

Opportunities and Challenges

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Opportunities and Challenges- A New Zealand perspective
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Opportunities and Challenges

Opportunities and challenges for civic participation of global Chinese communities
Two aspects – Local and Global
Two aspects are interconnected
If dysfunctional, aspects are in contradiction to each other
We must seek synergy, so they act in concert and achieve more

Chinese in New Zealand

This morning described changing situation of Chinese in NZ
In the past – discrimination
Now – valued members of community
In theory but also increasingly in practice

NZ and the Chinese

NZ is coming to terms with Asia and the Chinese
Support for anti-immigration parties has fallen
More people are more positive about Asia
The Chinese economies and the Chinese peoples increasingly important

NZ and Chinese culture

Lagging in education sector
Not enough Chinese language or Chinese Studies in educational system
Popular engagement with Chinese culture increasing
E.g. festivals

Governor General at Chinese festival in Auckland

Chinese speaking out

Chinese have long been engaged in own civic/cultural affairs
Now, greater engagement in mainstream activities
E.g. local and national politics
How has this come about?
Draw on paper by Steven Young
Copies available

Changing environment

Chinese world becoming more important and more confident
Chinese in NZ
Growing in number
Changing in type
Changing profile of Chinese

Changing profile of Chinese

First waves of Chinese were uneducated
Gold digging >> market gardening and greengrocers
New immigrants and children of old are educated
Professionals – e.g. accountants (Pansy Wong), Architects (Steven Young), Lawyers (Mai Chen)….

English language skills

In order to participate in mainstream community Chinese need good spoken and written English
Chinese are increasingly indistinguishable form mainstream population
But this is not old-fashioned assimilation
Chinese are remaining ‘global’ with ties to culture and country

Technology

Impact of technology
Transport revolution
Then expensive sailing ships, now cheap jet aircraft
Entertainment – videos, CDs – preserve culture
Communications revolution>>the Internet
Having profound effect

Profound effect of Internet

Cheap and rapid communication between new and old homes
Keeps families, friends in communication
Web gives access to home news, culture, etc.
The Internet increasingly used as global political instrument

Huaren.org

Opportunities and challenges

Chinese most valuable when both Local and Global
Need to commit to new home
Need to retain links and culture
Become a transnational 'global citizen' that links both
Finish with observations from fellow Wellingtonian Steven Young

Steven Young - giving

Confucian values are relevant to the host society
The Chinese community as a group, and family connections in it are valuable intermediaries for the host
country seeking to trade with Asia
The Chinese community needs to fully participate in the host society in order to secure its future there as a
permanent home

Steven Young - taking

Western ideas about democracy, personal freedom, the rule of law, and Christian values help clarify some
relationships in traditional Chinese society and makes it more relevant to the modern world

Giving, taking, building

Chinese communities need to give ideas and take ideas
Together, Chinese and non-Chinese, we must constantly seek to build a better world that combines the best of
our heritage.