https://www.nation.co.ke/oped/Opinion/Why-the-Chinese-are-in-Kenya-to-stay/-/440808/2625826/-/5ly5m3z/-/index.html

Why the Chinese are in Kenya to stay

MONDAY FEBRUARY 16 2015

China is the largest populated state on the planet, with 1.4 billion people, effectively hosting 20 per cent of the earth's population.

In the last decade, Chinese geopolitical influence has expanded and at 10 trillion dollars in GDP, it will soon eclipse the US as the largest economy. Even here in Kenya, the Chinese influence is apparent.

The past few years have witnessed an expanding Chinese population. This will only accelerate with the Sino-Kenyan partnership. When the Chinese foreign minister came visiting, he indicated that China favours the policy of "industrial relocation" which may indicate that more Chinese will come in the next decade.

Just like the Kenya-Uganda railway brought in the Indian "coolies" who ended up as Kenyan Indians and have, since their entry, strode the Kenya's economic space like a colossus, the standard gauge railway may inundate the Kenyan nation with Chinese who end up establishing long-term business and social networks.

That we are increasingly witnessing Chinese presence in commerce, infrastructure, and even in crime, is a clear testimony that the inevitable will happen. We have seen Chinese merchants establish their presence in all major towns. The foundation of permanent Chinese presence in Kenya has, therefore, been laid.

CHINATOWNS

However, the most enduring Chinese influence would be the permanent Chinese settlements, usually called Chinatowns.

Chinatowns are enclaves within a large established city whose cultural and social distinctions are centred on food, and as a result, Chinatowns worldwide are usually popular destinations for various ethnic Chinese and other Asians such as Vietnamese, Thai, and Malaysian. Most Chinatowns generally have a range of authentic and tourist restaurants. Practically every major city in the world has a Chinatown.

In Europe, the earliest of these can be traced to Liverpool, England when the first direct trading vessel from China arrived in Liverpool's docks in the 1830s to trade in goods, including silk and cotton wool.
In the Americas, which include the US, Canada, and Latin America, Chinatowns have been around since the 1800s. The most prominent ones are in New York City, San Francisco, Vancouver and Toronto.

New York City is home to several Chinatowns. The Chinatown in San Francisco is one of the largest in North America and the oldest north of Mexico.

There are three noteworthy Chinatowns in Africa located in the coastal African nations of Madagascar, Mauritius, and South Africa. South Africa has the largest Chinatown and the largest Chinese population of any African country.

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

Where will be Nairobi's Chinatown? The Chinese will localise their settlement in a particular part. Will it be Kirinyaga Road, Kariokor, Eastleigh, Westlands or South B? I would bet the area bound by River Road, Moi and Haile Selassie avenues.

But will the Nairobi Chinatown bring forth economic prosperity, social and cultural harmony? We need to exhibit maturity and tolerance but ensure that the leadership puts the business interests of Kenyans first.

At the same time, Chinese interests should be protected but aligned to the aspirations of the Kenyan people.

Overall, a Chinatown would enhance Nairobi's image as a cosmopolitan city.

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https://www.bbc.com/news/world-radio-and-tv-18149316

Canada prepares for an Asian future

By Ayesha Bhatty
25 May 2012

Chinese immigrants have flocked to Canada's west coast and transformed Vancouver into Canada's very own Asian metropolis. The days of concern over the city being turned into 'Hongcouver' have gone. What does the future hold for Canada's Asian population?

Shoppers stroll casually past a Lamborghini store in Richmond's Aberdeen Centre - a major Asian mall in this once sleepy Vancouver suburb known for its farmland and fishing village.

Outside the shopping centre, people are queuing at the many Chinese restaurants. In the local supermarkets, butchers are picking live seafood out of fish tanks, chopping off the heads, then gutting and packaging them up under the watchful eye of customers, almost exclusively Chinese-Canadian.

Richmond is North America's most Asian city - 50% of residents here identify themselves as Chinese. But it's not just here that the Chinese community in British Columbia (BC) - some 407,000 strong - has left its mark. All across Vancouver, Chinese-Canadians have helped shape the local landscape.

Increasing trade

There are the little things. Casa Gelato - an Italian ice-cream shop with a huge local following - sells Asian-inspired flavours such as green tea, durian and lychee. The Vancouver Sun newspaper puts out an online Mandarin edition, Taiyangbao. The province's auto insurance corporation serves drivers in 170 languages - Mandarin and Cantonese being the most in-demand. Then there are the big contributions.

"Economic growth is obvious and easy to measure," says Thomas Tam, the CEO of Success, an immigrant service based in Vancouver's historic Chinatown.
For the first time in 2011, the Pacific Rim dislodged the US as British Columbia's **biggest trade partner** . With the collapse of the US housing market, lumber exports have fallen. But demand for coal and natural gas to fuel China's factories is skyrocketing.

Exports to China reached CAN$5.1bn ($5bn/£3.17bn) in 2011, nearly five times their value in 2001. Other booming industries include agrifoods, minerals, container traffic, tourism and education. The economic boost has driven a CAN$22bn ($21.6bn/ £13.7bn) upgrade in infrastructure along trade corridors with Asia.
"Within the last 20 years, we have expanded our airport twice, had a big facelift for our port, and seen the biggest-ever highway construction," he says. "Because of the impact of immigration, Canada as a whole is more resilient to economic recession and that's undeniable."

For centuries, Chinese immigrants have come to Canada for economic opportunities. It began with the gold rush in northern and central BC in 1858. In the 1880s, some 6,500 Chinese migrants were directly employed by the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), settling in towns along the railway route, all the way to the terminus in Vancouver, where the fledgling Chinatown took root (now the third-largest in North America).
But resentment grew among the white working classes, who saw the migrants as cheap labour, the so-called "yellow peril" stealing jobs and sullying society. In 1885, the federal government enacted the first anti-Chinese legislation, imposing a ' **head tax** ' of CAN$50 on every migrant worker.

