

# 14

## The Shifting Fate of China's Pacific Diaspora

Fei Sheng and Graeme Smith

This chapter attempts to bring into focus one of the more contentious aspects of the People's Republic of China's engagement with the Pacific: migration. Overseas Chinese communities have been both the source and the target of social unrest in Pacific urban centres, and Pacific leaders identify tensions around these communities as one of the major barriers to China's engagement with the Pacific (Little Red Podcast 2019). This chapter will focus on historical trends among the Chinese migrant community in Vanuatu and question a number of concepts that have become accepted in Pacific Studies. In particular, we question the sharp distinction drawn by scholars and media commentators between 'old' and 'new' Chinese communities in the Pacific, even though this shorthand has been adopted by the Chinese communities themselves.<sup>1</sup>

Academic circles in the People's Republic of China (PRC) know almost nothing about the history of Oceania and the overseas Chinese in this region.<sup>2</sup> This is unsurprising. The Pacific was never a major destination

---

1 In Vanuatu, 'old' Chinese are taken to be those from Guangzhou who arrived before 1980, while the 'new' Chinese came after that time and may hail from other provinces.

2 The entire Pacific, including Australia and New Zealand, lacks Chinese-language research on the history and current situation of Chinese migrants. In recent years, a more representative study is Zhang Qiusheng's *A History of Chinese Emigrants to Australia* (1998). Research on the Pacific Islands is even more limited. Chinese literature includes 'Chinese Labor in Oceania', the eighth section of Chen Hanzao's *Compilation of Historical Materials on Overseas Chinese Labor* (1985). There is also Australian scholar Liu Weiping's *A History of the Chinese in Oceania* (2000), published in Hong Kong. See also Fei Sheng, *The Overseas Chinese in the South Pacific Islands* (2014).

for Chinese migration. The absolute number of Chinese migrants remains small and historical ties with the modern Chinese state are limited—Cold War competition in parts of Africa, which saw Maoist China spend close to 3 per cent of its GDP on foreign aid (Kitissou 2007), was largely absent from the Pacific. From a geopolitical perspective, Pacific nations are surrounded by ocean, far from China, and are not crucial to the development of China's foreign relations. From the perspective of the PRC state, Pacific issues are insignificant. However, the Pacific was one of the earliest regions to accept Chinese migrants, it is still absorbing new migrants, and their scale and impact on the changing geopolitics of the Pacific should not be underestimated. While much of the history of Chinese migrants in Australia has been elided in favour of the white settler narrative (Loy-Wilson 2014), Chinese migrant families in the Pacific maintain a strong sense of their history.

With the rising status of the Pacific in China's international strategy—the Pacific was added to the Maritime Silk Road in November 2014 when President Xi Jinping visited Suva—the Pacific Chinese community is not only more influenced by China, but is also an important medium for China to expand its overseas influence, even though the migrants themselves are not encouraged by the Chinese state. The formation and development of Chinese migrant society in Oceania is inseparable from the extension of the ocean network in which an outward-looking and more assertive China is situated. This chapter provides an overview of the evolution of Chinese communities in Oceania and incorporates new findings from archival research, field investigations and interviews in Vanuatu. These will be used to analyse changes in Chinese migrants' livelihoods, complicate the sharp distinction between old and new Chinese that has developed in the literature<sup>3</sup> and provide context for the new forms of migration that are emerging among Chinese communities in the Pacific.

## **The Asia-Pacific Ocean network and Chinese migrants in the Pacific**

China and the Pacific Islands had close ties before the arrival of Western colonial powers, especially in Melanesia due to its proximity to Southeast Asia. These ties can be seen as an extension of China's trade network,

---

3 See, for example, Chin (2008).

which operated alongside many other ethnicities—Malays, Jews, Tamils and Gujartis. With the rise of the pearl, beche-de-mer and, later, sandalwood trades, China and Oceania belonged to the same trading network (Shineberg 2014). The influx of Chinese migrants into Oceania and their impact on the Pacific began with indentured Chinese labourers in 1850. China was dragged into the global colonial system built by European capital. China began to deploy its labour resources according to the needs of the global market. Large-scale Chinese migration to Oceania began in 1848 when about 390 contract workers were transported from Xiamen to the colony of New South Wales in Australia (FitzRoy 1849). However, after the 1851 gold rush, Cantonese people, largely from the Pearl River Delta, became the main drivers of immigration to Australia.

Early Chinese migrants to the Pacific can be divided into two types. The first was individual migrants, largely to Australia. The second type, common from the 1860s and found mainly in the Pacific, was Chinese labourers recruited by colonial labour companies. The cause of the latter was a new regulation that emerged from the treaty signed after the Second Opium War legalising the commodification of Chinese labour. Foreign merchants were no longer prohibited from recruiting workers directly from China. Concurrently, Pacific islands were claimed and developed by European (and later American) powers in the mid-19th century, driving demand for plantation labour. There were, however, significant differences among colonial powers in their attitudes towards recruiting Chinese labour. Germany promoted large-scale labour recruitment in German New Guinea and German Samoa while strongly discouraging any interbreeding between Chinese labourers and the local population (Steinmetz 2007).<sup>4</sup> British and Australian colonial administrators tended to oppose Chinese migration, but would often find the commercial interests of plantation owners in conflict with their sympathy for the racist underpinnings of migration restrictions, which included poll taxes and a restriction on steamers that only one Chinese could be carried for each 100 tonnes of cargo (Fitzgerald 2007:164–66).

Further driving the demand for Chinese labour was the tough natural environment and living conditions on the Islands, which made it difficult to develop a large workforce without the use of contract or forced labour. Spread from German New Guinea to as far as French Polynesia, the

---

4 German administrations were often bent on keeping 'native populations' in a museum-like state—an obsession that extended to prohibiting the use of corrugated iron for roofing.

indentured labourers were geographically isolated. Many of those who survived continued on to Australia and New Zealand, becoming vegetable farmers and small traders (Chen 1984). The spread of Chinese migrants to the Pacific Islands was the result of the Western colonial project and their control of the Pacific exchange network. But Chinese migrants, both forced and free, took advantage of emerging maritime traffic to establish their own transnational networks. Even under the White Australia Policy, retail empires such as Wing On stretched from London to Hong Kong to Fiji (Fitzgerald 2007).

