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A VIRTUAL CHINATOWN:

THE DIASPORIC MEDIASPHERE OF

CHINESE MIGRANTS IN NEW ZEALAND

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Chinese

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Abstract

This is a study of the social dynamics of the current Chinese migrant community in New Zealand through a critical analysis of the Auckland-based Chinese-language media. It combines two research fields, international migration studies and media studies, to conceptualise Chinese-language media as a specific type of alternative media in contemporary New Zealand.

The Chinese population in New Zealand has rapidly increased through immigration since the passage of the 1987 Immigration Act; Chinese now comprise 3.4% of the New Zealand population, and a wide variety of Chinese-language media have accordingly thrived in New Zealand. In contrast to New Zealand mainstream media, these Chinese media serve the specific needs and interests of newly arrived and only minimally acculturated Chinese migrants.

The research was conducted in three phases: quantitative and qualitative data were acquired from the content of Chinese-language media during the period of the 2005 New Zealand general election; qualitative data were obtained from focus groups and interviews with members of the Chinese audience subsequent to the election; qualitative data were generated from Chinese media personnel.

The findings suggest that these Chinese-language media closely reflect and depict recent PRC Chinese migrants’ perceptions of New Zealand and aspirations towards their new life in the host country. Within the global context of the Chinese diaspora in historical and contemporary times, this research also introduces a new angle for exploring the socio-economic impacts of China as a rising superpower on New Zealand and the Pacific Rim.
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Since the Fourth Labour Government implemented the Immigration Act of 1987, the Chinese ethnic group has rapidly increased to become one of the largest in New Zealand. The momentous feature of this Act was its non-discriminatory intent:

“Immigrants are now selected on the basis of personal merit rather than national or ethnic origin. This is a significant departure from the bias in favour of the British and West Europeans which had shaped New Zealand migrant flows for almost a century” (New Zealand Dept. of Statistics 1989, 202). The Act thereby facilitated a strong wave of non-European immigration to New Zealand. The most recent New Zealand census, in 2006, shows that Chinese now constitute 3.4% of the New Zealand population. In comparison to the Europeans who make up 67.6% of the population as the largest individual ethnic group in this country\(^1\), 3.4% might not seem sizeable. However, the Chinese population figure has rapidly grown from 19,494 in 1986 to reach 147,570 in 2006, more than 7 times as many as twenty years ago. The Chinese account for nearly half of the Asian population in New Zealand, and are the second largest ethnic minority group in the country, next only to Maori, the indigenous people.

\(^1\) The 2006 census included a new ethnic category of ‘New Zealander’; most of the 10.7% of the population identifying with this group would previously have been included in the ‘European’ category.
With the surge in Chinese immigration to New Zealand, a wide variety of Chinese-language media in the form of newspapers, radio, television, and websites has developed and flourished in a number of major cities in this country. This process began with the launch of the *Sing-tao Weekly* in Auckland in 1989, which later became a daily newspaper and was followed by a large number of other media. *Sing-tao* belonged to the Hong Kong-based media empire of Sally Aw, the youngest daughter of the formidable Aw Family, whose commercial empire stretched from Burma and British Malaya to Australia (Ip 2006a, 186).

Today, anyone shopping in an Asian grocery store in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, or Christchurch could hardly fail to notice several piles of free Chinese language newspapers stacked at the entrance of the store to greet the customers. There is ready access to Chinese satellite TV throughout most of urban New Zealand, provided as a component of Sky TV, and New Zealand-made Chinese websites have mushroomed to serve the Chinese-speaking internet users in New Zealand.

The Auckland region (covering Auckland City, North Shore City, Manukau City, Waitakere City, Rodney and Franklin Districts) has both the largest number and the highest proportion of people who identify themselves as ethnic Chinese. Consequently Auckland accommodates the largest volume of Chinese media and the most sophisticated of these media. Within the Auckland region at the time of beginning this PhD research in May 2005, approximately fifteen Chinese-language media 

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2 Much earlier, some Chinese-language newspapers were circulated within the then-existing Chinese community. The last one, the *New Zealand Chinese Grower Monthly*, survived until 1972. Details about these early Chinese newspapers are presented in Chapter Two.

3 The 2006 census shows that 98,391 ethnic Chinese lived in the Auckland region, 67% of the New Zealand Chinese population.
print publications including newspapers and magazines appeared regularly. There were also four Chinese radio stations (936 AM, 95.8 FM, 990 AM, 90.6 FM), together with a daily one-hour programme of Chinese language news on Triangle TV, a community TV station serving Auckland City. In addition, for those who had subscribed to Chinese satellite TV, there were seven channels in Mandarin and Cantonese. Details of these media will be presented in Chapter Two.

There is no doubt that the present flourishing of the Chinese-language media in New Zealand is closely associated with the rapid increase in the New Zealand Chinese population through immigration. To date, the significance of these Chinese-language media for the New Zealand Chinese migrant community has not received sufficient scholarly attention. This point will be elaborated later in this chapter.

Hypothesis and research questions

This thesis aims to be a study of the current Chinese migrant community in New Zealand, especially the new arrivals from the PRC, through a systematic and comprehensive analysis of the Chinese-language media in this country. In 1922, Robert Park published his classic work on ethnic language newspapers. His study discussed those media that at the time were circulating within the immigrant communities in Chicago in more than forty ethnic languages. Park (as cited in Lin 2004, 5) suggested that “The immigrant press … (was) … a powerful institution that served to keep the mother language from disintegrating; however, its main function was to help immigrants assimilate into the host society”. To what extent does this argument remain valid in the analysis of the social dynamics of Chinese migrant community in today’s New Zealand?
This research focuses on the Chinese migrant community that has evolved in New Zealand since the passage of the 1987 Immigration Act. The hypothesis of this thesis is that the New Zealand Chinese media closely reflect the development of the Chinese migrant community in New Zealand, and provide a unique perspective for investigating Chinese migrants’ settlement and adaptation in their host country. Through a critical analysis of these Chinese-language media, the researcher attempts to gain insight into many aspects of the New Zealand Chinese migrant community. The manner in which Chinese migrants consume particular types of media is expected to offer a revealing reflection of Chinese migrants’ information needs, modes of thinking, sense of identity, and strength of ties with their countries of origin.

Thus, this research proposes to answer the following interlocked questions about the Chinese-language media and the Chinese migrants themselves as seen through these media:

1) To what extent is the Chinese migrant community reflected or exhibited by the Chinese-language media?

2) How do these Chinese-language media serve the Chinese migrant community as an institution to sustain Chinese solidarity?

3) What role do these media play in the process of Chinese migrants’ settlement and acculturation in the core society of New Zealand?

4) How do Chinese migrants perceive New Zealand?

5) What kind of aspirations do Chinese migrants hold for their new lives in New Zealand?
6) What role do media play in Chinese migrants’ maintenance of the link with their homeland?

**Context of the research and literature review**

To answer these questions requires an initial systematic examination of the New Zealand Chinese community. The Chinese have been a significant ethnic group in New Zealand since Chinese pioneers participated in the early development of central Otago and the West Coast. The earliest Chinese immigration to New Zealand can be traced back to 1866, when the Dunedin Chamber of Commerce invited twelve Chinese miners across the Tasman Sea from Victoria to work the abandoned Otago goldfields (Bulter 1977; Ng 1993; Ip 1995). Thus the Chinese came to be the non-European immigrants with the longest history of residence in this country, more than one hundred and forty years.

The Chinese are, however, the ethnic group that has lived through the darkest shadow of racism in New Zealand. Historically, systematic anti-Chinese legislation and restrictions (including exclusion from immigration, the denial of naturalisation, and restrictions on occupational competition) were constantly imposed on the Chinese community in New Zealand (Murphy 2001). As one of the well-established former British colonies, New Zealand, along with Canada and Australia, has traditionally been a major and desirable destination for immigrants from the United Kingdom. Brooking and Rabel (1995, 36) have summarised a history of New Zealand’s other immigrants and have presented a forthright description of the long-lasting outcome of immigration policy: “mainstream British New Zealand had difficulty coping with the challenge of diversity” and so “politicians, bureaucrats, and the public showed a
preference for immigrants whom they thought would fit most easily into the ‘Britain of the South’. ‘God’s Own Country’ was only to be opened to the select white and preferably British few.”

The ‘whiter than white’ immigration policies of New Zealand effectively restrained the growth of the Chinese community in this country. For almost fifty years, the community had been predominantly male, since men-folk were forced to live as bachelors; their wives and children left behind in China were not allowed into the country. This situation did not change until the outbreak of the Second World War, which resulted in New Zealand’s acceptance of war refugees from China, allowing the women and children to join their husbands and fathers. This was a watershed, marking the transformation of the New Zealand Chinese community from transient sojourners into established settlers. During the 1950s and 1960s, the New Zealand government encouraged all immigrants, including these old Chinese settlers, to assimilate into the white-predominant mainstream society. As a result, the Chinese in New Zealand gradually became invisible until the mid-1980s, which saw a new wave of Chinese immigration to the country.

These newcomers are mostly fortunate frontrunners who benefited from the economic booms in East Asia that started in the late 1970s, especially in Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan, and later in mainland China. Unlike the early Chinese settlers from a poverty-stricken peasantry background, the newcomers are urbanised and the majority of them arrived in New Zealand as affluent entrepreneurs and successful professionals. As Ip (2003a, 342) notes, most of the new Chinese migrants are largely unaware of the closed and unexamined chapters of New Zealand’s racist past. Instead, they are often stunned by the ‘non-Chinese’ behaviours of the New Zealand-born
Chinese. It seems to them that many ‘bananas’ in New Zealand are willing to collaborate with mainstream New Zealanders’ racial prejudice against Chinese immigrants. Conversely, the New Zealand-born Chinese also have mixed feelings towards the newcomers. On the one hand, they are made more alert to their own Chinese identity and cultural heritage; and on the other, they are disquieted by some newcomers’ ‘un-Kiwi’ behaviours, which arouse anti-Chinese sentiment among some mainstream New Zealanders. Because they resent being mistaken for new Chinese immigrants, many New Zealand-born Chinese distance themselves from the newcomers (Ip 1996; Yee 2003).

Nevertheless, those outside the Chinese communities are largely unaware of such distinctions and often resort to the convenient label of ‘Chineseness’ to apply to all the Chinese in New Zealand. Being the third largest ethnic group in this country, the Chinese often feel caught in an awkward dilemma, as they witness Pakeha and Maori, the two dominant groups, debating the pros and cons of who should or should not be admitted to New Zealand (Ballantyne 2005, 89). The Treaty of Waitangi, accepted as the founding document governing relations between Maori and the British Crown, laid the foundation of the social dynamics of New Zealand. The Treaty recognised the status of Maori as partners, and provided privileges to Maori by regarding them as the indigenous people of Aotearoa with specific rights that are not generalised to the whole population. This exclusively bicultural perspective, widely

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4 ‘Banana’, meaning ‘yellow outside and white inside’, refers to Chinese who were born and have grown up in the West. The New Zealand-born Chinese commonly use this term to identify themselves.

5 This comment was made by the informants of two focus groups conducted by the researcher in November, 2005. The details will be presented in Chapter Two.

6 Pakeha is a Maori term denoting New Zealanders of European descent.
presented and generally accepted at present by mainstream New Zealanders, may however provoke anxiety among the Chinese, especially the new immigrants, for whom it may highlight their socio-political marginalisation in this country.

Considerable ignorance is evident among mainstream New Zealanders’ perceptions and responses to the presence of Chinese and other Asian immigrants in the country. It is clear that some New Zealanders resent the Asians and do not realise that New Zealand is the homeland of many Asians. This resentment is evidenced from jeers and shouts such as ‘go home’ and ‘send them back’. Populist politicians have also made use of such antipathy to Asian immigrants to manipulate voters during general elections. More noticeably, New Zealand popular media have played an important role in promulgation of racism by portraying Chinese and other Asian migrants as ‘undesirable others’ (Spoonley and Trlin 2004; Ip and Murphy 2005).

This current situation may largely result from the specific historical and social context of New Zealand as a successful former British colony dominated by white Europeans. There has been little scholarly attention to the social development of New Zealand in relation to its ethnic minorities (O’Connor 1968; Murphy 2003; Ballantyne 2005). There is an apparent lack of public awareness that Chinese and other ethnic groups have made significant contributions to the social fabric and structure of New Zealand. This general neglect on the part of scholarly experts has impeded mainstream New Zealanders’ understanding of migrant communities and has perpetuated negative attitudes towards non-European ethnic minorities. From the beginning, colonial historians concentrated on the narrative of the Anglo-Celtic majority as the main actors in New Zealand’s development. Since the 1950s, Maori-Pakeha relations have become a predominant theme of New Zealand history; biculturalism has especially
become the vogue since the passage of the Treaty of Waitangi Act in 1975 and the subsequent surge in Maori political activism (e.g. Walker 1983, 1984). As Ballantyne (2005, 93) argues, both ways of presenting the country’s past led to the conscious or unconscious exclusion of people who are neither Europeans nor Maoris. Within such an unbalanced research context, existing studies on the Chinese in New Zealand have mostly been undertaken on immigration policy and European New Zealanders’ reactions to Chinese immigration.

There are some notable exceptions to this paucity of scholarly consideration of the Chinese perspective and Chinese interactions with mainstream New Zealanders. Not surprisingly, these works were primarily completed by a few New Zealand Chinese academics. Bickleen Fong (1959) was the first researcher to publish her scholarly effort, entitled *The Chinese in New Zealand: a Study in Assimilation*. This was based on her MA thesis in Education at Otago University. Fong’s work presented an anthropological study of the New Zealand Chinese community of the 1950s. Sadly, it was published not in New Zealand, but in Hong Kong. In 1993, James Ng, a refugee from the Sino-Japanese war of 1937-1945, who grew up in New Zealand, published his research dedicated to the history of the Chinese in New Zealand, in four volumes entitled *Windows on a Chinese Past*. Unfortunately, Ng’s work mainly focused on the period between the gold-mining age and the Second World War, although it was written in the 1990s when a considerable number of new Chinese immigrants had

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7 This Act resulted in the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal, which gave force to the Treaty of Waitangi within New Zealand legal system. The tribunal is commissioned to settle the breaches between Maori and the Crown in relation to the treaty.
8 Murphy (2003) gives a comprehensive list of these works in his compendium of the bibliographical references to publications about the Chinese in New Zealand.
already arrived in the country. Manying Ip is another prominent scholar in this field who emerged in the 1990s. Originally from Hong Kong, Ip came to New Zealand in the early 1970s and later undertook extensive research on the New Zealand Chinese community. In 1990 and 1996, Ip published two highly acclaimed books entitled *Home away from Home* and *Dragons on the Long White Cloud*, which together depict the evolution of the old Chinese settlers’ community in New Zealand in great detail. Over the past decade, Ip has published a wide range of works on the Chinese in New Zealand (e.g. Ip 2001, 2003a, 2003b, 2005). These works have explored various issues related to both the old and the new Chinese communities. Elsie Ho is another scholar who has specialised in the new Chinese immigrants. Also originally from Hong Kong, Ho began to win academic praise in the late 1990s for her series of research essays on the Hong Kong immigrants in New Zealand (e.g. 1996, 1998, 2002, 2006).

Overall, the Chinese in New Zealand did not receive much scholarly attention until the 1990s. *Unfolding History, Evolving Identity*, a wide-ranging collection of twelve recent studies of the Chinese in New Zealand, published in 2003, presents a major and substantial in-depth study of the Chinese communities in New Zealand. From the editor’s point of view, Ip (2003b, xi-xii) notes that the intent of this book is to be “a comprehensive overview of Chinese New Zealanders: their history, the development of their community from the early colonial period up to recent times, and how their identity as a visible minority has been formed in a largely monocultural, or at best bicultural, nation”. This book also contains a detailed Appendix, a compendium by Murphy of the sources of information on the Chinese in New Zealand. As Murphy
(2003, 280) concludes: “history writing on the Chinese in New Zealand is still in its infancy”; this is especially true of living history.

**Significance of this present research**

*Studying the Chinese in New Zealand through Chinese media*

The above-mentioned research on the Chinese in New Zealand has been conducted predominantly within the disciplines of history, sociology and demography. This means that existing scholarly effort on the New Zealand Chinese community has involved analysis of empirical data primarily generated from archives, census, large questionnaire surveys and personal interviews, since these are the most common sources of information for historians, sociologists and demographers.

So far, there are very few scholarly publications devoted to the specific topic of the Chinese-language media in New Zealand. The earliest one, by Ng and Murphy (1997), was written as a component of a full introduction to print culture in New Zealand. Almost ten years later, Ip (2006a) completed a socio-historical study, in which early Chinese newspapers and the most recent developments in New Zealand Chinese-language media in the form of broadcast media and internet websites were both presented. This study also delineates the wider context of the production of these media including the influx of Chinese immigrants and media policy in New Zealand. Soon after, Voci (2006) conducted a questionnaire survey to study the consumption of New Zealand Chinese-language media among Chinese migrants including foreign-fee-paying students. Each of the three articles is of value to the present study, since each author profiles these Chinese media at large, providing a knowledge base for this
researcher. However, more in-depth examinations on the complicated relationship between these media and the New Zealand Chinese community could be done, especially during the recent years when Chinese immigration to New Zealand, especially from the PRC, has increasingly become a significant element in the social fabric of this country.

It has been established that within a global context Chinese-language media, along with Chinese schools and business-orientated Chinese clans and kinship organisations, form “three pillars” of any given diasporic Chinese community (Suryadinata 1997, 12). Ip (2006, 179) also notes that, “the development of the Chinese-language media in New Zealand has closely mirrored the fortunes of the community.” On the other hand, Voci claims that there are “…a large number of periodicals that certainly provide news and information, but do not seem to get involved in stirring cultural debates or taking strong political stances. A catch-all formula tries to reach out to as many readers as possible, without displeasing anyone” (Voci 2006, 170).

Besides these three publications, predominantly profiling and descriptive studies of New Zealand Chinese-language media, there are two published book chapters that to some extent reveal the relationship between these media and Chinese migrants. Pang (2003) discusses how the Auckland-based Chinese media played an important role in mobilising new Chinese migrants to seek social justice for their children’s education in 1995. Liu (2009) concentrates on investigating the role of Chinese print media in shaping new Chinese migrants’ negative perceptions of Maori. Liu’s article is a development of her Masters thesis completed in 2005.
There are four unpublished Masters theses about the New Zealand Chinese-language media. Among them, Stanbridge (1990) and He (1992) contributed important knowledge about the old Chinese community through their analysis of two early Chinese newspapers circulated within this community. Huo (1999) and Yang (2005) were more interested in the New Zealand Chinese-language journalism, rather than the Chinese migrant community.

Overall, the above-listed published and unpublished studies show that the approach of media and communication studies is under utilised compared to other methods of studying New Zealand Chinese. The present PhD research seeks an alternative way to study the social dynamics of the current Chinese migrant community in New Zealand through analysing the New Zealand Chinese-language media which serve this specific community. This intent is to develop an understanding of Chinese migrants’ settlement and acculturation in New Zealand, which are manifested in the content of Chinese media as their perceptions of the host country, their aspirations towards the new life within the host country, and their ties with the homeland. The researcher has applied quantitative and qualitative methods from media and communication studies, in particular, in-depth analysis of Chinese media content, audience consumption patterns and media operation, to study the Chinese migrants in this country. The content of New Zealand Chinese-language newspapers, radio, and websites has been assembled as the primary source of information to generate quantitative data. Qualitative data has been acquired from interviews with Chinese migrants including those who consume the New Zealand Chinese media and those personnel who operate these media. These media and communication studies approaches are novel ways to examine the Chinese in New Zealand; compared to existing studies, they involve a
larger collection of empirical data and a wider application of different theoretical concepts and methods to analyse data.

**Contribution of knowledge to the study of Chinese diaspora**

This research is also a contribution of new knowledge for understanding the global network of the Chinese diaspora. The Chinese diaspora is a significant group within the international migration system, in both a historical and a contemporary context (e.g. Pan 1990, 1999; Charney, Yeoh and Kiong 2003). By 2007, nearly 39 million Chinese and their descendants were living outside mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong (Li 2009). The Chinese diaspora is scattered in every continent of the world.

Within the Western world, particularly the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, the Chinese diasporic communities share many common characteristics. Most early Chinese immigrants came to these four countries originally from the four counties (Enping, Kaiping, Xinhui and Taishan) of Canton in southern China. In the late 19th century, they left their homeland as gold-seekers. They were almost exclusively male and intended to return to their home villages after a period of hard work overseas. Chain migration and ‘sojourner orientation’ were typical of these early Chinese migrants. All of these four recipient countries had a period of immigration restrictions directed against these Chinese migrants. Since the 1960s, these countries have all implemented a new migration paradigm to replace the traditional mechanism

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9 Although not included in this total, the Chinese in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region are often regarded as overseas Chinese because of the policy of ‘one country and two systems’. This policy stipulates that even after the transfer of the sovereignty of Hong Kong from Britain to China on 1 July 1997, Hong Kong continues to operate with a high degree of autonomy compared to other parts of China (except Macau).
of receiving immigrants based on racial origin. According to this new paradigm, migrants are selected on the basis of predefined qualities or skills, generally involving a points system (e.g. Murphy 2001; P. S. Li 2003; W. Li 2006). The majority of new Chinese immigrants to the four recipient countries are members of an urban upper-middle class with an equal gender representation. They include some of the best educated, most highly trained and most skilled people of Hong Kong, Taiwan and China. In addition to their professional skills, many of these new Chinese immigrants also bring considerable wealth into their host countries (Skeldon 1994; Coughlan and McNamara 1997; Charney, Yeoh and Kiong 2003; Ip 2003a, 2003b, 2003c). In terms of settlement, the phenomenon of ‘astronaut family’ or ‘satellite/parachute’\textsuperscript{10} is also common within these new Chinese migrants.

Voluminous research on the Chinese diaspora in the United States, Canada and Australia has been undertaken and these academic works have provided helpful references indeed for the study of the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand. However, New Zealand’s specific historical and contemporary contexts are different from these other countries. Accordingly, the dynamics of the contemporary new Chinese community in this country merit specific study.

First, it should be noted that the new Chinese community in New Zealand came into existence much later than its counterparts in the United States, Canada and Australia. New Zealand was the last of these countries to abolish a race-based immigration policy, which was maintained until 1987, long after its abolition in the U.S., Canada

\textsuperscript{10} These migrant families are characterised by the head of the household working in the country of origin and frequently visiting the remaining family members who reside in the host country. For details, see Skeldon (1994).
and Australia (in 1965, 1967 and 1970 respectively). The new Chinese community in New Zealand is therefore of relatively recent origin; it is mainly clustered in urban Auckland, the only significantly cosmopolitan metropolis within the country. Within Auckland, the new Chinese immigrants have not been able to establish any settlement similar to the ‘ethnoburbs’ and ‘global economic outposts’ in Los Angeles (Li 1998, 2006), although Chinese immigrants prefer to live in specific upper- and middle-class suburbs. Ethnic Chinese businesses flourish in many areas of Auckland, but large-scale Chinese commerce centres similar to those in Vancouver and Toronto have not been established as a part of the landscape of urban Auckland. Furthermore, New Zealand is unlike the other three recipient countries where Chinatowns have existed continuously in many major cities. Instead, the Chinatowns in New Zealand are only preserved within the oral histories of Auckland and Wellington. There has been in this country none of the revitalisation of old Chinatowns that is characteristic of overseas.

Second, there is a greater diversity of geographical origin among members of the new Chinese community in the United States, Canada and Australia compared to that of New Zealand. This is because the much earlier abolition of restrictions on non-European migration has facilitated the re-migration of substantial numbers of the Chinese diaspora in South-East Asia to the United States, Canada and Australia since the 1960s. In New Zealand, immigrants of Chinese descent from South-East Asia have always remained a minority compared to those from other major source countries, namely Hong Kong, Taiwan and China.\textsuperscript{11} As an example, we may consider

\textsuperscript{11} This claim is made based on the numbers of immigrants of Chinese descent from South-East Asia during different periods, and will be elaborated in detail in Section B of Chapter 2. The 2006 census showed that Malaysian Chinese outnumbered Taiwanese and Hong Kong Chinese. This is because
Indochinese refugees of Chinese descent; these people now form a distinct sub-group within the Chinese communities in the United States, Canada, and Australia. Between 1975 and 1987, over 800,000 Indochinese refugees settled in the United States, over 125,000 in Canada and over 100,000 in Australia (Chantavanich and Reynolds 1988). Consequently, sizeable Indochinese neighbourhoods have been established in many major cities; for instance, Cabramatta in Sydney (Dunn and Roberts 2006). These neighbourhoods show strong Chinese cultural influences. Equivalent neighbourhoods do not exist in New Zealand, since the number of Indochinese refugees to this country has been small (less than 8000). Many of the Indochinese refugees in New Zealand, especially the Vietnamese refugees, later re-migrated and joined their relatives and friends in the larger Vietnamese communities in Australia (Price 1987).

Third, since the abolishment of restrictions against Chinese immigration in the 1960s, different foci of immigration policies implemented in the United States, Canada and Australia have resulted in the composition of Chinese migrants in these three countries being substantially different to that in New Zealand. As Zhou, Chen and Cai (2006, 47) note, “In the United States, close to 80 per cent of the Chinese immigrants were admitted to the country under family unification categories.” This means that more varied age groups of Chinese immigrants, mostly from the mainland (ibid), are commonly seen in the United States. Whereas the Chinese immigrants to Canada witness to another pattern: the majority of them have arrived primarily under the categories of professionals and business investors; the Hong Kong Chinese are the dominant sub-group due to their numbers and also their prevailing economic and

nearly half of Taiwanese and 30% of Hong Kong Chinese migrants approved for residence from 1998 to 2002 were recorded as long-term absent in 2005 (Department of Labour 2005, 91).
political influence within the Canadian Chinese community (ibid, 48). The so-called post-Tiananmen Chinese students-turned-refugees and migrants are major contributors to the formation of new Chinese communities in the United States and Canada; this is even more obvious in Australia as the consequence of humanitarian student and resident visa policies introduced by the Hawke and Keating governments. As Gao (2006, 154) states, “Since the mid-1980s, more than 100,000 Chinese mainlanders have settled in Australia. Many of them first came as students and then remained permanently. Up to now this group still forms the majority of the new mainland Chinese community in the country.”

In New Zealand, a changing density of Chinese immigrants from various geographical origins is highly noticeable. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the ‘reluctant exiles’ from Hong Kong were the main body of Chinese immigrants to New Zealand. This situation remained so until the mid-1990s, when a substantial number of Taiwanese arrived to seek ‘the last utopia’ (Ip 2003b). During those two periods, PRC immigrants did join the new Chinese community, but compared to the other two groups, their social and political influences on the New Zealand Chinese community were insignificant. Figures released by the New Zealand Immigration Service show that between 1989 and 1992, the total number of long-term migrations from China was between 300 and 400 each year. There was no significant influx of post-Tiananmen mainland Chinese students-turned-immigrants to New Zealand. Even until the 1997/1998 financial year, only 200 or so Chinese students at all levels were enrolled in various educational sectors in New Zealand (International Policy and Development Unit, 2002). This situation has changed dramatically since the early 2000s which saw a sharp increase in the PRC immigrants, as well as Chinese foreign-
fee paying students, arriving in New Zealand. Section B of Chapter 2 will provide a detailed account of this.

These recent PRC newcomers are primarily drawn from China’s new rich and middle class that emerged in the mid-1990s, when there was an acceleration of economic reform and economic growth in the country. Their arrival has substantially boosted the Chinese community economy in New Zealand; more importantly they brought in with them social values and a political outlook acquired in China, in particular a recently revived Chinese nationalism. The arrival of recent PRC immigrants has profoundly transformed the New Zealand Chinese community. In recent years, China’s new rich have generated the main source of Chinese immigrants and international students to many developed countries. Such a transformation of the new Chinese community in New Zealand may manifest similar social significance to the one that these PRC newcomers have brought in other countries, particularly in the United States, Canada and Australia, given that New Zealand shares many similarities with the other three countries in terms of their historical and contemporary immigration policies impacting on ethnic Chinese. Thus, this research may point to a new angle for the study of the recent PRC immigrants in these three countries.

Furthermore, the changing density of Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong, Taiwan and China to New Zealand also suggests that the Chinese migrant community, with its much shorter period of settlement in the host country, is still undergoing development. This means that the Chinese migrants in New Zealand are yet to face many issues that have already surfaced in other countries. Also, they may encounter additional issues that have not occurred in other countries, in particular, issues related to the specific socio-political context of New Zealand, such as their interactions with
Maori under the Treaty of Waitangi. Regarding approaches towards immigrants’ acculturation, the United States carries out an assimilation model; Canada and Australia promote and exercise multiculturalism as an official policy; New Zealand emphasizes a bicultural perspective.

The Treaty of Waitangi, accepted as the founding document governing relations between Maori and the British Crown, has moulded a backdrop to the social dynamics of New Zealand. It has provided the mechanism whereby Maori are recognised and claim special privileges as the indigenous people of Aotearoa with specific rights that are not generalised to the whole population. This bicultural perspective has both a legal and institutionalised validity for the majority of Maori and Pakeha New Zealanders. However, biculturalism may provoke a certain kind of anxiety within Chinese migrants about their ethnic identity, which is distinct from that of mainstream New Zealanders. In this regard, it may be argued that Chinese identity is a core issue of socio-political marginalisation of Chinese migrants in New Zealand; their response to biculturalism is also often revealed through how they perceive and interact with Maori. Although the validity of this research is limited to the bicultural context of New Zealand, its findings may be relevant to an examination of Chinese migrants’ perceptions of and relationship with indigenous people and other ethnic minorities in the United States, Canada and Australia.

**Organisation of the thesis**

The content of the following chapters is outlined below.

Chapter Two presents the broad contexts in which this research has been conducted. It discusses the evolution of the Chinese diaspora in New Zealand and profiles the
development of Chinese-language media in this country in both historical and contemporary times.

Chapter Three explains the theoretical part of this research. The researcher has surveyed a wide range of theories of media studies and international migration studies in order to conceptualise Chinese-language media as a distinct body of alternative media in New Zealand. In contrast to New Zealand mainstream media, these Chinese media serve the specific needs and interests of newly arrived and less acculturated Chinese migrants.

Chapter Four covers the empirical part of this research, which was designed and conducted in three phases. Quantitative and qualitative data were generated from the content of Chinese-language media during the period of the 2005 New Zealand general election. Then, qualitative data were obtained from focus groups and interviews with members of the Chinese audience subsequent to the election. Finally, qualitative data were generated from interviews with Chinese media personnel.

Chapter Five is an analytical discussion of the empirical findings presented in Chapter Four, applying the theoretical framework developed in Chapter Three. It starts with a discussion of the constraints on New Zealand Chinese media in terms of commercial content and journalistic standards. This is followed by an examination of how Chinese media depict marginalised recent PRC Chinese migrants, who maintain their emotional link to China.

Chapter Six concludes that this research demonstrates a new way of studying the New Zealand Chinese migrant community by analysing the Chinese-language media which serve this community. These media depict a wide range of social dynamics of the
recent PRC immigrants to New Zealand and play a significant role in shaping a Chinese socioeconomic space in this country. The existence of Chinese-language media may in consequence be perceived as an ‘imagined Chinatown’ in New Zealand.
CHAPTER TWO

CHINESE PRESENCE AND CHINESE-LANGUAGE MEDIA IN NEW ZEALAND

This chapter aims to provide the broad context in which the present research has been conducted. It will survey the social history of Chinese immigration to New Zealand along with the development of Chinese-language media in this country. The chapter consists of two major sections: the unfolding history of the old Chinese community in New Zealand since the mid-19th century and the newspapers circulating within this community; a portrayal of the new Chinese community and the new Chinese-language media in New Zealand.

Section A

The old Chinese community and early Chinese newspapers

The old Chinese community: from sojourners to ‘model minority’

It is well documented that the first known Chinese settler came to New Zealand in 1842 (Malone). However, it was at the discovery of gold in central Otago in 1861 that the history of Chinese immigration to New Zealand began to take real shape. In 1866, the first organised group of Chinese arrived in New Zealand from Victoria, Australia, at the invitation of the Dunedin Chamber of Commerce, to rework abandoned claims and deserted shafts. As Ip (1995, 163) notes, “the presence of the Chinese in Otago was just part of the much larger global picture of the huge Chinese emigration in the
mid-nineteenth century, with more than two million people leaving the homeland in search of better luck overseas.”

Similar to their forebears who were gold seekers in the United States, Canada and Australia, the Chinese arriving in New Zealand came largely from the villages of Canton, South China. Under the shadow of declining Imperial Qing, they were originally hapless peasants who were in desperation because of land paucity and heavy taxation. Over the years, they had also undergone many social disturbances caused by famine, banditry, and local militia riots. The two Opium Wars (1840-1842, 1858-1860) and the Taiping Rebellion (1851-1864) further pushed them to the edge of despair. For the early Chinese migrants, going abroad was considered one practical way to survive. They expected to return to China with enough gold for a relatively comfortable retirement. They stayed in New Zealand as sojourners and therefore tended to have a frugal life. A large number of photographs taken by Alexander Don in this period show that the Chinese usually lived in grass-sod huts.12 According to the 1881 census, the Chinese population reached a total of more than 5000 and constituted 1% of New Zealand’s non-Maori population in that year (Ng 2003, 7). With the depletion of gold by the 1900s, market gardening and laundry became the predominant occupations among the Chinese in New Zealand.

However, New Zealand, called ‘New Gold Mountain’ by the Chinese, did not mean fortune to every Chinese individual in New Zealand. The early Chinese had a habit of consistently saving their earnings; they looked different in their appearance, lacked

12 Alexander Don was then a Presbyterian missionary preaching among the Chinese gold miners. He is arguably one of the most important figures documenting the early New Zealand Chinese community because of his detailed diaries about Chinese and many photographs taken of them (Ng 1993).
competence in the English language, and generally were not Christians. These factors contributed to rampant hostility toward this predominantly male minority group by mainstream Europeans in New Zealand. The Chinese were perceived as unassimilable, poverty-stricken and undesirable aliens in the country. These manifestations of racism occurred in a sequence of waves, which facilitated the promulgation of a series of immigration legislations directed against the Chinese.

The first discriminatory law was passed in 1881. As described by Ip (1995, 172), “the number of Chinese who could be landed from one ship was limited to one for every 10 tons of the vessel’s weight. This was the so-called ‘tonnage ratio’. Every Chinese immigrant had to pay a poll tax of 10 pounds. The tonnage ratio was to be increased to one Chinese to 100 in 1888. In 1896, it was again doubled, and the poll-tax was raised to 100 pounds”. In 1907, a ‘reading test’ for the Chinese was introduced. It required the Chinese immigrants to “read ‘to the satisfaction of customs officials at the port of entry’ one hundred English words picked at random” (ibid., 173). The Chinese already resident in New Zealand were also discriminated against. For instance, legislation passed by the Cabinet in 1908 announced that “… no letter or certificate of naturalisation shall on any ground whatsoever be issued to any Asiatic, being a Chinese’. In consequence, the Chinese lost their right to New Zealand citizenship, “a right which they would not regain until 1952” (ibid.). In 1920, New Zealand passed the Immigration Restriction Amendment Act, which virtually closed its doors to the Chinese and other ‘undesirable aliens’ (ibid.). The policy of ‘keep New Zealand white’ resulted in a rapid decline of the Chinese population in New Zealand. During the following years, the Chinese community in New Zealand was
predominantly male, since men were not allowed to bring their wives and children into the country, but had to leave them behind in China.