Under the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1923, immigration ground to a halt. The ban was lifted in 1947 - due in part to the contribution of Chinese-Canadian soldiers in WWII - but Mao's red revolution closed the door at the other end.

Sharp backlash

The next significant wave of migrants came in the 1980s and 90s. But they weren't about to do manual labour or settle in Chinatown with the so-called Chi-eppies (Chinese elderly people) and Chi-lippies (Chinese low-income people).

This was a largely wealthy class of Hong Kong Chinese who snapped up homes in the priciest neighbourhoods, sent their children to the best schools, and kicked off a construction boom which transformed downtown Vancouver into a Hong Kong-style city of skyscrapers.
Their sudden impact brought a sharp backlash. Polite Vancouver society was aghast at the "monster houses" being built in the old-monied communities of Shaughnessy and Kerrisdale, often demolishing character homes and tearing down trees in the process.

Newspaper headlines and **some politicians** warned of an "Asian invasion" while the bitter elite coined the phrase 'Hongcouver' to express their dismay at the perceived Asian-isation of their city.

"The wealth of the newcomers was an irritation to some in the local community," says historian John Douglas Belshaw, a professor at the University of Victoria. But attitudes soon began to change, he says.

"The elite says, 'Our bread's buttered on this side. We can sell a ton of real estate to this community and they're kind of like us. These people like their whiskey straight'."

Mandarin increase

The Hong Kong wave subsided after the British handover to China in 1997. Since then, immigrants from Mainland China, and to a lesser extent, Taiwan are leading the westward charge.
Mandarin is edging out Cantonese on the streets of the city. Overall, nearly **one-in-five Vancouverites** is now of Chinese origin - the biggest migrant community by far, with some 12,400 new arrivals each year.

Privately, there have been grumblings. In the safety of living rooms or the anonymity of online forums, old-time Vancouverites blame the Chinese for the city's sky-high property prices, although experts say there's little evidence to back up the fears.

Language is another flashpoint, especially when it comes to older migrants. "There used to be a time when immigrants to this country were required to know the language," whispers a woman in a doctor's clinic, as the receptionist struggles to ask an elderly Chinese man when he last took his heart medication. A family member has to be contacted by phone before the queue gets moving again.
There's concern too that foreign students are taking up places at university, bringing much-needed bags of cash in foreign student fees. A similar problem is playing out in schools, some say.

"My son wants out of private school," says one parent who asked not to be named. His teenager has become one of the few white students at an exclusive Christian academy in a Vancouver suburb. "All these Asian kids are playing the piano and violin in the evenings. My kid plays hockey," he says.

It's not uncommon to find only one or two white students in Vancouver classrooms, says Mr Tam in his Chinatown office, especially in courses like finance or engineering.

He says he gives the same advice to all young people - Asian and non-Asian - struggling to find their place: "Take this as an opportunity rather than a challenge.
"The future is in Asia and Vancouver has a very good advantage, which is that of all the Canadian cities, we are the closest to the Asia Pacific Rim."

That reality is reflected in the BC government's economic plan, aptly titled " **Canada starts here** " - a clear reference to BC as the Pacific gateway, a full three sailing days closer than anywhere else in North America.

"Our government is focused on making sure British Columbians are first in line to do business with Asia to create jobs here at home," says Premier Christy Clark.

"Vancouver and British Columbia are a natural place for many Asian families because of our diversity. There are countless personal and cultural connections here and our economy and province is richer, more vibrant and attractive for newcomers as a result," her office said in a statement.

For now, BC continues to prosper from its ties to Asia and its booming economy.

http://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/2144154/how-massive-influx-chinese-migrants-has-changed-myanmars#comments

How a massive influx of Chinese migrants has changed Myanmar's second-largest city Mandalay

The makeover of Mandalay reflects a Chinese footprint across Southeast Asia that has grown alongside Beijing's economic and military clout
PUBLISHED : Tuesday, 01 May, 2018, 1:46pm
UPDATED : Wednesday, 02 May, 2018, 2:13am
Myanmar's last royal capital harboured the most learned Buddhist monks and exquisite artists, citizens speaking the most refined Burmese and cooks who prepared the best curries in the land. Mandalay was rhapsodised as the nation's cultural core. Today, along the grand moat of the former royal palace, Chinese music rings out as people perform tai chi exercises, a sign of an uneasy transformation taking place in Myanmar's second-largest city.

This once quintessential Burmese metropolis, residents say, is losing its traditions as a massive influx of Chinese migrants reshapes it in their own likeness.

‘‘I feel that I am no longer a resident of Mandalay,” said Nyi Nyi Zaw, a 30-year-old journalist, adding that problems between Burmese and Chinese caused by the changing dynamics have become a staple of his reporting.

‘‘They (Chinese people) look like the residents. They have money, so they have the power.”

This makeover of Mandalay – located about 300 kilometres (185 miles) from China’s Yunnan province and at the crossroads of trade, transport and smuggling routes – reflects a Chinese footprint across Southeast Asia that has grown alongside Beijing’s economic and military clout.
And it is one that is expected to widen as China pushes forward with its “Belt and Road Initiative” to link Eurasian nations via land and sea routes.

Propelled by Beijing’s policy of encouraging Chinese enterprises to expand abroad as well as official Chinese government investment in its neighbours’ infrastructure, the influx has sparked a measure of prosperity in some impoverished Southeast Asian regions.
But along with it has come local resentment, sometimes anger, at perceived Chinese aggressiveness, cultural insensitivity and environmental damage.

