980 to 1999) with regard to their length of residence (p. 57). This pattern is found to be most obvious for the Taiwan-born immigrants who had the highest unemployment rate in 2001 (14.2%) and 2006 (16.1%).

3. Home, Identity, Sense of Belonging, and Returning

It may be assumed that, having been “old-timers” who have spent more years of their lives in the host countries/regions than in Taiwan, they have given more careful thought than new immigrants to the identity issue. The questions asked were: “Where do you perceive your home to be and why?”, “Who do you think you are?”, and “Would you be returning to Taiwan in the future?”

“Home”
In Canada, often straightforward responses are given, such as “Canada is my home.” These responses are related to the proximity of family members, the environment and their length of stay:
My family is here (ETOR#24).

My children are here (ETOR#24, ECAL#9).

Canada is my home: most of my family members are in N. America (ECAL#8).

We are so used to being here. When we go back to Taiwan or Hong Kong where my husband grew up, we cannot breathe properly because of air pollution (ECAL#13).

Canada is my home — I like the living environment and will not go anywhere else (EVAN#1).

We cannot get used to Taiwan anymore because it is too hot there...we have gone back to Taiwan about once every two to three years (ECAL#7).

I am no longer used to Taiwan, and do not want to return. But my home is still Taiwan because I was born there and my brothers and sisters are all there (ECAL#16).

Canada, Taiwan and Vietnam are all my homes. We don't return to Taiwan because we are no longer based there. Canada is my home — it is inexpensive to live here (in Toronto) (ETOR#21).

We are Canadians, as we are out of touch with Taiwan for too long (EVAN#2).

My home is here in Toronto, the place I have lived most of my life (ETOR#24).

On the other hand, early T-C often think of Guam as their home for similar reasons: “We have been in Guam for over thirty years, and twenty years in Taiwan. We have no other homes to go to, and we will remain in Guam” (G#13). “Guam is my home, and Taiwan is where my roots are”(G#20). “Taiwan is my home; Guam is my root. When my husband retires from teaching in his College, we will go back to live in Taiwan” (G#19).

Having lived in Guam since 1967, G#11 still returns for her medical check-ups in Taiwan, though not to settle. She does not refrain from talking about where she would like to be buried in the future and tells us that her husband, who passed away three years ago, had bought eight burial sites for the family. When the father of her brother-in-law died, she sold one site to the family of the dead charging only USD 500, instead of the original price of USD 4,000. Apart from her bakery which was started 30 years ago, she is dedicated to women’s organizations, activities related to Taiwanese who are visiting from overseas, and the Chinese school; she has also won many awards. She has helped the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Office in getting to know the T-C community, and to receive dignitaries from Taiwan.
“Who Am I?”
As in most of my previous studies, the identity issue is somewhat paradoxical. Asking people to choose from different categories does not induce them to reveal the complexity of their feelings. It is therefore important to prompt frequent and fuller answers with qualitative remarks.

For some, identity is situational: “If I go to the US, I tell people that I am Chinese from Taiwan. If I travel, I say that I am Taiwanese. It depends on how and where the question is asked” (ECAL#14). “I am a Chinese, also a Taiwanese” is an easier way to describe myself . . . and it is hard to separate people into clear-cut categories” (G#2). “I am Chinese, Taiwanese, and Chinese American all at the same time” (G#15). “People choose their identities with their best interest in mind. In China, one would say that one is from Guam. But in Guam, one would say that one is Chinese…. Regarding self-identity, I am American, Taiwanese, and Chinese. It is sometimes confusing, as to who I am” (G#5). “I think of myself as Chinese, although I have US citizenship. My boys think they are mixed. They are happy to grow up in Guam which does not have racial prejudice…” (G#17). “I am Taiwanese, since I have affection for Taiwan . I consider both Guam and Taiwan to be my homes” (G#21). “I am “Taiwanese American” and “Taiwanese” at the same time” (G#22).

In contrast to the Taiwanese-Canadian immigrants that I studied earlier (Chiang and Huang 2009), a majority identify themselves as Chinese-Canadians and Chinese-Americans in the two respective countries, particularly those who are China-born but have grown up in Taiwan. In spite of being Mainlander Taiwanese (waishengren 外省人), they are very attached to Taiwan which they regard as their roots or home. This current study therefore complements my research on self-identified Taiwanese-Canadians who were native Taiwanese (benshengren 本省人) before immigration. Owing to the political history of Taiwan in the last six decades, the latter may be called “reluctant exiles,” as they carry a deeper sense of Taiwanese consciousness in their self-representation.

