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The Chinese Communities in the
Smaller Countries of the South Pacific:
Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga and the Cook Islands

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The idea for the cover was taken from a photograph of a storyboard from the middle Sepik area of Papua New Guinea.

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The Chinese characters for Chinese words in italics can be found in the glossary at the end of this working paper.

Introduction

This is the second working paper to emerge from research I have undertaken over the past fifteen years on Chinese in the South Pacific Countries. The first, Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies Working Paper no. 12 (Willmott 2005), described the Chinese communities in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia. The present working paper examines the history of Chinese settlement in the smaller countries of the Pacific and therefore excludes Fiji, Western Samoa and French Polynesia.

While some might feel the small numbers of Chinese in these countries hardly merits research, it is my hope that students of Chinese abroad will appreciate summaries of all that we know about them. One of my aims in undertaking this research was to fill a gap in the published records on Chinese overseas, and for these small countries very little is available at present. This working paper brings together information from archival documents, published material and my own brief fieldwork in these countries, which took place in 1993-1996.

Logistic constraints forced me to limit my area of research primarily to Polynesia and eastern Melanesia. Of the Micronesian countries, I included only Kiribati and Nauru, because the history of Chinese migration to these two countries, both traders and labourers, is very similar to the rest of the South Pacific, whereas the other Micronesian territories experienced quite different patterns of colonialism and migration (Oliver 1975, 104).

Of all the Pacific Island territories, only three have no history of Chinese settlement: Tuvalu, Tokelau and Niue. Until recently, the Kingdom of Tonga was also without Chinese settlers. Reasons for the lack of Chinese traders in Tuvalu and Tonga are discussed in the relevant chapters here. Tokelau, briefly part of the Ellice Islands, also attracted no Chinese traders. Niue provides an interesting puzzle, because one of its main exports during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was tree-fungus destined for the Chinese community in New Zealand (Chapman 1982, 122), yet no Chinese came to the island and all this trade was in British and German hands, beginning with J. C. Godeffroy & Sohn of Hamburg (Copper 1888, 321). So far as I can determine, no Chinese live in Niue or Tokelau today, nor in Tuvalu with the exception of Chinese Embassy staff from Taiwan.

In one of his usually insightful papers, Professor Wang Gungwu has attempted to categorise Chinese migration over the last two centuries as falling into four patterns (Wang 1989), all of which can be seen in the countries under review here. The earliest and most persistent pattern is *huashang*, or trader, those who went abroad to seek commercial opportunities. In 1850, another type emerged, *huagong*, or contract labourer. The significant distinction between these two types of migration lies in the fact that the

huagong emigré was recruited by a labour agent, whereas the *huashang* migrated on his (for almost all were men) own or through family and village connections.

The third pattern defined by Professor Wang is *huaqiao*, or sojourner, which appeared in the first half of the twentieth century because of a combination of factors in China and the host countries. On the one hand, Chinese nationalism emerged from the historic events occurring in the motherland, and on the other hand, anti-Chinese discrimination often developed in the countries where Chinese had settled. A causal link between these two phenomena has been drawn in each direction by various scholars (sometimes reflecting their area of study, whether Southeast Asia or North America and Australasia), but Wang suggests it is over-simple not to recognise an interrelation between the two (ibid., 47).

The *huaqiao* phenomenon is manifest in active and bounded communities characterised by cultural, educational, and political activity relating to China (ibid., 37). Such activity is on the wane among Chinese abroad, according to Wang, and an entirely new phenomenon is emerging in the past two decades, that of the *huayi*. This fourth pattern comprises those of Chinese ancestry who are no longer tied to their motherland but move rather freely in the global economy, re-migrating to take advantage of new opportunities. Such peripatetic migration does characterise some of the earlier Chinese in the Pacific islands, who went first to the Victoria gold fields then re-migrated elsewhere in the Pacific to follow perceived advantages, but they maintained strong social and sentimental links to their villages in China.

One can see the *huashang* pattern in both Kiribati and the Cook Islands, while the migrations to Nauru and Banaba were obviously *huagong*. The Chinese in Tonga represent a very recent migration that comprises all four patterns outlined by Professor Wang. Starting with a few *huashang* in the 1970s and early 80s, it now also includes a significant number of *huagong* as well. Together, they can be said to form a community in the sense that there is an association that unites many of them, and in this we see a contemporary version of the *huaqiao* pattern: concern is given to preserving Chinese culture and safeguarding the interests of the Chinese as a group.

Earlier *huaqiao* communities emerged when the Kuomintang (*Guomindang*) government in China was pursuing a policy of encouraging patriotism among overseas Chinese, and in Tonga I found that same pattern pursued by the same political party in what seems an almost anachronistic manner in the 1990s. As in earlier *huaqiao* communities elsewhere, the Chinese in Tonga faced some antagonism from the indigenous population.

Not all Chinese in Tonga participate in the community, however, and we find the *huayi* pattern also manifest there. A good example would be a *restauratrice* who was living in Nuku'alofa because it was easier for her daughter to pass the Tongan School Certificate examination than the Australian. Her brother in Australia helped her get started, and she relied on the help of a younger sister who came from Shanghai for one year. She expected her daughter to complete her high school in Australia, then go to Brigham Young University in Hawai'i, hoping eventually to end up at UC Berkeley, such

is her global view of the family's future. Another Chinese, born in Samoa, educated in China, migrated to Vietnam then Macao before moving to Thailand, where he married a Japanese woman, moved to the Philippines, thence to Tonga, and has since retired to Macao. Some Chinese have come to Tonga from outside China (including the first trader in 1974), and many see it as a way-station in their plans to enter more affluent countries such as Australia, Europe, or America. One, for example, had applied for a visa to Spain because it is easier to enter than other EU countries (interview).

This is the new generation of Chinese pioneers in the Pacific. Some of them matching huge American and Japanese concerns with grand schemes and high-flying expense accounts, they are a far cry from their early predecessors, the adventurous traders who opened the way into the Pacific a century and more ago. Like those early pioneers, however, they are loners, matching their wits against the elements (now economic rather than physical) in the pursuit of individual ambitions.

Another part of the Chinese story in the Pacific is the relationship between China and the now independent Pacific states. It is complicated by the fact that two Chinese governments, both claiming exclusive diplomatic rights, are competing for diplomatic recognition by these small countries. All the countries surveyed in this working paper, with the exception of the Cook Islands, have been involved in this competition. Tuvalu has remained steadfastly with Taipei, while Kiribati, Nauru and Tonga have shifted their allegiance between Beijing and Taipei, Tonga from Taipei to Beijing in 1998 and the other two more than once. In no case does the switch have much effect on the Chinese residents of the countries involved (apart from the embassy staff, of course). Nevertheless, I have documented these diplomatic shifts for each country here for the benefit of historians.

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Kiribati

(Gilbert and Ellice Islands)

The history of the Chinese in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, now the separate states of Kiribati and Tuvalu, comprises two quite distinct stories, both of which relate only to Kiribati. The first is the story of a score of Chinese traders in the Gilberts and some of their descendants who are living there today. The other is the somewhat shorter story of several hundred Chinese workers contracted to dig phosphate on Banaba (Ocean Island) during the first half of the twentieth century. The two stories touch each other for only four individuals, so far as I could discover: Yee Pung Chong Gum, a Chinese working on Banaba who married an i-Kiribati woman and moved to Butaritari before the war; Mak King, who was a trader on Onotoa before the war and later worked as an interpreter on Banaba; and two Chinese who worked on Banaba after the war: Tak Fai, who married an i-Kiribati woman and moved to Tarawa when the phosphate mines were closed in 1979, and another who married a Tuvaluan woman and moved to Hong Kong via Nauru.¹ Banaba will be treated separately in this paper.

The written history of the region begins with the sighting in 1788 of the Tungaru Islands, as they were then called, by Captains Gilbert and Marshall, each in charge of a convict ship heading for Australia (McQuarrie 2000, xxi).² By the time the American missionary Hiram Bingham established a station on Abaiang Island in 1857 (Goward 1907, 6), Butaritari was already the commercial centre of the region, Richard Randall having landed there in 1846 and set up a coconut oil business (Macdonald 1982, 25f). Butaritari had an excellent harbour with easy entrance to the lagoon, so was a favourite watering place for whalers (Maude 1968, 236). By 1852, Randall had expanded his business to include stores on Abaiang, Tarawa, Maiana, and Tabiteuea.

¹ I have not found the Chinese names of any of these four. There may have been two other Chinese who moved from Banaba to Tarawa with i-Kiribati wives (interview with Meri Kum Kee), but I have no names or information for them. Ben Kum Kee, son of Jong Kum Kee (*Zhang Jinqi*), worked on Nauru after the war as interpreter for the British Phosphate Company, later moving to Hong Kong, where he died in 1967 (McQuarrie 2000, 192). He was married to Wong Day.

² Spanish explorers had passed through the islands in the sixteenth century as had a British ship in 1765, but with little contact (Macdonald 1982, 14f.).

When copra replaced oil as the main export in the 1870s, J. C. Godeffroy & Sohn of Hamburg (later Jaluit Gesellschaft) established a store at Butaritari from its headquarters in the Marshall Islands (Macdonald 1982, 27), and the first copra was shipped from the Gilberts in 1872 (Maude 1968, 282).

The British and German agreement of 1886 on their respective spheres of influence in the Pacific placed all the Gilbert Islands under British administration, with headquarters at Tarawa (Goward 1907, 6). A British Protectorate was established over the Gilbert and Ellice Islands in 1892 (Coates 1970, 4), and this became a colony in 1916 (Sabatier 1977, 153).

Early Chinese Traders

According to Douglas Oliver, Chinese junks were “touching on the northwestern islands” of the Pacific Ocean before European contact (Oliver 1975, 104), but there is no evidence that they came as far south as the Gilbert group. The historical record gives the first Chinese trader at Butaritari as Ah Sam in 1883 (McQuarrie 2000, 189; I have not found his Chinese name), but there may have been one Chinese settler in the island group by 1871.³ Ah Sam was the local agent for On Chong, a Sydney company established by the Yip family in 1868.⁴ On Chong owned several ships trading between Sydney, Townsville, Hong Kong, China, and Butaritari (Lydon 1999, 86).

In the early 1890s, five trading companies had stores on Butaritari: On Chong, Jaluit Gesellschaft, Crawford & Co. and Wightman Brothers both of California, and Henderson & McFarlane of Auckland (Talu 1979, 107). They were all trading commodities for copra (Goward 1904). “Altogether they employed some forty-five European and Chinese traders throughout the group. The major concentrations were on Butaritari, Abaiang, Nonouti, and Tarawa...Tobacco was the major retail item [supplemented by] cloth...kerosene lanterns and matches”(Talu 1979, 107). There were no native traders at the time, as Kiribati communal values required that commercial activities be undertaken only by “strangers” (Oliver 1975, 190).

The story of Chinese traders in the Gilbert Islands before the Pacific War is really the story of the On Chong agency. According to Jonathan Willis-Richards (personal communication), its major shareholders were five Chinese from Zhengcheng County in

³ The 1931 census of the Gilbert islands counts one Chinese-i-Kiribati who was at least sixty years old, indicating that s/he was born in 1871 or earlier (WPHC 1932, Table 38). There is the possibility, of course, that this was the child of a Chinese employed as cook or carpenter on a passing ship.

⁴ A Mr Yip (*Ye*) from Dongguan founded On Chong (*An Chang*) in Sydney with headquarters at 205 George Street, later moving to 223 George Street (*Sands Sydney Directory, 1868, 37, & 1880, 100*; interview with Norman Chong, Melbourne, 8/10/93).

Guangdong Province.⁵ Without specifying the year, McQuarrie states that “On Chong’s headquarters on Butaritari had 50 or more Chinese staff. They had their own clubhouse, with food, wine and opium specially imported from China, and ran gambling sessions every night” (McQuarrie 2000, 189).⁶ In the 1930s, On Chong employed several Europeans as well (*Ibid.*, 4). It exported copra and sharks fins from its own wharf and ran stores on 13 or 14 of the Gilbert Islands (*Ibid.*, 189).⁷ As almost all of its agents married i-Kiribati women, their descendants were part-Chinese, the amount of their Chinese culture depending on where they were educated and the social context of their lives.⁸ Because most of them had i-Kiribati mothers, and because they were few in number, the Chinese in Kiribati have never created any community organisation, nor did the Kuomintang (*Guomindang*) establish a branch there.