The maritime colonial network dominated by the Western powers broke down in the 1940s and the development of overseas Chinese communities in Oceania entered an important transition period. With the outbreak of the Pacific War, the momentum of Chinese migrants gathering in the Pacific Islands and dominating local economies was curbed as Micronesia and much of Melanesia were occupied by Japan. Many Chinese migrants were forced to relocate to Australia or safer Pacific islands. Chinese workers in then phosphate-rich Nauru were evacuated to Melbourne or the Gilbert Islands. At the end of World War II, the Chinese indentured-labour export system, with its overtones of slavery, was completely abolished in the Pacific. Many Pacific Islands governed by European and American powers also introduced bans on Chinese migrants, often justified in terms of avoiding the mixing of races and social stability. Large-scale, organised Chinese migration to the Pacific Islands ceased.

Chinese migrants intensified their engagement with the Pacific Islands during the post-war years, and the Chinese community dispersed throughout the region. Changes in the international situation, particularly the onset of the Cold War, further encouraged the localisation of Chinese migrants. The first generation of migrants were fully naturalised and married into local communities, bringing them higher social status when their host countries gained independence. Papua New Guinea (PNG), which was home to the largest Chinese community, became, like many island colonies, a trustee of Australia. At the time, the Australian Government (which, along with the British, had opposed Chinese migration to PNG) resolutely maintained the White Australia Policy, which prohibited Chinese from continuing their migration journey to Australia. As a result, the existing Chinese community, predominantly male and with no prospect of finding brides from China, faced the choice of a rapid demise or marriage with the local population.

After the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, the Nationalist Government was defeated and fled to Taiwan. Most Chinese communities in the Pacific were affiliated with the Nationalists and so were forced to interrupt their ties with the mainland, but also did not have the means to return to Taiwan. As a result, the pressure on these communities to integrate with local societies grew. By the end of the 1950s, Australia began to allow Chinese born in the trusteeship to become naturalised. The statistics of the PNG authorities in 1966 showed 2,455 residents were believed to be Chinese. Among them, 566 were born in China, but only 282 retained Chinese nationality (Nelson 2007:2). By the 1970s, the Chinese community in the Pacific was no longer in close contact with the regimes on either side of the strait, and its Chinese identity was weakening. In 1971, PNG had 50,000 expatriates, including 3,500 Chinese; however, almost none of them still had Chinese nationality or had been born in China. By 2000, the census no longer counted whether people were of Chinese descent—almost all Chinese populations identified as Papua New Guinean or Australian (Nelson 2007:4). Many localised migrants and their descendants gained prominence; PNG's second prime minister Sir Julius Chan is an obvious example.

Between 1960 and 1980, most of the island nations of Oceania achieved independence or autonomy, leading to the adjustment of their immigration policies. Although former colonial powers such as Australia and New Zealand supported the island countries through development assistance, the burden of self-reliance for remote island nations was considerable. The leaders of many countries regarded the development of foreign trade and the attracting foreign investment as means of building modern nation-states, which gave the populations of neighbouring Asian countries an opportunity to expand their trading networks. At the same time, the White Australia Policy was abandoned in 1972 and under the Hawke–Keating Government (1983–96) Australia promoted a national development strategy of engagement with Asia, which encouraged Pacific countries to relax controls on Asian immigration. This saw a spike in Chinese migrants to the Pacific from neighbouring Asian countries such as Malaysia and Indonesia. From the early 1990s, migrants came directly from mainland China, largely from Fujian and Guangdong provinces. This has seen the emergence of a new group of Chinese in the Pacific: the 'new Chinese migrants'. Within the Chinese community in Vanuatu, the dividing line between 'new' and 'old' is understood to be 1980, a less complex division than that required in PNG (Chin 2008:119–24).

In migration history, scholars usually divide immigrants into two categories: ‘sojourners’ and ‘settlers’. The former emphasises the roots of immigration from China as either a result of migrant preference or differential exclusion (Castles 2003:11), while the latter emphasises the establishment of migrants in local communities. Over the past three decades, these categories have coexisted in the emerging Chinese immigrant groups in the Pacific Island countries, but the former predominates. There are four sources of emerging Chinese immigrant groups. One is the resource-development activities of Southeast Asian Chinese enterprises in the Pacific Island countries since the 1980s, especially deforestation activities in PNG and Solomon Islands (Global Witness 2018; Nelson 2007:6). The second is Chinese project labour since the 2000s—that is, the large number of workers brought by Chinese companies to develop local mineral resources and infrastructure, some of whom seek further commercial opportunities when the project finishes (Smith 2013a:184–85; Smith and Dinnen 2015).<sup>5</sup> The third is migrants who acquire nationality through legal procedures, mainly through marriage or investment migration; these migrants dominate the retail trade in many Pacific nations (Firth 2006; Smith 2016). The fourth source is middle-class migrants relocating to the Pacific for health or lifestyle reasons; these will be described briefly in this chapter.

When discussing emerging Chinese migrant groups in the Pacific, it is difficult to apply the usual concept of immigration that implies a long-term commitment to a new country. Since few Pacific Island countries have elements that attract ordinary Chinese people, particularly in terms of personal safety and the standard of schooling available (Smith 2013b), a large number of new migrants are simply ‘passing through’. In an era of continued facilitation of the trans-Pacific transportation network and China’s growing influence in the Asia-Pacific, their mobility is remarkable and their livelihoods closely tied to Chinese society and domestic markets.

---

5 Ramu Nickel remains the largest Chinese-owned mining company in the Pacific, but they have been joined by other state-owned enterprises, including Zijin (China’s largest gold mining company) in partnership with Barrick at the Porgera gold mine and Guangdong Rising Asset Management at the Freida River copper mine in partnership with Australian mining company Highlands Pacific.

## The rise of the Chinese business community in Vanuatu

Among Chinese communities in the Pacific, the number of people who identify as Chinese in Vanuatu is relatively small. Official PRC statistics put the number at 2,000 legal settlers, estimating that more than half of them are new migrants who have arrived in the past 10 years (Guillain 2018). However, as of 2018, local sources say the number is between 4,000 and 5,000, though the extreme mobility of the population makes a reliable estimate difficult.<sup>6</sup> The political situation in Vanuatu is relatively stable, there is no history of anti-Chinese riots and Chinese in Vanuatu are concentrated in Port Vila and Luganville, the capital of the largest island. Over the past century, Chinese traders in Vanuatu have not closely integrated with the broader population. This is in contrast to other Pacific nations—such as Tonga and PNG—where Chinese settlement now reaches into the hinterlands.