Chinese have been drawn to Southeast Asia for centuries, with waves of migrants fleeing war, revolution and starvation in the first half of the 20th century.

While most of them came with little more than the shirts on their backs, many of the latest migrants are arriving with cash and savvy.
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While most of them came with little more than the shirts on their backs, many of the latest migrants are arriving with cash and savvy.
Next to Laos’ capital, Vientiane, Chinese are building a virtually new city on more than 300 hectares (741 acres) of government-provided land that was expected to cater to an influx of migrants coming to work on Chinese-backed infrastructure projects reshaping the once sleepy town on the banks of the Mekong River.

Residents of Sihanoukville are calling Cambodia’s only seaport “China Town” as more Chinese corner real estate and settle in a country that has turned from the West toward Beijing, now its key political and economic supporter.
Spearheaded by a surge of Chinese tourists, condominiums and second homes marketed to mainlanders are sprouting in the northern Thailand hub of Chiang Mai, along with both legal and illegal businesses catering to their needs.

A tourist with no knowledge of Thai or English can now hire an unlicensed Chinese taxi driver or even a bodyguard.

Chinese investment has increased sharply in Malaysia, sparking concerns over sovereignty. In addition to mega ventures including a US$100 billion property development project, Chinese state-linked firms have also bought assets linked to the indebted 1MDB state fund, which was set up by Prime Minister Najib Razak and is being investigated by the US and other countries for embezzlement and money laundering.

Opposition leaders have used the influx of Chinese money as an issue in the May 9 general election, warning that the government is selling the country – a claim dismissed by Najib.

In Mandalay, anti-Chinese jibes have become a staple of workaday conversation.
Cartoons, comedy routines and literature label the country the “Chinese Republic of the Union of Myanmar” and the city as “Mandalay, Yunnan”.

A popular song The Death of Mandalay laments what Mandalay has become: “The city where I was born is no longer there/Who are these people in the city?”

While a Chinese community has long existed in Mandalay, a new wave flocked to snap up swathes of cheap vacant land following massive fires that tore through the city’s core in the 1980s.
As isolationist Myanmar opened up in the 1990s, Chinese entrepreneurs also took advantage of low interest rates at home and high ones in Myanmar to invest in real estate. Others are involved in shadier areas such as the jade trade and narcotics trafficking.

Since foreigners are not allowed to own land or enjoy other privileges, a large but unknown number of Chinese have obtained Burmese citizenship through bribes to Myanmar immigration officials or outright forgery of documents, Burmese businessmen and local journalists say.
The result has been soaring real estate values that have forced many locals to move to the city's outskirts.

"If we can't enact laws and take effective action on immigration, we will see a continuation of the Chinese influx because this area is good for them," said Win Htay, who also heads a large sugar company.
The ease with which Chinese are able to illegally obtain citizenship contrasts with the plight of the Rohingya, a Muslim minority group at the heart of an ongoing refugee crisis who despite having lived in Myanmar for generations are denied citizenship.

Some take a balanced view of the Chinese presence in Mandalay, frequently reported as high as 50 per cent of the city's 1.2 million inhabitants, although estimates are unreliable given the undocumented status of many and depending on how assimilated ethnic Chinese are counted.
"As a native I am not so concerned about Mandalay changing because of the Chinese. The world is becoming a global village," said Tin Maung, managing director of the Royal Tun Thitsar Company. "Races mix all the time, but it is important that all are loyal to the country."

The Chinese presence in Mandalay and Myanmar is simply a natural outcome of intensified and positive relations with Southeast Asia, said Zhu Xianghui, associate professor at the Institute of Myanmar Studies of Yunnan University.

He said concerns by Burmese nationalists that their country is under threat of Chinese expansionism is "an overreaction from a poor country".

In response to questions about illegal immigration, the Foreign Affairs Office of Yunnan in China said it "always urged those going overseas to abide by local laws and customs."
While some of the regional migration is driven by Chinese government-backed policies, other migrants are aided by the age-old "guanxi", the informal networks through which Chinese from a particular locality or clan have moved abroad. These networks aid and ease the entry of those following them into a foreign environment.

Some simply come on their own, seeking a better, freer life outside China.

Qing Dai, a prominent author and environmental activist who now calls Chiang Mai home, said she enjoyed the absence of an internet firewall in Thailand, clean food and water, and being among "nice, peaceful people", some of whom she helps through charities.

Living in a rural area outside the city, Qing Dai said she had not yet encountered Thais averse to her countrymen.

"But when I travel here and there, I do see the impolite, following-no-rules, arrogant Chinese and I feel ashamed for that," she said.

"We have a long way to go before China's true modernisation is complete."

Now that China has urged its citizens to go out into the world, it's only natural that many will choose to "follow their dreams," said Aranya Siriphon, an anthropologist at Chiang Mai University.

"That's what we humans do," she said.

"But we have to be able to manage the negative aspects of these dreams."

This article appeared in the South China Morning Post print edition as: resentment rises as chinese move into mandalay

http://www.afr.com/business/our-complex-relationship-with-chinese-australians-20151227-glvgml

Jan 9 2016 at 12:15 AM

Our complex relationship with Chinese Australians

Never before have there been more people of Chinese origin in Australia, or the nations' economies so tightly linked. Yet for many Australians a fear of China is proving difficult to overcome.

By: Mark Mulligan

https://nacla.org/article/japanese-peruvians-reviled-and-respected-paradoxial-place-perus-nikkei

Japanese-Peruvians-Reviled and Respected: The Paradoxial Place of Peru's Nikkei

Eve Kushner, September 25, 2007

Percy Takayama says that several times recently when he's approached a Lima newspaper kiosk, people gathered to scan the tabloid headlines have yelled at him that "Japanese should go back to their country!" Others have shouted that the Japanese have robbed the country blind; he recently tried to buy something at a store, only to have the clerk say, "I don't wait on criminals."

