Intercultural Marriage, Legal Status and Social Belonging in China

Chinese-African Couples and Families in Guangzhou

vorgelegt von

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Statutory Declaration

I, Yang ZHOU, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

Cologne, 20th March, 2017.

Yang ZHOU

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Köln, den 20. März 2017.

Yang ZHOU

For my family

ABSTRACT

Guangzhou, as a long-time center of business, attracts diverse African migrants that widely influence culture, religious practices, language as well as foreign policy and administration. A noticeable feature of this migration pattern is the emergence of Chinese-African marriages and partnerships and their resulting children. These families face constraints under the 'Exit and Entry Administration Law', the *hukou* (household registration/户口) system and other administrative measures, which can lead to an irregular or second-class status of Chinese-African couples and their children.

This thesis provides insights into Chinese-African couples' personal lives; marriage or partnership choices; economic conditions and employment; cultural, value and gender differences within families; different opinions on child-rearing; and positive and negative aspects of relationships with in-laws, relatives, and friends. Furthermore, the thesis explores Chinese traders', co-workers', and neighbors' attitudes towards Africans and Africans' attitudes towards Chinese. The study deals with the obstacles to legal status and social belonging that Chinese-African couples encounter and reviews the role of cultural and religious differences in their social relationships.

Even if Chinese partners have lived in Guangzhou for several years, as members of the floating population (*liudongrenkou*/流动人口), they are not granted equal rights or official residency under the *hukou* system, and their extended family members in rural villages or towns are not able to give them financial or social support. These Chinese partners are outsiders in Guangzhou, where they live and work, as well as outsiders in the hometowns where they have no desire to return to. Their African partners are considered part of the foreign 'floating population' by the Guangzhou administration. They face difficulties with regularizing their stay, and as non-citizens have limited or no access to social security. Chinese partners have to find ways to help African partners to deal with status issues and cultural differences so as to adapt to Chinese society. In cases where Chinese-African couples have children, the latter often find it hardto build self-confidence under conditions of prejudice. Children whose Chinese and African parents are not married are not eligible for *hukou* status, and will have difficulties attending school. However, Chinese and African partners try to find support from religious groups, business communities or other Chinese-African families in order to gain a sense of belonging and to help their children. It can be seen that the majority of Chinese-African couples do not attain their shared goal of socioeconomic upward mobility.

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

ACRONYMS

CCG	Center for China and Globalization
CCPIT	China Council for the Promotion of International Trade
CZGOPRC	Guangzhou Committee of Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
DESASD	Department of Economic and Social Affairs Statistics Division, UN
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
GDFAO	Foreign Affair Office of People's Government of Guangdong Province
GDPAFFC	Guangdong Province for Friendship with Foreign Countries
IIO	International Immigration Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fond
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MOFCOM	Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China Special Commissioner's Office in Guangzhou
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NHFPC	National Health and Family Planning Commission of the People's Republic of China
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNPF	United Nations Population Fund
WTO	World Trade Organization

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 The Story of Lan and Zach

Lan, a woman in her mid-30s, comes from a small village in Hebei Province and worked in Guangzhou for nearly ten years[1]. She separated from her Nigerian husband Zach and moved back to her hometown at the end of 2015. They had no children. Later, she met her Chinese boyfriend, a former classmate, and started afresh. As I remember, it was on a hot night of the year 2014 that she called me in sadness.

> I went to Jinshazhou[2] this morning. An African friend gave me a letter from Zach. I am so tired, and wonder if I could meet you at my place to discuss something with you. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

Lan lived in a humid 18-sqm^2 apartment located in an 'urban village' of the Xiatang residential community, furnished with abed, a messy desk, an old TV, a broken wardrobe, and a small window which let in very little sunlight. During the long, hot summer in Guangzhou, her room smelled musty. The Xiatang residential community is located in the Dengfeng Subdistrict in the Yuexiu District of Guangzhou. Many Middle Eastern and African traders, Chinese domestic migrants, Chinese ethnic minorities and some 'urban villagers' live and work there (Niu 2015). The so-called 'urban villages'—a result of Guangzhou's recent urbanization—are a small number of undeveloped and disorganized areas in the city surrounded by high buildings and modern facilities. The well-known African urban village is situated in the Xiatang community near the Yueyang Trade Market, which also partly belongs to the so-called 'Chocolate City,' as the Chinese call it. Native residents of the urban villages are called 'urban villagers'. As they have not come to an agreement with the local government for compensation and resettlement, they still occupy the densely clustered houses in the urban villages. They can rent out their houses to any one and decide on the rental price. The urban village appears much more dilapidated compared to its surrounding area, and rental prices in the urban villages (ranging from 500 to 3000 RMB, equivalent to 65 to 400 Euro per month) are much cheaper than in other regions in Guangzhou. Some villagers live outside the urban village and work within it. The reasons are two-fold. Firstly, with profits from the leases, or other income, they can afford a new house in a better area. Secondly, more and more foreign migrants are gathering in the urban villages for business. As villagers explained, these foreign traders' habits, customs and daily lives are different from theirs. For example, Chinese prefer to go to bed early and get up early, while foreign traders enjoy a lively nightlife and often get

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[1]To protect individual privacy, pseudonyms are used for all interviewees in this thesis.
[2]A small island located in the west of Guangzhou, as a connection between Guangzhou and Foshan, which attracts lots of Africans due to cheap rent and relatively lax management.

up late.

Lan showed me an envelope with documents authenticating her marriage in Nigeria in 2012 signed by a lawyer. Zach wanted Lan to go to the Nigerian embassy in Beijing to obtain a marriage certificate and help him to apply for a reentry visa so that he could travel back to Guangzhou. I asked her about the documentation process to assure that their marriage was legal.

> These are copies. I don't know whether they are valid for certification in Beijing…Zach submitted documents to the Chinese embassy in Lagos on the day after the marriage ceremony, after travelling from his hometown. After I left Nigeria, Zach called me to say thathehad received certification from the Chinese embassy in Nigeria, and then he came back to Guangzhou with a visitors [F] visa[4]...After that, we lived together and prepared documents to obtain a family reunion visa [Q visa in 2013]. You would never have thought things could change so quickly. The police phoned me to say I must go to the police station and pay the 5000 RMB for overstaying for Zach. I was shocked and afraid…I prompted him several times to renew his visa on time, and he said he would do it ...When I went to the police station, I found out he had overstayed for one month. It was so stupid that he did not abide by the law, [and] just thought if we paid the fine, everything would be ok, because we were married. The policeman told me that I had to purchase a ticket to send Zach back to his hometown. If he wanted to come back to Guangzhou, he needed to apply for a new visa again...I did not understand the law before, you know. I searched on the Internet, deportation was a serious matter and he might not get a new visa within five years…I have been waiting for him for one year already, you know one year, there were lots of problems he should have told me about earlier....If he wants me to go to Beijing, he should give me the original documents…He neither believes me nor understands the law. If he doesn't have the certificate from the Chinese embassy, why didn't he tell me earlier, [instead of] just causing trouble? (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

A few days later, Lan met me at a restaurant and I asked her whether she had made the decision of going to Beijing. She said,

> I don't want to go to Beijing. I need to go to my hometown to take my *hukou*[5] and ask the local police to give me a single status certification and then go to Beijing to apply for a marriage certificate. These trips cost a lot. The officials may deny our application because of Zach's previous overstaying…When I was in Nigeria, I did not submit the single status certificate to the Chinese embassy,[and] my *hukou* is still registered as an unmarried status. Did Zach get our marriage certificate legally? I don't know what has really happened to Zach. Maybe he has another wife in Nigeria. I haven't seen him for a long time and he just calls me when he gets into trouble. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

In the months after Zach was deported back to Nigeria, he had called Lan once a week and told her to send some goods to Lagos so that he could earn some money and prepare to return to China. But over time, he phoned Lan less and less frequently. Lan received money from

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[4] See chapter 6 Legal Regulations for International and Internal Migrants
[5] See chapter 6 Legal Regulations for International and Internal Migrants

Zach only twice, and it was just 200 dollars—not enough to balance her expenditures of buying and transporting goods to Nigeria. Still, she felt satisfied with her husband's hard work. "He was just not that lucky, maybe later things will be better," Lan once said with tears in her eyes. However, after over one year of separation, Lan seemed frustrated. I encouraged her to think about their happy times, but she sighed, saying,

> As a Catholic, I should have supported my husband unconditionally. But wait for him for five years? I don't know…I went to his hometown for the wedding ceremony only to find that his family was so poor, so poor that you could not imagine. I don't want to go to his hometown again…He was born in a rural area and lacks money like me. There is no electricity, no clean water, and no furniture in his room, not even a bed. I slept on the floor with a mat. It was a one-hour walk to buy drinking water there…I did not understand their dialect, few people spoke with me…Just five people participated in the wedding. My parents did not come. Zach only has a brother…He looked much happier than Zach. I was very happy that day. I wore a wedding dress, and they congratulated me on being a bride... We had some happy times when we lived together. But now I'm changing my mind. I need to survive. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

Several times I accompanied Lan to transport goods to her customers. She sold her products at cost, about which I was confused. She explained why, which later became a reason for her breakup with Zach:

> He left me a heavy debt of 100,000 RMB...I cannot borrow money from my parents. They live in a rural area, also need money in their old age...The market is bleak. It's hard for anyone to survive in Guangzhou. Zach is poor at business. He should just stay in his country…I cannot imagine how hard it's going to be if we have a child. Much more money will be spent, given that I don't have a Guangzhou *hukou*, and cannot enjoy civic rights like other local citizens. Maybe I don't love him enough. I cannot tolerate the living conditions in his hometown. No friends, no relatives there. Those young girls might dream about marrying foreigners, but I am in my mid-30s. I am more realistic than when I was young…I don't want to go to Beijing. We are done, no future. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

Lan also shared that another factor for the breakup was that her parents did not accept her marriage with Zach, not just because of language barriers, but also because of Zack's unstable income and undocumented status.

> Once I brought Zach to my hometown. My parents and relatives know nothing of English, and depended on gestures to communicate with him. Zach speaks poor Chinese. Mostly, they just watched each other, smiling. We stayed 4 days before we left. After that he never phoned my parents…They thought I made a hasty decision and did not take future pressures into consideration. [They] did not participate in our wedding in Guangzhou. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

In fact, Lan's parents told others that Lan remained single because she was busy with work in Guangzhou. So when she separated with Zach and then came back home to marry her new boyfriend in 2016, none of her relatives knew that it was her second marriage. Even her husband was kept in the dark.

At the end of 2014, Lan had to close her clothing store, because business was so bad that she did not make enough money to pay for the rent and deposit for the next year. The market manager asked her to leave by the end of the contract. Worse still, creditors all came to her for the debt that Zach had left behind. Lan made a deal with the creditors that they could take goods from her store as a liability payment, and then she would pay back the remaining debt little by little. She had little money for her daily needs, since the debt had consumed most of her savings and she had not yet found a new job. After closing the store in October 2014, Lan quickly went to a face-to-face interview at many employment agencies. She worked as a shop assistant in Xiaobei until November 2015, paid back all her debts and went back to her hometown. Later she met her current Chinese partner, Jie, and sent me the following messages:

> I will never tell Jie that I once married an African. You see, my *hukou* is still registered as single…I don't want to remember it at all. I sent lots of goods to him [Zach] for free last year. That cost a lot, I wanted to help him…We were husband and wife. I betrayed [our marriage oath]. So I wanted to make it up to him. I have paid the price and now we are even…We [Jie and I] plan to marry in 2016. A new life…I will never contact him [Zach]. (December 2015, translated from Chinese)

The case of Lan and Zach shows that economic and legal factors in Chinese-foreign marriages impact the stability and longevity of the relationship, which may lead to a divorce. Both disadvantaged individuals share structural constraints and marginalization: the Chinese migrant woman comes from an underdeveloped region in China, and encounters multiple obstacles due to the Chinese special resident registry system (*hukou*). At the same time, the African spouse is a non-citizen, often with undocumented status. Due to the scarcity of capital, informal economic conditions, and the shortage of job and business opportunities, many Africans can only manage marginal businesses under Chinese laws (Lan 2015). Moreover, the export trades in Xiaobei and Sanyuanli witnessed a recent downturn, which reduced the income of Chinese-foreign families, many of which were heavily dependent on foreign trade. As Lan said, Zach planned to open a store in Guangzhou and then stores in other regions. If everything had gone as planned, they could have lived in a better residential community in a different area. If they were to have children, the children would be eligible for dual citizenship, and might have the opportunity to study in developed countries. The parents could later reunite with their children. However, the reality is that China recognizes only one nationality, and Chinese-African transnational business dreams and family strategies did not help Lan and Zach to integrate into Chinese society, and achieve the socioeconomic status they had hoped for (Lan 2015). Additionally, due to language barriers, different values, undocumented status and economic hardship, African spouses/partners like Zach tend to have discordant relationships with their parents-in-law and Chinese relatives, and their Chinese spouses or partners meet the same problems with their African in-laws. Although, Lan faced

family and social pressure, Zach's influence led her to convert to Catholicism, which helped her to deal with or accept reality, and also gave her religious friends with whom she can share and exchange life experiences, and gain a sense of belonging. Although the case of Lan and Zach is only one example, it demonstrates the key features of Chinese-African marriages and partnerships in China and the daily barriers currently encountered in certain social environments.

1.2 Research Questions and Argument

1.2.1 Research Questions

Africans seem to find it hard to adapt to living in Guangzhou in many respects. The language and cultural barriers are big problems, but the situation seems more complex than that. During the interviews, more and more questions arose. Why istheChinese administration stricter on Africans than any other foreigners? Why do Africans still prefer to stay in Guangzhou under such conditions? Why do most Africans tend to come to Guangzhou for business rather than other purposes? Why do only fewAfricans spend time learning Chinese or local cultural norms in order to better adapt? Whydo Africans choose to marry Chinese who belong to the domestic 'floating population' under the constraints of *hukou* in Guangzhou, who lack social networks and financial capital, and who cannot easily help Africans gain legal status? Why do Africans live with Chinese and have children but do not marry? Why do Africans who already have Chinese-African children still not prepare to live in China for a long time? Why do Chinese women choose to live with African partners rather than locals or other domestic migrants in Guangzhou? Why do Chinese obey their African partners' demands to convert to certain religions rather than Africans complying with Chinese partners' demands? Why are some Chinese-African children bright and cheerful, and deal positively with stereotypes, while others react negatively to social conditions? Why do some couples have good relationships with parents-in-law and relatives, while others are in conflict with kin? Why are some couples satisfied with life and work, and have wide social networks while other couples do not? Why are many couples who are focused on business not able to achieve upward mobility?

   All of these questions have graduallybeenanswered by interviews conducted over a long period of time with Chinese-African couples, parents-in-law, relatives, friends, neighbors, co-workers and others associated with these couples. Particularly, important concepts like legal status and social belonging are closely connected with research on Chinese-African marriage and partnership, and need to be addressed here.

1.2.2 Legal Status and Social Belonging

1.2.2.1 Legal Status

Linton (1936) defined status simply as a position within a social system. Status refers to the position a person occupies in society, whereas the closely linked notion of role refers to the practices expected of people of a certain status. Every position or status in society carries a set of expected behavioral patterns. Every society and every group has many such status positions and every individual occupies a specific position in each of the groups to which he belongs. Each of these social positions, with the rights and duties it entails, is a status (Kelly & Stein 2011). Status can be divided into two different categories: ascribed status and achieved status. An ascribed status is generally permanent, such as gender, race, or age, and is assigned at birth and remains static throughout an individual's life. An achieved status is one that is chosen or gained, acquired through one's own efforts as a result of the attainment of knowledge, ability, or skill or through perseverance.

Linton defines a role as the dynamic or behavioral aspects of status. Roles are the actions expected from a particular status. Roles provide social life with order and predictability.

Overall, status is a structural phenomenon and role is a behavioral phenomenon; status is a concept of sociology, role is a concept of social psychology; status depends on social structure, role relies on the personalities and capabilities of individuals. People occupy a status, but they play roles.

In this dissertation, legal status is defined under the Chinese law system, and Africans with undocumented status are in an illegal position. Because traditional immigrant countries in Europe and North America have increased restrictions on immigration and enforce immigration policy strictly, migrants look for countries where immigration requirements are more loosely controlled (Lan 2015). Haugen (2012) found that some visa agencies encourage Africans to maintain unrealistic expectations when moving to China for business. Earlier African traders sometimes involuntarily overstayed visas, but overstaying has since become a functional choice for Africans who encounter economic problems but do not want to go back their countries empty handed. Such individuals hide in African communities and work during the night, which can reduce the risks of having their visas checked. Quite a few undocumented Africans earn lots of money while overstaying. In November 2007, the policemen in Baiyun district raided Chentian Village and discovered a number of undocumented Africans who they deported (Fang & Liang 2010). Huang and Ning (2008) studied foreign casual laborers or unemployed individuals who seemed to be involved in illegal practices which lead to social problems. Africans accounted for 77.9% of foreign

casual labor and unemployment in Guangzhou, and some Africans are involved in criminal activity, or working without permits. A Ugandan male trader (aged over 30 years old) said,

> I must extend the visa in Hong Kong. I am not sure. Maybe next time [officials] may not give me visa. You see, I did not have time. I find goods for my customers. No goods, no money. I use money to come here, and everything eats money. Guangzhou is not good to our Nigerians. I got a six-month visa before, [when] it was a good time to make money. Now I do not want to open this store. Rental is too high. I will leave here. Vietnam is good, and my friend went there. I will see. (August 2014)

When we discussed the reports of overstaying, he said,

> Who knows? Maybe, they did not have money to go back. The [air] tickets are expensive. Or some want to stay here longer, [and] Guangzhou can give them a long time visa. Why not? We just [come here to] do business. It is not bad. If they have visa, no one will do that [overstay]. You see, this is a good way. (August 2014)

Due to the expiration of visas, some Africans move to rural places such as Huangqi in the Foshan area (Niu 2015), where landlords only care about quick profits. Or their friends will offer temporary shelter, or they lodge in warehouses where they sleep in the morning and work at night without registration of residence or work permits. The difficult legal situation of many African traders causes them to be in a transient state, even if they intend to stay longer.

Government administration of foreigners and Chinese is reflective of state requirements on legal status. Subject to the Entry and Exit Administration Law (*zhonghuarenmingongheguo churujingguanlifa*/中华人民共和国出入境管理法) and other regulations, Africans' legal statuses are questioned widely. Concurrently, Africans' Chinese spouses or partners are subjected to the *hukou* system. Although they are living and working in Guangzhou as ordinary Chinese citizens, they have limited social security without Guangzhou *hukou*. In other words, their legal status does not offer them equal treatment. Like their Chinese parents, Chinese-African children are restricted by *hukou*. Some children born out of wedlock or as a second child before the end of the one-child policy in 2016, need to find a way to apply for *hukou*, or may find themselves without documented status in China. Theoretically they are Chinese citizens, because one of their parents is Chinese and they were born in China, and therefore should share the same rights and responsibilities as other Chinese. But it is difficult for them to apply for *hukou* and attend public schools for free. If they are born outside of marriage, they need a paternity test to apply for *hukou*, while their African fathers may have left China. If they were born as a second child before 2016, they must pay a fine in order to attain the *hukou* of their Chinese parent, due to China's one-child policy which was amended in 2016. One could say that Chinese and Chinese-African children are mainly impacted by *hukou* in Guangzhou, as social equality and a sense of social belonging are connected with Guangzhou *hukou*.

1.2.2.2 Social Belonging

Belonging has long been studied in psychology. It is the desire for social bonds and connections with others, the need for affection between people (Murray 1938), and the need for positive feedback from others (Rogers 1951). Although belonging can be defined in different ways, belongingness (Baumeister & Leary 1995; Goodenow 1993; Maslow 1954) is always connected to motivations for affiliation (McClelland 1987) and the need for relatedness (Deci & Ryan 1991; Ryan 1993; Vallerand 1997). Vallerand (1997: 300) states that the requirement of relatedness "involves feeling connected (or feeling that one belongs in a social milieu)". The important characteristic of belonging is the demand of regular contact, as well as the stability, continuity, positivity and pleasure perception of interpersonal relationships and emotional concern, within the context of desired relationships rather than among strangers (Baumeister & Leary 1995). Thus, a sense of belonging can be recognized as an element of social connectedness and met by an interpersonal tie marked by "stability, affective concern, and continuation into the foreseeable future" (Baumeister & Leary 1995: 500).

When the need for belonging has been satisfied, the individual lacks driven motivation to demand more feelings. When this need has not been met, the opposite is true. Importantly, the need for belonging differs between individuals. As Kelly (2001) points out, some people are able to meet needs of belonging through few or simple social contacts, while others meet requirements of belonging through deeper and stronger interpersonal contacts. When individuals fail to attain belongingness, they experience a sense of social loneliness, isolation and alienation.

A variety of human behaviors, cognitive, motivational processes, and emotions play a role in creating a sense of belonging. Fulfillment of the demands of belonging creates positive emotions such as happiness and a sense of wellbeing, whereas a deficiency may trigger negative emotions such as depression, anxiety, stress, jealousy, extreme loneliness or alienation. Many negative behavioral, psychological, and social outcomes, including mental illness, criminal tendencies, and social isolation are results of a lack of sense of belonging. Maslow (1968) points out that human being's deepest emotional needs for belonging stem from the need to be loved and respected.

Davis (2006) describes the political sense of belonging used to construct particular collectivities, which are closely connected to ideologies which draw categorical boundaries to divide 'us' and 'them', and which use political power to maintain and define belonging within community boundaries. Normally politics of belonging are related to migrant rights, resident rights, workers' rights, and even urban planning rights. In the context of political belonging, in the case of pluralist societies, common values and destiny, responsibilities, loyalty and

solidarity are requisite to membership.

In the modern world, belonging is diversified. People may belong to multiple countries, change belonging in different life stages, obtain multi-status in various social situations, and find sense of belonging with families, ethnic groups, nation-states, religious affiliation and so on (Pfaff-Czarnecka 2011:210).

In this dissertation, belonging is present in many aspects of Chinese-African couples' lives, and diverse belongings may overlap and intersect with each other, such as belonging to family, household, ethnic-group, nation-state, religion, secular organization, workplace and so on. But unlike former migration-related research concentrating on forging collective identities of immigrants, I propose a certain notion of belonging, where either Chinese or African spouses/partners attempt to create emotional attachment and produce feelings of "at-homeness" or "at home" (Davis 2006:197; see also Castillo 2015a), as well as feelings of security or safety (Ignatieff 2001). This understanding touches on the most significant characteristics of belonging: "emotional investments, affective bonds, and desire for attachment" (Pfaff-Czarnecka & Toffin 2011: xiii). Furthermore, "it [belonging] is inward-oriented (inside-out-orientation): it starts off from subjects as focal points or knots, located at junctions or intersections of relational ties" (Pfaff-Czarnecka & Toffin 2011: xvi). Belonging in this sense also stresses cultural models, norms of sharing, networks, practices and routines, in order to establish permanent solidarity, shared histories and future aspirations, within family, village, neighborhood, religious community or ethnic group (Toffin & Pfaff-Czarnecka 2014: 3). In particular, Africans can be seen as one minority group different from the Chinese, but they can also be classified into different smaller minority groups based on language, religion, values, experiences and lifestyles. Africans, as foreigners, must produce various ways of belonging to avoid "alienation and rootlessness" (Pfaff Czarnecka & Toffin 2011: xiv). For Africans, "not belonging" (Pfaff-Czarnecka & Toffin 2011: xxvi) means not adapting to Chinese institutions, as well as not finding membership in African communities, or not feeling a sense of belonging, or experiencing a reduced sense of shared fate or purpose with others.