“Returning to Taiwan”
We also asked interviewees whether they expect to return to Taiwan, as an indication of their sense of belonging. A majority (22 out of 24) of Taiwanese-Chinese immigrants in Canada wanted to remain in Canada, while a smaller proportion (9 out of 22) wanted to remain in Guam. Considering the location of Guam in the Pacific and its close proximity to Taiwan, the active “trade partners” approach that exists between Guam and Taiwan, the significant lack of excellent medical facilities in Guam compared to Taiwan especially with regard to elder care, and the recent rapid urban development in Taiwan, it
would not be surprising for a larger number of T-C immigrants in Guam to consider returning to Taiwan, compared with those in Canada. Other factors may count as well such as the fact that all the respondents in Guam have established their business, family life, social networks, social capital and such in Guam, and have embraced and enjoyed the multi-racial and friendly environment on Guam. T-C immigrants may choose to stay as migrants in the host country, especially if their children also remain. This is more likely to happen in Canada than in Guam.

The following three narratives illustrate the decisions of those who want to remain in Canada:

I will not return to Taiwan, as all my family members are in the United States. My three daughters all graduated from UBC. Canada is my home. My husband likes to live here (EVAN#18).

Having been in Canada for 39 years, I do not have any roots in Taiwan (EVAN#18).

Taiwan is my home, and all my brothers and sisters are there. I went back for the first time after having emigrated for five years. I return every winter, and less often in the summer, as I cannot stand the hot and humid weather (ECAL#19).

However, some of those interviewed are planning to return to Taiwan in the near future:

My husband wants to return to live in Taiwan eventually (gao lao huan hsiang 告老還鄉). We have already bought a house in Taichung where we can live in the winter. We normally return to visit our relatives in Taiwan twice a year (ETOR#22).

I have not rested since the Chinese New year for the last 15 days...I really crave to retire, and to go back to Taiwan where I feel at home with the culture, even though I have lived in Canada for 23 years (ETOR#23).

G#21 who has lived in Guam for 31 years used the term luo ye gui gen 落葉歸根 to describe how she feels about returning to Taiwan in the future: “We are like leaves returning to the roots.”

Although G#16 wrote down “yes” in response to the question, “Would you be returning to Taiwan in the future?”, he was ambivalent about his decision to return. Born in Shanghai and having immigrated to Taiwan with his father at the age of 15, he went to Guam at the suggestion of his father when the US relinquished its political ties with Taiwan. He came as a business migrant with an E2 visa, received his green card in 1976, and became a citizen in 1981.
Having lived in Los Angeles and Shanghai at different times, he prefers Taiwan to the other two places, simply because he is used to the food in Taiwan, and values the warmth in human relations (jen chin wei 人情味) there. Like his wife, he would like to live in Taipei to take care of his mother-in-law, as well as spending time with his brothers and sisters. The couple go back to Taiwan two to three times a year to see their sons who are working in Hong Kong and the US.

Quite a number of respondents chose “Undecided,” regarding whether to move back to Taiwan or not:

I thought about returning to live in Taiwan before. There are too many people there. Guam is more layback (sic). It is a friendly place, and I am used to living here (G#18).

I used to visit my parents in Taiwan five to six times a year when they were alive; now we only go about two to three times a year. I was born there, and I would like to contribute to Taiwan’s Higher Education…. If I have a good job offer, I will return to live there. I can spend one semester at one place, or stay behind in Taiwan while renting out my apartment in Guam (G#18).

As noted in an earlier study, Stephenson et al. (2010) observed generational differences in their decisions on where to stay:

Their children, the second generation, have been well-educated on Guam, and many have received their tertiary education in the US Mainland. Many of the second generation Taiwanese-Chinese of Guam come back to Guam to live out their adult lives. Our data at present suggest that their children, the third generation, may not return to settle on Guam permanently as adults, but may likely maintain a distinct “sense of home” with reference to Guam, the place where they grew up.9

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9 Further elaboration of this point was made through personal communications with Rebecca A. Stephenson, a social anthropologist who taught at the University of Guam in 1977-2007 and a close friend of the Chinese community. She opined: “The 1st generation Taiwanese on Guam, who are now elderly, went back and forth quite readily between Guam and Taiwan. (China Air and Fly Guam have a number of direct flights per week.). Some 2nd generation Taiwanese explained that they actually have used Guam as a ‘stepping stone.’ The 3rd generation children of some of the Taiwanese residents of Guam have chosen themselves, or have been strongly encouraged by their parents, to go to the US Mainland for tertiary education. But their post-tertiary residence, proposed or achieved, vary considerably. Some 2nd generation Guam Taiwanese parents plan or hope to join their children in future, instead of staying back in Guam. Others have successfully encouraged their tertiary-educated children to return to Guam, for reasons such as joining the family business in Guam, seeking gainful employment where there is less competition among their age-mates, and their Chinese ethnicity might be a significant asset in
V. Conclusions