The emergence of Chinese migrants in Vanuatu was initially the result of colonial expansion by Britain and France into a country of extraordinary linguistic and cultural diversity (Bedford and Spriggs 2014). Due to this unusual joint colonial project, Vanuatu was integrated into a regional market that relied on maritime transport links, and this regional market established direct links with China's southeast coast. The first Chinese migrants who appeared in Vanuatu were chefs and carpenters aboard British merchant ships in 1844, but locals knew of no descendants of these early voyagers. The first Chinese who survived and set down roots were Chinese retailers (*huashang* 华裔) who appeared in the mid-to-late 19th century.

The Chinese community of Vanuatu can be traced back to Cheung Yabao (张亚宝), widely known as 'Ah Pow', who arrived from Fujian in 1912, having worked as a chef with the merchant vessel *Euphrosyne* (Willmott 2005:7, 2007:37).<sup>7</sup> After he settled in Port Vila, he opened a bakery, importing ingredients from Australia through British merchants. The Cheung family has prospered for four generations, becoming the most powerful merchant family in Port Vila and leaders of the Chinese community there. Cheung Yabao's grandson, Charles Cheung

6 Second author's interviews, July 2018. Port Vila.

7 This family will be referred to as the Cheung family in this chapter.

(Cheung Zhali 张查理), is head of the family and, together with his uncle Cheung Lianzhong (张连仲), owns Vanuatu's largest supermarket chain, Au Bon Marché.<sup>8</sup> Charles Cheung is the chairman of the Vanuatu Chinese Club, the largest Chinese community organisation in Vanuatu, and serves as Vanuatu's Consul General in Shanghai. In a country like Vanuatu that lacks industrial diversification, the Chinese business community has significant economic and political influence. The Chinese Association of Port Vila in the capital is registered as a corporate legal entity and has a charter in accordance with company law (Chinese Club 2004).

It is no accident that merchants with strong overseas ties dominate Vanuatu's Chinese society. Vanuatu's economy was born out of a single crop plantation introduced by the colonial powers. From the mid-to-late 19th century, the pillar of the colonial economy was coconut planting. Today, Vanuatu's main exports are copra, which can be used for oil extraction, and medicinal kava. As of 2016, the value of merchandise imports was seven times greater than the value of exported goods, an imbalance partially offset by tourism, which accounts for 80 per cent of service exports (WTO 2018:16–17). French colonists mixed cattle in coconut plantations and established a profitable beef export industry. But until World War II, Vanuatu lacked an industrial base and the proportion of foreign workers was low. This can partly be attributed to a lack of enthusiasm on the part of the colonial powers. In Colonial Office communications, British officials disparaged the climate as unsuitable for white settlers and even attempted to swap their stake in the colony with France in return for French territory in Africa. The French refused. Vanuatu still relies heavily on the import of consumer goods, and early Chinese merchants such as the Cheung family used this to dominate the retail trade and accumulate wealth.

World War II created further opportunities for Chinese businesses. On the one hand, the southwestern Pacific battlefield established by the United States made Vanuatu a military supply base and a defence facility. The US military began the construction of a large-scale infrastructure, altering the local landscape and consumer culture. While the urban population expanded, introduced pests and diseases caused hardship in

---

8 Zhang Yabao had a wide range of operations, including the sale of a small amount of opium, as Zhang Yabao himself had a preference for smoking opium, though he abstained after getting married. Zhang Yabao had three sons: Zhang Lianfang, Zhang Liansheng and Zhang Lianzhong. Charles Cheung is the son of Zhang Lianfang (Zhang Liansheng (the second son of Zhang Yabao)), 22 August 2016. Interview with first author; Charles Cheung, 23 August 2016. Interview with first author).

rural areas (Bennett 2004), leading to the near collapse of subsistence economies in the port areas and increasing reliance on export earnings and imports. In the shadow of war, many Chinese in Vanuatu began to invest in Australia and New Zealand while gradually establishing a monopoly over imported consumer goods. After the withdrawal of US troops from Luganville, US military camps became the centre of a new urban area, with Chinese merchants building new shops along the hardened roads. The Huang family drew on their connections in Australia to become the main rice suppliers, establishing exclusive sales rights.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, the Liang family in Luganville established a monopoly over potatoes, onions and non-perishable vegetables from New Zealand. Supply ships regularly visited Luganville to provide fresh vegetables and receive the hospitality of Chinese businessmen.<sup>10</sup>

Chinese business forces not only benefited from wartime conditions, but their identity within colonial society was unique. Unlike other Pacific Island colonies, Vanuatu was under the joint management of Britain and France. The two colonial authorities cooperated, but also displayed mutual restraint and even competition, which Chinese businesses exploited. Due to its large number of colonies in the South Pacific, Britain neglected Vanuatu, while the French focused more resources there.<sup>11</sup> In order to compete with the British, French authorities provided free basic education and limited the penetration of the British forces in various ways, giving Chinese merchants more scope than they enjoyed in neighbouring colonies such as Solomon Islands or PNG, where colonial authorities restricted Chinese merchants to favour British trading companies such as Swires.

Unlike neighbouring New Caledonia, Vanuatu attracted few European migrants. There were missionaries and farmers, but Vanuatu's European population had few industrialists or commercial operators, making it difficult for the colonial authorities to replace or suppress Chinese businessmen. On the contrary, colonial authorities relied on Chinese businessmen to maintain the local private economy, and

---

9 The surname of the merchant has been changed, respecting the interviewee's wishes.

10 Suppliers in New Zealand and Australia regularly visit Vanuatu retailers. After updating or confirming contracts, they often travel the islands with their hosts and attend banquets hosted by local Chinese businessmen.

11 Many Chinese merchants expressed the view that those with high academic qualifications have English and French bilingual ability, while less-educated people only speak French (Liang Wenhua (owner of the Luganville Port Iowa store), 19 August 2016. Interview with first author).

so rarely restricted their activities. Unlike most in Pacific or Southeast Asian countries, there has never been an anti-Chinese movement in Vanuatu, though there are signs of the sentiment emerging in present-day Port Vila. Because the island's pillar industries, coconut cultivation and cattle farming, do not require intensive labour input, the colonists did not introduce a large number of Chinese workers from overseas. The main imported agricultural labour force in Vanuatu were Vietnamese introduced by France. While they largely returned to Vietnam during the first Indochina War, with over 500 current residents they still represent the second largest foreign community in Vanuatu (Willie 2018). The concept of private property in Vanuatu is also weak, making it difficult for local business groups to compete with Chinese businesses.<sup>12</sup> Thus, since World War II, the Chinese community has controlled Vanuatu's economic lifeline.<sup>13</sup> After Vanuatu's independence, local communities took ownership of land, but control was typically concentrated in the hands of the chiefs. Because their sources of monetary income are limited, clan leaders often exchanged land for the Chinese migrants' money and goods, allowing them to advance socially through contact with local elites and commercially by building up holdings of urban and rural land.