It was the Japanese full-scale invasion of China (1937 -1945) that significantly changed the New Zealand Chinese community. By 1939, the Japanese armies had penetrated into Southern China and subsequently terrorized the home villages of the New Zealand Chinese. The then Labour Government under Peter Fraser expressed great sympathy for the deteriorating situation in China and implemented a policy of issuing war refugee permits to family members of the Chinese men working in New Zealand. In 1947, the Fraser Government further announced that these refugee Chinese wives and children were entitled to be granted permanent residence. This announcement was a milestone, marking the transformation of the New Zealand Chinese community from frugal male sojourners into settled families.

The Chinese community in New Zealand increased over the following decades, although it was highly marginal and remained self-contained, generally marrying only within the Chinese in New Zealand or overseas. By the mid-1980s, prior to the new wave of Chinese immigration to New Zealand, the Chinese in the country numbered around 19,000 (ibid., 186). New generations of New Zealand Chinese had grown up and obtained tertiary education; increasingly Chinese doctors, lawyers, engineers and other professionals had emerged in the country. The Chinese hardly featured in any negative statistics such as accidents, crime, and welfare dependency. They were perceived as an assimilated ‘model minority’ by New Zealand society.

Having been well assimilated into New Zealand for decades, the old Chinese community was virtually invisible until the Chinese New Year in 2002 when the New
Zealand Government formally apologised to them for the actions of previous Governments in imposing a poll tax on Chinese persons entering New Zealand and in enacting other discriminatory statutes. In June 2005, the old Chinese community held a conference entitled ‘Crouching Tiger, Hidden Banana’ in Auckland. This highly profiled conference was a national assembly which attracted nearly all the prominent figures of the old Chinese Community including entrepreneurs, politicians, lawyers, artists and academics. In 2006, a second ‘Banana’ conference was held in Auckland. It too was highly publicised and gained wide attention among New Zealand mainstream media. In August 2007, the New Zealand Chinese Association (NZCA) organised a third conference entitled ‘Bananas NZ Going Global’. Unlike the previous conferences that focused on the old Chinese community in New Zealand, the third one was an international conference casting light on wider issues of the Chinese communities in the United States, Canada and Singapore. Six Chinese guest speakers from overseas, including Kenda Gee, a member of the Canadian Head Tax and Exclusion Act Committee, were invited to address the conference.

**Early Chinese newspapers**

Given that the early Chinese immigrants to New Zealand were mainly from an illiterate or semi-literate peasant background, they had difficulty in running a newspaper and maintaining a sizeable readership. In the 1880s and the 1890s, there were some overseas Chinese newspapers and magazines mainly from Australia circulating among the Chinese gold miners (Ng and Murphy 1997). As far as can be established, the earliest Chinese language newspaper produced in New Zealand was *Kam Lei Tong I Po*, which was first issued on 12 May 1883 by Alexander Don and
appeared as a handwritten sheet (New Zealand Presbyterian 1883, cited in Ng and Murphy 1997).

In the early 20th century, New Zealand-based Chinese newspapers became a significant part of the Chinese community. Between 1900 and 1949 when the People’s Republic of China was established subsequent to the communist victory, the Chinese regarded themselves as sojourners in New Zealand. Most of them were “urban-dwelling males who, marginalised and beset by racism, dreamed of returning to their families in China with enough money to secure a comfortable living” (Ng and Murphy 1997). There were four influential Chinese newspapers circulating within the Chinese community during this period. One of these newspapers survived after 1949; until 1961 it was pro-Kuomintang (KMT) in its political reporting of the conflicts between Taiwan and the mainland. After 1961, the contents of this newspaper became New Zealand-orientated and remained so until 1972 when the newspaper closed. The following section will provide some sketches of these four important New Zealand-produced Chinese-language newspapers.

a. **The Man Sing Times (民聲報)**

From a journalistic point of view, the New Zealand Chinese-language newspaper first appearing in the 20th century was the *Man Sing Times* (民聲報, or ‘People’s Voice Times’), which was launched in 1922 by the Nationalist Party branches in Wellington

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13 The name of the Kuomintang is often translated as ‘Chinese Nationalist Party’; it was formed in 1912 from a collection of several revolutionary groups that had successfully overthrown the Qing Dynasty (1644 -1911) in the Xinhai Revolution. The KMT was the founding and the ruling political party of the Republic of China (ROC), which was established in 1912. The nationalists were defeated by the communists in the civil war and fled the mainland in 1949, but maintained the ROC in Taiwan.
Chiu Kwok-Chun, the chief editor, was one of the two editors of the *Man Kok Po (Chinese Republic News)* based in Sydney. In 1914, Chiu was sent by Sun Yat-sen to Sydney on a mission to use newspapers to gain political influence over the Chinese sojourners in Australia and New Zealand, since the New Zealand Chinese also read the Australian Chinese newspapers of that time (Ng 1993, 3:381).

The content of the first issue of the Man Sing Times begins with a portrait of Sun Yat-sen surrounded by a congratulatory message on his new presidential role in the Republic of China. This was followed by two pages of photographs of members of the Nationalist Party branches in New Zealand, and there was a full-page cartoon showing the political situation in China. After these pages was a special note from the editor proclaiming, “The Man Sing Times is an official organ of the Chinese republicans in New Zealand and Australia, and also circulates throughout America, the Straits Settlements, the Pacific Island [sic], Hong Kong, Canton and other parts of China” (TMST, vol. 1 No. 1, July 1921).

The *Man Sing Times* was stencilled and handwritten in classic Chinese without punctuation. This paper was priced at sixpence per issue, published every ten days, and was carefully edited with photographs, news, editorial, literature and advertisements. Most of the news reports were about the latest politics in China; but there was a section entitled “News of This Island” reporting the Chinese activities in

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14 The earliest 20th-century Chinese publication in New Zealand was the annual report of the very first Chinese Association in 1911. The Chinese Association was established in March 1909 by Huang Roliang, the then Consul in New Zealand. This report was printed in China, and contained the association’s aims, activities and the names of founding members (Ng and Murphy 1997, 272).

15 Sun Yat-sen formed the Revive China Society in Honolulu in 1895, which was the beginning of the KMT. He played an instrumental role in the Xinhai Revolution and was the first provisional president of the ROC. He is often referred to as the Father of Modern China.

16 It is hard for this researcher to read the full text of this cartoon because of its poor printing quality.
New Zealand. Such content suggests that this newspaper primarily served the interests and information needs of Chinese sojourners who kept an intimate relationship with their homeland, but were alienated from New Zealand. The Man Sing Times lasted only one year because of financial difficulties (He 1992, 15; Ng 1993, 3:166) and a total of 31 issues were published.

b. Q-Sing Times (屋倫僑聲)

‘Q-sing’ was the Cantonese pronunciation of ‘qiao sheng’, which literally means “the voice of the Chinese sojourners”. The first issue of this newspaper was published in November 1930 with the Chinese title Wulun qiaosheng (屋倫僑聲 or ‘Voice of the Overseas Chinese in Auckland’). The pronunciation of ‘Auckland’ in Cantonese is more like ‘Oak-lun’, while it is ‘Wu-lun’ in Mandarin. In May 1939 the paper began to have its English name Q-Sing Times because of the requirement to register with the New Zealand Government. The Q-Sing Times then used both Chinese and English for the titles and texts. As its name indicated, the Q-Sing Times was mainly distributed within Auckland.

During the period of the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945), the NZCA’s Auckland branch ran the Q-Sing Times as its official newspaper, which was published every fortnight, and played a central role in unifying the Chinese in Auckland. The size of the Q-Sing Times appears slightly smaller than today’s A4 paper. Its cover page was often a hand-drawn portrait of wartime figures such as eminent politicians and Chinese soldiers. The Q-Sing Times was still handwritten and stencilled because of the difficulty of having Chinese typesetting done in New Zealand at that time. The newspaper contained editorials, news (warfare in China and the activities of the
Chinese community in New Zealand), advertisements for the local Chinese shops and
some European businesses, and a literature supplement ‘sheng guang’\textsuperscript{17}, which
contained patriotic poems and prose, riddles and stories, all related to the war. Such
China-oriented content provides evidence that the Chinese in New Zealand kept a
strong tie with their homeland at that time. Nevertheless, advertisements for European
businesses in the \textit{Q-Sing Times} suggest that in the 1930s and 1940s the New Zealand
Chinese community had integrated with the host society at some level.

To contemporary Chinese readers, the most impressive part of the \textit{Q-Sing Times} may
be its special section publishing the details of people who made or refused to make
‘save-China donations’. Those details included people’s names, the amount of money
and goods donated, and the names of their home villages and their businesses in New
Zealand. To humiliate publicly people who refused to make a donation, the newspaper
even called on the Chinese community to boycott them. As Ip (2006, 180) notes, “in a
tight-knit community where most people were related through inter-marriages and
kinship ties, and where the majority of the members were engaged in similar
occupations (either market gardening or fruit shops)”, the list of donors’ names was
an extremely powerful means of consolidating a patriotic Chinese community and
promoting a positive atmosphere for more generous donations in future.

In the late 1930s, seventy years after settling in New Zealand, the Chinese still
identified themselves as Chinese only. This is implied by news reports and editorials
in the \textit{Q-Sing Times}, which used terms like “our country” and “our government”
referring to China and the KMT Government. When the terms “we”, “us” “my dear

\textsuperscript{17} ‘sheng guang’ means ‘voice and light’ in Chinese.
sisters”, etc., were applied in these texts, the authors meant to identify themselves with their compatriots in China (He 1992, 51) and possibly all overseas Chinese in general, since a New Zealand Chinese identity did not exist then. The *Q-Sing Times* shows that by and large the Chinese community of the 1930s was still alienated from the core society of New Zealand. As He (1992, 7) notes, the *Q-Sing Times* “was the major source of information to the New Zealand Chinese about the news for [sic] their homeland […] . The host country’s obvious lack of warmth and its barrier to naturalisation reinforced the Chinese idea that they should return to China one day. This sojourner feeling was a major reason for the need of newspapers like the *Q-Sing Times*. It was a newspaper written in Chinese for the Chinese in New Zealand reporting the news in China.”

Two important figures had made a considerable contribution to running the *Q-Sing Times*. One Y. S. Chau, the supervisor of the *Q-Sing Times*, was then the pastor of the Chinese Presbyterian Church of Auckland. Chau wrote over ninety percent of the editorials for the *Q-Sing Times* for two years. These were judged to be of high quality both in content and in language (Vogel, cited in He 1992, 37). Another remarkable figure was Dan Chan, who was the actual organiser of the *Q-Sing Times*, also acting as the executive editor, the copyist, the translator, and an initiator of the literature supplement. In running the *Q-Sing Times*, the greatest difficulty came from copying by hand, since there was at that time no Chinese typesetting facility in New Zealand, and every single Chinese character and picture had to be drawn by hand on stencil paper, and to be printed by cyclostyle machines. When He interviewed Dan Chan (He 1992), he mentioned that normally it took at least an hour to copy one page and he had to copy everything himself from the first to the last page, including the
advertisements. In today’s digital world, it is difficult to imagine the amount of effort needed to produce such publications. In later years, Chan was also involved in running another important Chinese newspaper, *The New Zealand Chinese Growers Monthly Journal* (僑農, ‘qiaonong’), which will be discussed below.

The financial sources of the *Q-Sing Times* remain unclear. Evidence shows that donations, advertisement income and subscription fees were the main sources. However, He (1992, 25) implies that the newspaper probably received additional support from the Chinese Consul to New Zealand, or even directly from the Chinese Nationalist Party. The *Q-Sing Times* was circulated chiefly in Auckland, but also throughout New Zealand, Australia, and the South Pacific Islands, and was closed down before the end of the Second World War.

c. *New Zealand Chinese Weekly News* (中國大事週刊)

When the *Q-Sing Times* was circulating in Auckland, the Wellington Chinese Association also published a similar newspaper, the *New Zealand Chinese Weekly News* (中國大事週刊, ‘zhongguo dashi zhoukan’). Between September 1937 and July 1946, a total of 379 issues of this weekly were published and distributed within the Chinese community nationwide. Like the *Q-Sing Times*, each issue was laboriously handwritten and cyclostyled and was edited by full-time professionally trained journalists. The content of the *New Zealand Chinese Weekly News* was also similar to that of the *Q-Sing Times* in terms of reporting news of the war in China, coordinating fundraising and advocating patriotism. During the period from 1938 to the end of the war, the *New Zealand Chinese Weekly News* was more influential than the *Q-Sing*
Times, since it used by the National headquarters of the NZCA to keep in touch with membership across the country (Ng 1993, 3:176).

d. **New Zealand Chinese Growers’ Monthly Journal (僑農)**

Published between July 1949 and August 1972 (700 copies per issue, 165 issues in total), the *New Zealand Chinese Growers’ Monthly Journal* (僑農 ‘qiaonong’) was the longest-lived newspaper within the old Chinese community. According to its last issue, it “first appeared in 1942 in the form of a booklet printed by gestetner” (NZCGMJ, vol.19 No. 165, 1972). The *Growers’ Journal* was the official organ of the Dominion Federation of N. Z. Chinese Commercial Growers, which later changed its name to the “New Zealand Chinese Commercial Growers’ Association”. The organisation was initially established in January 1943 with support from the current Labour Prime Minister Peter Fraser in order to secure its supply of produce to American forces in the Pacific. By offering three hundred pounds, the Government encouraged the organisation to “unite the market gardeners and ensure the exchange of information” (Sedgwick 1982, 413-4). In its second issue, published on 1 August 1949, the *Growers’ Journal* clearly proclaimed its purposes, “to strengthen the unity of the Chinese growers, to provide information on growing techniques and marketing gardening knowledge, to improve growers’ living standard, and to spread Chinese culture” (cited in Ip 2006, 181). Later years showed these purposes were accepted by editors and received by readers. As Stanbridge (1990, 14) comments, the journal “was a vital link between the Chinese residents in New Zealand, particularly those in rural areas who had less opportunity to associate with fellow Chinese. Whist every family would have contact with their local Chinese association, the *Growers’ Journal* cut across clan and distance barriers.”
The *Growers’ Journal* was mostly monthly, sometimes bimonthly, and was distributed to the members of the Federation of N. Z. Chinese Commercial Growers and Chinese fruit shops nationwide. Its size was similar to today’s A2 paper. On double sides, the *Growers’ Journal* usually contained pages varying in number from 4 to 16. It was laid out in a classic Chinese written style, which was straight from the top to the bottom and from the right to the left; grammar and style contained many elements of classical Chinese, for instance, ‘wu ren wei zhi (吾人，謂之)’ instead of ‘wo men (我們) shuo (say 說)’. The *Growers’ Journal* was initially handwritten and stencilled, and became typed and printed after 1953 (NZCGMJ, vol.19 No. 165, 1972). With a strong sentiment in favour of the KMT Government in Taiwan, the *Growers’ Journal* regarded Taiwan as ‘my country’ and used the calendar of the Republic of China to chronicle each issue.

In terms of the sources of funding, the *Growers’ Journal* relied mainly on advertising revenues and donations from the Chinese community, which received free distribution of the journal. Throughout the period of 1949 to 1972, advertisements in the *Growers’ Journal* strongly suggest that the Chinese community was widely interactive with the core society of New Zealand. Except for traditional Chinese businesses such as grocery stores, herbalists, stationers, chinaware, the *Growers’ Journal* also advertised many European companies handling items ranging from market gardening (machineries, insecticide, fertiliser and seeds) to clothing and insurance.
Prior to 1st Oct 1961, the Growers’ Journal contained columns of international news (mainly about Taiwan)\textsuperscript{18}, local news (the activities of the New Zealand Chinese) and

\textsuperscript{18} It seems that the international news came from Taiwan because of their way of using Chinese language and reporting agencies. After 1949, the NZCA kept a close relationship with the Republic of
notices of the Dominion Federation of N. Z. Chinese Commercial Growers. After October 1961, the *Growers’ Journal* was redesigned by eliminating foreign news because of the pressure of the New Zealand Government’s assimilation policy (Ng and Murphy 1997, 273-4). It still carried the news of activities of the New Zealand Chinese, but concentrated on providing information related to techniques and knowledge of market gardening. For the old Chinese community, the *Growers’ Journal* played an important role in maintaining their Chinese heritage and preserving Chinese cultural identity. One significant piece of evidence is that, between August 1950 and February 1952, the *Growers’ Journal* published a series of Chinese language lessons entitled ‘Movement for Chinese Literacy’. Figure 2.1 is a photocopy of Lesson 1 and Lesson 2 of the ‘Movement for Chinese Literacy’ (from volume 2, issue 1 of the NZCGMJ, August 1950). A translated version of the Chinese content by Stranbridge (1990, Appendix 2) is attached as Appendix 1.

After 1949, as well as the *Growers’ Journal*, there were some other small-scale bilingual newsletters circulating within the old Chinese community, such as the Chinese Anglican, Auckland Chinese Hall, the Wellington Chinese Sports and Cultural Centre Newsletter, and the *Seyip Youth*, a monthly magazine run by the Seyip Association. In 1970, the Seyip Association was involved in publishing the cooking book *Kiwi Chopsticks* to promote Chinese cooking, which “paved the way for more Chinese restaurants and takeaways” (Ng 1993, 3:391-2).

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China Government in Taiwan. It is reasonable to assume that the Embassy of the ROC may have been the original source of the news.

19 Ng and Murphy (1997) mention only the titles of these newsletters, and their content and publishing details remain unknown.
Rethinking early Chinese newspapers

The Chinese-language media in New Zealand have coexisted with the diasporic Chinese community from the very early stage when the community consisted of sojourners longing for return to China till the present, when the new Chinese settlers have become a notable feature of New Zealand society. In this sense, the New Zealand Chinese-language media are presumably comparable to their counterparts in the United States and Canada, which are considered as mirrors of the social history of the Chinese communities in the two countries (X. Zhao 2006; Zhou, Chen and Cai 2006).

During the sojourner period, the New Zealand Chinese community was further set apart from the host society as a result of a series of anti-Chinese legislation. This alienated Chinese community consisted primarily of market gardeners, greengrocers and laundrymen who wished to have a comfortable retirement in China with savings earned in New Zealand. Serving such a community, the New Zealand Chinese-language newspapers of that time performed two functions: on the one hand, they provided an imaginary space to accommodate and consolidate Chinese identity in a foreign country; on the other hand, they delivered China-oriented news to sustain New Zealand Chinese’ emotional ties with their homeland. This situation is particularly evident when contemporary readers look through the content of the Q-sing Times and the New Zealand Chinese Weekly News, which were specifically published to coordinate fundraising and to advocate patriotism towards China, then subject to the Japanese invasion. The New Zealand Chinese newspapers were supported during wartime by the Chinese Consul to New Zealand through a supply of news and possibly funds. The KMT-run government of the Republic of China was
then the only legitimate Chinese government, and played a central role in unifying overseas Chinese, including those in New Zealand.

With such a legacy, the New Zealand Chinese community maintained its relationship with the Nationalist government in Taiwan after the Chinese Communist revolution of 1949. Since New Zealand belonged to the Western bloc during the Cold War, the New Zealand Chinese had no alternative but to stay in the free world against the PRC. During the 1960s, the assimilation policy of the New Zealand government encouraged the New Zealand Chinese to further discontinue connections with their motherland, either China or Taiwan. The changed content of the *New Zealand Chinese Growers’ Monthly Journal* attested to this historical landmark. International news with a Chinese orientation was removed and replaced by New Zealand-orientated issues, in particular those relating to market gardening, the predominant occupation among the Chinese community of that time. The *Growers’ Journal* still served the Chinese community as an institution for sustaining Chinese solidarity, but now also played an innovative role in facilitating the transformation of the Chinese in New Zealand into Chinese New Zealanders.
Section B

The new Chinese community and Chinese-language media

Evolution of the new Chinese community

a. New wave of Chinese immigration to New Zealand

The ‘new Chinese’ community refers mainly to a cohort that has formed through immigration since the passage of the 1987 Immigration Act. As noted in Chapter One, the significant feature of this new Act was its non-discriminatory intent. The new Chinese immigrated to New Zealand from a variety of countries and regions of origin including China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and a number of South-east Asian countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia. Chart 2-1 depicts the composition of the Chinese population in New Zealand according to the 2006 census.
Chart 2-2: Top ten source countries for residence approvals for the 1992/93 to 2001/02 financial years (data from New Zealand Immigration Service).

Chart 2-2 shows the top ten countries sending immigrants to New Zealand between 1992 and 2002. It is clear that Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China have provided the majority of Chinese immigrants to New Zealand. The number of Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan was greater than that from China before the 1993/94 financial year. The number of Taiwanese immigrants was in particular much greater than that of the immigrants from China and Hong Kong during the early and mid-1990s. However, China has become the main source of Chinese immigrants to New Zealand since the 1996/97 financial year. In contrast, the number of Taiwanese and Hong Kong Chinese immigrants to New Zealand has rapidly decreased during the same period. Between the 1992/93 and 1995/96 financial years, nearly 40,000 Hong Kong Chinese and Taiwanese were granted New Zealand permanent residence,
though many of these people may not have arrived in New Zealand or may have left the country later and not returned. At the end of 2005, 46.3% of Taiwanese and 33.9% of Hong Kong Chinese with New Zealand permanent residence did not live in New Zealand (Merwood 2006, 87).

China has sent the largest number of Chinese immigrants to New Zealand since the 1996/97 financial year. Based on the data of Statistics New Zealand, Chart 2-3 was produced to show the trend of PRC immigrants to New Zealand between 1980 and 2006. This chart also reveals that there was a sharp increase in the number of PRC immigrants to New Zealand from 2000 to 2005.
Chart 2-4: Top four source countries for residence approvals for the 1992/93 to 2006/07 financial years (data from New Zealand Immigration Service).

Chart 2-4 depicts the four top source countries sending immigrants to New Zealand for the 1992/93 to 2006/07 financial years. It shows that the number of PRC immigrants to New Zealand has been second only to that from the United Kingdom since 2002/03, although PRC immigrants were more numerous than the British immigrants in the 2001/02 and 2002/03 financial years.

b.  *PRC Chinese students studying and staying on in New Zealand*

Chart 2-1 reveals that according to the 2006 census PRC Chinese now comprise over half of the New Zealand Chinese population. One should be mindful that the census data include overseas students and visitors as well as migrants. The 2006 census shows that the Chinese population in New Zealand had risen to 148,912 from the
2000 census figure of 104,583, a 40.5% increase. This sharp increase is related to the large number of Chinese students who arrived in New Zealand during the early 2000s. In 1997 and 1998, there were only 159 and 262 Chinese students from the PRC studying in New Zealand (International Policy and Development Unit, 2002). This situation has dramatically changed since 1999. Chart 2-5 shows that China was the largest source country for international students to New Zealand between 1999/00 and 2005/06. Between 2001 and 2003, more than 40,000 Chinese students were granted permits to study in New Zealand. Although the total number of Chinese students has decreased since then, it still remains more than 20,000 each year.

The Chinese students also tend to study in New Zealand for longer than students from other major source countries. Based on the analysis of longitudinal data over a
window of nearly nine years, from 01 July 1997 to 25 March 2006, Merwood (2007) has produced a detailed report on international students in New Zealand, which contains much valuable information about the Chinese students in this country. As Merwood (ibid., 9) found, 77% of Chinese students were likely to have multiple sector study pathways (school, English language and tertiary studies) in New Zealand. They comprise 73% of the international students undertaking multiple study pathways in this country (ibid., 21).

Since 2002, the New Zealand Government has made some major changes to student immigration policy by strengthening the link between study and work. The aim of the Government in making these changes is to facilitate the transition of international students from study to work and residence in New Zealand. With these changes, international students have been given more opportunities to work while studying in this country, and to gain work permits after studying. They are also entitled to receive bonus points from their New Zealand qualifications and working experience when applying for residence through the Skilled Migrant Category (SMC).

Merwood (ibid., 56) has also found that, “to date, the majority of students taking advantage of these new work policies have been Chinese.” The rate of transition to work and residence for students from China was highest (32%) compared to other main source countries such as South Korea (23%), Japanese (10%) and the USA (10%) (ibid., 35). For Chinese students, the most common way was to go from study to residence, from English language and tertiary studies to the Skilled/Business Stream. For those Chinese students who did not transit to work or residence, over two-thirds held a student permit for four years or more (ibid., 9).
c. **Chinese overseas visitors**

In addition to Chinese immigrants and international students as long-term residents, Chinese overseas visitors on tourist visas and short-term permits have also enlarged the new Chinese community. Compared to Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore, China has been the main source country or region of origin for Chinese overseas visitors to New Zealand since 1997. According to Welch's report released in May 2007 by Statistics New Zealand, “Visitors arrivals from China have increased by about 100,000 in the past decade, from just 15,900 in the April 1997 year to 115,600 in the April 2007 year.” Holiday-makers make up the majority of Chinese overseas visitors to New Zealand.

Examination of the demographic trends of Chinese immigrants, international students and overseas visitors shows that PRC Chinese have been the predominant element in the new Chinese community in New Zealand since the late 1990s.

d. **Reasons for the rapid growth of PRC Chinese presence in New Zealand**

There is a voluminous literature on reasons why a significant number of Hong Kong Chinese and Taiwanese have immigrated to the West since the mid-1980s (e.g. Skelton 1994; Bedford, Skelton and Ho 1998; Ip 2001, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c). However, there is less research on the rapid growth of the PRC Chinese presence in the West, in particular in New Zealand. On the one hand, it may be associated with the changes made to New Zealand immigration policy since 1987. Theoretically, New Zealand Immigration Service, which refers to “non-New Zealand resident arrivals intending to stay in New Zealand for less than 12 months (New Zealand Immigration Service 2006, 116).”

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20 The term ‘Overseas visitor arrivals’ is defined by the New Zealand Immigration Service, which refers to “non-New Zealand resident arrivals intending to stay in New Zealand for less than 12 months (New Zealand Immigration Service 2006, 116).”
Zealand has opened up its gate to immigrants from all countries, as long as they are young, skilled and affluent. In other words, any immigrants bringing benefits to the economic development of New Zealand are welcomed. Since China is the most populous country in the world, the PRC Chinese are likely to make up the largest source of people qualified for immigration to New Zealand. On the other hand, the rapid growth of the PRC Chinese presence in New Zealand may be by and large attributed to China’s fast growing economy and the Chinese Government’s changed policy on controlling Chinese citizens’ travel overseas. Generally speaking, the dramatic increase of the PRC Chinese presence has also been happening not only in New Zealand, but also in many other developed countries such as the United States, Canada, Australia, Europe and Japan.

Accelerated economic growth has been particularly evident in China since the mid-1990s, following Deng Xiaoping’s influential southern tour in 1992. The sizable number of newly emerged upper and middle class Chinese have been the main source of Chinese citizens travelling overseas for a variety of purposes including immigration, study, visit to relatives and friends, or even just for spending a holiday. According to the researcher’s interviews and focus group discussions, some recent PRC migrants remark that they have moved to New Zealand with the aim of pursuing a better life for themselves and better education for their children. For those who came from highly industrialised areas such as Beijing, Shanghai, and the Pearl River Delta region, dense population and polluted local environment are their major

21 Subsequent to the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, Deng Xiaoping lost his absolute power as official leader of the Chinese Communist Party and retired from office. However, in early 1992 he toured Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai and Shanghai and made influential speeches reasserting his agenda for the further reform of China’s economy.
concerns. Stressful daily life in these areas further drives people to leave in order to escape from severe competition at work. One of the informants told the researcher 22,

“When I was in China, I had to go out almost every evening to accompany my boss and our clients, eating and drinking at restaurants following by playing Mah-jong and singing Karaoke till midnight. You know, every night! Gee, I wouldn’t live very long if this will be the rest of my life. I need to spend time with my family.”

They were also concerned about the stress and competition from which their children had to suffer at school. With education becoming increasingly commercialised in China, attending elite universities and schools, even kindergartens, has turned out to be costly because of various types of expensive entry exams and follow-up tuitions. In contrast, New Zealand provides international standard general and tertiary education at a much lower cost, once they become permanent residents of the country.

Liu (2005, 98) notes that, on an institutional level, the rapid growth of the Chinese presence overseas is connected with the fact that China has further loosened the control over Chinese citizens travelling abroad for private reasons. In 2002, the Chinese Government made a significant policy change to the border control imposed on Chinese citizens. According to the Ministry of Public Security, from 2002 onwards, Chinese citizens intending to travel overseas are no longer required to submit a foreign invitation with other documentation when applying for a private passport, nor are they required to have prior approval (chu jing ka 出境卡) from the

22 Interview conducted in January 2006.
Bureau of Public Security. This change is considered to be a milestone similar to Taiwan’s removal of the Marshal Law in 1987, which has facilitated the massive wave of Taiwanese going overseas since then.

Still on the institutional level, Liu (ibid., 102) also claims that the rapid emergence of Chinese emigration is associated with the mushrooming of intermediary agencies across China. These agencies can be operated privately, officially or semi-officially,

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legally or illegally, to help Chinese citizens prepare visa applications and sometimes airline tickets. It is hard to figure out how many intermediary agencies have been involved in arranging for Chinese citizens to go abroad, since chain migration has been a major feature of Chinese international movement for centuries. Operating intermediary agencies has been a highly profitable business. For instance, in 1998 in Shenyang, one of the major cities in Northern China, the intermediary agencies charged a typical fee of $2,000 US dollars for handling a student visa to Australia and Canada.\(^\text{24}\) In August 1999, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Public Security and the National Bureau of Commerce and Industry Management began to regulate intermediary agencies that specifically arrange for Chinese students to study overseas. However, there are no clear regulations to control other intermediary agencies that may be involved in the operation of Chinese emigration. In November 2007, 270 intermediary agencies specified in dealing with the matter of studying overseas had obtained official registration. These agencies are scattered across the whole country, but the majority of them are operating in Eastern and Southern China where the economy is much more advanced than in the West. Figure 2-2 (numbers added by the researcher) shows the distribution of these intermediary agencies nationwide.\(^\text{25}\) It suggests that the recent PRC students, possibly students-turned-migrants, coming to New Zealand ultimately came from every part of China, but in particular from the East and the South.

\(^{24}\) This figure is based on the experience of a relative of the researcher. In 1998, arrangements were made by an intermediary agency for her to study in a high school in Vancouver.

\(^{25}\) The Chinese Ministry of Education has provided these official figures (www.jsj.edu.cn, accessed 7 November 2007).
Snapshots of the new Chinese community

Because of New Zealand immigration policy aiming to attract skilled and affluent immigrants, the majority of the new Chinese community are highly urbanised entrepreneurs and well-educated professional Chinese emigrants from Hong Kong, Taiwan and some highly industrialised areas of China such as Beijing, Shanghai, and other large cities in the eastern coastal provinces. The Chinese migrants like to live in Auckland, which they consider to be the only ‘international metropolitan city’ within New Zealand. Merwood (2007, 7) notes that the Chinese students tend to study in Auckland as well, since they largely came from the same regions as the new Chinese migrants who are used to bustling city life. Auckland is also the premier destination for Chinese overseas visitors from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, since Auckland International Airport is New Zealand’s primary gateway to the world.

Except for the Auckland region, the new Chinese, including Chinese immigrants and international students, are increasingly visible in New Zealand’s other major urban areas such as Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch. Most Chinese visitors, especially those from China, prefer to visit the famous tourist cities of the North Island such as Rotorua and Taupo, but hardly go to the South Island. Welch (2007) has found that, in the April 2007 year, Chinese visitors averaged a stay in New Zealand of only 5 days, which makes it impossible for them to travel around the whole country. This time is so short because many Chinese visitors are on a package tour whose primary destination is Australia.

Within the Auckland region, the new Chinese migrants appear to cluster in certain suburbs of North Shore City, Waitakere City, Auckland City, and Manukau City. The
concept of ‘ethnoscape’ can be borrowed to describe the phenomena associated with the Chinese presence in Auckland. According to Appadurai26, ‘ethnoscape’ means “the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guestworkers, and other moving groups and persons constitute an essential feature of the world, and appear to affect the politics of and between nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree.” A Chinese ethnoscape is evident in certain parts of Auckland where the new Chinese are highly concentrated. For instance, in commercial centres such as Dominion Road, Central parts of Pakaranga, Mt Albert and New Lynn, it seems that more than half the businesses are run by the new Chinese; noticeably, signs of many of these businesses are in simplified Chinese characters, which indicate the ownership of these businesses probably being PRC Chinese, since Hong Kong Chinese and Taiwanese tend to use the traditional system of Chinese characters. Walking along streets in these places, Chinese tourists often have an ambiguous feeling towards the various Chinese services available, ranging from restaurants and beauty salons to computer gaming rooms and photography studios, along with Chinese law firms and accountancies, etc. What the Chinese tourists have seen is so different from the ‘last paradise’ New Zealand which appears in the beautifully printed brochures provided by many travel agencies.

The new Chinese migrants came to New Zealand as a result of the 1987 Immigration Act and the points system initiated in 1992, because of which the majority of them are likely to be young, of balanced gender, well-educated, and maybe affluent under the skilled, family and business migration streams. Some new Chinese migrated to New Zealand...

26 For more detail, see http://www.intcul.tohoku.ac.jp/~holden/MediatedSociety/Readings/2003_04/Appadurai.html
Zealand as single persons and form their young families in the country later; others arrived as young nuclear families.

A number of research articles (e.g. Ho 1995; Ip and Friesen 2001; Henderson 2003; Ho and Bedfred 2005) on the settlement of new Chinese migrants have established that these migrants have encountered great difficulties in finding suitable employment and starting a business in New Zealand. As Ho (cited in Ip and Friesen 2001, 225) states, “many highly qualified migrants failed to find employment even (if) [sic] their skills were recognised. There is evidence of employers’ prejudice against applicants without local experience, or candidates who have a foreign accent.” In consequence, a large number of skilled Hong Kong and Taiwanese migrants have left New Zealand, either returning to Hong Kong and Taiwan, or travelling between New Zealand and the two regions to earn income and to maintain their New Zealand families at the same time. These phenomena were typified as ‘astronaut families’ and ‘parachute kids’ among the Taiwanese and Hong Kong migrants and drew a lot of negative comments in New Zealand mainstream media in the mid-1990s (e.g. Ho, Bedfred and Goodwin 1997; Ip and Friesen 2001; Chui 2004).

For many Hong Kong and Taiwanese business migrants, the hurdle in setting up a business stems mainly from the fact that New Zealand economy is based on agriculture, which is completely different from that of Hong Kong and Taiwan. A Hong Kong business migrant (cited in Ip and Friesen 2001, 225) commented, “…Economically, New Zealand is very agricultural. Most of the Hong Kong business migrants are experienced in financial and industrial businesses. I’ve found it hard to start a business here.” In addition, “the inflexible attitude of the monopolist producer boards (which control the export of daily products, meat, and apples and pears), the
long distance to overseas markets, and the smallness of the domestic market” comprise other major obstacles for new Chinese migrants to establish export and import businesses in New Zealand (ibid.).

The situation of PRC migrants is more diverse than that of Hong Kong and Taiwanese migrants. Those who arrived in the 1980s and 1990s were generally less affluent and many former professionals had to work as low-paid manual labours in order to earn basic income. Some with enough savings decided to go back to university for retraining in New Zealand (ibid., 226). The recent arrivals are generally in a better economic position than their predecessors, since the majority of them were former foreign-fee-paying students and business migrants drawn from China’s ‘new rich’ generated by the recent economic boom in the country. Chapter Five will provide a detailed analysis of the recent PRC migrants who are primarily from the newly-emerged upper and middle classes in urban China.