Takayama, a Peruvian journalist, is accused of no crime. He is the target of abuse simply because he, like Peru's now-discredited former president Alberto Fujimori, is of Japanese descent. Fujimori's government collapsed in scandal last year; Fujimori himself has been officially accused of dereliction of duty and there have been allegations that he, like his erstwhile adviser Vladimiro Montesinos, illegally profited from his job and has the proceeds stashed away in foreign accounts. Fujimori is currently living in exile in Japan. Some Peruvian politicians and the tabloid press have attacked Fujimori in ways that subtly—and sometimes not-so-subtly—implicate the entire Japanese-Peruvian community in his government's misdeeds. The result, says Takayama, has been verbal attacks on those with Asian features (including Chinese-Peruvians), offensive graffiti scrawled on Japanese-Peruvian-owned businesses, and even physical assaults, such as the mauling that one young man received while standing in line at a Lima bank. A mob of retirees beat him up, yelling that Fujimori had made their pensions less secure.

The history of Peru's nikkei, or people of Japanese descent, has been marked by even more serious examples of discrimination, including anti-Japanese riots in Lima in 1940 that left 10 Japanese-Peruvians dead. During World War II, thousands of Japanese-Peruvians were incarcerated in U.S. detention camps, the largest Latin American group held in the camps.

But the place of the nikkei in Peruvian society is more complex and paradoxical than all this might suggest. The Peruvian stereotype of the nikkei is not that of thieves, but of honorable, ambitious hard workers. Considered as trustworthy as Toyotas, the nikkei have often served as treasurers in clubs and schools. The first Japanese arrived at the end of the nineteenth century as indentured plantation workers; today many nikkei run successful businesses, large and small, and Japanese-Peruvians are more often than not economically well-off.

Alberto Fujimori, in 1990 the virtually unknown dean of Peru's agricultural university, used the nikkei stereotype to his advantage, adopting the campaign slogan "Honesty, Technology, Work." Fujimori also dubbed himself El Chino, "the Chinaman." Peruvians routinely use the term "chino" to refer to nikkei; usually there's no intent to insult. But the term suggests the Japanese are indistinguishable from other Asians, and many nikkei consider it derogatory. By embracing the term, Fujimori undercut its negative charge and symbolically allied himself with the mass of Peruvians who use it. At the same time, he often campaigned wearing traditional indigenous clothing and hats, symbolically making the point that Peru's indigenous and mestizo voters—groups which together make up some 80% of the population—should consider Fujimori to be someone like themselves, in stark contrast to the rich, white opposition candidate, novelist Mario Vargas Llosa.

Today, Peru's 54,000 nikkei form one of the nation's largest immigrant-descended ethnic groups, though they make up only a tiny one-fifth of 1% of the population of 27 million. Seventy percent of Japanese-Peruvians live in Lima; the city boasts a nikkei cultural center and museum, and magazines and newspapers aimed at nikkei readers. In recent years, owing to Japan's economic boom and Fujimori's now-vanished prestige, more nikkei have shown an interest in connecting to their ethnic roots. But the community as a whole has tried to keep a low profile and until the 1990 election, political participation was not encouraged.

The first Japanese to come in significant numbers arrived at the turn of the last century, lured by promises of steady work on Peru's coastal cotton and sugar plantations. Eager to escape crippling unemployment and poverty in Japan, they avidly signed labor contracts, hoping to come home rich in a few years. The first boatload of contract workers arrived in 1899; they soon discovered that the life of a laborer on Peruvian farms was one of overwork, abuse, and disease. Many fled the plantations; some managed to buy and work their own farms in the coastal and jungle regions, and others went to cities where many established small stores.

If the early Japanese migrants had too little capital to open shops, they often compensated ingeniously. The day after arriving in Peru, Heitaro Hayashi bought cosmetics, pantyhose, and handkerchiefs and headed for the red-light district. Knowing no Spanish, he wrote phrases like buenos dias and muchas gracias on flash cards. Prostitutes paid cash for his merchandise, enabling him to buy more goods. These were the origins of the soon-to-flourish Hayashi Company.[1] Others with insufficient capital worked from ubiquitous, shoddy-looking bazaars. With frequent "liquidation" and "inventory" sales, they catered to the poorest Peruvian consumers, who felt exploited, even as they gravitated toward this type of bargain shopping.[2]

Because Peruvian banks wouldn't lend to Japanese, the immigrants pooled money in cooperative arrangements called tanomoshi, providing small loans to one family at a time. With a tiny advance from a tanomoshi, Samuel Matsuda's father established an inn and then a café. "That's how we've advanced, little by little," says Matsuda, who continued his family's ascent by becoming a congressman.

Japanese business successes aroused a nativist response; Peruvians groused about Japanese monopolies and unfair competition: "It can be said that there is not a street in which there is no Japanese barber shop," said a 1926 article calling for all

Japanese businesses to close immediately. Enraged by the predominance of Japanese and Chinese shops, a nationalist wrote in 1927, “Asiatic immigration is for the race what cancer or syphilis is for the human body.”[3]

Meanwhile, Peru’s Japanese community continued to grow, swollen by new arrivals. By 1936, the 23,000 Japanese-Peruvians represented 45% of Peru’s foreign population, distantly followed by the 7,000 Chinese and then by scant numbers of Italians, English, and Germans.[4] Densely clustered in Lima, the Japanese seemed even more numerous than they were.