On Chong did not expand into the Ellice Islands, where there was less trade, perhaps because it was not on the route of whaling ships, although there were a few Australian and English traders ‘on several islands’ (Macdonald 1982, 29).⁹ By 1888 the New Zealand firm of Henderson & Macfarlane had monopolised trade in the Ellice Islands (*ibid.*, 67). Consequently, no Chinese community developed in the Ellice group, and there are no Chinese in Tuvalu today with the exception of ROC embassy staff. One Chinese married a Tuvaluan woman on Nauru and lived briefly on Funafuti after the Pacific War, but they returned to Nauru when they found no business opportunities in Tuvalu, eventually moving to Hong Kong (interview with Chinese in Nauru).

An early agent for On Chong in the Gilbert Islands was Kwong Choy (or Kong Choy), who lived on Onotoa in the Kingsmill Group of islands (southern Gilberts) late in the 19th century but moved to Butaritari in 1900. He married Eren Redfern, the daughter of Tom

⁵ Willis-Richards suggests the five comprised Jong Kum Kee, Kwong Choy, Yee On, Foon (either Joe or George) and Carter Bing (Ah Nga).

⁶ The number 50 may be high, as the 1931 census counted only 14 Chinese and 15 Chinese-i-Kiribati on Butaritari, including three Chinese and eight Chinese-i-Kiribati women (WPHC 1932, Table 2D), and at the time of the Japanese invasion ten years later, there were only seven Chinese families there (McQuarrie 2000, 60).

⁷ Robert Louis Stevenson “lodged with a Chinaman” on Abaiang in 1889 (Stevenson 1987, 332).

⁸ Most of the information on On Chong agents before the war is from interviews on Tarawa in 1996 and private communications from Peter McQuarrie, Peter King, Henry Chan and Jonathan Willis-Richards.

⁹ Kofe mentions at least three companies that had been trading in the Ellice Islands since 1870: Whitman (presumably Wightman) Brothers of San Francisco, Henderson & Macfarlane of Auckland, and Godeffroy & Sons of Apia, which became Deutsche Handels und Plantagen-Gesellschaft in 1879 (Kofe 1983, 105).

Redfern, an English trader (agent for Randall on Onotoa) and his i-Kiribati wife. In 1904 Kwong moved again to Beru, where he remained until his return to China in 1949. In 1935 he was joined on Beru by Ah Lim, who moved to Kuria in 1939 and spent the war years there before returning to China with Kwong Choy. Kwong Choy's son, George Kwong, was On Chong's agent on Nikunau, then joined Ah Lim on Beru until 1942, when he moved to his wife's home on Nonouti for the duration of the war. A second son of Kwong Choy was working for On Chong at Butaritari until the war.

Another early agent on Onotoa was Louis King, who lived there 1898-1900 and married Nei Rerebati Lanyon, then moved to Abemama. King's son Mak King later took over the Onotoa agency and remained there with his Chinese wife Tung Ang throughout the war.¹⁰ He then moved to Banaba as an interpreter for the British Phosphate Commission until its operations ceased in 1979, when he retired to Vancouver.

At Abemama in 1900 was Ah Louis (Arue), also married to a local woman. His daughter Nei Take married Carter Bing (Ah Nga), On Chong manager at Butaritari until 1926, when he moved to Tabiteuea.

Siu Akam (*Shao*) was On Chong agent on Makin at the turn of the century with his i-Kiribati wife Nei Tibe. Their son Siu Wayang (or Waiang) married Turia, daughter of an i-Kiribati-European marriage. Lau Man Jack (Man Tiaki, *Liu*), born in Tong Mei Village, Zhengcheng County, also lived on Makin, where he married Siu Akam's daughter Nei Ketia. Their son George Lau was born on King George V's birthday, 3 June 1927.

William Kum On was agent for On Chong on Northern Tabiteuea 1898-1911 and remained there until his death in 1934. Also at Tabiteuea until 1925 was Yee On, who then moved to Butaritari. William Kum On's son, Yee Kum On, lived at Tabiteuea with his i-Kiribati wife until after the war. Jim Kum Kee (see below) also lived there in the 1930s and remained until the end of the war, when he moved with his i-Kiribati wife and children to Tarawa.

On Nikunau, Willie Fay was On Chong's agent 1908-11, when he was replaced by Jong Kum Kee (see below) and later by a Mr Lo. Fay worked on Maiana from 1928 until at least 1934.

Joe Sing lived at Betio on Tarawa in the 1890s-1910s married to Nei Kareke, with whom he had a daughter Mary.

Of all the pre-war Chinese traders, we know most about Jong Kum Kee (*Zhang Jinqi*), two of whose descendants I interviewed in 1996. Kum Kee, as he was known in Kiribati, was born in *Zhengcheng* County in Guangdong and worked on On Chong's steamship

¹⁰ Since the 1931 census counted no Chinese female living on Onotoa (WPHC 1932, Table 2D), Mak King must have married between the census and the outbreak of war.

TSS *Brunner*¹¹ before he was appointed agent on Nikunau in 1911. He married Mary Sing at Betio (Tarawa) in 1917, and together they had six sons and three daughters, all of whom lived in Kiribati at one time or another, four of whom were still living there in 1996.

In the late 1920s Kum Kee sent his three oldest children—Ben, Annie and Jim—to Zhengcheng for a Chinese education and the next three in 1936—Miria, Bong (*Zhang Bang*) and Waysang. They were cared for by Kum Kee's Chinese wife, who had no children of her own. Ben returned to the Gilberts with his Chinese wife Wong Day to become government trade representative on Nonouti, Annie and Bong remained in China with their Chinese spouses, and Waysang died in Hong Kong at the age of 18. Miria married Willie Foon, and they returned to Butaritari just before the war. The other three children—Deitii (Daisy), Hang and Motie—missed out on a Chinese education because of the war.

Kum Kee moved to Butaritari in 1931 as the manager of On Chong in the Gilberts. When W. R. Carpenter & Co. bought the company's Gilbert Islands operation in 1934 (PIM1935), Kum Kee remained as manager.

The 1931 census of the Gilbert Islands counted 37 “Mongolians” of whom five were Japanese subjects (WPHC 1932, Table 23). We can safely say, therefore, that there were 32 Chinese in the Gilberts at that time, of whom 26 were born in China (Table 22) and five were under the age of ten. All but one of the adult men were married, most to i-Kiribati wives. Sixteen of the Chinese were in trade, either as managers or “general traders” (Table 25). The others were an engine fitter, a ship's cook, a clerk, a domestic servant, and seven without gainful occupation.¹² Less than half identified as Christian, 13 Catholic and two Congregationalist (Table 26).

The 1931 census confirms that no Chinese were living in the Ellice Islands at that time.

The 73 Chinese-i-Kiribati (the census category is “Mongolian-Pacific Islands Half-Castes”) were all born in the Gilbert Islands and were spread among the same islands where Chinese lived at the time (Table 35). Thirty-nine of these were under twenty years

¹¹ McQuarrie (2000, 191) states that Kum Kee was “working on the On Chong ship *TSS Macquarrie*” before 1910, but *Lloyd's Register of Ship Owners* indicates that the *Macquarrie* did not belong to On Chong until 1936. According to Lloyd's, the 540T *Brunner* was leased to On Chong 1904-12 by its owner Loo Tom Fin of Sydney. On Chong also leased the *Loongana* in 1910-11, a three-masted wooden barque of 296T which was wrecked at Butaritari in 1912, so it is possible, though unlikely, that Kum Kee worked on it.

¹² This is calculated from several Tables to exclude the Japanese family (a couple with three children) and the five Chinese children (WPHC 1932).

of age (Table 38). In addition, the census counted another 24 “Pacific Islanders with a percentage of Mongolian Blood” (Table 42).

By 1938, only three companies were trading in the Gilbert Islands, the German, American and New Zealand companies having withdrawn. On Chong, now owned by W R Carpenter & Co., was still trading in its own name at stations on all but the two most southern islands, Arorae and Tamana (Talu 1979, 110). Its competitors were the Japanese company Nanyo Boyeki Kabushiki Kaisha (NBK), which had extended its operations from the Marshall Islands to Butaritari in 1915 (McQuarrie 2000, 6), and Burns Philp (South Seas) Company Ltd., established at Tarawa in about 1920. The manager of Burns Philp reported that in 1938 NBK had shipped about 400 tons of copra, On Chong 2650 tons, and Burns Philp 2750 tons (Burns Philp 1939, 2). The same report expressed concern that NBK was undercutting both Australian companies by buying copra at £6 per ton instead of the traditional rate of £4.

On Fanning Island (Tabuaeran), a remote atoll three thousand kilometres east of Tarawa, a relay station had been established in 1902 to service the trans-Pacific cable completed that year to link Australasia and Fiji with Canada and the northern hemisphere. Managed by Australians and New Zealanders, the Cable & Wireless Co. employed Chinese tradesmen (McQuarrie 2000, 25). Seven Chinese were on Fanning at the time of the 1931 census (WPHC 1932, Enclosure 5a), but the number had risen to 21 in the 1947 census (Pusinelli, 46). As Fanning was never invaded by the Japanese, the Chinese remained there until the cable station was closed in 1963 (G&E 1965, 10).

The Pacific War

When the Japanese invasion threatened southern China in the late 1930s, several of the Gilbert Island Chinese who were visiting Hong Kong and China decided to return to their island homes to avoid the imminent Japanese occupation. Carter Bing’s young son, John Carter Bing, who was living in Hong Kong at the time, negotiated with the British authorities to allow seventeen of them who were British subjects to board the *RCS Viti* bound for Fiji (McQuarrie 2000, 190). Lau Man Jack and Low Gee Leong were not permitted to board because they were born in China, so their families had to leave them in Hong Kong. The group included Low Gee Leong’s wife and five of their children, Miria Kum Kee and her husband Willie Foon, Lau Man Jack’s wife and son George, Louis King’s wife and four sons and two Bing brothers (*ibid.*, 193-4). Louis King himself had remained at Abamama.

The *Viti* sailed to Suva, where Willie Lau Gee Leong, Ioteba Kee Yang, two Bing brothers, and Louis King’s wife and two sons remained, while the other ten boarded the *Kiakia* bound for Butaritari. They arrived at the end of 1940, so were caught by the subsequent Japanese invasion.

The war years were difficult for the Chinese in the Gilbert Islands, although the presence of the manager of the Japanese trading company NBK may have mitigated the worst aspects of Japanese occupation (McQuarrie 2000, 63).¹³ When the Japanese captured Butaritari on 10 December 1941, they arrested the male heads of the seven Chinese families who lived in the On Chong compound and held them for a week before releasing them.¹⁴ Declaring On Chong “an English Company” (as it was owned by W. R. Carpenter & Co.), they confiscated all its assets, using the goods as provisions and the store as a barracks (PIM 1949). Kum Kee’s house, which was built on stilts over the lagoon, was ransacked and all his belongings thrown into the mud (McQuarrie 2000, 60). The Chinese families decided to move away from Butaritari to live in the remote village of Kuma at the northwest end of the atoll. Some 13 Chinese families were trapped on seven of the other Gilbert Islands for the duration.

On 9 February 1942, Yee Kum On’s teenage son, Yee On Bonto, made a daring escape in a small sailboat with a party led by Captain Harold Stead (McQuarrie 2000, 67).

Post-War Kiribati

The British colonial administration that returned to the Gilbert Islands after the war was committed to developing co-operative societies among the indigenous population and consequently prevented On Chong and the other overseas companies from returning to the islands (PIM 1949, 57; King, private communication).¹⁵ In 1947, the administration offered to repatriate any Chinese wishing to return to China. Apart from Carter Bing and his family from Abemama (who paid their own fare), the offer was accepted by only two other Chinese, Cheung Ming and Li Pak Ming (KNA, letter 14/5/47).¹⁶ Two years later the offer was also made to Ah Lim on Kuria, Yee Pung Chong Gum on Butaritari and Kwong Choy on Beru (KNA, letter 3/1/49), and they probably all left in that year.

The first post-war census took place in 1947 after Carter Bing and the other two Chinese had left. Only seven Chinese remained in the Gilbert Islands, five men and two

¹³ The following account of the war years is based primarily on McQuarrie 2000, 60ff. & 189-195.

¹⁴ The seven included Kum Kee, Willie Foon, Yee Pung Chong Gum, Adam Lau Sam (cook), Cheng Kwok Yang (assistant manager and accountant) (McQuarrie 2000, 192) and Joseph Low Gee Leong (*ibid.*, 64).

¹⁵ Two co-operative societies had been started on Beru by H. E. Maude in 1931, and by 1934 there were 34 in the Gilbert Islands, which were strongly supported by the policies of the New Zealand Labour government after the war (PIM1949, 57).

¹⁶ Carter Bing at this time had a Chinese wife named Yuan Lon Mei and three young daughters aged 8,7, and 1 (KNA, Letter 3/9/46)

women (Pusinelli, 46). Two were retired, three were storekeepers, and one was a domestic servant (Pusinelli, Table 12d). In addition, there were 112 Chinese on Banaba, 21 on Fanning Island, and none in the Ellice or Phoenix Islands (Pusinelli, 57). The census counted 151 Chinese-Gilbertese and 12 Chinese-European-Gilbertese, the latter probably descendants of Kwong Choy and Siu Wayang.