Due to administrative constraints and social barriers, many Africans are unable to produce feelings of belonging or 'at homeness' in Guangzhou, and strongly rely on African communities, or religious groups. Although, a few have lived in Guangzhou for a long time, most seem to be disinterested in permanent residence in China, and aspire to immigrate to developed countries (Haugen 2012, 2013). However, a few were interested in gaining Chinese citizenship. Generally, Africans preferred belonging to their religious groups rather than to Chinese society. Religious affiliation highlighted as a sense of belonging to a common whole, where all members are unified by devotional rituals, or by regularly frequenting sacred sites, or by sharing life experiences, or by common aspiration. Therefore, I focus on African

migrants' aim to develop a sense of belonging through different strategies, such as organizing communities, joining churches, managing families in China and so on. African migrants forge certain statuses in different contexts and play roles in different organizations in order to face language barriers, discrimination, and poverty in their host countries (Gill 2010). Usually migrants in transnational circuits fail to feel safe, loved, and respected and are at risk of loneliness, while Africans try to produce a 'home' on their journey (Castillo 2015a: 3). There may be physical or non-physical spaces or feelings, which can yet lead African migrants to experience positive emotions and attain psychological and physical satisfaction. It cannot be denied that Chinese administration impacts the legal status of Africans, but China is not a country particularly focused on immigration (Niu 2015). No more than 8000 foreigners are registered in China with a Permanent Residence Permit (Article1 2012)[6], and China rarely grants citizenship to African migrants. Overall, Africans achieve belonging in Guangzhou by marital relationship, kinship, friendship, broad social networks, communities, and religious groups, instead of via unachievable political belonging, civic rights, or cultural forms (see Pfaff-Czarnecka 2013: 6).

Africans' Chinese spouses or partners obviously belong to China, and are Chinese citizens. As insiders, they share common identity markers, life experience, knowledge and meaning with other Chinese, and take for granted things that other Chinese hold as given in the social sphere. They are granted different rights than their immigrant African spouses or partners. However, under the decentralized institutional system (*hukou*), these Chinese spouses or partners are classified into social and economic positions different from Guangzhou people by the Guangzhou *hukou* system, and occupy a secondary legal status that affects social class, resource allocation, interest distribution and welfare services. While the current trend towards greater market-oriented mobility stimulates opportunities for social mobility and change in status (Lu 2008), but the current *hukou* system still disables equal welfare services in certain places. Although these women have lived in Guangzhou for many years, they are unable to meet the requirements of Guangzhou *hukou* and receive fair social services. They have a sense of belonging as Chinese, which creates a social boundary that divides them from foreigners. But the Guangzhou administration also creates a social boundary that excludes these Chinese spouses or partners from the sphere of local permanent residents.

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[6]'Waiguoren zai Zhongguo Yongjiu Juliu Xiangshou Youguan Daiyu de Banfa.2012. Zhongguozhongyangzuzhibu, renliziyuanbaozhangbu,gonganbu deng 25bumen guanyu yinfa <waiguoren zai Zhongguo yongjiu juliu xiangshou youduan daiyu de banfan>de tongzhi'. [Circular of 25 Authorities Including the Organization Department of the Central Committee of Communist Party of China, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and the Ministry of Public Security on Printing and Distributing the Measures for Entitlements of Foreigners with Permanent Residence in China. 'In principle, foreigners may enjoy the same rights and bear the same obligations as the Chinese citizens except for political rights and the rights and obligation as otherwise specified by laws and regulations'].

1.2.3 Argument

Several researchers have argued that, through marriage, migrants can adapt to host countries and gain favorable social resources (Fleischer 2012). In a transnational context, Africans could be seen as trans-migrants or trans-traders due to their constant mobility and relationships spanning multiple countries. When Africans migrate to China, they might gain favorable social capital by marrying Chinese citizens. At the same time, many Chinese-African couples face difficulties to attain socioeconomic upward mobility.

Firstly, transnational mobility generates a growing number of Chinese-African romantic relationships that are constrained by Chinese family structures and governance systems. The most influential regulations impacting Chinese-African families are the 'Exit and Entry Administration Law', and the *hukou* (户口) registry systems which bring about problems of legal status and social belonging for these families.

Secondly, Guangdong province contains three Special Economic Zones, which invite a large number of foreign investments, in turn attracting a huge number of domestic migrants, also known as 'floating population' (*liudongrenkou* /流动人口) who seek employment. As the capital of Guangdong province, and as one of the four biggest metropolitan cities in China, Guangzhou has a 'floating population' of millions—numbering 8.37 million individuals in 2013—so that the local government has had to establish a much stricter *hukou* system than in other cities, for reasons of population management, resource allocation and interest distribution (Lu 2008). Although some efforts have been made in Guangzhou, and the social security system for both locals and immigrants seems to be moving towards standardization, differentiation of citizenship still exists, creating increasing instability as the mobile population continues to grow. Through my fieldwork, I found that the majority of these Chinese partners have lived in Guangzhou for several years but do not meet the requirements of Guangzhou *hukou*. As the rural 'floating population' rather than urban residents, they are ineligible for local social benefits.

Their African partners are considered members of the foreign 'floating population' by the Chinese administration. Most African traders and migrants are issued short-term visas, as they are generally seen as temporary visitors or transient traders rather than long-term residents in China (Niu 2015). As transient migrants and non-citizens they are also largely cut off from social support systems. Castillo describes Africans' living strategies as dwelling on the move in Guangzhou (2015). They depend on mobile and unstable journeys to gain profits by frequently going back and forth between China and Africa for business. Their mobility places them at risk of structural marginalization in China (Lan 2015).

The majority of Chinese-African children born from these intercultural marriages only hold the *hukou* of their mothers' place of birth. In other words, they are outsiders like their parents

and it is hard for them to access local resources, social welfare and attend public school with free tuition.

Thirdly, under China's current immigration policy, it is possible for foreigners to rely on the Chinese partners to avoid language and documentation barriers when applying for and obtaining a family reunion (Q) visa (valid for over 180 days) or working permit and accessing social benefits. But marrying a Chinese partner does not guarantee foreigners a Chinese permanent residence card. In my fieldwork, only one African respondent had attempted to apply for permanent residence. Very few Africans spouses/partners met the requirements of a family reunion visa, and many African partners easily extended their short-term visas with the help of their Chinese partners. For undocumented Africans, marrying or cohabiting with a Chinese partner may provide a way to hide in China, but it does not automatically make their stay legal (Lan 2015). Although it seems difficult for Africans to attain permanent or long-term resident status, they are able to depend on Chinese partners' language skills and Chinese identity to purchase cheap goods, rent shops, manage restaurants, collect commercial information, and travel to other places for economic gain during short periods of stay in China (Lan 2015).

Although some Africans and Chinese have long-term partnerships, it does not mean that Africans plan to live in China in the future (Mathews 2015). Africans frequently move between China and other countries to conduct business, which leads others to believe that Africans neither really understand nor adapt well to Chinese society. Also, some think such marriages are merely a practical strategy Africans use to stay in China.

Fourthly, Chinese-African partners and their children not only encounter problems of legal status, but must also seek strategies to deal with various tensions and to gain a sense of belonging in China. These couples must negotiate cultural, religious, value, gender power and child education differences within their families; manage language, kinship and value conflicts with in-laws; confront negative or positive attitudes towards Chinese-African relationships from the wider society; cope with trade competition among Chinese and African traders; and attempt to gain belonging through religious groups, national and business associations and so on.

These processes of gaining legal status, finding social belonging, and cultural interaction highlight that transnational marriage is not easy in the Chinese context. Chinese migrants need to resolve their second-class status under *hukou* system, and in the meantime help their African spouses/partners and their children to adapt socially and culturally, gain access to social benefits, and acquire legal status. These two disadvantaged groups, due to their outsider or 'floating' status, are caught in structural marginalization in urban China. They are subjected to diverse regulations that impact their incomes, family lives, business opportunities and social relationships. Due to the shortage of official support and guidance, these couples have

difficulty in helping their children to face stereotypes and create belonging.

1.3 Research Methodology

This study is based on eight months of fieldwork (June-August 2013, July-November 2014) in Guangdong province and two months (May-June 2014) in Zhejiang province. It will pay more attention to Guangdong, and just provide an overview of African-Chinese couples in Zhejiang. Data was collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, unstructured interviews and archival research.

In Guangzhou, I chose to live in two of the most well known African settlements: the urban village in Xiatangxi community and commercial housing in Xiaobei. I was able to observe the daily life, interactions and cultural traditions of African respondents, who live in diverse neighborhoods along with Middle-Eastern traders, Chinese ethnic groups, Chinese labor migrants and other low-income people. I visited or observed African-Chinese families, restaurants, shops, cafés, schools, churches, mosques, housing agencies, the Foreign Service Center (*waiguorenfuwuzhongxin*/ 外 国 人 服 务 中 心), the Civil Affairs Department, courthouses, police stations, NGOs, African national associations and other provincial and town associations, and other related places.

Through participant observation and interviews with over 20 African-Chinese couples, over 30 relatives and many close friends, firsthand information was obtained about religious or cultural differences, kinship and friendship. These became the topics of everyday conversations in the field. Sometimes I would stay overnight at respondent's homes when their husbands were not there, helping the women with small tasks, participating in family parties and meeting parents-in-law, relatives, and friends. I also participated in some church or mosque rituals with the couples, which made it easier for me to hold in-depth discussions with many individuals, and get to know both sides of the intercultural relationship.

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with 40 Chinese and 10 Africans. I attempted to interview more Africans, but some conversations could not be finished in the work environment, or were disturbed by personal affairs. Sometimes, in accordance with the requirements of respondents, we met in restaurants or bars when they had free time. Sometimes they thought I was a reporter or Chinese official seeking information about illegal immigrants, and gave me false or misleading information, or did not show up to appointments with me. I also visited two registered churches and a few private churches, two mosques and housing agencies that hosted numerous Africans, so as to find potential informants. Through occasional conversation, I was able to collect background information, but found it difficult to gather full details.

My main fieldwork languages were English and Chinese. Though a number of languages

are widely used by Africans from different countries, including Fulani, Hausa, Lingala, Swahili, French, English, and Portuguese, I used only English and Chinese in my interviews, which are the languages intercultural couples most often use to communicate. My interviews confirmed that transnational families are bound to face social pressure and must solve internal and exterior conflicts by creating special communities and social connections. Moreover, through English and Chinese interviews, I was able to grasp the advantageous, as well as disadvantageous methods used by families and schools in the rearing and education of African-Chinese children. Because I mainly used English and Chinese in the interviews, I may have missed opportunities to record life stories of Africans who spoke less English. When expressing their opinions, Africans often unintentionally used French and Portuguese words or sentences, which forced me to guess their meaning from their facial expressions and gestures.

Some challenges arose in conducting research with African-Chinese families. Some of the respondents were secretive about their personal information and did not necessarily want to publicly disclose if they were married or simply cohabiting, due to attitudes towards unmarried couples living together. Moreover, they kept themselves out of trouble that could arise from their overstaying or owing long-term debts by limiting social interaction and adopting a cautious attitude towards others. A few African men thought that disclosing information about their family affairs might be damaging to their male authority and dignity. Additionally, African partners with illegal status sometime mistrusted their Chinese partners, worrying that partners might 'steal' businesses, stores, or houses which were temporarily registered under Chinese partners' names (Lan 2015).

Furthermore, I had to carefully manage my position as a friend of the Chinese women rather than the African men, and keep a safe distance from intercultural families' conflicts and different ideas on daily lives, religions and customs. The general atmosphere of social stigmatization and mistrust was a challenge during the fieldwork, but once trust had been established, I was able to move forward with productive research.

As a female, I was often asked whether or not I was single. When African men were made aware of my non-single status, they showed indifference or changed the topic, or repeated their requests for help finding a Chinese girlfriend. Sometimes, when I indirectly rejected them, they were unwilling to continue the conversation. I often had to change strategies and seek various ways around gender issues. The gender and racial discrimination came up as a foreign researcher more than once, and some Africans took out negative emotions on me, likely due to their difficult experiences in China.

The field felt like a seesaw battle of interpersonal relations, and endurance was required to manage the different roles to be played in various contexts. But it was also very interesting for me to think further about African-Chinese intercultural relationships and so called 'pragmatic

romances'.

1.4 Chapter Outline

At the beginning of this chapter, the description of one Chinese-African marriage and breakup revealed the main thrust of the dissertation. This case addresses the undocumented status of some Africans and the second-class status of their Chinese partners, and shows their dissatisfactory relationship with parents-in-law and difficult experiences in the wider society. Visa validity, language barriers, cultural differences, economic instability, gender inequalities, isolation, and Chinese traditional values (such as 'familistic orientation', 'other orientation', 'filial piety' and 'matching door' marriages, which will be explained in later chapters) make it difficult for African partners to deal with their legal status, family and social relationships, and sense of belonging. Their Chinese partners also have trouble balancing the relationship between their Chinese family and African partners. These couples are confronted with challenges both within and outside of their relationships.

Chapter 2 addresses concepts of marriage and migration and their interconnections, and reviews concepts of cross-border and transnational marriage or family. It also analyzes factors such as gender imbalance, marriage markets, cultural practices, personal experiences, children's education and institutional system. In particular, it outlines motives of socioeconomic upward mobility as well as cultural and gender differences that may lead to such marriages and family structures, and closely connect with Chinese-African marriages/partnerships. Such relationships often encounter social pressure, policy constraints, and stigmatization, or may even be considered fake marriages in some countries. Meanwhile, due to increasingly frequent migration, governments have to formulate new polices to manage migrants.

Chapter 3 outlines Chinese traditional marriage rites, the concept of 'matching-door,' changes in family structures with the opening of Chinese borders, the one-child policy, and cultural diversity in the context of the 21st century. This chapter includes statistical data on the growing number of Chinese-foreign marriages and divorces registered in mainland China, gender compositions of such marriages, comparison of such marriages between Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, and registered divorces in Guangzhou. Chinese-African marriages vary regionally, annually and by gender, reflect diverse personal choices, and reveal the changing conventions of marriage and family. Chinese-African marriages and partnerships impact social institutions and sociopolitical transformation in China. While there are numerous studies on southwestern and northeastern Chinese who marry other Asians and encounter legal constraints and social obstacles, much more research could be done on Chinese-African marriages and partnerships.

Chapter 4 describes Guangzhou as the starting point of an overseas road since 618BC, and its vital role in foreign trade in China both historically and as a 'Millennium Commercial City' of the 21st century. Guangzhou has attracted diverse foreigners to work, live, and freely practice religious and cultural beliefs, including many African traders. They are distributed in at least nine districts of Guangzhou, particularly concentrated in Xiaobei and Sanyuanli. The well-known 'chocolate city'—the foreign commercial markets in Xiaobei, in the Yuexiu district—shows that Africans tend to stay together in commercial and residential communities in order to support each other. African traders with a short-term visa tend to live in hotels, while others choose to live in commercial buildings, or poor residential environments in 'urban villages'. Another reason why Guangzhou attracts African traders is that there are many religious places of worship, such as the Sacred Heart Cathedral, the Huaisheng and Xianxian Mosques and so on.

Chapter 5 reviews the causes of mobility and historical migration flows in China, showing that there were nearly 247 million domestic migrants in China, making up 18% of the total population at the end of 2015 (NHFPC 2016). Most Chinese spouses/partners and interviewees living and working in Xiaobei and Sanyuanli are domestic migrants—also called the 'floating population'. Because Chinese interviewees had diverse experiences and reasons for migration, their personal backgrounds will be covered in various chapters in detail rather than listed in this chapter.

Moreover, this chapter uncovers theories and frameworks of transnational migration and transnationalism in order to understand African interviewees' transnational backgrounds. Through multinational business, Africans may create sustainable economic sources, opportunities for personal and familial upward mobility, and provide their children with a good education. Transnational business practices are thought to be a relatively safe way to adapt to host countries and maximize personal interests. However, in China, African transnational traders are considered transient migrants and belong to the foreign 'floating population', due to their frequent movement, and receive limited social support. In Guangzhou, Africans are of diverse ages, nationalities, and ethnicities. They occupy different niches of society, practice different religions and occupations, and speak different languages.

The 20 African spouses or partners interviewed are from 13 different countries. 45% of them are Christians or belong to related branches, while the rest are Muslims. The majority of Chinese spouses or partners had moved from rural areas to Guangzhou to make a living. They lack competitiveness in formal labor markets due to their limited education and work experience. Most of these couples engage in business and are connected via business relationships. Heavily depending on business, these two disadvantaged groups are constrained by China's administrative system. They run businesses in legal limbo and can rarely change their inferior and unstable conditions over short periods of time. Couples interviewed had

twelve Chinese-African children among them, ranging from the age of two months to thirteen years. These children were also constrained by official policy, religious choices, and social bias, and were in need of parental guidance and social support in navigating these challenges.

Chapter 6 lays out some important foreign policy regulations, and demonstrates that the Guangzhou authorities and local people are not fully prepared to interact with a sizable number of African migrants. Some African interviewees become irregular migrants by overstaying their visas unintentionally, while others break the law by conducting business without a business visa, or taking on jobs without a work permit, or living in China without registering their residence. They claim that they are not aware of laws, while law enforcement officials say they circulate relevant regulations on immigration websites and in African residential communities to make sure that laws are understood and followed. Due to the strict measures to curb the phenomenon of 'three illegals' (*sanfei*/三非: illegal entry, illegal stay, illegal work), both law enforcement officials and Africans hold negative attitudes towards each other. Middlemen like landlords find it awkward to cooperate with law enforcement officials and African tenants, because officials need their help to manage Africans while African tenants rely on landlords for information to know when visa checks may happen and other forms of protection. Even when living with Chinese partners, Africans may not be granted long-term family reunion visas. As domestic migrants, Chinese spouses/partners are constrained by their *hukou*. So both groups are marginalized in urban China as domestic and foreign 'floating populations'.

Chapter 7 discusses different ideas on marriage, culture, religion, gender power and raising children between Chinese and African spouses/partners. Most Chinese-African couples meet each other through business-related situations. Whether they have romantic feelings for each other or just consider practical aspects of the relationship, such relationships are far from traditional Chinese ideas of 'matching door' marriage and lead to family tensions. Couples also break up for various reasons, such as having to live apart, value differences, religious beliefs, gender conflicts, extramarital affairs, financial tensions, family pressure and negative social influences. Particularly, economic, gender power and cultural differences lead to conflicts over educating children. Moreover, Chinese-African children are usually raised in the Chinese context rather than under bicultural conditions, speak Chinese rather than any other foreign languages and have little knowledge about Africa. However, due to their African appearance, they still have to deal with prejudices.

Chapter 8 analyses the key concepts of family, household, and *fenjia* (分家) which are the basic social units at the foundation of Chinese society, and outlines concepts of *jiazuquxiang* (familistic orientation/家族取向), *yang* (养), *fengyang* (奉养), *xiaoshun* (filial piety/孝顺) and *ming* (fate/命) which impact parent-child relationships and Chinese-African

marriages/partnerships. With the one-child policy, intense workplace competition, social stress, and the high cost of living, parent-child relationships play a key role in helping individuals gain resources, decreasing social pressure, and sharing burdens. Some parents attempt to prevent their children from marrying Africans because foreign marriages entail unstable factors, such as the mobility of African partners, unpredictable economic conditions, language barriers and cultural differences. Only a few Africans have good relationships with their parents-in-law, by actively joining in family affairs and being able to communicate well. These positive practices allow African spouses/partners to quickly and easily adapt to local society and make them 'feel at home' (Castillo 2015).

Chapter 9 describes Chinese and African attitudes towards Chinese-African marriages and partnerships. 90% of the Chinese interviewees hold conservative attitudes about Chinese-African marriages/partnerships. They think neighborhood harmony and safe residential conditions are important for compatibility with African neighbors. Some landlords complain that it is difficult to balance relationships with African tenants and law enforcement officials. Some Chinese and African traders told me they were distrustful about cooperating with each other. Among African interviewees, most African men approve of marrying Chinese for romantic or practical reason, while female Africans seemed less supportive of Chinese-African relationships. As Chinese-African couples said, they not only face stereotypes in Chinese society, but also face hostile and jealous attitudes from Africans. However they are better placed to navigate trade competition with other Chinese and African traders.

Additionally, this chapter discusses the social networks of Chinese-African couples, in particular national associations, economic groups, religious communities and families supporting these couples in facing social obstacles and isolation. Some Chinese spouses/partners rarely communicate with other Chinese and prefer to join African groups for social support. They are therefore considered Africans by their family members or friends. However, African communities and networks are unable to support all African members due to their limited power and social resources, or due to an individual's illegal status.

Chapter 10 compares the situation of Chinese-African couples in China and Japanese-African couples in Japan. The main similarity is that Africans face legal constraints in both countries, and Japanese or Chinese partners must become business partners, guarantors, and translators to help Africans stay in host countries. But due to differences in economic development, gender relations, culture, social networks, personal experience, systems of law, employment restrictions, etc., Japanese-African marriages/partnerships differ from Chinese-African relationships. The most important difference is that for Africans in Japan, marrying a Japanese person is the best way to obtain permanent residence status, which includes a work permit, while it is hard for Africans to obtain a long-term visa or work

permit via marriage in China. The constraints of *hukou* in China mean that Chinese may have limited social welfare in urban centers, while Japanese partners have no equivalent constraints. As a result Japanese have more power in family and social affairs as well as child rearing than Chinese in relationships with Africans. This comparison shows the unique conditions of Chinese-African relationships and contributes to refining theories about marriage, culture and migration.

Chapter 11 provides a summary of the main findings of this thesis.

Chapter 2 Marriage, Culture and Migration: Literature Review

2.1 Marriage and Migration

Lu (2007:3) argues that marriage, as "a contract between two individuals based on love and commitment to each other is increasingly considered a norm". Furthermore, "a non-ethnocentric definition of marriage is a culturally sanctioned union between two or more people that establishes certain rights and obligations between the people, between them and their children, and between them and their in-laws" (Haviland, Prins, McBride & Walrath 2013: 208). In other words, marriage seems to be an interpersonal relationship within a cultural framework, and is normally based on a contract of rights and obligations between two individuals and their families.

Age and gender are important aspects of marriage (Balta & Steptoe 2000; Evans 2005; Tosaku 2010; Weadock 2004), and same-sex or transgender marriages generate new practices and challenge traditional marital regulations (Medicine 2002). Although the benefits of romantic relationships are diverse due to race, gender, social class, parental status, and type of union, partners and spouses tend to desire intimacy (Sassler 2010), which is beneficial to emotional and physical health and sense of wellbeing (Dush & Amato 2005). Marriage choices are impacted by several factors, including individual preferences, emotions, economics, parental influence, legal and social conditions, religious beliefs, etc. Swidler (2001: 113-114) explains how people perceive romantic love in their marriage, which is idealized as "(1) a clear, all-or-nothing choice; (2) of a unique other; (3) made in defiance of social forces; and (4) permanently resolving the individual's destiny." In fact, based on cultural circumstances, individuals make decisions or choose particular strategies to meet the requirements of sustaining a marriage which are much more realistic or pragmatic than romanticized ideas of love. Swidler (2001) also points out that marriage is both an institution and a relationship, meaning it is understood in both mythic/romantic and practical ways. Indeed, marriage based on love is often ambiguous, gradual, uncertain, complex and de-emphasizes mythic romanticism (Igarashi 2014).

Stimulated by gender imbalances, matchmaking industries, desires for economic and social upward mobility, cultural practices, gender power difference, personal experiences, current education and changes in government regulations, international/cross-border/transnational marriages are on the rise. In this new century, increased individual mobility worldwide has led to the phenomenon of transnational migration, which in turn increases the occurrence of marriage-related migration. Transnational migration has frequently been conceptualized as

individuals "within multiple hierarchies of power operative within and across territories" (Mahler & Pessar 2001: 447). The mobility across borders has changed, and migrants may now keep multiple links with their home and host countries rather than having to settle down in a host society while leaving behind their country of origin. In a transnational context, migrants move back and forth between two or more countries and may not settle down in any particular country at all which is unlike previous migrants (Levchenko 2013; Levitt 2001). These individuals, by developing and maintaining familial, economic, societal, organizational, religious, and political relationships, carve out personal identities as trans-migrants (Basch, Glick-Schiller & Szanton-Blanc 1994).

Transnational migrants may move back and forth between multiple countries for purposes of business, employment, study, travel, and so on, and may meet spouses and partners in any of the countries they visit. Marriage may allow some migrants to move from undeveloped areas to developed regions to live with their spouses, and some couples may be able to choose between several countries when settling. Because marriage creates more opportunities for individuals to choose where they live and work, people may be able to access resources and social networks in both sending and receiving countries. However, the relationship between migration and marriage is not simple. For example, many women move to foreign countries as workers with or without documents, but may later gain favorable economic and legal status in the host country by marrying citizens (Piper & Roces 2003). So marriage and migration are closely and complexly intertwined, and impact existing social, cultural and economic structures, creating population management challenges for both emigrant and immigrant countries.