According to the researcher’s interviews with these people and some Chinese media personnel, many recent PRC migrants still play in the stock and foreign currency markets of their homeland and frequently transfer large amounts of money between China and New Zealand. Having arrived as an investor migrant, one former PRC national told the researcher, “the market for our products (for interior design) in New Zealand is too small to make profits; we mainly deal with clients in the U.S. and Europe”. In New Zealand, he and his circle in similar situations spent most of their time playing golf during the period of waiting to become New Zealand citizens. As many remark, it is much more convenient for a PRC Chinese business person to travel overseas on a New Zealand passport than on a Chinese passport, since New Zealand citizens can visit most countries in the world without a visa.
It has been established that New Zealand mainstream media have played an influential role in shaping general New Zealanders’ perceptions of Chinese migrants (Ip and Friesen 2001; Spoonley and Trilin 2004; Ho and Bedfred 2006). Based on a content analysis of New Zealand print media for the period 1993-2003, Spoonley and Trilin (2004) find that these media had a general emphasis on the problematisation of Asian immigrants. Although New Zealand media has shown a growing interest in the economic impact and benefits of immigration, negative coverage of Asian immigrants is ongoing. An article published in December 2006 in North & South, one of the leading journalistic magazines in New Zealand, seems to be a deliberate collection of negative images of Asian immigrants. Although the author did not specify the Chinese, they were obviously the target since the Chinese comprise the majority of the Asian population in New Zealand. According to the author of this article, “in the past 15 years we’ve opened our borders to people from North Asia and all they needed was money and a clean bill of health. … [T]hey also brought murder, extortion, kidnapping, assassinations and disease. Welcome to New Zealand, the new home of Asian drug runners, illegal suburban brothels, health cheats, student P pushers, business crooks and paua smugglers.”27 The anti-Asian immigrant sentiment has been fertile soil for the New Zealand First Party under the leadership of Winston Peters. According to many observers and critics, Peters and his party are to some extent equivalent to Pauline Hanson and her One Nation Party in Australia. Over the past ten years or so, Peters played a distinct role in influencing New Zealand’s

27 For more detail, see Coddington (2006). After this article was published, 26 signatories including Asian community leaders, academics, journalists, business leaders and artists lodged a formal complaint with the Press Council about its content, which was upheld.
national politics. Chapters Four and Five will give more details on the Chinese migrant community in relation to party politics in New Zealand.

**New Chinese-language media**

*a. A variety of media forms supported by modern technologies*

Over the past two decades, a variety of Chinese-language media has flourished in New Zealand, especially in Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch. As noted in the previous chapter, Ng and Murphy (1997), Ip (2006) and Voci (2006) have looked at these new Chinese-language media at large. Combining their inventories, this researcher intends to construct a broad picture of new Chinese-language media in New Zealand; Table 2-1 shows the various forms of new Chinese media ranging from the earliest to the latest. It must be noted that this table does not provide an entire list of the new Chinese-language media in New Zealand, but portrays the variety of these media which use media technologies including print, radio, television and websites.

The *Sing-tao Weekly* (later daily) was the earliest new Chinese-language medium in New Zealand and was published between 1989 and 1994. After the *Sing-tao Daily*, many followers appeared, but did not survive very long and have disappeared. It is difficult to restore a complete picture of the new Chinese-language media in New Zealand, in particular of print media. This is largely because, to date, New Zealand-produced Chinese newspapers and magazines along with radio and television programmes have not been treated as meaningful materials for documenting the

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28 In the 2008 New Zealand general election, Peters did not win back his electoral seat; his party also lost its previously held seats in the parliament.
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<th>Print Media</th>
<th>Radio</th>
<th>Television</th>
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<td><em>Sing Tao Daily</em></td>
<td>Radio Chinese AM 990 BBC/FM 90.6</td>
<td><em>World TV</em></td>
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<td><em>New Zealand Chinese Weekly</em></td>
<td>Chinese Voice AM 936/FM 95.8</td>
<td>Golden Raindrop</td>
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<td><em>Mandarin Times</em></td>
<td>Capital Chinese Voice</td>
<td><em>Touch China</em></td>
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<td><em>New Zealand Chinese Magazine</em></td>
<td>Chinese FM 96.1/FM 88.5</td>
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<td><em>New Zealand Chinese Bizlink</em></td>
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<td><em>The Epoch Times</em></td>
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<td><em>New Zealand Bilingual Magazine</em></td>
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Table 2-1: A selective list of the new Chinese-language media in New Zealand (1989-2008)

socio-history of the new Chinese community in the country. Thus, there is no comprehensive and systemic collection of these Chinese media by either public or private libraries.
Such a wide variety of Chinese media forms indicates that new Chinese media have clearly benefited from the latest information technology including facilities for printing in black and white and colour, satellite transmission and the internet. Several Chinese newspapers even have their own on-line version. Although Chinese print media may be distributed and circulated within some regions, as are Chinese radio broadcasts, Chinese television programmes and Chinese websites are generally accessible nationwide. This means that wherever the new Chinese stay in New Zealand, they have no difficulty in receiving and consuming Chinese-language media.

b. Private entrepreneurial operation and ownership

In Canada and Australia, the governments have provided substantial funding to run ethnic media including Chinese-language media, especially broadcast media to promote and embrace the official policy of multiculturalism (e.g. Zhou, Chen and Cai 2006; Cunningham and Sinclair 2000; Gao 2006, ). In New Zealand, nearly all of the Chinese-language media are privately owned and operated as small businesses. Most of the New Zealand Chinese-language print media have been free of charge, except for the two defunct newspapers, the Sing Tao Weekly (later the Sing Tao Daily) and the Independence Daily. The satellite-transmitted programmes on World TV are however only available to paying subscribers. The only New Zealand government-subsidised broadcast media are Chinese radio (the Community Access Radio in the early 1990s) and a very limited airtime for Golden Raindrop TV on Triangle TV, the Auckland regional TV station. In consequence, Chinese media have to rely on audience and advertisers to provide revenue streams; they must follow the general rules of the market economy in order to survive. Primarily serving the new
Chinese community, the new Chinese media are dependent on the development of the 
Chinese community economy, in particular in terms of pursuing the revenues from 
advertisers.

During the researcher’s interviews with Chinese media personnel, a veteran publisher 
commented, “It is very difficult to get European advertisers, since they think the 
Chinese market very small. Those European companies that advertise in Chinese 
media are mainly banks and telephone companies.” The competition for advertisers 
is extremely severe among the Chinese print media in New Zealand. This is partially 
the reason why so many Chinese newspapers have mushroomed but soon vanished 
completely. It has been estimated that at least twenty Chinese newspapers have 
existed over the past twenty years; only a few have run for a relatively long period of 
time, such as the Mandarin Times, the New Daily and the New Zealand Chinese 
Herald.

Initially, it was weekly and soon began to publish three issues per week; it has been a 
daily since 2004 (Ip 2006, 189-190). In the severely competitive market of Chinese 
print media in Auckland, the successful strategy of the Mandarin Times is its 
continuous emphasis on publishing a wide range of up-to-date advertisements; for a 
single business, an advertisement could be sized from whole broadsheet pages down 
to a 2cm x 2cm square and with a wide price range from thousands to six dollars in 

29 Interview conducted in November 2007.
One Chinese newspaper editor interviewed by the researcher revealed that in 2005, it cost five thousand dollars to print one issue of her newspaper, which contained 40 broadsheet pages per issue, was published once a week and had a circulation of five thousand copies. Another editor revealed that it usually cost eight thousand dollars to print one issue of 10,000 copies of his newspaper, which contained 40 to 50 broadsheet pages per issue. It is the high cost of printing that has caused the failure of many Chinese newspapers with limited clients who would advertise. The high cost of printing has also contributed to the relative success of the *New Daily* since the early 1990s, because this newspaper has its own printing facilities, whereas many of its competitors had to find a printing company and may have had to spend more investment on printing and thus make less profit than *the New Daily*.31

Because of the considerable amount of investment involved, a few Chinese companies supporting the publication of Chinese-language newspapers are in fact concentrating on running their main businesses in finance (banking), the stock market, foreign currency exchange and international money transfer.32 For them, Chinese newspapers provide a platform to advertise their services and provide the latest information on international stock markets and foreign currency exchange rates. This is the reason why this kind of newspaper, for example, the *Mingshan Weekly* and the *New Zealand*  

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30 Interview conducted in February 2006.
31 Interview conducted in February 2006.
32 The existence of Chinese money transfer companies is associated with the fact that the Chinese government restricts free currency transfers between China and overseas. For instance, someone travelling overseas for personal reasons is allowed to carry only a certain amount of cash. If a larger amount of money is needed, an alternative channel is required. The Chinese Yuan is not a floating-rate currency, so most PRC Chinese use US or Hong Kong currency as intermediates in the exchange between Chinese Yuan and New Zealand dollars.
Chinese Bizlink, had to close down when their so-called ‘mother companies’ collapsed.

The development of New Zealand Chinese-language media over the past two decades has clearly reflected the pattern of the changing Chinese immigrant population in this country. In 1989, Hong Kong Chinese launched the first new Chinese-language print media in New Zealand; the New Zealand version of the Sing Tao Weekly (later the Sing Tao Daily) was similar to its counterparts in North America and Australia in that it contained a small proportion of local (New Zealand) news, but largely relied on the international news reports and other content transmitted from Sing Tao’s headquarter in Hong Kong. A few Hong Kong Chinese volunteers also ran New Zealand’s first Chinese community radio programme in Cantonese and English.

Later, the Taiwanese became the largest group within the Chinese immigrant community; they started the Independent Daily. The New Zealand version of the Independent Daily was largely dependent on the headquarters based in Sydney, from which it received most editorial content except for the New Zealand local news. The Independent Daily in Sydney came into existence in 1994 and was funded by pro-independence Taiwanese, who had a strong influence on the content of the newspaper. With the surge in PRC immigrants to Australia since the late 1990s, it became increasingly difficult for this newspaper to attract enough advertisers and readers. According to Ren (2006), it was the overwhelming domination of PRC Chinese immigrants that forced this newspaper to close down. Interviews by this researcher also revealed that the fate of the Independent Daily in Sydney corresponded to the experience of its counterpart in Auckland, which closed down in 2004. For instance, one Taiwanese community leader observed that there had been many newspapers run
by the mainlanders since the early 2000s. He commented “There used to be fewer than five Chinese newspapers owned by Hong Kong Chinese, Taiwanese and Malaysian Chinese.” In the past few years, PRC Chinese have become the major player in operating the Chinese print media, of which some have their own online version. The PRC Chinese also own the popular Chinese-language websites in New Zealand, such as www.chinese.net.nz and www.skykiwi.co.nz.

The experiences of Chinese-language broadcast media are different from those of print media, since the severe competition for advertisers is a less obvious issue. In 2000, Taiwanese initiated World TV Ltd, New Zealand’s first Chinese-language TV station. Given that it has invested much larger capital and have more professional management, WTV has largely dominated the market of Chinese broadcast media since it started. At present, this company owns a satellite TV network in three Asian languages (Chinese, Japanese and Korea) and two Chinese radio stations. Like the Chinese print media in New Zealand, WTV is a privately operated enterprise; however, unlike the exclusive ownership of Chinese newspapers and websites, WTV has Taiwanese, Japanese and Korean shareholders, although the Taiwanese are predominant. The main sources of revenue for World TV Ltd are monthly fees charged to the subscribers and advertising (mainly for Chinese businesses).

c. Overview of content of the new Chinese media and media attitudes

In terms of media content, there are some major characteristics that seem to be generally shared among all new Chinese-language media. First of all, commercial

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33 Interview conducted in November 2005.
34 Interview with a senior manager of World TV Ltd conducted in November 2007.
advertisements comprise the main content of these media. These advertisements primarily include Chinese business services (such as real estate, car dealing, house maintenance, restaurants and grocery stores), consultancies on immigration and law, finance and accounting, and advice on medical and educational matters. Chinese Community notices regarding special social gatherings are also frequently presented. Most New Zealand local news in Chinese media is an edited translation from the news reports in the mainstream media. For instance, Liu (2009) examined how Chinese newspapers handled reports on Maori-related issues, and suggested that the Chinese reporters and editors tend to follow several reports of one issue in mainstream media and then produce one article in the form of a translated summary.

Only the New Zealand Chinese Herald and World TV Ltd deliver a limited number of original reports of New Zealand local news from their own reporters. The New Zealand Chinese Herald was initially published in the 1990s by the New Zealand Herald as a daily which enjoyed a nationwide readership. At that time, the local news in the Chinese Herald was derived from its ‘parent paper’, thereby ensuring the journalistic quality. In later years, the ownership of the Chinese Herald was transferred to other Chinese companies several times; however, this newspaper “...still enjoyed the reflected glory of its namesake and predecessor” (Ip 2006, 190). World TV Ltd produces a news hour programme, which is broadcast on WTV and its two Chinese-language radio stations (936 AM and 95.8 FM) every weekend. The two radio stations also give airtime to commentary and talkback sessions on New Zealand local news, which will be one of the foci of discussion in Chapters Four and Five.

Compared to their limited effort in presenting New Zealand local news, all Chinese media endeavour to cover a large quantity of immediate reports about current politics,
economy, sports and entertainment in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. The World TV Ltd broadcasts mainly satellite television and radio programmes from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. The Chinese print media and websites primarily rely on downloading from the websites of major media corporations based in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong to source news items.

Over the past two decades, the New Zealand Chinese media have experienced a shifting political stance, which can be identified easily from commentaries and news reports showing media attitudes towards China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. A number of informants, including Chinese readers and media personnel, said that during the early 1990s, the so-called ‘post-Tiananmen era’, many Chinese newspapers appeared to have critical comments on China. Criticism was heavily concentrated on China’s poor record of protecting human rights and her rampant growth of corruption, which seemed connected with the dictatorship of the Communist Party. Chinese newspapers with such a political stance were largely run by the Taiwanese, Hong Kong Chinese and some mainland Chinese activists involved in the democratic movement subsequent to the Tiananmen Square protest in 1989. In recent years, it seems that political criticism of the Chinese government in New Zealand Chinese media has diminished and conversely the pro-Chinese government content has increased substantially, since most of the news reports about China are downloaded from websites such as www.chinanews.com.cn, www.sina.com.cn and the like, all based in China.

At present, anti-Chinese government sentiment remains noticeable in only two Chinese newspapers. One is the New Daily, based in Auckland, which often carries reports and commentaries revealing the sufferings of the dissenters during the Anti-
rightist Campaign and the Cultural Revolution, and some current issues related to social injustice in China. The other is the Falun Gong-linked newspaper, the *Epoch Times*, which according to its website has its headquarters in New York, is published in 17 languages and is distributed in 30 countries across the five continents. It claims that, “the Chinese-language *Epoch Times* started publishing in response to the growing need for uncensored coverage of events in China. The first newspaper was published in New York in May 2000, with the web launch in August 2000. Local editions published by regional bureaus soon followed, making it the largest of any Chinese-language newspaper outside of Mainland China and Taiwan.”³⁵ Falun Gong is considered by the Chinese government to be an ‘evil cult’ and has been officially banned in mainland China since 1999. Falun Gong also has links to New Tang Dynasty Television (NTDTV), based in New York and broadcasting non-stop Chinese language programs to North America, Asia, Europe and Australia. In New Zealand, a NTDTV programme commenting on current international affairs is transmitted by Triangle TV for one hour every weekend.

The changing attitudes of New Zealand Chinese media, from being critical of the Chinese government to becoming complimentary, can be explained in the light of the influx of recent PRC migrants as described earlier; their ownership of these media and their position as the main source of advertisers have greatly changed the content of Chinese-language media in New Zealand. Chapters Four and Five will discuss these two points further.

The attitude of Chinese media towards New Zealand is rather unclear, since it is hard to find evidence from which to draw any concrete conclusion. This researcher argues that the content of these Chinese media mainly reflects and exhibits the interests and concerns of Chinese media consumers, including both advertisers and audience. Chapters Four and Five will explore this argument in detail.

\textit{d. Chinese-language media manifesting the new Chinese community}

The new Chinese community has taken shape as a result of New Zealand’s innovative immigration policy, which aimed to attract Asian immigrants, and a completely new mode of political economy in ‘Greater China’\textsuperscript{36}, the homeland of the new Chinese. This is a hybrid group, unlike the early Chinese settlers consisting of illiterate and semi-literate peasants originating from the villages of Canton in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century. This new community is sophisticated in terms of members’ socio-economic status and sensibility to political culture as well as the patterns of their settlement in New Zealand and transnational movements between New Zealand and the homelands. Such sophistication has profound implications for the production of new Chinese-language media that are diverse in form and miscellaneous in content.

Economically, the new Chinese media are largely dependent on the prosperity of the Chinese community. In the past, a small number of early Chinese settlers, mainly manual labourers, were unable to create such prosperity, but the new Chinese bring to New Zealand ample human and financial capital to establish a sizeable lucrative Chinese market covering a variety of industries. Advertising revenues from the

\textsuperscript{36} A detailed explanation of ‘Greater China’ will be presented in Chapter Three.
Chinese community economy become the main source of income to support these new Chinese media, which are purely commercial ventures, unlike the early Chinese newspapers mainly depending on donations from the humble Chinese market gardeners and greengrocers.

The new Chinese media are clear manifestations of the new Chinese community in New Zealand, but some questions remain unanswered. To what extent is the new Chinese community reflected or depicted by these new Chinese media? Do these new Chinese media still serve the new Chinese community as an institution for sustaining Chinese solidarity as early Chinese newspapers did? What role do these new Chinese media play in the process of new Chinese settlers’ adjustment and integration into New Zealand society? How do these media exhibit and impact on the Chinese perception of New Zealand and acculturation in this country? The main aim of this PhD research is to seek answers to these questions.

The purpose of this chapter is to present the broad context in which the role of contemporary Chinese-language media in New Zealand can be studied. Chapter Four and Chapter Five will provide additional background information concerning the interactions between the Chinese media and the new Chinese settlers, at a specific historical moment - the 2005 New Zealand general election. The next chapter will present the theoretical framework for conducting this research.
CHAPTER THREE

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter presents the conceptual framework under which this research was conducted. The purpose of the research is to develop an understanding of the current Chinese migrant community in New Zealand, especially the sector composed of PRC migrants who arrived since the late 1990s, through a critical analysis of the locally produced Chinese-language media which specifically serve this community. The main focus of this chapter is to provide a theoretical basis for study of the Chinese-language media as a distinct phenomenon in contemporary New Zealand. This chapter consists of three main sections: the configuration of socio-politically marginalised Chinese migrants’ identity in New Zealand within the broad context of studying the Chinese diaspora; conceptualisation of alternative media that primarily serve marginalised social minorities; and the analytical framework within which diasporic Chinese media in New Zealand will be considered in the subsequent chapters.

Section A

Chinese migrants’ socio-political marginalisation in New Zealand

A survey of theories on international migration studies

Existing theories relating to international immigration have conceptualised the major issues that emigrant communities have to deal with, in both sending and receiving countries. In general, these issues can be summarised in three categories: 1) the
factors which facilitate decision-making by individuals who migrate from one country to another; 2) the situation of immigrants after they arrive in the host country; and 3) the common impacts that immigrants may have on various aspects of the host society.

According to Massey and his associates (Massey et al. 1993, 1994, 1998; Hirschman et al. 1999), conventional international migration is mainly caused by socio-economic differences between developing countries and the industrialised world. In terms of the adaptation of an immigrant community in the host country, the assimilation model suggests that immigrants normally experience a ‘race relations cycle’ of contact, competition, accommodation, and eventual assimilation. Assimilation is the eventual outcome of the process by which immigrants enter the social cliques and institutions of the core society at the primary group level (e.g., Park and Burgess 1969; Gordon 1964; Shibutani and Kwan, 1965). By comparison, the pluralism model emphasises the significance of immigrants’ retaining their own cultural heritage along with embracing and practicing the culture of the core society (e.g., Yancey, Ericksen and Juliani 1976; Waters 1990; Alba 1990; Gans 1999).

Since the late 1990s, “transnationalism” has become a predominant framework to explain the pattern of contemporary international emigration. Scholars of transnationalism focus on the nature of some specific groups of international emigrants who are living dual lives: “speaking two languages, having homes in two countries, and making a living through continuous regular contact across national borders” (Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt 1999). Essentially, these people are involved in the exercise of intensive and simultaneous activities across international borders in a new age, which is marked by the rapid technological developments in transportation.
and communication, especially the internet (Faist 1999, 2000; Kivisto 1999; Vertovec 1999).

Faist (1999, 201) has made a systematic comparison between the three models as shown in Table 3-1. This comparison leads us to understand how the experiences of different groups of immigrants progressing through the stages of adaptation inherent in these models may result in different interactions with the core society that they encounter. Within one immigrant community, the well-settled early arrivals and displaced newcomers may have mixed feelings towards each other, as people of the two groups are experiencing different levels of adaptation, which may accordingly cause the early arrivals to have ‘changed’ political interests, value systems and social behaviours from the perspective of the newcomers. Conversely, the early arrivals may have a stronger sense of belonging to the core society than the newcomers because of their deeper degree of acculturation into the host country. In other words, within one ethnic immigrant community, both the early arrivals and newcomers may consider each other somehow ‘foreign’. Hence, it may be argued that an ethnic immigrant community is presumably fragmented, because different members of the community are undertaking different stages of adaptation and acculturation into the host country. Within a community in which some members are highly involved in transnational activities and the rest are not, the consequence of adaptation and acculturation at different levels may be even clearer in terms of the fragmentation of one community’s political interests and cultural identities.

Recognising the fragmentation of one ethnic community, as discussed above, helps us to explore migrants at different stages of adaptation and acculturation.
impacting in different ways on the core society. For instance, the newcomers are more likely to be vulnerable than the early arrivals to racial prejudice against immigrants caused by cultural differences and conflicts. Thus, it may be argued that migrants within one ethnic community may or may not share common views as to whether members of the community have collective needs, expectations and aspirations, in particular where political issues of the host or home country are concerned. This argument has an important role to play when we examine ethnic Chinese media in New Zealand as a form of alternative media, which will be discussed in Section B.

Table 3-1: Three concepts for the analysis of immigrant adaptation (Faist 1999, 201).
In his classic studies on the Chinese in Southeast Asia, Wang Gungwu (1991) summarises that, ‘Chinese identity’ may refer to historical identity, Chinese nationalist identity, communal identity, national (local) identity, cultural identity, ethnic identity and class identity. Wang’s conceptual framework appears to be applicable to analyse the identity of the Chinese in New Zealand. According to the 2006 census, 3.4% of the New Zealand population identified themselves as ethnic Chinese. To a large extent, being Chinese for many New Zealanders may be a simplistic matter of subjective identification, because the census form requires everyone to answer the question “Which ethnic group do you belong to?” The available options include New Zealand European, Māori, Samoan, Cook island Maori, Tongan, Niuean, Chinese and Indian. Apparently, “Chineseness” is imposed on a particular ethnic group by non-Chinese in New Zealand.

The 2006 census has also revealed that 6% of New Zealand Chinese tend to identify themselves further as Hong Kong Chinese, Cambodian Chinese, Malaysian Chinese, Singaporean Chinese, Vietnamese Chinese and Taiwanese; and 94% of Chinese preferred not to claim their sub-ethnicities. This fragmentation within the Chinese groups indicates that the issue of defining “Chinese identity” within the Chinese

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37 Although almost twenty years have passed since the publication of Wang’s work, this writer maintains that it remains definitive in the field of analysing the identity of Chinese overseas.


community itself is much more complicated than that within the wider communities of New Zealand.

The New Zealand Chinese community clearly includes two distinct groups of people, namely, the well-established New Zealand-born Chinese mainly including the descendants of poll tax payers, and the new arrivals facilitated by the passage of the 1987 Immigration Act (e.g. Ng 1993; Ip 1995). In the context of studying Chinese-language media that require the audience to possess competent Chinese language skills, both in literacy and listening, it is easy to separate the New Zealand-born Chinese from others. This is because English has become the first language within the descendants of poll tax payers, among whom very few have competence in reading Chinese text, although they may be able to speak some Chinese words, mainly in Cantonese. Since this research focuses on the Chinese-language media, the New Zealand-born Chinese will not be the primary research target in this thesis.

First language skills and preferences can also fragment the newly arrived Chinese who have immigrated to New Zealand from various countries of origin. In totality they may be a complex social admixture, of which the majority is competent in the Chinese language; however, some who have been educated in languages other than Chinese may prefer using those languages in daily life.

Besides language differences, diversities in socio-economic and political backgrounds are also evident within the newly arrived Chinese. In this context, it is essential to examine the new arrivals’ Chinese identity within ‘Greater China’. In his elaborate analysis of the concept of ‘Greater China’ by surveying themes, variations and reservations, Harding (1993, 660) lists a wide range of ways of using ‘Greater China’:
“some refer primarily to the commercial ties among ethnic Chinese, whereas others are more interested in cultural interactions, and still others in the prospects for political reunification. Some observers focus exclusively on Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and mainland China, others incorporate Singapore, and still others include the overseas Chinese living in South-east Asia, America and Europe. To some writers, ‘Greater China’ is simply a way of summarising the new linkages among the far-flung international Chinese community; to others; it is a prescription of the institutions that should govern those ties.”

On the basis of Harding’s conceptual framework, this researcher argues that the meaning of cultural ‘Greater China’ has great relevance to the Chinese migrants in New Zealand. Although coming from various countries of origin, they share a common ancestry that can be traced back to mainland China. They maintain certain traditional Chinese customs and family values, and take pleasure in Chinese festivals and foods. In recent years the rapid developments in the technologies of communication, especially the internet, Chinese popular cultural products have accelerated the building of a cultural Chinese community in New Zealand.

The concept of cultural ‘Greater China’ is especially meaningful to new Chinese migrants to New Zealand, whose arrival has contributed substantially to the flourishing of the Chinese community economy in the country. The reason for this is associated with such factors as the commonly used Chinese language, including various dialects, networking within Chinese clan and kinship, specific Chinese communication ritual and customs, and even Chinese superstition, for example Fengshui. These institutionalised Chinese behaviours and beliefs stand as the steady pillars of the Chinese community economy, but may be highly incomprehensible and
inaccessible for non-Chinese who are attempting to penetrate the Chinese market. Hence, the microcosm of an economic ‘Greater China’ in contemporary New Zealand exists for both Chinese and non-Chinese.

In terms of specifying New Zealand Chinese identity in a political sense, the concept of political ‘Greater China’ is not without its problems for the following reasons. First, with regard to an ‘independent Taiwan’, anyone who entertains the concept of one unified New Zealand Chinese community will risk controversy in the current setting of two clearly divided Chinese rival groups. Second, the political attitude of an individual Chinese towards New Zealand domestic conflicts may fragment the Chinese migrant community into more than two rival groups because of their varying economic status and religious background and their conflicting social values. Furthermore, different moral standards and intellectual judgments on significant international affairs such as the Iraqi War, global warming, and climate change can further fragment the Chinese migrants in New Zealand into many confrontational interest groups.

Nevertheless, a politically unified Chinese migrant community does exist in New Zealand. One factor that shapes this community is the extent to which race relation and race-based issues have been politicised in this country. In this regard, Ip and Murphy (2005) have encapsulated detailed accounts by examining New Zealand cartoons of the past 140 years. By reviewing the history of New Zealand’s immigration policies towards the Chinese, we have no difficulty in finding concrete evidence that Chinese issues were repeatedly politicised.
In contemporary New Zealand, it may be argued that, while the law is essentially colour-blind (with the exception of specific rights for Maori), in practice, racial prejudice and institutionalised racism are still evident (Wilson et al. 2005). To be a Chinese migrant may mean to be vulnerable to this. In this sense, two kinds of self-consciousness may be in effect when these migrants in New Zealand claim their Chinese identity. On the one hand, the consciousness may be manifested as people wishing to preserve Chinese cultural heritage and to remain apart as a distinct ethnic group. On the other hand, the consciousness may be the catalyst for Chinese migrants to seek social justice, and to fight for legal and political rights equal to those of citizens of other races in the country.

Since the mid 1970s, the revival of Maori activism and recognition of the significance of the Treaty of Waitangi have become a central theme of the national politics in this country. Unlike Canada and Australia where multiculturalism is openly promoted and exercised as an official policy, New Zealand emphasizes a bicultural perspective, although some Maori may still consider it in practice a monoculture.

Since the passage of the 1987 Immigration Act, New Zealand immigration policy has had a clear target of attracting affluent entrepreneurs and skilled migrants (in reality mainly from Asia). This policy has been the subject of contentious debate over the past two decades; the most critical voice has come from Maori as the indigenous people of Aotearoa and the treaty partner. Maori have a high rate of unemployment and a lower economic status, and are therefore more anxious about the ‘Asian invasion’. Walker (1995, 301) claimed that, “The government has defaulted on its obligation under the Treaty of Waitangi to consult widely with Maori people on its
immigration scheme, which makes it vulnerable once again to an embarrassing claim before the Waitangi Tribunal.” (Walker 1995, 301)

It will be beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss further how significantly the Treaty of Waitangi has impacted on Chinese migrants, especially on their political status in the country. Nevertheless, it can be argued that, on an institutional level, the bicultural or monocultural socio-political context of New Zealand can make Chinese migrants feel like outsiders who are more often treated more “like gatecrashers than welcomed guests” (Ip 2009, 3). Thus Chinese migrants in New Zealand are a socio-politically marginalised minority.

**Terminology**

This section lists some key terms used in this thesis. The terms below may or may not be inclusive, depending on the context, and the meaning of the terms may not be precisely the same as that used in other texts involving study of the Chinese in New Zealand or elsewhere.

a. **Chinese diaspora**

Originating from ancient Greek references to the dispersal of Jews from Israel, the word ‘Diaspora’ is now commonly used by scholars. Diaspora is defined in a variety of ways Dorais (2001). For instance, according to Connor (cited in ibid., 4), in general, “a Diaspora is any segment of a people living outside its homeland.” More specifically, French social scientists Raulin and Medam along with Bruneau and Prevelakis, state that “Diaspora are made out of social networks whose function is to establish and maintain relations among immigrant populations who believe that they
share the same ancestry” (ibid). In terms of the characteristics of Diaspora, Safran, Tölöyan, Clifford and Vertovec share the following views (ibid., 5-7): 1) diasporic communities share a collective memory concerning their land of origin, which is a basic element in maintaining their ethnic identity; 2) the diasporic status may be considered as a type of consciousness, which makes diasporic communities feel that they may not be completely accepted by their host society and therefore suffer from the feelings of displacement and alienation; 3) their consciousness and solidarity as displaced and alienated ethnic communities bind people together.

On the criteria above, the term ‘Chinese diaspora’ may refer in general to people who live outside China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, and who share a collective identity of Chineseness by tracing their ancestral roots back to China. As discussed earlier concerning various types of Chinese identity, ‘Chinese diaspora’ may therefore include some individuals who do not consider themselves to be ‘Chinese’. It may also include “Chinese who know little about what being Chinese means but who have rediscovered their Chineseness and have been trying to be re-sinicized” (Wang 1991, 198).

The Chinese diaspora has resulted from massive waves of Chinese emigration, especially from southern regions of China, which started during the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Initially, most of the Chinese emigrants moved to and settled in South East Asia. Later, many Chinese immigrated to North, South and Central America as well as to the Caribbean, southern Africa, Europe and Australasia. Today the Chinese diaspora is scattered throughout the world.
b. **Chinese Overseas**

This term refers to people who are of Chinese descent living outside China, Taiwan and Hong Kong, so-called *huayi*. They include Chinese who are Chinese nationals living abroad and Chinese who are foreign nationals. In this sense, ‘Chinese overseas’ is equivalent to ‘Chinese diaspora’. The definition of Chinese overseas is by and large associated with Chinese ethnicity.

c. **New Zealand Chinese**

This term refers to a cohort of the Chinese diaspora based in New Zealand. The New Zealand Chinese comprise two major groups. The first one includes a variety of individuals who are of Chinese descent and hold New Zealand citizenship through either natural birth or naturalisation. The second group consists of foreign citizens of Chinese descent residing in New Zealand, who may be permanent residents or short-term visitors to this country. The term ‘New Zealand Chinese’ is closely associated with one’s legal entitlement to remain within the national borders of New Zealand.

d. **Old New Zealand Chinese community or “laoqiao”**

The old New Zealand Chinese community consists mainly of the descendants of Chinese gold miners and later the poll-tax payers who initially came to New Zealand before the early 20th century. It has been established (Fong 1959) that the old New Zealand Chinese community has to a large extent assimilated into the core society of New Zealand since the 1950s. The New Zealand Chinese Association (NZCA) is an organisation that represents this old Chinese community. This Association has thirteen branches across New Zealand, which suggests that the old New Zealand
Chinese Community is widely spread throughout the country. The abbreviated term ‘old Chinese’ is used in this thesis.

e. New New Zealand Chinese community

The ‘new New Zealand Chinese community’ refers mainly to the ethnic Chinese who have recently immigrated to New Zealand following the passage of the 1987 Immigration Act. This is a highly heterogeneous community comprising Chinese people originally from Hong Kong, Taiwan and China, and members of the Chinese diaspora based in Southeast Asian countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia. Some of these newly arrived Chinese have naturalised to become New Zealand citizens; while others remain as foreign citizens, but live in New Zealand with permanent residency.

A large number of Chinese short-term visitors to New Zealand may also be considered as part of the new Chinese community, although they are not permanent immigrants in a legal sense. Depending on the length of their stay in New Zealand, these Chinese short-term visitors may include Chinese international students, business people or holiday-makers, and may have originated from Hong Kong, Taiwan or China or those Southeast Asian countries noted above.

To cover the wide range of members of the new New Zealand Chinese community, the abbreviated term ‘new Chinese’ is used in this thesis.

f. Recent Chinese migrants

This term refers to Chinese immigrants of the new Chinese community who have resided in New Zealand for a period of less than five years. They may include
naturalized New Zealand citizens and new Chinese immigrants. This definition is based on a longitudinal survey by the Chinese New Settlers Services Trust (CNSST) (Wang 2007). The CNSST is a charitable trust that offers support services to assist new Chinese migrants with their settlement in the Auckland region, especially those who have difficulties in understanding the English language and in coping with the social environment of New Zealand. According to this survey, it usually takes approximately five years for new Chinese immigrants to adjust to New Zealand life and fully settle in this country.

Section B

Theories of alternative media studies

This section presents a survey of theories of alternative media studies, since Chinese-language media in New Zealand is a specific type of alternative media. As Ferguson (1998, 45) argues, “(media as) the processes of representing ideology have to be understood as concerned with reproduction of society”. The following discussion will provide a concrete theoretical basis on which ethnic Chinese media in New Zealand can be understood.

Scholars within the fields of critical media studies, radical and social movement media studies, and citizen media studies, such as Cottle (2003), Hermann and Chomsky (1994), Downing and his associates (2001), and Rodriguez (2001), have established that alternative media by and large emerge to reflect some highly specific ideals, concerns and interests, which somehow clash with those standard to the large-scale mainstream media (e.g. Downing, et al. 2001; Downing 2003; Atton 2002; Dagron 2004). In contrast to mainstream media, the main subjects of news and
features in alternative media are often the politically oppressed or marginalised social minorities; alternative media may thus be seen to publicise the existence and opinions of the less powerful.

In most cases, the social actors in alternative media can be viewed as a counter to hegemony - “the dominance of one group, nation or culture over another (Childers and Hentzi 1995, 131)”. Due to their vulnerable positions within the structure of power (Foucault 1977), the social actors of counter-hegemony may unavoidably become the victims of misrepresentation of a kind which occurs in images and descriptions that are either inaccurate or cannot be easily countered (Pitkin 1967; Wallis 1984). Within such a context, Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) is a powerfully influential text especially for understanding the misrepresented racial “otherness” and cultural “difference”. According to Said’s theoretical framework, disadvantaged and marginalised minorities are created by the prevailing social order. As Erickson (cited in Gross and Woods 1999, 4-5) says, “Social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people and labelling them as outsiders.”