## **The Vanuatu Chinese community in a shifting Asia-Pacific regional network**

In the 20th century, especially after World War I, Pacific Island countries were integrated into the colonial system dominated by Britain and France. Under British–French joint management, the Vanuatu Chinese could use both British and French maritime routes built in the Pacific, resulting in strong mobility. For example, before the founding of the PRC, Vanuatu Chinese enjoyed visa-free or loosely reviewed access to the majority of British and French colonies in the Asia-Pacific, allowing Chinese

---

12 Chinese merchants held the belief that the lack of private property ownership means local merchants face filial pressures to extend credit and goods, and in a tight market bankruptcy comes extremely fast. They also frequently expressed the view that the leisurely lifestyle of local people makes them reluctant to engage in regular wage employment (Liang Wenhua and Yaxiu (wife of Liang Wenhua), 19 August 2016. Port Vila. Interview with first author. For privacy reasons, Yaxiu is a pseudonym). These comments echo those by Chinese business owners in PNG in the 1970s, who claimed, 'The native trade store can never survive long simply because it usually is "eaten" by relatives of the storekeeper before he can make any profit' (Wu 1982:106).

13 Other ethnic Chinese businessmen such as Zhang Liansheng and Liang Wenhua agreed with this proposition.

businessmen to travel freely throughout the region. The following case study of the Huang family in Tahiti, French Polynesia and, ultimately, Vanuatu reflects this.

French Polynesia began importing Guangdong Hakka labourers into their sugar cane farming industry via Hong Kong in 1865, and they eventually formed a relatively large community of Chinese traders.<sup>14</sup> In 1911, Huang Cai, a three-year-old Hakka child from Dongguan, accompanied his mother Yumei to Tahiti, joining his father, Huang Jin, who had already settled in the local area. Huang Cai grew up in Tahiti and attended a local Chinese elementary school run by the Chinese Nationalist Party from 1916 to 1922 before making a living from farming for the next 25 years. In 1941, he married across the racial divide, taking E Tama of Tahiti as his wife. At the same time, his younger sister Huang Yajiao married a Frenchman and they moved to Luganville.<sup>15</sup> In 1947, there was a rumour that France wanted to send more troops to Indochina to fight and would recruit from the Asian population of Tahiti, so Huang Cai fled with his wife and two sons to Dongguan, close to the border with Hong Kong. In February 1950, following the fall of the Nationalist Government in China, Huang Cai fled back across the border and worked as a carpenter on Hong Kong Island. However, after three years, he transferred to Kowloon to work on a farm. Since his economic situation was not improving, he returned to the Pacific, joining his sister in Vanuatu in 1958. He started farming with his younger sister Huang Yajiao while his younger brother Huang Yasheng entered the retail industry. Huang Cai died in early 1960. His son, Huang Wan, though born in Tahiti, completed high school in Hong Kong and worked at airport customs. Taking on his father's career, Huang Wan went to Vanuatu in about 1970 and ran the family store with the help of his aunt. He founded Luganville's first commercial cinema and hired local Chinese to serve visiting international sailor consumers. In 1979, on the eve of Vanuatu's independence, Huang Wan decided to sell his assets in Luganville and move to French Polynesia to work with his

---

14 English-language sources on the history of the Chinese diaspora in French Polynesia are limited. The most authoritative source in French is Coppenrath (1967).

15 Huang Wan, 20 August 2016. Port Vila Bakery. Interview with first author. Information from the resume submitted by Huang Wan in 1970 to the Vanuatu Government when applying for citizenship. Held by the Huang family. The name is written like this, but it seems to be transliterated according to his nickname in Hakka dialect, Huang Jiajiao. The latter is also the case for his younger brother Huang Ansheng.

father's old friends, fearing expropriation by the new regime.<sup>16</sup> In 1988, Lena Li, a niece who had married into the Cheung family in Port Vila, invited Huang Wan to come to Vanuatu to settle down again, sponsoring the reopening of the cinema. Huang Wan eventually joined the Cheung family's pastry business.

Immigration and secondary migration caused by changing times increased the international mobility of the Pacific Island-based Chinese. Vanuatu, as an English–French co-managed colony, created new opportunities for the Chinese to establish their status and expand overseas exchanges. Changes in the geopolitics of the Asia-Pacific, including the Pacific War and the Cold War, greatly influenced the Chinese Pacific Island diaspora. Due to the remoteness of the islands, misinformation, rumours and scams frequently affected the life choices of Chinese migrants. However, Huang Cai, Huang Wan and his son were able to shuttle freely between French Polynesia, Vanuatu and China, demonstrating the centrality of the trans-Pacific network to the livelihoods of Chinese people in the Pacific.

## China's rising influence and the Pacific Islands diaspora

For the Pacific Island Chinese, the opportunities brought by earlier geopolitical shifts cannot be compared with the changes wrought by the independence of the Pacific Island states and their establishment of diplomatic relations with either the People's Republic of China or the Republic of China (Taiwan). After the establishment of diplomatic relations between Vanuatu and mainland China in 1983,<sup>17</sup> institutional barriers to the flow of people and goods were largely removed. Independence in the 1970s and 1980s coincided with China's own efforts to reform its economy and open up trade, leading to rapid regional integration. It also

16 Huang Wan, 20 August 2016. Port Vila Bakery. Interview with first author. He had heard rumours there may be anti-Chinese activities after independence. Because the French colonists resisted Vanuatu's independence, they suffered more hatred from the locals. Chinese who maintained deep ties with French colonists were worried their property might not be protected after losing their British passports.

17 This is aside from a brief interlude in November 2004 when the government of Serge Vohor briefly recognised Taiwan. The Council of Ministers overturned the decision and Vohor, who was accused of assaulting the Chinese ambassador (Chen 2004), was removed the following month in a no-confidence vote. Vanuatu has since remained a diplomatic ally of the PRC, signing on to the Belt and Road Initiative in 2019 and even recognising China's position on the South China Sea.

spurred the development of Vanuatu's foreign trade, which, along with remittances, was a major contributor to Vanuatu's development over the next two decades (Kumar et al. 2011).