As Li and Du (2008) mention, the first large wave of African migrants arrived in Guangzhou around 2004. In the following decade, they occupied several foreign markets and married Chinese. However, it will take longer for the general Chinese population to accept African newcomers as potential long-term residents or citizens and potential spouses of Chinese citizens. Chinese-African marriage is an example of transnational migrants finding spouses or partners while conducting business in a host country. A few Africans settle down in China, while others go back and forth between different countries to do business, leaving Chinese spouses/partners and their children in China. By taking advantage of resources across borders, they aim to improve their socioeconomic condition. Marsh (2014) writes about Ojukwu Emmanuel, a Nigerian man with a Chinese wife, who founded a Nigerian-Chinese Family Forum for about 100 African-Chinese couples and their children. A Nigerian's Chinese partner Nan told me that they are registered in this forum but seldom join meetings because they are busy working. As far as she knew, there were many couples who had joined the forum but later left China, whose names are still registered as participants. Some new couples have not registered, so the official number of couples is inaccurate. The local civil

administration department has only collected the total number of all foreign-related marriages in Guangzhou, and cannot provide an exact figure of Chinese-African marriages. Although only 20 African-Chinese couples will be analyzed in this study, their relationships demonstrate the connections between marriages/partnerships and migration. By marriage or partnership, Chinese help African migrants gain legal status to move back and forth between China and other countries, and potentially to attain goals of social and economic upward mobility. Chinese-African relationships are an unusual phenomenon in China, which impact traditional marriage and family structures, culture, values, social networks and government policy.

2.2 Terminology of Cross-Border/Transnational Marriage

International marriage has long been an area of study. However, as globalization creates greater opportunities for individuals to meet foreigners in the workplace or while traveling (Jones 2012), the changeable characteristics of marriage become much more complex (Schiller, Basch & Szanton-Blanc 1995). The term international marriage does not fully explain current dynamics and complexities of marriage, and as such is slowly being replaced by studies on cross-border/transnational marriages (Igarashi 2014).

The increased speed of mobility creates more exchanges between countries and increases the phenomenon of cross-border or transnational marriages. Although 'cross-border marriage' and 'transnational marriage' are often used interchangeably or are similarly formulated in the literature (Constable 2005, 2009; Levchenko 2013; Lu & Yang 2010; Lyons & Ford 2008; Piper 1997, 2003), both terms need to be clarified.

'Cross-border marriage' emphasizes geographical, national, racial, class, gender, and cultural borders constructed in the host societies (Lu & Yang 2010:25). The state, as well as other social actors, mediate these borders in order to differentiate the 'we' from 'others' (Lu 2007:1). This term also connotes that marriage migrants may influence the organization of population and social security, political and social citizenship, and integration and assimilation in host countries (Lu 2007; Lu & Yang 2010). For example, in South Korea, the government expects cross-border spouses to build close ties with the host society and integrate quickly. It has gradually carried out a 'Grand Plan' to meet immigrant needs, such as language learning, schooling and domestic violence shelters (Bélanger 2010; Lee 2006:2). But integration is a complicated process, influenced by pre-migration socioeconomic, demographic and educational features (Khoo 2003), and also needs to take into account attitudes and practices of both members of host societies and countries of origin (Jayaweera & Choudhury 2008). For instance, in Hong Kong, mainland Chinese spouses and their children do not have resident status, and suffer from discrimination and limited educational

opportunities (Ma, Lin & Zhang 2010). In Vietnamese-Taiwanese families, the immigrant spouses or partners are looked down upon or excluded from labor markets in Taiwan (Bélanger 2010). When one parent comes from an undeveloped region, bicultural children are often perceived to threaten the 'quality' of national and ethnic populations. They are discriminated against in official policy and can rarely integrate into Taiwanese society (Wang & Bélanger 2008). According to Constable (2003), Piper and Roces (2003) and Suzuki (2007), the dominant view is that women enter into cross-border marriages for "economic gains, and generally in order to extricate themselves and their families from poverty" (Lu 2007:1). Particularly, southeastern women are stereotyped as luring men for the purpose of immigration (Constable 1997a), and are often perceived as 'husband-stealers' (Lan 2008: 9). Press reports stated that Thai women are appearing in fitness centers seeking men from developed countries in order to achieve permanent resident status or earn money (Head 2006; Pavia 2005; Syson 2006). Because of many negative views of immigrant women (Sim 2012), employers and agencies try to manage women's appearance so as to desexualize and defeminize female workers (Constable 1997b). Negative treatment of migrants in host societies cause some immigrants to survive in their spouses' societies or other host countries by continuing to practice their own cultural values (Inglehart & Norris 2009), and many are poor at combining different cultures and are at risk of alienation (Crul & Doomernik 2003). Many migrants resist integration, or are difficult to accommodate in host societies (Igarashi 2014). Therefore, cross-border marriages require long-term and complex adaptation processes in order to achieve stable family and social relationships.

As a new trend included in transnational migration, 'transnational marriage' refers to a situation where one person migrates from his or her own country of origin to a spouse's country of origin or residence (Chen 2011). Yang and Lu (2010: 25) define the phrase 'transnational marriage' as "a transnational network and space created by the 'actors' themselves, as well as the transactions of economic resources, symbols, and political and cultural practices between the sending and receiving communities; and how these transactions influence local development, social practices and cultural norms in both sending and receiving societies." In other words, these grassroots relationships are important for both social and economic positions (Hille 2006). Therefore, "the term transnational marriage has the advantage of situating cross-border marriages within the context of wider transnational processes" (Charsley 2012: 19).

'Transnational family', which is closely connected to 'transnational marriage', is defined as a cluster of family members who are living in spatial separation across multiple borders with collective welfare and a sense of unity (Bryceson & Vuorela 2002: 3). Currently, transnational families are formed by flexible relationships between different places, various ethnicities and diverse nationalities, transnational restructurings of capitalist production and international

trade. In other words, depending on available resources, transnational families tend to migrate to the country where economic opportunities and circumstances are most favorable. Such families as units survive through sustainable, repetitive daily routines and activities, where members can easily navigate their social circles and deal with challenges (Hille 2006). Schmalzbauer (2004) argues that in transnational spaces and migrant processes, family plays a vital role in migration strategies, but may also contribute to feelings of home-sickness or isolation due to geographical distances between migrants and their natal families. Moreover, "Transnational couples are these whose marriages are stretched across nation-state boundaries" (Charsley 2012: 20). In a transnational marriage, one spouse may migrate to another country, or they may tolerate a spatial separation due to unavailability of resources or personal preference, leaving family reunification to a later date. For example, some European families choose 'living apart together' as a strategy for family development (Levin 2004: 223-240). This type of family model also occurs in Asia, as Lyons and Ford (2006) find. Immigration policies related to labor management and social status in both Singapore and Indonesia impact development strategies employed by Singaporean-Indonesian transnational families. Singaporean men may choose to live in Singapore and build a residence in Indonesia. Their Indonesian wives can live there without suffering the stress and isolation of living in Singapore, and enjoy an improved economic situation and higher class status in Indonesia.

As seen above, the complex descriptions referring to transnational marriage and marriage-related migration are associated with the family relationship. The most widely used terms in this field are marriage migration, family reunion, family migration, and dependent migration (Charsley 2012: 14). Moreover, various scholars interpret transnational marriage differently. Some argue it refers to a marriage between individuals in different states, while Williams (2012: 23-25) understands transnational marriage narrowly as a marriage within established and pre-existing transnational networks, shared belief systems, normative values and daily practices. She prefers the wide usage of cross-border marriages in academic research, and considers this term a general description proposing a 'continuum' between transnational and absent elements of transnational marriage, which may connect whole families and groups rather than just individuals. In her and others' opinion, transnational marriage describes cross-cultural, intercultural or intermarriages (Breger & Hill 1998; Chen & Huang 2006; Gorny & Kepinska 2004; Rodriguez 2006; Roer & Ezra 2006; Wise & Velayutham 2008), which include individuals from different communities or regions. Thus 'transnational' and 'cross-border marriages/families' are often intricately intertwined, but neither completely encompasses the complex situations of African-Chinese marriages/partnerships and families in China.

2.3 Motivations for Marriage-related Migration

2.3.1 Gender Imbalance and Matchmaking Industries

Aside from definitions of marriage-related concepts, many scholars also address personal motivations and structural factors of marriage-related migration. Take the characteristics of intra-Asian marriages for example, which display a gender imbalance and function with the help of intermediaries (Lu & Yang 2010).

Firstly, the gender ratio imbalance is an important factor in host societies. In the early 1990s, a large number of East Asian single men from Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, sought wives from the Philippines, Vietnam and mainland China (Jones & Shen 2008; Lin & Ma 2008; Toyota 2008). As women in Japan, South Korea and Taiwan are generally educated and carry out economic activities, they continue to work, remain single, and/or choose high-income partners (Morgan & Hoffmann 2007). Many prefer to maintain separate households from their parents-in-law (Piper 1997), meaning they often reject the traditional role of the wife (Bélanger 2010). Men in rural areas of these countries are often economically disadvantaged, and women tend to prefer urban to rural life, leading to a shortage of marriageable spouses for rural men (Wang & Chang 2002). Meanwhile, men are considered responsible for the continuation of the family line and support of the elderly, so many choose to marry foreign brides rather than staying single or childless.

Secondly, matchmaking industries, such as certain social networks, marriage brokers or marriage markets, play a vital role in motivating marriages between sending and receiving countries (Bélanger 2010). They help men choose brides and bring foreign women into host countries. These convenient services encourage men to engage in foreign-related marriages, increasing the occurrence of marriage between East Asian men and Southeast Asian women (Imamura 1990; Kojima 2001; Nakamatsu 2005; Shinozaki 1996). This could be considered a kind of import of foreign brides from less developed areas to richer regions arranged by a third party (Ma 1996; Suzuki 2003). Matchmaking practices differ between societies. In Korea and Japan, the government grants licenses to agencies (Bélanger 2010; Nakamatsu 2002). Agencies in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore seem to be unregulated. These agencies are thought to be responsible for human trafficking in Vietnam and China (Lu & Yang 2010), and the women who participate in arranged marriages may be considered victims of human trafficking or opportunity seekers (Nakamatsu 2002; Robinson 2007). This complex phenomenon of commercially arranged marriages may also be incorporated into trafficking of women in Western countries (Glodava & Onizuka 1994; Marjan & Lin 1997). Although arranged marriages carry potential risks for both sides, they also allow for individuals' free choices in the establishment of family, economic improvement and social upward mobility

(Constable 2005).

Currently, many high-income groups also encounter dilemmas in partner selection and depend on matchmaking agents or markets. For instance, Baas (2007) finds that Indian IT professionals search for marital partners without regard to the caste system. Companies discourage respect for the caste system, as IT professionals work in isolated environments and work long hours. They may base marriage choices on economic profits and social prestige within the IT industry rather than within caste or cultural systems. Kim (2011) and Kitamura (2010) argue that it is also difficult to meet a suitable marriage partner in Japan, since the Japanese think finding a spouse is as hard as searching for employment. The current situation in China is similar. Some parents are anxious and eager to seek a suitable partner for their single child via matchmaking platforms (Wong 2014), partly because the Chinese highly value the virtue of filial piety, in which children and their spouses should provide support, care and respect for the elderly members. Taking care of two parents and four grandparents is too large a burden for a single child, so elderly parents are eager to find a spouse for their child to share family responsibilities (Sun 2012). However, children are mature enough to make their own decisions. Also, young people generally prefer to establish a financial base and career rather than settling into marriage (Hunt 2013). Particularly, successful women of marriageable age who retain a single status are often described in negative terms (To 2013), so parents are willing to engage in marriage markets to find a suitable son or daughter-in-law for their hard-working child (Yang 2011).

2.3.2 Socioeconomic Upward Mobility

Aside from influences of gender imbalance and agencies or markets, there are other considerations and motives in marriage-related mobility, such as economic and social upward mobility, cultural practices, gender relations, personal experiences, children's education and administrative system and so on. The social upward mobility, cultural and gender differences are very relevant to Chinese-African marriages/partnerships discussed in this dissertation.

Marriage-related migration is often concerned with women who are 'marrying up' (Freeman 2005), meaning they attain economic improvement and social upward mobility through marriage. Examples can be found of Japanese women marrying Westerners from typically English-speaking countries to improve their quality of life or career (Fujita 2009; Kelsky 2001; Mizukami 2007; Sato 2001). Nguyen and Tran (2010) look at micro-level factors that encourage Vietnamese women with poor economic conditions to marry Taiwanese or other foreigners to achieve economic upward mobility. As 'go betweens', these immigrant women have double aims in marriage and migration. On the one hand, they live with their parents-in-law in rural places to take care of them and participate in farming activities

(Morgan & Hoffmann 2007; Piper 1997); on the other hand, after settling down, they do not just offer economic support to their natal families (Bélanger 2010), but also help family members to migrate (Suksomboon 2009). And as Constable (2005) said, by marrying Dutch men and moving to Holland, Thai women gain economic advantages and can transfer money or gifts to their family members to enhance socioeconomic and class mobility of their natal family, as well as to display their high income and better living conditions in the host country. Additionally, earliermigrant women often become matchmakers, introducing foreign partners to potential wives from their country of origin, and thus promote marriage-related migration (Lu 2008). Their modern lifestyle encourages more families to send their daughters as marriageable partners to wealthier areas (Nguyen & Tran 2010). These increasing flows lead to the phenomenon of 'feminization of migration', which may be seen as the nexus between migration and marriage, and refers to the increasing number of female migrants within a mobile population (Chiu 2003; Hugo 2005; Parrenas 2001; Tyner 2004; Yamanaka & Piper 2005). These migrant women also move to wealthier countries or areas for employment opportunities, such as export processing zones or areas where cheap and disposable domestic and care services are in demand (Yang & Lu 2010). In fact, there is no simple picture of migration, work and marriage. Migrant women do not belong to one category, and multiple roles as workers and wives are not clear-cut. For example, many women move to foreign countries to seek employment with or without legal status, and later gain favorable economic and legal status in the destination countries by marrying citizens (Piper & Roces 2003). Their occupations in host countries are diverse, from domestic work, care or health services, to entertainment or sex work (Anderson 2000; Chang 2000; Ehrenreich & Hochschild 2002; Huang et al. 2005; Kempadoo & Doezema 1998; Lan 2008; Oishi 2005). For instance, Thai women may join the sex and entertainment industry in Germany, and through marrying their customers may migrate to developed countries as wives (Mix & Piper 2003). Philippine domestic workers also depend on marriage to permanently settle down in Canada for a better life and escape the role of domestic worker (McKay 2003). Some Asian brides are regarded as hostesses, entertainers or sex workers in Japan, though they find Japanese husbands for the purposes of residence (Piper 1997, 1999; Suzuki 2000). These women are migrant workers before or after marriage, and cannot ignore their multiple roles as wife, worker or mother.

New research has been conducted on male spouses coming from developing countries, as individuals seeking opportunities in developed countries and marrying women from wealthier nations (Jones 2012; Schans 2012a), such as Cameroonian men gaining legal residence in Germany through marriage to a German partner (Fleischer 2012). Yamanaka (2009) studies the situation of Japanese women marrying Nepalese men who are undocumented migrants. After getting married, these foreign husbands gain legal status and become breadwinners in the relationship. Kudo (2002, 2012, 2015) explores many cases in which Pakistani men

overstay their visas in Japan, but after establishing a relationship with or marrying local women, are able to change from undocumented to permanent residents and run businesses with their wives' help. The topic of socioeconomic upward mobility is also relevant for Chinese-African couples.

2.3.3 Cultural and Gender Differences in Relationships

Many societies in Asia emphasize social and family obligations and responsibilities related to social norms; particularly, "kin members, the state, marriage intermediaries (institutional or individual) and commercial sectors are all involved in decision-making" in marriage (Lu 2007: 3). These cultural frameworks and values impact both men and women being and staying in marriage. Yamamoto (2010) studies cases of Japanese women marrying well-educated Western men, for expectations of "modern husbands and modern marriage" (Constable 2007: 7), or overseas lifestyles (Kelsky 2001; Sato 2001). But some of them were strongly influenced by their responsibilities and obligations to their natal family and moved back to Japan. Moreover, Chi (2007: 7) shows the heavy involvement of relatives in the choice of spouse and marriage decisions. In Taiwan, mothers-in-law expect obedient foreign daughters-in-law who have 'traditional virtue' and can fulfill the duties of taking care of elders, raising children and managing housework, and who never challenge the power of the mother-in-law. But they also complain about conflicts of language and cultural barriers with foreign daughters-in-law, which arouse their suspicions of immigrant women's marriage aims. Similarly, Tan (2001: 2) said "Chinese family relied on the cohesion of the family as a tightly-knit unit for social and economic survival." For men, the families' expectations of their daughters-in-law imply that sons also have to negotiate marital decisions, otherwise problems may arise between in-laws (Chan 2013: 641). Overall, the marriage choice of many Chinese young people is subjected to their parents' approval and expectations (To 2013).

Gender relations in such marriages are also related to ingrained cultural practices, notions, values and social status. Ma, Lin and Zhang (2010) outline that men from Hong Kong prefer slightly social and economic inferior partners from mainland China to meet cultural traditions of assortative mating, believing that men should have a higher level of education, occupational prestige and a higher income, and be older than their mainland partners. Socioeconomically disadvantaged Hong Kong men tend not to seek local partners. In order to meet the demands of traditional marriage values, they prefer to marry mainland Chinese due to societal disparity like economic or class differences. Sigad and Eisikovits (2009) consider the high status of North American culture, the advantage of English mastery, and the respected standing of motherhood in Israeli culture, which facilitate female gender roles in American-Israeli relationships. Charsley (2005) points out that compared to British born

wives, Pakistani husbands are at a disadvantage within their transnational marriages. Turkish-Danish transnational marriages also show the transformation of gendered power dynamics, where Turkish women may play a larger decision-making role in the family (Liversage 2012). According to Takeshita (2007, 2010), Japanese prefer modern lifestyles and resist control from Pakistani husbands' families. Through economic advantages, the formation of strong social networks and negotiation of cultural differences, they are able to take control over children's education within Muslim societies and gain residence in the U.A.E. and Sharjah, far away from husbands' families. Tang and Wang (2011) observe that immigrant women empower themselves by resisting Taiwanese patriarchal family systems as well as depending on matchmaking industries to negotiate gender and power in relationships (Belanger 2010; Lauser 2008; Nakamatsu 2002; Suzuki 2004, 2007). Vietnamese women play an important economic role in sending money to families (Bélanger, Tran & Le 2011) to pay off debts incurred by their immigration, but also reconfigure gender status within their natal families (Bélanger & Tran 2011). In the case of Chinese-African marriages and partnerships, cultural and gender differences shape spousal relations, practices of child education, as well as relations with in-laws (see chapter 7 and 8).

2.4 Social Barriers

Alongside the analysis of definitions and motivations of marriage and marriage-related migration, a large body of research explores social conflicts, policy constraints and stigmatization related to such marriage (Lu & Yang 2010). Though marriage seems to be an active agent of migration, migrants may grasp development opportunities in host countries (Lu 2007). The negotiation of relationships with family members and host societies may help them to reconstruct their status within social constraints (Jones & Shen 2008), but unavoidably they face inequalities and unachieved goals. Women in such marriages are often depicted as vulnerable, marginalized and inactive 'victims' or 'commodities' of the globalization process (Nakamatsu 2002; Robinson 2007), which reinforces existing power imbalances (Piper 1997; Lan 2008). Therefore, intercultural marriage is not necessarily the best way for immigrants to deal with hardships; instead it may increase suffering in receiving countries. For instance, Mix and Piper (2003) point out that Thai women marry German men for permanent resident status. Although some want to break away from sex work, due to unemployed husbands, their own lack of skills, or language barriers, they continue or begin to do sex work to survive. Piper and Roces (2003) also argue that contrary to women's hopes of escaping domestic work through marriage, their foreign husbands marry them for their ability to take care of a family. At the same time, some foreign husbands have difficulty integrating into wives' societies, and differences in cultural practices and social status may cause family

conflicts (Suksomboon 2009). Rutherford (1990) states that people from different cultures hold unequal values to some extent. In the case of child-rearing, Japanese wives tend to carefully manage children's lives, whereas Muslim fathers take a different approach. Due to cultural homogeneity in Japan, it is difficult for bicultural children to practice Islam (Maruyama 2007; Kudo 2008). Also, Japan does not provide religious education for Muslim students, so Pakistani fathers send children to Islamic countries, where schools offer English learning, to shape the Muslim identity of their children and their ability to survive in the future. The issue of sending money to a Muslim husband's kin in Japanese-Muslim relationships is also problematic. Different ideas on child rearing may also create tensions between Vietnamese daughters-in-law and Taiwanese mothers-in-law when Vietnamese mothers-in-law earn money from Taiwanese sons-in-law by taking care of grandchildren, while Vietnamese daughters work outside of the home and are less invested in childcare (Bélanger& Wang 2012). Some couples send children back to Vietnam to be raised by Vietnamese grandparents until school age, which helps to relieve the heavy burden of childcare fees in Taiwan (Bélanger & Wang 2012).

Moreover, with the increase of migration, both the sending and receiving governments have to formulate policies to manage migrant flows. Sending societies obviously need to control brain drain and the loss of skilled laborers. Receiving societies expect to absorb contributing human resources but also have to face challenges of controlling migrants to reduce strain on welfare systems (Knight 2002: 3). Low skilled workers are less favorable than professionals in certain countries (Ong 2003: 271). To preventing unskilled spouses access to labor markets in immigrant countries via spousal visas, local governments investigate the validity of marriages to eliminate spousal visas based on 'fake' marriages. Kim (2011) finds that Chinese marriages to South Koreans are usually assumed to be faked for the sake of a spousal visa to South Korea. Government policies are often invasive of intimate relationships, and the categorization of 'fake' and 'real' marriages creates stigmas surrounding migration-related marriage. Furthermore, marriage-related migrants are pushed into marginalized positions due to the preference for skilled labor in South Korea. This means that the government holds strong power over migrants. China undeniably benefits from the inflow of professionals and migrant laborers, but generally prefers the former over the later. The effect of Chinese institutions and regulations on intercultural marriage and partnership in China is an important area of discussion, particularly concerning African spouses' or partners' current or previous legal status, and visa restrictions and enforcement.

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, international marriage, cross-border marriage, transnational marriage, intercultural marriage, interracial marriage, or interethnic marriage are widely used and cross-reference each other to some degree, emphasizing gender, role, class and race (Bélanger & Tran 2011; Breger & Hill 1998; Penny & Khoo 1996; Romano 1998). Particularly, strong intersection and substitutability may be found between the concept of cross-border and transnational marriages in complex contexts. It is also vital to note that migration could be either a cause or consequence of marriage and vice versa.

Moreover, there are many factors at play in marriage-related migration, such as socioeconomic upward mobility, cultural and gender differences, personal experiences, children's education, and government regulations and administration. These also play a role in regard to Chinese-African marriages and partnerships in China By engaging in transnational business, the majority of Chinese and African spouses/partners, as members of the 'floating population' with limited social and economic capital, hope to reach socioeconomic upward mobility in China. Through family management and business cooperation, Chinese and African couples build their own advantages to negotiate cultural and gender power differences. Some are successful, while others are not so fortunate, which also influences their children's education and future life.

Furthermore, there are many cases of social conflicts, policy constraints and stigmatization in cross-border/transnational marriages, which can also be seen in the case of Chinese-African marriages/partnerships in China. These conflicts impact couples' daily lives, working conditions, family relationships and social networks, and will be analyzed in the next chapters.

Chapter 3 Historical and Statistical Information about Marriage between Chinese and Foreigners

This chapter aims to show how the enforcement of marriage law, the one-child policy and the 'reform and opening up' policy lead to structural changes in Chinese marriage and family practices. In the past, because of familial, social, economic and political interests, couples could not easily decide to marry or separate. However, under the new policies traditional marriage values and rituals have modernized, family structure has become '4-2-1,' negative attitudes towards individual choices of marriage partners and divorce have changed, Chinese-foreign marriages are increasing and gender relations are equalizing. The most important issue for Chinese women is the chance to gain knowledge and skills to compete with men in labor markets. Chinese men see the advantage of women gaining income and contributing to family development, and are learning to respect women's choices. In my fieldwork, some African interviewees had different viewpoints from Chinese men on controlling women's power within and outside of the family, which leads to gender power conflicts in Chinese-African marriages/partnerships. The literature illustrates the phenomenon of and motivations for intercultural marriages (officially called Chinese-foreign/ foreign-related marriage) appearing in the southwest and northeast of China. While there are many studies on Africans' daily life and working conditions in Guangzhou or other areas in China, there is a lack of research on Chinese-African marriages and partnerships in southern China—particularly in Guangzhou. Statistical data demonstrates that in the 21st century, depending on the level of socioeconomic independence, Chinese, and in particular Chinese women, have freer choices to marry or divorce Chinese or foreign partners than before. The data also shows a large number of Chinese-foreign marriages in Guangzhou, but this does not mean that Chinese-African marriages are successful.