At the time of the census, the Chinese working on Fanning Island included carpenters, clerks, domestic servants, fishermen, laundrymen, a gardener, and labourers (Pusinelli, Table 12D). Unfortunately, I have been unable to discover anything more about this little community, which had existed from before the war as the major work force of the Cable & Wireless Co. on that island.

Although the copra trade was in the hands of i-Kiribati co-operatives after the war, Chinese were permitted to open businesses on Tarawa, where the remaining Chinese families congregated, mainly at Betio and Bairiki.¹⁷ When Jong Kum Kee died in 1946, his son Jim Kum Kee moved to Bairiki and worked for a while, then opened a restaurant with his brother Bong, who returned from China in 1959, and a retail store called EKK (after Jim's wife Elizabeth). Bong's son came to Betio from Hong Kong in 1971, and together they opened the LYK store in Betio (named after Bong's Chinese wife). Kum Kee's other sons, Hang and Motie, opened Jong Kum Kee Brothers Store in Betio, and his daughter Deitii also lives on Tarawa (interview Bong). Two of Motie's sons have their own companies, Waysang's WKK Enterprises in Betio and George's GKK stores in Tearooreke and Bairiki. These retail stores sell consumer goods such as tinned food, clothing and textiles, radios, bicycles, boat engines, boats, tobacco, and fishing nets (Keith-Reid 1995, 44; "Kiribati Joins UNESCO" 1991, 4).

After the war, Tong Tin Hy (or Hai) moved from Fanning Island to Tarawa with his i-Kiribati wife and family, including his two sons Anote and Harry.¹⁸ Tong worked for Mobil Oil and sent both sons to study in New Zealand, where Harry qualified as a doctor and moved to the Marshall Islands, while Anote returned to Tarawa. When the Cable & Wireless Company closed its operations on Fanning Island at the end of 1963, there was only one Chinese working there (G&E 1965, 10).

In her report on the 1963 census, Dr Norma McArthur continues to categorise the Chinese as "the Mongolian component" of the population and states that "only four persons living in the Gilbert Islands describe themselves as Mongolian in this census" (McArthur 1964, 2). Unfortunately she does not distinguish Chinese-i-Kiribati from other

¹⁷ Information on the Chinese in Kiribati since the war is derived primarily from fieldwork and interviews at Tarawa in 1996. Kwong Choy's son, T. Kwong represented the southern Gilbert Islands co-operative societies in 1953, and Mr T. Redfern, Kwong Choy's brother-in-law, represented the northern group (K. Nicholson 1954, 9).

¹⁸ One person told me that Tong worked on Canton Island for the airlines (personal communication), but others agreed he was at Fanning with Cable & Wireless.

“Micronesian/non-Poynesian”, all of whom are included in the “Indigenous Population” category. The remaining 101 Chinese enumerated were on Banaba with the exception of two on Fanning, but all of them had left Kiribati by the time it achieved independence in 1979, so one can no longer speak of a Chinese community in Kiribati.¹⁹ Chinese influence remains in the growing number of i-Kiribati with Chinese ancestry and in the external relations between Kiribati and the governments centred in Beijing and Taipei.

Today, many i-Kiribati have some Chinese ancestry, but as one told me, “it’s not important, so we stress our i-Kiribati side.” Relations between Chinese and i-Kiribati show no signs of prejudice or discrimination, and I was told by i-Kiribati and others that the part-Chinese are completely accepted, indeed considered good looking. Most of those who identify themselves as Chinese are Catholic.²⁰ All are citizens of the country according to the constitution, which defines as i-Kiribati “a person one of whose ancestors was born in Kiribati before 1900” (Constitution 1980, 29).

The fact that two sets of part-Chinese brothers were elected to parliament in 1998 is further indication that there is no discrimination or prejudice against them. Anote and Harry Tong and Waysang and Johnny Kum Kee (sons of Motie Kum Kee) all became members of parliament that year. While Harry had been a member of parliament in the 1980s, he had left politics for some time to return to his medical practice. His younger brother Anote was re-elected, however, having already served a term as MP for Maiana (“Observations” 1998). The Kum Kee brothers were entirely new to politics.

Kiribati established diplomatic relations with Beijing in 1979, and an embassy was opened at Bairiki. I was told in 1996 that a few of the older generation attended functions at the embassy, but because most Chinese identify as i-Kiribati, the embassy has little relevance for them.

China provided several kinds of aid to Kiribati, including an interest-free loan of NZ\$5.6 million in 1990 for a new parliament building and airport extensions (Hoadley 1992, 114). In 1994-5 a team of fifty Chinese technicians and tradesmen improved and extended the runway for the airport on Tarawa, a project that caused some controversy in the parliament, where the leader of the opposition objected to the use of Chinese labour (“Deal” 1994). China sent four doctors to the hospital on Tarawa at that time and donated 5000 bicycles and various appliances as part of their aid package (interview with Ambassador Wang, 1996). China also donated an inter-island ferry (Henderson & Reilly 2003, 102).

¹⁹ The 1985 and 1990 censuses include no Chinese (Republic 1993, Table B), which is somewhat bewildering, as there were at least four living in Betio in 1996.

²⁰ Four of the seven Chinese were Catholics in 1947 (Pusinelli, 53). The percentage of Catholics among the part-Chinese rose from 27% in 1931 to 70% in 1947 (*ibid.*, 55). Subsequent censuses do not allow us to make the comparison, as they do not distinguish part-Chinese from other Micronesian/non-Polynesian individuals.

In 1997, China established a satellite tracking station on Tarawa, the only one outside China's own territory (Henderson & Reilly 2003, 100). The station led to controversy in the Kiribati parliament in 2002, when the leader of the opposition claimed that China had funded the government's re-election (*ibid.*). In the 2003 elections, Anote Tong defeated his brother Harry for the presidency after accusing the Chinese embassy of contributing financially to Harry's campaign (Field 2005, 25). The Chinese tracking station was then closed, and President Anote Tong recognised the government in Taipei instead of Beijing (*ibid.*).

A former American senator, Mike Graber, visited Kiribati in 1993 to propose that the country sell 100 citizenships to people living in Hong Kong, mainland China, and Taiwan ("Goodbye" 1993). By 1996, Kiribati had sold "about a dozen" passports at US\$30,000 each, but they conferred neither citizenship nor residency rights on the owners, and half the fee went to a Chinese Canadian agent in Toronto ("Whispers" 1996, 14).

Banaba (Ocean Island)

The Pacific Phosphate Company began mining the phosphate deposits on Banaba in 1900 with 35 Ellice Islanders and 70 Gilbertese (Faaniu 1983, 122). Britain annexed the island the following year and administered it as part of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Protectorate (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 56). To supplement the Pacific Islanders, the company introduced Japanese labour in 1908, but when they struck for higher wages in 1919, they were replaced with 375 Chinese recruited in Hong Kong, who arrived on the island in 1920 (Schlomowitz & Munro 1991, 105). They were paid 32 shillings for the first half of their three-year contract, 36s for the second half (Schlomowitz & Munro 1991, 115).

Labour conditions were similar to those on Nauru. Chinese labourers dug phosphate with pick and shovel in ever deepening pits and loaded it into baskets to be hauled to the surface and carried to the field hoppers by other Chinese using wheelbarrows (Pope 1921, 30). Chinese were also employed as "mechanics", including carpenters, blacksmiths, engineers, boat-builders, cooks and stewards (Schlomowitz & Munro 1991, 112) and for weaving large cane baskets to hold 1500 pounds of phosphate for transfer from lighters to ships (Ellis 1935, 223).²¹ Gilbertese did other labour on land, while Ellice Islanders manned the lighters and other boats (Schlomowitz & Munro 1991, 112). The Chinese were on three-year contracts, the Pacific Islanders, one or two years (*ibid.*, 114).

H E Maude, the acting administrator of the island in 1932, reported that there were 698 Chinese on Ocean Island at that time, of whom 694 were housed in 55 company barracks,

²¹ Harold Pope describes how the phosphate, having first been crushed and dried, was loaded into these large baskets at the jetty, four of which filled a lighter, which then took it out to the ship waiting offshore, where the baskets were hoisted up and dumped into the ship's hold. In 1921 1,300 tons were loaded each day in this manner (Pope 1921, 31).

each about 18 X 5m with cement floors and walls, tiled roofs, eight windows, and containing 10-14 beds (Maude 1932, 2). The other four Chinese were probably servants in private houses of the mine managers. Two-thirds of the men were literate, according to Maude, and all were Confucianists.

Banaba's "Chinatown" in the 1930s included a Chinese reading room and a hall for performances of Chinese opera (Ellis 1935, 224f). There was little interaction between Chinese and the indigenous Banabans (ibid., 254), and unlike Nauru, Banaba had no fertile soil available to the Chinese for vegetable cultivation (Pusinelli, 14).

As on Nauru, the pre-war history of Chinese labour on Banaba was marked by incidents of industrial conflict and inter-ethnic tension. In 1925, 300 Chinese attacked the Gilbertese workers' quarters, and the ensuing riot left one Chinese dead and six Chinese and ten Gilbertese injured, whereupon the Gilbertese workforce went on strike (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 201). After an enquiry, ten Chinese were sent to prison in Fiji and the striking Gilbertese workers were sent home (ibid., 203). The following year the British Colonial Office set a limit of 750 Chinese working on Banaba (Ibid., 279).²²

Chinese labour struck again in 1931 because of the early repatriation of 250 of their number (Macdonald 1982, 118). When an influenza epidemic broke out among the Gilbertese workers in 1936, the company tried to recruit more labour from Hong Kong to replace them, but the Colonial Office restriction prevented any increase in the Chinese workforce (Schlomowitz & Munro 1991, 110).

In 1938 there were 783 Chinese working on Banaba (Sabatier 1977, 293). In 1940, they were "working around the clock" because operations on Nauru had been curtailed by the activities of German raiders (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 304). The next year, facing the imminent threat of Japanese invasion, the colonial officials decided that "as many as possible should be repatriated from Ocean Island straight away" (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 308), but there were still 591 Chinese on the island when the French destroyer *Le Triomphant* arrived at the end of February 1942 (ibid., 316). All were evacuated to Brisbane, Australia, so there were no Chinese on Banaba during the Japanese occupation.

Mining resumed on Banaba immediately after the war, again with contract Chinese labour, albeit in smaller numbers and on annual rather than triennial contracts. By this time, all the Chinese were tradesmen rather than labourers (Pusinelli, 14), Pacific Islanders having replaced them in the mining fields (Faaniu 1983, 125). The 1947 census was unable to enumerate the Chinese on Banaba, because they were all lodged in a quarantine station at the time of the census, having just arrived from China (Pusinelli, 9).

²² Faaniu reports that a strike by the Tuvaluan workforce in 1926 led to repatriation for them as well. They had demanded a rise in wages from £2 per month to £5-7, which was refused (Faaniu 1983, 124).

The report states, however, that there were 121 of them, all male and all recruited in Hong Kong (ibid., 14).

When the Gilbertese labourers went on strike in 1948, the company attempted to recruit 700 more Chinese in Hong Kong, but because of recent labour unrest on Nauru, the Hong Kong Government refused to allow any recruiting until the Nauru enquiry had been completed (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 378). Consequently, the number of Chinese continued to diminish through the next decades. By 1963, all the workers were Pacific Islanders except “a very small number of skilled experts, mainly Europeans and Chinese” ((G&E 1965, 10). According to the 1962-3 colonial report, these included only 49 Chinese mechanics earning £22 per month, but the census that year counted 99 Chinese living on island (McArthur 1964, 2).²³ By 1968, there remained only 30 Chinese (G&E 1969, 9) and one less the following year (G&E 1971). By this time, decimal currency had been introduced, and tradesmen were paid a basic wage of \$46.60 per month, while their average earnings, including overtime, rations and allowances, amounted to \$140.66 per month (ibid.).

A census conducted in 1973 counted a total of 35 Chinese living in Kiribati, 23 adult men, 12 adult women, and 8 children (G & E 1975, Table 8). Since there were only four or five Chinese in the Gilberts by that time, we can assume that the Chinese work force on Banaba continued at about the same level.

The last shipment of phosphate left Banaba at the end of 1979, and the company personnel had all gone by the beginning of 1980 (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 522). One of the few remaining Chinese moved to Tarawa, and the rest returned to Hong Kong, thus ending a dwindling Chinese community that had existed for nearly sixty years.