While the literature on Chinese immigrants has been burgeoning in recent years, there is scant empirical evidence of early T-C immigrants in Western countries. This study attempts to fill in the gap through ethnographic research which helps to provide vivid images of the lived experiences of early T-C immigrants. Our interviewees are not descendants of the pre-1980 immigrants, who call themselves loh wah kiu (Old Overseas Chinese 老華僑), nor those among the new T-C immigrants since the late 1980s. Their historical significance is linked to two political incidents that led to the alienation of Taiwan, first from the United Nations in 1971, and then from the United States in 1979. The timing of their immigration was also linked to immigration policy changes such as the introduction of the points system in 1967, and its subsequent amendment in 1978 in Canada. Their migration to Guam was also affected by the change in visa requirements.

Whether the early T-C immigrants are settling permanently or not depends on the circumstances. They often think of themselves as different from the new T-C arrivals, who are leading transnational lives. As noted by Wong (2005), the new Asians arrived as business immigrants, independent skilled workers, or applicants in the family category. The first generation of recent T-C immigrants was concentrated in middle-class or upper-middle class residential areas which provided safety, good transportation, and most importantly, good quality schools, i.e. places where they could easily meet other Taiwanese. Some of the first-generation migrants fit the stereotype of “millionaire migrants” as depicted by Ley (2010). They raised their children with one or both parents living in Canada, while being supported by their earnings from Taiwan. As transnationals, the parents and different members in the family stayed connected, maintaining links between emigrants and their family and friends back home. Declining costs in telecommunications, travels and financial transfers mean that “migrants are now connected instantaneously, continuously, dynamically and intimately to their communities of origin. . . . This is a fundamental break from past eras of migration” (Dade 2004:1, cited in Hugo 2009).

The cosmopolitan and welcoming atmosphere of both Canada and Guam suits the T-Cs who have chosen to immigrate. They experience a smooth process of integration as their sense of home grows stronger, and as they become permanent settlers in a non-racialized socio-cultural environment. Despite the looking for a future spouse among the Taiwanese Chinese community of Guam, and filial piety, including bringing cheer to the lives of their grandparents.”
differences in location, more similarities than differences were brought to light between the early T-C immigrants in Canada and in Guam. Most of them came to Canada or Guam for gainful employment when they were young adults. Diligence, ingenuity and perseverance served them well as important achievement factors, in addition to the development opportunities for hard-working immigrants. They came from a good educational background, and brought with them entrepreneurship and social capital from Taiwan. Their children received a good education while in Canada and Guam, went on to study in universities and moved onto successful careers. In both locations, they have in fact contributed to the host societies in building human capital and increasing the birth rates. More importantly, they are not “settler losses;” they are making the host country their home, and becoming an integral and vibrant part of the host community through various kinds of social participation. Most of them, by now retired and in good health, are enjoying their rich and busy social life as volunteers in various religious, social, political, and community organizations.

The early T-C immigrants are contributing significantly to the cultural and ethnic diversity of Canada and Guam in the era of globalization. Having lived abroad for close to forty years, their global views are different from those of the new immigrants and the people back in Taiwan; they are imbued with a strong sense of belonging to the countries to which they have immigrated. Having moved with their families at the start, their definition of home depends to a large extent on where their family members are. They therefore fit the description of “luo di sheng gen 落地生根,” indicating that they have planted new roots, rather than “luo ye gui gen 落葉歸根” which means returning to their roots. In contrast to the new immigrants, they are less likely to engage in a transnational life.

Identity changes with time. It would be worthwhile to compare different generations with regard to their mobility patterns, identity, and sense of home in the future. Chinese immigrants of different ethnicities should also be studied as a part of the early T-C immigrants in Canada and the United States, which have taken the largest numbers of immigrants of all countries. By utilizing ethnographic research, this paper highlights the diverse nature of early immigrant experiences which remain under-represented in recent accounts in print. One cannot speak with assurance that there is a substantial difference between contemporary, early and historical migration processes and outcomes — all migrants need to struggle to survive or to be successful in their adopted countries. The theoretical and policy implications that impacted the life experiences of the early T-C immigrants who were interviewed during the course of this study need to be investigated on a broader scale, in order to reach general conclusions.
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