Nativist resentment was further fueled by a U.S.-led international campaign that tied anyone of Japanese descent to Japan’s role as a World War II enemy. For two days in May 1940, Peruvians sacked, looted, and burned more than 600 Japanese homes and businesses in Lima, killing 10 Japanese and injuring dozens. The looters stripped Japanese property of windows, floor planks, wallpaper, and tiles, even carting off toilets, all in full view of the police, who made no attempts to intervene. Almost all Japanese-owned shops were destroyed, and there was an estimated $6 million in property damage.[5] In the wake of the riots, there was an exodus back to Japan.

Expatriate Peruvian writer Herbert Morote has lambasted then-Peruvian president Manuel Prado for allowing riled-up citizens to sack the businesses of honorable immigrants so he could look good to “Uncle Sam.”[6] In the war years, the United States was demanding hemispheric unity in fighting totalitarian regimes, asking Latin American governments to root out supposed civilian subversives. The FBI drew up a list of the most “dangerous Axis nationals” and set out to investigate them, though 35 years later a chief intelligence officer would admit that he and his colleagues “found no reliable evidence of planned or contemplated acts of sabotage, subversion, or espionage.”[7]

In Peru, the government allowed the FBI to spread anti-Japanese propaganda and to investigate individual Japanese. Japan’s bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941 prompted the Peruvian government to freeze and confiscate Japanese assets, forbid Japanese-Peruvians to assemble in groups larger than three, and shut down Japanese-language newspapers and schools. Following the U.S. lead, Peruvian authorities blacklisted prominent Japanese and later the entire community, prohibiting the patronage of Japanese businesses.

As part of a U.S.-designed plan to repatriate Axis officials, Peru forced some Japanese to return to Japan. When this proved impractical and expensive, the United States and Peru agreed that Japanese-Peruvians should be deported to the United States. In 1942, Peruvian officials began rounding up scores of Japanese-Peruvians, stuffing them into the bowels of rancid boats, shaving their heads, and spraying them with DDT. On their arrival in the United States, the 1771 detainees were confined to dusty, barbed-wire-enclosed concentration camps in Texas. In exchange for the prisoners, Peru received $25 million from the U.S. government.[8]

Eleven other Latin American countries, including Ecuador and Panama, shipped Japanese to U.S. camps, but 84% of the 2,118 imprisoned Latin American Japanese came from Peru.[9] Mexico moved its Japanese to inland areas but deported none. Chile, Argentina, and Venezuela also refused to deport Japanese, as did Brazil, though Brazil’s Japanese community was by far the largest in Latin America.

The non-Peruvian Latin American deportees were freed from the Texas camps soon after the war ended, but most Japanese-Peruvians remained in detention till late 1946 because Immigration and Naturalization Service officials had seized their passports and then accused them of being illegal aliens. Eventually most went to Japan or stayed in the United States, for Peru readmitted only 79 of those who had been deported.

About 10,000 Japanese-Peruvians remained in Peru during the war, and that group chose to keep living there afterward, rather than moving to a devastated postwar Japan. The younger nikkei felt entirely Peruvian anyway, some unable to speak Japanese. The climate in Peru remained anti-Japanese for some time, so the community tried to keep as low a profile as possible. “The Japanese were afraid that all the past discrimination would be repeated,” explains Olga Okuma, a Peruvian nikkei now living in California. “They wanted their kids to assimilate.”[10]

Fujimori’s 1990 election, and his appointment of four Japanese-Peruvians to cabinet posts during his ten years as president, brought renewed public attention to the nikkei community, attention that the community did not completely welcome.[11] Japanese-Peruvians were far from unanimous in supporting Fujimori’s candidacy: He had not actively associated himself with the community, and his populist pronouncements had little appeal for middle- and upper-class nikkei, many of whom backed Vargas Llosa’s conservative FREDEMO party, as did well-off Peruvians in general. Indeed, three nikkei ran for congress under FREDEMO auspices. At one point, a group of nikkei marched in front of Vargas Llosa’s house, accusing Fujimori of pushy, un-Japanese behavior for daring to run.

Amelia Morimoto interviewed nikkei at random in April and May 1990, between the first round of the election and the runoff between Fujimori and Vargas Llosa.[12] At that time, 25% of her interview subjects thought it premature to have a nikkei candidate. One asserted, “A Japanese can’t govern Peru. A pure Peruvian, native to here, has to assume the presidency.” Vast numbers of participants felt that Fujimori was simply not ready to be president. One said, “He doesn’t have a plan for governing. I’m deeply worried, because he isn’t prepared to govern the country.” Fear dominated the responses, as with this comment: “The whole colony is afraid that he’ll do a bad job and that 91 years after our grandparents arrived, he’ll fail, erasing the positive image that the colony has worked to achieve.” Some nikkei worried that a Fujimori victory could bring new attacks on the community. Others, however, voted for Fujimori out of fear that a poor electoral showing would discredit the nikkei.

For its part, the opposition campaign used a broadly circulated flyer to ridicule Fujimori’s Japanese ancestry. Rumors, fueled by the opposition, had it that Fujimori had been born in Japan, not Peru. If true, that would have made Fujimori constitutionally ineligible to serve as president.[13] True or not, the reports served to paint Fujimori as a foreign interloper, in contrast to Vargas

Llosa, whose white Spanish-descended forebears could be traced back for generations. “No Japanese will govern Peru,” said widely displayed campaign signs. Some upscale restaurants refused to serve nikkei, and there were some attacks on nikkei businesses and homes.