3.1 Changing Marriage and Family Relations

In the past, marriage, as a vital contractual relationship in China, created a strong conjugal unit between two kin groups. The members of the two kin groups had corresponding obligations through marital rites (Chuang 1994; Freedman 1967a & b; Wolf 1972). As the permanent contractual relations and family benefits between the two kin groups relied highly on their matching social and economic values, family members chose their son- or daughter-in-law very cautiously. Parents had absolute authority over children's personal choice, and it was a huge responsibility for them to find their children a good match and shoulder the expense of the wedding ceremony. Simultaneously, the matchmaker played a

primary role as go-between in traditional marriage. The so-called matching-door principle (*mendanghudui*/门当户对) was a way of determining Chinese marriage choices. The socioeconomic statuses of the two families would be evaluated, while individual characteristics were considered less during this process (Baker 1979; Croll 1981; Freedman 1979; Xu, Ji & Tung 2000). However, age, physical appearance and submissive traits of women, which could improve their chances of being married to men of higher socioeconomic class, would be considered in the matchmaking (Amit 1994). The perfect match was made by "the shrewd calculations of social, economic and political advantage that go into the making of a match" (Freedman 1967: 11). For most Chinese, the choice of a spouse was more pragmatic than personal, and "marriage was made in Heaven and predestined. This was best illustrated in a popular blessing to the couple at the wedding—tian zuo zhi he (天作之合)—union made in Heaven" (Lu 2008: 34). Hence, a marriage was a significant celebration for both families (Fricke et al. 1994). Due to the high wedding cost and as the newlywed husband became the head of a small family unit, there was a possibility of family members dividing up the whole family property and living apart (*fen jia*/分家). Though this could weaken family relations, a family received the benefit of gaining a daughter-in-law. Additionally, other alternative forms of marriage such as child bride (*tongyangxi*/童养媳) and uxorilocal marriage (*zhaozhui*/招赘) could be accepted as individual survival strategies. Despite the fact that monogamy had been established since the Zhou Dynasty (1046BC-256BC), concubines (*naqie*/纳妾) existed in richer and higher-class families. The concubines (*qie*/妾) were usually from a lower socioeconomic class than their husbands, which was an exception under the matching-door principle, and they did not have rights equal to the legally married wives. However their sons were able to share similar rights to other sons born in legal marriage (Wang 2000). Normally the marital rites of the concubines were simpler than those of the legal wives (Zhang & Li 1996). The concubines used marriage as a strategy to move upward both economically and socially, but they were stripped of the close connections to and support from their natal family, which differed greatly from two families' alliance in legal marriage (Zhang & Li 1996). As a form of hypergamy, families of lower socioeconomic class hoped to marry their daughters to higher-class families and reach upward mobility via family alliances (Zhang & Mao 2003). Marriage was taken seriously as a long-term beneficial contract and alliance between two groups. Following the matching-door principle, the social, economic and political interests of both kin groups would be connected, in which case, if the marriage failed, neither side could afford to take the blame. Therefore, people could not easily decide to divorce. Nevertheless, some couples might lack romantic feelings towards each other, and men would try to find concubines, whom they preferred to the pragmatic marriage.

In ancient China, the validity of marriage was based on the 'six-etiquettes', which include

the man's parents asking a matchmaker to propose a good woman (*nacai*/纳采); the man's family asking a woman's name and birthday for matchmaking (*wenming*/问名); the man giving gifts to the woman and officially offering a letter for the marriage proposal (*naji*/纳吉); the man's family fulfilling the obligation to pay satisfying betrothal gifts to the potential wife's family, which was the most solemn ritual of engagement (*nazheng*/纳征); setting a marriage date (*qingqi*/请期); and finally meeting and escorting the bride (*yingqin*/迎亲).

At present, the Chinese government has enforced marriage law for over six decades. Meanwhile, influenced by other cultures, traditional marriage ceremonies have been subject to change. In fact, traditional and modern marriage rituals each have their own advantages and disadvantages in the modern context. Traditional marriage has been reinterpreted in modern society, and individuals have various choices between traditional and modern celebration (Shen 2010). The proposal and the wedding ritual are indispensable elements. The wedding ceremony is a vital symbol of the forming of an independent household, the establishment of a family and a reinforcement of social responsibilities. Until recently, for most Chinese, marriage was a necessity and natural step in the life-cycle, sometimes spurred by social pressure and personal issues. For women, finding good husbands who could provide for their welfare and security and aid in raising children were primary choices.

During the Maoist period, the leader regarded women as 'a half heaven' (*banbiantian*/半边天) who should go out to work and support their families. From the late 1950s to mid-1970s, in order to develop the country's economy, the central government encouraged people to have fewer children, but the policy was not well enforced (Liang 2014). Macartney (2008) reported that before the one-child policy, every couple had 5.8 children on average. After 1979, the one-child policy was fully implemented by laws, regulations and administrative measures (Greenhalgh 2003). The government took various means to enforce this policy, from controlling family planning, to introducing housing and schooling packages (Kane & Choi 1999: 992). According to the policy, couples that met certain requirements were allowed to have a second child. For example, in rural areas, where inheritances were passed on to the son, couples were allowed to have a second child if their first-born was a girl. Also, couples of ethnic minority groups could have two children for the sake of cultural preservation. Additionally, couples who suffered child loss due to natural disasters or whose first-born was disabled could have another child. Couples who did not meet the above requirements but had more than one child had to pay for all expenses related to reproductive medical care during pregnancy without government support and were fined for having extra children. The actual enforcement of the policy varied among provinces due to their different realities (Liang 2014). To date, the policy has been flexible to a certain extent depending on the social conditions of the region (Fung 2014: 1). China aimed to enforce the one-child policy to control the

population from exceeding 1.2 billion in the 1990s (Kane & Choi 1999: 992). In fact, in 2000, China had a population of about 1.27 billion (Fung 2014). After many years of birth control, the government amended the policy in January 2016, allowing each couple to have two children out of concerns of an aging society and labor management.

The one-child policy has created the '4-2-1' family structure, where one child must care for four grandparents and two parents, which is a huge burden on the child (Sun 2012). At the same time, the elderly treat female and male offsprings more equally than they previously did, and try their best to support this one child through higher education, financial aid or social connections. Through higher education, a growing number of Chinese women have the chance to gain knowledge and skills necessary to compete with men in labor markets, so Chinese women are more financially independent than before, and also have more of a voice in family matters. These changes in family structure lead men to see the advantage of women gaining income and contributing to family finances, and are more accepting of women working out of the home and negotiating in family matters. Particularly in modern urban places such as Guangzhou, not only the husband puts bread on the table—the wife also goes to work to support the family financially. Many women feel satisfied with their successful careers. Some may choose to stay at home to raise children, and return to the job market after the kids start going to kindergarden, while others continue working and ask parents or nannies to take care of the children. Chinese women are free to express their own opinions, not just because they are financially independent, but also because men gradually accept the equal rights of males and females, and learn to respect women's choices.

However, the multiplicities of African marriages are different from current Chinese forms of marriage, where only marriage with official registration in the Civil Affair Bureau is legally accepted. As Yaw and Takyi (2006: 10-13) mention, there is a variety of legitimate marriage forms in different regions of Africa, which are "customary or traditional law marriages, marriage under Islamic rules and regulations, marriage under the ordinance (civil or church), consensual unions, polygamous marriage, and outside wife-ships" most of which are illegal under Chinese law. Moreover, some African interviewees still thought men have more power within and outside of the family than women. Chinese-African marriages in China may therefore present some value differences and legal problems that lead to family conflicts.

3.2 Foreign-Related Marriage in China

Due to political issues, social institutions and restrictions of migration, China differed from other societies by limiting Chinese-foreign marriage for a long time (Quan 2005; Liu 2009). But with the economic reform and opening of the borders in the decades since the 1970s, the

Chinese government gradually began to allow for the mobility of domestic and foreign populations and successively amended the legal framework. With new technologies such as high-speed modes of transportation and electronic mobile devices, people connect with others more conveniently and frequently. These modern technologies are changing social relationships and altering attitudes towards partnership, marriage and family, so the Chinese are gaining growing opportunities to choose a partner out of their own social circle. Though the number of Chinese-foreign marriages and divorces are a small proportion of the overall registered marriages in China, the increasing rate of such marriage and divorce exceeds the growth figure of all marriage and divorce registrations in the PRC in the same period (Wang 2015).

Wang (2015: 2-4) points out that Chinese-foreign marriages can be divided into three categories. In the first category, PRC citizens marry foreigners (*waiguoren*/ 外国人), excluding citizens from Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan. *Waiguoren* (外国人) colloquially refers to foreigners with physical appearances or ethnicities distinct from 'the Chinese,' such as Westerners, Africans, Southeast Asians or Arabs. This categorization therefore works to homogenize and affirm 'Chineseness' as 'not foreign' (Wang 2015: 6). Chinese citizens marrying foreigners is referred to collectively as *kuaguohunyin* (跨国婚姻) or *zhongwaihunyin* (中外婚姻), translated as transnational marriage, international marriage or Chinese-foreign marriage. The second type of Chinese-foreign marriage is between citizens of the PRC with Hong Kongers, Macanese or Taiwanese. Hong Kong and Macau have a high degree of autonomy under the PRC government, as special administrative regions and self-governing territories. Taiwan was occupied by the National Party of China during the civil war, but still maintained relationships with PRC. The third category of marriage is between PRC citizens and overseas Chinese (*huaqiao/huare*n/华侨/华人). Ichikawa (2006) asserts that *huaqiao* (华侨) represents individuals living abroad who still maintain citizenship of PRC. *Huaren* (华人) denotes people granted foreign citizenship who have no intention of returning to PRC. All the three types of Chinese-foreign marriages (*zhongwaihunyin*/中外婚姻) can also be understood as 'foreign-related marriage' (*shewaihunyin*/涉外婚姻) in the Chinese language.

This dissertation is concerned with 'intercultural marriage' rather than 'international marriage', 'transnational marriage', 'cross-border marriage' or 'foreign-related marriage'. The term 'intercultural marriage' is defined as "a union of two people from diverse cultures as well as different countries" (Romano 1988: xii). And "such a union may also, but not necessarily, indicate differences in race, ethnicity, and language" (Breger & Hill 1998: 7; Romano 1988: xii). Although the terms 'interracial' and 'interethnic' marriages are widely

used (Davis 2010; Root 2001; Schwertfeger 1982; Wang 2015), Khulpateea (2007) and Thiagarajan (2007) note that the terms 'interracial' and 'interethnic' are problematic in categorizing groups, in that they are based on social constructions of race and ethnicity and are often hierarchical and discriminatory. The concept of 'foreign-related marriage' is connected to Chinese government policy. These terms are therefore excluded from the scope of this dissertation. 'Intercultural marriage' mainly refers to the cultural, religious and customary differences between Africans and Chinese that deeply impact these couples' daily lives, relationships and social networks. Intercultural marriage is additionally influenced by differences of governance between China and African countries, which influence social and cultural practices, in turn influencing individuals' social statuses. At the same time, the term stresses the various values and deep imprints formed by diverse cultures and social institutions in different societies, which inform people's attitudes and judgment of 'others' from their own positions. The other important reason for using 'intercultural marriage' is in order to consider the Chinese context. African-Chinese marriages refer to the first category of 'Chinese-foreign marriage/ foreign-related marriage', where Africans are foreign nationals from other countries with physical appearances distinguishing them from Chinese. The most essential factor is that they do not "share a common culture or an overarching sense of 'Chineseness'" (Wang 2015: 4). Moreover, with the growth of various choices of spouses or partners in a globalized framework, individuals can make personal choices, rather than family-pressured choices; in turn reformulating and reshaping different cultures (Mathews 2000: 308). African-Chinese couples in intercultural marriages or partnerships can construct their own combined culture and impact the local culture. The term 'intercultural marriage' is used interchangeably with the term 'Chinese-African marriage' throughout this dissertation, because these two terms offer a more accurate description than Chinese-foreign marriage, and capture the nuances of Chinese and African cultural contexts.

3.2.1 Literature Review: 'Chinese-foreign' Marriages, Africans in China

The growing mobility of people increases exchange between countries and allows the phenomenon of intercultural marriages in the Asian context to arise (Constable 2005, 2009; Levchenko 2013; Lu & Yang 2010; Lyons & Ford 2008; Piper 1997, 2003). There are many studies on the growing number of mainland Chinese who chose to marry foreigners from other Asian areas or countries such as Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea and Japan and then chose to register in their spouses' home countries during the late 1990s and mid-2000s (Igarashi 2014; Kim 2010; Liaw et al. 2010; Ma et al. 2010; Ministry of Interior 2011). Media in the host countries focus on the challenges of intercultural marriage, such as differences in culture and lifestyle, and language barriers, portraying Chinese as an 'inferior other' or as 'gold

diggers' with a lower educational level and as responsible for generating social problems in host societies (Hsia 2007: 55–62; Shih 1998: 287–319; Tsai 2011: 245).

In China, there are separate studies on intercultural marriages involving southwestern and northeastern Chinese marrying foreign Asian nationals as these regions differ and face specific challenges. For example, foreign-related marriages have long occurred in southwestern China based on long-term intermingling, geographical proximity and kinship (Luo & Wu 2009). Such marriages are informed by elaborate social customs, which also cater to local gender inequalities, but they threaten the national legal system when involving unregistered civilians and are not well protected by law (Long & Li 2007). Vietnamese mothers and their Chinese-Vietnamese children are likely to feel anxious about their legal and social status, because they are at risk of deportation or without permanent residents' card. (Zhou 2008). In Northeastern China, Chinese women have long history of marrying Korean men (Quan 2006), and Chinese rural women from this region have also married Japanese males arranged by matchmaking markets in current times. Sometimes, Chinese spouses are confronted with different values and cultural customs, and in extreme cases family violence leads to physical and mental trauma for victims (Gao 2008; Yin, Nakajima & Quan 2012). The children resulting from these marriages suffer serious social discrimination and rejection (Liu & Quan 2008). These Chinese-foreign marriages reflect changing attitudes towards marriage and family in China, and have the potential to impact social institutions and transform the traditional structuring of families (Wang 2015).

Considering the number of intercultural marriages and divorces registered in China, research on such marriages—particularly Chinese-African marriages—is minimal. Several scholars have carried out extensive studies on African trade activities in China (Cissé 2015; Marfaing & Thiel 2015; Müller & Wehrhahn 2013). Due to their different economic policies and investment opportunities (Bodomo & Ma 2010), different Chinese cities attract varying numbers of Africans seeking different employment opportunities in China (Bertoncello & Bredeloup 2007; Bodomo2012; Castillo 2015; Haugen 2012; Le Bail 2009; Mathews 2011; Mathews & Yang 2012; Porzucki 2012; Zhou, Xu & Shenasi 2016). Although many Africans are dissatisfied during the early stages of their transnational migration, they try to develop networks and manage businesses and social lives in China (Porzucki 2012), and gradually establish distinctive 'ethnic enclaves' and 'ethnic economies' (Li, Lyons & Brown 2012; Zhang 2008). These economic 'outposts' are especially attractive to Africans, and have significant impact on local urban patterns (Bertoncello & Bredeloup 2007). Their transnational commercial activities become an important bridge between China and Africa (Bodomo 2010). There is contention among researchers as to the value of this transnational bridge—some argue that African trade in China may be detrimental to the Chinese economy, also it is kind of a socio-culturally contentious process (Zhou, Xu & Shenasi 2016). Africans

in China have formed unstable 'transient spaces', in which transnational or trans-local traders converge without long-term stability (Bork-Hüffer et al. 2014), and create 'precarious homing' to deal with hardships (Castillo 2015). As drivers of globalization, African traders tend to transport cheaper and counterfeit goods; their practices can be seen as characteristic of 'low-end globalization' (Mathews 2007, 2011; Mathews & Yang 2012). For some Africans, China is not their first destination of choice, but becomes an important migratory step in order to help them to achieve primitive capital accumulation, and eventually achieve the goal of migration to developed countries in Europe and North America (Haugen 2012; Mathews 2015). Africans in China are more dependent on wide social networks and social capital to overcome language barriers, undocumented status, limited economic resources and so on. Compared with established immigrants, African newcomers are considered to have lower class status and limited social capital (Liang 2013). It is difficult for Africans to access social support available to Chinese citizens, and they often undergo crises of fractured and weakening social support from their homeland, inducing them to learn to build new social support networks in their new environment (Xu 2009b). Particularly big cities like Guangzhou have tightened their immigration policies to force deportation of undocumented foreigners and reduce problems of governance associated with immigration. This seems to differ from the welcoming attitude towards Africans on a national level (Lan 2014). Aside from African traders, there are many African students and entertainers in China who often work in trade on the side (Bredeloup 2014; Castillo 2015; Haugen 2013). Many Africans are religious and can find spiritual and financial support through their religious communities and social organizations (Haugen 2012, 2013; Huang & He 2014; Niu 2015). With an over 1000-year long history in Guangzhou, mosques are a spiritual homeland for foreign Muslims (Li 2011). Several important mosques depend on their famous history and traditional customs to attract a large number of Africans living and working around them (He 2009). With the increasing number of foreigners in Guangzhou, there also seems an increase in immigration offences leading to the public discourse of the 'three-illegals' or *sanfei*: illegally entry, illegally stay, and illegally work. Africans overstaying on entry visas has become a hot topic in Chinese governance and policy (Lan 2014; Le Bail 2009; Yu 2013; Zhu & Price 2013).

Aside from academic research over the years, mainstream media and social media report on African issues in China. For example Voice of America (2009) and Guangming (2014) reported on the large number of Africans living and working in Southern China; Deutsche Welle (2010) reported on Africans as new working immigrants in Guangzhou; Ifeng, Guang Ming Daily (2012), Sina (2014) and Youku video (2013) focused on Africans' daily life and trade in Guangzhou; Sina (2004, 2015), Iron Community (2014), Tianya (2013) and Southern Metropolis Daily (2007) talked about African drug trafficking in China; SouthernMetropolis Daily (2014) reported on Africans' illegal activity in China; while CNTV (2012) and

Chinesenews (2014) reported that Africans groups are vulnerable in China and do not have many criminals. PCN (2010) discussed African immigration tests as a component of Chinese immigration requirements; RFI (2012) reported that China has considered enacting immigration laws to control foreigners and the 'three illegal matters'; and Xinhuanet (2011), South China Morning Post (2014), Nandu (2014), Oushinet (2015) briefly expressed problems in African-Chinese marriages, such as African spouses' overstaying on entry visas, economic pressures, tensions within kinship, and differing views on the education of children.

Compared with comprehensive studies of African economies and their related trading communities, which have been widely discussed by reporters, policy makers, scholars and educators in newspapers, television programs and other media in China and abroad, Chinese-African marriages and partnerships are an important, but under-researched topic that urgently needs to be tackled.

3.2.2 Statistical Data

The following four figures and one diagram show official numbers of Chinese-foreign marriages, the gender composition in such marriages, the comparison of registered marriages among Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou in 2014, registered divorces in mainland China and divorce registration records of Guangzhou in 2014. These figures show both Chinese-Chinese marriage and divorce and Chinese-foreign marriages and divorce, and particularly compare numbers of Chinese-foreign marriages and divorce in first-tier cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou. Comparison of different cities shows that Guangzhou attracts different foreigners than other cities.

Figure 1: Chinese-foreign Marriages Registered in Mainland China (1979-2014) (produced by the author)
From Sources: China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbook 1979-2015
(ZhongguoMinzhengTongjiNianjian)
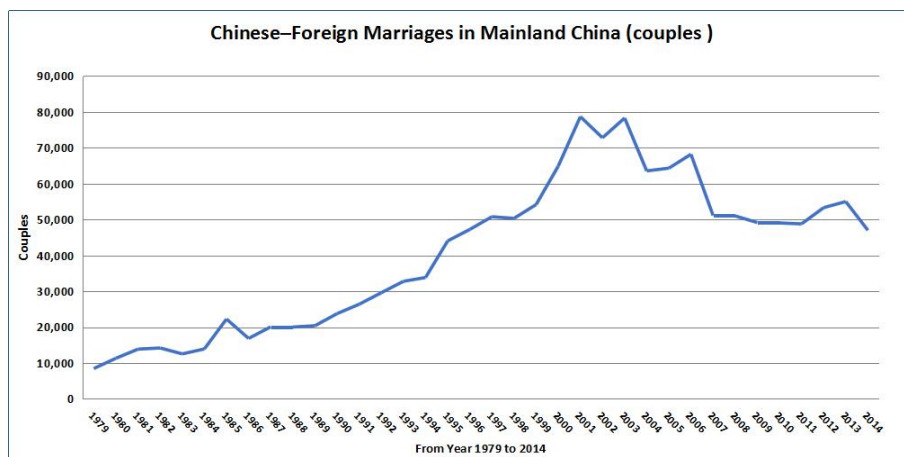
The statistics (Figure 1) produced by the PRC's Ministry of Civil Affairs since the start of the reform period indicate that 8460 foreign-related marriages existed in 1979. After years of continual growth, that number reached over 50,000 in 1997, climbing to a peak at almost 79,000 couples in 2001. The figure grew sharply from the late 20th century to the 21st century because during that time Hong Kong and Macao were consecutively returned to China. More and more citizens of Hong Kong and Macao went to mainland China to conduct business or visit their hometowns. Due to cultural similarities, they choose mainland Chinese as spouses. Despite the outbreak of the Asian economic crisis, China continued its economic development, which attracted other Asians seeking employment. With so many foreigners entering China, the potential for foreign-related marriages increased. After five years of ups and downs, the number of foreign-related marriages was at 68,183 in 2006, gradually declining to 48,778 by 2011. The data shows a slight rise over the next two years, reaching 54,000 foreign related marriages, but the trend seems to be a steady decrease, and the number of foreign-related marriages dropped to around 47,000 in 2014. Scholars have noted that there are several distinct features of foreign-related marriages in the PRC. Firstly, young Chinese women tend to marry older foreigners. These couples' average age is older than the average age of Chinese couples (Ding et al. 2004; Gao et al. 2003). Secondly, a large number of foreign partners have reached a higher level of educational, which leads to an average educational level of foreign-related marriages higher than that of Chinese couples (Ding et al. 2004; Gao et al. 2003). Thirdly, in recent years, the number of people from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan and overseas Chinese marrying those from mainland China has decreased, while the marriage between foreign nationals and mainland Chinese is rapidly growing (Ding et al. 2004).

