

Opportunities and Challenges

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Opportunities and Challenges- A New Zealand perspective Tim Beal Victoria University of Wellington
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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 from 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, we must constantly

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