²³ In Table 13 of her census report, McArthur records 56 “Mongolians” mining phosphate (which includes executive and clerical positions), while Table 2 gives a total of 93 “Mongolians” living in the “Chinese Location” (65 men and 28 women) (McArthur 1964, *passim*).

TABLE 1: CHINESE POPULATION ON BANABA (OCEAN ISLAND)

YEAR	TOTAL	WOMEN	SOURCE
1920	400		Ellis 1935, 187
1921	375		Schlomomwitz & Munro, 106
1922	306		Schl. & Mumro, 106
1925	380		Ellis 1935, 199
1927	618		Schl. & Munro, 106
1931	698		Maude 1932, 2
1934	365		Schl. & Munro, 106
1936	593		Schl. & Munro, 106
1937	780		Davidson 1945, 500
1938	665		Schl. & Munro, 106
1938	783		Sabatier 1977, 293
1941	773		McQuarrie 1994,130
1942	591		Williams & Macdonald 1985, 316
1947	121		Census
1947	142		G&E Report 1965
1963	99	28	Census
1968	30		G&E Report 1969
1969	29		G&E Report 1971
1973	30	10	Estimate from Census

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Nauru

The tiny island country of Nauru, with an area of only 21 square kilometres and a resident population of less than ten thousand people, sits just below the equator and three hundred kilometres east of Banaba, the westernmost island of Kiribati. Both Nauru and Banaba were important sources of phosphate fertiliser during most of the twentieth century, and it was the phosphate mines that brought Chinese labourers to both islands.

Nauru was sighted in 1798 by an Englishman, who named it “Pleasant Island” for its beauty—alas, almost totally destroyed in the next two centuries. After 1886, when the British and German governments had agreed on a division of their spheres of influence in the Pacific (Aikman 1993, 7), Germany annexed the island in 1888 and began recruiting carpenters and other construction labour from China around the turn of the century (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 72). When the Pacific Phosphate Company (PPC), a consortium of British, Australian and New Zealand capitalists, started to build mining facilities in June 1906, they also contracted Chinese tradesmen and labourers (Ellis 1935, 128). Operations began the following year, a German agency in Hong Kong having been commissioned to recruit Chinese labour on three-year contracts with the possibility of renewal (*ibid.*, 261; Viviani 1970, 36).²⁴ The agency recruited 743 workers, but when their ship reached Nauru, the Chinese workers refused to disembark because they claimed that a discrepancy in their contracts amounted to forced labour. The company was compelled by this strike to return 200 recalcitrant men to China (Chen 1984, 59f). A PPC official visiting Swatow later in 1907 inspected 500 “coolies” recruited by their agent, a hundred of whom he found unfit. He travelled to Nauru with the other 400 men on a German ship and was disgusted by the brutal treatment and thrashings the Chinese had to suffer en route (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 75; Chen 1984, 62).

Living conditions for the Chinese workers on Nauru were harsh, and the work was extremely arduous. They were divided into two groups, one group working with pick and shovel in deep pits without cover from the sun all day, digging the phosphate from among the sharp rock that could easily cut them as they scraped by it. The other group hauled the phosphate up from the pits and carried it in baskets on shoulder poles to collection sites (Pope 1921, 30), where it was “loaded into vee-shaped side tipping railway trucks” to be transported to the crushers and dryer plants (*General Information on Nauru*, 19).

Despite these conditions, about half the workers renewed their contracts each time (Decker 1940, 80),²⁵ so the Chinese community on Nauru developed some continuity

²⁴ The German Consul in Swatow had negotiated the right to recruit labour with the Viceroy of Liang Guang (Guangxi and Guangdong) (Chen 1984, 59).

²⁵ Decker (1940, 80) states that many of the returned labourers recruited others from their home villages, who went to Hong Kong to stay in company barracks until they could be sent to Nauru. *Cf.* Viviani 1970, who reports that only one-fifth renewed their contracts

through the three decades before the Japanese occupation. The Chinese government had laid down regulations for contract labour, including the requirement that “each labourer should be provided with a bed, a table and other articles of ordinary use” (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 75),²⁶ but this did not save the Chinese from miserable conditions. By 1914, when Australia took over the administration of Nauru from Germany, some 500 Chinese labourers were mining with pick and shovel. While the local population sold pigs, fruit and vegetables to the Chinese, there was no other social interaction between the communities, and no intermarriage has been recorded for the pre-war period (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 36f).²⁷ Nor was there much contact between the Chinese and the labourers from the Caroline and Gilbert Islands.

In 1920 a consortium called the British Phosphate Commissioners (BPC) took over management of mining on Nauru (Ellis 1935,180),²⁸ and in 1921 the first Australian administrator promulgated a “Movement of Natives Ordinance” confining all workers to their barracks 9pm-5am and excluding them from the European settlement from dusk to dawn (Viviani, 1970, 54). This effectively isolated the Chinese from social contact with any other ethnic group. The Chinese complained through their interpreter that the recruiting agency in Hong Kong had misled them about conditions on Nauru, that wages were too low and rations so bad that they had to buy food at prices far higher than they expected (Williams & MacDonald 1985, 164). There were 597 Chinese on Nauru at the time, including two women and three children (Campbell 1923, 232).

In August 1922, the League of Nations Trustee Commission informed the Australian government that their administrator on Nauru was not following the trustee mandate in that phosphate production benefited neither other nations nor the Nauruans themselves. They further stated that the conditions of Chinese workers were not sufficiently specified,

(p.58). Chen gives figures on arrivals and departures for the years 1922-4, which indicate that in 1922 and 1923 about the same number left as arrived, while in 1924 325 arrived and only 131 left (Chen 1984, 61).

²⁶ This regulation also required the repatriation of corpses, which took place at least until 1917, the date of the earliest grave in the Location Cemetery.

²⁷ During the German period, a policy of strict “apartheid” was enforced, with Chinese forbidden to enter any Nauruan precinct or home, or to have any commerce with the indigenous population (Hiery 1994, 289).

²⁸ The Nauru Agreement signed in 1919 between the governments of the UK, Australia and New Zealand, arranged for the phosphate to be divided between the three countries on a ration of 42/42/16 respectively and for the assets of the Pacific Phosphate Company to be bought out in the same ratio (Macdonald 1988, 14). It also agreed to an Australian administrator for the island. The agreement came into effect 28 October 1920 (Williams & Macdonald 1985,135).

and it asked Australia to investigate rumours that labour was being mistreated on the island (Chen 1984, 63).

This prompted the Australian legislature in 1922 to pass a “Chinese and Native Labour Ordinance” giving the Australian Commissioner of Trust Territories the powers to control working and living conditions and arbitrate disputes (Williams & MacDonald 1985, 203).²⁹ It also limited work to nine hours a day and six days a week (Viviani 1970, 56). For this, labourers received £1/12s a month (mechanics earned considerably more: £5-6 pounds per month), seventy percent of which was remitted to their families in China. Conditions continued to be harsh, however, as an annual death rate of five per thousand indicates. Any Chinese injured while working was repatriated with £19 severance pay; those dismissed for misconduct or illness were repatriated without compensation (Viviani 1970, 57f).

In 1924 the BPC decided to rely entirely on Chinese labour in their Nauru mines, repatriating over a thousand labourers from the Pacific Islands (Viviani 1970, 56).³⁰ A year later, in early January 1926, the 822 Chinese workers went on strike. Rather than negotiate, the BPC had the Chinese leaders arrested and asked one of its employees, Thomas Cude, an ex-policeman from Bristol, to deal with the matter. Cude quickly recruited 30 Nauruans and armed them with truncheons made of shovel and sledgehammer handles. When some 700 Chinese demonstrated in front of the BPC office the next day, Cude ordered a baton charge, which injured several Chinese. The Australian administrator negotiated an end to the strike the next day, and the strike leaders were “sentenced to various terms of imprisonment” (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 206f).

Another incident occurred in April 1930, when a “squabble between two Chinese factions” caused the death of a policeman, according to an article in the *Pacific Islands Monthly* (“Indentured Chinese”). The same article reported that the Chinese on Nauru had remitted £14,436 to their families in China that year, an average of £13 per worker.

By the time of the 1926 strike, the BPC had already begun to mechanise the extraction of phosphate, so that steam shovels replaced the pick and hoe, overhead cable cars replaced the shoulder pole and baskets. In 1930, the company completed a cantilever to load the ships, which previously had involved loading baskets of phosphate into lighters that took them out to the ships anchored beyond the reef (Viviani 1970, 68). Furthermore, the world-wide depression that year forced the BPC to cut production by

²⁹ At this time, recruiting in Hong Kong was in the hands of Roy Pope, younger brother of the Australian commissioner H.B. Pope (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 188). Pope had first tried unsuccessfully to recruit labour from Java and Singapore, and when the Japanese refused permission for BPC to recruit from the Carolines, he went on to Hong Kong to establish his recruitment agency (*ibid.*, 167).

³⁰ Compare Ellis 1935, p.188: “From 1923 we have relied entirely on Chinese labour at Nauru, and we have found these men excellent for hard work.”

75% (PIM August 1931, 9), so one quarter of the Chinese labourers were repatriated in 1931 and 1932. Most of those remaining worked in the deepest excavations, some fifty feet below the surface, where hand labour was still required to fill the skips that were hoisted out by cable (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 205; Ellis 1935, 239). By this time, Chinese were not only labourers but working as machinists, carpenters, hospital orderlies, and as domestic servants in the homes of the European managers (Ellis 1935, 241 & 247).³¹ In the late 1930s the BPC increased production and recruited more labour, so the Chinese population rose to 1,350 Chinese on Nauru in 1940 (Davidson 1944, 320). Between June and July 1941, however, some 773 Chinese were prematurely repatriated with compensation, their places being taken by Gilbertese (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 310). This left 582 Chinese on Nauru when the Japanese invaded in 1942. The company believed that Gilbertese would fare better under the Japanese than would the Chinese, a prediction that proved to be true.

In addition to their paid labour, some Chinese grew vegetables in small plots around the workings, and some raised pigs near their living quarters in what the Europeans called “Chinatown” (Ellis 1935, 235 & 240). Some also ran shops and teashops, with some barbers and tailors as well (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 294, from a diary kept by the teacher’s wife, Mrs. Tohill). A recreation hall provided by the company was full of activity, including Cantonese opera, fantan and mah-jong. The Chinese built a sports ground nearby, where they played soccer, basketball and volleyball (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 253).

An analysis of headstones in the Location Cemetery on Nauru suggests that most of the contract labour came from the Seiyap (*Siyi*) districts south-west of Canton, in particular the counties of Toishan (*Taishan*) and Yanping (*Enping*).³² Of the 86 legible stones, 23 (27%) are from Toishan, 18 (21%) from Yanping, seven from Hoyping (*Kaiping*) and two from Sunwui (*Xinhui*)—a total of 50 (58%) from the Seiyap District. The remainder were spread over eleven counties in and around Canton with only three from other parts of China—all three since 1950. Interviews with Chinese leaders supported these proportions derived from the cemetery.

The cemetery also provides evidence of an early Chinese association. Some thirteen stones, dating from 1923 to 1962, display the three characters *Xie Xuan Tang* across the top of the inscription, which can be roughly translated as “Hall to Assist Return”. All but one of the legible inscriptions are for men from Toishan, suggesting that these stones

³¹ Cf. Viviani 1970, 68. Davidson (1945, 500) gives 1,486 Chinese labourers on Nauru in 1939. Unfortunately, this source provides no references, as it was produced for an intelligence agency.

³² As well as Chinese, about half the headstones in the Location Cemetery mark graves of Pacific Islanders, notably I-Kiribati and Polynesians. All but one of the 148 Chinese stones face seaward, while most of the others face inland. The most recent stone is dated 1989, and I was told that Chinese bodies are now returned to China for burial.

were erected by a Toishan mutual-aid burial society and indicating that this association existed for at least forty years. The association no longer exists, and Chinese currently living in Nauru have no memory of it. A Chinese leader told me that in the period before the Pacific War there were several locality associations (*tongxianghui*).

An early Chinese association that continues to exist today is the Office for Chinese Wellbeing (*Huaren Kangle Shi*). I was unable to determine exactly when this association was founded, but one of its leaders told me that it was “very old” and originally served as a liaison committee between the Chinese workers and the BPC. Before the war, it also organised celebrations of the main festivals, including Chinese New Year, *Qingming* (5 April), The Mid-Autumn Festival, and *Chongyang* (ninth day of ninth lunar month).