Figure 2: Gender Composition of Chinese-Foreign Marriages Registered in Mainland China (1979-2014) (produced by the author)
From Sources: China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbook 1979-2015
(Zhongguo Minzheng TongjiNianjian)
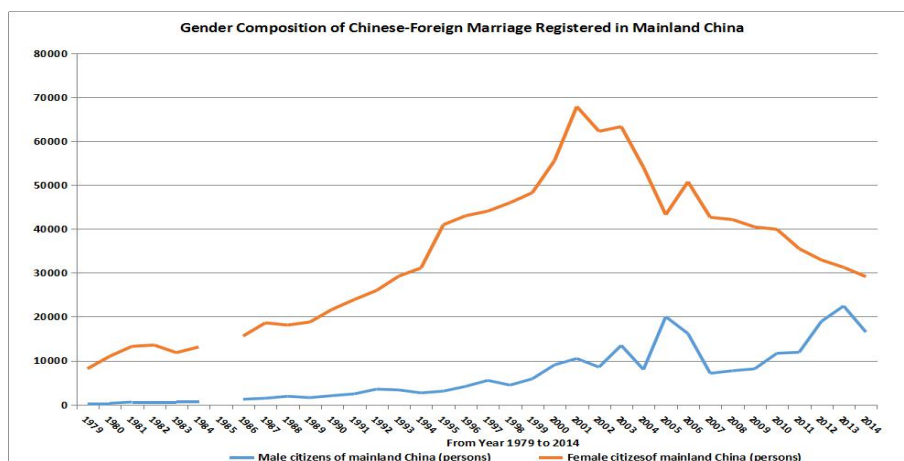
Figure 2 shows that it has overwhelmingly been mainland Chinese women marrying foreign men rather than vice versa (Wang 2015). The gender composition of Chinese-foreign marriages registered in mainland China shows the trend from 1979 to 2014, excluding records for 1985. The number of both Chinese women and men marrying foreigners grew constantly from 1979 to 2001. Over these 23 years, for Chinese women, the number of foreign-related marriages increased sharply from 8168 to 67,839; while for Chinese men, the number of foreign-related marriages went from 247 to 10,489. After 2001, these two categories strongly fluctuated over the next three years. The number of Chinese women in Chinese-foreign marriages dropped quickly to 43,214 in 2005 and slowly climbed to 50,723 in 2006. On the contrary, although the number of Chinese men in foreign-related marriages declined to 7972 in 2004, it quickly grew to about 20,000 in 2005 and then dropped again to 16,158 in 2006. In 2007, both groups decreased, after which Chinese women-foreign men marriages continually dropped to 35,489, while the number of Chinese men-foreign women marriages was higher than the previous four years, reaching 11,903 in 2011. Major findings of foreign-related marriages were recorded in economically developed cities and provinces, such as the provinces of Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang and Shanghai (China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbook 1979-2012). Media states that in the 21st century, foreign-related marriage registration in mainland China will tend to decline—a trend representing advanced living conditions, more chances to go abroad, and new attitudes towards choice of spouse in developed urban areas in China (Jiang 2007; Tan 2009). Meanwhile, there is a new type of foreign-related marriage: in choosing foreign husbands, some middle-aged Chinese females expect a 'fresh start' in their lives after a divorce, often under the name of 'love' and 'romance' (Pang & Wen 2005; Hu 2007).

Figure 3: The Comparison of Registered Marriages in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou in 2014 (produced by the author)

From Sources: China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbook 2015(Zhongguo Minzheng Tongji Nianjian)

Figure 3 compares numbers of registered foreign-related marriages in the first-tier cities of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou in 2014. A first-tier city embraces the national political, economic and social mandate, and has the leading role and capacity of a large city. Its advantages are embodied in the level of urban development, comprehensive economic strength, transportation planning and services, ability to attract highly qualified workers, capacity for information exchange, international competitiveness, and capacity for technological innovation. A first-tier city plays a dominant role in leading and disseminating national activities of production, services, finance, innovation, distribution of goods, circulation of currency, industry circulation, and general business (CBNweekly 2014). Thus, as a first-tier city, Guangzhou has a great advantage in attracting foreigners, which contributes to the growth of Chinese-foreign marriages. The columns show that Beijing and Shanghai hold far more numbers of foreign nationals and Taiwanese marrying mainland Chinese citizens than Guangzhou. However, because of the location in southern China, Guangzhou depends on geographical proximity, cultural similarity, shared language and close economic contact with Hong Kong, Macao and traditional overseas migration. In Guangdong Province, the number of foreign-related marriages reached about 8401 pairs in 2014, with 14 percent in the capital city Guangzhou. The total number of Chinese-foreign marriages was 1178 in Guangzhou, which was less than the 1962 pairs in Shanghai but higher than the 1149 pairs in Beijing in 2014. It must also be considered that recent registration records for African foreigners in Guangzhou may not be exactly accurate. Some African foreigners have Chinese partners, and some of them live with a Chinese partner in a polygamous marriage, which are not legal under current Chinese marriage laws. It is therefore difficult to calculate the exact number of foreign-related marriages in Guangzhou.

Figure 4: The Number of Registered Divorces in Mainland China (1979-2014) (Produced by the author)

From Sources: China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbook 1978-2015

(Zhongguo Minzheng Tongji Nianjian)

Figure 4 provides the number of registered divorces published by the Chinese Civil Affairs Department, including foreign-related divorces. The figure shows that both types of divorce are increasing. In 1979 there were 193,000 divorced couples overall, and it grew to 211,000 in 1982. From 1983 to 1985, the divorced population was at nearly 200,000 couples, and after 2003, it soared to 690,000 couples. In 2004, registered divorces exceeded 1 million. The number fluctuated for a while, but maintained rapid growth, reaching 2.957 million in 2014. The divorce registration number between Chinese and foreign nationals, overseas Chinese and people from Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan in mainland China is much smaller than that of registered divorces from mainland Chinese residents, but the increase of such divorce seems unlikely to stop.

Figure 4 also offers details, showing that in 1980 the registered number of foreign-related divorces was 330 couples, but the number was not more than 126 in other years before 1985. From 1987 to 1993, the number reached 220 and continually grew to 968. In 1994, the number of divorces dropped to 737. In 1997, it bounced back to 1385 couples, but in 1999 the number of divorced couples again declined to 975. From 2000, the number exceeded 1000, and after some ups and downs soared to its peak at 9470 in 2008. It can be seen that from early 21st century, more and more Chinese are choosing independent lifestyles and are no longer willing to bear unhappy marriages. In the past, Chinese chose foreigners partly for socioeconomic upward mobility; with the increase of favorable economic conditions and changing attitudes towards marriage and social class, divorcees are less likely to care about criticisms of irresponsibility towards family, and young people particularly are more concerned with personal feelings and the pursuit of personal happiness. In 2011, foreign-related divorces fell back to around 5700, and gradually grew to 6714 in 2014. However, the number of divorces judged by courts is excluded in the findings, so the number of foreign-related divorced couples was actually over 7000 in 2014. In general, in the 21st century, the foreign-related divorce rate is higher than that in the 20th century, as the Chinese have more liberal views on divorce, and care more about personal feelings and choice of spouse than they previously had.

Figure5: The Number of Registered Divorces in Guangzhou in 2014 (Produced by the author)
From: China Civil Affairs Statistical Yearbook 2015 (Zhongguo Minzheng Tongji Nianjian)

The Number of Registered Divorces of Guangzhou in 2014

Registered Divorces of Mainland Residents, 22,979

Overseas Chinese, Hong Konger, Macanese, and Taiwanese, 256

Foreign Nationals, 42
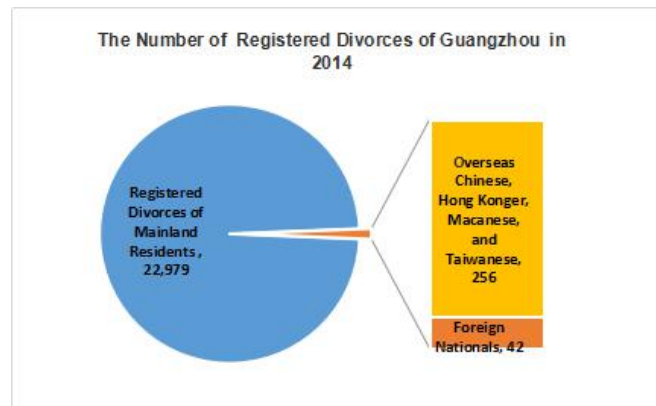
As figure 5 shows, in 2014 the total number of registered divorces was 23,277 in Guangzhou. It included 22,979 Chinese residents' registered divorces in mainland China, and 298 foreign-related divorces, which is the third highest number of recorded foreign-related divorce, closely after Fuzhou (403) and Shanghai (373) in 2014. 14.1% of foreign-related divorces in Guangzhou were registered divorces of foreign nationals. However, the data are not accurate. One reason is that some cases judged by courts are not included. Other reasons include cases in which couples separated but did not register on time, or divorced under religious context without involving Chinese institutions. For example, in some cases African-Chinese couples registered marriages in China, but separated without record. In some cases Africans went back to Africa for years and found another wife, or Africans suffered illness and left China, all of which could lead to inaccurate data. Unsurprisingly, the number of foreign-related divorces is higher in the provinces of Guangdong, Fujian, Zhejiang, and cities of Fuzhou, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Jiangmen, and Beijing, where most foreign-related marriages were recorded in 2014.

The above paragraphs describe patterns of foreign-related/intercultural marriages and divorces with reference to regional diversity, annual fluctuations and gender differences in China. Marriage and divorce choices differ by various degrees among regions, genders and time periods.

3.3 Conclusion

By literature review and statistical date, it can be seen that due to external and internal reasons, Chinese traditional marriage and family structure are changing. The growth of Chinese-foreign marriage and divorce partly reveals the difficulties of managing marriage, which also reflects the realities of Chinese-African marriages. The next chapters will explore various reasons that cause such relationships to break-up, such as value, cultural, language and gender inequality, economic and social pressures, and family conflicts. Some African spouses/partners find it hard to understand close ties and family values of their Chinese spouses/partners, so only a few couples/partners continue staying in their relationship.

Chapter 4 The Field Site: Guangzhou

Guangnan is the richest place known to others, the climate is like spring all year round;
The huge ships are floating in the river, thousands of wealthy people live there.
Taken from: [Ming Dynasty] Fen SUN 'Guangzhou Folk Song'
广南富庶天下闻，四时风气长如春；
峨舸大舶映云日，贾客千家万家室。
摘自：【明】孙蕡《广州歌》

Guangzhou has a special position in China's history, culture, religion and economy. As a first tier city, Guangzhou attracts numerous foreign workers and residents. Compared with other foreigners, Africans are relative newcomers. In just 15 years, more than 300,000 Africans have arrived and settled in different areas of Guangzhou and other cities of Guangdong province. The diversity of nations, religious affiliations, languages, occupations, social networks, socio-economic backgrounds and gender make these Africans a complex group. Africans tend to migrate quickly within different areas of Guangzhou and other cities, some without documents, creating difficulties in foreign policy and management in Guangzhou.

4.1 The General Situation of Guangzhou

Guangzhou has been recognized as the first region to open up to international trade. Currently, it is in the spotlight due issues of managing African migrant populations. Guangzhou is the capital of Guangdong province and covers an area of 7,434.4 square kilometers. It is located in southern China along the Pearl River Delta margin, bordering the South China Sea, and adjacent to Hong Kong and Macau. Guangzhou has existed for at least two thousand years and was the origin of the 'Maritime Silk Road' in ancient China (Guang 2002). It is now known as 'The Millennium Commercial City.' As a transportation and communication hub in southern China, Guangzhou has long been an important port economy.

Beginning in 618 (Tang Dynasty) when Guangzhou was still called *nanhaijun* (南海郡), this international trade city established a flourishing maritime business and customs system (*shibosi*/市舶司) which administered overland and maritime trade and diplomatic relations with foreigners (Li 2011). Guangzhou was a starting point of the 'Road to Foreign Land' (*tongyilu*/通夷路) which passed through more than 30 countries and regions, and opened up 10,000 kilometers of ocean routes to promote foreign trade in the golden age of the Tang Dynasty (Cheng 1995). This was a remarkable signal of openness to trade in ancient China, indicating that not just Chinese traveled internationally to do business but also that foreigners

voyaged to Guangzhou. At the peak of this period, nearly 4,000 foreign merchant ships docked at the Guangzhou port and more than 100,000 foreigners settled in Guangzhou (Wang & Ma 2006). The local government designated an exclusive area for foreigners to live in, called *fanfang* (藩坊) (Guan 2002; Wang & Ma 2006). During this period, a large number of Arabs inhabited *fanfang*, introducing Islam into China. The government appointed several special officials to administer *fanfang*, responsible for organizing public matters, holding foreign business meetings, and managing foreign residents' daily lives and foreign children's schooling (Wang & Ma 2006).

From 960 to 1367 (Song Dynasty to Yuan Dynasty), Guangzhou's economy continued to develop rapidly. The domestic wars led to decreased international trade in Guangzhou for a while, and Quanzhou (in Fujian province now) appeared to be a strong trade competitor, with sophisticated management of customs and a solid economic foundation, but Guangzhou maintained its position as the economic and political center of the Lingnan region (*lingnandiqu*/岭南地区). Since 1368 (Ming Dynasty), Guangzhou's economy has sustained overall growth that has far outstripped previous generations, monopolizing foreign trade in China. The Qing government (from 1636 to 1911) preferred doing business with foreigners. However, it prevented foreigners from close contact with citizens. The central government authorized a specific number of Chinese businessmen to deal with foreign trade. These specified Chinese traders stayed in designated areas of Guangzhou known as Foreign Goods Factories (*yanghuohang*/洋货行) or The Thirteen Industries (*shisanhang*/十三行) or The Thirteen Streets *(shisanJie*/十三街)*, where they conducted business with foreigners. These designated areas were located on riverbanks for ease of transportation of goods and to facilitate administration (Liang 1999). From 1715 to 1786, Great Britain, France, Holland, Sweden, and the U.S. gradually established Fondacos or Factories (*shangguan*/商馆) in Guangzhou, which were named The Thirteen Foreign Factories (*shisanyiguan*/十三夷/商馆) in Chinese, and doubled as places of residence for foreign traders (Huang 2003). In reality, there were more than thirteen factories—the term was simply a reference to the most popular and thriving factories of that period. The Thirteen Industries (*Shisanhang*/十三行) referred to both various groups of traders and their businesses and a specific trade area in Guangzhou. All trade activity had to be carried out under the strict supervision of the central government (Zhao 2011). In 1757, in order to prevent foreign vessels from threatening the central government in Beijing, The Qing government (*Qingzhengfu*/清政府) had to close customs in nearby areas, such as the Min customs (Fujian province), Zhe customs (Zhejiang province) and Jiang customs (Jiangshu province), leaving the Yue customs in Guangzhou port as the only trade port open to the foreign world. Far from the central government in Beijing, Guangzhou's municipal government was relatively free to administer foreign trade (Yue 1994;

Zhang 2012). These actions led to the rapid economic development of Guangzhou and its monopoly over foreign trade.

In 1921, Guangdong province founded the Government Hall in Guangzhou, and in 1925 established Guangzhou city. Guangzhou holds a substantial position in China's political and economic landscape. Thanks to its unique history and trade conditions, Guangzhou not only draws a large number of domestic businessmen but also attracts traders from around the world.

After the foundation of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Guangzhou started to hold the semiannual 'Canton Fair' in 1957, which became an effective conduit for trade and promoted openness to foreign trade (Yan 1986). Since 1979, with the 'south door' opened and further consolidation of business, Guangzhou has reshaped the distribution of industry and gradually transitioned from a consumer-oriented to a production-oriented city (Chen 2009). Guangzhou is considered to be a first-tier city in line with Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen, characterized by considerable commercial services and rapid industrial development (ifeng 2014). In 1952, the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) was established. From 1995 to 1998, the Guangzhou branch of CCPIT organized the 'Guangzhou Commodity Exhibition' in South Africa (Niu 2015). In 2001, China joined the WTO, which inspired its rapid growth as an international economic and political player. Undeniably, economic activity in Guangzhou benefited from WTO accession. In 2009, the third session of economic cooperation of speaking tour of African embassadors was held in Guangzhou. The aim of the the meeting and the subsequent tour of selected enterprises in Guangdong Province was to expand cooperation and communication between Africa and China, with a particular focus on Egypt, Botswana, Mauritius and Nigeria (GDPAFFC 2009). In 2013, the Guangdong CPIT allied with the Guangzhou branch of the China Development Bank and the China Import and Export Credit Insurance Corporation to launch 'Entering Africa' activities, which aimed to create a platform for foreign trade in Africa (Wu 2015). In 2015, representatives of the Guangdong provincial government participated in the first session of the African Investment Forum held by the Ethiopian government, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the World Bank, and the China-Africa Development Fund (GDFAO 2015). In the meantime, the Guangzhou CPIT and the Guangdong International Chamber of Commerce set up the 'Guangdong Investment and Trade Union for Africa' in Guangzhou (MOFCOM 2015). The economic development of Guangzhou somewhat benefited from these various organizations and cooperation with African countries.

In the first half of 2015, the total import and export trade in Guangzhou was valued at approximately 391.71 billion RMB, an increase of 8.7% over the previous year (8.8% in USD). Export alone was 234.51 billion RMB, an increase of 29.8%. Trade of processed goods accounted for 80% of total imports and exports, and also showed stable growth. A large

portion of exports were labor-intensive products such as textiles, clothing, bags, shoes, toys, furniture, plastic products and lighting. Trade between Guangzhou and Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America increased to 49.4%, 57.4% and 24.6% respectively (MOFCOM 2015; National Statistics Yearbook 2014). The Chinese government promoted economic development and created preferential policies that attracted a large number of Africans seeking trade opportunities to Guangzhou. Especially since 2005, Africans have become important participants of the Canton Fair. In May 2014, the 115th session of the Canton Fair drew 17,287 African merchants, the highest increase among foreign participants (Cheng 2014). Economic development, improvement of infrastructure, a stable social environment, and personal development opportunities have attracted a large number of foreigners to live and work in Guangzhou. The Bureau of Exit and Entry Administration of the Ministry of Public Security P. R. China Statistics counted nearly 52.67 million foreign (excluding Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan) entries and exits in 2014. On October 25, 2014, foreign residents in Guangzhou numbered about 118,000, including 57,000 Asians, 22,000 Europeans, 16,000 Africans, 14,000 North Americans, 5,000 South Americans, and 4,000 from Oceania (Guangzhou Public Security Bureau 2014). While Africans are not the biggest foreign population in Guangzhou, were at 14% of the total foreign population, they impact low-end businesses and attract more attention than any other groups in Guangzhou (Mathews 2015).

4.2 Distribution Pattern of Africans in Guangzhou

Africans did not recognize China as an immigrant destination early on. Dubai was the major marketplace, offering attractive prices, goods from all over the world, cheap warehouses, a logistical hub on the international level, excellent air connections to global destinations, a system of well-organized duty-free zones, and a variety of cheap hotels (Bredeloup 2013). During the 1980s and 1990s, Bangkok and Jakarta were well-known trading posts in Asia for Africans to purchase fabrics and cosmetics (Bredeloup 2012, 2013). From 1997 these regions were affected by the economic crisis in Southeast Asia. African merchants were forced out of these regions, and traveled instead to Hong Kong where they settled in Chungking Mansions—a place considered terribly unsafe by the Hong Kong press (Mathews 2012)—which had become the gateway to mainland China (Bodomo 2006).

In late 1990s, Muslims from the northwestern areas of China, such as Uyghur and Hui, migrated near the Xiaobei area of Guangzhou. Later they connected with Arab businessmen who brought more Africans into Guangzhou (Zhen 2009). Around 2004, Africans took the first steps into the Xiaobei area of Guangzhou. They acted as trade intermediaries entrusted by individuals or companies for the procurement of goods, and earned an intermediary fee. Few African companies set up at that time, but there were some commercial agencies and a

few stores (Li & Du 2012). They stayed in hotels, and then tried to find private housing to rent once they were familiar with the environment. Long-term migrants who were able to find roots provided business and accommodation aid to later migrants. Slowly more and more Africans relied on these social networks to apply for visas and settle down in Guangzhou. Later Africans occupied Tianxiu Mansion in the Xiaobei area, which was the original commercial territory of Middle Eastern merchants (Li, Xue, Lyons & Brown 2008), and built 'transnational social spaces' (Faist 2000; Liet al. 2008) or ethnic enclaves' (Fang & Liang 2010; Li, Xue & Du 2009). African migrants gradually spread to different regions of Guangdong province and different cities in China (Lan 2014, 2015). For Africans, markets have become fields for information exchange and making friends, but at the same time, markets inevitably increase harsh export competition among African traders (Haugen 2012). Guangzhou is the favored place of Africans for buying and reselling almost every kind of good, including clothing, electric items and household goods.

African trade activities and purchasing choices aim to achieve maximum economic efficiency. However, a Chinese trader named Gao, who has worked in Xiaobei for over eight years, said,

> In 2009, everyone in the market had a currency detector, [because] foreign traders prefer cash transaction—a great amount of money—and you need to identify false currency. In the past, Africans purchased goods by the container. But now most African traders purchase small allocations and depend on consolidating shipments with other traders. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

During my fieldwork, many traders confirmed that compared to the prosperous trade between Africans and Chinese near Xiaobei and Sanyuanli in 2009, trade had declined by 2012. Especially in 2014, although the markets were still in operation, numerous African and Middle-Eastern traders said profits had dwindled. This is not just because of the economic downturn, but also due to soaring production costs in China with the declining purchasing power of other countries. Some stores also failed because people were not interested in their products. Due to the spread of Ebola in some African countries in 2014, the Guangzhou government more strictly controlled the movement of people between Africa and China. At that time it was difficult for many Africans to obtain Chinese visas from the Chinese embassy in African countries. However, those staying in Guangzhou were able to obtain renewal visas without returning to their home countries. Yuan (aged mid-50s), a landlady whose family mainly depended on collecting rent from Africans, sent me an email complaining about the situation during the time of the Ebola outbreak. She said that because the number of African tenants was significantly reduced, her family's living conditions had become miserable. Moreover, considering expensive commercial costs, the sluggish business environment, and the local government's unfriendliness towards Africans, some African traders decided to leave Guangzhou. For example, a Malian interviewee (aged mid- 30s) who ran a shop in Yueyang

market for four years decided to take his family back to Mali in the spring of 2015. From 2009 to 2014, apart from Ebola prevention that influenced trade markets near Xiaobei and Sanyuanli, police actions against the 'three illegals' (*sanfei*/三非: illegally entry, illegally stay, illegally work), pushed Africans out of Guangzhou as well. The Guangzhou government hoped that these measures would standardize markets and optimize foreign-related administration, but unforeseen negative effects accompanied these measures. For example, new policies forced foreign retailers who were unlicensed or without working permits to leave Guangzhou, which lead to market decline in Xiaobei and Sanyuanli. But we cannot simply declare that the era of prosperity in Xiaobei and Sanyuanli has ended by these negative examples, because in 2015 many African traders applied for visas and returned to Guangzhou once again. Perhaps recent years may have simply been an incubation period leading to greater trade growth.

Guangzhou is attractive to Africans for several reasons. First of all, Guangzhou is situated in the subtropical zone and the climate is hot and humid all year around, similar to many African regions. Secondly, Guangzhou has sound urban infrastructure compared to many African regions, and the living conditions are comfortable and convenient. Thirdly, Guangzhou produces a wide range of goods in hundreds of factories known as the 'world factory' (Lan 2014; Li, Ma & Xue 2009), or the 'world's department store' (South China Morning Post 2009) and has become an 'African tower of Babel' for cheap goods (Bodomo 2012). Fourthly, as a manufacturing and distribution center, connected to more than 400 shipping ports in 100 countries, Guangzhou is very convenient for economic and trade activity (He, Wang & Li 2015). All of these advantages make Guangzhou preferential to other cities in China.

Map 1: Zoning Map of Guangzhou (produced by author)

By visiting African respondents (Map 1), I found that Africans are mainly working and living in Yuexiu District and Baiyun District (Li 2015). A few live and work in Haizhu District, which is located to the south of Yuexiu District, and some live in Panyu District. Some Africans also reside to the west of Yuexiu in Liwan District, and to the east in Tianhe District. Jinshazhou, a small island connecting Guangzhou and Foshan has many African residents due to its cheaper rent and lax governance.