Over the years, many studies have established that mainstream media usually play a central role in characterising racial and cultural others as ‘deviants’ (e.g., Wilson and Gutiérrez 1995; Gross and Woods 1999; Cottle 2000). An attempt to sound an alarm against and to counter such misrepresentations was seen in a march organised in Rome on 16th March 2002. The march was entitled “Reclaim Your Media”, and the main message of those taking part was “Don’t hate the media! Become the media!” (Downing 2003, 629). The demonstrators were expressing their wish to create an alternative to mainstream media, and to open up a new public sphere in which the
passive and ill-used ‘us the objects’ would become transformed into an active ‘we the subjects’.

Hackett and Carroll (cited in Atton and Hamilton 2008, 125) have defined alternative media by three features. First, these media “tend to be ‘relatively autonomous from corporate capital and the state’”; this suggests that these media may be short of funding and thus may be unable to afford to recruit professionally trained media personnel. Second, alternative media “tend to pursue politically progressive aims. These are manifested in representational strategies that give access to ‘voices and issues marginalised in hegemonic media’”; this implies that these media can construct an alternative ‘public sphere’. According to Habermas (1989), the “public sphere is the space between government and society in which private individuals exercise formal and informal control over the state: formal control through the election of governments and informal control through the pressure of public opinion. The media are central to this process.” Finally, alternative media promote and enhance horizontal communication between media operators and audience; this kind of communication is a process which transforms “audiences from consumers of the media (and even as commodities of the media, to be traded by media corporations and advertisers) to participants in the process of media production.” (cited in Atton and Hamilton 2008, 125)

These above three key features are crucial for us to understand alternative journalism as ‘native reporting’. As Atton (2002, 112-3) notes, ‘native reporting’ enables alternative media to attract the interests of their audience at a grassroots level, resulting in enthusiastic collaboration from media users and audiences who thereby support journalists’ work that confirms their views of reality. Through the sharing of
messages circulated through alternative media, people who are initially in a socio-politically isolated situation may become aware that they are actually not alone, but in a discrete, wider community which is otherwise marked by alienation, marginalisation and vulnerability. In consequence, the use of alternative media engenders and empowers effective communication, which in a sociological sense raises collective consciousness and strengthens the network within disadvantaged and neglected social minorities.

Section C

Analytical framework for Chinese media in New Zealand

This section aims to establish a theoretical framework for examining the Chinese-language media in New Zealand under the conceptual frameworks of international migration studies, Chinese migrants’ identity studies, and alternative media studies. First, an attempt is made to explore the discourse of the New Zealand Chinese media, whose main functions and features will be discussed. This will be followed by an interrogation of the Chinese media in New Zealand from three dimensions: the production of Chinese media, the construction of Chinese media messages, and the audience’s reception of Chinese media.

Discourse of the Chinese-language media in New Zealand

At a theoretical level, Ma (2003, 8) has established that the Chinese diaspora can be a ‘process’ and ‘spatial network’, which is remarkable for ‘connectivity, exchange, and [the] spread of people, goods, ideas and information across networked space and among a number of places with a varying degree of intensity and directionality’ (cited
in Sun 2006, 5). Starting from Ma’s emphasis and having overviewed diasporic Chinese media in various countries across historical and contemporary eras, Sun (ibid, 9) argues that Chinese media produced in different geographic locations enable Chinese migrants to carve and affirm their place-based identity. This argument has two important implications for examining the Chinese-language media in New Zealand as a form of alternative media in the country: 1) the essential consideration of the issue of locality, namely, New Zealand’s specific socio-political context; 2) the needs of New Zealand Chinese media which generate a localised identity among Chinese migrants.

Serving the Chinese migrant community as a socio-politically marginalised minority, ethnic Chinese-language media have emerged as a result of the specific social context of New Zealand. In order to comprehend the discourse of the Chinese media in New Zealand, it is vital to find appropriate answers to two questions:

1) To what extent are Chinese migrants in New Zealand in need of local Chinese media?

2) Who are the main audiences of these Chinese media within the New Zealand Chinese migrant community?

As discussed earlier, the present analysis of New Zealand Chinese media is primarily oriented to explore the social dynamics of the Chinese migrant community, which is a complicated social mixture in terms of the community’s cultural, economic and political identities in relation to the concept of ‘Greater China’. The Chinese media reflect some highly specific ideals, concerns and interests of the Chinese migrants, which somehow differ from and clash with those of the core society of New Zealand.
In this context, immigrants at different stages of adaptation and acculturation may react to and impact on the host society in different ways as discussed in Section A. It was argued earlier that, because of this, members of the Chinese migrant community may or may not share collective needs and aspirations, in particular where political issues of New Zealand are concerned. In most cases, this happens when newcomers of the Chinese migrant community are labelled and stereotyped by the host society, in which these newcomers’ different behaviour or existence is singled out, stigmatised, and considered unacceptable by many ‘mainstream New Zealanders’ including European Pakeha and Maori, and even some deeply acculturated earlier arrivals within the Chinese migrant community itself.

While socio-political marginalisation has been imposed on the Chinese migrant community in general, some members of this community may be motivated to elevate their self-image. Given that they have been denied a voice in New Zealand mainstream media, the marginalised Chinese create their own media. Who are these people whose voice is denied in New Zealand mainstream media? It can be argued that they are mainly the recent Chinese migrants who are more sensitive about race-based politics than the earlier arrivals. Furthermore, they lack strong competence in the English language, and many feel it easier to use the Chinese language to convey sophisticated and provoking ideas. As discussed in Chapter Two, statistics show that recent Chinese migrants to New Zealand are mainly from the PRC. Therefore, the New Zealand Chinese-language media by and large provide an alternative platform for the recent PRC migrants to speak out.

Old and some new Chinese who are fluent in English may have no difficulty in accessing New Zealand mainstream media to give themselves a voice through
journalistic interviews, letters to the editors, and talk-back radio shows. In some cases, English-speaking Chinese could be provocative writers or journalists of New Zealand mainstream media such as Tze Ming Mok\textsuperscript{40} and Lincoln Tan. Tan as a new Chinese migrant from Singapore even owns \textit{Iball},\textsuperscript{41} an English language newspaper which is well-known for publishing debates about Asian-related issues in the country. Tan himself is also a columnist of the \textit{New Zealand Herald}.

\textbf{Features and main function of Chinese media in New Zealand}

Primarily serving socio-politically marginalised recent Chinese migrants, New Zealand Chinese-language media may at first open up an alternative public sphere to address race-based issues, especially those that have been highly politicised in the country. These media can be considered to be instances of free zones independent of the dominant institutions of the core society of New Zealand; they enable the promulgation of the alternative social opinions, concepts and practices of those marginalised Chinese migrants. By enhancing self-consciousness of those people about their own distinct socio-political identity, Chinese-language media facilitate the maintenance of a separate Chinese community within New Zealand. In terms of serving this specific community, the emergence and existence of Chinese media enable and empower some new Chinese migrants to utilise their own media as a free public sphere to highlight issues of special interests to them and provoke discussions caused by racial differences and to fight against racism, although their voices may not

\textsuperscript{40} Tze Ming Mok is a fiction writer and socio-political commentator, and has been an advocate for the Asian community in New Zealand.
\textsuperscript{41} Lincoln Tan was a journalist in Singapore before his migration to New Zealand. Having difficulty in finding a journalistic position in New Zealand mainstream media, Tan decided to publish his own newspaper, \textit{Iball}, which was founded in Christchurch, and later moved to Auckland.
be heard by the core society of New Zealand. For many newly arrived Chinese migrants, it is particularly meaningful to have such an alternative public sphere to address and to discuss their concerns and interests.

As noted earlier, alternative media are operated through horizontal dialogue between media operators and an audience who share a like-minded consciousness; thus, ‘native reporting’ is also a feature of the Chinese-language media in New Zealand, through which a wide channel of communication among new Chinese migrants can be constructed and utilised. This kind of inner communication within the Chinese migrant community is particularly vital for the newcomers to realise the availability of Chinese social networks in the country.

Besides news items and issues, Chinese media are important in providing specific information (e.g. housing, employment, social services) to assist the newcomers in removing language and cultural barriers to adapt to their new lives and to settle into New Zealand. In contrast, the early arrived Chinese, with language difficulty or not, are less dependent on such information, since they have settled in New Zealand and are more familiar with the social surroundings in the country.

In addition, news of the homeland in Chinese media contains another type of information that keeps Chinese migrants emotionally tied to their countries of origin. The circulation of popular cultural products made within ‘Greater China’ particularly reinforces the newcomers’ sense of belonging to an imagined Chinese community. Within this imagined community (Anderson 1983) and through the sharing of information circulated via Chinese media, newly arrived Chinese who may feel socially alienated can find a comfort zone.
Overall, the socio-political marginalisation from the New Zealand core society can result in new Chinese migrants using an alternative public sphere to articulate their political voices, seeking specific types of practical information for settlement, and hoping to find Chinese social networks to provide them with emotional and psychological support, since they are living as aliens in a foreign land with a completely different cultural and social background. In many cases, the language barrier could be a major obstacle for them. It is difficult for them to receive comfort from faraway relatives and friends back in the home country. Loneliness and helplessness may typify the mental status of new Chinese migrants. Under such circumstances, Chinese-language media fulfil the role of forming a platform for new Chinese migrants to support and communicate with each other, but without necessarily seeing each other. To relieve Chinese migrants’ psychological stress, Chinese-language media give priority to entertaining the community by publicising the contents of popular cultures of their homeland.

**Semiotic analysis of Chinese media**

The extensive discussion above has permitted an understanding of the discourse of Chinese-language media in New Zealand. ‘Discourse’ here is used in the sense defined by Foucault (1977). According to Foucault, discourse is “coherent, self-referential bodies of statements that produce an account of reality by generating ‘knowledge’ about particular objects or concepts, (and also by) shaping the rules of what can be said and known about those entities (cited in Childers and Hentzi1995, 84). ” It is not here intended to replicate the many accounts of structuralism and deconstruction, but the following discussions are conducted in the spirit of discourse analysis in order to pursue an understanding of the language and visual facets of
Chinese media in New Zealand. This approach attempts to perceive these Chinese media from the viewpoint of semiotics.

Semiotics is the study of signs (including sounds, marks, and other form of codes) and the ways in which they produce meaning. Semiotics is based on the interpretation of the arbitrary connections between the thing signifying (signifier) and that which it signifies (signified). There are three basic types of arbitrary connections: icon, index and symbol (Childers and Hentzi 1995, 272-9). To explicate the meanings of such connections, the researcher would like to quote three typical examples: gay magazines tend to have photos of handsome and muscular men on cover pages; the Nazi swastika is often used as the logo of extreme rightists’ official websites; and a clip of New Age music may announce a spiritual program to be broadcast on air. All of these practices can be easily found within the characteristic writings and images used in Chinese media. In terms of using icon, index and symbol, ethnic Chinese media are similar to other forms of alternative media.

However, before moving to Chinese media, this researcher intends to discuss Naficy (1993)’s compelling research on Iranian television in Los Angeles, which is a detailed case study identifying the special features of the textual strategies and typifying practices of diasporic media. The following discussion on Naficy’s work is intended to build the conceptual basis on which semiotic features of the Chinese media in New Zealand can be understood.

For Naficy this research is situated within the context that the exilic Iranian community negotiated and constituted its cultural identity in the U.S during the 1980s. After the 1978 Islamic Revolution in Iran, a large number of middle and upper
class Iranians who were involved with the development of western culture in the Pahlavi Dynasty fled to Los Angeles. Los Angeles as the capital of American popular culture provided this exiled community with a vigorous platform in which to produce a wide range of music, dance, poetry and video, as the presentation of Iranian culture in the west.

Exile, as Naficy describes it, is “a process of perpetual becoming, involving separation from home, a period of liminality and in-betweenness that can be temporary or permanent, and incorporation into the dominant host society that can be partial or complete (ibid., 8-9).” Concentrating on liminality, Naficy argues that exile culture articulates the aesthetic expression of loss, separation and nostalgia. In terms of the use of language, Persian as the native language for all Iranians in exile was spoken and presented on exile-specific television. In these television programmes, the hosts always addressed the audience with, for example, “you dear ones”, or “let’s watch the following messages together”, to create a sense of communal cohesion (ibid., 108-9). With regard to visual images and expressions, television producers often employed footage of tortured and dead bodies, and ruined and destroyed buildings, to convey the sense of loss and solidarity. In particular, images such as wilderness, seas, birds, and gardens often appeared as the logos of programs. These images were also frequently applied to set up the backgrounds and foregrounds of the programs. As Naficy explained, “wilderness, sea, birds, and gardens act as icons, indexes, and symbols of the nature order and of Iranian cosmology. In exile, each of these signs heightens the experience of the other and of the sense, and each intensification in turn enlarges the grandeur of the other …..The intimate intensity of
individual exiles’ feelings for their homeland is expressed through their identification with the immensity and timelessness of these signs of nature (ibid., 160). ”

The use in this case of the Persian language and special images may be considered, in terms of semiotics, to differentiate the exilic Iranian community from the mainstream U.S. society and to transform visual and linguistic material into an ‘Iranian cultural forum’. According to Naficy, this cultural forum can disseminate information, and express shared beliefs and values. More importantly, it assists the producers and viewers in the process of their acculturation and in the construction of individual and collective identities in exile (ibid., 114). In this sense, Behdad (1996, 457) concludes that television in Naficy’s study plays a ‘mediating role in transforming an exile community into an ethnicity’.

The key word ‘ethnicity’ brings us back to the early discussions on the emergence and existence of Chinese-language media in New Zealand. It may be argued that ‘Chinese ethnicity’, as provisionally defined earlier, contains an additional, metaphorical meaning. ‘Chineseness’ defines the boundaries between these migrants and the core society of New Zealand, not only in terms of racial differentiation and confrontation, but also with regard to the promulgation of distinct political cultures of different social groups. New Chinese migrants desire their needs to be expressed within the co-existence of powerful hegemonies. Given the exclusion imposed by social boundaries, the establishment of Chinese media as a means of articulating the needs of a distinct new Chinese community becomes an exercise in constructing the identity of a marginal culture in New Zealand.
Production of Chinese media

The above discussion leads to the conclusion that in order to run the Chinese media successfully, it is crucial for Chinese media operators to be aware of the components and settlement patterns of the new Chinese community, since those factors determine who the Chinese audience will be and what kind of common needs and interests they have. These needs and interests are the basic soil for nurturing and cultivating the Chinese media in New Zealand.

The physical production of Chinese media can be influenced by various factors which can be broadly categorised as institutional and technical. On an institutional level, Chinese media are not dissimilar to New Zealand mainstream media in terms of establishing and operating the media as businesses. Unlike the state-funded Chinese language media run by the SBS in Australia (e.g., Husband 1994; Cunningham and Sinclair 2000), the Chinese media in New Zealand have to rely on audience and advertisers to provide revenue. As private business ventures, the Chinese media in New Zealand are run by individual persons or shareholders. Therefore, they have to follow the general rules of the market economy in order to survive.

Over the years, much literature on media economy has been produced (e.g., Scherer 1980; Wirth and Bloch 1995; Chyi and Sylvie 2001; Albarran 2002). The media market is formed by content providers who offer information and entertainment as products, and by consumers, including the audience and advertisers. Chinese media in this country have to confront issues such as governmental regulation, industry supply, resource allocation and competition in the same way as mainstream media. The major difference between Chinese and mainstream media in this respect is the media market
size. Unlike mainstream media which are backed up by a broader economy, Chinese media largely have to rely on the development of a Chinese community economy in the pursuit of advertising revenue.

At the institutional level, another influence on the existence of ethnic media is the New Zealand government’s policies towards the emergence and operation of ethnic media, including the Chinese media. In general, a liberal democratic government may promote multiculturalism by providing a free environment to encourage the development of ethnic media. By contrast, a dictatorial regime may not permit the existence of independent ethnic media. The regime may use strict censorship and promulgate specific broadcasting standards to control firmly controversial issues related to ethnic affairs, even when these would otherwise be addressed by mainstream media. New Zealand is a Western democratic country, in which mass media are largely free of government control. The Advertising Standards Authority, New Zealand Press Council and the Broadcasting Standards Authority, are the three main bodies that have power to intervene in the provision of New Zealand media content as a consequence of formal complaints from the audience. Independent of such audience complaints, New Zealand media personnel work in accordance with principles of self-regulation compiled and recognised by the industry. However, nearly all ethnic media in New Zealand, including the Chinese media, seem to operate in a regulatory vacuum, since they do not appear as members of any organisation related to the three authoritative bodies mentioned above. The Chinese Media Bureau, a private business organisation, is the only ethnic media body involved in the Advertising Standards Authority. Since 2003, the Chinese Media Bureau has translated the Advertising Codes of Practice into the Chinese language and distributed
it among all Chinese media operators, from whom the response has been rather passive. It seems that the Chinese audiences are also not responsive to the Codes of Practice which regulates the New Zealand media industry in general. For instance, from 2003 until 2007 the Advertising Standards Authority received only one formal complaint about the Chinese newspapers from one Chinese reader.\(^{42}\) Hence, it may be argued that the Chinese media enjoy complete freedom to develop and flourish, and to deliver any kinds of content.

The availability of financial resources to media owners plays an important role in the recruitment of qualified media personnel, including editors, reporters, programme producers, etc. Ideally Chinese media workers would be required to have adequate knowledge of the Chinese migrant community, especially of the needs and interests of the newly arrived Chinese. They also need to have strong skills in Chinese and English to understand the social environment of the community, and in turn their interpretation of mainstream New Zealanders’ perception of the Chinese community may be essential.

The availability of finance also permits appropriate technology for Chinese media content to be created and to be updated. As computers and the internet become more powerful and sophisticated, the New Zealand Chinese media have moved into the digitised world. As a result, textual and graphical information can be transmitted within the Chinese migrant community and to and from the homeland and New Zealand at unprecedented speed. The production of Chinese media, therefore, has

\(^{42}\) According to the researcher’s interview with the Chinese Media Bureau in November 2007, this may be because of the cultural sensitivity of Chinese, who do not like their names to be publicised, an essential part of the handling of a formal complaint by the Advertising Standards Authority.
increasingly had to compete for the supply of media content, human resources, audience and advertisers.

**Construction and reception of Chinese media messages**

In order to discuss the construction of Chinese media messages and the audience’s reception, the framework ‘discourse analysis’, developed by Fairclough (1995) will be used. Although Fairclough’s effort has been devoted to analysing the mass media, his approach is also applicable to the Chinese media in New Zealand. As Fairclough (ibid., 12) argues, “……the relationship between the mass media and other parts of the network of social institutions they operate within their relationship to ordinary life (the ‘lifeworld’) and the family on the one hand, their relationship to business and commerce on the other …..I see the mass media as operating within a social system, which makes it important not to isolate particular aspects such as these two tendencies from the way the media are shaped by, and in turn contribution to shaping, the system overall.”

With input from sociology, linguistics and semiotics along with the ‘social-cognitive model’ developed by van Dijk (1988a, 1988b, 1991), Fairclough’s framework (Figure 3-1) emphasises an examination of the relationships between media content, media production and the process of an audience’s comprehension of media content, and between these and the wider social practices within which they are embedded.
Within the discourse of the Chinese media in New Zealand, the framework illustrated in this diagram suggests that the content of Chinese media can be analysed in the following ways. In terms of a critical linguistic approach, the text can be perceived as “built out of choices from within available systems of options in vocabulary, grammar, and so forth. … [T]he linguistic choices that are made in texts can carry ideological meaning” (Fairclough 1995, 25). In this sense, it may be argued that Chinese texts in these media can reflect how socio-politically marginalised Chinese migrants use the Chinese language, since the audience tends to accept linguistic forms.
of expression in a manner generated by the socio-cultural reality of the new Chinese community.

As for Chinese media’s visual aspects, the patterns of the Chinese migrants’ adaptation and acculturation in New Zealand may also shape certain modes of presentation. Thus the manner of presentation will reflect cultural identity of the main audience of Chinese media and the social relationships within the Chinese migrant community. This means that the main audience may largely influence what material is to be presented, and how, in Chinese media.

Different stages of adaptation in the core society of New Zealand can further influence the Chinese audience’s reception of Chinese media. Depending on the extent of acculturation in New Zealand, different sub-groups within the Chinese migrant community may have developed various attitudes towards the available Chinese media. For the less acculturated, regular consumption of the Chinese media may reinforce their sense of social belonging to a particular marginalised minority group. In this regard, Chinese media can be perceived as an effective communication channel to connect members of the new Chinese, and thereby to bind them into a distinct sub-group within the Chinese migrant community. Using the acclaimed argument by Anderson (1983), the Chinese media are presumably an extremely powerful means of constructing an ‘imagined community’ for any marginalised new Chinese.

In conclusion, in contemporary New Zealand, the Chinese-language media mainly serve the needs and immediate interests of the socio-politically marginalised new Chinese immigrants; because of their short settlement history, most of them are
minimally acculturated to the core society of this country, and probably lack strong competence in the English language. Using this theoretical framework, the application of suitable methodology and the collection of quantitative and qualitative data for this research will be discussed in Chapter Four.
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA COLLECTION AND EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

This chapter applies the theoretical framework developed in Chapter Three to the design of the empirical research and the collection of data. As explained in the previous chapter, the theoretical framework for examining the New Zealand Chinese media is aimed at exploring how ethnic Chinese media serve the specific interests and needs of the socio-politically marginalised recent Chinese migrants mainly from the PRC. As a consequence, the objective in gathering data was that the information collected and the selection compiled would illustrate the characteristics of the Chinese media and explain the interactive relationship between Chinese media and Chinese migrants.

In order to ensure the validity of the data, the scope of data selection was extended from the content of Chinese media to include the Chinese audience and media operators. To this end, the research was designed to be in three phases: first, quantitative and qualitative data were generated from the content of Chinese-language radio programmes, Chinese newspapers and Chinese websites during the period of the 2005 New Zealand general election; second, qualitative data were obtained from focus groups and interviews with members of the Chinese audience subsequent to the election; third, qualitative data were generated from interviews with Chinese media personnel. The aim was to cover three areas through these empirical findings: 1) the general content of Chinese-language media in New Zealand; 2) the relationship
between the Chinese media and Chinese migrants; 3) Chinese migrants’ perceptions of New Zealand and their link to the homeland as manifested by the Chinese media.

This chapter consists of four major sections: the first focuses on the design concepts of the research including theoretical considerations of mass media in relation to democratic elections, and background information about democratic elections in ‘Greater China’ and New Zealand; the remainder presents the detail of the three phases of the research and the empirical findings.

**Section A**

**Conceptualising the design of research**

Given that the content of Chinese media is miscellaneous and frequently changing, it was decided to begin by pursuing an understanding of the general characteristics of the content of the Chinese media. This is followed by an examination of the interactions between Chinese media and the Chinese migrant community. One possible approach would be to select quantitative and qualitative data from the Chinese media portraying particular events and agendas likely to draw special attention among the Chinese migrants; alternatively, samples could be randomly selected during a fixed time period. In fact, both approaches were used.
At the time this research commenced in May 2005, the 2005 New Zealand general election was approaching.\textsuperscript{43} The election created a timely platform for matching the above two criteria to generate useful data for the purpose of the research.

**Democratic elections and mass media: theoretical considerations**

Electoral democracy, as Diamond (1999, 10) notes, is “a civilian, constitutional system in which the legislative and chief executive offices are filled through regular, competitive, multiparty elections with universal suffrage.” Drawing on ideas from Elklit and Svensson (1997), Diamond and Myers (2000, 366-7) argue that “free” and “fair” elections are held under a number of circumstances such as: when candidates and partisans of different political parties have substantial freedom to campaign and solicit votes, while voters experience little or no coercion in exercising their electoral choices; when electoral districts and rules do not put opposition parties at a systematic disadvantage; when a neutral authority, not the ruling party, controls and administers elections to ensure voting and vote-counting under transparent and impartial procedures; when competing parties and candidates all have access to publicly controlled (or state-influenced) mass media.

Hayward and Rudd (2006, 479) elaborate on the reciprocal relationship between mass media and politics: political communication demands that politicians rely on mass media through words, sounds, images, and even actions in order to affect citizens and voters’ perception and reception of the political environment. Three groups of actors

\textsuperscript{43} New Zealand runs its general election every three years. Once 18 years or older, a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident who has lived in the country for one year or more without leaving the country, is required by law to register on the Parliamentary Electoral Roll. Voting is not compulsory.
participate in this political communication: political parties and candidates; media personnel; and citizens and voters. On a theoretical level, Kleinnijenhuis and Rietberg (1995, 96-100) have conceptualised the interactions between political elites, mass media and the public as taking part in three processes: 1) ‘top-down’, which refers to political elites setting the political agenda for the public through mass media, such as party advertising campaigns in newspapers and leaders’ debates on television; 2) ‘bottom-up’, which refers to the public setting the political agenda for the political elites through the media, for example through opinion polls, letters to the editor and talkback radio; 3) ‘mediacracy’, which refers to the media determining political agendas for the public and political elites.

An attempt was made to apply the above ideas of democratic elections and mass media in an examination of the relationships between New Zealand’s political elites, ethnic Chinese media and the Chinese migrant community during the 2005 election. The objective was to find out what agendas politicians set up to communicate with Chinese migrants, how ethnic Chinese media served the specific needs and interests of Chinese migrants, and how these media mediated between politicians and Chinese migrants. Characteristics of the content of the Chinese media relating to this particular event were analysed in order to explore the significance of the New Zealand Chinese media to the Chinese migrant community.

Two aspects of the Chinese media in association with the 2005 general election were considered: how the Chinese-language media represented the 2005 election; and how Chinese media played their role in communicating between Chinese migrants as voters and New Zealand political elites. It was expected that Chinese migrants’ response to the election through the Chinese-language media should give some
indication of their perceptions of New Zealand. These perceptions may have been influenced by their immediate socio-economic background in the home countries, which contributes to the evolution of their Chinese identity. This identity includes consciousness of self and otherness and an understanding of New Zealand society and mainstream New Zealanders, and may also combine Chinese migrants’ nostalgic sentiments towards the homeland with a comparison with New Zealand society. The general election would be a catalyst for some Chinese migrants to express their aspirations for socio-economic mobility, their political ambitions and their cultural orientation towards their new life in the host country. A background picture of democratic elections in Hong Kong, Taiwan and China and of party politics in New Zealand will put these considerations in context.

The democratic experiences in Hong Kong, Taiwan and China

Among the three regions, Taiwan is generally regarded as the first Chinese democracy. Defeated by the communists in the civil war, Chiang Kai-shek led the KMT in retreat to Taiwan and resolved to build a different Chinese society on the basis of Western ideas of liberal democracy. At least once every three years between 1950 and 1987 Taiwan held five types of local elections: village, city, county, municipal city and province. By using many ‘dirty tricks’ and the guaranteed votes of military and government party members (Chao and Myers 2000), the KMT manipulated the local elections and maintained its unchallenged leadership until 1986, when President Chiang Ching-kuo44 announced that the KMT would launch major

44 Chiang Ching-kuo is the son of Chiang Kai-shek.
political reforms to democratise Taiwan. That was followed by a group of opposition politicians forming the Democratic Progressive Party, whose avowed aim was the independence of Taiwan. Chiang Ching-kuo took no action to suppress the DPP. Instead, on 15 July 1987, the government lifted martial law, allowing the subsequent rapid democratisation of Taiwan. In 1988 and 1989, dozens of political parties were formed and a free press began to flourish; in early 1992, a constitutional reform took place and the electoral process began to expand; finally, in March 1996, Taiwan held its first national election for president and vice-president.

The colonial legacy forced Hong Kong, a British colony until 1997, to have a different experience of democracy. As Pepper (2000) puts it, within a prevailing Chinese environment, the British authorities chose not to democratise Hong Kong, since they considered the Hong Kong Chinese to be ‘politically apathetic’ and to prefer ‘to leave the business of government to the professionals’. The colonial government feared the possibility that the mainland communists would endanger Hong Kong’s political stability; accordingly it left the “population’s anti-communist majority to go about their daily lives to raise their families and improve their livelihood (Diamond and Myers 2000, 379).” It was the 1997 handover which initiated the process of democratising Hong Kong. Following Margaret Thatcher’s confirmation of Hong Kong’s return to China in 1982, the Hong Kong authority introduced a limited electoral process in 1984 and later produced the draft constitution, the Basic Law, for governing Hong Kong after the handover. As Baum (2000, 440) argues, the Basic Law, under the guiding principle of ‘one country, two

45 These two phrases were cited from Alexander Grantham, the governor of Hong Kong from 1947 to 1957 (Pepper 2000, 416).
systems’, “retained many of the key institutional features of the late colonial regime, including a strong, appointed chief executive and a weak, mainly advisory/consultative legislature, an arrangement popularly referred to as ‘executive-led government’”. Hence, Baum (ibid., 462) concludes that Hong Kong retains its political institutions – semi-democratic in form but neo-authoritarian in essence.

In mainland China, the ruling Communist Party has tightly controlled society since its victory in the 1949 revolution. Western-style democratic elections were forbidden in the country until 1988, which saw the launching of direct and contested elections for village committees and chairs. It is still arguable whether village elections in China are truly democratic (e.g. O'Brien and Li, 2000; Pastor and Tan, 2000; Oi and Rozelle, 2000). As Diamond and Myers (2000, 382) put it, “the PRC leaders have repeatedly stressed their determination to avoid adopting any Western political models and instead design a Chinese-style polity, governed by a single ruling party that combines socialism and democracy with Chinese customs and thought.” The result of this is that mass political culture in China still has a minimal level of democratic orientation. Nevertheless, Wang (2007) argues that, since China’s rapid economic growth has yielded social changes leading to democratisation, Chinese citizens have showed a promising trend to be in favour of such elements of liberal democracy as freedom of speech, political participation, and interest group politics.

To sum up, democratic elections are relatively new political exercises in Taiwan, Hong Kong and China, where the majority of new Chinese immigrants to New Zealand were generated. Among these three large groups of Chinese migrants, Taiwanese are likely to have more experience in party campaigns, fund-raising and political assemblies than the other two.
**New Zealand's party politics under MMP and the 2005 general election**

In a referendum held in late 1993, a majority of New Zealand electors voted to introduce a new electoral system known as Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) to replace the first-past-the post (FPP) voting system which had been used in the country for nearly 160 years. MMP was designed to enhance the political opportunities of small parties, giving representation to all those crossing the threshold of 5 per cent of the overall vote or winning an electorate seat. With the party vote determining the overall distribution of seats, electorate MPs and list MPs (according to the rankings chosen by party hierarchy) together comprise the New Zealand Parliament. Larger parties that fail to win a majority of the seats in Parliament have to work with small parties, which may strongly influence the construction of the government. However, both smaller and larger parties have to compromise themselves in such a coalition.

New Zealand's first general election under MMP was held in 1996. Between 1996 and 2005, three coalition governments (National-New Zealand First, 1996-98; Labour-Alliance, 1999-2002; Labour-Progressive, 2002-05) were formed as the results of the three general elections.

According to the Chief Electoral Office, a total of nineteen political parties were registered for the 2005 New Zealand general election. However, only eight parties played any significant role in this election. They are listed in table 4-1.
The Labour Party is generally classified as a centre-left wing party. As Miller (2005, 153-4) comments, the party professed an early belief in the foundations of socialism, including the need for a fundamental restructuring of the capitalist economy towards public ownership and control. Since the fourth Labour government (1984-1990)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Date of Formation</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Labour</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>In government 1935-49; 1957-60; 1972-75; 1984-90; 1999-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>In government 1949-57; 1960-72; 1975-84; 1990-99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand First</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>In government 1996-98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Not in government prior to 2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>The Association of Consumers and Taxpayers (the forerunner of the ACT New Zealand party) was founded in 1993.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Future</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Government support Party 2002 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>In government 2002 -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maori</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>The co-leader of the party, Tariana Turia, was a former Labour Party member who had been a Cabinet minister of the Labour-led government.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-1: Political parties in the 2005 New Zealand general election.
launched a series of radical reforms that became known as ‘Rogernomics’, the party has transformed into a ‘hybrid’ party of the neo-liberal and social democratic type. The party still pursues its traditional goals of protecting beneficiaries, low-income Maori, and workers’ rights, while at the same time defending its free market credentials with middle-income voters.

The National Party generally presents itself as a hybrid party of the liberal/conservative type based on an ideology that is strongly anti-collectivist, anti-unionist and anti-interventionist. National supporters believe in values such as individual freedom and choice, personal responsibility, and limited government. After winning the 1990 general election, the party introduced a wide range of governmental changes including substantially reduced social spending and an increased pace of privatisations; it implemented the Employment Contract Act to reduce the power of unions. Those sweeping actions cost National its catastrophic defeat in the 1999 general election.

The New Zealand First Party (NZ First) was founded in 1993 by Winston Peters, a sacked National Minister of Maori Affairs. As Miller (ibid., 156) comments, “New Zealand First offers the most complete manifestation of contemporary populism.” Since the party started, Peters launched a number of vigorous campaigns against corruption in leading companies and for settling the Treaty of Waitangi between the Crown and Maori. He is best known, especially to migrants, for attacking immigrants.

46 ‘Rogernomics’ is named after Roger Douglas, Minister of Finance in the fourth Labour government. He played a prominent role in the radical economic restructuring during this government.
The party enjoyed sufficient popularity to enable it to play a ‘king-maker’ role in the formation of coalition governments after the 1996, 1999 and 2002 elections.

The Green Party, as its name suggests, is committed to environmental activism aimed at conserving natural resources. However, Green activists tend to present the party as centre-left, since they believe in ‘post-materialist’ values and advocate liberal views such as opposition to nuclear weapons, and the protection of women’s and minorities’ rights. The ACT Party grew out of the Association of Consumers and Taxpayers, which was founded by Roger Douglas. The party is an advocate of small government, private enterprise, and market liberalism (Aimer and Miller 2002, 4). United Future was formed from the merger of centrist party United New Zealand and Christian-dominated conservative Future New Zealand. The party focuses on advocating universal family principles, although some critics object to its explicit religious connection. The Progressive Party is ideologically left-wing and holds a number of policy objectives such as full employment and free education and healthcare.

The Maori Party came into existence by the controversial law passed by the Labour Government in 2004, which reserved the ownership of the country's foreshore and seabed to the state, pre-empting any Maori claims based on customary right. The party claims to unite "all Māori" into a single political movement. Traditionally, Maori voters have provided strong support to Labour. Seven Maori seats are reserved for Maori political representation in the New Zealand Parliament.
Figure 4-1 shows the final result of the 2005 general election. Neither Labour nor National won an outright majority in the parliament. Negotiations with potential coalition partners were equally crucial for both parties after 17 September, the polling day. Among the six important minor parties, the Green and Progressive parties had clearly proclaimed their support for Labour. The Maori Party’s position seemed ambivalent, since Tariana Turia, one of the party’s co-leaders, resigned from Labour, which had however traditionally obtained support from the majority of Maori. NZ First with seven seats once again played its role as ‘king maker’. After bitter experiences with National, Peters finally chose to work with Labour as Minister for Foreign Affairs outside cabinet. On 17 October, Helen Clark announced the arrangements for the new Labour-led government, which was a coalition between Labour and Progressive; NZ First and United Future entered into confidence and supply agreements with the government; the Greens promised to work with the government on agreed policy and budget initiatives, and not to oppose confidence or supply for this term of Parliament.
Three phases of the research

The research was designed to generate quantitative and qualitative data in three phases by following the development and consequences of the 2005 New Zealand general election as represented in the Chinese media, and tracking the significance of the Chinese media to the Chinese migrant community. The period of the 2005 New Zealand general election was defined as starting from 25 July 2005, when the Prime Minister Helen Clark officially announced the date of the 2005 general election, to 21 October 2005, shortly after the new coalition government was formed. This period was thirteen weeks in total.