Nikkei organizations did little to protest the anti-Japanese aspects of the campaign, limiting themselves to statements about how nikkei should conduct themselves to minimize the risk of attacks: During election week they should stay out of public places, avoid traveling alone, and have neighbors watch out for them. Fujimori’s then-wife, Susana Higuchi, later assailed the nikkei for their silence during the elections, saying, “The nikkei are passive. There are few nikkei who fight.... During Vargas Llosa’s campaign, the colony squelched itself.”[14]

Following Fujimori’s election, one nikkei observed: “There’s sympathy and pride that a Japanese is president, even if no one wants to say so. But we’re also afraid that if his government doesn’t work out, they’re going to attack us.”[15] In fact, while the Fujimori victory touched off a brief wave of enthusiasm for all things Japanese in Peru, it also provoked a new wave of racism, including remarks about the “flat-faced first lady,” Susana Higuchi. A 1991 newspaper editorial accused the nikkei of promoting prostitution in the past and of exploiting poor people. Three visitors from Japan were murdered. Other attacks, including a car bomb set off next to the Japanese embassy, were likely guerrilla actions aimed at drawing attention to the Fujimori government’s improved economic and diplomatic ties with Japan. But they left many in the nikkei community feeling vulnerable.

This fear led thousands of nikkei to flee to Japan in a reverse migration called dekasegi. Peru’s economic crisis had already prompted movement to the thriving islands in the 1980s, but Fujimori’s presidency accelerated the exodus. While fewer than 1,000 Peruvian nikkei lived in Japan in 1988, more than 31,000 did by 1992, mostly young adults. Currently, 15,000 Peruvian nikkei live in Japan, leaving a generation in Peru decimated.

As the Fujimori government was progressively discredited by the accusations of corruption, abuse of power, and serious human rights violations lodged against his closest associates and finally against him personally, Peruvian political discourse became increasingly anti-Japanese. In the 2000 election campaign, supporters of then-presidential candidate Alejandro Toledo chanted, “cholo yes, chino no.” (Toledo describes himself as a cholo, or an urbanized person of indigenous background.) Toledo, now Peru’s president, has sometimes referred to the “Oriental Mafia,” as well as the “criminal Japanese and his accomplices,” thus turning denunciations of Fujimori government misdeeds into racial attacks.[16] In this year’s national elections, there were several nikkei candidates, but all lost, except for Susana Higuchi, Fujimori’s ex-wife, who won a congressional seat. It remains to be seen, then, whether the Fujimori era will be remembered as one in which the Peruvian nikkei fully and permanently entered the nation’s political life or one in which they were cruelly and definitively set back.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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NOTES

1. Seiichi Higashide, Adios to Tears: The Memoirs of a Japanese-Peruvian Internee in U.S. Concentration Camps (Honolulu: E&E Kudo, 1993), p. 89.
2. Clinton Harvey Gardiner, The Japanese and Peru, 1873-1973 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1975), p. 65; J. F. Normano and Antonello Gerbi, The Japanese in South America: An Introductory Survey with Special Reference to Peru (New York: International Secretariat, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1943), pp. 92-101.
3. Gardiner, The Japanese and Peru, p. 66.
4. Mary Fukumoto, Hacia un nuevo sol: Japoneses y sus descendientes en el Perú (Lima: Asociación Peruano Japonesa del Perú, 1997), pp. 240-241.
5. Fukumoto, Hacia un nuevo sol, p. 522; Higashide, Adios to Tears, pp. 108-110. Higashide says this figure corresponds to “U.S. dollar value at that time.” Oddly, Gardiner, The Japanese and Peru, p. 53, puts the number much lower at $1.6 million.
6. Herbert Morote, Réquiem por Perú, mi patria (Lima: Editorial Horizonte, 1992), p. 122.
7. Clinton Harvey Gardiner, Pawns in a Triangle of Hate: The Peruvian Japanese and the United States (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981), p. 22.
8. Historian Amelia Morimoto, interviewed in the documentary “Humillados y Ofendidos,” aired on the U.S television newsmagazine Aquí y Ahora, June 5, 2001.
9. The other nine countries were Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, and Nicaragua. See Gardiner, The Japanese and Peru, pp. 87–88.
10. Author’s interview, Albany, California, September, 2000.
11. The cabinet ministers were Jaime Yoshiyama and Daniel Hokama (both ministers of energy and mines), Victor Yamamoto (minister of health), and Jaime Sobero Taira (minister of fishing). Other Japanese-Peruvians won congressional seats during Fujimori’s era.
12. All the following quotes about Fujimori’s candidacy come from Amelia Morimoto, Los japoneses y sus descendientes en el Perú (Lima: Fondo Editorial del Congreso del Perú, 1999), pp. 218-222.
13. Reports that Fujimori had doctored his birth documents to prove that he had been born in Peru rather than Japan continued to circulate during his presidency; if, however, it were proved that Fujimori had been born in Japan he would have had automatic Japanese citizenship, making it impossible to deport him to stand trial on corruption charges in Peru. Earlier this year the Peruvian press reported that careful examination of his parents’ immigration and other records indicated a Peruvian birthplace.
14. Fukumoto, Hacia un nuevo sol, p. 336.
15. Fukumoto, Hacia un nuevo sol, p. 337.
16. Author’s correspondence with Percy Takayama.

Tags: race, Peru, Japanese, immigrants, discrimination, Alberto Fujimori

https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/07/world/australia/china-australia-history.html

200 Years On, Chinese-Australians Are Still Proving They Belong

By Isabella Kwai

- May 7, 2018

SYDNEY, Australia — Out of a pile of papers on her dining table, Man-Yee Leanfore, 70, pulled out one: a copy of an old immigration document from 1907.

A young woman in a traditional Chinese dress stared out from the attached photos. Age: 29. Build: Thin. Hair: Dark. Nationality: Chinese.
The document permitted Mrs. Leanfore's great-grandmother, Yuck Land Hing, to come and go from Australia at a time when the White Australia Policy kept out most Asian immigrants. It was a limited reprieve — a three-year exemption to the dictation test commonly used to exclude nonwhite immigrants.
"We suffered," Mrs. Leanfore said as she looked at the photo, recalling the first in a long line of her relatives who emigrated to Australia. "But we didn't do anything wrong."