In 2006, under the auspices of China, Fiji hosted the first Ministerial Conference of the China–Pacific Island Countries Economic Development and Cooperation Forum in Nadi, attended by state ministers from the eight countries that recognise China, including Vanuatu. Vanuatu's Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism demonstrated knowledge of both Chinese political slogans of the day and their potential impacts on domestic businesses, arguing that:

in order to promote this harmonious development in our respective regions we shall ensure to encourage and to undertake foreign trade and investment in an orderly way, as foreign capital enterprises would certainly take the lead and positive role in our region's economic growth and development. We must also ensure that domestic and external capital enterprises develop side by side and in a complementary manner (Bule 2006).

Undoubtedly, increased trade and investment has not only encouraged more Chinese citizens to migrate to Vanuatu, but also created opportunities for the local Chinese community. The impact goes beyond economics. The experience of Liang Wenhua from Luganville illustrates how some of Vanuatu's Chinese residents have seized these new opportunities.

In the 1970s when Huang Wan was running the Luganville cinema, he hired a poor grocery store owner, Liang Wenhua (known to locals as 'Ah Hua'), as a partner and ticket seller.<sup>18</sup> Liang is second-generation Chinese. His father is from Dongguan, but was forced to leave in 1939 and arrived in Vanuatu with his fellow clansmen, finding work as a helper in Chinese shops. After the outbreak of the Pacific War, he went to Sydney to work as a market gardener, returning to Port Vila before moving to Luganville to run a grocery store. Born in 1955, Wenhua was one of eight children—six of them daughters. Because Luganville lacks Chinese men of the right age, four of the daughters remained unmarried. They assisted their parents in running the store and gave up opportunities to make a living in the capital. Wenhua had one sister married in Port Vila who eventually left for Hong Kong. The other sister chose to marry

---

<sup>18</sup> Despite sharing a surname, Liang Wenhua is not part of the influential Liang family from Luganville.

into a Vanuatu family and ultimately was ostracised from her Chinese family. Despite this, his father insisted that Wenhua go to Australia to complete secondary education before returning to Luganville. When his father died, the family's economic burden fell on Wenhua. In addition to working with his sisters, he also worked for other Chinese businessmen, including Huang Wan. During the Maoist era, China and the Pacific Island countries had no direct contact. In addition to lacking goods and news, it was difficult for Wenhua to find a Chinese woman to marry.<sup>19</sup>

The establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Vanuatu was crucial for Wenhua. After 1983, news from China increased. Chinese businessmen who visited the Pearl River Delta in southeast China returned with photos of single girls from their hometowns for the consideration of lonely Chinese men in Vanuatu. In 1993, Wenhua, then 38, saw photos of a Dongguan girl named Yaxiu and quickly got in touch. Yaxiu had just suffered a short, failed marriage at a time when divorce was uncommon in China and the economic and social status of divorced women was low (Liu and Chan 1999). She expressed her willingness to leave her hometown and start a new life in Vanuatu. They were married in 1994 and started to run the store together. Yaxiu's previous full-time work was in finance, so she learned the operation of Wenhua's store and established a professional financial system to reduce losses and waste. She used contacts in her hometown to import light industrial products from the Pearl River Delta, changing the tradition of relying on re-export trade between Australia and New Zealand and greatly increasing the profitability of Wenhua's store. The president of the Santo branch of the Chinese Association of Vanuatu said, 'Yaxiu is really capable, not only her business ability, but also her social skills are strong. Unlike the local Chinese, her eyes are open and active'.<sup>20</sup>

Unlike many Chinese born in Vanuatu, Yaxiu frequently travels to wholesale markets in Guangzhou to learn about the latest consumer trends and source goods directly from China. She is also establishing close ties with the Chinese Government's Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (now subsumed by the United Front Work Department) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs so that she can grasp the latest developments in China's politics and diplomacy. Since the mid-to-late 1990s, Yaxiu has

---

19 Liang Wenhua, 19 August 2016. Interview with first author.

20 Liang Yuyuan (president of the Santo Vanuatu Chinese Association), 17 August 2018. Interview with first author.

also built wealth by buying land from chiefs in Vanuatu and investing in real estate in Australia. Through the contacts provided by Yaxiu, Wenhua was permitted to open a petrol station adjoining the retail store, which became its main source of profit. In the past two decades, Liang Wenhua has improved his economic state and that of his sisters, building new homes for them. Wenhua's only regret is that, typical of new Chinese traders, Yaxiu is too mobile. She is unwilling to settle in Vanuatu for long periods and is mobile between China, Australia and Vanuatu.<sup>21</sup> Unlike earlier generations of migrants (Wang 1993:927), Yaxiu did not spend time in Hong Kong, Singapore or Taiwan before migrating to the Pacific.

Although the case of Wenhua and Yaxiu is striking, it is by no means a rare example of 'old' and 'new' Chinese migrants benefiting each other. Cheung Yabao, the first Chinese migrant with a known descendant in Vanuatu, once lived with a local Vanuatu woman, but had no children, so returned to his hometown to marry. His son explained, 'The family specifically asked, not to find a virgin, but to find a woman who has already had a child to get married, to ensure Dad can have descendants.'<sup>22</sup> His second son, Cheung Liansheng, was married to a new migrant from Mawei in Fujian province around the age of 45. A number of second-generation Vanuatu Chinese men born in the 1950s were married to Chinese women from China in the mid-to-late 1980s through photos and contact with distant relatives. The brides usually came from poor families or were willing to go abroad for various reasons. The old Vanuatu Chinese families were maintained through the influx of new female migrants. Even if the Pacific network exists, without openness and extensive contacts with China, old Chinese communities are likely to shrink, as in PNG<sup>23</sup> (Nelson 2007:3; Wu 1982), or to marry into the local community, as seen in Samoa and smaller Pacific Island nations (Willmott 2007). As Willmott urged, it is important to recognise:

the enormous importance of chance in migration: where people end up depends as much on luck as decisions ... Professor Wang [Gungwu] would not call them migrants all, but they became such by dint of shipwreck or opportunity grasped (Willmott 1995:131).

---

21 Liang Wenhua and Yaxiu, 19 August 2016. Interview with first author. Port Vila.

22 Zhang Liansheng, 22 August 2016. Interview with first author.

23 The 1933 census found only five Chinese living in PNG.

To this, we should add misinformation, rumors and chance, which are the basis of many migration decisions for the Chinese in the Pacific, a problem that has not improved with the arrival of the internet. This is not a complete break from migration based on false promises, common in the 19th century. While the element of coercion is no longer present, the misinformation obtained by today's Chinese migrants often has a commercial motive, whether it is found in Pacific-focused WeChat groups or a Baidu (China's main search engine) enquiry for 'Vanuatu', which at the time of writing yielded the result 'what are the benefits of having more than one passport? A Vanuatu passport is quickly obtained'.