Section B

Phase 1: analysis of the content of Chinese media

In the first phase, quantitative and qualitative data were acquired in order to encapsulate the features of the general content of Chinese media, including Chinese-language radio, newspapers and websites, during the period of the 2005 election. These features include characteristics of editorial coverage, journalistic interests, and Chinese audience feedback on editorial coverage. Data from Chinese television were not included, although programmes on WTV are very popular within the Chinese migrant community. WTV is inaccessible to those who do not have a subscription to this satellite network, for which there is a monthly fee ranging between $74.01 and $134.40. It was assumed that the total size of the Auckland-based Chinese audience who regularly watched WTV in 2005 would be much smaller than that of the Chinese
audience consuming free Chinese newspapers and radio programs, \(^{47}\) and also smaller than the number of New Zealand Chinese internet users. This latter estimation was based on a research report publicised by InfoAge: “New Zealanders continue to have one of the highest penetration rates for internet use in the world with 79.8 per cent or more than 2.5 million people connecting from home, school, work, libraries or internet cafes by the end of 2004.”\(^ {48}\)

During the thirteen weeks of the election campaign and formation of the new government, an attempt was made to focus mainly on monitoring *I Love New Zealand*, the major programme of news reports and current affairs on 936AM, the Chinese radio in Mandarin, which broadcasts between 7:30am and 9:30am from Monday to Friday. This programme is presented in the form of news reports, commentaries and interviews with politicians, and also invites audiences to participate in the programme by calling in. Since both PRC Chinese and Taiwanese speak Mandarin and comprise the majority of the Auckland-based Chinese population, *I love New Zealand* seemed to generate the most suitable data from Chinese radio for the purpose of this study. During the thirteen weeks all the sessions of *I love New Zealand* were recorded for analysis.

\(^{47}\) The information of the pricing range of WTV is publicised on the website of the company http://www.wtv.co.nz/packages.pdf (accessed 8 March 2008). In 2006, WTV claimed that more than 10,000 customers subscribed to their programmes. These customers included both normal households and corporate subscribers, for instance, restaurants and motels. Assuming there were between 4 and 5 people in each household gives a total of approximately 45,000 Chinese audience members nationwide with access to Chinese satellite TV. This is about 30% of the whole New Zealand Chinese population.

\(^{48}\) InfoAge is an IT consulting firm which has been working for a number of governmental sectors including the Auckland Regional Council, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health. (accessed 13 March 2008 http://www.infoage.co.nz/resources/netstats.htm).
At the time of the 2005 election, ten Chinese print media publications had a significant circulation within the Auckland region. Table 4-2 shows their profiles.

As noted in Chapter Two, the New Zealand Chinese Herald has maintained a better journalistic quality than other Chinese newspapers because of its special connection with the New Zealand Herald in the past. The Chinese Herald has the most diverse coverage with independent news reports, current affairs commentaries, and letters to

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Table 4-2: Auckland-based Chinese language newspapers and magazines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of publication</th>
<th>Circulation (copies)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Location of main readership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand Chinese Bizlink</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>weekly</td>
<td>Auckland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand Chinese Herald</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>three times per week</td>
<td>Auckland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin Times</td>
<td>17000</td>
<td>daily</td>
<td>Auckland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriental Times</td>
<td>15000</td>
<td>weekly</td>
<td>Auckland, Christchurch, Hamilton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Weekly</td>
<td>16000</td>
<td>weekly</td>
<td>Auckland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice of Asia</td>
<td>22000</td>
<td>bi-weekly</td>
<td>Auckland, Christchurch, Hamilton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand Mirror</td>
<td>20000</td>
<td>weekly</td>
<td>Auckland, Wellington, Dunedin, Hamilton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Times Weekly</td>
<td>15000</td>
<td>weekly</td>
<td>Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Times</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>weekly</td>
<td>Auckland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTV Monthly</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>monthly</td>
<td>New Zealand nationwide</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At the time of the 2005 election, ten Chinese print media publications had a significant circulation within the Auckland region. Table 4-2 shows their profiles.

As noted in Chapter Two, the New Zealand Chinese Herald has maintained a better journalistic quality than other Chinese newspapers because of its special connection with the New Zealand Herald in the past. The Chinese Herald has the most diverse coverage with independent news reports, current affairs commentaries, and letters to

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49 The NZ Chinese Herald has its own reporters to contribute New Zealand news to its front page, while other Chinese-language newspapers rely mainly on translated news from the mainstream media.
the editors, in comparison with other Chinese newspapers, which are dominated by advertisements, mainly for Chinese community businesses. All issues of this newspaper published during the thirteen weeks were collected. At the same time special issues of other Chinese print media were also collected for additional information.

During the period that Chinese radio and Chinese newspapers were monitored, data were also collected from www.chinese.net.nz, one of the most popular Chinese-language gateway websites in New Zealand. This powerful search engine also delivers international and New Zealand local news, advertisements, feature articles and on-line chat rooms. The researcher’s primary interest was in tracking the Chinese internet viewers’ hits on New Zealand local news and their responses to the messages relating to the election during the thirteen weeks.

Given that New Zealand local news in the Chinese media is usually an edited translation from mainstream English-language media, a decision was also made to monitor content relevant to the general election in mainstream media including the New Zealand Herald, Sunday Star Times, Close Up, Agenda, and Face to Face with Kim Hill on TV One, and the Leaders’ Debates on TV One and TV 3. The objective in monitoring the political content in the mainstream media was to obtain a general awareness of the possible sources of information available to the Chinese media over

50 www.skykiwi.co.nz states that it started much earlier; however, it began enjoying much popularity after the 2005 election. This website has now become the best-known Chinese-language website in New Zealand. Skykiwi claims that every day there are 70,000 visits to this website; the majority (84%) of these visitors are young under 24 years old (http://www.skykiwi.co.nz/pages/about_us/html-cn/index.html, accessed 3 August 2009).
the period of the election. No systematic comparison was intended between the political content in the Chinese media and that in New Zealand mainstream media.

In analysing the content of the Chinese media, the following questions were asked during the first phase of the research:—

- What is the general content of the New Zealand Chinese media?

- What kind of international and New Zealand local news reports were provided by the Chinese media during the 2005 general election?

- What kind of news reports seemed to draw special attention and interest among the Chinese audience during this period?

- Did the Chinese media reveal any correlation between the Chinese migrants’ comprehension of New Zealand politics and their political behaviour in this election?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Total Pages</th>
<th>% of Total Coverage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>News</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisements</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>81.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Pages</td>
<td>42.4</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-3: A breakdown of the content of the *New Zealand Chinese Herald.*
During the thirteen weeks, a collection was made of all thirty-nine issues of the *NZ Chinese Herald*. Published on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, each issue of the *NZ Chinese Herald* contains approximately 42 pages. As noted earlier, it has the most diverse coverage of regular independent news reports, commentaries on current affairs and occasional letters to the editor, in contrast to other Chinese newspapers, which are dominated by advertisements for Chinese community businesses. Even so, this does not mean that the content of the *NZ Chinese Herald* is not predominantly advertisements. Table 4-3 presents a breakdown of the coverage of this paper. The data show that the content of the *NZ Chinese Herald* is roughly 80% advertisements and 20% news. Table 4-4 presents a further breakdown of the news of this paper. The editorial space for presenting New Zealand local news is much less than that for the news of Hong Kong, Taiwan and China; news of China covers more space than news of Hong Kong and Taiwan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>News of Regions</th>
<th>Average pages per issue</th>
<th>% of total (average 42.4 pages)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>0.027 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong and Taiwan</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.017 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.016 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other countries and regions</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.015 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4-4:* A breakdown of the news holes of the *New Zealand Chinese Herald.*
The programmes on Chinese radio AM 936 share a similar pattern of content to that of the NZ Chinese Herald. They rely mainly on advertisements for Chinese community businesses and Mandarin-speaking programmes including news and entertainment transmitted from China and Taiwan. A primary research focus was to monitor ‘I love New Zealand’ on 936 AM, which is the most important programme.
produced by this radio station. It is presented in the form of news reports and commentaries on current affairs hosted by two presenters. The hosts also invite call-ins from the audience to participate in the programme. ‘I love New Zealand’ runs each weekday between 7:30am and 9:30am. All sessions of this programme were recorded during the thirteen weeks. For each day, each minute of the programme time was allocated to one content category, which thus broke down the two hours into a number of sections with different categories of content as shown in Table 4-5. From Table 4-5, Chart 4-1 was generated to summarise the data. It shows that advertisements and homeland news occupied nearly a quarter of the programme time, although the programme is designed to be news-oriented and is entitled ‘I Love New Zealand’.

It needs to be mentioned that the advertisements for Chinese businesses in the NZ Chinese Herald are very similar to those in other Chinese newspapers; 936 AM carries less variety of advertisements. A Chinese telephone directory usually provides more information about Chinese businesses advertised in all Chinese media. At the time of data collection, there were several kinds of Chinese telephone directories circulated within the Auckland Chinese community. Among them, the Chinese Yellow Pages is the largest in terms of size and number of pages. Published by the owner of the New Times Weekly and a Chinese advertising company, the Chinese Yellow Pages (Year 2005 version) lists Auckland-based Chinese community businesses. It was used as a guide to conduct an analysis of the advertisements in the Chinese media. This beautifully colour-printed book contains 400 pages, which cover all commercial areas that Chinese migrants were involved in at the time of printing.
Most of these businesses cluster within the service industry ranging from restaurants, grocery stores, beauty salons, after-school tutors and car dealers, to law firms, chartered accountants and international financial services. Noticeably, businesses related to construction and property development occupy more than forty pages, the largest section of the book; these businesses include architectural design, supply of construction materials and manufacturing of fittings for kitchens and bathrooms.

Chart 4-1: A breakdown of ‘I Love New Zealand’ on 936 AM.
Election news in Chinese media

In order to identify the priorities of Chinese editors' choices in selecting New Zealand news to be delivered in the Chinese-language media, all New Zealand news in the NZ Chinese Herald, ‘I love New Zealand’ and www.chinese.net.nz over the election period were categorised into war, politics, economy, crime, health, accident, education, science, moral, amusement and interest. Chart 4-2 shows the frequency distribution of New Zealand news in the three forms of Chinese media. It clearly shows that the three media shared a similar pattern in that news regarding New Zealand politics, and the New Zealand economy appeared much more frequently than other types of news, but between politics and the economy, the Chinese media overall gave priority to news related to New Zealand politics.
a. Call-ins on 936AM

Among the eight major political parties in the election, only ACT, National and Labour appeared on 936AM to promote their platform policies. This may be because only these three parties had candidates who could speak Mandarin fluently. Standing for the ACT Party, Kenneth Wang arrived in New Zealand from mainland China in 1985 as an English language school student and later graduated with a Masters degree in Fine Arts from the University of Auckland. In the 1990s, Wang was known to the Chinese migrant community as an active critic of the Chinese Government subsequent to the 1989 Tiananmen protest. Wang was selected as the ninth candidate for the ACT Party in the 2002 general election. However, he did not enter the Parliament until November 2004. Standing for the National Party, Pansy Wong was born in Shanghai, grew up in Hong Kong and moved to New Zealand with her family in 1974. She was a chartered accountant in Christchurch and became a list MP for National in 1996 as the result of New Zealand’s first general election under MMP. In 2002, Wong moved to Auckland to contest the Central Auckland seat without success. However, she remained a list MP due to her high ranking within the National Party. Labour initially attempted to put Steven Ching up as a candidate, but he later withdrew. Originally from Taiwan, Ching is an Auckland-based businessman, and has been described as a top fund-raiser for the Labour Party. He even established a Chinese branch for Labour and was given a ranking at No. 42 on the party list for the

51 The Progressive Party list included two ethnic Chinese candidates, but so far down the list that they had no chance of election.  
52 The former ACT MP Donna Awatere Huata was charged with fraud, and finally evicted from her parliamentary office by a Supreme Court decision. Kenneth Wang then took Huata’s Parliamentary seat due to his ranking on the party list.
2005 election. However, Ching stood down while police investigated allegations of misused Government connections.

For nearly four weeks before 17 September, the polling day, Kenneth Wang and Pansy Wong were interviewed every morning for seven minutes by programme presenters on ‘I love New Zealand’. ACT also sponsored a one-hour programme ‘Xiaoxuan and You’ every Thursday night, in which Kenneth Wang was interviewed by a programme presenter and several current affair commentators. Call-ins from the audience were invited. Similarly, Labour delivered a half-hour programme hosted by Steven Ching and another active Chinese Labour party member to advocate general policies of the Labour Party every Tuesday afternoon.

Close attention was given to the call-in part of ‘I love New Zealand’, which occupied more than one quarter of the programme time. During the 13 weeks, a total of 350 calls were recorded and transcribed. All these calls were categorised under key topics according to the content of transcripts. Three major issues relating to the election were frequently discussed by the Chinese callers:

- Kenneth Wang and the ACT Party
- Support for Chinese MPs and Chinese candidates
- Criticism of the Labour government

53 Xiaoxuan is Kenneth Wang’s Chinese name.
Depending on the content of these call-ins, the 350 calls were categorised into three large groups according to callers’ opinions (against, neutral and for) towards the eight political parties. Chart 4-3 shows the results of the analysis of these call-ins.

The majority of callers paid attention to Labour, National and ACT. Chinese callers devoted their efforts to talking about Labour and National; they shared a common ground with mainstream New Zealanders who also paid attention to the two large parties. However, ACT attracted much more Chinese callers’ attention than other minor parties. Only a few calls were made relating to the Greens and NZ First; as for the Maori Party, United Future and the Progressive Party, they received hardly any attention.

Chinese callers gave overwhelming support to Chinese MPs and ethnic Chinese candidates, namely Kenneth Wang for ACT and Pansy Wong for National. This was
particularly the case just before 17 September, the polling day. Among the 154 call-ins prior to this day, 59 (38%) call-ins were in favour of the idea of Chinese representation in the New Zealand parliament; 50 (32%) call-ins were specifically about Kenneth Wang and the ACT Party. In terms of the total numbers of call-ins expressing the opinion ‘for’, Labour received less support than ACT and National combined.

Criticisms of Labour concentrated heavily on the Clark Government’s policies on taxation and welfare expenditure, in particular on interest-free student loans, unemployment benefits and state housing. In general, these callers complained that Labour abused taxpayers’ money to bribe beneficiaries and low-income earners in order to secure votes. Specifically, these views were expressed: 1) Labour received a lot of support from Maori and the Pacific communities, since these two communities comprised the majority of beneficiaries; 2) beneficiaries are likely to turn to robberies and burglaries; 3) the current rampant crimes may have been cultivated by Labour’s welfare policy. For example, one caller said, “For the purpose of stabilising society, Maori and Pacific Islanders should be looked after to some extent; otherwise, they will become mobs. Nevertheless, the current policy is to encourage those who do not work, but reap the rewards; it is actually harmful to them and makes them not motivated. If Chinese are asked to be assimilated (into the mainstream), I’d say it is more important to ask [Maori and Islanders] to do so, since many of them have become pitiful and dangerous social groups. Labour is their nanny.”

These criticisms of the Labour Party also ranged over the government’s ‘impotent’ performance in controlling crimes and ‘inefficient’ strategies to develop the New Zealand economy. These kinds of comments were often related to Labour’s policies
on taxation and social welfares; for instance, “Labour is the party which confiscates from the rich and gives to the poor; it opposes entrepreneurs and taxpayers and stands for the interests of lazy and marginal social groups. Many African and Latin American countries in the third world similarly confiscated capitalists’ assets and redistributed them. What’s the result? Those countries slid to the edge of collapse.”

The Green Party was another factor contributing to the Chinese callers’ negative opinions of Labour, since the two parties were seen as campaign partners aiming to form a left-wing government after the election. The Greens were considered by many Chinese callers to be a political force with a hostile attitude towards the Chinese Government, because the party had been actively involved in supporting the Tibetan independence movement, was openly critical of China’s human rights record, and had also opposed New Zealand’s proposed free-trade agreement with China\(^\text{54}\).

Call-ins after the polling day indicated that a large number of Chinese voters were disappointed with the final result of the election in which Labour was the winner; National and ACT would not be able to form a coalition government. One call-in on 20 September commented, “Pansy did not work hard (to campaign) within the Chinese community like Xiaoxuan did. It resulted in National’s loss of Chinese votes.” Noticeably, two post-election phenomena showed that Chinese callers’ disappointment turned into personal attacks on Labour supporters within the Chinese

\(^{54}\) New Zealand is the first developed country to negotiate a free trade agreement with China. The two countries began the process of negotiation in 2004, and the agreement was signed in April 2008 in Beijing.
community, especially Tommy Tay. Tommy Tay\textsuperscript{55}, the eponymous host of “Tommy Tay’s Commentary on Current Affairs”, another programme of news and current affairs on 936AM, was known as a constant supporter of Labour. In his programme, Tay provided a lot of general information about previous New Zealand general elections, the MMP system, political parties and some politicians. Immediately after the polling day, Tay was accused of misleading Chinese audiences through his programme. “I Love New Zealand” became the platform for voicing such accusation. One call-in said, “Tommy Tay told us that it would be a waste to vote for a small party below than 5\% threshold (\textit{sic}).” It received a number of supportive call-ins, which all blamed Tay for misleading the Chinese audience not to vote for ACT. On 4 October, Tommy Tay was even labelled as a traitor to the Chinese community; as one audience member expressed, “Tommy Tay betrayed our community’s interests. … ACT could have gained more votes, if all Chinese had united (to vote for ACT).”

From attacking Tay, call-ins on “I Love New Zealand” later shifted their target to elderly PRC Chinese migrants who lived on benefits “provided by the Labour government”. Since the passage of the 1987 Immigration Act, elderly Chinese have migrated to New Zealand mainly under the category of Family Union, which enabled them to join their children living in the country. Since they are retired, they have to live on their own small amount of savings or pensions accrued from China or their children’s incomes which are low. Many of these elderly Chinese migrants therefore enrolled in English language schools, which enabled them to receive financial support

\textsuperscript{55} Originally migrated from Malaysia, Tommy Tay had been widely considered as the most senior figure within the circle of New Zealand Chinese media for since the early 1990s. He was nominated as one of the candidates standing for the Progress Party in the 2005 election immediately after withdrawing his membership from Labour. However, Tay gave up his candidateship at the end.
from StudyLink (a division of Work and Income New Zealand) to cover student loans and costs related to learning.

According to these callers, elderly Chinese migrants have made no contribution to New Zealand, but have wasted taxpayers’ money by abusing the welfare system; they are damaging the image of the Chinese community. Three emotional call-ins were made by this kind of elderly Chinese to respond to this. They sounded deeply distressed by such attacks from their own community. As one lamented, “we have had enough traumatic experiences in our life in China, but how could we imagine that Cultural Revolution-style insults would occur in New Zealand?” One caller then commented, on the 29th September, “National and ACT supporters greatly resent the result Labour winning the election. They choose to attack these vulnerable old people living on the generosity of Labour’s welfare.”

The Chinese callers had much more interest in discussing New Zealand politics before the release of the final result of the election on the 1st October (including special votes counted). Among the total of 350 calls, 282 (81%) were closely linked to the general election; it is hard to identify any clear pattern in the rest, except for those related to the single issue of China’s manned space flight. On the 12th October, China successfully launched its second manned spacecraft, carrying two Chinese astronauts into orbit. This news seemed to electrify some patriotic Chinese callers, who dominated the call-in time of “I Love New Zealand”. China’s space programme apparently intensified some callers’ national pride of China as a rising superpower. However, a number of call-ins expressed disappointment with the New Zealand mainstream media. As they commented, the mainstream New Zealanders seemed to have no interest in the Chinese astronauts.
a. Election coverage in the NZ Chinese Herald

An advertisement for the Labour Party with a portrait of Helen Clark only appeared a few times in this newspaper; in contrast, much larger advertisements for National and ACT were more frequently seen. Figure 4-2 is an advertisement for Pansy Wong and the National Party. In this predominantly Chinese-language advertisement, Wong is portrayed as a confident and passionate Chinese woman, clenching her fist and waving to the readers. The aim was to convey a strong message as shown by the eight large Chinese characters: “Actions always follow her words; bold in speech and in action.” In semiotic terms, this advertisement clearly showed to the Chinese readers
that Pansy Wong was an outspoken and active mainstream politician standing for the rights of the Chinese community.

Figure 4-3 is an advertisement for Kenneth Wang and ACT. This advertisement was also dominated by Chinese language under the title, “His words will be followed by actions; actions will result in solutions; Xiaoxuan will work harder still”. From a semiotic perspective, this advertisement looks more convincing than the previous one for Pansy Wong in the sense of understanding how an ethnic Chinese politician has actually served the Chinese community, since a number of photos were chosen to show Kenneth Wang’s significant engagements with Chinese migrants. After showing all his hard work for the community as recorded in these photos, the designer of this advertisement aimed to convince Chinese readers by suggestion that since he has done so much for them, they should now do something for him. There was
The NZ Chinese Herald committed itself to covering the election regularly through one special page entitled, “Let’s look after the interest of the Chinese community and pay attention to the general election”. This was in addition to its normal commentary section, which contained articles from regular contributors. Both this new special page and the normal commentary section gave their largest coverage to the ACT Party. Besides special news reports about Kenneth Wang, ACT occupied a special column space, in which Kenneth Wang and his supporters contributed articles about this election; an article entitled “Be Clear of the Voting Situation, Cast your Vote with Seriousness” on 18 August is a typical example of this type of publication:

Dear Chinese friends, please open your eyes to figure out who Peters and the New Zealand First Party are. The truth is: he is an utter political hooligan, who has constantly been anti-Chinese, anti-Asian and anti-immigration, stirring up racial hatred in order to obtain political benefits ... Up to now, neither Labour nor National nor any other parties have openly opposed Peters. Only the ACT party is different. The party has a clear banner, which not only stands up to debate with Peters ... but also seeks social justice for us Chinese who are humiliated.....we should be united to vote for ACT.....since ACT and we have formed an intimate relationship, just like “you are inside me and I am inside you…….”
On 26 August 2005, the NZ Chinese Herald released the result of its survey on Chinese voters’ preferences for the eight major parties, which had responses from 604 Chinese informants. Figure 4-4 and Table 4-6 show the result of this survey, which to a large extent corresponded to the call-ins on 936AM: the 2005 election seemed a ‘three-horse race’ among Labour, National and ACT to the Chinese migrant community; compared to other minor parties, ACT received enormous support from the Chinese voters, enjoying almost the same level of popularity as National.
The *NZ Chinese Herald* admitted that this survey only partially revealed the political choices of the Chinese community, since the number of people who replied to the survey was much smaller than they had hoped for. The *Chinese Herald* published the questionnaire for the survey in 9 issues of the paper, which claimed to have a circulation of over 10,000 copies for each issue. This suggests that approximately 100,000 copies of the questionnaire were distributed. However, only 250 or so readers answered the questionnaire via post and fax; around 300 people answered it in public places such as Chinese shops and restaurants.

The newspaper’s reporter noted that more than 55% of survey participants were low-income earners (annual income under $30,000); among these people, more than 35%
were retired or unemployed (26 August, *NZ Chinese Herald*). The socio-economic profile of respondents may explain why Labour supporters are overrepresented in the survey.

The result of the survey broadly corresponded to the call-ins on 936AM, since it also showed that Chinese voters paid special attention to three major issues: law and order (41.7%), tax cuts (39.9%) and the welfare state (38%). This can be interpreted in the following way: those who were concerned about welfare expenditures also paid attention to the issue of tax cuts; they tend to relate the issue of law and order to the issue of the welfare state. Unlike 936AM, which allowed Chinese callers to criticise Maori and Pacific Islanders openly on air, the *NZ Chinese Herald* did not present any specific negative editorial content about the two communities. This may be because the newspaper applied some measure of self-regulation; in addition, the newspaper format makes it easier than on radio to publish only polished views and not random opinions.

Nevertheless, this newspaper gave space to discussions of ethnic politics in New Zealand, in particular, to some critical voices about the political privilege of Maori. One commentary entitled “Discussing ‘Maori seats in parliament’” on 25 August typified such sentiment: “According to the MMP system, there should be some Maori seats … Why should Maori have special seats in the parliament, but not other ethnic groups? The reason is simple and clear, because these seats enable Maori interests to be protected; it also shows that only people from your own race can protect your own interests…” From this account of Maori seats representing Maori political interests, the author shifted to the issue of Chinese political representation in the parliament and
asked, “… is it safe if Chinese do not depend on Chinese MPs (or other Chinese) to protect Chinese interests, but people from other races?”

The reporter of the *NZ Chinese Herald* apparently approved of this author’s viewpoint on Chinese political representation, since he or she commented on the survey in this way: “Only people (candidates) who share the same background and experiences as us can understand our feelings, and will be able to speak on our behalf of in Parliament.” Sharing a common view with many callers on 936AM, this reporter also claimed that “It is Wang Xiaoxuan whom 53.64% of participants (in the survey) believed to represent our interests most” (26 August, NZ Chinese Herald).

After the polling day, it was clear that Kenneth Wang’s loss disappointed many people, including the editor(s) of the NZ Chinese Herald, since a number of commentaries with a focus on the topic “who is the winner of the election?” were chosen to be published. One commentator on 22 September argued “Although ACT lost the election and Xiaoxuan will be unable to return to the parliament, we Chinese have been mobilised to participate in New Zealand politics; we therefore have our political influence on the mainstream society.” Another commentator said on 1 October “I feel cold and sad with the input of tens of thousands of Chinese votes which seemed swallowed by great oceans. The two large parties have gained large shares, some small parties small shares; what have we Chinese gained? My answer is ‘zero’.” On 15 October, he further said “During the election, the politicians knew that we Chinese were not united and took advantage of this. Large parties took more of our votes; small parties fewer. Our Chinese votes were thus divided.”
Chinese media commentator Tommy Tay was not only attacked on the Chinese talkback radio, but also came under fire in the *NZ Chinese Herald*. On 20 September, a letter to the editor, entitled “Mr Tommy Tay, I Feel Really Ashamed for You!”, was published covering nearly half a page. In this letter, the writer pointed out, “In your programme, Mr Tay, you always use positive words to comment on Labour, but hardly other parties [sic]; you deliberately select good news reports of Labour, but utterly refuse to talk about the criticisms of Labour. … Many Chinese audiences with difficulties in reading and using English-language media directly listen to the radio. If they are only able to hear such biased news and commentaries day by day, haven’t you misled them?”

Just as the Chinese radio shifted their focus after the election result, the *NZ Chinese Herald* also devoted much effort to covering the single issue about China’s space programme. This newspaper even provided extra editorial space in addition to its normal China news section to report the space programme. On the 18th October 2005,
the day when the coalition government was formed, this newspaper published a special editorial section under the title of “Enthusiastic Celebrations on China’s Complete Success in Launching the Manned Spaceflight, Shenzhou 6.” This section comprised a total of 8 pages and was a collection of all kinds of congratulatory messages and advertisements from Chinese community businesses. Phrases such as ‘join the Chinese in New Zealand to applaud our Motherland’, ‘best wishes to our prosperous and strong Motherland’, ‘our pride as overseas sons of the Yellow Emperor’, were common in these messages.

Figure 4-5 shows one typical page of this special section. From the perspective of semiotics, this section deserves a closer look to examine how meaningful it was to Chinese migrants. First, its title was presented with Chinese characters set in a red background with a golden frame. Red and gold are commonly used by Chinese as symbolic colours to celebrate joyful occasions such as weddings and elderly people’s birthdays. The editor clearly intended to make use of this title to draw Chinese readers’ attention. Second, red and gold were also used to frame those celebratory messages along with an illustration of a rising rocket; this encouraged Chinese readers to pay attention to the significance of a historical moment; third, those celebratory messages as exemplified above inspired Chinese readers to embrace their cultural heritage and to maintain their emotional link to the homeland. Overall, this special section in the NZ Chinese Herald constructed an imaged space that could augment the sense of Chinese identity among Chinese readers, especially those new arrivals from

56 The Yellow Emperor is the legendary ancestor of all Han Chinese.
the PRC, and consolidate their consciousness of belonging to a distinct group of a migrant community.

b. Election news and activities on www.chinese.net.nz

While 936AM and the NZ Chinese Herald were monitored, attention was also given to www.chinese.net.nz, one of the most popular Chinese-language gateway websites in New Zealand. During the election period, data were collected on the Chinese internet viewers’ hits on New Zealand local news items, which were all edited translations from New Zealand mainstream media such as the New Zealand Herald and TV One.

A total of 896 items of New Zealand local news were viewed by Chinese internet users. The frequency of hits on each of these news items ranged from 18 to 2099, but typically between 300 and 500. The 896 news items were also coded into 12 categories: national election politics, non-election-related politics, economy, crime, health, education, accidents, science, diplomacy and international politics, human interest, morality and culture. The aim was to investigate Chinese viewers’ changing interests in the news over the election period. Chart 4-4 displays the frequency distribution of Chinese internet viewers' hits on these news items each week.
One can see that the Chinese viewers’ strongest interest was in politics; this was the case especially before 17 September, the polling day. They did not show the same degree of interest in the process of political parties’ negotiations for forming the coalition government, although their hits increased slightly around the final stage of the negotiation. Besides politics, the Chinese internet viewers also showed strong interest in New Zealand’s economy. However, they had much less interest in news reports about issues such as education, culture, science and health.

The 2005 election was the favourite discussion topic for Chinese internet viewers. During the 13 weeks, a total of 97 initial messages related to the election were put on the bulletin board, each of which received an average of 1872 hits and 7.9 responses. Chart 4-5 shows the activity on www.chinese.net.nz. It is clear that Labour, National, and ACT were still the foci of discussion. These initial messages and responses to
them had much in common with the discussions on Chinese talkback radio and the commentaries in the NZ Chinese Herald. They can be broadly summarised as supporting conservative parties and expressing overwhelming criticism of the Labour government on issues of high taxation and welfare expenditures on Maori and the Pacific Islanders.

The cyberspace provided by www.chinese.net.nz gave Chinese migrants more freedom to discuss the election, in comparison with talkback radio that allowed a limited call-in time for speaking, and the NZ Chinese Herald that was controlled by reporters and editors. A number of viewers’ notes were long, and more importantly, provoking; these views appeared randomly on talkback radio and were indicated in the commentaries in the NZ Chinese Herald, but were clearly presented here on the internet.

For instance, on 9 September, under the title “Make Sure All Chinese Compatriots Read this” someone advocated that,

“... If Labour collects more tax for stabilising the society, is so much discrimination and burglary targeting Chinese in the past three years a kind of harmony? You may receive benefits when you study; however, once you graduate, you will see a large amount of your money taken away to benefit those who are lazy, but discriminate against you, steal from you, and laugh at you. After paying high taxes from your income from hard work, you have to pay your mortgage and guard against burglary, discrimination and children being insulted at school; what is the point of your immigration? ... If you want more discrimination, you vote for Labour. ... If New Zealand allows Labour to carry on mismanaging the country, it will certainly fall to a third world country, because thoughtful people all go to Australia; those left are beneficiaries including Maori, Pacific Islanders and the elderly people......”
The author of this post used the phrase “all Chinese compatriots” on the assumption that all Chinese migrants shared common concerns about high taxations, social discrimination against Chinese and crimes supposedly committed by Maori and Pacific Islanders. It received responses such as “I support National!”; “What a wonderful thoughtful article! We do need some profound analysis like this. … Labour has so many MPs, but not a single Chinese MP... Some of our compatriots thought because we were working-class, we ought to support Labour; how silly they are! Think about this: why do we work so hard, but only earn a little? Because we are not given well-paid jobs; we are not the people who make the rules of the game.”

A similar view was also shared in another typical post entitled “Why Do I support National?”, which stated,

“Labour’s action is short-sighted. The government collects high taxation from hard-working people to subsidise those young and strongly built who do not work, but cheat, steal and rob. … Labour’s way certainly gains many votes, since there are more poor people than rich in the world. Even so, I think, if National comes into power, I have a chance to become rich through my hard work, although I am poor at the moment; however, under a Labour government, I will only remain poor and live on the dole, since Labour has no interest in developing the economy to improve our living conditions.”
Kenneth Wang and ACT were also the foci on the discussion forums of www.chinese.net.nz. On 14 October, a message entitled “Suggestion that Kenneth Wang join the Labour Party” was the most popular, receiving 6728 hits. The author listed a number of reasons in support of the suggestion, such as: “1) Labour looks after the interests of the working class, supports social justice and assists disadvantaged social groups. … It is the party which really protects Chinese as an ethnic minority; 2) Kenneth Wang performed the miracle that we Chinese as a politically marginalised ethnic minority rescued the ultra right-wing ACT in this election; 3) ACT is in debt to Kenneth Wang who has done so much for the party, but he was only put No.7 on the party list, which will not get him into the parliament.”
This message received 55 responses. One of these responses did not support Kenneth Wang, but instead argued “I don’t support ACT, since it is a populist party similar to NZ First in the sense of playing the card of race issues. Well, the Chinese know ACT very well. It is not because of the Chinese understanding of the party’s policies and its performance in the parliament, but because of the propaganda in the *NZ Chinese Herald*. Its editorial space on the election became ACT’s own notice board. … [I]t only aimed to manipulate the Chinese to vote for Kenneth Wang. … ACT claims to represent the interests of the Chinese community, but what are they? We are unlike Maori who have a common interest associated with the Waitangi Treaty. We ourselves cannot even define what the interests of the Chinese community are, so how can ACT represent us?” Another follow-up response noted “What a wonderful comment! The Chinese can blame Helen Clark and mock Peters, but cannot criticise Xiaoxuan, because such criticism is considered as helping Peters to suppress our own people. … We have arrived in this democratic country from an authoritarian society, but are still constrained by (political) suppression.”

Overall, those quotations from 936AM, the *NZ Chinese Herald* and www.chinese.net.nz were distinct political voices that are rarely heard in New Zealand mainstream media. Closely reflecting Chinese migrants’ interests in ethnic politics and their perceptions of the host country, also facilitating effective communication within a particular group of migrant sector, Chinese-language media served as an alternative public sphere for the Chinese migrant community in New Zealand.
Section C

Phase 2: relationship between Chinese media and migrants

Research design

Due consideration was given to possible limitations of the data generated from the content of the Chinese media, because they may only partially reveal the interactive relationship between the Chinese media and the Chinese migrant community. After the first phase of the research, two possible limitations were postulated:

3) Chinese editors’ choices in selecting the New Zealand local news to supply the content of the Chinese newspapers, radio and websites may not fully correlate with Chinese migrants' interests and concerns relevant to the election;

4) During the election, Chinese migrants who had interest in the election may not have interacted with the Chinese media by consuming and responding to these media (through letters to the editors, talkback radio, hits on the headlines of the internet news, response to public surveys, etc.), and so their perceptions of the election may not have been revealed.

In the second phase, in order to explore further the interactions between Chinese media and Chinese migrants during the 2005 election, one aim was to acquire qualitative data subsequent to the election to complement the data generated from the first phase. In this phase, the main objective was to examine the extent to which the social dynamics of the Chinese migrant community were revealed by the political content of the Chinese media in the previous phase. It was intended to examine whether the political content of the Chinese media during the election fully depicted
Chinese migrants’ perceptions of New Zealand and their political aspirations. An attempt was made to explore Chinese migrants’ reception of the Chinese media and utilisation of the Chinese media in association with their experiences of relocating and settling in New Zealand. Therefore, further questions were laid out at the second stage of the research as follows:

• What role do the Chinese media play in the process of the Chinese migrants’ settlement and acculturation in New Zealand?