In 1937, when the Japanese invaded eastern China, the Chinese on Nauru, as elsewhere in the diaspora, established a National Salvation Committee to raise money for China’s war effort (Akashi 1970). The founding chairman was Mr *Zheng Quanqun*, under whose leadership the committee raised a remarkable \$180,000 in fifteen months from the six hundred Chinese living there.³³ Opposition from some Chinese businessmen led to violence at a meeting of the committee on 6 November 1938, when Zheng was seriously injured, dying of his wounds three months later. During his leadership, Chinese workers on Nauru refused to load ships bound for Japan (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 290).³⁴ The National Salvation Committee disappeared after his death, but a large headstone was erected on his grave in December 1939 by a committee calling itself the Nauru Overseas Chinese Association (*Naoru Huaqiao Xiehui*).³⁵ I have found no further mention of this organization, so I assume that it disintegrated during the Japanese occupation; Chinese residents on Nauru today have no recollection of its existence.

During 1940, Nauru was threatened by German raiders combing the Pacific Ocean for targets. When a German ship bombarded Nauru, “the Chinese took to the phosphate fields or rode bicycles to the other side of the island”, and they worked in the phosphate

³³ Information on the National Salvation Committee on Nauru comes from Zheng Quanqun’s gravestone in the Location Cemetery. This huge donation amounted to about \$300 per person in the Chinese community on Nauru; compare this with an estimated \$125 per person among the Chinese in Canada, which was considered “disproportionately great” compared to average contributions throughout the diaspora (Con 1982, 189).

³⁴ Because the Chinese on Nauru refused to load phosphate bound for Japan, the BPC fulfilled its Japanese contracts from Makatea in French Polynesia and Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 302).

³⁵ The headstone states that Zheng died at the age of 37, “such a brave and promising young person who met his death in a foreign country.” The writing on the gravestone is horizontal and from left to right, indicating that those responsible were rather progressive for their time.

fields at night to avoid the floodlit wharfs, which were obvious targets for the Germans (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 304).

When the Japanese navy was steaming towards Nauru in February 1942, most of the 582 Chinese and 117 Europeans were evacuated on the French destroyer *Le Triomphant*, the Chinese permitted to take only their chopsticks, bowl and towel (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 315).³⁶ The Chinese were “stowed below, being allowed on deck for an hour in small groups to get fresh air” (ibid.). Seven Europeans and 191 Chinese remained on the island, although in 1943 the Japanese removed seven of the Chinese to Truk (now Chuuk) with 1,201 Nauruans (*Bulletin* 9/2/96,1).

During the Japanese occupation, the Chinese suffered appalling hardships, with shorter rations than the other prisoners and more brutality from their captors.³⁷ Ellis reported that the Chinese suffered “starvation, incessant toil from daylight to dark, enemy looting of their possessions [and] executions” (Ellis 1946, 140).³⁸ Four Chinese were blindfolded and beheaded on the beach in 1943 (McQuarrie 1994, 138). By 1944 five had starved to death, and by the time of the Japanese surrender on 14 September 1945, another seven had died (McQuarrie 1994, 79 &82).³⁹ At the celebration of China’s National Day on 10

³⁶ A photograph in the Nauru Phosphate Corporation Museum on Nauru shows a Chinese woman and three children among the “ex-pats” on the deck of the ship evacuating them. The Chinese evacuees were landed at Brisbane on March 8 1942, whence they were sent to Port Augusta and thence by train to Alice Springs. Two hundred were then sent by bus to Wauchope and three hundred to Hatches Creek, 500km northeast of Alice Springs, both groups to mine wolfram (tungsten ore), an essential ingredient of munitions during the war. The isolation of the mines eventually made the scheme impractical, and all but thirteen of the Chinese joined the American Army in November 1943 and moved to Queensland for the duration. At the end of the war, the BPC provided £25 compensation to those Chinese they could contact for the effects they had lost when evacuated (Rankine 1996).

³⁷ Peter McQuarrie writes that the Banabans, Gilbertese and Tuvaluans “fared much better under Japanese rule than the Chinese and Nauruans because they were afforded higher status in the Japanese order of racial prejudice” (McQuarrie 1994, 141-2).

³⁸ Ellis writes that one innovative Chinese scavenged string from the deteriorating rubber conveyor belts, spun them together on a bicycle wheel spinner to make fishing line (Ellis 1935, 140).

³⁹ Twelve Chinese headstones in the Location Cemetery bear dates during the Japanese occupation: two in 1942, two in 1943, six in 1944, and two in 1945. There is also a large and elaborate grave dated 1946 and dedicated to all previous Chinese dead. Photographs taken at the time of the Japanese surrender show several Chinese, including an interpreter named Nai Fai Ma. According to Peter McQuarrie, Ma kept a diary during the Japanese occupation, but unfortunately this was not available to me at time of writing.

October 1945, a Chinese flag that had been hidden throughout the war was hoisted by Li On, a Chinese “who came to Nauru in 1907 and had done 30 years of service before the Japanese occupation” (Ellis 1946, 142).

After the war, recruitment of Chinese contract labour resumed, and the community grew quite quickly to over a thousand. By 1948 there were 1,300 Chinese on Nauru, all men recruited through Hong Kong on two-year contracts (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 348). At this time, Nauru was subject to a 1947 UN Trusteeship agreement granting Australia administrative jurisdiction and the BPC a continuation of their monopoly control of phosphate mining on the island (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 363).⁴⁰

On 5 June 1948, the BPC brought 440 new recruits from Hong Kong and attempted to repatriate 218 on the same day, including 52 “recent arrivals whose health, work habits or political activity had made them unsatisfactory employees” (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 378). Disagreement on severance pay and dissatisfaction with the company’s two interpreters led to the Chinese barricading themselves in the Chinese Location. According to one source, the assistant interpreter, Mr Charlie Cheung Hung Foo, “administered the Chinese community’s welfare funds and controlled much of the commercial activity within the location.”⁴¹ The Chinese leaders accused him of embezzlement and bribery and demanded an investigation (Macdonald 1988, 378).

By this time fearful of communist agitation among their Chinese workforce, the administration reacted to the Chinese request with immediate brutality. Thomas Cude, who had been responsible for the savage attack on Chinese strikers in 1926 and was now Police Inspector for Nauru, swore in thirty Nauruan special constables, some of them taken straight from jail, who immediately surrounded the Location. On the morning of 7 June, the Chinese armed themselves with tools and stones, and when violence broke out, one Chinese was killed and six wounded by gunfire; ten more were injured by batons, one of whom died later. Forty-seven leaders were arrested and badly beaten in jail, causing two more deaths. In all, four Chinese died and thirty-five were injured, while two policemen were slightly injured. An official enquiry found that police behaviour had been “excessive and condoned battoning [sic] of unresisting Chinese.”⁴²

⁴⁰ An attempt by China’s delegate to protect the Chinese workers on Nauru through an amendment to allow all the nationals of UN member countries “right to enter, reside and work in Nauru” was defeated following Australia’s objection (Macdonald 1988, 29). Chinese workers therefore remained entirely at the will of the BPC.

⁴¹ The “number one interpreter” for the BPC on Nauru at the time was Mr Chow Yan Kit.

⁴² The UN Visiting Mission to Nauru in 1950 included one Chinese member, Mr. T. K. Chang (Macdonald 1988, 35). Barrie Macdonald writes of the “ill-disciplined and trigger-happy government and BPC employees engaged as voluntary police” and the “rough justice meted out to prisoners by special Nauruan constables”(p.34).

Despite this incident, the Chinese population on Nauru continued to rise to almost 1,500 in 1950. A United Nations report that year recommended that all restrictions on movement should be abolished as well as the penal provisions for indolence. It also recommended that the Chinese should be permitted to bring their wives and children to Nauru. Because of Nauruan objections, the Australian administration did not change the repressive laws promulgated nearly three decades before, but it did allow Chinese families to come to the island beginning in 1952 (Viviani 1970, 101 & 128).⁴³ Each worker was permitted to bring his wife and two children under twelve, but they were not allowed to settle. At the time, however, very few family apartments were available for workers, so no more than thirty-five Chinese families were in residence throughout that decade. Indeed, between 1951 and 1952, the Chinese population suddenly dropped from 1411 to 759 (*Reports to the UN* 1951 & 1952). Furthermore, by 1953 post-war reconstruction had been completed, and the BPC had further mechanised the mining process so that fewer workers were required. Mechanisation, combined with a company preference for Nauruan workers and those from the Gilbert and Ellice Islands, produced a dramatic drop in the number of Chinese to about five hundred by 1953 (Williams & Macdonald 1985, 405).

In 1964 the BPC decided to raise its annual extraction rate from 1.6m to 2.5m tonnes, requiring more skilled workers. To achieve this, it increased the contract period to three years and built six hundred family flats as well as more accommodation for single men (Viviani 1970, 129). The Chinese population rose steadily over the next few years, now working primarily in skilled trades and clerical jobs and bringing wives and small children with them. An international school teaching Cantonese was opened in 1965 with an Australian headmaster (Mr. Campbell) and teachers hired from Hong Kong, including Mr Louie Sung. Because wages were still rather low, Chinese began to open general stores, managed by their wives, to service the Chinese community with imported dry goods and food items, primarily from China. Chinese leaders told me that there were also several Chinese locality associations (*tongxianghui*) operating then, including Toishan, Hoyping and Yanping. It appears that an active Chinese community emerged in the mid-1960s, when there was well over a thousand Chinese in Nauru.

In 1967 the BPC was replaced by the Nauru Phosphate Corporation (NPC) in preparation for Nauru's independence on 31 January 1968 (Aikman 1993, 7). Neither change had much effect on the Chinese community, as company and government policies remained essentially unaltered. Chinese continued to work for the NPC, now on two-year contracts with six weeks paid leave, and most renewed their contracts (interview). The number of Chinese shops grew steadily, their clientele expanding to include non-Chinese residents. I was told that Chinese are not eligible for resident status. Although Article 75

⁴³ According to Williams and Macdonald 1985, the Chinese had requested in 1950 that they be permitted to bring their families to Nauru (p.404).

of the Nauruan constitution provides for naturalisation,⁴⁴ so far as I could determine no Chinese has availed themselves of this opportunity.

The 1992 Census, the most recent one available, counted 233 Chinese residents, of whom 91 were women (Demmke *et al.* 1999, Table 4)⁴⁵ This figure probably underestimates the total number at that time, however, because quite a few Chinese would have been in Nauru on visitor's visas and were thereby excluded from the census. Of those counted, 83 had been in Nauru for more than five years, and 107 were on contract to the company, including two women.⁴⁶ One Chinese born in 1910 had been in Nauru for fifty years when I visited in 1996 (interview).

Intermarriage between Chinese and Nauruans is still very rare; records show only one between a Chinese woman and a Nauruan man (Demmke *et al.* 1999, Table f1.3). A score of Chinese have married i-Kiribati women while working in Nauru. A few Chinese on Banaba also married i-Kiribati women, moving briefly to Nauru after the Banaba mines were closed down before returning to Hong Kong (interview).

In 1996, when I visited Nauru, there were about 400 Chinese living on the island.⁴⁷ Almost all are Cantonese, about 30 of them from Hong Kong but the largest portion from the Seiyap (*Siyi*) District, especially from Toishan (*Toishan*) and Yanping (*Enping*) Counties.⁴⁸ While there were a few who drove trucks, most were clerks and tradesmen, contracted either to the NPC or to the Nauruan government. All lived with their families in the Location, there being very few single Chinese men in Nauru. Chinese children over twelve are still not permitted to reside in Nauru.⁴⁹ The only school in the Location

⁴⁴ *Constitution of Nauru*, Nauru: Government of the Republic of Nauru, 1998, Part VIII: Citizenship, Article 75, 1: "Parliament may make provision for the acquisition of Nauruan citizenship by persons who are not otherwise eligible."

⁴⁵ The other 352 "Asians" comprised 250 Filipinos, 88 Indians, one Japanese and 13 "other Asians".

⁴⁶ Nauru National Population Census, Tables F2 & F1.1.

⁴⁷ The Taipei chargé d'affaires told me that there were about 700 Chinese in Nauru in 1996, and his agricultural expert said 800, but local Chinese leaders estimated 300. Assuming that Embassy estimates are too high and that leaders have some interest in under-estimating, I have arrived at my own estimate of 400.

⁴⁸ A leading Chinese told me that there were Chinese from all the counties around Canton, very few Hakka (*Kejia*) and only one from Teochew (*Chaozhou*).

⁴⁹ I was told by one Chinese that a visitor's visa valid for a month was easy to obtain, and overstaying was not difficult because enforcement was lax.

taught in English, so those wanting a Chinese education for their children send them to live with relatives in Hong Kong or Guangdong.

In 1996 there were 72 Chinese shops at various places around the perimeter of the island, thirty of them in or near the Location. There were also about sixty Chinese restaurants catering mainly to Nauruans, at least one in each hamlet.⁵⁰ Since Chinese may not hold business licences, all shops and restaurants are legally owned by Nauruans with Chinese managers running the business, most of whom are the main investors as well.