Table 1: The Distributions of African Respondents in Guangdong Province

Resource: Author's Fieldwork, and References of Li, Xue, Lyons and Brown (2008)

Areas	Main street	Trade and residential areas
Yuexiu District	Huanshidong Road, Huanshi zhong Road, Hongqiao, Hengan Road, Xiaobei Road, Baohan Street, Dengfeng Street, XiatangXi Road, Huangtian Street, Tongxin Road, Tongxin nan Road, Lujing Road, Lujingxi Road, Lujingdong Road，extending to Guangshan Road, Dongfengzhong Road, Dongfengdong Road, Hengfu Road, Taojin Road, Jianshe Road, Guangyuan West Road	Yisheng Mansion, Hengjing Mansion, Hengsheng Mansion, Xiushan Building, Taoci Trade Mansion, Guolong Mansion, Yongyi Mansion, Dengfeng Hotel, Tianxiu Mansion, Jinshanxiang Trade City, Yueyang Trade City (A/B), Xindengfen Hotel, Honghui Trade City, Laogan Mansion, Xiatanxincun, Jinlu villa, Beixiu Mansion, Zaoqing Mansion, Jinying Mansion, Yuexiu Garden Court, Yuebei Hotel, Sanrong Mansion, Qiaofu Court, Baimasi Clothing Market, Liuhua Wholesale Market, Tianen Clothing Market, Yulong Trade City, and so on
Biayun District and Jinshazhou	Sanyuanli Avenue, Jichang Road, Yaohua Street, Yongping Street (Shayong south), Yuanjing Road, Guanghua Road, zengcha Road	Tangqi Clothing Market, Jianan Clothing Market, Tongtong Trade City, Baile Trade City, Jingtang Xiushan Building, Kuangquan Xiushan Building, Zhanxi Clock and Watch City, Yangguangyaju (Mawu), Jichang Road community, Tongdewei Teacher New Villages, Jingui Village, Jinshazhou and so on.
Haizhu District	Xingangxi Road	Clothing and fabric wholesale markets near Sun Yat-sen University
Panyu District		Lijiang Garden, Qifu New Village
Nansha District		Dongyong Town
Liwan District		Century Square,
Tianhe District		Guangzhou East Railway Station, Tianhe Plaza, Dongpu
Foshan city	Huangqi walking Street	Huangqi of Nanhai District, Hepan Garden, Dasha Village, Binjiang Mansion

The Table 1 shows distributions of Africans in Guangdong province. The region surrounded by Huanshi Zhong Road and Huanshi Dong Road in Yuexiu District is referred to as the 'Chocolate City' by the Chinese. Niu (2015) states that, according to Africans, Xiaobei (also called 'Dengfeng' or 'Baohan') is broader than just the 'Chocolate City' region, and refers to

Xiaobei Road, Xiaobei Huaquan Station, Xiaobei Station, Jinlu area, Tongxin Nan Road, Xiatangxi Road, Lujing Road, and Hengfu Road. Because Xiaobei and Sanyuanli are places where African businesses started, the main fieldwork for this dissertation was conducted in these places.

Sun (age mid-50s), a landlord and shop owner working on Baohan Street, said that around the late 1990s, only a minor number of Africans did business in Guangzhou and stayed in hotels near the Hongqiao area. After 2002, Africans gradually spread out to Dengfeng Hotel and Xiushan Building and conducted business in Tianxiu Mansion and other neighboring markets. To meet foreigners' daily needs, locals opened small stores, groceries and restaurants. Clothing, electronic and furniture stores geared to African consumers gradually appeared in these areas. This triggered a boom of small businesses. A Nigerian boss who owns a company and lives with his African wife and two daughters in Guangzhou said,

> I first came to Guangzhou in 1999, just for the Canton Fair. I hardly saw any Africans. My friend told me Taoci [mansion], [and] Tianxiu had cheaper goods. I asked a translator to go there with me...I sent some clothing to Lagos [to] my brother's shop. I was lucky, the goods sold very well, and my brother supported me to stay in Guangzhou. We have three companies now. (September 2014)

According to market manager Qiu, Tianxiu Mansion in Yuexiu District opened for business in 1994 with mostly Chinese shop owners. Building A and Building C were for commercial occupants. The first to fifth floor of Building B was occupied by shops selling clothing, fabric, leather, jewelry and small electrical items, and offices occupied on the sixth floor and above. Li and Xue (2008) point out that in 2008, African and Arab occupants took up 70% of Tianxiu Mansion's 600 offices. At the same time, African and Arab traders occupied half of all 200 stores in Xiushan Building, which is not far from Tianxiu Mansion. A staff member of Dengfeng Company said the famous Xiatang-based living area 'Jinlu Villa' with markets and transportation belongs to Dengfeng Company. Considering living conditions and convenient shopping, Xiaobei attracts a large number of Africans who tend to do private business. Middle Eastern and African Muslims frequent the Muslim restaurants nearby. Additionally, night markets, bars, pubs, and Karaoke draw more foreign traders to Xiaobei.

Huanshi Road in Xiaobei is connected to the Guangyuan West Road, where popular foreign trade markets are also located. For instance, the old and new Tian'en markets have more than 500 stores, 25% of which are registered to Africans. Though other stores are registered under Chinese names, Africans run many of these stores using their Chinese partners' names. In fact, nearly 85% of stores are managed by Africans (Li & Du 2012). According to Xiong (2014: 89), 603 Africans residents manage the Kuangquan Street community in Yuexiu District, including 317 Nigerians, 35 Bengalis, 45 Tanzanians, 59 South Africans, 121 Ugandans and 26 others. Xiong states that Africans living and working near Kuangquan Street are usually traders with extensive experience, and 68.5 % of them conduct business in many countries.

These groups are mainly engaged in private commercial activities, and focus on low-end products in Guangzhou.

In 2006, the Yuexiu Branch of the Bureau of Public Security set up the first Foreigners' Management Center in Guangzhou, and police officers regrouped from different sections of the Bureau to handle all foreigner-related administrative services (Xiao 2008). In 2007, Dengfeng Street set up a service station for foreigners, encouraging them to live in Jinglu Villa (Zheng & Chen 2008). In January 2008, the first Residential Community Service Center for Foreigners was opened in Lijian Garden in Panyu District (Xiao 2008). In 2012, 'Dengfeng Service Center' started to provide professional NGO services for foreign-related consultations (Niu 2015: 40).

Photo 1: The Market for Africans in Yuexiu District (Taken by author in 2014)

Sanyuanli is located to the north of Guangyuan West Road, in Baiyun District, where many African traders set up stores. In this area, Xiong (2014: 89) surveyed nine markets with nearly 5000 stores, around 7.5% of which were run by foreigners, with African traders as predominant occupants. The Jianan Market in Sanyuanli is famous for wholesale clothing in larger shops in the basement, which charge cheaper rent than other floors due to their disadvantaged position. There are several transnational companies run by Africans located beneath the ground floor. Prices of clothes in this market are much lower than other wholesale markets, so these markets are 'shopping paradises' for both Africans and Chinese wholesalers who want to purchase cheaper clothing and order special design products. Africans store managers buy products made in China directly from local factories at low prices, earning profits from other Africans who buy goods in their stores in Guangzhou. Some Chinese factories display samples in Africans' stores to attract more customers. These African shop owners serve as middlemen, securing low prices from factories and selling products to other African buyers. Therefore, in Xiaobei and Sanyuanli areas there are not only appreciable numbers of African buyers, but also numerous African sellers, and all Africans in these areas

are mainly engaged in business-related activities.

Jinshazhou in Baiyun District also serves as an important connection between Guangzhou and Foshan City, and is a settlement for a large number of Africans. Bill, a Nigerien trader, said,

> I prefer Jinshazhou, because there are few police checks on visas. I use the subway and bus to go to markets very quickly. I like the Chinese subway. The living conditions are good, the rent is higher than Xiaobei [city village], but it is OK. (November 2014)

Yuexiu and Baiyun Districts have better living conditions, along with cheaper rent and fast transportation to downtown markets. Additionally, the strict visa and residence permit checks on Africans in Xiaobei and Sanyuanli force numerous undocumented Africans to seek new places to survive (Haugen 2014). As a border between Guangzhou and Foshan, Jinshazhou has loose governance, making it the perfect place of settlement for lower income or undocumented Africans.

Photo 2: The Chinese-African Stores in Yueyang Trade Market (Taken by author in 2014)

To the south of Yuexiu District is Haizhu District. There is a huge clothing and fabric market on Xingang Xi Road in Haizhu District, which has 14 zones and more than 4000 stores attracting Africans consumers. However the majority of Africans still gather in Yuexiu District rather than other areas.

Panyu District is also situated to the south of Yuexiu District. Luopu Street is a wholesale distribution center in Panyu District, well known for cosmetics, decorative materials, and household products. Foreigners engaging in related industries normally choose to live near this area. According to Xiong (2014: 88-89)the foreign service station on Luopu Street in Panyu District established on January 15, 2008 is the only fully completed station among 19 foreign service stations planned in Panyu District. In 2014, this station offered services to 766 foreigners, including 65 Africans from D.R. Congo, Nigeria, Mali, South Africa, Kenya, and

Togo. These foreigners lived in Lijiang Community, Qifu Village, Guangbi Community, Guangao Community, Luocheng Community, Luotaonan Community, Zhujiang Community, Xisan Village, Luoxi Village, Shaxi Village, Orange Tree Village, Dongxing Village, Shangjiao Village and elsewhere. Most African respondents live in these areas with their African or Chinese family members. They have lived in Guangzhou for several years and are familiar with social norms. Their Chinese partners help them to buy apartments in Guangzhou. Real estate is a wise investment, as housing prices keep increasing in Guangzhou. Should they choose to leave this area, resale profits will have increased yearly. The infrastructure and property management services of these communities are good and transportation is convenient. These Africans obviously have higher income than those living in urban villages, so they can rent or buy better apartments in Guangzhou.

Shiji Plaza in Liwan District, to the west of Yuexiu District, has a small number of African residents. Rental of an apartment in Shiji Plaza is nearly 1,500-5,000 RMB per month. Chinese partners usually try to convince African partners to move out of African communities in Xiaobei and Sanyunli and buy or rent an apartment together, but much depends on whether African partners decide to live in China for long and whether they have enough money. High-income Africans tend to engage in business in China for about ten years, speak fluent Mandarin or Cantonese and have in-depth understanding of local society. They normally find housing in favorable residential districts and live with family members in Guangzhou. Their children attend international schools that cost more than 100,000 RMB in annual tuition. They hope their children master two or more languages, and would prefer for their children to settle in Europe or North America in the future. A South African respondent, William, indicated that the biggest motive for him to earn money is to provide his children with a better life. He followed his Chinese wife's suggestion to move to a Chinese community and is preparing to buy an apartment in Shiji Plaza.

Dongpu, located in the east of Yuexiu District, has many African residents. They tend to do business in this area and often take buses or subways to the Guangzhou Railway Station, around which many markets are located, such as Baima Clothing Market and Liuhua Market. In Dongpu, many buildings are sold to teachers at a cheaper price, and some teachers have taken advantage of this to buy an additional apartment that they rent to foreign students who do not like strict dormitory management on campuses. The reasonable rent is attractive to African students, who later connect their friends to apartments in this area. At present, African communities have formed in small clusters in Dongpu.

Huangqi is in the Nanhai District of Foshan City bordering Jinshazhou in the Baiyun District of Guangzhou City. Huangqi attracts Africans for more or less the same reasons as Jinshazhou does. African respondents said that their friends and some people they knew were mainly clustered in these areas. As Haugen states (2015), though Guangzhou and Foshan are

both cities in Guangdong province, administration of foreigners is implemented differently in these areas. Ten years ago, undocumented Africans had already moved from Guangzhou to Foshan, due to strict visa and housing registration control in Guangzhou, while Foshan polices seemed more tolerant of foreigners.

My fieldwork shows that a number of Africans use living places as offices or warehouses simultaneously, spending less money than they would on separate rentals, and saving company registration fees and taxes (Fang & Liang 2010). However, the 'Interim Provisions of Guangdong Province on the Administration of and Services to Aliens' (2011) state that "No citizen, legal person or other organization may rent or provide free housing to aliens who do not have valid passports or who have expired visas. The housing rented shall not be concurrently used for living in, warehousing, production and business operations" (Article 17 2011). Therefore it is illegal for Africans to store goods in their living places. Moreover, Africans share living places with friends without proper registration, which also is forbidden by law. "An alien tenant shall perform the following obligations:…in the case of a change in the use or occupants of the housing rented, or subletting or lending of such housing to a third party, altering registration of temporary residence with the public security organ, and going through the formalities with the real estate administration department for alteration of rent" (Article 19 2011).

Xiaobei and Sanyuanli areas have numerous semi-closed residential communities. The first floor of such a building is used for commercial purposes. Because these residential quarters are in the old downtown and adjacent to the viaduct, to attract Africans, the rent is generally lower than other housing in this area (Li & Xue 2008). Africans also make use of rented places for other purposes without registration. 'The Report of Investigation and Research on the Administration of Foreigners Living in Rented Houses/Apartments of Guangzhou City' (2008) states that due to the lack of a unified legal approach to manage foreigners, the following problems arise: failure of foreigners to register in police stations, failure of foreign-owned companies to obtain licenses, disregard of visa expiry dates, and incoherence of information submitted to the administration by landlords (CZGOPRC 2008). Due to these issues, African migrants are generally portrayed as a cause for concern in the media and often referred to as illegal immigrants (Da Kung Pao 2013).

All of the above areas contain commercial distribution markets, well-facilitated offices, comfortable residences, or convenient transportation. Africans are more interested in developing transnational business than settling down. However, if there is any possibility to extend their stay in China, they will happily take advantage of the opportunity for long-term profit accumulation. Although some Africans come to China as foreign students to learn Chinese and study business, most become involved in commercial activities sooner or later.

4.3 Places of Worship

With its looser central government control and long-term history of foreign trade, Guangzhou exhibits many unique cultural features. As the economic and political centre of southern China, it differs from other cities in the region. In 147AC Buddhists landed in Guangzhou before moving on to southeastern China, making it one of the earliest places with a religious presence. Buddhism spread all over China from Guangzhou. In 651AC, Islam spread into China through the Maritime Silk Route originating in Guangzhou. Huaisheng Mosque (*huaishengqingzhensi*/怀圣清真寺), Huaisheng Tower and Waqqas Tombs, the three oldest Muslim structures in China, are situated in Guangzhou. These milestones of Islamic history in China attract many Muslim pilgrims (Zhang, Huang & Zhao 2007). In the middle of the 16th Century, Christian missionary Matteo Ricci arrived in China with Western traders to preach Christian doctrines (Ren 2002). As an international trade center, and a center of cultural exchange (Cai 1991), Guangzhou has been home to domestic and foreign populations throughout history, leading to social and cultural diversity which has played an important role in China's development.

Currently, Guangdong Province has 13 registered Catholic sites, including six in Guangzhou: the Sacred Heart Cathedral (*shishishengxindajiaotang*/石室圣心大教堂), Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel in Shamian (*shamianludetang*/沙面路德堂), the Baogang-based Immaculate Heart of Mary Church (*baogangshengmushengxintang*/宝岗圣母圣心大教堂), the St. Francis of Assisi Cathedral in Dongshan (*dongshangshengwufangjigetang*/东山圣五方济各堂), the St. Anne Church in Tianhe (*tianheshenganni*/天河圣安妮), and the Zengcheng-based Mary Help of Christians Church (*zengchengshengmujinjiaozhiyoutang*/增城圣母进教之佑堂). Sacred Heart Cathedral in particular is an important place of worship for Africans (Hong 2013). It is situated in the old downtown near Wanling Plaza, which also attracts Africans to purchase goods. Haugen (2013) points out that there are more than a dozen African Pentecostal churches in Guangzhou, but none is officially registered.

Through fieldwork, I found that every Sunday afternoon the Sacred Heart Cathedral holds a Mass which is exclusively for foreigners, with the exception of a few Chinese partners and volunteers. Church volunteer Chen confirmed that Africans account for more than 95% of participants in the foreign Mass. Some Africans come from Sanyunli, Xiaobei, Dongpu and Panyu to attend the Mass in English, singing of hymns, Bible discussion, personal experience exchange groups, and other offerings, starting at 3:30PM. Some Africans volunteers distribute handouts, and show African 'brothers' and 'sisters' around the cathedral. Some are proud members of the choir. However, due to certain elements of sermons, language barriers or their undocumented status, some Africans choose to attend private underground churches rather

than gatherings in the Sacred Heart Cathedral (Haugen 2013).

Photo 3: The Sacred Heart Cathedral (Taken by author in 2014)

Within Christianity, there are many denominations. According to an interviewee, there is a Nigerian private Pentecostal church offering services in English located in an office building near Guoshan Street, which allows multinational Africans and a few Chinese partners and familiar Chinese friends to participate in services. During worship, priests interpret the Bible on the basis of their personal experience and understanding. At the same time, the congregation expresses their agreement and praise to God, and more importantly, prays for wealth. A newcomer must be introduced to church leaders or guardians by a church member, allowing leaders to decide whether to accept or deny participation. A Congolese church established in Tianxiu Mansion mainly uses French in mass with a few English explanations. Through fieldwork, I found another five private African churches, located in private houses or commercial buildings near Sanyuanli, Panyu, Dongpu, Jinshazhou and Foshan. Normally, these underground African churches are practically unknown because the Chinese government prohibits unregistered churches, or because some church leaders are undocumented and want to avoid contact with officials, or because a registration application was rejected by the government (Haugen 2013).

Similarly, African Muslims belong to various sects. Numerous African Muslim respondents were from Mali, Niger, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Togo, Angola, Ghana and Nigeria. If they have free time on Friday, they go to famous mosques in Guangzhou to pray, such as Huaisheng Mosque (*huaishengqingzhensi*/ 怀 圣 清 真 寺), Xianxian Mosque (*xianxianqingzhensi*/先贤清真寺), Haopan Mosque (*haopanqingzhensi*/濠畔清真寺) and Xiaodongying Mosque (*xiaodongyingqingzhensi*/ 小东营清真寺). The Huaisheng Mosque, built during the Tang Dynasty, is located on Guangta Road in Yuexiu District. As Wang (2014) explains, the Huaisheng Mosque is an important national cultural relic promulgated by the

State Council in 1999, and attracts both domestic and foreign Muslims. Huaisheng Mosque occupies an area of 2,966 square meters, containing men's and women's worship halls, a lecture building, a Light Tower, a library, a reading room, bathrooms, a reception room for foreign guests, and the Islamic association office. As one of the oldest mosques in China, Huaisheng Mosque has existed for more than 1300 years, and plays vital functions in Muslim religious activities and culture. Second, Xianxian Mosque (مسجد حكماء), dating back to the Tang Dynasty, is situated on Jiefang North Road. It is built on the site of the tomb of Muslim missionary Saade Bin Aibi Wangesu. The mosque was built to honor 40 famous Arabic Muslim missionaries. It covers an area of more than 24,000 square meters. On August 27, 1985, the Guangdong provincial government designated it as a protected key cultural relic. In 2010, a new prayer hall with an area up to 1,800 square meters was established, exceeding the total areas of the four original Mosques. The prayer hall is bigger than any counterpart in other mosques in China. Third, Haopan Mosque was founded in 1465 (Ming Dynasty) and is located on the Tiancheng Road, covering 491 square meters. The building is majestic with a simple, elegant, garden-style layout. In August 1993, it was listed as a protected key cultural relic in Guangzhou. Forth, Xiaodongying Mosque was also established in the Ming Dynasty, more than 500 years ago. It covers 536 square meters, located on Yuehua Road. Since1876, the mosque held funeral ceremonies for deceased Muslims. In 2009, the Moslem cemeteries built the 'Farewell Hall' in another area, so the funeral activities ceased in Xiaodongying Mosque (Wang 2014).

Photo 4: The Celebration of a Muslim Festival in Xianxian Mosque of Guangzhou in 2014 (Taken by author in 2014)

During Eid al-Fitr in July and Eid al-Adha in October 2014, many African respondents stayed in Guangzhou and went to mosques to celebrate the festival with Chinese Muslims who do not speak English or French. Although the Africans and Chinese had difficulty

communicating with each other, they were able to exchange the simple greeting 'asalam alaikum.' Some African respondents reported arguing about rules of different religions on benches outside a small African restaurant on the second floor of Yueyang Trade Mansion. However, sometimes Africans are busy and directly pray in shops, or worship rooms in mansions or markets. An Angolan Muslim, Mars, said,

> It is important for us [that] these markets have [a] room [for us] to pray. Many years ago, I prayed in [a] Chinese store, [because] I was searching [for] goods in [the] market and did not have time to go to [the] mosque. [There was] no special place [to] pray. [But] now Chinese [people] know our culture, [so] they open these rooms. It is good…Many Muslim traders come here, and Chinese people know how to do business. (October 2014)

Yuan, a government official, said officials know there are undocumented Africans in religious places, but turn a blind eye on their participation in prayer rituals, which may reduce conflicts. As Haugen (2013) found, the government seems to implement a pragmatic policy to tolerate these underground churches, which remain relatively inconspicuous. Church leaders in African communities secretly protect undocumented Africans. Frank, a Nigerian trader in his early 40s, manages a store near Guangyuan West Road and vaguely implied that he offered support to undocumented Africans.

> They did not want to go back [to their hometowns] with empty hands. [When] they came here, [they] took family money and borrowed some from friends. It is [a kind of] gambling and they must succeed... They will be looked down on [by us] if they are broke. We understand them…Everyone likes money, they had to earn some…It is a wrong thing, [but there is] no other choice…I have to share my money with them, [because] God tells us to help them. (October 2014)

According to the investigations of Haugen (2012, 2013), one reason that Chinese authorities do not thoroughly investigate and deal with undocumented Africans is that they made a deal with African religious communities. The government gives tacit approval of African communities protecting their members in exchange for information from them.

4.4 Living Arrangements

4.4.1 Urban Villages

Aside from employment opportunities and religious activities, living arrangements are also essential to African's survival in Guangzhou. The majority of African respondents choose to live in urban villages, commercial buildings and private housing, while those with the means may decide to live in hotels for short stays because they are a short distance from the markets or offer convenient transportation.

An 'urban village' is a village surrounded by a city, which is caused by a rapid success of government urbanization goals (Guo &Wu 2007). Zhang (1998) argues that urban villages are

formed by the development of urban municipalities and the extension of city outskirts to rural areas. Considering factors of land ownership restrictions and relocation compensation, as well as development costs of rural residential lands, the developers have to exploit cultivated land rather than rural residential spaces. When the broad roads and high mansions gradually take over crop fields and embrace residential lands in villages, reformation costs of undeveloped residential spaces spike yearly, creating a vicious circle of transformation difficulties.

Guo and Wu (2007: 182-183) summarize the development features of urban villages as: (1) non-agricultural industries, such as real estate, commerce and service industries take the place of agriculture. (2) Geographical areas of urban villages have been incorporated into the urban planning and development, and are close to the city center, with even some parts belonging to the downtown area. (3) Residential areas become fully incorporated into urban architecture, and may resemble urban community planning, but conceal the problems of dirty, messy, complex, crowded living environments. Bai (2004) thinks that the development of these areas severely lags behind other places in the city. Li (2004) also points out that urban villages are surrounded by tall buildings inhabited by many high-income citizens. Urban villages that include low-income households and stand in concrete jungles seem to be obviously backward, and the unique situations of urban villages cause a range of social issues: (1) The residents in urban villages are citizens, villagers, ethnic groups and 'floating populations' who are mainly low-income. Due to inferior economic conditions, urban villages breed criminal activities. Persons eager to change their livelihood and alleviate poverty tend to steal and engage in drug dealing. (2) Because of the high density of housing, crowded streets, poor ventilation, lack of lighting, unsafe building structures, and terrible infrastructure and sanitation, these places generate a high rate of serious fire hazards and infectious diseases (Yu 2010). (3) The intertwining of residential and commercial activities causes illegal renting and reselling, or residential places are used as offices or storage without authority or fire-protection devices. (4) Lots of villagers do not participate in urban employment, and their personal or family incomes are typically gained from sharing rural collective dividends, bonuses and rentals (Chen et al. 2010). These behaviors and lifestyles have 'parasitic nature', meaning villagers can profit without seeking jobs.

Currently, the government has a plan for old districts and regional reconstruction including rebuilding urban villages, but the villagers do not agree with government plans, because they have built housing estates, many with more than three floors, and have held these properties for years. They demand considerable compensation from the government for resettlement, but the government has not yielded to the villagers' demands, so the villagers insist on living in urban villages. As housing prices keep rising in Guangzhou, it seems more and more difficult for the government to pay costs on old district reconstruction and urban villagers' resettlement (Guo & Wu 2007). Zhen (2009) estimates that in Guangzhou, transformation of the 138 urban

villages will cost at least 200 billion RMB.