The strengthening of China's ties with Vanuatu has increased the speed of information exchange within Vanuatu's Chinese community with the introduction of social networking platforms such as WeChat and the spread of officially approved Chinese culture. An early proposal by the Vanuatu Chinese Society (Port Vila) to set up Chinese-language schools gives a flavour of the efforts made to standardise Chinese language and culture in a community where Mandarin ranked far behind Cantonese, English, French and Bislama:

Going to visit relatives and friends in China and sightseeing has become a dream of many people. But when you enter China, you need to communicate with each other. To communicate, you must use a common language. Mastering Mandarin is the first key to roaming the land of China. To this end, in direct response to the voice of people who want to learn Chinese, under the advocacy of the Chinese Embassy and the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, we decided to 'promote Chinese culture'. For the purpose of hosting a Chinese school in Port Vila that is both Chinese and friendly to Chinese culture (Yuan 1997).

Efforts to promote a 'friendly' version of Chinese culture in Vanuatu have continued, and in February 2015 the University of the South Pacific Emalus Campus in Port Vila opened a Confucius classroom, partnering with Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunication.

The position of many new migrants in relation to the Chinese state is complex. Researchers have argued that the Chinese state 'can be a vocal advocate of the rights of ethnic Chinese in the Pacific, particularly when they are under threat' (Henderson and Reilly 2003:99). While riots against Chinese migrants in the Pacific from 2006 onwards proved the opposite proposition—that the Chinese state and Chinese citizens were

indifferent or even hostile to recent Chinese migrants to the Pacific (Smith 2012)—recent rhetoric around ‘overseas citizen protection’ indicates that the geopolitical calculus around these concerns may also be shifting (Connolly 2016). This is complicated by growing public expectations of what a powerful Chinese state is able to do for them, expectations fostered by a series of popular movies based around the extraction of Chinese citizens from hostile African environments, notably *Wolf Warrior II* and *Operation Red Sea*, respectively the highest and third-highest grossing Chinese films ever made.

A change in the recent geopolitical calculus that has largely gone unnoticed is the arrival of middle-class migrants in the more stable countries of the Pacific—notably Fiji and Vanuatu. Rather than being driven primarily by economic goals, as migrants from Fujian and Guangdong have been, many of these new arrivals are drawn by the slower pace and clean environment offered by the Pacific Island nations. The owner of a small restaurant in Port Vila who had trained as an artist back in China explained her journey to Vanuatu:

I came to Vanuatu because of illness. The doctor told me I should move to a country where the pace was slower, where there was less pollution, no factories. I did a lot of research and settled on Vanuatu. At first, I wasn't used to it. After less than a month, I fled! They didn't have streetlights; the roads were filled with potholes or gravel. I remember when I arrived thinking, 'I had no idea it would be so poor'. The airport had no air conditioning, not like the huge airports in China. The cars were old and battered. It was a shock. I wondered if I'd got on the wrong plane. But the locals: I saw how happy they were. When I was applying, I knew that of all the developing countries Vanuatu was one of the happiest. Their smiles were a comfort, not like the fake smiles you get in China (*pi xiao, rou bu xiao* 皮笑肉不笑). Even though their shoes and clothes were simple, happiness radiated from them. After a month back in China, I got sick again, I wasn't sleeping, too many obligations (*yingchou* 应酬). It doesn't matter whether you feel like it, friends will take you out for a meal, go for a drink, eat lots of meat, it's how you express affection—no thought of whether it's good for you. Friends, family, relatives, husband, an endless cycle of obligations. I went downhill fast. Now [three years later], I don't even need to take medicine.<sup>24</sup>

24 Restaurant owner, 9 February 2019. Interview with second author.

She observed that in Port Vila, while people from Fujian ran shops, most migrants from other parts of China were recovering their health, or that of their children (*liao yang* 疗养). Chinese citizens from other Pacific Island countries were also migrating to Vanuatu because countries like PNG and Tonga felt unsafe. All of this had seen the Chinese population rise from 500 or so in 2014 to more than 3,000 in 2019. Medical teams visiting on the Peace Ark had been told by the Chinese embassy that 4,000 to 5,000 Chinese people lived in Vanuatu (including all people of Chinese ethnicity). The restaurant owner hesitated to call the new arrivals migrants, as it seemed unlikely many would settle in Vanuatu, with most looking to move on to Australia or New Zealand or return to China when their children's schooling required it. Many traders also felt there was no need to get citizenship—which they were eligible for after 10 years—because an investment permit allowed them to do everything required to run a business.

A shopkeeper from Shandong said that the money to be made running a shop in Vanuatu was scarcely worth the effort, with many finding there was more money to be made working off the books on a tourist visa in Australia, a short two-hour flight away. She explained, 'It's Fujian people exploiting other Fujian people'. Aside from exploitation, many migrants were brought to the Pacific by misinformation and outright scams, with some taken in by a promise that migration to American Samoa would enable them to get a US passport. Others were kept hanging for years on the promises of migration agents that Vanuatu could be a 'springboard' to Australia and New Zealand. This shopkeeper knew of one man who had waited nearly 20 years to secure a New Zealand passport, finally managing to do so when he was 60 years old. True to her word about the worsening business environment, she soon returned to China.<sup>25</sup> Sources in the old Chinese community confirmed that some 'Chinese shops' in Port Vila now stand empty, with no one willing to take on the lease.<sup>26</sup> In some ways, this shift reflects the growing prosperity of China—more Chinese migrants, but fewer willing to work long hours in shops and restaurants. As Patrick Matbob notes in Chapter 15, to reduce their workload, some Chinese business migrants in PNG are hiring local workers from an area—Misima—they regard as producing hard workers.

---

25 Shopkeeper, July 2018 and January 2019. Port Vila and on WeChat. Interviews with second author.

26 February 2019. Port Vila. Interviews with second author.

There is a widespread belief in Vanuatu that the sudden spike in the number of Chinese arriving on their shores is the result of Chinese state support, a belief shared by some senior Vanuatu government ministers.<sup>27</sup> While the opposite seems to be true—in conversations with the second author in July 2019, Chinese shopkeepers in Honiara largely did not want Solomon Islands to switch diplomatic allegiance from Taiwan to China (see Aqorau, Chapter 10, this volume)—there is ambition within the Belt and Road Initiative to coordinate and harmonise, or at least ameliorate the impact of, new commercial migrants from China. The second author's interviews with a range of migrants from Fujian and other provinces bring into question the practicality of this approach, at least in the short term. Many of these migrants have enjoyed few, if any, positive interactions with Chinese officials, and their instinct is to steer well clear of the embassy, except when they need to renew their passports. More successful businesspeople and leaders of the Chinese community are more likely to engage with Chinese officials, not least because of the access to information and business opportunities that such networks can bring. However, for ordinary shopkeepers, Chinese officials are best avoided (Smith 2013b).