Apart from a lion dance at Chinese New Year organised by the Office for Chinese Wellbeing, the community celebrates no Chinese festivals publicly. There is a large hall in the Location, where Chinese films and other forms of community entertainment used to take place, but recreation had become individualised by 1996 to the extent that the hall was seldom used, families preferring to watch television or videos in their own apartments. The only Chinese association was the Office for Chinese Wellbeing, whose chairman, Mr Keong Wah (*Jiang Hua*), was the de facto leader of the community. One Chinese told me that informal gatherings of Chinese from the same locality occurred on special occasions such as festivals and welcoming visitors, but there were no longer any locality associations (*tongxianghui*) on Nauru.

In 1980, Nauru established diplomatic relations with Taiwan, which provided infrastructural aid of different sorts over the years. Diplomatic relations were lifted to ambassadorial level in August 1990, when an embassy was opened and Taiwan's ambassador to Tonga was accredited to Nauru with a resident chargé d'affaires, Mr. Hsiung Kien (*Xiong Jian*), looking after its interests on the island (*Free China Journal* 1/1/91, 4). After an agricultural technological co-operation pact was signed with Nauru in 1991, Taiwan established an agricultural demonstration centre on Nauru in 1992.⁵¹ After President Bernard Dowiyogo paid a six-day state visit to Taiwan in March 1993, Taiwan provided a concessionary loan to refurbish Nauru's finest hotel, the Menen (*Bulletin* 13/10/95, 3). In 1996, Nauru's President Lagumot Harris attended the inauguration of President Lee Tenghui in Taipei (*Bulletin* 28/6/96, 8) and visited the city again in 1999, when he was welcomed with a 21-gun salute ("Taiwan Welcomes").

The Taiwan Embassy's relations with the local Chinese community were cordial, although local Chinese told me that the community had no interest in the politics of China and seldom visited the embassy. On October 10th (Double Tenth), anniversary of the

⁵⁰ According to the 1992 census, 36.1% of Nauruan households had no cooking facilities, presumably relying upon their nearest Chinese restaurant for their meals (*Nauru Population Census 1992*, p.36). The Taiwan chargé d'affaires estimated 100 restaurants. My own estimate is based on counting them around most of the island.

⁵¹ "News Briefs", *The Free China Journal*, vol.x, no.23 (26 March 1993), p.1. See also Robert Keith-Reid, "Impossible? Not so, say Nauru's farmers, Growing move to produce vegetables at home", *Islands Business Pacific*, January 1994, p.45.

founding of the Republic of China in 1911, the Taiwan embassy used to host a large banquet for the local Chinese, and they held a smaller banquet at the Chinese New Year.

In July 2002, President Rene Harris agreed to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, whereupon Taiwan severed its relations and withdrew its ambassador and aid personnel (Lu 2002).⁵² The untimely death of Harris brought Ludwig Scotty to the presidency, however, and on May 2nd 2005, he met with ROC President Chen Shuibien in Majuro while both were attending the Marshall Islands Constitution Day (Pareti 2005, 23). Scotty subsequently visited Taiwan to re-establish diplomatic relations with the ROC (*Asian Wall Street Journal*; Pareti 2005, 23). A major reason for the switch was Taiwan's willingness to guarantee a loan of US\$13.5m from the US Export-Import Bank to avoid the bank seizing Air Nauru's only remaining Boeing 737 (Keith-Reid 2005).

While I do not have direct evidence of the situation today, my assessment of the Chinese community on Nauru leads me to suggest that these switches of allegiance between Taiwan and Beijing by successive Nauruan governments have little effect on the resident Chinese, some of whom will favour Taiwan while some lean towards Beijing, but all of whom are confident in a Chinese identity beyond the political squabbles.

⁵² According to Lu, Beijing "offered the Nauruan government US\$60 million in financial aid and promised to pay off a debt of US\$77 million the tiny country owes to General Electric Co."

TABLE 2: CHINESE POPULATION ON NAURU

YEAR	TOTAL	WOMEN	SOURCE
1914	500ca	0	Viviani
1921	597	2 (+3ch)	Viviani/Campbell
1926	822		Viviani
1927	761		Viviani
1930	1110		Viviani
1935	931		Viviani
1939	1512		Viviani
1939	1486		Davidson <i>et al.</i>
1940	1350		Davidson <i>et al.</i>
1942	582		Wms.&Macdonald
1945	172		Wms.&Macdonald
1946	778		Viviani
1948	1370	0	Viviani
1950	1491		Viviani
1952	759		Viviani
1953	515		Viviani

1964	835	16(+24ch)	Viviani
1965	900	94(+131ch)	Viviani
1966	1167		Viviani
1992	233	91	Census
1996	400		Interviews

ca=estimate

Most figures 1914-1966 from from Territory of Nauru *Reports* (in Viviani 1970, Appendix Table 3).

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TONGA

Tonga is the only region of the South Pacific that escaped becoming a colony of an outside power. Although it fell within the British sphere of influence when the major imperial states carved up the Pacific in 1886 and 1889 (Prothero 1920, 90ff), the development of a constitutional government in 1875 pre-empted the influence of traders and prevented Britain from making Tonga a colony (Campbell 1992, 76f). Britain proclaimed a protectorate over Tonga in 1900, but internal rule remained in the hands of the king (ibid., 113) and continued so after independence was achieved in 1970.

While sandalwood and bêche-de-mer brought adventurers to the “Friendly Islands” in the late 18th century (Gunson 1977, 96), it was coconut oil that attracted the first European trader to settle on the main island of Tongatapu in 1844. By the end of the 1850s “there were permanent traders living in various parts of the group” (ibid., 103). From 1869 Godeffroy & Son, the German firm with headquarters in Samoa, developed a monopoly on copra, gradually absorbing the independent traders into its operations (ibid., 103f). This monopoly may explain the complete absence of Chinese traders from Tonga, although there were Japanese traders in the early part of the twentieth century on both Tongatapu and the Ha’apai archipelago (Robson 1948, 76), some of whom married Tongan women (interview).

The first Chinese residents in Tonga were two Anglican priests who arrived in the late 1920s. One of them, Seni Ma’ake, was much loved by his congregation and remained in Nuku’alofa for a decade or so, leaving just before the Pacific War began (interview). I do not know his family circumstances.

As far as I can determine, the first Chinese businessman settled in Tonga in 1974, a century later than in most other Pacific Island countries (interview). Born in Taiwan, Mr Lin was a trained engineer from the Philippines and established a construction company that built Tonga’s indoor stadium in 1989, a project funded by the Taiwan government (IB Sept. 1989, 48). Lin left Tonga in 1990 so that his growing children could pursue tertiary studies in the United States (interviews).

Two years after Lin arrived, an ambassador from Taipei was posted to Tonga in 1976. Diplomatic relations were established between Taipei and Tonga in April 1972 (*Free China Journal* 13/4/93,7; “King Visits” 1997, 6), the first South Pacific country to recognise the ROC. In 1978, another Chinese from Taiwan named Gu opened a restaurant and later a general store in Nuku’alofa. Gu sponsored a relative in 1983 and a second in 1985, both of whom worked in his companies and were the first immigrants from mainland China. By that time there were three Chinese restaurants, perhaps a dozen or more Chinese in Tonga (interview). The rate of Chinese (and other) immigration rose sharply in the late 1980s, however, especially after Tonga began selling Tongan National Passports in 1989.

In 1982 the Tongan Legislative Assembly had passed a law to allow foreigners to buy Tongan Protected Persons Passports (TPPP) (Act 18 1982). According to Paul Theroux, the scheme was suggested to King Tupou IV by a Hong Kong businessman, George Chen (Theroux 1992, 267). Several hundred of these passports were sold to people from eighteen countries, most of them to Chinese (IB Nov. 1989, 15; “Kingdom” 1991, 24). The TPPP did not confer the right to reside in Tonga, although some passport holders were able to obtain a visa to become residents. When several countries refused to recognise the TPPP as a legitimate travel document (IB Nov. 1989, 15) and Japan deported a Chinese carrying one (IBP Sept. 1989, 29; Oct. 1989, 9), a Tongan National Passport was introduced at a higher price of US\$20,000 (“Kingdom” 1991, 24) valid for ten years but granting residency for only one year (Act 7 1989).⁵³ Both these schemes facilitated Chinese immigration to Tonga while they lasted.

The 1986 census recorded 143 “Other Asians” (other than the 98 Indians), most of whom we can assume were Chinese, although there were two Japanese restaurants in Nuku’alofa at the time and Japanese aid was building a high school in Vava’u (interview). Five “Asians” lived in Vava’u and three in Ha’apai, the remaining 135 all on Tongatapu Island with 103 in Nuku’alofa itself. They included 40 children under 20 years of age (Census 1986), indicating that Chinese families were residing in Tonga by that time.

The TPPP scheme was terminated in July 1996 by a new minister of immigration, who conducted a review that found some students and others were illegally in the country (“Immigration Review” 1996, 8). About fifty people were deported, most of them Indians but including “one or two Chinese” (ibid.). During the following two years 92 residents were naturalised “on humanitarian grounds” (Fonua 1998A, 16).

⁵³ When the Tongan Protected Persons status was declared unconstitutional in 1988, the Legislative Assembly passed an act to give the king “absolute discretion” in granting naturalisation (Act 30 1988) and amended the Immigration Act the following year to grant free entry to holders of Tongan National Passports (Act 8 1989). The sale of passports has been a major political issue in Tonga, sparking a public demonstration in March 1991 led by the RC Bishop of Tonga protesting the king’s approval of an amendment to the constitution giving him and the legislative assembly the right to grant citizenship to any foreigner and a subsequent amendment to the Nationality Act granting citizenship to 426 foreigners who had already bought passports (Act 2 1991; “Kingdom” 1991, 24; James 1994, 256), because citizenship implies the right to acquire land. I do not know how many Tongan National Passports (TNP) were sold, and their price has been variously given as US\$30,000 (Keith-Reid 1995, 18), US\$50,000 (“Kingdom” 1991, 24), US\$225,000 (IB Nov. 1989, 15), T\$30,000 (interview), T\$35,000 (interview). In May 1993, the opposition newspaper *Ko e Kele’a* reported that a secret police report indicated a passport scam in the immigration department involving TPP Passports sold to a local Chinese man and discovered in a search of his premises (“Prolonged” 1993).

In September 1993, when I visited Tonga, the immigration department counted 187 Chinese living in Tonga, up from 145 the previous year, both figures excluding those on visas of less than six months duration (Immigration). Of these, 22 held TPPP and had been granted residency on the grounds of assured income, while 22 were naturalised citizens, having arrived on TPPP and lived in Tonga for five years. There were 123 on work permits, including 62 workers from Tianjin constructing a large airport hotel for a Chinese businessman from Taiwan (*ibid.*).⁵⁴ The other 61 had jobs or were in business with Tongan partners; one man with a family worked for the Electric Power Board (interview). Eleven children of those holding TPPP were on student visas, and nine other Chinese held extended visitor visas (Immigration.). Chinese children were attending a fee-paying primary school (Tonga Side School) and the state high school, one older student at the Tongan Maritime Polytechnic Institute (interview).

In 1993, five Chinese restaurants (another was owned by a native Tongan), two hotels, several retail stores, food stalls and snack bars were visible evidence of Chinese business in Nuku'alofa, most of them with Chinese employees. Several of the restaurants employed family members who were on work permits of six months to two years duration. There were also some Chinese from Taiwan who lived on income from abroad (Immigration). Five years later, there were 38 small shops operated by Chinese in Nuku'alofa, 26 of them owned by Tongans and a few by naturalised Tongans of Chinese origin (Fonua 1998A, 17).

Before 1989 almost all the Chinese living in Tonga came from Taiwan, with very few from Hong Kong or elsewhere. Since then, however, mainland China has been the main source of immigrants, and they slightly outnumbered the Taiwanese by 1993 (interview). Most came from Shanghai or Guangzhou, with a few families from Hong Kong, hardly any from Southeast Asia.