Photo 5: Urban Village-An African Interviewee's Living Place (Taken by author in 2014)

Urban villages have some negative influences on urban planning, but considering that Guangzhou, as the first tier city, has a higher living expenditure than other cities, urban villages benefit low-income groups. Almost all villagers in urban villages own housing that is turned into shops and small rental apartments. They earn monthly rent, which solves the problem of lack of fertile land. The relatively low rent, cheaper costs of necessities, and employment opportunities offered in urban villages generate self-sustaining living and entertainment enclaves, making urban villages affordable destinations for low-income populations. Urban villages are also regarded as 'labor pools' and 'labor warehouses' as they attract an under-employed, floating labor force (Zhen 2009). Guo and Wu (2007) observe that urban villages accommodate up to 3 million residents, accounting for one third or one quarter of the total population in Guangzhou. Urban villages become a reservoir for potential laborers, and have created 100,000 job opportunities for the 'floating population'. Meanwhile, the benefit of creating rental spaces drives the villagers to expand buildings, narrowing the width of streets and generating problems such as inadequate sanitation and fire protection (Yu 2010: 11590). Landlord Liu (age mid-40s) said,

> The government should treat us better—we help Africans rent rooms, and take them to register at the police station. It saves the police time in checking documents. And we rent stores and apartments to these outsiders. Xinjiang people [minority group: Uygur and Hui] rent our places to sell dry fruits and cakes. They earn money from African Muslims. We help many people. If the government wants us to leave, they need to give us more money. Now the housing is very expensive in Guangzhou, so they must compensate us. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

In Guangzhou, it is said that an inch of land is equivalent to an inch of gold, as the growing population is seeking employment and accommodation. The living conditions in urban villages are dissatisfactory for these residents, but considering their downtown locations, cheap rent and access to necessities, coupled with convenient transportation to foreign trade

markets and ethnic restaurants, urban villages in Xiaobei and Sanyuanli attract a large number of Africans. For Africans, time is money, and living near the markets is obviously a practical and affordable choice. Nigerian trader Ford, whose partner is Chinese, said,

> We stayed in Baohan for more than four years. We worked very, very hard to earn money and moved here [to Tongdewei]. It is good to live in Baohan. There are many markets. It is easy to purchase and transport goods, but I did not like it there. It is dirty and very noisy. Now we've bought an apartment as my babies need a better life. This place is better, and we go to Xiaobei by bus from a station here. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

Senegalese Bruce said,

> I lived in Dengfeng [an urban village in the Xiatang community], and now I share an apartment with two friends in Guolong [commercial building in Xiaobei]…It has furniture and electrical [appliances]. It is more expensive than [the housing] in Dengfeng. Last month I paid 500 [RMB for] electricity, but I did not turn on the air-conditioning. It ate my money…Guolong is near Tianxiu and Dengfeng [trade markets]. I know this place…If I move to any other place, they [landlords] may cheat me. (July 2014)

Cameroonian trader Joyce said,

> Every time I came to Guangzhou, I lived in Baohan. It is OK. I did not have time to find a place, and my visa [just allows a] short [stay]. My friend finds a place for me. They asked Mama [Landlady to book] a room [for me]. [It just takes] five minutes to [get to the] markets…Everything eats money, [but] Baohan saves money and time. (September 2014)

Apartments in urban villages are generally rented on the basis of size. The monthly rental ranges from 500 to 2,000 RMB (about 65 to 260 Euro). Buildings equipped with furniture and appliances are a little better, with monthly rent ranging from 2,000 to 4,000 RMB (about 260 to 515 Euro). Buildings in the urban villages are directly adjacent to each other, creating lots of sunless rooms. These kinds of buildings are called kissing-buildings (*jiewenlou*/接吻楼), or handshaking buildings (*woshoulou*/握手楼) due to the hair-breath distance between them. During the hot summer, people cannot stand the stuffiness in the room and have to have the air-conditioning on for a long time, so electricity becomes expensive. Compared with mansions or commercial buildings with better living conditions and higher rents, urban villages in Xiaobei and Sanyuanli offer more favorable rents for low-income Africans. But still, it is appalling to find that two or more Africans choose to live together in a 10-m² room and split the rent. This kind of room has terrible sanitation, because it may be windowless and the bathroom is often merely a few steps from the bed. Electric fans must be used, otherwise the humidity in the room will become suffocating within minutes. The interiors in some rooms were in poor condition due to rough treatment by tenants or lack of repairs. One landlord said he once knocked on the door several times to collect the rent, but no one answered the door, so he opened it to see if the African tenant had escaped. To his surprise, there were 7 more Africans sleeping in the room. He had to kick them out of the room, as

these strangers did not have visas.

> If they had had visas, I would have asked them to register at the police station, and to pay an extra fee. These people did not have visas. I was kind enough to not call the police. I just let them go. We have a contract, and if someone allows others to reside in the apartment long-term, they need to register and pay a higher rent. And the police told us to take Africans to register. If we do not do that we have to pay a penalty. These Africans always get us in trouble. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

Staying overnight at a friend's place is normal for Africans, because undocumented people cannot stay in a hotel due to strict registration regulations and high costs, or because documented Africans have limited finances and must share a residence. Hotels managers, property agents and private landlords are subjected to law and regulations: "Persons harboring or hiding foreigners who illegally enter or reside in China, or assisting such foreigners in evading inspection, or providing, in violation of the law, exit/entry documents for foreigners who illegally reside in China shall be fined not less than 2,000 RMB but not more than 10,000 RMB; where circumstances are serious, such persons shall be detained for not less than five days but not more than fifteen days and shall also be fined not less than 5,000 RMB but not more than 20,000 RMB, with the illegal gains confiscated if there are any" (Article 79 2013). Therefore, Chinese people are forbidden to offer refuge to undocumented foreigners, but some still provide accommodations due to the considerable economic benefits. With the support of African friends, undocumented individuals can survive. Some African traders in particular sympathize with undocumented Africans, hiring them as laborers and providing warehouses as residences. These undocumented Africans often sleep in the morning and work at night in an effort to avoid morning police checks for visa and residence permits on the streets.

Moreover, many African students, in order to do businesses, rent apartments with friends in urban villages near markets. They can make money while having a private place to study. A 17-year-old Tanzanian student said,

> I am learning Chinese in school [for a] six-month term. If I pass the exam I can apply for university here…I live with my brother and a friend here [in Xiatang community]. The rent is 300 [RMB per month]…I spend much time studying Chinese, and go out to purchase goods in the afternoon…We store these goods in our rooms…I like Xiaobei. The subway is fast. Before I came here, I did not know Guangzhou had subway, I thought it was just better than my country…After I learn Chinese, everything will be better. (July 2014)

In my fieldwork, I found that plenty of interviewees experienced living in the urban villages of Yuexiu District and Baiyun District, and some of them are living there still. Because Chinese partners from rural areas lack the social and financial capital to gain employment opportunities in Guangzhou, they have to look for cheap housing. Due to financial constraints and language barriers, African respondents consider the urban villages of Xiaobei and

Sanyuanli as shelters offering chances to establish social networks. With a lower cost of living, convenient transportation and a short walking distance from markets, Africans choose to live in these areas temporarily until they have enough money to move to better residential communities. A Somali female trader said,

I live in Dengfeng, it is cheaper [than other places], my friends are also here…If they want some business information from me, they [need to] give me money [as a broker fee]. Some newcomers consult me, [and] I rent a place for them…Dengfeng is a right place [for newcomers], they should know markets [here]. (August 2014)

Some Africans also benefit from businesses, for example, banking, communication services and restaurants, which attract them to stay in urban villages for long periods. In return, Africans' dynamic trade behaviors lead to a flourishing of the Xiaobei and Sanyuanli areas.

4.4.2 Commercial Buildings

For Africans with higher incomes, there are more prosperous communities where monthly rents are more than 5,000 RMB (about 645 Euro). For instance, property manager Kuan of Guolong Mansion, located in Xiaobei near trade markets, reports that a three-bedroom rental costs 4,000 to 5,000 RMB per month, and to purchase a 100-m^2 room in this building costs at least 2,000,000 RMB (about 260,000 Euro). Accommodation costs including property management, utilities, gas and Internet are high, so normally three or more Africans rent an apartment together.

Some Africans did not use natural gas before. An African guest turned on the gas for a while, but did not know how to use an electric stove, leading to an excessive gas leak. When he lit the stove again, the room caught fire, causing us big trouble. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

Property agent Wang also said some Africans forgot to turn off the air-conditioning or turn edit on the whole day, which led to high power charges. African tenants did not want to pay ensuing extra fees, so they said the meter had problems or the agents collected arbitrary charges.

These people are not reasonable. Why we should do that? We cannot get money from their electricity fee. The hydropower companies manage these things, and we just help them collect payments. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

Some Africans damaged housing facilities, such as bathroom tiles, faucets, showers and fans. Some did not know that certain items cannot be put in the microwave oven and caused explosions. Some cheaper residential communities near Jichang Road, Tongdewei area (*teacher's new village*/教师新村), and Liwan area attract various Africans as well. Nigerian trader Oscar married a Chinese woman. He said,

We rent a small apartment in Shiji Plaza. Three years ago, [to] buy such a flat already cost 2 million. Now the price is much higher. We did not have money to buy it. This community is very good, has a

nice kindergarten…we send our children to the kindergarten…We lived in Baohan Street, now we rent this flat. (October 2014)

Shuang, her Nigerian husband Bauman, and their two children live in a nice residential community called Sijihuacheng in Jinshazhou. Both of them worked a long time to make enough money to buy this flat. The community is very good. Although some Chinese knew she was married to an African and said bad things about her, Shuang thinks they have better financial means than her Chinese neighbours. When they moved to Sijihuacheng, Bauman's friends rarely lodged in their home to avoid trouble. Landlady Guan said some African bosses are rich, so they have rented several flats from her for a very long time and sublet them to others. They do not mind trouble caused by these short-term tenants. Meanwhile she can be certain the rent to her is paid on time. Because her contracts are registered with these bosses, any problems are the responsibility of the African bosses.

Normally, Africans need to pay two months' rent as a security deposit, and then pay a monthly rent. For example, an African who lives in Guolong Mansion needs to pay 2,000 RMB (two months' rent) as deposit and an additional 1,000 RMB rent for the first month, so the first payment is 3,000 RMB before she can move in. Some flats cost more than this. It is quite expensive for many Africans who lack capital and are just in Guangzhou on a short-term stay to purchase goods. So they tend to stay in places of inferior quality but with convenient transportation such as urban villages.

4.4.3 Hotels

Apart from living in urban villages, staying in private residences or buying housing, there are many transient African traders staying in hotels (Haugen 2012). Africans pay nearly 100 RMB to hotels to obtain booking certifications for visa applications. After they migrate to China, the hotel will provide them with a temporary residence permit. According to the Exit-Entry Administration Law and Public Security administration regulations in China, hotels must to provide foreigner's registration information to the local police station (Article 39 2013), which saves foreigners the trouble of temporary registration. Due to the high costs of hotels and lack of places for good storage, African may cancel the booking and move to other places without registration. A staff member of Dengfeng Hotel said,

> At the beginning we did not know how to check whether a visa is valid, and we gradually learned it from the police. We check information about tenants very carefully. We have standard procedures different from those of private housing. Those landlords do not make sure of the validity of foreigners' visas. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

A staff member of Yuebei Hotel said many Africans stayed for just one week, and a few stay one month. The hotel offered discounts to attract Africans back. They did not allow Africans to stack goods in the room, as it makes carpet dirty and difficult to clean. To avoid such

problems, they provided storage at an extra charge. They told Africans several times that packing up things in the corridor would disturb other customers, but some Africans did not take this seriously. They often welcomed others to sleep in their rooms. Hotel staff told Africans that these people should check in and pay an additional fee, but it was no use. African trader Ramdy's Chinese partner Tuan said,

> I helped Ramdy's Angolan friends to rent an apartment in Xiatang. They speak Portuguese and poor English. It is difficult to rent places. I just walked around the market to find a hotel and asked the hotel to prepare a proof of booking for them. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

Therefore, established African migrants or their Chinese partners can use social networks to easily find places for African newcomers to settle down.

Photo 6: The Yue Yang Hotel near Xiaobei in Yuexiu District (Taken by author in 2014)

In general, short-term African residents with better financial means may choose to stay in a hotel for convenience. For example, a large number of African participants of the Canton Fair prefer to live in hotels next to the exhibition area or in the city center for convenient transportation. Short-term visa holders short of money may share a room with friends or live in urban villages. If an extension to a visa is not granted, they can leave at any moment with little financial loss. Some hold long-term visas, while some extend short-term visas several times a year in China. Once they have experience living in China, they tend to live in communities with better property management. Some Africans have working visas, and prefer the affordability of renting nice private housing far from Xiaobei and Sanyuanli. Their African or Chinese family members live with them in Guangzhou and their standard of living is fairly high. Due to the strict management of university dormitories, residences on campus will be locked before 11:00PM. To facilitate business, some African students rent a flat with friends near trade markets. This allows them to team up to do business, as well as to establish study groups. Some undocumented Africans try to hide in warehouses, friends' places, or

cheap residences far from Yuexiu District, and take night jobs to survive.

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, Guangzhou attracts Africans for its developed business environment and its variety of religious communities. Patterns of distribution, living conditions, and the scale of trade deals demonstrate obvious economic inequality within African groups, which causes fierce trade competition and social stratification. The next chapter will compare other skilled foreigners with Africans to illustrate Africans' diverse backgrounds, including diversity in nationalities, religions, languages, occupations and gender. Many Africans struggle with language barriers and limited financial support and social networks, and inadequate foreign management makes it difficult for Africans to adapt to Guangzhou and achieve the dream of making quick money.

Chapter 5 The Research Participants

The world will be a harmonious place if people appreciate their own beauty and that of others,
and work together to create beauty in the world.

Taken from: Xiaotong FEI

各美其美，美人之美。

美美与共，天下大同。

摘自：费孝通 '80 寿辰'

The vast majority of African respondents cross geographical, cultural and political boundaries and link their countries of origin and destination, and therefore can be considered transnational migrants. The diversification of nationality, culture, languages and occupation of Africans depends on an extremely high degree of mobility to engage in trade and build social networks and enjoy diverse lifestyles across national borders rather than living as permanent residents in one specific place.

African spouses/partners in this study are from thirteen African countries, two-thirds are Muslims, and over 80% of them speak neither Mandarin nor Cantonese, less than 15% of the interviewees speak simple Chinese for daily communication, and less than 5% of them speak fluent Chinese, meaning they cannot blend into local society. At this time, trade competition can be vicious among Africans themselves, as well as among other foreigners and Chinese in China.

Among twenty couples interviewed, the majority of Chinese are from rural areas or towns and seek employment in Guangzhou. Ten of them have the same religious affiliation as their African spouses/partners. Even if they live in Guangzhou for several years, they are severely impacted by *hukou* and rarely enjoy the same social supports as local residents. Two couples have moved to senior communities, eleven pairs live in commercial housing, and seven pairs are still living in urban villages. Just three couples were able to buy housing in Guangzhou, while the majority of couples have rented housing for a long time. The stability or instability of Chinese-African marriage and partnership will impact their parenthood and the future of their Chinese-African children.

5.1 Internal Migrants/Floating Population---Chinese Partners in Guangzhou

The phenomenon of migration did not just recently appear in China. Ye (2000) and Yu (2002) observe that Chinese migration has occurred throughout history, and examples of management of documented migration have been found as far back as 685BC (Zhou dynasty). Since the free-market reforms in 1987, manufacturing in China developed quickly and stimulated a huge need for low-cost laborers. Due to China's Special Economic Zones Plan,

eastern and southern coastal provinces like Fujian, Zhejiang and Guangdong have benefited heavily from development resources, and attract massive investment from overseas (Spence 1999), bringing about sharp growth of economic and resource inequality between the west and east, and rural and urban areas (UNDP 2005). According to Liang (2001), in the 1980s, there were less than eleven million internal migrants -'floating population'. As time goes on, more and more migrants from western or rural areas are leaving their hometowns for developed urban areas seeking job opportunities and financial gain. By the end of 2015, Chinese domestic migrants numbered nearly 247 million, constituting 18% of the total population in China (NHFPC 2016).

Usually 'migration' describes migrants moving from origin/emigrant areas to final destination/immigrant areas as a permanent change. These groups normally shift back and forth between different cities or the countryside (Solinger 1999). Migration in this sense mainly consists of two factors: time and spatial position (Duan & Sun 2006). But in the Chinese context, domestic migration is closely connected to a special factor— *hukou*, a household registry system which will be explained in Chapter 6. Domestic migrants are normally called a 'floating population', who can move to any area in China, but find it hard to change the *hukou* of their place of origin and therefore face limitations in their new place of residence (Lu 2004; Li 2007). Nielsen, Smyth and Zhang (2005) argue that members of this 'floating population' move to the cities to engage in economic activities and pursue economic interests because of high underemployment in rural areas. Many years ago, villagers implemented a 'collective ownership system' to organize agricultural systems. Later, collective ownership was replaced by a 'household contract responsibility system', combined with industrialization. Families began to do farm work for profit and productivity grew markedly, while at the same time creating surplus labor in rural areas. Woon (1993) observes a surplus of more than 200 million agricultural workers in the 1990s in China, who were forced to seek jobs in cities. In 1997, for example, domestic migrants staying in Beijing for at least three months accounted for more than 90% of the 1.58 million migrants with the purpose of seeking employment (Guo & Iredale 2003: 4-5). Obviously, because on the one hand local residents did not want to do these jobs, on the other the local government had to protect urban laborers' interests to give them jobs first rather than members of the 'floating population' who are outsiders (Wang & Zuo 1990). Labor markets are less accessible to domestic migrants than to local urban residents who enjoy higher living conditions, income and social welfare (Feng et al. 2002). Compared with local urban residents, domestic migrants are more willing to take on 'Three-D' jobs (dirty, dangerous and demeaning), like construction, mining, sanitation and textiles. Additionally they lack basic services like subsidized housing, medical care and government schooling, and fail to receive protection or benefits from employers (Solinger 1999; Wang 2006; Yuan & Wan 2007). Internal migrants are a cheap labor force in

the production of goods and economic development, as well as a channel of communication and knowledge transfer between rural and urban areas. Inevitably, the 'floating population' leads to administrative, social and demographic policy changes in both emigrant and immigrant areas (Taylor 2011). The men and women of the 'floating population' are called peasant workers (*nongmingong*/农民工) and peasant women working in cities or female migrant worker (*dagongmei*/打工妹) respectively by urban residents (Song & He 2008).

Gaetano and Jacka (2004) observe that an increasing number of *dagongmei* (打工妹) are moving to special economic zones and southern and eastern coastal cities. The Pearl River Delta region in particular has an overwhelming population of young female laborers. Throughout my interviews, most female migrants said that they were attracted by the media's portrayal of city life and they wished to live out the 'fantastic dream' of leaving their homes and going to Guangzhou. As Cheng and Wang (2003: 31-32) discovered in their research, 30% of migrant women worked in factories, and 40% of the women that migrated in the 1990s came from a rural area, had a low level of education, were young, and married men from other provinces. Marriages of these women often have a low economic standing and marry men with a low socioeconomic standing in developed places in China. Their standard of living in cities seems inferior to that of independent urban women.

Due to their status as outsiders, media portrays these *dagongmei* (打工妹) as morally and socially inferior, or as mistresses (*qingfu*/情妇) of Hong Kong or Taiwanese traders (Sun 2004). Some young *dagongmei* who have worked and lived in cities for a long time, have achieved some measure of independence, and have gained respect from their rural family members because of their material wealth, social superiority and because they are able to send money back to their families. However, it is still hard for them to get an urban *hukou* because of their low level of educational, lack of high-level work experience, small tax contributions and so on. Therefore, the most comfortable way to settle down in cities is to marry a man with an urban *hukou*, but only a small number of women can realize this dream. Many *dagongmei* of marriageable age must consider going back to their hometowns to find village men to establish families. But in the opinions of many *dagongmei*, village men are less educated, more inclined to patriarchal behavior, and have less economic potential compared with urban men. Moreover, dagongmei want to escape from family control and complex social networks of in-laws and relatives in rural areas. As the chances of marrying a Chinese urbanite are small, *dagongmei* gradually start to consider international marriage (Lu 2008: 85).

According to the results of fieldwork in Xiaobei and Sanyuanli, many Chinese interviewees belonging to the 'floating population' decided to leave their natal families because of unhappy experiences, shortage of employment and low income. Some domestic migrants gather enough capital to leave their hometowns and dream of better opportunities and higher

earnings in big cities like Guangzhou. Those who become bosses in stores or companies have much better living and working conditions than other migrant workers. Some are able to meet the Guangzhou *hukou* requirements, such as the people of Chaoshan (an area in Guangdong province). In this dissertation, 40 Chinese answered 30 questions in semi-structured interviews. Interviewees have previously lived in rural, town or suburban areas. They are market managers, property managers, traders, restaurant operators, dentists, pharmacists, retired teachers, housewives, vendors, telephone booth center staff, waiters, and cosmetologists. Apart from these 40 Chinese interviewees, more than ten Chinese landlords/landladies who are local residents were interviewed, and many Chinese judges, police, office clerks, traders, students, workers, waiters/waitresses, taxi drivers and manual laborers spoke with me about issues related to African immigrants. The interviewees' backgrounds are diverse, and include professionals, students, civil servants or traders who belonged to the 'floating population', but because of higher education, skills, tax contribution and other means were able to achieve Guangzhou *hukou* status, become urban residents and enjoy social welfare. This demonstrates the social stratifications within the 'floating population'. Professional internal migrants clearly differ from the large number of *nongmingong* and *dagongmei*, who find it hard to reach Guangzhou *hukou* status.

As explained earlier, the majority of the Chinese spouses or partners interviewed left their hometown to work in Guangzhou as *dagongmei* at first, then gradually gained economic autonomy and attempted to adapt to urban life. Due to lack of skills and limited education, they had fewer opportunities to find steady jobs in labor markets. Their uncertain prospects make them difficult to be recognized as urban residents. When of marriageable age, they may choose not to marry and tolerate the social pressure, or they marry someone without an urban *hukou* but who works or lives in an urban setting, or they return to their hometowns to marry, or consider marrying foreigners like Africans involved in trade, entertainment or service sectors.

5.2 Transnational Migrants---Africans in Guangzhou

Transnational migration has frequently been conceived of as individuals "within multiple hierarchies of power operative within and across territories" (Mahler & Pessar 2001: 447). The mobility of humans across borders has changed, and migrants now keep multiple links with their home and host countries rather than settling down in host societies and completely abandoning home countries. Unlike previous migrants, migrants today may move back and forth between two or more countries and may not settle down at all (Levchenko 2013; Levitt 2001).

In the early 20th century, American anthropologists Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton

Blanc studied West Indian, Haitian and Filipino migrants in the U.S. and proposed a systematic theory and framework for analysis of transnationalism. They found that migrants' experiences are not strictly limited to either emigrant or immigrant countries. Rather, though they took root in the destination countries, through advanced transportation and communication technologies, they were able to maintain multiple links in both countries, and often shuttled between countries of origin and destination. Transnational migrants' statuses are established in multiple states. Transnationalism is the process of constructing a connection between countries of origin and settlement (Schiller, Basch & Blance 1995). Basch, Schiller and Blanc also used the term 'social field' to describe the information sharing and cumulative social capital among migrants and their communities, Transnational migrants' social networks are shaped by existing economic, political and cultural norms, however once transnational social fields are formed, they impact norms in both sending and receiving countries. The American sociologist Alejandro Portes (2001) emphasizes the importance of migrants' transnational relationships over time in order to understand transnationalism as a continuum. He also stressed that even if migrants are under the supervision of state institutions, activities take place outside the scope of state regulation and control, and represent the interests of the transnational actors themselves. From 1998 to 2000, German political scientist Thomas Faist introduced the concept of transnational social space, formed by the combination of social and symbolic relationships crossing multiple national borders, networks, locations, and organizations. Thomas Fasit's view (2000) shows that firstly, migration and re-migration are uncertain and changeable strategies for survival and development. Secondly, migrants live outside their countries of birth, but maintain close contact with those countries. Thirdly, these contacts may be informal. In short, Faist (2001), Portes, Guarnizo, Landolt (1999), and Vertovec (2004) all stress that continuous improvement of transportation and communication technologies create the necessary conditions for transnational mobility and connections, considerably reducing long-distance costs and making it possible for immigrants to spread information rapidly, thus contributing to the establishment of transnational networks and activities.

This dissertation considers African mobility as transnational migration. That is, "being connected to several places at once – or 'being neither here nor there' – has long been a defining feature of the experience of being a migrant. Leading transnational, multi-sited lives means that exchanges and interactions across borders are a regular and sustained part of migrants' realities and activities. These exchanges may take the form of ideas, values and practices, as well as political mobilization and economic contributions" (IOM 2010: 1). African migrants play a vital role in transnational trade between Africa and other countries that want to establish connections and promote migration and social exchange. African multinational businesses may befinancial sources and offer upward mobility to individuals

and their families. Business owners may also provide their children with a positive upbringing and a good education, creating sustained financial stability. Transnational business is a relatively safe channel in adapting to host countries' socioeconomic and political environments. By planning survival strategies, migrants may seize every opportunity by both origin and host countries to maximize benefits (Portes 2003; Schmalzbauer 2004). However, China's institutions and policies may make it difficult for Africans to realize their ambitions.