• How do the Chinese media serve the needs and interests of Chinese migrants in general?

• What kind of content of Chinese media particularly appeals to a wide range of Chinese audiences?

• To what extent were the general concerns and interests within the Chinese migrant community concordant with the empirical findings from the analysis of the content of Chinese media produced at the first phase of the research?

Focus groups would be used as a method to generate qualitative data from consumers of Chinese media. The decision to use focus groups to study the relationship between Chinese media and the Chinese migrant community was made in recognition of the fact that the Chinese migrant community was diverse. Chapters Two and Three discuss how the complexity of the New Zealand Chinese community may result in a variety of controversies, debates and even conflicts among the numerous types of ethnic Chinese. Focus groups formed of selected members of the Chinese migrant community would be an effective way to generate reliable data about this community.
Barbour and Kitzinger (1999, 5) have established that focus groups enable researchers to explore people’s different perspectives, since they react to each other within an established social network. Within such networks, peer communication and group norms drive members to articulate, censure, and exchange their accounts with regard to sensitive issues. In the context of the current research, such sensitive issues may be relevant to controversies over the consciousness of Chinese political identity among the Chinese migrants, many of whom prefer to be cautiously diplomatic in various social surroundings, especially in sensitive circumstances such as conflicts across the Taiwan Strait. Conducting focus groups would provide some means of access to the political opinions of the Chinese migrant community.

Regarding the utility of focus groups, Wilkinson (1999, 67) argues that “in the focus group, people take differing individual experiences and attempt to make ‘collective sense’ of them. It is this process of collective sense-making which occurs through the interactions between focus group participants.” Therefore, Farquhar (1999, 62) suggests that “Group methods can make an important contribution to sensitive research. They can be helpful in facilitating access to particularly sensitive research populations, and giving voice to sections of the community who frequently remain unheard. They may create a relatively safe space for the disclosure of experiences or behaviours which in other contexts would be seen as taboo.” An attempt was made to recruit participants with a collective sense of being new Chinese migrants, from whom would be gathered their experiences of settlement and perceptions of New Zealand as the new home country.

It has been pointed out that each individual’s consciousness of his or her own Chinese identity within the Chinese migrant community may fragment the community into
many sub-groups. Considering the researcher’s own background, originally from the PRC, it would have been difficult to ensure that non-PRC migrants would feel affiliated with her. Waterton and Wynne (1999, 139) have noted that the researcher-researched relationship is essential for the two parties to negotiate their identities within the ‘community’ context of a focus group. This process of negotiation may sometimes interfere with the accomplishment of an objective encounter between the researcher and informants, and accordingly affect the validity of the data generated from the process. As a result, a decision was made to form focus groups with the PRC Chinese migrants as majority participants. This was also because the PRC Chinese comprise the largest source of Chinese immigrants to New Zealand.

In addition to using focus groups for generating qualitative data, it was planned to conduct one-to-one interviews with non-PRC Chinese migrants, using the same discussion topics as for focus groups. As Michell (1999) suggests, in contrast with focus groups which can efficiently facilitate the exploration of mutual and communal experiences and identities, one-to-one interviews can provide a comfortable atmosphere for informants to reveal certain feelings and experiences which would have remained unspoken if they were in a focus group. This could be connected with social hierarchy, oppression, alienation and stigma that may exist amongst the informants within one focus group. In general, parallel one-to-one interviews can avoid the difficulty that some individuals are silent and marginalised in focus groups because of their private and alienating experiences. Taking these considerations into account, it was planned to recruit the informants for one-to-one interviews among non-PRC Chinese migrants who were knowledgeable about and actively involved in the public affairs of the New Zealand Chinese community, especially within their own
sub-groups. More importantly, it was expected that they would openly express their views about the New Zealand Chinese community without any significant barrier resulting from the interviewer being PRC Chinese and them not.

**Data collection**

In the second phase of the research, the aim was to investigate whether the Chinese migrant community’s concerns and interests were concordant with the findings from the quantitative analysis of call-ins of ‘I love New Zealand’ on 936AM, the political content of the NZ Chinese Herald, and the Chinese viewers’ response to the New Zealand local news on www.chinese.net.nz during the 2005 general election. With the researcher’s social contacts and knowledge of the Auckland-based Chinese migrant community, the method of ‘snowballing’ to approach potential informants was applied and the Information Sheet Appendix 2 about the research and Consent Form Appendix 3 were sent off to these people. Special care was taken to send English and simplified Chinese versions to the PRC Chinese, but English and traditional Chinese versions to non-PRC Chinese.

Nine informants were finally chosen to form two PRC Chinese-dominated focus groups representing a diverse profile of the Chinese immigrants to New Zealand in terms of age, occupation, length of residing in New Zealand, immigration or visa category, and the mode of consuming the Chinese-language media. Particular consideration was given to the evaluation of the depth of informants’ knowledge of the Chinese migrant community and their competence and communication skills. The researcher was the facilitator for the two focus groups both held in November 2005 and the translator of later quotations.
Table 4-7 displays the profile of participants in Focus Group One held in the community centre of New Lynn in Waitakere City, Western Auckland. All participants in this group were living in neighbouring suburbs such as New Lynn, Avondale, Mt Albert and Blockhouse Bay, where housing was relatively cheaper and cheaper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>Length of residence in NZ</th>
<th>Migration/Visa category</th>
<th>English competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>retired police officer</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>9 years</td>
<td>family union</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>retired engineer</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>family union</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>self-employed shop owner</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>general skilled</td>
<td>competent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>housewife (volunteer</td>
<td>Brunei</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>family union</td>
<td>very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>community worker)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>student</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>international student</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lg</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>school principal</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>general skilled</td>
<td>excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sh</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>senior engineer</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>19 years</td>
<td>general skilled</td>
<td>excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>self-employed painter</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>general skilled</td>
<td>very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sy</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>secondary school teacher</td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>family union</td>
<td>excellent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-7: Profile of participants in focus groups.
which accommodated a large number of less affluent immigrants from the PRC under the categories of general skill (Ho and Brehed, 2006) and family union as well as many Chinese foreign fee-paying students boarding in these immigrants’ families. Three participants knew each other quite well because they had been regularly attending sports and other leisure activities among the Chinese migrants at the community centre of New Lynn. All participants seemed relaxed and felt a strong sense of sharing opinions among companions. The focus group was conducted in Mandarin Chinese.

Focus Group Two was held in a Chinese language school located in Parnell, one of the most expensive suburbs in central Auckland. The students attending this school came from the greater Auckland region and their parents were Chinese immigrants from various countries of origin and mainly professionals with higher incomes. Table 4-8 also depicts the profile of the participants in Focus Group Two. The three PRC participants knew each other quite well, but none of them had met the Malaysian Chinese participant before. Interviewing the Malaysian participant separately was considered, since he did not speak Mandarin well. However, he expressed willingness to meet others to discuss issues related to the New Zealand Chinese community, and the three PRC participants were also happy to talk in English. Eventually, Focus Group Two was conducted in Mandarin and English.

In the two focus groups, the focus groups schedule Appendix 4 was distributed among the participants and they were invited to answer the questions through discussions. This schedule was carefully designed according to the findings of the researcher’s analysis of the contents in Chinese-language media as discussed in Section B. These questions focused on participants’ perceptions of Chinese-language media, their
information needs for settlement in New Zealand and interests in party politics of the
country. The recorded tapes were fully transcribed and translated into English by the
researcher.

Given the difficulty in forming focus groups among the Taiwanese and Hong Kong
Chinese, interviews were conducted with two Taiwanese community leaders with
considerable knowledge of the Taiwanese community and abundant experiences in
dealing with the PRC Chinese and Hong Kong Chinese as well as leaders of the old
Chinese community. For them to prepare well for their answers, they were sent the
interview schedule slightly modified from the focus groups’ schedule one week prior
to the interviews taking place in November and December 2005. The interviews were
conducted in Mandarin Chinese; they were fully recorded, transcribed, and translated
into English by the researcher.

In addition to the two focus groups and two formal interviews according to a carefully
designed schedule, informal interviews were also conducted with three other people
including one sociology PhD student of Hong Kong origin in October 2005 and two
business migrants from the PRC in July and November 2006. In informal interviews,
a pre-set interview schedule was not used, but instead there were used some of the
questions for focus groups and the two formal interviews. At the time of conducting
the interview, the informant from Hong Kong was doing his PhD research related to
the New Zealand Chinese community. The two informants of the PRC origin both
immigrated to New Zealand under the investor category and shared an extensive
network within the Auckland-based Chinese investors who had migrated from various
countries of origin. These three informants provided valuable data which could not be
obtained from the two focus groups and two formal interviews.
Empirical findings

a. Chinese media are primarily consumed by newly arrived Chinese migrants

Through focus group discussions and interviews, it has been identified that at present New Zealand Chinese-language media serve mainly newly arrived Chinese immigrants. These people regard the Chinese media as an essential source of information for their initial settlement in New Zealand. The earlier arrivals still consume Chinese media, but the degree of their dependency on these media to manage their life in New Zealand has become much less significant than in earlier years, since they have become familiar with their social surroundings. Many newcomers, even the well-educated skilled migrants who have passed the IELTS test, still consider that their competence in the English language is not strong enough to understand fully the news in New Zealand mainstream media.

One participant in Focus Group One made a typical comment: “I read zhonggangtai (China, Hong Kong and Taiwan) news on Chinese websites and New Zealand news in Chinese newspapers. It is easy and convenient to learn about New Zealand local news through the Chinese media.” One of the Taiwanese community leaders reinforced this point: “After all, our English is not as good as our Chinese, our mother tongue. As far as I know, very few Taiwanese (migrants) subscribe to English newspapers … The Chinese media are very helpful to many of us.” He even mentioned that in the early 1990s when a large number of Taiwanese migrants arrived, they once formed a newspaper-reading club. As he said, “One person who had excellent English skills translated the news from the New Zealand Herald into Chinese and told others the content of the news, for example, the change into summer time; others then followed
up to discuss the news. This (situation) lasted until we had the chance of publishing the New Zealand edition of the *Independent Weekly.*”

The Chinese media are especially important for the elderly immigrants. A participant in his 70s in Focus Group One noted, “When I came to New Zealand ten years ago, there was only one Chinese-language newspaper, the *Mandarin Times,* which was only one page like a flyer, not available everyday, only published once a week. I felt that I was being locked in a cage. I couldn’t hear and see anything (because it was all in English). I did not know what was going on in New Zealand. I felt I was like a deaf and blind man … then I went back to China where I felt very happy with the material and spiritual life. … Two years later, I returned to New Zealand and found there were so many more Chinese people, Chinese-language newspapers and radio and TV programmes, and the Chinese community was organising many activities advertised in Chinese newspapers. I began to socialise with fellow Chinese and eventually felt well settled in New Zealand. Without the communication facilitated by the Chinese-language media, I would have gone back to China again. … The Chinese media have become a part of our life here.” Elderly Chinese immigrants have great difficulty in understanding the English language and have to rely on Chinese media to manage their social lives in New Zealand. As discussed in Chapter Three, the use of Chinese-language media engenders effective communication within socio-politically marginalised Chinese migrants in New Zealand and strengthens the social networks among them.

The informants shared this common view that Chinese-language media were important to the newcomers. However, they also shared a common concern about the
Chinese media. The following is a quotation from the discussion within Focus Group One:

W: These Chinese media have become a part of our life here … they should be responsible for the society and people, not only for the purpose of making money.

Y: They published some advertisements for illegal services such as selling fake New Zealand qualifications and driving license, which have damaged the image of the Chinese community. Who should discipline them?

Q (question by the researcher): Do you mean that the media operators should check the credibility of the advertisers before publication?

L: Yes, where do the Chinese readers go to complain if they are cheated (by wrong information like immigration consultants’ advertisements)?

W: The Chinese media should be under surveillance, because media can circulate information very quickly. If the information is wrong, it will mislead people.

b. Chinese media partially reflect Chinese migrants’ perceptions of New Zealand politics and their aspirations

Most informants shared a common view that the Chinese media played a significant role in facilitating and conducting political communication within some member of the Chinese migrant community during the 2005 election. As described earlier, New Zealand local news in Chinese media during the 2005 election was highly political, especially the call-in part of ‘I Love New Zealand’, which was predominantly discussions about the election.

Unfortunately, the content of Chinese media did not seem to report this election in full. Instead, this election was portrayed as a three-horse race, since only three
political parties, namely Labour, National and ACT, appeared in the Chinese media. One participant in Focus Group Two commented, “We could only see the coverage of three parties up front, and didn’t know what’s going on (with others). Was money talking behind the scenes? Presumably only these three parties spent money on Chinese media, given that these media are so business orientated.” This quotation further reveals that some Chinese audience members were concerned about the commercial orientation of Chinese media, which may devalue the credibility of these media.

In response to the researcher’s question, “Do you think Chinese MPs represent the Chinese community’s interests?”, a variety of answers from the informants clearly indicated that recent migrants largely believed this to be the case. Regarding the perceived ideal of Chinese MPs standing in the New Zealand parliament, the following views are typical of those expressed by newcomers:

- “We share the same culture. They understand us.”;
- “We always expect someone we trust to speak on our behalf.”;
- “We (Chinese) are 3% of the New Zealand population. Therefore, we should have two or three Chinese MPs in the parliament.”.

All informants were invited to compare the content about Kenneth Wang and Pansy Wong in Chinese media, since Kenneth Wang seemed to attract more attention and to enjoy wider popularity among the Chinese voters. One of the Taiwanese community leaders commented on this phenomenon: “Kenneth Wang has done many things (for the Chinese community) and took part in all the (Chinese community) gatherings. Compared to Pansy, he is more attractive and approachable to (Chinese) people.”
Given that Kenneth Wang was selected as the ninth candidate in the 2002 election and became a list MP in 2004, his main political activities took place after 2002, especially after 2004. This was the period which saw a large number of PRC migrants arrived in New Zealand as discussed in earlier chapters.

However, the earlier arrivals did not seem so convinced about the reason why Wang was popular, as shown in the following extract from discussion among the participants in Focus Group Two. This might typify a very different voice from the Chinese migrant community regarding Chinese representation in New Zealand politics.

Lg: Some Chinese voters have too high expectations of Chinese candidates or MPs, who may not represent our interest. For example, Pansy Wong supported passing the law legalising prostitution, which is against Chinese cultural values and moral standards. I wish some people were rational and realistic.

Sy: Pansy Wong is a list MP, not an elected constituency MP. She doesn’t represent anyone other than the National Party. Only 4% of the NZ population are Chinese, and they cannot influence the election much. Therefore, we only hope a MP will treat us equally and fairly, no matter whether he or she is Chinese or not.

Sh: Many newcomers don’t understand the party politics in New Zealand.

Le: We hope New Zealand will be prosperous and safe to live in. I support whoever has such views, not necessarily a Chinese. Why focus on the issue of Chinese MPs?

Another Taiwanese community leader also challenged the idea of common political interests among the Chinese migrants. As he put it, “It is hard even to find a common interest within the Taiwanese community because of the activists yearning for an independent Taiwan. It is impossible to have one common interest of the Chinese
community. … The newcomers have limited social contacts and are easily manipulated by politicians.”

During the interviews and two focus group discussions, the participants were invited to comment on one particular article entitled “Chinese Talking about the 2005 Election”, which was published as an independent news report in the New Zealand Chinese Herald on 15 September 2005. In this article, the newspaper’s reporter claimed that the report was based on interviews with a number of people within the Chinese migrant community and presented their views on the election. The participants were asked whether these views represented theirs or were typical opinions among their social circles. The answers were various. Participants with longer length of residency and adequate knowledge of New Zealand politics tended to comment that the content of this article was rather shallow and superficial. For instance, one said, “The reporter did not carefully choose the interviewees. These people cannot represent the wider Chinese community, but only some … we are not different from mainstream New Zealanders. Everyone has their own interests and views in a democratic society. Therefore, Chinese opinions on the election should not be just about the three parties and those few issues as reported in this article.” Such comments indicated that some Chinese audience members did question the journalistic quality of Chinese media, in particular, the reporters’ understanding of New Zealand party politics.

When it was suggested to one of the Taiwanese community leaders that, among the call-ins on 936AM, National and ACT had received more support than Labour, he responded, “Really? The callers comprised more mainland Chinese. They are keen to discuss participation in New Zealand politics, but know very little (of it). … The
Taiwanese don’t listen to this programme much. If they do listen, they probably don't want to call in.” When asked why this was, he did not give a clear answer. However, the other Taiwanese community leader did give a reason, “Everyone has their own thoughts in a democratic society. These Chinese media have only revealed some people’s views; the majority (of the Chinese migrant community) keep silent, but people observe (what is going on) and make up their mind how to vote … the newcomers (from the mainland) have limited engagement with New Zealand politics. (I want to say) Don’t be manipulated by the politicians. Although we (Taiwanese) do not talk, it does not mean that we (Taiwanese) have no opinions.” From the Taiwanese community leaders’ perspective, in contrast to early-arrived Taiwanese with more experiences in democratic elections and more knowledge of New Zealand politics, the recent PRC migrants were novices; however, Chinese media provided a platform for these newcomers to discuss their particular concerns and interests at a level which they were comfortable with.

c. *New Zealand Chinese media in association with recent PRC immigrants*

In response to a question about two letters to the editor of *Iball* (see Appendix 4), one of the Taiwanese leaders said, “I can understand the Kiwis’ feeling that there are too many Chinese newspapers here. They carry similar content, and the competition (among them) is severe.” It was known that he initially arrived in New Zealand in 1993, and he was asked “When did you notice such competition?” He answered, “In the recent years since 2001 or 2002, during which many mainland Chinese came. It may be easy for them to set up a business like publishing a newspaper. There are so many now. There used to be fewer than five Chinese newspapers owned by Hong Kong Chinese, Taiwanese and Malaysian Chinese.” Taking a different angle to
comment on PRC influence on Chinese newspapers, the other Taiwanese informant said, “Media operators should take a neutral political stance. I have noticed that the recent newspapers are very pro-China. The closed-down Independent Daily was pro-Taiwan. They all provide biased information. I now read hardly any Chinese newspapers.”

In terms of the pro-China content in Chinese media, the recent PRC migrants express approval and consider it important. One informant in Focus Group One made the following comment: “Chinese newspapers should not report anything damaging our national interests. You are Chinese, China is your own country. … The Epoch Times (Da Ji Yuan) and The New Daily (Xin Bao) are betraying our country. In New Zealand, why do they only focus on the dark corners in China? Every country has its own problems.” Patriotic sentiment towards China among the recent PRC migrants could also be found during focus group discussions, especially on the subject of the Chinese warship’s visit to Auckland. As one informant said, “We are proud China is leading aerospace science and technology in the world. I was surprised to see some Taiwanese went to see the warship. If good things (happen), they identity themselves as Chinese; if bad things, they become Taiwanese.”

**Section D**

**Phase 3: qualitative data from Chinese media personnel**

The empirical findings from the first and second phases provided a broad understanding of the relationship between the Chinese media and the Chinese migrant community. There remained, however, some ambiguity about how the Chinese media served the Chinese migrant community. For the purpose of enriching and
supplementing empirical findings and further exploring the relationship between the Chinese media and the Chinese migrant community, a third phase of the research was pursued to investigate the role of Chinese media personnel. The chief objective was to find Chinese media personnel’s views on their mission in operating Chinese-language media, in particular their vision of its role and their perceptions of how Chinese media ought to function within New Zealand society.

Since starting this research in May 2005, the researcher had developed an extensive network among Chinese media personnel including a number of reporters and editors of the newspapers, as well as hosts of radio and TV programmes. Knowing about the research on the New Zealand Chinese media, most of these people were kind enough to provide the information requested. The researcher maintained frequent contacts with them and often had discussions with them relevant to the Chinese media and New Zealand Chinese community. Between November 2005 and February 2006, the researcher attended a number of social occasions at the invitation of different Chinese media personnel, in which some high-profile public figures within the Chinese migrant community were present. Those social occasions enabled observation of a wide range of active members of the Chinese migrant community, including restaurant owners, real estate agents, financial advisers, lawyers, artists and others. As a consequence, the researcher’s knowledge of the Chinese media and the New Zealand Chinese community was further extended.

With such knowledge, there was no intention of formally interviewing many Chinese media personnel. Instead, the researcher made sure always to take notes of important conversations with these people, as well as maintaining detailed records of observations of the relevant social gatherings. It was planned to interview only a few
selected Chinese media personnel belonging to two main categories: 1) those who had become personal friends of and would enjoy free discussions with the researcher on various topics related to the Chinese in New Zealand; and 2) those of less acquaintance, but who would be unique sources of information regarding the New Zealand Chinese media to which there was no alternative access.

In the end, the researcher interviewed the former owner of the *NZ Chinese Herald* (1997-2004) in November 2007, one former editor of a Chinese newspaper in February 2006, a senior manager of WTV in March 2007, the owner of www.skykiwi.co.nz in August 2007 and a former columnist for several Chinese newspapers in November 2007. All of these interviews were conducted informally. That is, there was no pre-set interview schedule, and answers were sought to only some specific questions from these people. The researcher recorded three interviews with the interviewee's permission and transcribed and translated them into English. For the remaining, unrecorded interviews, detailed notes were taken during the interviews and immediately afterwards translated into English.

In the third phase, answers were sought to three key questions through observations of and interviews with Chinese media personnel:—

- What do Chinese media personnel think about the reception of Chinese media according to their understanding of the Chinese media audience and advertisers?

- What vision do the Chinese media personnel have of their mission to provide certain types of media content to serve the Chinese migrant community?
• How do the Chinese media personnel position themselves for mediating between the Chinese migrant community and the core society of New Zealand?

**Empirical findings**

In terms of serving the Chinese migrant community, WTV may be considered as the most active media player. In addition to delivering translated news from New Zealand mainstream media on its own TV and radio programmes, WTV has reported broad issues about New Zealand, including non-topical introductions to miscellaneous public service organisations (e.g. St John Ambulance). The senior manager of WTV described their mission: “We are located in New Zealand and ought to focus on serving the interests of the Chinese in New Zealand, no matter where they are originally from. We take a neutral stance on the politics in Taiwan, Hong Kong and China. As a settled migrant with 17 years of living in New Zealand, I understand what kind of information Chinese migrants may generally need. We want to be a bridge, a communication channel, for the Asian migrant community and New Zealand mainstream.”
The 2005 Election Campaign Seminar initiated by WTV showed evidence that Chinese media tried to build a bridge between Chinese migrants and the mainstream New Zealand. This seminar was hosted on the 17th July 2005 at the meeting hall of the Auckland Institute of Studies and was organised by fifteen Chinese media companies (including WTV) across New Zealand. Figure 4-6 shows the flyer for this seminar, which was widely distributed within the Chinese community. In fact, a total of twenty-two Chinese media companies attended.

At the invitation of these Chinese media, eight major political parties sent their spokespeople (including Michael Cullen, the deputy Prime Minister; Rodney Hide, the leader of ACT; and Peter Brown, the deputy leader of NZ First) to answer a total of twenty questions from the Chinese audience either on-site or through talkback.
radio on air at the same time. According to WTV, the twenty questions were carefully selected by these Chinese media companies from more than one hundred questions generated from an opinion poll they conducted within the Chinese migrant community. Although these questions covered a wide range of issues, they seemed chiefly to focus on the maintenance of the welfare state, law and order, and education for youth.

Although Chinese media personnel tried to report the 2005 election in full, the actual content of Chinese media represented this election as a ‘three-horse race’ among Labour, National and ACT. As the second phase of the research found, newly arrived Chinese migrants commonly had a high expectation of Chinese media as an important source of information about New Zealand. However, these media were actually unable to cater for wider needs of the new migrants. Most media personnel did not give a satisfactory explanation for this, except for one who was the editor of a closed-down Chinese newspaper. At the time of an interview with her\(^57\), she had left the circle of Chinese media completely. This may have enabled her to hold an outsider’s stance and to discuss openly her concerns about the Chinese media.

As she commented “These Chinese-language media are operated as private businesses constrained by commercial orientations and therefore only serve the interests of whoever buys the coverage. This is why advertisements comprise the main content of Chinese media.” Although some Chinese media operators may want to change this situation by providing more journalistic content, they have limited resources to recruit reporters and editors with highly developed professional skills to fill the demanding

\(^{57}\) Interview conducted in February 2006.
roles. For instance, the newspaper for which she had worked aimed to distinguish itself from other Chinese newspapers by providing content with economic and financial orientation, but such content came primarily from Chinese-language sources. She noted “A lot of Chinese migrants who have properties and play in the stock market of China also want to invest in New Zealand, either in the stock market or other business opportunities, but they feel it is hard to find such valuable information. We did try to meet their needs. However, we need money to buy such information to put in our newspaper. And again, someone with a thorough knowledge of the New Zealand investment market and good English skills would not work for us on low wages.”

She also made a comment on the call-ins on AM 936, especially about the 2005 election. “Callers enjoy enormous freedom of speech. Whatever they said was broadcast on the radio. This programme is a free space for people to relieve their feelings including stress and anger. There is no such freedom in the media in China.”

The author then asked for her view of the role and mission of Chinese media in New Zealand. “It should be a cultural bridge between the Chinese migrants and the mainstream society, and ought to guide Chinese migrants to adapt to New Zealand’s way of life; it must work beyond the Chinese community. However, for none of current Chinese media is this actually the case.”

**Summary**

This chapter has presented the methodological part of this thesis, which focuses on explaining how to establish access to New Zealand Chinese media and the Chinese migrant community as scholarly research objects. The central aim was that empirical
data would be able to reflect the interactions between the Chinese media and the Chinese migrant community in a broad sense. As the theoretical part of this thesis explains, ethnic Chinese media serve the specific interests and needs of the Chinese migrant community in contrast to New Zealand mainstream media. As a study of the New Zealand Chinese migrant community through an analysis of ethnic Chinese media, this research should be grounded in robust data generated to answer questions raised in the fields of media studies and international migration studies.

The detail of the research design has been presented, containing three phases to generate the empirical data. It was decided firstly to acquire quantitative and qualitative data from the content of Chinese media during the 2005 New Zealand general election. This decision was based on the expectation that the general election would stimulate the Chinese migrant community to discuss its main interests and concerns about its socio-political status as a new but equal member participating in democratic and multiethnic New Zealand. The preliminary findings of the first phase became the basis of continuing the research into its second phase, which concentrated on acquiring data on audience reception of the Chinese media. The third phase of data collection among the Chinese media personnel was directed by the findings of the previous two phases, which had constructed a rough picture of the relationship between the New Zealand Chinese media and the Chinese migrant community, although some aspects still lacked clarity. The aim of the third phase of the research was to clarify some ambiguities through discussions with people who operate the Chinese media.

The empirical findings show that the general content of New Zealand Chinese media is constrained by commercial advertisements for Chinese community businesses;
however, the Chinese media covered the 2005 New Zealand general election extensively. The Chinese media is an important source of information about New Zealand society for Chinese migrants, especially for the new arrivals. These media construct an alternative public sphere for Chinese migrants to participate in New Zealand politics. Among Chinese migrants, the newly arrived people are more eager to have Chinese representation in New Zealand politics than more established earlier arrivals; in 2005 they gave enormous support to a small conservative party which claimed to represent the Chinese community’s interest. During the period of the New Zealand election, a large number of PRC immigrants were overwhelmed by patriotic sentiments toward the homeland because of China’s success in launching its first spacecraft. The next chapter will provide further analytical discussions of the empirical findings by applying the theoretical framework developed in Chapter Three.
CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

This chapter applies the theoretical framework developed in Chapter Three to discuss the empirical findings. The theoretical framework suggests that New Zealand Chinese-language media primarily serve and cater for needs and interests of socio-politically marginalised Chinese migrants, most of whom lack competence in the English language and are minimally acculturated to the core society of New Zealand.

The implication of this is that discussions of the empirical findings will centre around three major issues:

1) Who are the socio-politically marginalised new Chinese migrants that form the main audience of New Zealand Chinese media?

2) What specific media needs and interests of these Chinese migrants do Chinese media reveal?

3) How do their media consumption patterns reveal that these migrants are minimally acculturated to the host country?

As explained earlier in Chapter Two, the statistical analysis of Chinese immigration to New Zealand over the past two decades indicates that a sharp increase in PRC Chinese immigrants since the early 2000 has resulted in their demographic predominance in the current Chinese migrant community. Discussions within this chapter will therefore focus on examining the significance of Chinese-language media within the recently arrived PRC Chinese migrants.
This chapter consists of three sections: the first discusses the constraints on New Zealand Chinese media in terms of its journalistic standards and commercial content; the second examines the way that Chinese media serve the marginalised recent PRC Chinese migrants, especially the information it provides which might shape their perceptions of New Zealand and aspirations; the third explores these newcomers’ emotional link to China.

**Section A**

**Constraints on New Zealand Chinese media**

*Chinese media economy*

Empirical findings show that the content of New Zealand Chinese media is overwhelmed by commercial advertisements for Chinese community businesses; although some Chinese media have tried to obtain advertisers from mainstream New Zealanders, it seems difficult for them to achieve satisfactory results. This situation may be understood in two ways: on the one hand, as one Chinese newspaper editor revealed,\(^58\) mainstream society lacks awareness and recognition of the importance of Chinese media which specifically serves the Chinese migrant community; on the other hand, most Chinese media personnel lack effective communication skills to arouse the interest of mainstream advertisers. In this context, to possess effective communication skills requires marketing personnel in Chinese media to not only use English competently, but also to have a thorough understanding of New Zealand’s

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\(^58\) Interview conducted in February 2006.
market surroundings and business culture including social norms. A person with such skills would not normally work for a Chinese media company, which is often operated as a small-scale private business and cannot afford a rewarding pay rate. Without a wider client basis, the advertising revenue of Chinese media market remains very small compared to that of New Zealand mainstream media. This directly results in Chinese media having limited financial resources to recruit qualified journalists and editors to work for them.

To be a qualified reporter or editor working for Chinese media requires a professional background of training in journalism in conjunction with strong bilingual skills and a profound knowledge of the Chinese migrant community and New Zealand society. Ideally, such a person would be well aware of the needs and interests of Chinese migrants and could facilitate appropriate communication between the Chinese migrant community and the host society. In reality, someone with these qualifications would be capable of pursuing employment opportunities in mainstream media or other promising careers within the mainstream society, while budget constraints mean that privately-owned Chinese media are unlikely to provide journalists and editors with job security and welfare and generally require them to work long hours at a low rate of pay. This researcher’s observations of and interviews with Chinese media personnel indicate that in fact they are mostly recently arrived migrants, who may have good English but lack in-depth understanding of the history and current situation of New Zealand.

This lack of professional reporters and editors is the primary reason for the journalistic quality of Chinese media remaining low at grass-roots level. The Chinese-language media can only provide limited coverage of New Zealand society owing to
their reliance on edited translations of daily local news from the New Zealand mainstream media. Mainstream media such as the New Zealand Herald and TV One concentrate on reporting current affairs to cater for the information needs and journalistic interests of mainstream New Zealanders, who typically do not need much background information. Thus newly arrived Chinese migrants, who do need such information about the host society and generally regard the Chinese media as a very important information source, are left with inadequate resources to develop a proper understanding of the reality of New Zealand. The Chinese-language media and their personnel are not highly regarded from either inside or outside the Chinese migrant community; Chinese newspapers are often treated as free advertising flyers piled up at the entrances to Chinese restaurants and Asian supermarkets.

**The 2005 New Zealand general election in Chinese media**

Given that Chinese media lack qualified reporters and editors and have limited sources of advertising revenue, whoever pays is likely to receive special coverage in Chinese media. One result was that, as we have seen in Chapter Four, the 2005 election was represented by Chinese media as a ‘three-horse race’ among Labour, National and ACT. This indicates that only these three political parties may have bought special coverage in Chinese media. Moreover, in comparison with Labour and National, ACT probably spent more, since the party occupied much larger editorial space in the NZ Chinese Herald, and Kenneth Wang appeared at two interview programmes on 936AM during the election period. Such a ‘three-horse race’ representation of the 2005 election in Chinese media stood in a strong contrast to New Zealand mainstream media, especially TV3, which was even under legal challenge because of its unfair treatment of two small political parties.
In order to appear on TV3 to participate in the *Leaders’ Debate* on 11 August 2005, the party leaders of Progressive and United Future took TV3 to the High Court in Wellington over its refusal to allow them on this debate. In the end, TV3 was ordered by the court to include them; their exclusion would be detrimental to New Zealand's parliamentary democracy. This court case was widely covered by mainstream media from the angle of discussing the interference of New Zealand’s legal system in the matter of TV3’s public responsibility. Unfortunately, this court case was not reported by any Chinese media; neither was it commented on by Chinese audiences. This may suggest that Chinese media deliberately avoided mentioning this news because of their own biased coverage of the election.

As far as the Chinese media’s public responsibility is concerned, Chinese audiences primarily focused on criticising advertisements for illegal businesses (such as selling fake New Zealand qualifications and driving licenses; see Chapter Four, p.154) in Chinese newspapers. This indicates that Chinese audience may be unfamiliar with the legal and regulatory environment of New Zealand’s media, as well as with the MMP system and the importance of the two small political parties, and thus were not interested in discussing this court case.

Without any authoritative intervention except for advertisers, Chinese-language media enjoyed absolute freedom in their provision of content related to the 2005 general election. This context is crucial for examining the interactions between political elites, Chinese media and recent PRC Chinese migrants during the 2005 election. As discussed in Chapter Four in terms of applying the framework developed by Kleinnijenhuis and Rietberg (1995), they took part in the following three processes:
• ‘Top-down’: at the beginning of the election period, only three political parties, namely, Labour, National and ACT, relied on their Chinese candidates to set political agendas for Chinese migrants through Chinese media, although Labour eventually withdrew from this process because of its proposed Chinese candidate stepping down.

• ‘Bottom-up’: Chinese migrants expressed their concerns and interests to the political elites of New Zealand mainstream society through Chinese media (talkback radio, discussions in newspapers and on the internet). However, their political agendas were inaccessible to mainstream political elites, except for Kenneth Wang and Pansy Wong who could understand them through the Chinese media.

• ‘Mediocracy’: Chinese media determined political agendas for Chinese migrants and ethnic Chinese political elites. As discussed earlier, Chinese media represented the 2005 election as a ‘three-horse race’. Kenneth Wang and Pansy Wong were given a favourable treatment by the Chinese media to the direct benefit of ACT and National and the disadvantage of the Labour Party. Of the two, content analysis revealed that Kenneth Wang received considerably greater coverage in Chinese media than Pansy Wong.

On the whole, the role played by Chinese media during the 2005 election suggests that the interaction between Kenneth Wang and the ACT Party and the Chinese migrant community deserves a closer examination.
ACT’s political agendas set for Chinese migrants

Kenneth Wang and the ACT Party enjoyed enormous popularity among the newly arrived PRC migrants. To understand this, a brief overview of Kenneth Wang’s engagement with these migrants prior to the election may help. Despite his own PRC background which many PRC Chinese migrants appreciated, Kenneth Wang won credit largely because he acted as a Chinese community leader in handling three high-profile events involving the recent PRC migrants.