This year commemorates 200 years of Chinese migration to Australia. The anniversary comes at a time when Australia is once again conflicted about its relationship with the region's biggest, most powerful country, and many Chinese-Australians are digging into their families' archives to share their history with audiences from both China and Australia.

February's Lunar New Year celebrations in Sydney featured talks from local historians. Chinese-Australian history museums are planning new exhibitions that connect the story of Australia's earliest Chinese immigrants to its newest, and community organizations are hosting regular talks around Chinese figures in Australian history.

Even in smaller towns and cities like Bendigo, where the Golden Dragon Museum has successfully raised money to replace its historic ceremonial Qing dynasty dragon, Chinese-Australians are actively seeking ways to keep their culture alive.
Those who are involved say these activities are an effort to define their community on its own terms, separate from debates over the influence of the Chinese Communist Party in Australia, and to ensure that the public understands that not everyone who looks Chinese in Australia is a new arrival.
"I think people, especially white people, lump us all as Chinese, as if everybody is the same," said Teik Hock Lim, 67, an ethnic Chinese, retired social worker, who grew up in Malaysia under British rule. "It's like if people would call all white people the same."

Australia's relationship to Chinese immigration has always zigzagged between rejection and acceptance.

In 1818, Mak Sai Ying, a young man from Guangdong, stepped off a ship in Port Jackson, becoming one of the first recorded Chinese immigrants to the continent. Given the Anglicized name John Shying, he became a well-known pub owner in Sydney's west.

When gold was discovered in the 1850s, a wave of new migrants from around the world arrived to try their luck, including thousands of Chinese men from Canton.
Out on the goldfields, competition for riches meant tension simmered between European and Chinese miners. Riots broke out; in one instance, a mob of 3,000 European miners burned a Chinese camp.
To discourage immigration, Victorian ports levied a heavy tax on Chinese miners. But the most resolved disembarked at South Australian ports and made the 500 km (310 mile) trek to the goldfields on foot. Not all survived.

Australia's first federal parliament went on to pass legislation in 1901 that would require all immigrants to pass a 50-word dictation test to enter the country. Because the test was enacted to keep nonwhite immigrants out, there was an insidious twist: officials could test applicants in any European language.
After a while, "there was never a Chinese person who could pass it," said Daphne Lowe Kelley, a community leader and former President of the Chinese Heritage Association of Australia. Unable to enter Australia in the 1920s, Ms. Lowe Kelley's father sailed to New Zealand instead, paying a tax to settle there.
Those of Chinese descent who were already in the country, like Mrs. Leanfore's great-grandmother, could apply for an exemption from the test in order to travel. But many, with families still living in China, simply gave up and returned home, including Mrs. Leanfore's grandmother who returned to Guangzhou.

In the decades following 1901, the Chinese population declined.
Race-based policies remained in place until 1973, when the government heralded a policy of multiculturalism.
Now there are about 1.2 million people in Australia with Chinese ancestry.
For years, older Chinese-Australians have nursed the painful legacy of the White Australia Policy. Now, after 200 years, they see their community as a patchwork of experiences.

It includes the descendants of Cantonese and Hakka migrants from the Gold Rush era, ethnic Chinese refugees who fled the Vietnam War, migrants from Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and mainland China who have arrived steadily since the 1980s, and most recently — an influx of Chinese international students.

Nick Shying, 22, is one of many Chinese-Australians whose roots reach back to the first Chinese settlers — despite his pale skin and blue eyes. He said people often laugh when he brings up his Chinese heritage. Australians still use appearance as a basis for ethnic assumptions, he said, "but here I am as an example of the potential flaws of taking that approach."

Many community leaders say these nuanced identities are once again being overlooked and oversimplified as the public focuses on new waves of immigration.

Part of the reason may be that Australia still considers itself a white nation, said Kate Bagnall, a historian at the University of Wollongong. "That's a really powerful image that's really difficult to shift," she said.

And with the Australian government fending off allegations of political interference from the Chinese government, some worry this ignorance of history will spur an anti-Chinese backlash.

"There are some of us in the community who feel this is shades of the White Australia Policy coming back again," said Ms. Lowe Kelley, a former president of the Chinese Heritage Association.

She added that when she reads news singling out Chinese political donations and investment, she worries that it will filter down: "What happens is it tars the whole of the Chinese community."

Of the many Chinese-Australian historical organizations she has been involved with, none receive funding from the Chinese government, she said.

Others involved in the revival of Chinese-Australian history also said they steer clear of Chinese officialdom.

Mark Wang, the deputy chairman of the Museum of Chinese Australian History in Melbourne said the goal is to remain impartial, relying on state government funding, ticket sales and community donations.

"We don't want to be distorted by a political undercurrent," Mr. Wang said. "We're about Australian history. We're not about Chinese history."

For families closest to that history, the past is a bittersweet mystery that should never stop being reinterpreted and retold.

Mrs. Leanfore's son, Ken, 31 is a photographer. Tired of fielding questions about his unusual last name, he recently curated an exhibition using stories of Chinese-Australians with names that were Anglicized by immigration officers.

On a recent afternoon, in the family home her ancestors bought in 1928, Mrs. Leanfore sipped tea with her husband and son, as a pack of grandchildren chased each other through the house.

"None of them are pure Chinese," said Mrs. Leanfore, smiling. "But that's what the future is going to be."