The recent experience of six Chinese migrants who found that Chinese authorities were able to exercise extra-territorial power in Vanuatu to detain them and remove them from Port Vila without trial—even though four of them had Vanuatu passports—will reinforce sentiment that the PRC state is best given a wide berth (McGarry 2019a). The embarrassment caused to government officials by this case, which included the revelation that Vanuatu's Interior Minister Andrew Napuat did not know which Chinese agency he was liaising with, led to the reporter having his work permit denied and being the subject of a no-fly order, stopping him from rejoining his family in Port Vila (Garrett 2019). This operation echoed the deportation of 77 Chinese nationals from Fiji two years earlier. They were accused of being involved in telephone and online scams targeting China, but an investigation by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation suggested that at least some of them were sex workers (Cohen and Webb 2017).

---

27 July 2018. Port Vila. Interviews with second author.

Further complicating the relationship of Vanuatu's Chinese community with the Chinese state is the increasing popularity of Vanuatu passports as a second passport for Chinese businessmen, particularly those looking to work in the European Union. Strictly speaking, Chinese citizens are not allowed to hold another passport, but the sale of these passports to 'honorary citizens'<sup>28</sup> (US\$150,000 for an individual, US\$205,000 for a family of four) has reached such a scale—1,800 sold in 2018—that they are now the largest source of Vanuatu Government revenue, outstripping VAT (McGarry 2019b). While it is unclear whether this will result in large-scale migration, the experience of Tonga suggests that at least some passport holders will look to settle in Vanuatu (van Fossen 2007), particularly if China encounters economic or political upheaval.

## The evolution of migrant livelihoods in the Pacific

Although the Chinese in the Pacific are a branch of the Chinese family that China has limited awareness of, they are also distinct. A small and scattered population, they are completely dependent on networks of cross-sea exchange, not only between their place of residence and China, but also between different Pacific Islands. The case of Vanuatu indicates that the colonial rule of European powers created opportunities for Chinese settlers in the South Pacific. Dependency, the checks and balances between different colonial powers, and maritime traffic between the Pacific islands improved their economic and social status and shaped their business-led livelihoods. Despite distance, the connection with China is increasingly vital to the Chinese communities in Pacific Island countries. The proliferation of Chinese families and the development of their businesses depend on the use of hometown resources. Especially since the 1980s, the arrival of 'new' migrants allowed the 'old' Chinese community to develop and grow.

China's increasing affluence has changed the nature of the Chinese community in Vanuatu, with the emergence of migrants seeking not just commercial opportunities, but also the health and lifestyle benefits offered by a country free of the stress and pollution that characterises

---

28 Some limits are placed on the rights of these passport holders, such as the ability to run for public office in Vanuatu.

present-day China. While President Xi Jinping's focus on the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation calls for greater coordination of the activities of Chinese overseas, the diversity of Vanuatu's Chinese population and the antipathy of many of its members towards the Chinese state make it unlikely this community will advance the lofty goals laid out under the Belt and Road Initiative.

## References

- Bedford, S. and M. Spriggs 2014. The Archaeology of Vanuatu: 3000 Years of History Across Islands of Ash and Coral. In E. Cochrane and T. Hunt (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Prehistoric Oceania*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1–17. doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199925070.013.015
- Bennett, J.A. 2004. Pests and Disease in the Pacific War: Crossing the Line. In R.P. Tucker (ed.), *Natural Enemy, Natural Ally: Toward an Environmental History of War*. Portland: Oregon State University Press, 217–51.
- Bule, J. 2006. Official Statement of the Honorable James Bule. Statement at the Ministerial Conference of the China–Pacific Island Countries Economic Development and Cooperation Forum, Nadi, 5 April.
- Castles, S. 2003. Migrant Settlement, Transnational Communities and State Strategies in the Asia Pacific Region. In R.R. Iredale, C. Hawksley and S. Castles (eds), *Migration in the Asia Pacific: Population, Settlement and Citizenship Issues*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 3–22.
- Chen, H. (ed.) 1984. *Collection of Overseas Chinese Historical Materials [Huaren chuguo shiliao huibian]*. Beijing: Zhonghua Books.
- Chen, H. 1985. Chinese Labor in Oceania [Dayangzhou huagong]. In H. Chen (ed.), *Compilation of Historical Materials on Overseas Chinese Labor [Huagong chuguo shiliao huibian]*. Vol. 8. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company [Zhonghua shuju].
- Chen, M. 2004. China's Envoy to Vanuatu Says Vohor Punched Him. *Taipei Times*, 6 December. www.taipetimes.com/News/taiwan/archives/2004/12/06/2003213963
- Chin, J.U. 2008. Contemporary Chinese Community in Papua New Guinea: Old Money Versus New Migrants. *Chinese Southern Diaspora Studies* 2:117–26.
- Chinese Club 2004. *The Companies Act: Memorandum of Association of the Chinese Club Limited*. Port Vila: Chinese Club.