The first was the introduction in November 2002 of a minimum standard of English for applicants for residency in the Entrepreneur category. 59 This sudden change was a nightmare for many intending Chinese business migrants holding a Long-term Business Visa who had established a business in New Zealand. 60 They felt that it was impossible for them to learn English and pass the required test at middle age, that they had been fooled by the ‘racist’ Labour Government and that there was nowhere for them to go; they could neither stay in New Zealand nor go back to China, since they had relocated their businesses and families here and given up everything in China. They received a great deal of sympathy within the Chinese community, various voices

59 Distinct from the Investor category for people who have substantial capital to invest in the country, the Entrepreneur category enables people who have successfully established a business in New Zealand to gain residency; the Long-term Business Visa is the usual method of entry to New Zealand for those intending to gain residence in this way. Until November 2002, there were no language requirements for a Long-term Business Visa; this attracted a large number of intending Asian migrants to come to New Zealand and establish small businesses, and many later gained New Zealand residency in the Entrepreneur category. However, after that date, the principal applicant for a Long-term Business or Entrepreneur visa had to have a minimum competency in English; this even applied, though with a lower required standard, to those granted a Long-term Business Visa before this date and subsequently applying for residence as Entrepreneurs.

60 There were also some whose applications for Long-term Business Visa were lodged before the change and who complained that they had made substantial wasted efforts to prepare for coming to New Zealand. Many of these lodged their applications through irresponsible immigration agents, who misled their clients into proceeding with their migration plans without informing them of the sudden policy change.
in which commented that the new rule could be perceived as a contemporary version of the Poll Tax restricting Chinese immigration to New Zealand. Figure 5-1 was an advertisement in the NZ Chinese Herald, in which these people sought signatures from the Chinese community to support them. Here is a translation by the researcher of the key content of this advertisement.

“On 20 July, the Mandarin Times published an open letter by Entrepreneur visa holders, which was entitled “Three years of hardship in establishing businesses; a rough journey of future immigration”; after the New Zealand Chinese Herald published this letter on 23 July under the title of “Entrepreneur migrants: we have nowhere to go”, … we have received wide support from the Chinese community including Chinese MPs Kenneth Wang, Pansy Wong and the Chinese-language media. This has really inspired us with enthusiasm and we feel that we are no longer a small alienated group. Once again, we call the community and ask for your support to us. Please sign your name into the table below……”

Kenneth Wang participated in a number of public meetings of these people and made strongly supportive speeches; he organised a petition calling for the language requirement to be abandoned, which gathered 7296 signatures.61

The second was the case of Cong Bo. Cong was a former language school student from China, found guilty of dangerous driving causing death in March 2004. In December 2004, Cong was sentenced to 250 hours' community work and ordered to pay $10,000 reparation to the victim's family. However, he had quietly fled New Zealand and gone back to China before sentencing. Kenneth Wang was actively

61 For detail, see http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/Presented/Petitions/c/a/d/cad766a1fa4e41b8bb2327d0d5c66cd5.htm (accessed 3 January 2009).
involved in the preparation of a formal apology to the victim’s family on behalf of the Chinese community and called for the community to make generous donations to the family.

The third was initiated by a PRC Chinese migrant’s open letter addressed to the Prime Minister Helen Clark and Parliament. In his letter, Li Manchao expressed deep disappointment with the effectiveness of local police and the legal system of New Zealand after his house was broken into by burglars three times within twelve months. This letter, demanding ‘equal rights with the burglars’, was widely published by the Chinese media and was extensively discussed in the chat rooms on Chinese websites from March to June 2005. Wang collected 4936 signatures from the Chinese

Figure 5-1: An advertisement by entrepreneur migrants in the NZ Chinese Herald.
community for a petition to strengthen criminal law that was presented at Parliament on the 15th June, 2005.\textsuperscript{62}

It is beyond the scope of this study to explore the details of these events. It may however be argued that the three together signalled the building of solidarity and collective self-consciousness among the recent PRC migrants. They all took place after Kenneth Wang became the second Chinese MP in November 2002, and through them, he established himself as a spokesman for the recent PRC migrants within New Zealand’s political arena.

The ACT Party was fully aware of Wang’s overwhelming popularity within the Chinese migrant community. He was therefore assigned to lead ACT’s Asian campaign with the specific theme of "Stop Peters". Given Peters’s well-known stance of anti-immigration, it is clear that this campaign was designed strategically to target Asian voters, the majority being Chinese migrants. For ACT, this Asian campaign was so vital that Rodney Hide, leader of the ACT Party, noted that “Our Asian

\textbf{Figure 5-2:} ACT 2005 election billboard.

\textsuperscript{62} For detail, see http://www.parliament.nz/en-NZ/PB/Presented/Petitions/6/d/b/6dbd7da48efd46bda711cf65bf33729f.htm (accessed 2 January 2009).
chapter is one of Act’s most potent weapons, and that the “Asian vote contributed both to our victory in Epsom and in returning Heather Roy to Parliament.” Figure 5-2 shows the picture of the billboard for this campaign, which is the first political billboard in New Zealand with a nearly all-Chinese message.

As illustrated, the billboard, fronted by Kenneth Wang, showed Peters playing king-maker to Labour and National, and warned that any government with NZ First would be a recipe for chaos. From this billboard with an emphasis on anti-racism, it seemed that Kenneth Wang was sending three messages to Chinese voters on behalf of the ACT party: 1) ACT is concerned about racism and looks after the interest of Chinese migrant community; 2) “Stop Peters” was the only way to stop a racist politician holding the balance of power; 3) ACT shared a common view with National on the issue of tax cuts. To stress the first two points, a sentence in Chinese language was put along with Wang’s portrait; Wang’s signatures in both English and Chinese were also shown under the portrait. Those who did not know much about the ACT party and Kenneth Wang’s role might assume that Wang was a key member of ACT. Regarding tax cuts, the third message aimed to convince the audience that ACT shared a common view with National, Labour’s powerful rival.

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64 ‘ACT is Back’, December 2, when Rodney Hide gave a speech to Victoria University 2005 Post-Election Conference, at Legislative Chamber, Parliament Buildings.
65 ACT was the first political party in New Zealand to advertise using the Chinese language on campaign billboards, which appeared in the 2002 election.
66 When ACT launched this billboard, it noted, “Don Brash and Helen Clark should condemn Peters’ racist politics and rule out dealing with him. He only has power because National and Labour are prepared to deal with him.” For detail, see ACT’s newsletter entitled, “Stop Peters by action billboard launched”, http://www.act.org.nz/node/27300 (accessed 3 January 2009).
With an overwhelming coverage in Chinese media, Kenneth Wang and ACT transmitted these three messages widely to Chinese migrants. Knowing well his extensive popularity within the Chinese migrant community, Wang proclaimed, “The only way to support Xiaoxuan is to give your party vote to ACT,” which was one of ACT’s campaign slogans in the Chinese print media. Figure 5-3 shows another ACT’s advertisement in the Chinese Times, a Chinese-language weekly claiming a circulation of 10,000 copies in Auckland. The content of this advertisement was dominated by the signatures of many Chinese, who were presumably Wang’s supporters. These signatures corresponded to the title of this advertisement, “From the
same root and origin we share the same fate, Xiaoxuan, we support you!” At the bottom of these signatures, Wang’s portrait was used again by the ACT party to remind Chinese voters, “Let’s meet on 17 September, awaiting your participation and support …”

Overall, using Chinese media to set agendas for Chinese migrants, Kenneth Wang and the ACT Party made ‘Stop Peters’ or anti-racism the central issue of the 2005 election for Chinese voters. ACT’s strategy proved successful in the sense of winning a great deal of support among the recent PRC migrants, who were deeply disappointed with Kenneth Wang’s failure to return to Parliament. In contrast, the earlier Chinese migrants including Taiwanese and some PRC immigrants did not show the same enthusiasm for Kenneth Wang and the ACT party.

The popularity that Kenneth Wang and ACT enjoyed among many recent PRC migrants may be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, it revealed these people’s anxiety about a ‘racist’ politician being so influential in politics within the mainstream society; feeling insecure and vulnerable, they sought equally powerful leadership from a trustworthy mainstream politician to stand up for them and thus provide protection, but did not have faith in anyone other than ethnic Chinese politicians.

On the other hand, it indicated that these newcomers lack in-depth understanding of New Zealand’s political system and the party politics in this country. Regarding the essence of MMP which enables political representations of minority views in Parliament, the Chinese audience hardly made any comment. Except for ACT and NZ First, the other five small parties in the election were almost absent in the Chinese media; neither Chinese media personnel nor audience were interested in discussing
the Maori Party, a new political party just emerging at the time of the 2005 election. Instead, the content of Chinese media and audience’s interest mainly focused on the issue of Maori as welfare beneficiaries. This showed that many new Chinese migrants did not understand the political environment of New Zealand. The researcher traced the discussion forum on www.chinese.net.nz and found not even a single post about the two Orewa speeches by Don Brash, the then-leader of the National Party. In contrast, many mainstream New Zealand many critics commented on Brash playing the race card against Maori, and thus giving the party a soaring rate of popularity.

Furthermore, the new Chinese migrants’ lack of an understanding of New Zealand politics was also exhibited by their exclusive focus on parochial issues within the Chinese migrant community and barely mentioned these parties’ history, membership, ideology or even campaign platform policies except for the issues of taxation and the welfare state. The message “Suggestion that Kenneth Wang Join in the Labour Party” is an extreme example of the degree of naivety among these newcomers.

Section B

Profile of the recent PRC immigrants

ACT gained recent PRC migrants’ support largely owing to Kenneth Wang’s overwhelming popularity among these people. Nonetheless, there are also other factors contributing to the result that recent PRC migrants approved of conservative parties and disagreed with the centre-left Labour government. This should be

67 See Chapter Four, p.142.
interpreted in connection with their socio-economic background in China. In other words, a certain category of people from China who recently immigrated to New Zealand are likely to perceive their host country in a particular way. In order to validate and make the following arguments concrete, a closer examination of the composition of these recent PRC migrants and an overview of recent socio-economic developments in China are both essential.

**Two major groups of recent PRC migrants**

Chart 5-1 shows the age profile of the PRC Chinese population in Auckland in contrast to that of other Chinese groups according to the 2006 census. These PRC Chinese are predominantly young, with ages between the early 20s and early 40s. The census data includes overseas students and visitors as well as migrants, but it is clear
that most Auckland-based PRC migrants are young. The formation of such a demographic pattern may be explained by analysing the pattern of PRC students to New Zealand over the period of rapid increase in Chinese immigration to the country.

Chapter Two (p.43-44) has discussed the fact that the number of Chinese students in New Zealand has dramatically increased since the early 2000s. Since 2002, the New Zealand government has changed policies to encourage international students to become migrants once they complete their studies. As Merwood (2007, 56) found, the Chinese students are the largest group benefiting from these policy changes. Precisely this period saw a sharp increase in Chinese immigration to New Zealand.

Another significant feature of the recent PRC migrants is that they include the largest group of business immigrants to New Zealand since 2000. Chart 5-2 shows the pattern of the PRC business immigrants to New Zealand for the 2000/01 to 2006/07 financial years. It is very noticeable that the total number of PRC investors was particularly large for the 2000/01 to 2002/03 financial years. During this period, nearly all of the PRC business immigrants were exclusively investors; they were the most significant component of investor migrants to New Zealand. However, the number of PRC investor migrants rapidly decreased after the 2003/04 financial year; meanwhile, the number of entrepreneur migrants has steadily increased. It will be beyond the scope of this part of the thesis to discuss the reason for this trend.

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68 Generally speaking, business immigrants include investors and entrepreneurs. The latter refers to people who have been granted Long-term Business Visas and have established a successful business in New Zealand before being granted resident permits.
Nevertheless, the sizable number of PRC business migrants to New Zealand between 2000 and 2005 may have resulted in a significant impact on the local Chinese community economy. This argument is closely associated with the requirements for the applicants under business migrant categories. For instance, for those who were granted residence permits under the investor category, the core criterion was that the principal applicant needs to invest a specified minimum of funds in New Zealand. Between 1999 and 2005, the required minimum of funds was $1 million. This figure was increased to $2 million in 2005.\(^\text{69}\) Considerable sums of PRC investors’ funds poured into New Zealand for the 2001/02 financial year, which was the peak period

for PRC investor migrants to arrive in the country. As Chart 5-2 shows, approximately 2800 PRC investor applicants were granted residence permits. This means that these people must have brought at least $2800 million into New Zealand. Chapter Three has discussed the fact that the Chinese migrants are inclined to conduct business within the Chinese community. Therefore a substantial amount of investment would have entered the Chinese community businesses. As Chapter Four (p.119) has shown, the advertisements in Chinese media clearly reveal that businesses related to construction and property development, which require the input of considerable capital, have become the most significant part of the Chinese community economy.

**The new rich and middle class from China**

As we have just seen, the major sources of the recent PRC immigrants to New Zealand are former foreign-fee paying students from wealthy families and business people. These people are among the immediate beneficiaries of China’s economic growth in recent years, the newly emerged new rich and middle class in China.

Chapter Two has discussed the fact that the Chinese students primarily came from the eastern and coastal provinces of China, where economies are much more developed than the hinterland. A large body of research (e.g.; Li and Tang 2000; Lin, Wang and Zhao 2004; Ravallion and Chen 2007) has been done on the issue of China’s economic disparity between its eastern coastal provinces and western interior. Since 1978, China’s economy has grown at the staggering speed of an average of almost 10 percent each year, more than Japan and the Asian tigers achieved over similar periods.
when their economies took off (*The Economist*, 27 September 2007). China has developed into an economic powerhouse for the whole world, but its western interior has been largely left out of the nation’s economic boom. With 28.8% of Chinese population and 71.4% of the land area of the country, the western interior’s share of the national GDP is under 17%; the per capita income of the western interior is less than 40% of that in the eastern provinces (Lu and Neilson 2004, 1). Because of such economic disparity, the Chinese government introduced the Great Western Development Program in 2000.

The economic disparity between urban and rural China is seen as another significant consequence of unequally sharing the economic boom in the country over the last two decades. According to an official Chinese source, at the end of 2006, “75.5 percent of villages in the whole country still had no central water purifying systems, while 84.2 percent lacked garbage treatment plants and 79.4 percent had unhygienic toilets. … Hamlets with gym facilities or libraries only accounted for less than 15 percent of the total. Licensed medical practitioners were unavailable in 23.9 percent of all villages” (Xihua News Agency, 22 February 2008). In order to seek a better life, many peasants have migrated to cities to work. China’s National Bureau of Statistics has revealed that the number of Chinese peasants moving to the cities as migrant workers rose by more than 80 million between 1996 and 2006; the total number of migrant workers stood at 130 million by the end of 2006. These migrant workers mainly find

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71 For more detail, see http://www.china.org.cn/english/China/243467.htm (accessed 8 October 2008)
employment within labour-intensive sectors such as construction, food services, and manufacturing. Many of these jobs are considered low-paid and undesirable by urban residents’ standards. For instance, “in Beijing, until 2000, more than 100 kinds of jobs were not open to migrant labour. Now, some low-paid jobs that many Beijing residents are unwilling to take, such as street sweeping or garbage collecting, are open to migrants” (Zhang 2002, 35-6). Low-paid and undesirable jobs mean that migrant workers unavoidably fall in urban poverty.

Beside migrant workers, China’s urban poverty has also been generated from large scale re-construction of state-owned enterprises, which has resulted in a sharp rise in the number of redundant workers and retirees with limited or no regular pension. Mushrooming protests by the unemployed and pensioners are new scenes in urban China, especially in the northeastern provinces. For instance in 2002, up to 50,000 sacked workers took part in a protest against cuts in their lay-off benefits in China’s largest oilfield in Heilongjiang province (BBC, 13 March, 2002). As Hussain (2007, 108) comments, in the past “the urban poor were small in number and characterized by the so-called ‘three nos’: no ability to work, no savings or other income source and no relatives to depend on. The ‘new urban poor’ in the period since the 1990s have not only been more numerous but also, for the most part, able and willing to work but unable to find jobs.” Currently, 21% of China’s urban population is in poverty, according to statistics from China’s Ministry of Civil Affairs (Hong 2005, 729).

73 For more detail, see http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/1870936.stm (accessed 19 October 2008)
In contrast, the number of rich Chinese has also been increased sharply. China’s new rich have drawn a lot of international media attention, including Forbes, who now compiles a list of the richest Chinese. In 1999, it took US$6 million to get on the China top 50. In 2002, the person who ranked 50th on the list was worth US$110 million (Time, 16 September 2002). The Merrill Lynch Cap Gemini survey shows that “China had 320,000 millionaires (those with $1 million in investible assets) in 2005, up 6.8% from 2004. Granted, China’s millionaire growth rate is the same as that of the U.S., which had 2.67 million millionaires in 2005. In other words, China has about the same number of millionaires as Ohio.”

The wealth of the Chinese middle-class has also significantly increased and the size of this social group is also growing, although the definition of the Chinese middle class varies. The survey by the Sociology Institute of the China Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) in 2001 found that the Chinese middle class accounted for 20 percent of the total population (People’s Daily Online, 5 October 2008). According to Euromonitor International, the middle class in China is defined as comprising households with an annual income between RMB 60,000 and RMB 500,000 in 2005. By this definition, the Chinese middle class grew from 65.5 million in January 2005 to 80 million in January 2007 (ibid.).

The Gini coefficient is commonly used as an indicator for measuring the overall degree of income inequality of a country. Table 5-1 shows the changing values of China’s Gini coefficient between 1981 and 2001.\textsuperscript{77}

The danger line for the Gini coefficient as defined by the Chinese government is 0.40 (Shirk 2007, 31). According to the Chinese official source, China already reached the ‘yellow light’ Gini level of 0.45 in 2001 (China Daily, 20 September 2005). Euromonitor International provides another reliable source of information which notes that in 1990 the richest 10% of Chinese households possessed 19.0% of the national wealth. By 2006, their share had risen to over 40.0%.\textsuperscript{78} Shirk (2007, 31)

\textsuperscript{77} Data from Ravallion and Chen (2007, 20).
\textsuperscript{78} Euromonitor International is the world's leading independent provider of business intelligence on industries, countries and consumers. For details about this report, see An Hodgson’s article entitled
provides further figures to show the striking disparity in China, “… the richest 10 percent hold 45 percent of the country’s wealth, and the poorest 10 percent have only 1.4 percent. The per capita income of urban residents is now 3.23 times that of rural dwellers compared to 2.57 that of rural dwellers back in 1985. The annual growth rate of urban incomes (8-9 percent) is almost twice that of rural incomes (4-5 percent).”

In summary, the new rich and middle class in China are made up of the urban-based private entrepreneurs, managers in lucrative foreign firms and domestic enterprises and some professionals such as engineers, lawyers and accountants. They largely cluster in China’s eastern and coastal provinces, and have been the primary source of the recent PRC immigrants to New Zealand.

Recent PRC migrants’ perceptions and aspirations

With such a particular socio-economic background as described above, the recent PRC migrants perceive New Zealand in a particular way, which is reflected primarily into their support for conservative parties, namely National and ACT, and their intense criticism of the centre-left Labour government and its conduct in maintaining the welfare state. The influence of these migrants’ socio-economic background is independent of the presence of Pansy Wong and Kenneth Wang as Chinese candidates and the propaganda by National and ACT; it is the common ground which these people share with National and ACT. In this context, their criticism of the Labour government’s ‘high’ tax policy and ‘massive expenditure’ on beneficiaries can be

interpreted by reference to current China, a society in which uneven distribution of wealth and social inequalities are widespread.

As discussed earlier, China’s Gini coefficient reached the ‘yellow light’ level in 2001; a small number of urban rich and a sizable middle-class control the greatest proportion of the country’s wealth, while the majority of the Chinese population remain in poverty. The Chinese government has realised the danger of such a pyramidal social structure that is likely to result in political instability. It introduced the Minimum Living Standard Allowance (MLSA) at the end of 1997. In 1998, a new social security system aiming to cover a wider range of Chinese citizens was implemented under the management of the newly established Ministry of Labour and Social Security. Branch offices of this ministry in all provinces across China were finally set up by the end of 1999. However, as Hussain (2007, 112) notes, “both rural and urban social security systems are highly decentralised”. For instance, social insurance and pension schemes only cover 7 percent of the total rural population in China (ibid., 110). In China, it has been a long established tradition that someone is expected to receive financial support from family members or friends, if needed. The increase of population receiving the MLSA is regarded as an undesirable aspect of the prosperous business districts in urban China. It also challenges China’s conventional value system, which always rewards hardworking people and condemns hangers-on. While a new social security system is in the making in China, those in severe poverty still suffer from institutionalised social discrimination and stigmatisation.

This may explain why many recent PRC migrants in New Zealand express their concern that a large number of working-aged New Zealanders live on the dole. From their point of view, only the elderly and disabled people who are in a state of total
helplessness without any earning power of income are entitled to or deserve government assistance. Their perception of the social security system primarily serving the poor is conditioned by the specific social context in China.

Within the developed world, the welfare state as an institutional framework is considered as a mechanism to coordinate social integration and maintain political stability. It has been well established that,

Welfare institutions intervene and alter the original allocation of resources in the society……
Despite the popular view that welfare payments mainly assist the poor, these payments are only a small portion of government transfers. Thus, in many cases the term ‘social security spending’ is preferred to ‘welfare state’ to delineate the role of social security in maintaining a minimum income level, and the social security system itself generally evolves around three primary goals of welfare programs: redistribution, efficiency, and social cohesion (Li, Feng, and Gizelis 2008, 10; also see Wilensky 1975; Pampel and Williamson 1988; Pierson 1991).

Such a concept of the welfare state encompasses the provision of citizens’ social rights and their participation in a civil society.

However, in the case of China, social discrimination against recipients of state welfare such as the MLSA is not just due to the conventional value system of the Chinese society, but also to the slow pace of development of China’s civil society. In China, disadvantaged social groups lack legally protected rights to participate in the processes of decision-making about their welfare. There is abundant evidence of this: there are numerous protests by redundant workers and vulnerable pensioners in urban
China fighting for their rights; the *Hukou* system\(^{79}\) limits the right of rural Chinese citizens to live in cities; most migrant workers do not have contracts with their employers, and thus obtain no legal protection from workplace injuries, sickness-leave and unpredictable redundancy, and of course receive no pensions (NBS 2005, cited in Hussain 2007, 111); migrant workers’ children are denied admission to urban schools or are charged much higher fees, so are left behind in the countryside.

Unfortunately, attaining of social equality and justice through redistributing social resources seems an alien ideology to China’s new urban rich. This is reflected in the fact that China currently lacks a broad tax base from which to generate revenues needed for its new social security system (Li, Feng, and Gizelis 2008, 16). For the rich, ‘taxation’ means a rather unpleasant by-product of the process of accumulating their wealth. In 1999, the list of *Forbes* Magazine survey of China's richest was called the "death list", since it resulted in a visit of the tax police to many who eventually ended in jail due to fraud (*Business Week*, 6 February 2006).\(^{80}\) Findings of the surveys jointly conducted in 2003 and 2004 by China’s State Administration of Taxation and China Tax Magazine also revealed the ordinary Chinese public’s assumption that “tax evasion by the wealthy is rampant in China, ranging from private enterprise owners to wealthy pop stars that may not be paying the State what they truly owe (*China Daily*,

\(^{79}\) *Hukou* is a record of household registration, which officially identifies a Chinese citizen as an urban or rural resident. China originally implemented the ‘Hukou’ system in the 1950s. Under this system, rural residents are strictly prohibited from living in cities without an official urban residency permit. They are not entitled to the same social welfare as urban residents. This system has institutionally differentiated the Chinese citizens into two worlds. Thanks to China’s economic boom, the system has been eroded since the 1980s, with the rural population increasingly leaving the land to find jobs and a better life in many large Chinese cities.

\(^{80}\) For more detail, see http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/06_06/b3970072.htm (accessed 21 October 2008).
15 September 2005). This context helps to explain why throughout the 2005 election, many recent PRC migrants supported National and ACT, which both parties trumpeted a platform policy of ‘tax-cuts’.

Overall, recent PRC migrants’ conservative views towards the welfare state were well established prior to their arrival in New Zealand. During the 2005 election, many of these migrants voiced their concerns and aspirations through Chinese media; they expected to see a conservative government to replace the then Labour government. Their criticism of Labour’s policy of ‘high taxation’ and ‘massive expenditure’ on social welfare to serve the common people (such as interest-free student loans and the Working For Families Package) highlights these people’s distance from the core value system of democratic New Zealand.

Among these people, the myth of Labour only looking after the poor, ‘the majority being Maori and Polynesians’, is presumably caused by their inadequate comprehension of the history of New Zealand. History shows that over the decades, there was no difference between Labour and National in the matter of maintaining New Zealand as a long-established welfare state since the 1930s; no matter which party was in power, it was committed to maintaining financial support for existing welfare state arrangements. The definition of the two major political parties in New Zealand as ‘left-wing’ and ‘right-wing’ is largely based on the relative priority each gives to the allocation of redistributed social resources to welfare or to economic

82 In New Zealand, the idea of government provision of social security can be traced back much earlier. The first Liberal government introduced old age pensions in 1898.
growth; National inclines to offer tax cuts in contrast to Labour’s preference for more public expenditure.

The alienation of recent PRC migrants from the core society of New Zealand in the sense of misunderstanding the welfare state was further reflected in their perception of the disadvantaged Maori and the Pacific communities. As Chinese media revealed, many recent PRC migrants assume that living on the dole is a common phenomenon among the Maori and the Polynesians, who are the main beneficiaries of the welfare state. Studies by Ip (2009) and Liu (2009) have identified that Chinese migrants generally perceive the Maori in a very negative way, because these migrants have limited interactions with Maori. They tend to stereotype the Maori in association with images such as ‘crime’, ‘low incomes’, ‘unemployed’ and ‘beneficiary’. Also with limited engagement with the Pacific Islanders, they tend to lump Maori and the Pacific communities into one group, just because the physical appearance of the two is similar. On Chinese talkback radio they often used one single word ‘mao dao ren’ to refer to the Maori and Polynesians in general.

It may be argued that recent PRC migrants’ negative views towards the other two major ethnic minorities in New Zealand are strongly influenced by the racial prejudice established by European New Zealanders. Throughout the history of New Zealand, white Europeans have controlled the institutions of the country, including the powerful agency of mass media. A large body of literature has established that in the West, coloured ethnic minorities are often portrayed in various negative ways in mainstream media (e.g. Wilson and Cutierrez 1995; Gross and Woods 1999; Cottle

83 Literally, ‘mao dao ren’ means ‘people of the Maori and islanders’ in Mandarin Chinese.
2000). Over the years, New Zealand mainstream media have routinely contributed to unfavourable images of Maori and the Pacific communities. Unfortunately, Chinese-language media take these images as granted and reinforce them to the Chinese audience. This kind of media stigmatisation of the disadvantaged Maori and the Pacific communities may significantly impede the recent PRC migrants’ acculturation in the multi-racial host country.

Stereotyping of Maori and the Pacific communities among many recent PRC migrants also parallels the issue of racial inequality in China. According to official figures, the Chinese population primarily consists of ‘Han Chinese’ (92%) and the rest of fifty-five ethnic minorities such as Tibetans, Uighur, Mongols, and Hui (Muslim Chinese), who live predominantly in the western hinterland. As noted earlier, China’s western hinterland is much less developed than the coastal regions. In history, even before the era of the economic reform, Han Chinese generally characterised these ethnic minorities as afflicted with poverty and uncivilised. As the gulf between the west and coastal China has widened over the past two decades, perception of ‘backward’ ethnic minorities has been reinforced. This trend is clearly reflected in the content of China’s school curriculum and teaching material on ethnic minorities; they are currently still portrayed as backward and needing aid from the Han Chinese (Postiglione 1999; Vickers 2005, 2008). With such attitudes in their pre-migration cultural background, the recent PRC migrants, mainly Han Chinese, have brought into New Zealand negative views towards ethnic minorities, and indigenous people, both in China and in New Zealand.
Section C

Patriotic sentiment towards China

The preceding examination of recent PRC migrants’ distance from the core society of New Zealand helps to explain why these people maintain a strong emotional tie with their homeland. This is clearly depicted by their embrace of Chinese nationalism, as shown in Chapter Four. During the 2005 general election, China’s achievement in her space programme was one stimulus for this. More generally, it is a manifestation of the fact that these migrants are very proud of China’s immense success in developing her economy. According to them, a prosperous China provides the basis for funding such an ambitious and costly project, which proclaims to the world China’s leading role in applying science and developing high technology. In their eyes, the Labour government does not have efficient strategies to develop New Zealand’s economy (see Chapter Four p.141), which appears sluggish in contrast to the economic boom in China. Statistical analysis in Chapter Four shows that the Chinese media give priority to covering the New Zealand economy, and the Chinese audience, mainly recent PRC migrants, also have a strong interest in this.
As mentioned earlier, over the past three decades China has been enjoying the fastest economic growth in the world, an average of almost 10% each year. Compared to China, New Zealand is apparently a slow runner, although it has achieved strong economic growth since the fourth Labour government implemented a wide range of economic and social reforms in the mid-1980s. New Zealand’s economy experienced a stunning growth during the 1990s, particularly between 1993 and 1996, with annual average growth in real GDP peaking at 6.8% in June 1994. Over 2002 to 2004, New Zealand GDP annual growth ranged between 3.4% and 4.5%, and achieved its peak of 5.2% in December 2004. Such a performance may not be considered impressive by
Chinese standards, but it was above the OECD average during this period (see Chart 5-4). Unfortunately, New Zealand economic growth fell to 1.7% in 2006.\textsuperscript{84}

The connection between the revival of Chinese nationalism and China’s fast economic growth has drawn a considerable amount of scholarly attention in recent years (e.g. Fewsmith, 2001; Gries, 2004; Hughes 2006; Zweig 2002). It has been established that the Chinese government has been using nationalism as a political strategy to legitimise the CCP rule, following the Tiananmen Square protests and the collapse of the former communist countries in Eastern Europe in 1989. This use of nationalism as a political mechanism throughout the early 1990s was closely associated with three crucial phases of building the theoretical framework of ‘Socialism with Chinese Characteristics’. The first one refers to ‘Deng Xiaoping’s Theory’ presented during Deng’s Southern Tour in early 1992. Deng urged the bold introduction of stock markets and expansion of foreign investment in China. At the CCP Fourteenth Party Congress later that year, General Secretary Jiang Zeming announced another step towards creating a market economy in China. According to Jiang, this new formula imposes market principles to regulate the country’s economy, which used to be centralised under macroeconomic controls. Following this, the third volume of Deng’s selected works was published to provide further rationale for continuous radical economic reform under the leadership of the CCP. In contrast to the previous version of Chinese socialism affiliated with Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong’s thought, ‘Socialism with Chinese Characteristics’ presents the CCP “as the

party of national salvation, implementing a market-orientated economic reform process within a multipolar post-Cold War international situation, harnessing the forces of technology to ensure the survival of the Chinese nation-state in a globalising world (Jiang 1998, cited in Hughes 2006, 69).”

‘Socialism with Chinese Characteristics’ has been the ideological force driving the growth of the Chinese economy since the mid-1990s. As noted earlier, the recent PRC immigrants to New Zealand predominantly consist of the new rich and middle class from urban China. Their wealth may be accumulated largely owing to China’s economic growth of this era. Given that the majority of recent Chinese migrants are in their 20s and 30s, an examination of the ideological atmosphere surrounding these people during their formative years in China may help to explain why they hold strong patriotic sentiment towards the homeland.

The early 1990s saw a massive ‘patriotic education campaign’ throughout China (e.g. Zhao 1998; Hughes 2006), which incorporated efforts from the Central Propaganda Department, the State Education Commission, the Radio, Film, and Television Ministry, the Cultural Ministry, and the Communist Youth League of China Central Committee. It particularly targeted the youth, in all educational levels, from kindergarten to the university level. This campaign concentrated on teaching the youth to be proud of being Chinese by emphasizing the ‘great achievements’ of the Chinese people and especially under the CCP leadership; it was centred around two main themes.

One was Chinese tradition and history with a special focus on the period that China suffered from humiliation by the West following its defeat during the Opium War.
The other one was China’s national unity and territorial integrity. As Zhao (1998, 297-8) comments, “the Communist government took every opportunity to instigate nationalist resentment against foreign pressures……The regime thus created a sense of crisis among the Chinese people, in an attempt to convince them that international ‘hostile forces’ were doing everything they could to take these territories (referring to Hong Kong, Taiwan and Tibet) from China, or to prevent China from taking them back. These presentations told the Chinese people, especially the younger generation that, if not for the strong leadership of the CCP in fighting against these conspiracies, China would fall apart.”

Apparently, China’s state-led patriotic education campaign has been successful. It has enhanced Chinese people’s national pride, which is clearly depicted in the content of China’s mass media, for instance, the Global Times (Huan qiu shi bao環球時報). Empirical research by Frisch (2008) has also found that commercial advertisements on Chinese television in recent years show a trend to portray China as a rising superpower. The popularity of the 12-part documentary television series, The Rise of the Great Powers (Da guo jue qi大國崛起) broadcast on CCTV in 2006 also witnesses to the revival of Chinese nationalism.

In the meantime, the patriotic education campaign has also fuelled a strong sentiment against the United States and Japan among the Chinese people, especially the younger generation. As a result, we have seen outraged protests spreading from Beijing to other large Chinese cities, when American missiles struck the Chinese Embassy in

85 For more detail, see Shrik (2007, 86-7).

Within New Zealand, recent PRC migrants’ patriotic passion towards China was shown by their engagement in celebrating the success of China’s space programme, as discussed earlier. In addition, it is also reflected in their ill feeling toward the Green Party, especially during the 2005 election. The party is known by many recent PRC migrants as ‘unfriendly’ or ‘hostile foreign pressure’ on China, for it has constantly given moral support to the Dalai Lama and thus to his exiled government, as well as opposing the New Zealand government signing the Free Trade Agreement with China. The matter of the Tibetan separatists is highly sensitive for many recent PRC migrants whose ideological system was largely cemented by the ‘patriotic education campaign’, which emphasised China’s national unity and territorial integrity. Moreover, the Greens’ concerns about China’s environmental damage and other human rights issues are alien to them. The Greens’ stance is presumably perceived by these migrants as a provoking criticism of the Chinese guoqing (the state of the nation), of which they have developed a different understanding from their patriotic education. The Green Party was an important factor reinforcing the view of the recent PRC migrants who were not in favour of Labour, because the two parties campaigned together during the 2005 election in order to form a left-wing government.

This chapter has been primarily an analysis of the empirical findings of Chapter Four using the theoretical framework developed in Chapter Three. This framework suggests that the Chinese-language media in New Zealand serve mainly the specific needs and interests of the recent PRC migrants who are at an early stage of integrating
and acculturating in New Zealand. These media contribute to reinforcing these people’s sense of belonging and consolidating the cohesion among them. As an effective means of transmission, ethnic Chinese media provide an alternative public sphere for recent PRC migrants to address their concerns and to share their interests about the host country. In this way, these media function as an alternative mechanism for these people to participate in the core society of New Zealand. Meanwhile, Chinese media also serve as an arena for recent PRC migrants to maintain their patriotic passion for the homeland.

A statistical analysis indicates that the recent PRC migrants have become the most numerous group of the Chinese migrant community in New Zealand since the early 2000s. These newcomers are generally young, between 20 and 40 years old, and by and large belong to the newly emerged rich and middle class in urban China who are the most immediate beneficiaries of China’s economic boom, especially since the mid-1990s; fuelled by the mechanism of ‘socialism with Chinese characteristics’, this period has seen the accelerating development of a market economy in China’s coastal regions.

The recent PRC migrants in New Zealand tend to perceive the host country in a way that is closely associated with their socio-economic background, clearly reflecting their advantages amidst the economic disparities across China. China is in the process of making a new social insurance system, but it is still at an early stage, so many of these newcomers are unhappy with New Zealand’s welfare state, feeling it is too generous. Their conservative views concentrate largely on questioning the Labour government’s conduct in dealing with issues such as social inequality, redistribution
of social wealth and the disadvantaged ethnic minorities, namely Maori and the
Pacific communities.