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In Chinatown, Sound of the Future Is Mandarin

By KIRK SEMPLE

Published: October 21, 2009

He grew up playing in the narrow, crowded streets of Manhattan's Chinatown. He has lived and worked there for all his 61 years. But as Wee Wong walks the neighborhood these days, he cannot understand half the Chinese conversations he hears.

Cantonese, a dialect from southern China that has dominated the Chinatowns of North America for decades, is being rapidly swept aside by Mandarin, the national language of China and the lingua franca of most of the latest Chinese immigrants.

The change can be heard in the neighborhood's lively restaurants and solemn church services, in parks, street markets and language schools. It has been accelerated by Chinese-American parents, including many who speak Cantonese at home, as they press their children to learn Mandarin for the advantages it could bring as China's influence grows in the world.

But the eclipse of Cantonese — in New York, China and around the world — has become a challenge for older people who speak only that dialect and face increasing isolation unless they learn Mandarin or English. Though Cantonese and Mandarin share nearly all the same written characters, the pronunciations are vastly different; when spoken, Mandarin may be incomprehensible to a Cantonese speaker, and vice versa.

Mr. Wong, a retired sign maker who speaks English, can still get by with his Cantonese, which remains the preferred language in his circle of friends and in Chinatown's historic core. A bit defiantly, he said that if he enters a shop and finds the staff does not speak his dialect, "I go to another store."

Like many others, however, he is resigned to the likelihood that Cantonese — and the people who speak it — will soon become just another facet of a polyglot neighborhood. "In 10 years," Mr. Wong said, "it will be totally different."

With Mandarin's ascent has come a realignment of power in Chinese-American communities, where the recent immigrants are gaining economic and political clout, said Peter Kwong, a professor of Asian-American studies at Hunter College.

"The fact of the matter is that you have a whole generation switch, with very few people speaking only Cantonese," he said. The Cantonese-speaking populace, he added, "is not the player anymore."

The switch mirrors a sea change under way in China, where Mandarin, as the official language, is becoming the default tongue everywhere.

In North America, its rise also reflects a major shift in immigration. For much of the last century, most Chinese living in the United States and Canada traced their ancestry to a region in the Pearl River Delta that included the district of Taishan. They spoke the Taishanese dialect, which is derived from and somewhat similar to Cantonese.

Immigration reform in 1965 opened the door to a huge influx of Cantonese speakers from Hong Kong, and Cantonese became the dominant tongue. But since the 1990s, the vast majority of new Chinese immigrants have come from mainland China, especially Fujian Province, and tend to speak Mandarin along with their regional dialects.

In New York, many Mandarin speakers have flocked to Sunset Park, Brooklyn, and Flushing, Queens, which now rivals Chinatown as a center of Chinese-American business and political might, as well as culture and cuisine. In Chinatown, most of the newer immigrants have settled outside the historic core west of the Bowery, clustering instead around East Broadway.

"I can't even order food on East Broadway," said Jan Lee, 44, a furniture designer who has lived all his life in Chinatown and speaks Cantonese. "They don't speak English; I don't speak Mandarin. I'm just as lost as everyone else."

Now Mandarin is pushing into Chinatown's heart.

For most of the 100 years that the New York Chinese School, on Mott Street, has offered language classes, nearly all have taught Cantonese. Last year, the numbers of Cantonese and Mandarin classes were roughly equal. And this year, Mandarin classes outnumber Cantonese three to one, even though most students are from homes where Cantonese is spoken, said the principal, Kin S. Wong.

Some Cantonese-speaking parents are deciding it is more important to point their children toward the future than the past — their family's native dialect — even if that leaves them unable to communicate well with relatives in China.

"I figure if they have to acquire a language, I wanted them to have Mandarin because it makes it easier when they go into the workplace," said Jennifer Ng, whose 5-year-old daughter studies Mandarin at the language school of the Church of the Transfiguration, a Roman Catholic parish on Mott Street where nearly half the classes are devoted to Mandarin. Her 8-year-old son takes Cantonese, but only because there is no English-speaking Mandarin teacher for his age group.

"Can I tell you the truth?" she said. "They hate it! But it's important for the future." Until recently, Sunday Masses at Transfiguration were said in Cantonese. The church now offers two in Mandarin and only one in Cantonese. And as the arrivals from mainland China become old-timers, "we are beginning to have Mandarin funerals," said the Rev. Raymond Nobiletti, the Cantonese-speaking pastor.

At the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, which has been the unofficial government of Chinatown for generations and conducts its business in Cantonese, the president, Justin Yu, said he is the first whose mother tongue is Mandarin to lead the 126-year-old organization. Though he has been taking Cantonese lessons in order to keep up at association meetings, his pronunciation is sometimes a source of hilarity for his colleagues, he said.

"No matter what," he added, laughing, "you have to admire my courage."

But even his association is being surpassed in influence by Fujianese organizations, said Professor Kwong of Hunter College.

Longtime residents seem less threatened than wistful. Though he is known around Chinatown for what he calls his "legendarily bad" Cantonese, Paul Lee, 59, said it pained him that the dialect was disappearing from the place where his family has lived for more than a century.

"It may be a dying language," he acknowledged. "I just hate to say that."

But he pointed out that the changes were a natural part of an evolving immigrant neighborhood: Just as Cantonese sidelined Taishanese, so, too, is Mandarin replacing Cantonese.

Mr. Wong, the principal of the New York Chinese School, said he had tried to adjust to the subtle shifts during his 40 years in Chinatown. When he arrived in 1969, he walked into a coffee shop and placed his order in Cantonese. Other patrons looked at him oddly.

"They said, 'Where you from?' " he recalled. " 'Why you speak Cantonese?' " They were from Taishan, he said, so he switched to Taishanese and everyone was happy.

"And now I speak Mandarin better than Cantonese," he added with a chuckle. "So, Chinatown — it's always changing."