- Cohen, H. and T. Webb 2017. Chinese Nationals Deported from Fiji Were Sex Workers, Not Fraudsters: Source. *ABC News*, 6 October.
- Connolly, P.J. 2016. Engaging China's New Foreign Policy in the South Pacific. *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 70(5):484–505. doi.org/10.1080/10357718.2016.1194805
- Coppenrath, G. 1967. *Les Chinois de Tahiti: De L'Aversion à L'Assimilation 1865–1966*. Paris: Musée de l'Homme. doi.org/10.4000/books.sdo.180
- Fei, S. 2014. The Overseas Chinese in the South Pacific Islands: An Historical Approach [Taipingyang daoguo huaren shehui de fazhan: lishi yu xianshi de renzhi], *Pacific Journal* [Taipingyang xuebao] 22:11:55–62.
- Firth, S. 2006. *Globalisation and Governance in the Pacific Islands*. Canberra: ANU E Press, Chapter 6. doi.org/10.22459/GGPI.12.2006
- Fitzgerald, J. 2007. *Big White Lie: Chinese Australians in White Australia*. Sydney: UNSW Press.
- FitzRoy, Governor C.A. to Earl Grey 1849. *Accounts and Papers Session 4, No. 1*. 8 February 1851, Vol. XL.
- Garrett, J. 2019. China, Media Freedom in the Pacific, and the Great Australian Silence. *The Interpreter*, 20 November. Lowy Institute.
- Global Witness 2018. Paradise Lost: How China Can Help the Solomon Islands Protect Its Forest. www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/forests/paradise-lost/
- Guillain, E. 2018. The Chinese Community in Vanuatu. Lycée de Port Vila, 17 April. www.lfportvila.edu.vu/?p=4179
- Henderson, J. and B. Reilly 2003. Dragon in Paradise: China's Rising Star in Oceania. *The National Interest* 72:94–105.
- Kitissou, M. 2007. *Africa in China's Global Strategy*. London: Adonis and Abbey.
- Kumar, R.R., V. Naidu and R. Kumar 2011. Exploring the Nexus between Trade, Visitor Arrivals, Remittances and Income in the Pacific: A Study of Vanuatu. *Acta Universitatis Danubius. Economica* 7(4):199–217.
- Little Red Podcast 2019. *Step Up or Be Overrun: China's Challenge for the Pacific*. 5 March. omny.fm/shows/the-little-red-podcast/step-up-or-be-overrun-china-s-challenge-for-the-1
- Liu, M. and C. Chan 1999. Enduring Violence and Staying in Marriage: Stories of Battered Women in Rural China. *Violence Against Women* 5(12):1469–92. doi.org/10.1177/10778019922183471

- Liu, W. 2000. *A Collection of Chinese and Western Historical Material of Oceania* [*Dayangzhou huaren shi shicong gao*]. Hong Kong: Tiandi Press.
- Loy-Wilson, S. 2014. Rural Geographies and Chinese Empires: Chinese Shopkeepers and Shop-Life in Australia. *Australian Historical Studies* 45:3:407–24. doi.org/10.1080/1031461X.2014.948020
- McGarry, D. 2019a. Six Chinese Deported. *Vanuatu Daily Post*, 6 July.
- McGarry, D. 2019b. Passport Sales Out-Earn VAT. *Vanuatu Daily Post*, 22 August.
- Nelson, H. 2007. The Chinese in Papua New Guinea. ANU Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies Discussion Paper 2007/3. dpa.bellschool.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/2015-12/07\_03\_dp\_nelson\_0.pdf
- Shineberg, D. 2014 (1967). *They Came for Sandalwood: A Study of the Sandalwood Trade in the South-West Pacific 1830–1865*. St Lucia, Qld: University of Queensland Press.
- Smith, G. 2012. Chinese Reactions to Anti-Asian Riots in the Pacific. *The Journal of Pacific History* 47(1) 93–109. doi.org/10.1080/00223344.2011.653482
- Smith, G. 2013a. Nupela Masta? Local and Expatriate Labour in a Chinese-Run Nickel Mine in Papua New Guinea. *Asian Studies Review* 37(2):178–95. doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2013.768598
- Smith, G. 2013b. Beijing's Orphans? New Chinese Investors in Papua New Guinea. *Pacific Affairs* 86(2):327–49. doi.org/10.5509/2013862327
- Smith, G. 2016. The Drivers of Current Chinese Business Migration to the South Pacific. In M. Powles (ed.), *China and the Pacific: The View from Oceania*. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 144–49.
- Smith, G. and S. Dinnen. 2015. And Then There Were Three: A New Chinese Miner in Papua New Guinea. *SSGM In Brief* 2015/48. ssgm.bellschool.anu.edu.au/experts-publications/publications/4115/and-then-there-were-three-new-chinese-miner-papua-new-guinea
- Steinmetz, G. 2007. *The Devil's Handwriting*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- van Fossen, A. 2007. Citizenship for Sale: Passports of Convenience from Pacific Island Tax Havens. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 45(2):138–63. doi.org/10.1080/14662040701317477
- Wang, G. 1993. Greater China and the Chinese Overseas. *The China Quarterly* 136:926–48. doi.org/10.1017/S0305741000032392

- Willie, G. 2018. Vietnam Community is Second Largest Foreign Community in Vanuatu: New Ambassador. *Vanuatu Daily Post*, 12 September. [dailypost.vu/news/vietnam-community-is-second-largest-foreign-community-in-vanuatu-new/article\\_d4b45b19-066c-52c9-bc90-4208d730a7e0.html](http://dailypost.vu/news/vietnam-community-is-second-largest-foreign-community-in-vanuatu-new/article_d4b45b19-066c-52c9-bc90-4208d730a7e0.html)
- Willmott, W.E. 1995. Origins of the Chinese in the South Pacific Islands. In P. Macgregor (ed.), *Histories of the Chinese in Australasia and the South Pacific*. Melbourne, Vic.: Museum of Chinese Australian History, 129–40.
- Willmott, W.E. 2005. *A History of the Chinese Communities in Eastern Melanesia: Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia*. Working Paper no. 12. Christchurch, NZ: Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies.
- Willmott, W.E. 2007. Varieties of Chinese Experience in the Pacific. *Chinese Southern Diaspora Studies Occasional Paper*, 1, Chapter 3. [chl-old.anu.edu.au/publications/csds/cscsd\\_op1\\_6\\_chapter\\_3.pdf](http://chl-old.anu.edu.au/publications/csds/cscsd_op1_6_chapter_3.pdf)
- WTO (World Trade Organization) 2018. *Trade Policy Review: Report by the Secretariat, Vanuatu*. [www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/tpr\\_e/s378\\_e.pdf](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tpr_e/s378_e.pdf)
- Wu, D.Y.H. 1982. *The Chinese in Papua New Guinea: 1880–1980*. Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.
- Yuan, T. 1997. *My Opinion on Chinese Schools in Vila* [Zai Vila juban zhongwen xuexiao zhi wojian]. Vanuatu Chinese Association's Archives.
- Zhang, Q. 1998. *A History of Chinese Emigrants to Australia* [Aodaliliya huaqiao huaren shi]. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press [Waiyu jiaoxue yu yanjiu chubanshe].

This text is taken from *The China Alternative: Changing Regional Order in the Pacific Islands*, edited by Graeme Smith and Terence Wesley-Smith, published 2021 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.

[doi.org/10.22459/CA.2021.14](https://doi.org/10.22459/CA.2021.14)