In an ideological sense, recent PRC migrants’ biased understanding of New Zealand as a welfare state underlines the distance of their value system from that of the core society of New Zealand. This indicates the need for these people to be further incorporated and acculturated in the host country. As long as they are somewhat alienated from New Zealand society, these newcomers cling to a strong patriotic sentiment towards China as their rightful homeland.
CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS

Overview of the research

This chapter will present the conclusions of this research on the current Chinese migrant community in New Zealand through a critical analysis of the Chinese-language media in this country. The prime aim of this research is to apply a media studies approach to investigate the recent development of the Chinese migrant community in New Zealand. The establishment of this community is closely associated with the passage of the 1987 Immigration Act. Over the past twenty years, there has been a significant growth of the Chinese migrant community, as well as a wide variety of Chinese-language media flourishing in New Zealand. This trend has been accelerating, especially since the early 2000s, which saw a sharp increase in PRC immigrants to the country.

Within the global context of the Chinese diaspora in many other countries both in historical and contemporary times, Chinese-language media always coexist with overseas Chinese communities and serve as a powerful institution consolidating the cohesion of Chinese overseas and maintaining their Chinese identity outside China (Suryadinata 1997; Sun 2006). In the case of New Zealand, there is a unique bicultural element and over 140 years history of Chinese settlement in the country. An objective of this research is to examine the specific significance of the New Zealand Chinese media in manifesting the community life of the Chinese migrants in this country.
This research hypothesised that the New Zealand Chinese media closely reflect the
development of the New Zealand Chinese community, and provide a unique
perspective for investigating Chinese migrants’ settlement and adaptation into their
host country. Thus, this research attempted to seek answers to a number of interlocked
questions about the relationship between Chinese-language media and Chinese
migrants. For example, what role do these media play in the process of Chinese
migrants’ settlement and acculturation within the core society of New Zealand? To
what extent is the Chinese migrant community reflected in or exhibited by the
Chinese-language media?

The researcher has surveyed a wide range of theories within two primary research
fields, namely international migration studies and media studies, in order to establish
a framework for conceptualising ethnic Chinese media as a distinct form of alternative
media in New Zealand. In contrast to the mainstream media in New Zealand, ethnic
Chinese media publicise the existence and opinions of socio-politically marginalised
Chinese migrants whose voice has not found a place in the mainstream media. Using
their own media as an alternative public sphere, marginalised Chinese migrants
address race-based issues, especially some highly politicised issues, which often
manifest the specific needs and interests of those who are incompetent in the English
language and are poorly acculturated to the core society of New Zealand. In this way,
Chinese-language media facilitate inner communication by providing a common
language and sharing common views among a certain group of Chinese migrants and
thereby strengthen the social network within them. This conceptual framework
emphasises examining the interactions between Chinese-language media and the
Chinese migrant community. Consequently, the criteria for selecting empirical data
were chosen in the expectation that the information obtained would illuminate the characteristics of New Zealand Chinese media and reveal the relationship between these Chinese media and the Chinese migrant community.

In order to minimise limitations of the validity of empirical data, the scope of data selection was extended from the content analysis of Chinese media only, to include the Chinese audience and media operators. This research was thus undertaken in three major phases. Firstly, quantitative data was generated primarily from the content of the Chinese-language media during the 2005 New Zealand general election. This decision was largely based on the researcher’s expectation that a general election would stimulate socio-politically marginalised Chinese migrants to discuss their main interests and concerns about their new life in democratic New Zealand. The preliminary findings of this first phase became the basis of the second phase of the research, which concentrated on acquiring data on audience reception of the Chinese media. The third phase of data collection targeted Chinese media personnel in order to find out how these people perceive their role in serving the Chinese migrant community. The aim of the third phase of the research was to clarify any remaining ambiguities in the findings from the previous two phases.

The empirical findings clearly show that at present, the New Zealand Chinese media serve primarily the specific needs and interests of the recent PRC immigrants who have arrived in New Zealand since the early 2000s. They are at an early stage of integrating and acculturating into the core society of New Zealand. Accordingly, this research faces the specific task of exploring the social dynamics of a distinct sub-group within the Chinese migrant community in New Zealand.
The recent PRC immigrants to New Zealand are generally young and include the new rich and middle-class from urban China. These people can be considered as the most immediate beneficiaries of China’s rapid economic acceleration stimulated by the CCP’s new orthodoxy – ‘Socialism with Chinese characteristics’, which was launched in the mid-1990s. A number of researchers (e.g. Hughes 2006; Zhao 2004; Zweig 2002) have established that this new ideological framework is the cornerstone of structuring the current national state of China in terms of both domestic and international contexts. On the one hand, economic disparities have caused an increasing spread of social inequality across the whole country. On the other hand, China’s rise as a superpower has boosted the revival of Chinese nationalism, especially among the younger generation.

Having originated from such an economic and political background in China, the recent PRC migrants tend to perceive New Zealand in a particular way. Many of them have great concern about New Zealand’s welfare state, which they consider is too generous and too liberal, and may impede the country’s economic growth. Their conservative views noticeably concentrate on questioning the conduct of the centre-left Labour government in dealing with social inequality and redistribution of social wealth. In order to advocate their socio-economic stance and political aspirations, they are highly enthusiastic about the idea of pursuing ethnic Chinese representation within the party politics of New Zealand. These key findings highlight the ideological dilemma in which the recent PRC migrants are locked, and by which they are marginalised from the core value and belief system of New Zealand society, which has a strong and lasting tradition of egalitarianism. While living with this kind of
marginalisation in the host country, recent PRC migrants maintain a strong sentiment of patriotism towards China.

Conclusions

An alternative way of studying the Chinese migrants in New Zealand

This research demonstrates a new way of studying the New Zealand Chinese migrant community through analysing the Chinese-language media that serve this community. These media documented well the political behaviour of recent PRC immigrants and their aspirations in the host country. This approach uses a wide range of elements from the two distinct disciplines of international migration studies and media studies, both theoretical concepts and empirical methods. Quantitative and qualitative data for this research are primarily generated from the New Zealand Chinese media and other sources associated with these Chinese media. The collection of such data and the way of interpreting it are significantly different from the methods used in existing research on the New Zealand Chinese community by Ip, Ho and others, whose work has involved four disciplines including history, demography, sociology and anthropology.

The findings of this research provide a new understanding of the social dynamics of the recent PRC migrant community in New Zealand, which has become highly visible since the early 2000s. As a new sub-group within the new Chinese community in New Zealand, the recent PRC immigrants have a lot in common with earlier arrivals during the late 1980s and the 1990s, who were predominantly from Hong Kong and Taiwan. First, all these new Chinese settlers share a strong desire of maintaining Chinese cultural heritage and making use of the economic advantages generated from having
been part of ‘Greater China’. Cultural and economic aspects of ‘Greater China’
together cement the foundation on which new Chinese settlers’ consciousness of their
shared Chinese identity is cultivated and consolidated. Within the context of
contemporary New Zealand, marked by biculturalism, Chinese identity is the vital
force holding together a newly transplanted Chinese community while it merges with
the existing old Chinese community. Thus, a more sophisticated New Zealand
Chinese community makes its unique contribution to forging the multi-ethnic reality
of this country. Second, in contrast to the old Chinese settlers who were often
described as low-key and apolitical, these new settlers appear highly ambitious and
assertive. Over the past ten years or so, since New Zealand initiated the MMP system
in 1996, the new Chinese community has demonstrated a clear political ambition to
make their mark in the host country (Ip 2006).

Also, on the other hand, the recently arrived PRC immigrants also show many
differences from the earlier arrived Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan,
and in particular from their precursors from the PRC. As Ip (2006, 168) noted,
“immigrants from Hong Kong are generally more politically apathetic, probably an
attitude left over from their British colonial experience”. By contrast, among the three
groups, the Taiwanese were seen as the most active in New Zealand politics,
especially during the 1996, 1999 and 2002 general elections. This may be connected
with their political background in democratic Taiwan, which enabled them to
accumulate skills and experience in taking part in democratic politics through various
ways such as organising public rallies, lobbying politicians and raising funds for
political campaigns (ibid). The relative size of the Taiwanese community has
diminished drastically since the late 1990s and thus their influence has reduced. The
predominant group of new arrivals from the PRC now take the leading role in advocating the major concerns and interests of the Chinese migrants in New Zealand.

In contrast to the earlier PRC immigrants who belong to a completely different generation and are relatively invisible in New Zealand politics, the newcomers know how to make use of their own media to voice their aspirations. This was indeed what happened during the 2005 New Zealand general election, which saw a clear tendency to political mobilisation within the recent PRC immigrants. Even more meaningfully, many recent PRC immigrants took an opposition perspective to query and challenge the policies and accountability of the in-power Labour government. In the sense of measuring political efficacy (e.g. Lane 1959; Balch 1974; Craig et al. 1990), it is significant that these recent PRC migrants are willing to take a stance critical of authority, while in mainland China the majority of citizens still perceive the relationship between the individual and the state to be hierarchical, and only a minority perceive it to be reciprocal (Shi 2000, 548).

However, in his compelling research on public support for democracy in China, Wang (2007) has applied theories of economic growth and social modernisation (e.g. Huntington 1991; Przeworski and Limongi 1997; Inglehart and Welzel 2005) to argue that, with China’s rapid economic growth, an optimistic change is evolving among Chinese citizens in favour of such elements of liberal democracy as freedom of speech, political participation, and interest group politics. It may be argued that Wang’s claim has been witnessed to by numerous protests by the middle class in some large Chinese cities in recent years (Shen 2008). Some have caught a lot of attention from international media, and even from China’s state media. For instance, Xiamen residents opposed building a chemical plant next to their neighbourhood in
May 2007\textsuperscript{86}; Shanghai residents marched against the maglev railway in Pingyang district in Jan 2008\textsuperscript{87}; and Beijing residents have become involved in urban conservation movements (jiu cheng bao hu yun dong 舊城保護運動) (Yao 2005, 2009).

In particular, Wang (2007) points out that the booming Chinese economy has produced a pro-democratic generation of Chinese citizens who were born after the late 1970s. It is precisely this generation that comprise the bulk of recent PRC migration to New Zealand, and findings about the urbanised and affluent recent Chinese immigrants from the PRC discussed in this research have to a large extent corresponded with and supported Wang’s argument.

At the time of writing, the 2008 New Zealand general election had just been completed, and a new government had been formed under the leadership of right-wing political parties. During this election, the researcher did not collect data to examine Chinese migrants’ political choices and behaviours. Nevertheless, indications were revealed through the results of two surveys by the New Zealand Chinese Herald and New Zealand Chinese Business Roundtable Council (NZCBR)\textsuperscript{88} randomly conducted among the Chinese migrants. Both of the surveys showed that National and ACT, the two conservative parties, enjoyed much higher popularity than any other political parties within the Chinese migrant community, which is predominantly made up of recent arrivals from the PRC. In addition, most informants for the two surveys

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{86} http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200705/30/eng20070530_379187.html and http://www.iht.com/articles/2007/05/30/america/pollution.php
\textsuperscript{87} http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7188122.stm
\textsuperscript{88} The New Zealand Chinese Business Roundtable Council (NZCBR) was founded in February 2008 by a group of recent Chinese business migrants.
\end{flushright}
appeared to be still in favour of the idea of achieving Chinese representation in the New Zealand parliament. A journalist’s report showed that the newly established Botany electorate became a battleground among four Chinese candidates to fight for Chinese votes.\textsuperscript{89} As a result, some non-Chinese Botany residents felt left out from their own electorate, which was in some way turned into a ‘Chinatown’, since they were overwhelmed by political pamphlets in the Chinese language (\textit{The New Zealand Herald}, 28\textsuperscript{th} October 2008).

The 2008 election saw the success of two Chinese MPs - Pansy Wong standing for National and Raymond Huo for Labour. Wong not only finally won herself the Botany electorate after twelve years of remaining as a list MP for the National Party, but also becomes the only cabinet minister of Asian descent in New Zealand history. Huo emigrated to New Zealand from Beijing during the early 1990s and later became a trained lawyer in this country. He was 21st on the Labour Party list; after Kenneth Wang, he becomes the second New Zealand MP to have been a PRC immigrant. It is too early to predict to what extent the two Chinese MPs representing two rival parties may generate different impacts on Chinese immigrants, particularly the recent arrivals. Huo, the Labour MP, may or may not bring changes to recent PRC immigrants’ conservative views on egalitarian New Zealand, and thus to their biased understanding of Western democracy, from the perspective of balancing a society’s economic growth, political stability and social equality. As far as members of this particular group are willing to merge into the core society of New Zealand, and choose to be further acculturated in the host country, their status of socio-cultural

\textsuperscript{89} Pansy Wong for National, Raymond Huo for Labour, Kenneth Wang for ACT, Simon Kan for the Kiwi Party.
marginalisation in New Zealand can be diminished. However, both these Chinese MPs may face dilemmas constantly, as long as the interests of Chinese migrant community remain a politicised issue. Their dilemmas result from a need to balance their Chinese identity with both New Zealand’s national interests and their own party lines.

Although this research has covered the issue of ethnic politics from multiple angles, it is not a study within the boundaries of political science. Rather, it is a study with the clear aim of examining the degree of acculturation of a new sub-group within the New Zealand Chinese community, the recent PRC immigrants. Their modes of thinking, sense of belonging and patterns of aspiration, as revealed and discussed in this study, offer a deep insight into the extent to which recent PRC immigrants have adapted their new life into the core society of New Zealand.

**China’s rise as a superpower impacting on New Zealand Chinese**

The acceleration of China’s economic growth since the mid-1990s has generated the main source of the recent PRC immigrants to New Zealand. Given their socio-economic background in China, social and political contexts of the home country may have had a significant influence on these recent PRC immigrants’ perception of New Zealand and thus on their corresponding behaviours within the host country.

Therefore, the recent PRC immigrants can be easily differentiated from the earlier Chinese immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan. Even more noticeably, they are distinct from the preceding PRC immigrants who arrived in New Zealand between the late 1980s and the mid-1990s. Those earlier PRC immigrants did not have the same immediate chance to enjoy China’s economic boom in recent years; given that they
have been living for longer in New Zealand, in the remote Southern Pacific, they may not have such a direct feeling of China’s recent rise as a new superpower; nor did they have significant experience of China’s massive ‘patriotic education campaign’ which was carried on throughout the 1990s and still appears to be an on-going exercise. China’s rapid economic growth coupled with the ‘patriotic education campaign’ has boosted a strong sentiment of national pride among the Chinese people in general, especially the younger generation. This younger generation, by and large, has been the source of the recent PRC immigrants to New Zealand. Hence, the earlier arrived PRC immigrants who are more acculturated in New Zealand may perceive these newcomers as somehow foreign.

Overall, in comparison with all kinds of earlier arrivals, the recent PRC immigrants appear more patriotic towards China and maintain stronger and more intimate emotions about their homeland. With the ‘backup of a mighty powerful motherland’\textsuperscript{90}, the recent PRC migrants have manifested an intense pride in being ethnic Chinese in New Zealand. Thus, the strong confidence and vigorous courage with which they participate in the politics of the host country carries significant meaning, which has started a new chapter in the unfolding history of the Chinese in New Zealand.

A general picture of the 140 years history of the Chinese in New Zealand shows that the changing political and economic circumstances in China have constantly impacted on the New Zealand Chinese community. The shadow of declining Imperial Qing forced a small number of hapless peasants to seek a new and better life in the

\textsuperscript{90} This phrase was frequently used by callers on 936 AM.
Southern Pacific. However, these rootless Chinese sojourners suffered a great deal of racial prejudice within this predominantly white British colony. Subsequent to the fall of Imperial Qing, the succeeding fragile Republic government was still impotent to generate Chinese national pride among these displaced sojourners. The eight years of Japanese invasion of China further distracted the Chinese in New Zealand from building up and consolidating self-esteem and pride in their distinct ethnic identity. After 1949, New Zealand Chinese’s link with their homeland was virtually cut off because of the Chinese communist revolution. With the enforcement of New Zealand’s assimilation policy, ethnic Chinese gradually and eventually became invisible in New Zealand until the Hong Kong immigrants arrived in the country during the mid 1980s.

Starting in the early 1980s, the massive wave of Hong Kong Chinese immigration to western countries including New Zealand was largely caused by Hong Kong’s future return to China, which resulted in their fear of political uncertainty in this former British colony. A large body of research work has shown that, with the continuity of Hong Kong’s prosperity since the smooth handover, the number of Hong Kong residents identifying themselves as Chinese has steadily increased (e.g. Ma and Fung 2007; Mathews et al. 2008). Some informants for this research revealed that many Hong Kong migrants in New Zealand have returned; the remaining small community has gradually become invisible in contrast to the high profile Taiwanese and PRC migrant communities.

It is beyond the range of the thesis as a whole to examine China’s political impact on the Taiwanese community in New Zealand. Nevertheless, Taiwanese business personnel and other Taiwanese people have definitely enjoyed and obtained benefits
from the present prosperity of the Chinese community economy, which is apparently
boosted by the recent PRC immigrants, including a significant number of Chinese
students. These PRC immigrants have also brought various PRC-produced pop music,
TV dramas and blockbuster movies into New Zealand, which are now widely
circulated within the new Chinese community, and are even increasingly popular
among mainstream audiences, in New Zealand as in the rest of the world\textsuperscript{91}. This
indicates that Chinese migrants, from whatever country of origin, have somehow
broken their political barriers and come together to embrace their shared Chinese
cultural heritage in a foreign land.

It is noticeable that the recent arrival of a large number of PRC immigrants has also
enriched and enhanced Chinese cultural influence on the wider society of New
Zealand, especially changing New Zealanders’ diet structure and dining habits. A
first-time visitor to Auckland may be surprised to find that Chinese restaurants run by
recent PRC immigrants are everywhere, providing many kinds of regional cuisine,
whether in bustling business districts or typical European neighbourhoods. In the
past, Chinese restaurants were almost exclusively Cantonese style. Since 2000, the
Auckland City Council in conjunction with the New Zealand Asia Foundation has
been running its annual Chinese Lantern Festival, which is one of Auckland's most
popular summer events. The Lantern Festival is a pan-Chinese gala that involves
Chinese lantern exhibitions, art performances, food tasting, and a wide range of
business activities. While the major sponsors of this event are from Hong Kong and

\textsuperscript{91} For instance, recent films by the Chinese director Zhang Yimou have been distributed
internationally, including \textit{Hero} (http://www.miramax.com/hero.html), \textit{House of Flying Daggers}
(http://www.sonypictures.com/homevideo/houseofflyingdaggers/) and \textit{Curse of the Golden Flower}
(http://www.sonyclassics.com/curseofthegoldenflower/).
Singapore, the participation of PRC immigrants in the Lantern Festival and their influence on it are increasing; publicity for the event emphasises the presence of performers and lanterns from China.\footnote{See http://www.asianz.org.nz/auckland-lantern-festival promoting the 2009 festival and http://www.eventfinder.co.nz/2008/feb/auckland/auckland-lantern-festival the 2008 one.}

**New Zealand Chinese media as an ‘imagined Chinatown’**

Overall, the above-mentioned phenomena ranging from Chinese activism in New Zealand ethnic politics to the prosperous community economy and cultural life of Chinese immigrants are all depicted in the content of the New Zealand Chinese media. The question may be asked, how should we evaluate the existence of the ethnic Chinese media in New Zealand? Using the conceptual framework of an ‘imagined community’ developed by B. Andersons (1983), the researcher seeks to argue strongly that the existence of Chinese-language media may be perceived as an ‘imagined Chinatown’ in New Zealand.

The idea of ‘Chinatown’ has been studied extensively by historians and sociologists over the years. Scholarly efforts have established that Chinatowns arose in three major categories: 1) an overseas Chinese settlement constructed by Europeans’ imagination and their institutional power (e.g. Barth 1964; Ward 1978; K.J. Anderson 1987); 2) a unique element of the Western urban landscape (e.g. Lai 1973; Loo 1991; Shah 2001; Li, 1998); and 3) a cultural community (Ling, 2004).

In the West, a Chinatown used to be a cluster of a non-white, non-Christian cohort, ‘uncivilised and amoral oriental (Anderson 1987, 589)’. It served as a haven
providing protection, communal aid and ethnic solidarity for uprooted Chinese sojourners who could stay away from racial prejudice and discrimination, especially when facilitated by Chinese exclusion laws in a hostile host country. From this perspective, a Chinatown was a ghettoised ethnic enclave that held Chinese sojourners back from integrating and incorporating into the host society. During the 2005 New Zealand general election, the role ethnic Chinese media played among many recent PRC immigrants, in particular the advocacy by these media of a specific representation of ‘the interest of the Chinese community’ in the New Zealand parliament, manifested some historical features of ghettoised Chinatowns. The above argument is not to suggest that the recent PRC immigrants to New Zealand are mistreated like their forebears, the old Chinese settlers who were subjected to racial prejudice and cultural exclusion in New Zealand history. Rather, the point is to interpret the inclination among many recently arrived PRC migrants to distance or even exclude themselves from the host society. Their mode of thinking and political behaviours have exhibited the characteristics of cultural aliens in a foreign land, in particular their strong sense of insecurity caused by displacement.

In addition to its significant political content, the overwhelming advertisements in the New Zealand Chinese media offer a vivid portrait of the current Chinese migrant community in New Zealand, which appears prosperous and displays strong socioeconomic potential. As discussed earlier, the current prosperity of the Chinese community economy is largely associated with the inflow of capital and a surge in commercial activities brought by the recently arrived PRC immigrants. At present, members of the New Zealand Chinese migrant community, whether the earlier arrivals or newcomers from various countries of origin, even the old settlers, are all
able to embrace and benefit from such prosperity, which has moved beyond the
operation of Chinese restaurants and grocery stores, and has extended to the industries
of property development, finance sectors, and of course many other professional
services. By transmitting various kinds of business information, the New Zealand
Chinese media play a significant role in shaping and forging the boundaries of a
Chinese socioeconomic space in New Zealand. Without a physical location, this space
is an imagined socioeconomic Chinatown, in which various sub-groups of Chinese
migrants pursue and share common needs.

Apparently, Chinese cultural heritage is the cornerstone of this imagined
socioeconomic Chinatown in New Zealand. For Chinese immigrants, and perhaps
those few old Chinese settlers who consume Chinese-language media, an imagined
Chinatown signifies the existence of a cultural community that enables a Chinese
cohort with a desire to preserve and maintain Chinese cultural identity to enjoy a
communal life based on intimate and spontaneous socio-cultural relations. In this
sense, New Zealand Chinese media also construct an imagined cultural Chinatown, in
which Chinese migrants can seek psychological comfort and sense Chinese solidarity
from others whom they may never meet physically.

For non-Chinese in New Zealand, such a multi-layered imagined Chinatown
constructed by Chinese-language media carries different sociological meanings. As
someone comments on the Auckland-based Chinese newspapers: “as a monolingual,
English-speaking, white New Zealander. … [F]or years, I have viewed with disgust
the growing number of ethnic newspapers published in ethnic scripts. They show utter
disrespect to the wider community who view publications like those as a shroud of secrecy.”\textsuperscript{93} Such a viewpoint typifies the intolerance among some New Zealanders who still hold a Eurocentric sentiment and openly refuse to accept the multiethnic reality of the country. The actual number of these people may not be large. Most non-Chinese New Zealanders probably take either a neutral or a positive stance; a Chinatown is one distinct element of the urban landscape of many large cities in the West, such as those in New York, in Vancouver, in Sydney or in Melbourne. In the contemporary era, a Chinatown is no longer a stigmatised Chinese ghetto, but more like a commercial theme park for non-Chinese to go to for occasional shopping, or sightseeing, or to obtain some exotic experiences. This is exactly the case in Auckland over the past few years: more and more European New Zealanders and Maori appear to join the crowds enjoying Yum Cha and other Chinese cuisines either in Chinese restaurants or at international food courts; they also appear to patronise the ‘mysterious’ Chinese shops selling Fengshui balls and statues of Guanying and Maitreya Buddha.

Hence, in today’s New Zealand, the iconic significance of an imagined Chinatown is meaningful to both insiders and outsiders of the New Zealand Chinese community. With China arising as the economic powerhouse of the world and thus a new superpower, an imagined Chinatown presumably carries heavier social meanings in New Zealand as the host country for Chinese immigrants, especially from PRC. On one hand, it retains PRC migrants’ definite emotional link with China. On the other

\textsuperscript{93} This is quoted from a letter to the editor of \textit{iBall} on 23\textsuperscript{rd} February 2006. This letter was used by the researcher to facilitate the focus group discussions documented as Appendix 4.
hand, it may be perceived as a transplanted microcosmic China with radiating impacts on the wider society of New Zealand.

**Limitations of the research**

This research has exhibited the present picture of the New Zealand Chinese media, which serve mainly the recent PRC migrants. Since this research has been conducted through a media studies approach, PRC migrants who rarely consume New Zealand Chinese media are not represented in this study. Therefore, the findings of this research are insufficient to provide a full understanding of other sub-groups within the New Zealand Chinese migrant community.

Further, this research tends to treat all recent PRC immigrants as a specific sub-group within the Chinese migrant community. Just as this community itself is highly diverse, the recent PRC migrant community may be diverse as well. Diversities within recent PRC immigrants may be caused by a variety of factors, such as regional differences in China and individual socio-economic circumstances in New Zealand. However, the scale of the present research is not sufficient to investigate such intra-group differences.

**Suggestions for further study**

As just stated, there is a great potential for further investigation of the extent of diversity within the recent PRC immigrants to New Zealand, and how such diversity may result in a different understanding of these people in terms of their perceptions of New Zealand, aspirations towards their new life in the country, and their emotional attachment to China.
This research has initiated a new way of studying Chinese immigrants. It would be meaningful to compare the Chinese-language media and other ethnic media in New Zealand, such as Samoan radio and Korean newspapers, for further understanding of the social dynamics of migrant communities in this country. Similarly, comparison of Chinese-language media in New Zealand and those in other countries would generate even more understanding of the Chinese diaspora within the global context.
APPENDICES

Appendix 1

ENGLISH TRANSLATION AND ANNOTATION OF
THE CHINESE LESSONS

This Appendix contains my translation and annotations of all the Chinese Lessons found in the Growers Journal. I have included all biographical information at hand above the lessons found in that issue. For this, I am indebted to Mr Nigel Murphy of the Alexander Turnbull Library for finding and photocopying the original lessons for me.

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(Growers Journal Vol. 2 No. 1, August 1950, p1.)

Introduction.

The Chinese language is not a very difficult one. If you set aside a bit of time to practise, you will quickly master it. We are Chinese so we should be familiar with our own language, but the pressures of making a living prevent us from getting together to study it.

Starting with this issue, we will be running a series of Chinese Lessons, giving those in rural areas an opportunity to study Chinese. This is our greatest hope. Let us all make an effort to study and practise so that this aim will be realised. If everyone is willing to do so, we will continue to run these lessons. Not only should you learn to read the new characters in each lesson, but learn also to write them. You should also understand the meaning of each character and be able to use it in context. This is learning successfully.

LESSON 1.
Come, come, come, come to school.
Good, good, good, come to school.
Everyone, come to school.

LESSON 2.
Come, come, come, come [and] read books.
Everyone, come and read [a] new book.
Appendix 2

Participants information sheet

in English and Traditional Chinese

N.B. A Simplified Chinese version was also distributed.

School of Asian Studies • The University of Auckland • Private Bag 92019 • Auckland • New Zealand
Ph.D. Mailbox, Level 5, 58 Symonds St, Auckland City
Phone: 3737599 ex 87884
Email: Phoebe.h.li@gmail.com

PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION SHEET

Title: Utilization of the Chinese language media within NZ Chinese communities

To: Participants

My name is Phoebe Hairong Li and I am a Ph.D. student in the School of Asian Studies at the University of Auckland. I am currently conducting research on the NZ Chinese language media (inc. newspapers, radio and websites).

You are invited to participate in my research and I would appreciate any assistance you can offer me. As part of my work, I seek to discuss five questions with new Chinese migrants originally from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and other places, who have migrated to NZ since 1987. The languages of discussion will be Chinese and English.

I would like to discuss with you but you are under no obligation at all to be involved. The discussion will take about one and a half hours during work time. You will be placed into a focus group with several other participants to discuss five questions related to your perceptions and utilization of the NZ Chinese media and your experiences of settling and living in NZ. Confidentiality may not be guaranteed, since you will have to meet and talk with other people. I will also be recording an audio tape of the discussion but this will only be done with your consent. I myself will record, store, transcribe and translate the tape into English.

You can withdraw information provided by yourself at any time up until I begin to write about this focus group discussion (around September 2006). After completion of the entire research project, I myself will destroy the tape.
If you are willing to participate in the focus group, please let me know by filling in a Consent Form and sending it to me in the attached pre-paid envelop to the address at the head of this letter. I would like to be able to use information and examples you give in your discussion in subsequent conference papers and in my Ph.D. thesis. If I refer to your comments specifically, I will protect your identity by using a pseudonym and I will not provide sufficient information for you to be identified specifically.

If you would like to ask any questions about any aspects of this Project, and to have had them answered in detail, please contact me. If you have any queries or wish to know more please contact me by day (phone 3737599 ex 87884), or after work (phone 3090755) or by email (phoebe.h.li@gmail.com).

Thank you very much for your time and help in making this study possible.

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Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Manying Ip, School of Asian Studies (ext 87531)

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE on 28 April, 2006 for a period of 3 years, from 28/04/06 Reference 2006/127

(For any queries regarding ethical concerns please contact:
The Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Research Office - Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland. Tel. 373-7999 extn 87830)
參加討論者須知

題目：紐西蘭中文媒體在華人社團的應用

致參加討論者：

我叫李海蓉（英文Phoebe）。我是奧克蘭大學亞洲研究學院的博士研究生。目前我在進行有關紐西蘭中文媒體（包括中文報紙，廣播及網站）的研究。

我邀請您來參與這項研究。對於您提供的任何形式的幫助我將表示衷心感謝。

作為這項研究的一部分，我需要訪談自1987年移民法公佈以後從中國大陸，香港，臺灣及其他地區來紐西蘭的華裔移民。訪談將以中文和英文兩種語言進行。

我希望訪談您，但您沒有義務接受我的訪談。這次訪談大約需要1個半小時。您和接受訪談的其他人士將被分置在一個小組當中進行討論，話題圍繞您對紐西蘭中文媒體的看法，使用，以及您在紐西蘭生活的經歷。因為您將面對其他人進行談話，私人秘密也許不能完全保證。經您同意，我將在討論過程當中進行錄音，但我也會應您的要求隨時停止錄音。討論的錄音，錄音帶保存，文字整理及英文翻譯都將由我本人進行。我將歡迎您訂正我根據錄音帶所做的翻譯。

在我開始寫作博士論文當中有關這次討論的章節之前（大約在2006年的9月），您可以在任何時間要求退出這項研究，而不需要提供任何理，您所提供的和與您有關的資訊將被全部銷毀。在我完全結束博士論文答辯之後，我本人將銷毀所有的錄音帶。

如果您願意參與這次訪談，請您填寫一份同意表格，裝入預付信封以普通郵寄的方式通知我，按本須知上首位址。我將在未來的學術會議和博士論文中應用您所提供的資訊和事例，如果我援引您的發言，我將用代號的方式保護您的隱私，我不會提供足夠的資訊使您被特別辨認出來。

如果您有任何疑問或者想瞭解更多的情況，請與我聯繫。 (電話：3737599 extn 87884) or 電郵 (phoebe.h.li@gmail.com)。
十分感謝您的時間協助我的研究得以進行。

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APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE on 28 April, 2006 for a period of 3 years, from 28/04/06 Reference 2006/127

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Appendix 3

Consent form in English and Traditional Chinese

N.B. A Simplified Chinese version was also used.
CONSENT FORM

THIS CONSENT FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF SIX YEARS

Title: Utilization of the Chinese language media within NZ Chinese communities

I have been given a Participant’s Information Sheet and I have understood an explanation of this research project. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and I have had them answered. I agree to take part in this research.

I understand that the information that I provide in an interview will be taped and transcribed and might be used in the researcher’s conference papers and her Ph.D. thesis. I understand that I will not be identified specifically.

I understand that I may withdraw from this Research Project and require the removal of any information traceable to me at any time up to September, 2006 without giving a reason.

Signed:

Name: (please print clearly)

Date:

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE on 28th April, 2006 for a period of 3 years, from 28/04/06 Reference 2006/127

(For any enquiries regarding ethical concerns, please contact: The Chair, University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, Research Office, Office of the Vice Chancellor, University of Auckland, Private Bag 92019, Auckland. Tel: 3737599 ext 87830)
同意書

研究者
李海蓉（英文 Phoebe）

本同意書將被保6年時間

題目：紐西蘭中文媒體在華人社團的應用

有關這項研究，我已經被給予充分解釋並完全理解。我有過詢問問題的機會，我的問題均予以回答。我同意參與這項研究。

我明白，在訪談中我所提供的資訊將被錄音，並被整理成文字的形式，這些資訊有可能被研究者應用于她參加學術會議的文章和她的博士論文當中。

我明白，在2006年9月之前，我可以在任何時間要求退出這項研究，而不需要提供任何理由，我所提供的和與我有關的資訊將被全部銷毀。

我明白，在我的要求下，我將獲得一份我所參與的訪談錄音帶及文字資料。

簽名：

姓名：

日期：

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The Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Research Office - Office of the Vice Chancellor, Private Bag 92019, Auckland. Tel. 373-7999 extn 87830
Appendix 4

Focus Group Schedule

N.B. A similar schedule was used for one-to-one interviews.

1. The following comments related to NZ Chinese newspapers were made by two European New Zealanders. They were published as Letters to the Editor of *iBall*, an Auckland-based English newspaper, which mainly reports on issues of interest to NZ Asians. Please read these comments and then express your views on them.

Comment A.

“As a monolingual, English-speaking, white New Zealander… for years, I have viewed with disgust the growing number of ethnic newspapers published in ethnic scripts. They show utter disrespect to the wider community who view publications like those as a shroud of secrecy…. I detest strongly the building of ‘psychological Chinatown’ where communities live on their own and not truly wanting to integrate ….”

(Quoted from a letter to *iBall*’s editor on February 23, 2006)

Comment B.

“I most strongly disagree with (the above author) when he talks about ‘that ethnic shroud of secrecy’ and views with disgust ‘the growing number of ethnic newspapers published in ethnic scripts’….surely as hosts in a new home for migrant families, us “monologists” should be happy to embrace any form of communication which helps migrants understand and adjust to their adopted new, very alien living environment? And so what if migrants stick together and help each other, i.e. build ‘psychological Chinatowns’?”

(Quoted from a letter to *iBall*’s editor on March 16, 2006)

2. Express your views on the NZ Chinese language media. Focus your comments on these media as a source of practical information, particularly in relation to whether this information fulfils a useful function in assisting new Chinese migrants to settle and live in NZ.

3. What do you think of the NZ Chinese language media, in terms of depicting the interests and concerns of the NZ Chinese community?

4. How do you feel about the coverage of NZ politics in the NZ Chinese language media? If you can remember anything about instances of coverage relating to the general election 2005, please make specific comments about
this. Some newspapers and some radio ‘clips’ from the time of the election are available to help you in your assessment.

5. Please read this article (*Chinese Talking about the General Election: the reporter interviewed a number of Chinese voters*) published in the *New Zealand Chinese Herald* on September 15, 2005 and make your comments on the views which were expressed by the interviewees, and on how representative you feel these views were of the views of the wider Chinese community.


Appadurai, A. Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy.