In 1989, the Chinese in Nuku'alofa founded a Chinese Association called the Kingdom of Tonga Chinese Association (*Dongjia Wangguo Zhonghua Huiguan*) with Mr Gu as president. It rented a house on the main street, where it held monthly meetings and organised weekly Chinese language classes (Mandarin) attended by about ten children in 1993. The clubrooms included pool and table tennis tables, table soccer, television, videos and books. It also raised money for various charities and worked with the Taiwan embassy in welcoming visitors and cultural troupes. The officers are elected annually by its members. Subscriptions cover the costs of the association, with wealthy members paying more than the less wealthy. Because those from Taiwan were wealthier, they controlled the association, but there appeared to be no political conflict. Several Chinese told me they made no distinctions on the basis of origin, and the Taiwan embassy took an interest in all of them. "No problem (*meiyou wenti*): we are all Chinese", said one from Shanghai who considered the embassy looked after her interests effectively. The

⁵⁴ The businessman was Sam Wong, one of "a string of con-men" who have tried their hand at making money in Tonga, according to one source (personal communication). See below.

embassy also arranged for handicraft artists and cultural groups from Taiwan to perform in Nuku'alofa, often hosted by the Tongan Chinese Association (*Matangi Tonga* Nov. 1998, 31; "Teu 'a'ahi" 1993).⁵⁵

In 1993, there was little social contact between Tongans and Chinese, but I did meet one Chinese community leader who was married to a Tongan. Unfortunately, relations between Tongans and Chinese immigrants had previously been coloured by strong opposition to the policy of selling Tongan passports, although most anger was expressed publicly against the royal government rather than against the immigrants themselves. Nevertheless, incidents of violence against Chinese were not unknown and became more frequent around the turn of the century.

A growing concern that Chinese were moving into types of business enterprise (fast food outlets, taxis, growing vegetables) that had previously been the sole domain of Tongans sparked a government survey of the thirty Chinese enterprises in Nuku'alofa in 1998 ("Government" 1998). In January 1999, a group of Chinese met with the Minister of Police and Immigration to complain about crimes against them, including armed robberies, burglaries and assaults ("Tonga PM" 1999). The Tongan activist MP Akilisi Pohiva complained before the 1999 election that Chinese were "taking away business opportunities and...Tongan land" (Fonua 1999, 25). A similar complaint in 2000 was answered by the president of the Tongan Chinese Association, Raymond Yu, who told the press that Chinese shops were favoured by Tongan customers because of lower prices and more convenient hours. By that time, there were some 70 shops run by Chinese, although 70% of them were owned by Tongans, and the Chinese Association had 120 members, most of them naturalised citizens of Tonga ("Small shops" 2000, 23).

Over the past fifteen years, Tonga has been visited by wealthy businessmen from Taiwan and Hong Kong with various proposals that appear to many Tongans as exploitative. In 1992, Dr Sam Wong started to build a five-star hotel near the airport (*Matangi Tonga* July-Sept 1997, 32). Later Antony Lee, president of China Glory Investments in Hong Kong, proposed international links with Royal Tongan Airlines ("Hong Kong businessman" 1993).⁵⁶ Then in October 1996 Dr Wong tried to set up an inter-island

⁵⁵ At the same time, "one of China's ping pong masters", Mr Thomas Chen Zhiwei, arrived from mainland China in 1993 and was coaching Tongan table tennis players (*Matangi Tonga* Nov. 1998, 29).

⁵⁶ See the interview with King Tupou IV, where he mentions that Tongan Royal Airlines would go into partnership with a foreign investor ("Important" 1993). Robert Keith-Reid reported in 1995 that Antony Lee's company was unknown in Hong Kong and that there were grave doubts about the safety of his old Russian aeroplane (Keith-Reid 1995; cf *Matangi Tonga* Jan. 1997, 38). I was told of another Chinese businessman who came to Tonga in 1979 to establish a business with local partners exporting sandalwood to China; after they shipped four containers of sandalwood, he defaulted on payments, and the local partners were left with large debts and considerable resentment.

helicopter service with obsolete Russian machines that could not pass muster with the civil aviation administration (Keith-Reid 1996B).⁵⁷ Wong also announced a plan to build a 7-storey shopping plaza in the centre of Nuku'alofa and launched a Chinese Health Clinic in downtown Nuku'alofa run by a Dr Lu (*Matangi Tonga* July-Sept 1997, 32).⁵⁸ Two years later, Dr Wong gained permission from the Tongan parliament to open a casino in his hotel for the use of non-citizens, a project resented by some Tongan Christian groups ("Casino" 1999, 29).

While Tonga recognised Taiwan (1972-1998), the king was keen that Tonga be the first country in the world to recognise both Beijing and Taipei (Field 1998, 1). This unrealistic dream was ended when he visited Beijing and Taipei in 1997.⁵⁹ His official state visit to Taipei produced a treaty of co-operation, after which Taipei sent four agricultural technicians to Tongatapu to set up an experimental farm at Vaini ("King Visits" 1997). His "private visit" to Beijing included a meeting with PRC President Jiang Zemin, who gave him a 1.25-life-size bronze statue of the king, which was mounted in front of the royal palace in Nuku'alofa (Fonua 1998B, 27). The visits made it clear to the king that neither Beijing nor Taipei would accept dual recognition. Nevertheless, even as late as April 1998 the king was expressing, if obliquely, his wish to maintain relations with both regimes ("Interview with King" 1998, 13).

⁵⁷ See also *Matangi Tonga* vol.11, no.2 (April-June 1996), p.30. According to James, the land was leased to the Chinese businessmen by the king without consulting his cabinet, which caused "wide resentment" (James 1994, 262). Keith-Reid (1996B) names the man as Tony Wong and links him with the airport hotel project as well as the earlier passport sales schemes, apparently mixing up the two men Sam Wong and Antony Lee. He mentions that Wong has "another scheme to tear down half of downtown Nuku'alofa's old wooden buildings" to replace them with "a swanky, far-out shopping centre". The immigration review in 1996 found that half the small businesses on Tongatapu were owned by foreigners at that time ("Immigration Review" 1996, 10).

⁵⁸ Dr Wong sold the lease to this land in 2000 to Financial Management Ltd. ("Multi-million" 2001, 38). Possibly a more salutary Chinese (Malaysian) investment in Tonga was the MBf Bank (Tonga), which opened in 1994, owned 75% by MBf in Hong Kong and 25% by the Tongan Crown Prince, but MBf sold its share in 1996 (Keith-Reid 1996A).

⁵⁹ Since 1996, Princess Pilolevu had been encouraging the king "to normalise the relations between Tonga and the PRC", and her satellite-booking company Tongasat "played a major role in the transition" (Fonua 1998B, 26). Apart from improving the prospects for Tongasat, the Princess saw recognising China as "the first step for Tonga to become a full member of the UN" and also as opening a door for Tongan missionaries to work in China (*ibid.*, 27; "Tonga's Princess" 1998). Her brother, Crown Prince Tupouto'a, resigned as minister of foreign affairs after opposing the visit to Beijing ("China switch" 2000, 16; cf. "Interview with Baron Vaea" 2000, 23).

In January 1998, the king opened a new building for the Taiwanese embassy, owned by the Crown Prince and rented to the Taiwan ambassador (*Matangi Tonga* April 1998, 18). In July 1998, Taiwan's premier Vincent Siew and his wife visited Tonga to attend King Tupou's 80th birthday (*Matangi Tonga* Oct-Nov 1998, 20-21). On that occasion, the king told a reporter that he had maintained "good relations with both Chinas" and was "working with both of them" ("Interview with King" 1998, 13). However, when diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China were established 2 November 1998, all the official staff from Taiwan departed, and the Crown Prince's building became the official embassy of the PRC (interview). At the same time, the king's statue was unveiled in the palace grounds (Fonua 1998B, 27).

Subsequent to the establishment of diplomatic ties, several official Chinese delegations have visited Tonga and had audiences with the king. In April 1999, a delegation of five arrived from the All China Women's Federation (*Matangi Tonga* Apr-June 1999, 30). Then in February 2000, fourteen members of the National People's Congress made a two-day official visit (*Matangi Tonga* Jan-Apr 2000, 34; cf. "Chinese Delegation" 2000). According to one source, "senior military officers from Tonga and China have exchanged visits" (Feizkhah 2001). Beijing sent a trade delegation to Nuku'alofa in August 2004 "to assess investment opportunities in banking, agriculture, power, IT, import and export ("China" 2004). This followed a visit to Beijing by the crown prince in June 2004, when he announced his "Look East" policy of seeking capital from Asia, notably China, for helping to develop the Tongan economy. China has provided some aid to Tonga, including tents for the army and US\$4 million for a new high school at Pangai in the Ha'apai archipelago (Feizkhah 2001; *Matangi Tonga* Jan 2001, 4).

Since 2000, resident Chinese have moved into trades traditionally in the hands of Tongans, such as taxis, food stalls and small dry-goods shops. This has caused resentment among some Tongans, as has the evident wealth of a few Chinese compared to most indigenous Tongans. Tongan democrats also resented the fact that many Chinese owed their presence in Tonga to the king's unpopular policy of selling Tongan residency "passports". Anti-Chinese and anti-royalty sentiments combined to create a riot in November 2006, when crowds sacked the central business district of Nuku'alofa, looting and burning the shops and buildings along the main street. Demonstrations that started as attacks on the property of unpopular royalty and aristocrats soon enveloped Chinese establishments as well, since many of the larger shops along the main street were managed by Chinese.

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THE COOK ISLANDS

The fifteen inhabited islands comprising the Cook Islands contain little more than twenty thousand people, most of them on the main island of Rarotonga. There are very few Chinese among them, but scores of Cook Islanders can claim some Chinese ancestry because of a dozen or so Chinese traders who lived on one or other of the Cooks during the last two decades of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. At the start of that period, the Cook Islands were a British protectorate (officially proclaimed in 1888) until 1901, when they were annexed by New Zealand (Gilson 1980, 104).

According to Gilson, Chinese traders arrived from Tahiti “in small numbers from 1882” (ibid., 51; cf. Crocombe 1971, 73).⁶⁰ At that time, they were trading mainly alcohol for cash, which was sent to Tahiti, and for copra, which was exported to New Zealand after regular shipping was established in 1885 (Gilson 1980, 52). A census undertaken on Rarotonga by the British commissioner in 1895 included 11 Chinese and 38 “half-castes of all types” among a population of 2,500 (ibid., 78). We know that there was a Chinese trader on Atiu at the time (interviews), and there may well have been some on other islands as well. Nevertheless, the 1880s probably saw the high point in Chinese settlement of the Cook Islands, with a maximum population of no more than a score. None of these traders brought Chinese wives to the Cooks (they had left China as contract labourers), and most of them took Polynesian wives, with whom they produced large families. The Cook Island Maori word for “part-Chinese” is “Tinito”, which has no derogatory connotations, according to Cook Islanders I spoke to, and all “Tinito” are assimilated into the local population.

In 1907, an encyclopedia of the Pacific region reported that the copra trade in the Cook Islands was “in the hands of Tahiti firms, who ship both to New Zealand and San Francisco” (“Cook Islands” 1907, 5). From this we can assume that the Chinese traders were still exporting most of the copra at that time.

The Chinese traders in the Cook Islands were probably Hakka, as almost all the contract labourers in Tahiti were Hakka (Coppentrath 1967, 32). Descendants of the traders, however, know only that their Chinese ancestors came from Guangdong Province and assume, therefore, that they were Cantonese. Unfortunately, no record is available today, so far as I know, that can determine this question.

Through their descendants and some documents, we know the names used by some of the original Chinese traders, although none of their Chinese names has survived and it is

⁶⁰ Many of the Chinese who had gone in 1865 to work on William Stewart’s plantation at Atimaono were marooned in Tahiti when the cotton trade collapsed and their contacts expired in 1871 (Willmott 2004, 167f). Some became traders in the other islands of French Polynesia (Vognin 1994, 241), a few later moving as far as the Cook Islands.

difficult to sort the fragmentary evidence for each. They include Wong Soon, Ah Fu (Ah Foo, Ahfoo), Wong Yet Ming, Old Shing, Ah Kew, Ah Sin, Ah Siu and Moni.

The first four of these appeared on a petition signed by “forty white residents” and addressed to Prime Minister Richard Seddon of New Zealand during his visit to Rarotonga in 1900 (Scott 1991, 105). The petition requested that the Cook Islands be annexed to New Zealand, a move that Seddon himself favoured but was opposed by the British Colonial Office at the time. Paradoxically, Seddon’s harshly racist remarks during this visit included advice to restrict Chinese immigration: “They bring evils among you worse than the bubonic plague”, he said. “They bring leprosy with them, gambling, immorality and opium-smoking” (Tregear 1900, 427f).⁶¹

Two years earlier, the Cook Islands Parliament had passed “The Asiatic Restriction Act 1898”, which stated that

Whereas leprosy and other loathsome diseases have been introduced into the Islands of the Pacific by Asiatic immigrants: And whereas the Chinese are addicted to opium smoking, and are morally objectionable ...

Be it enacted ...

No Asiatic shall be allowed to land or reside in the Cook Islands unless they shall first obtain the permission of the Chief of Government and the approval of the British resident (*Appendix* 1899, A3,17).

