

COMPLETION REPORT

Inheritance and the Life of Guangdong Migrants in Yokohama Chinatown: Case Study on Shatenki and the Xie's Family

Dr. Yee Lam Elim Wong

PhD Student

Department of Japanese Studies

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

From 1 July 2016 to 31 March 2017, I visited Yokohama Chinatown for four times, including a long stay for two months in July and August 2016. I was invited to attend a few local events in the overseas Chinese community, including the celebration of Birth of Guandi in July, Yokohama Sparkling Twilight 2016 on 17 August, Gourmet festival in November and the Chinese lunar new year celebration in January 2017. Also, I spent my spare time apart from attending events and visiting archives/libraries on conducting oral interviews with the Chinese migrants. I have interviewed over 20 overseas Chinese in Yokohama and Tokyo during the four visits. All these fieldwork experiences are extremely important to my research. From my observation in these events, I argue that the Cantonese are the pioneers in the community in transmitting the upholding traditional Chinese culture in the community by organizing such events. For example, when the visitors participate in the Chinese cultural events and festivals in the Chinatown, in most of the time they are indeed experiencing the Cantonese culture. Lion dance performances in most of the Chinese festive celebrations are performed in the Cantonese way. The lions and other equipment used in the performance are directly imported from the Guangdong province. Religious rites practiced in the festivals are mainly performed in the Cantonese way. The Cantonese migrants organize the most number of overseas Chinese associations and organizations, and the Cantonese cuisine supports the Chinatown business for decades as the local cuisine dim sum (the Japanese called it yum cha) in Guangdong province becomes a symbol of Yokohama Chinatown.

I consider the reason behind the vitality of Yokohama Chinatown is the support of the three major pillars – the families, Cantonese migrants and identity. Existing literatures connect each of the three items with the history and development of the overseas Chinese community, but this paper is the first research that highlights the interrelationship between the three in building up Yokohama Chinatown.

The Cantonese family of the Xie's demonstrates the life experience in supporting the development of Yokohama Chinatown as well as upholding ethnic Chinese identity in the overseas Chinese community. From the case study, I conclude four major elements of the Cantonese migrants in sustaining their strong identity which allow them to be the leadership in the overseas Chinese community. The Xie family demonstrates four elements that assist them in transmitting ethnic identity in the family: education, family business, associational life and folklore practices. Based on intensive oral interviews and participate observation, the paper is conducted by historical and anthropological methods. This cross-disciplinary research examines the process of Cantonese migrants in strengthening the Yokohama overseas Chinese community which allows the Chinatown to become a coherence living space for the Chinese migrants for over 150 years.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

1. 10-11 May 2017 Present a paper on “Family, Everyday Life and the Making Up of Society: A Case Study in Yokohama Chinatown” in **the 9th Annual IAS-TU Delft Conference**, Leiden, Netherlands
2. 8-9 Jul 2017 Present a paper on “Inheritance and the Life of Cantonese Migrants: Case Study on Shatenki and the Xie Family” in **Asian Studies Conference Japan (ASCJ)**, Tokyo, Japan

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Inheritance and the Transformation of the Cantonese Migrants in Yokohama Chinatown from 1860s to the Present – A Case Study on Shatenki and the Xie Family

WONG, Yee Lam Elim

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)

1. Wong, Yee Lam Elim. “Family, Everyday Life and the Making up of Society: A Case Study in Yokohama.” In *City and Society: The Care of the Self (Volume 2)*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, forthcoming August 2019.