By regulation, every Chinese entering the Islands was charged a head tax of £25 (Tregear 1900, 428). Following Seddon’s visit, the 1898 act was replaced by “The Asiatics Immigration Restriction Act, 1900”, which did not mention leprosy but raised the head tax to £100 in line with New Zealand’s regulations at the time (*Appendix* 1901, 8&12), as Seddon had recommended (Tregear 1900, 439).⁶² The draconian resident commissioner Col. W. E. Gudgeon introduced a trading license in 1902 “to prevent the undue multiplication of Chinese and native stores”, which he described as “more or less sly grog

⁶¹ The widespread charge that Chinese brought leprosy into the Pacific has been thoroughly repudiated for Eastern Polynesia, since it arrived in the region decades before the first Chinese (Moerenhout 1837 v.2, 155; Coppenrath 1967, 43). Dr Maui Pomare, sent to the Cook Islands in 1906 by the New Zealand government to examine health issues, reported that leprosy had been introduced from Hawai’i comparatively recently and not by the Chinese (Scott 1991, 107).

⁶² I was told by Ron Crocombe that those Chinese not married to Cook Islanders were expelled from the islands at that time (private communication).

shops” (Scott 1991, 90). That same year, he tried to enforce the repayment of debts and discovered that Ah Sin was owed £44, while white traders like John M. Salmon were owed much more (ibid.).

A census of Rarotonga carried out in March 1901 counted only 11 Chinese (“born in China”) on the island, all male and all but one over the age of 40 (*Appendix* 1902, A3,12,16). A few details are available on some of them.

Wong Soon lived at Black Rock in Arorangi, where his wife, Teina Wong Soon, died in 1969. They are both buried at Hospital Corner in Arorangi. He was a man of considerable means, who was able to send his daughters to a school in Napier, New Zealand (interview). In the 1906-7 annual report of the resident commissioner, Wong Soon is listed as one of 17 “foreigners” owning land on Rarotonga, his section comprising seven acres (Scott 1991, 99). As he had daughters only, the name Wong Soon disappeared.

The Taripo family is descended from Ah Fu, who left Tahiti with his 18-year-old son, Anapa Teore, to avoid repatriation to China.⁶³ They arrived at Rarotonga on the same boat as the Ariki Vakatini, who encouraged Ah Fu to settle and leased him land (now part of the airport), which he drained for farming cattle and later built a cinema (interview). He ran a store at Avatiu in the 1880s, where legend has it that he looked after a Chinese leper for four years before having him murdered in 1885 (Hillas 1938, 52).⁶⁴ His business interests diversified into a bakery, shoe repairs, and soft drinks. He became the biggest citrus planter on the island, according to his great grandson, having bought the entire cargo of oranges and lemons salvaged from the *SS Matai* when it was wrecked in 1917; he planted an orchard from the seeds of that consignment. Ah Fu was once jailed by Gudgeon, for refusing to pay a fine of £8 (interview). He ended his days on Atiu, where he is buried (interview).

Anapa Teore took a Rarotongan wife with whom he had five children. One son, John Taripo, was adopted by the Ariki Tinomana, who married John M Salmon, a white trader on Rarotonga, so he was also known as John Salmon Jr., John Salmon Taripo and Te

⁶³ According to his grandson, Anapa Teore was brought up in Tahiti by Ah Fu and may not have been his son, as he was brought to Tahiti by another Chinese. He had a Tahitian mother and was educated at the school established by Chin Foo, a prominent leader in the Chinese community of Papeete (interview). There is a photo of Ah Fu in Scott 1991, p. 63.

⁶⁴ Hillas’ account, written fifty years after the alleged event, is dubious, to say the least, as it depicts Ah Fu as an impoverished shopkeeper working for the wealthy Chang Ho, of whom there is no record. Ah Fu’s efforts to drain the swampland at Nikao involved hiring an engineer from Martinique and bringing labour from Tahiti, so he was evidently a man of means by that time (interviews). A very similar story is recounted by Tregear but without names (Tregear 1900, 281).

Ariki Tapurangi (interview). A daughter married one of the French Estell brothers. Anapa Teore also fathered the Uritaua (Uriarua) family of Avatiu Valley (interview).

Unlike the other Chinese, Ah Siu came from Shanghai; he married Makiango from Mangaia and traded at Manihiki. Ah Siu's son Solomon was brought up by Ah Sin, who ran a tea shop in Avarua (personal communication). Ah Sin's descendant Ah Sin Uta was a leader of the Vaipae Labour Party on Aitutaki in 1942 (Scott 1991, 232). Solomon's grandson is Kauraka Kauraka, who worked for the Ministry of Cultural Development when I was there in 1993.

Ah Kew lived in Arorangi before the Pacific War, where he ran a coffee shop cum bakery and a teashop on the beach (interview).

On Atiu, a 1925 census of the population counted no Chinese (Stephenson 1976, 23), but two Chinese from Tahiti were trading there before the Pacific War (private communication).⁶⁵ One of them, known as Papa Moni, died in 1988. He had a store at Aeora that was still standing in 1992. A population survey in 1973 found several households where one or other parent had a Chinese father (Stephenson 1976, 178).

While there were many part-Chinese descendants of these early traders, none of them was educated in China, and none knew much about their Chinese heritage. Unlike their Tahitian cousins, they were entirely assimilated into their Polynesian families and communities.⁶⁶ No Chinese community association was established in the Cooks, and no community organization emerged.

At the time I visited Rarotonga in 1993, I was told that there were only three Chinese resident in the island group. One was a Mr Li, who had married a Cook Islander and had come to explore the possibilities of developing trade in *bêche-de-mer*; he discovered that it was not economical and instead set up a fast-food stall in Avarua. Another was Chris Wong, a part-Chinese from Fiji, who had also married a Cook Islander. He became chairman of the Tourist Authority in 1984 ("Reality time"; "Whispers"), eventually becoming the CEO of the Cook Islands Tourism Corporation (*Cook Islands Times*

⁶⁵ Under the leadership of Ngarimu Ariki Rongotini, the people of Atiu bought a sailing vessel in 1895, which they sailed between Tahiti and the Cook Islands (Stephenson 1976, 30). It is likely that the two traders came from Raiatéa on this boat, as there was a Chinese community on that island (Willmott 2004, 168), and a close relationship existed between the Atiu aristocracy and the chiefs Raiatéa.

⁶⁶ Ron Crocombe points out that these marriages were uxorilocal (living with the wife's family) and that the children therefore tended to take their mothers' names. For most of them, marriage with a local woman was the only way to access land (Crocombe 71, 73).

16/5/05, 8). The third was a Chinese-Tahitian, Yves Tchen-Pan, who started pearl farming on Manihiki in 1987 (Newnham 1989, 9).⁶⁷

In 1965, the Cook Islands became an independent state in free association with New Zealand (Hoadley 1992, 74) and in 1972 established its own office of foreign affairs (Neemia-McKenzie 1999). Diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China were established 25 July 1997 (Pac Is. Report 24/11/98). Since then, China has provided several forms of aid, starting with a grant of \$450,000 for the outer-island development programme in 1997 (Pac.Is.Report 10/11/98). In November 1998 Prime Minister Sir Geoffrey Henry visited China and signed a bilateral trade agreement granting mutual most-favoured-nation status ("Regional Briefing"). In 2002, a Cook Islands China Agricultural Exchange Programme was established, which brought two Chinese experts to Rarotonga for a year to experiment with new tropical crops and sent two Cook Islanders to China for three months' training (Pac. Is. Report 3/7/02). Recently a new courthouse was built by a Chinese construction company, a gift from the Chinese government, which has provoked criticism for its "Chinese" style. A new police headquarters is being built by the Chinese at the time of writing ("New Police HQ").⁶⁸ Both projects have used Chinese labour for construction, bringing a few dozen Chinese to Rarotonga who have created some local resentment by fishing on the reef and in the Avarua Stream ("Smoke Signals").⁶⁹

Increased economic and political activity by the Chinese government and various Chinese businessmen from abroad has raised some concerns among ex-pats and some Cook Islanders, notably those abroad. In November 2005, a group of Chinese businessmen visited Penrhyn to investigate the possibilities of establishing a fishing station on the island to service a fleet fishing the Northern Cooks ("Chinese Here"). Two Chinese from New Zealand had visited the island's MP, Wilkie Rasmussen, in October to introduce the idea, which had been approved by the cabinet (Rasmussen 1005).⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Yves Tchen-Pan first arrived on Manihiki in May 1986, when he negotiated a lease from the Manihiki Island Council for 3ha of the lagoon. At that time, the Tahitian pearl industry was "plagued with disease problems and some were seeking to expand into the Cook Islands" (Newnham 1989, 70). By the time he began farming, there were already eight local pearl farmers (ibid., 9), and his arrival injected considerable money into the Manihiki economy (ibid., 98).

⁶⁸ See also "Speech by Ambassador" 2006. Several letters denigrated the design of the new courthouse and objected to the proposed police headquarters as "un-Polynesian" as well as claiming they were both "sub-standard" (*Cook Islands News*, 10/12/05; 21/12/05; 22/12/05; 24/12/05; 28/12/05, 7/2/06, 20/2/06; see also "Chooks Corner" 18/3/06).

⁶⁹ "Chooks Corner" (11/3/06) also refers to "imported Chinese workers" on private property spearing eels in creeks as "a bunch of Chinamen".

⁷⁰ A Taiwanese fleet of five boats registered at Avatiu Harbour, Rarotonga, and fishing in the Cooks had recently left because of rising costs and diminishing returns (*Cook Islands*

Nevertheless, it provoked a letter from an “ordinary New Zealander” who advised the Cook Islanders not to “prostitute yourself to another dominant economy that, given the chance, will overwhelm yours at the earliest opportunity” (*Cook Islands News*, 28/11/2005, 4).⁷¹

A feature article in the *Cook Islands Times* by Ron Crocombe, long-time resident of Rarotonga, warned of the same dangers, linking the increase in official Chinese government activities with the rise in organised crime in a tone reminiscent of the early attacks on Chinese by white traders throughout the Pacific during the first half of the 20th century (Crocombe 2004). Three years earlier, Crocombe had suggested that the rise in Chinese immigration to the South Pacific might be part of Beijing’s efforts to dominate the region: “Some people are asking whether this build-up of Chinese citizens, which is going on throughout the region, is covertly supported by Beijing to boost the Chinese presence” he wrote in a security report to the Pacific Islands Forum (Feizkhah 2001).

Despite these reactions, the Cook Islands government has welcomed increasing Chinese aid. In February 2006, the new Chinese ambassador presented his credentials and announced two new aid projects: up-grading a cyclone-threatened section of Rarotonga’s circum-island highway at Nikao and an indoor sports stadium (*Cook Islands News* 28/2/06,1). The ambassador also expressed his hope that Chinese tourists would soon come to the Cook Islands “in their thousands” (ibid.). Three months later Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao offered a further donation of US\$4m for infrastructural projects at the discretion of the Cook Islands government. This announcement was made at the China-Pacific Islands Countries Economic Development and Co-operation Forum held in Fiji and attended by the Cook Islands prime minister (*Cook Islands News* 12/4/06). Evidently, the Chinese presence in the Pacific Islands is growing.

Times 25/7/05, 2). At time of writing, a group of Chinese businessmen from China, New Zealand and America were expected momentarily but had been stalled by visa problems (*Cook Islands News*, 9/2/06, p.1)

⁷¹ Subsequent letters in the *Cook Islands News* debated the reality of a Chinese threat, one urging “Stand up my people, and go against the Chinese ’invasion’”(12/12/05), while others decried the “scare-mongering” (10/12/05; 13/12/05). A letter from Fr. Tony Dunn at St Mary’s Church Arorangi, suggests that the Cook Islands is “reduced to a Pekinese lapdog” in the Year of the Dog, with “politicians selling out for short term gains and blinding themselves to the long term consequences” of relations with China (*Cook Islands News* 7/3/06, p.4).

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GLOSSARY OF CHINESE CHARACTERS

An Chang 安昌

Chaozhou 潮州

Chongyang 重阳

Dongjia Wangguo Zhonghua Huiguan 东家王国中华会馆

Dongguan 东莞

Enping 恩平

Guangdong 广东

Guomindang 国民党

Guangxi 广西

Huagong 华工

Huaqiao 华侨

Huaren Kangle Shi 华人康乐室

Huashang 华商

Huayi 华裔

Jiang Hua 姜华

Kaiping 开平

Kejia 客家

Liang Guang 梁广

Liu 刘

meiyou wenti 没有问题

Nuolu Huaqiao Xiehui 诺鲁华侨协会

Qingming 清明

Siyi 四邑

Shao 邵

Shunde 顺德

Taishan 台山

Tongxianghui 同乡会

Xie Xuan Tang 协旋堂

Xinhui 新会

Xiong Jian 熊健

Ye 叶

Zengcheng 增城

Zhang Bang 张邦

Zhang Jinqi 张锦祺

Zheng Quanjun 郑全君