Thanks to the boom of trade over the last two to three decades, many Africans have been attracted to Guangzhou. Since 2005, Africans have become important customers of the Canton Fair. In May 2014, the 115th Canton Fairsaw 17,287 African merchants, the fastest increase in customers. And in May 2015, the 117th fair drew 15,469 African traders who made up 8.37% of all foreign merchants (CIEF 2014, 2015). Despite the fact that plenty of documented Africans gather in Guangzhou, the African population still inspires controversy (Bodomo & Pajancic 2015; Castillo 2013). Some scholars argue that the number of Africans in Guangzhou range from 1,500 to 20,000 (Bodomo 2010; Li, Ma, and Xue 2009; Zhang 2008). According to media reports, by 2003 the African population had reached 200,000 or more, and the rate of growth was 30% to 40 % each year (Branigan 2010; Osnos 2009). The Guangzhou Public Security Bureau (2014) confirmed that from January to August 2014, nearly 370,000 Africans entered and exited Guangzhou. But on October 25, 2014, Guangzhou foreign residents numbered at about 118,000, including 16,029 Africans. On December 24th, 2015, the executive vice mayor Chen Guibiao of Guangzhou indicated that each year there are more than 2 million foreign entries into Guangzhou of which about 10% are Africans. Africans made more than 200,000 entries from January to November in 2015, while long-term-time African inhabitants are numbered at 5,208. The African population has always been in flux, partly because many are short-term visitors, and partly because some are undocumented. Zhu and Price (2013) argue that both local residents and local authorities are not prepared to deal with such a sizeable African population in Guangzhou.

At present, foreigners are incorporated into the management of the 'floating population' in Guangzhou (GDGOV 2008). Essentially, this means Africans are not considered as immigrants who are eligible for permanent residence, and they rarely have access to the same resources and social services as Chinese citizens do. As a 'floating population' with short-term mobility, Africans may leave China at anytime. However, Ghanaian trader Lee (aged mid-40s) is unhappy with this status, saying,

> Many years ago, there were no such complex regulations. It was easy doing business in Guangzhou, now it is hard. I am here more than 10 years, my visa is no problem, but I know some have problems…Sometimes I have told police officials that they should give us long-term visas. Applying for a visa is *mafan* [troublesome], we need [to] buy goods, check, and ship them, [which] takes time…The shipping eats money, so we have to sell these goods, earning nothing…Chinese earn

money from us, [as] we pay rent [and] buy goods here. The government should think about it. (July 2014)

A Malian trader complained about the lack of social benefits.

My wife is pregnant again. It's too expensive to see a doctor here. Last time we spent 4,000 [RMB] on the check [up]. My Chinese employee took my wife to the hospital, but I didn't know the name [of the hospital], a special one for pregnant women and babies, something like that. Because we are Africans, the hospital ate our money. (October 2014)

Unlike the traders, Rock, a Nigerian student, enjoyed the benefits of social insurance offered by the university in Guangzhou.

My university asked me to apply for insurance—800 [RMB] each year—before registration. I thought it was a waste of money…A little while ago, I played football and hurt my leg. I went to the hospital on campus. It is free and they just asked for five [RMB] registration fee, because I had purchased insurance. (August 2014)

Ben, a successful Ghanaian businessman, had a higher standard of living than the majority of his country mates. His wife (Ghanaian) and children have been in Guangzhou for more than five years and live in a better residential community in Baiyun district with security guards on duty 24 hours and good services. He thinks Guangzhou is convenient and a safe place for doing business. He also does business in Hangzhou and Yiwu near Shanghai. Thanks to his economic status, Ben seemed more able to adapt to local life.

It is OK. I can speak Chinese. We have a Chinese housekeeper; she makes Chinese foods for us, and picks up my kids from school. She speaks Mandarin and Cantonese to my daughters. It is good. My kids speak five languages. (September 2014)

As Niu (2015) observes, the majority of Africans are transient migrants looking to make money in China. They will not immigrate permanently and will not take the time to understand China or Chinese views. Mathews (2015) confirmed that even some Africans who stayed long-term in Guangzhou knew little about Chinese languages and culture, instead using English for daily and business communication. Lance, a young trader from Angola, was a newcomer who had little knowledge of Guangzhou and struggled with language barriers. His Brother Bob helped him a lot, but he was rarely able to participate in local society as well. Bob said,

I teach him how to do business… no time to learn Chinese, I am busy…tiring work…I do not go any other places, just look around markets. (August 2014)

Joy, a short-term trader from Tanzania, was not familiar with local society. He normally came to Guangzhou twice a year, or more depending on demand. He did not visit any other places, working only in the markets near Xiaobei and Sanyuanli. Most Chinese traders can understand some English. If they are unable to communicate with words, calculators can be used to bargain.

Smith is a Somali trader with a three-month business visa. He normally renews his visa in

Macao, which is cheaper than in Hong Kong, meaning he just needs to travel outside of mainland China and not back to his hometown. His elder brother does business in Dubai, and his younger sister looks after their mother in his hometown. He has only been back to his hometown once in the last three years to see his mother, friends and customers. He works in Xiaobei and Sanyuanli, but rarely travels to other places in China, because many customers order goods from him. The pressure of work tires him and leaves little energy to engage in local society.

Senegalese trader Robert knew very little about China before coming to Guangzhou. He held the common stereotypical views portrayed in the media, but was able to change them during his stay in China. He stayed not only in Guangzhou, but also went to Hangzhou where friends were studying. He said the West Lake in Hangzhou is beautiful. There was a classical dance performance on water, some good restaurants, and hotels near the lake. His friend delivered the photos to his mother, who did not believe that this was China.

Due to Africans' transient status, Chinese often do one-off deals with them, and rarely communicate intensively with them. A few Chinese traders who had a lot of experience with foreign business sometimes had friendships with African traders. For example, Tao has done business with foreigners for over 15 years, and has maintained long-term partnerships with a few African customers. African traders may stay in Guangzhou quite long but most need to renew visas many times, so business relationships are not stable. Tao does not connect with Africans in her personal life; her relationships with Africans are strictly business-related.

5.2.1 Diversification of Nationalities

Africans in Guangzhou have diverse nationalities, religions, languages, occupations and genders. Zhu and Price (2013) and Castillo (2013) observe that the majority of Africans in Guangzhou come from Sub-Saharan countries such as Nigeria, Congo, Ghana, Togo, Mali, Guinea, Senegal, Sudan, etc. Liang (2013) collected data from 648 Africans in Xiaobei and Sanyuanli, and found that documented Africans from western Africa made up 35.29% of the total documented individuals, Africans from central Africa accounted for 27.89%, East Africans for 21.13%, South Africans for 15.69%. Undocumented West Africans accounted for 76.9% of all undocumented individuals, Central Africans for 13.07%. Overall, 70% of individuals were from West Africa. Bodomo (2014: 4) found: "the top 10 countries with citizens from among the 300 respondents (in Guangzhou) are Nigeria, Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Ghana, DRC, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Togo". During my fieldwork, Xiatang community staff stated that there were nearly 2,000 Africans registered in the vicinity of Xiaobei at the end of 2014. Niu's (2015) fieldwork shows that 1,599 Africans were estimated to be in the Xiatang and Tongxin Jinlu communities, accounting for 89.2% of the total

number of foreigners in this region. 65.8% of the Africans in this region were Malian, Senegalese, Guinean, Nigerian, and Angolan, the other 34.1% came from 26 other African countries. So there are more West Africans than other groups in Xiaobei area. However, Africans who stayed in Guangyuan West Road and Sanyuanli are mainly from Ghana, Nigeria, and other non-Muslim regions (Haugen 2012). Malian interviewee Eric said,

> Many [African] Muslims are here in [Xiaobei]…a good place to eat Halal foods. Nigerians and Ghanaians are in Guangyuan, Yaotai [Sanyuanli], some stay here, they are Muslims…Some Nigerians in Tangqi and Jianan stare at me and they do not want me to know what products they sell or the prices [for the sake of competition]. They do the same thing, [searching the markets to find popular goods to resell]. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

5.2.2 Diversification of Religions

Religious belief further divides Africans into different groups (Zhu & Price 2013). Through my fieldwork, I found that many Africans from the same country belong to different regions with various religions, languages and customs. For example northern Nigerians are mainly Muslims, while southern Nigerians are Christians. A large number of African respondents living or working near Xiaobei are Muslims, and mainly from west and central African countries, such as Mali, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Togo, Congo, Ghana, Nigeria and Angola. Many female African Muslims are housewives who accompany their husbands in Guangzhou, taking care of the family and purchasing goods to make money in their free time. The remaining African interviewees in Sanyuanli or other areas are Christians[7] or Catholics and mainly come from Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, South Africa, Tanzania, Congo, Ethiopia and Cote d'Ivoire. Some Ghanaian and Cameroonian female traders were the primary money-earners in their families, spending years traveling the world as wealthy businesswomen. Interviewees described their religious life in Guangzhou. Eddie, from Cote d'Ivoire, said,

> We are Christians [he and his Chinese wife Lan]. Here [in Sanyunli] there are many Christians, it is good for us…I speak French, very bad English, you know, Nigerians and Ghanaians speak English, so I barely talk to them. (August 2013)

Beck is a student and a devout believer from D.R Congo.

> I studied in Wuhan, and just came here [to Guangzhou] to help my brother [look after the store]... Sacred Heart Cathedral, I just went there once, [because] my friends said it is famous. Wuhan also has many Christians…I pray every day either in the store or in my room. (August 2013)

As a priest of an underground Church, Simon converted from Catholicism to the Pentecostal church and has an ambition to spread his religion.

> I am Igbo from southern Nigeria, we are good at business…If you do not follow God, you will lose

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[7]Pentecostal Churches in China are called Christian.

yourself…I am sure more Chinese will follow us in the future…I believe God will lead Nigerians to become rich, we will find success in China. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

5.2.3 Diversification of Languages

Different languages may be spoken in a single African country, or different countries may use different languages, or a single language is sometimes used across national and religious boundaries in Africa. African respondents staying in Guangzhou speak Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo, Lingala, Swahili, Zulu, Fulani, Arabic, French, Portuguese, English, etc. A Nigerian trader Paul said Hausa was used in many countries in West Africa and Hausa people are good at business.

> I live in northern Nigeria, we have many languages…I speak Hausa and eight other languages, Chinese is the most difficult to learn…Southern Niger also speaks Hausa…I transport goods to Niger, then to Nigeria. It is easy [for us to] do business everywhere. (October 2014)

Eric expressed preference for dealing with Francophone Africans more than Anglophones.

> The business ideas are different. We are more traditional, thinking whether some risks could destroy our reputation, but the Anglophones often do things without sense. They make money in many ways. It is bad for our reputation…I work very carefully with a few Nigerians. (July 2013, translated from Chinese)

An Angolan trader Ramdy told me that he seldom spoke with Nigerians on the same floor in the market due to language barriers. His ex-Chinese partner Tuan told me that Ramdy is from Angola and speaks Portuguese. His English is worse than hers. Ramdy did not communicate with Nigerians because they inspected Ramdy's goods and asked his customers for the prices, leading to harsh competition.

William, from South Africa, thinks that speaking English is an international business skill.

> These French and Portuguese speakers can understand English, but are not very good at speaking it. English is more popular around the world, so they have problems doing businesses. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

He also explained the political and economic differences between South Africa and other African countries. South Africa has three major cities and several famous universities that are very international. Because of its historical development, there are many western people living and working there.

Abel is a Muslim from Guinea, who told me about language barriers he encounters.

> I speak Soussou and French, my English is poor, but I can understand…I want to talk with Chinese [people], but it is just 'nihao' [Hello], you know, Chinese [people] do not speak French…I will learn some Chinese. It is good for business. (July 2013)

5.2.4 Diversification of Occupation

Africans' occupational diversity must also be considered. Given high domestic mobility and serious under-employment in China, combined with competition created by Western people searching for jobs in China, there are few opportunities for Africans to find employment and develop livelihoods and businesses (Zhao 2013). Promfret (2009) and Lu (2009) think that compared to white-collar workers and business management personnel from Europe, North America, Oceania, and East Asia, or merchants from the Middle East, India, Europe, the United States, or Australia, Africans are perceived as small-business owners, retailers, peddlers, laborers, vagrants, dreamers, drug traffickers, and troublemakers.

Zhen (2009), Fang and Liang (2010) summarize that the three main categories of Africans in Guangzhou are traders, white-collar workers and blue-collar workers. (1) Traders who arrived in China early on with enough capital to buy goods tend to have private stores or companies employing several African and Chinese employees, and understand the local economy better than newcomers. During my fieldwork, Malian boss Steven said that he and his brothers first set up freight transport chains in southeast Asia and then moved to Guangzhou. They transported goods in 50 to 100 containers during the peak period from 2007 to 2009. Indeed, many logistics companies not only transport goods, but also directly purchase commodities from Chinese manufactures. These logistics companies hire both Chinese and Africans, because Chinese employees can easily communicate with local factories in seeking cheaper goods, while African workers may contact foreign customers to arrange details. As intermediaries, logistics companies earn a broker's fee plus profits from transportation and the sale of goods. Interviews showed that Africans depend on Chinese partners' language skills, small stores and business licenses, and may join a partner's store or borrow a business license without modifying registration or tax payments. Chinese partners may help Africans to expand their business activities outside of Guangzhou (Lan 2015), gradually extending to the Pearl River Delta and other cities in China, such as Shenzhen, Dongguan and Yiwu. Le Bail (2009) observes that a few Africans who graduated from Chinese universities in 1980s and 1990s became important middlemen in African-Chinese businesses, or their learning of Chinese languages and long-term experiences helped them to successfully acquire long-term visas. (2) White-collar workers normally work in branch or representative offices. Bosses manage staff who purchase goods and deliver them to customers. These staff members appear to be both middlemen and laborers. They select goods for their companies and ship them to customers. Some of them also secretly sell goods to customers. (3) Blue-collar workers may have less capital, few skills, poor social networks, language barriers, and may resort to overstaying visas or working without permits, exacerbating the Chinese labor surplus (Haugen 2012). They are not able to compete on the

labor market, nor are they protected by Chinese labor laws. For instance, Yongping Street in Sanyuanli area has numerous warehouses belonging to Middle Eastern and Africans bosses. They employ undocumented Ethiopian laborers who have to hide in storage and work at night in order to evade visa and work permit checks in the morning (Fang & Liang 2010). Haugen (2012) points out that undocumented Nigerians also observe police rounds to avoid visa checks. A few undocumented Africans are able to earn a lot of money in night markets. In November 2007, the policemen who served Baiyun district investigated Chentian village and discovered a number of undocumented Africans, who were then deported (Fang & Liang 2010). Senegalese female trader Betty (aged mid-40s) said,

> I am doing business here in [since] 2011…Every day I go to markets to buy some goods and send [them] to my customers…I cannot say 'no' to my customers, [I'm] very tired every day…The [transportation] fee is not cheap, sometimes I need to spend more than 6,000 dollars every month…It is normal [for a woman like me] to do hair…It is expensive, 500 RMB or more [each time]. I prefer to [use] some fake hair. The cheaper [fake] hair is not good for styling, and [the] good one eats money. I may spend 1,000 [RMB on hair making]. (August 2014)

As an old hand, William talked about the differences of African traders in the past and those nowadays. In the past, Africans came to China to join the Canton Fair. Airfare was expensive and involved several transfers, so only wealthy Africans made this journey. Now, many planes fly directly from Africa to China. William's Senegalese friend studied medicine in China in the 1980s. He speaks fluent Chinese and is familiar with Chinese culture. He buys high quality products from Chinese factories and his company sells medical appliances in Dakar. His children are in America. Now, many Africans come to Guangzhou with the support of their family or friends. Some of them know nothing about China or how to do business. William's friend thinks it is not just a risk to search for fortune in China, it also needs planning and intelligence.

A Ghanaian trader, Neil, expressed his thoughts on blue-collar workers.

> They need to earn money, so [they] come here. But it is not as easy as they [had] thought. I feel pity for them, [but] they should not stay here…No money, how to stay here? I spend lots of money in Guangzhou on air tickets, business overhead costs, rent, and many things…Sometimes I feel the money is not enough. [Those] poor persons, it's not good for them. (November 2014)

Apart from these three groups, there is a large number of African students in China. Liu (2013) finds that there were close to 200, 000 foreign students in China, and African students account for over one-third of this number. However, as Haugen (2012) and Bodomo (2013) point out, African students who study or live in China tend to engage in business activities, therefore achieving merchant status in China. Because they obtain legitimate long-term residency, Africans students do not worry about overstaying, nor do they need to engage in trade without proper working permits or ignore regulations. Many self-employed traders gain working experience in Guangzhou. Kevin (aged early 30s), a Guinean trader, works for an

international company. His experience is different from other private traders in Guangzhou. He said,

> I graduated from a university here [in Guangzhou] and speak French, English and Chinese well. My brother in France operates a company and asked me to work for him, but I did not want to go there. I am familiar with Guangzhou, and I have lots of friends here. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

Kevin orders goods directly from factories, because he knows, Xiaobei offers low-end products (*weihuo*/尾货). The quality of goods varies in Guangdong, and purchasing choices depend on how much money the trader has.

A Kenyan student, Robin, has a Chinese girlfriend. He studies in Jinhua, and as a basketball player he travels to many different places for games. He knows many of his friends are doing trade in Yiwu and Guangzhou. He believes she knows more about China and is more able to adapt to local conditions than other African traders. He is preparing to become a politician in his country. He also believes African traders are totally different from students. As a student, he is very keen to learn, whereas some traders whose primary goal is to make money use student visas although they have no interest in studying. Kevin takes language courses at the university, and also learns about Chinese culture and customs from his teachers. He has a Chinese language partner and has been able to speak well after just one year of study, but learning Chinese characters is very hard for him.

Bodomo (2012, 2013) found that apart from the majority being businessmen, there were also some artists, housewives, athletes, barbers, cooks and teachers. In addition, some Somali refugees who receive subsidies from the United Nations' refugee agency live in the urban villages. Landlady Li said, most refugees pay the rent every month on time, but sometimes go into debt because they do not receive subsidies on time. Some try to save money in order to engage in business activities to increase their income.

5.2.5 Gender and Social Networks

Scholars confirm that there are more African males than females in Guangzhou (Bodomo 2012; Li & Du 2012; Niu 2015). Nearly 80% of those interviewed by Bodomo (2012) were aged early 20s to mid-40s, about 82% of all interviewees are men. Aside from female traders, housewives, students and entertainers, there are also a few African women working as sex workers. One Ugandan woman complained about stereotypical views of African women.

> They cannot say Ugandan women are doing that [sex work]. How do these [African] men know the real background of those women? They are just afraid to [give information about] their countries. They use fake Ugandan passports. (September 2014)

Chinese landlord Li thinks differently. She checked the validity of the visas of three Ugandan women who signed housing contracts with her and is therefore sure these women held Ugandan passports. These women entertain different men in their rooms, so she feels sure

these women are sex workers. According to Li, these Ugandan women are tricked by friends into migrating to China to do business. After arriving in Guangzhou, they find it is difficult to do business without capital, and are cheated out of their money by these so-called friends. At the beginning these women try to make juice and traditional foods for Africans who live or work around markets. But their low income cannot support the costs of living, let alone the costs of a flight back to Africa. So they chose to sell their bodies for survival, and hide to evade visa checks. Once I encountered two African girls wandering on the overpass near Xiaobei, who used simple Chinese to ask a Chinese man whether he had 'needs' (*xuyao*/需要) late at night. The man was obviously not a trader and these two girls had no goods on hand. In this context, the Chinese word 'needs' (*xuyao*/需要) obviously refers to sexual desire. Haugen (2012) also encountered a few Africans sex workers, and confirmed that, "among the unauthorized migrants in China there are victims of trafficking. There is little knowledge about life in China in many African countries; traffickers have exploited this ignorance to entice women, especially East African women, into going there".

Alli, from Niger, had negative attitudes about this kind of work:

> I am a Muslim. These women are bad. They should stay at home and marry someone. In our societies they will never to be forgiven. No one marries them, no one. They have dishonored their families. (October 2014)

One Mozambican student thought it is unfair to discriminate against sex workers.

> We cannot say a person is bad or good, because we do not know their experiences. I know some [Africans] are rich, [or] maybe middle class [in their hometowns]. If they did not have money, they [could] not [have] come to Guangzhou. But some were poor, they borrowed money from friends and came to China. Lots of people said it is easy to make money in China. They have no choice – [they] could not find jobs [in their countries], so [they] came here to earn money. (June 2014)

According to their various backgrounds and situations, Africans also find belonging in different communities, such as Nigerian, Ghanaian, Nigerien, Malian, Cameroonian, Senegalese and Congolese communities and associations. Communities are not just divided by nationality, but also by socioeconomic class, religion or other aspects. These communities and associations often offer visa and business services, or financial support to members who encounter hardship. For example, a Cameroonian community collects medical treatment fees to cover an operation needed by a member of the community. Nigerian religious communities protect undocumented Nigerians (Haugen 2012). These communities support not only their own members, but also help Chinese. For example, a Guinean community donated 78,000 RMB for victims of the Wenchuan Earthquake in Sichuan Province (Zhen 2009). There is also an African-Chinese Family Forum held by Nigerians to provide information for African-Chinese partners or family consultations (Marsh 2014). Bauman, from Nigeria, joined this forum and made friends with other families.

> We have a forum for Nigerian and Chinese families, and other Africans also can join it…We have parties with other [African-Chinese] families. Shuang [my Chinese wife] makes many friends there, and my sons are also happy to play with other kids. (August 2014)

Simon thinks of his church community as a family, where members share ideas and support each other in accumulating wealth. His church community welcomes all believers as brothers and sisters, regardless of where they came from.

The above examples emphasize the national, religious, linguistic, occupational, gender and group diversity of Africans in Guangzhou. Africans may also judge and stereotype among themselves. There appears to be a particularly negative view of Nigerians widely spread among other Africans and Chinese (Haugen 2012). Kevin believes that Nigerians like making money and are after quick profits. Perhaps because many Nigerians just have short-term visas and do not have much time to purchase goods, they tend to take bigger risks in purchasing for resale. The result is they may choose goods that do not meet customers' requirements and earn fewer profits. If they owe too much money to others and are unable to pay it off, they may disappear. After several months they can change passports and return to China again. As Kevin said "Nigerians are rather a mixed bunch – someone is like a black sheep".

One Chinese trader, Kuang, prefers to do business with Malians and Angolans, because she says Nigerians cheat in business, and have the bad reputation of playing with young girls. She claimed that Zach had several Chinese girlfriends at the same time, and finally he married Lan. Many Chinese traders had known this, but just told Lan to bewary of Zach. Now Zach cannot come back to Guangzhou because he overstayed his visa, which confirmed their distrust of Nigerians. Africans from different areas and with different economic and religious backgrounds play various roles in African social networks.

5.3 Chinese-African Couples

As the number of Africans in Guangzhou increases, there are more and more Chinese-African marriages and partnerships, which are regulated by Chinese law. The Marriage Law of the Republic of China has strict regulations and definitions regarding foreign marriages. From a legal perspective, some African-Chinese couples' relationships count as illegal cohabitation. For example, some Africans have wives in other places but live with Chinese women in China. Cohabitation is defined as an unmarried man and woman living together as spouses, but not fulfilling the necessary legal procedures to receive a marriage certificate. If a couples' cohabitation began before 1994 the relationship may be considered a defacto marriage by law; otherwise the law does not protect cohabitation. As of 1994, marriages must be registered with the Bureau of Civil Affairs. However, in reality half of the interviewed couples who began living together after 1994 did not get a marriage certificate. One African interviewee has a wife somewhere else, but lives with a Chinese woman. Three African-Chinese children

were born out of wedlock, because their parents' marriages did not meet the requirements of law, or their parents were still in cohabitation, or they registered their marriage in another country but did not obtain certification in China. Two children were born, as second child, under China's one-child policy before 2016[8], making it difficult for them to get *hukou*, or even an identity card from the Chinese government. Since 2016, Chinese government has allowed couples to have two children. In order to protect interviewees' privacy, their real names and residences are not disclosed here.

Table 2:The Background of Chinese-African Couples (interviewed between 2013 and 2014)

Chinese wife	Hukou	Occupation	Religion	African husband	Nationality	Work	Religions	Children
Ning	Guangzhou	Pastor Trader	Christianity (Pentecostal)	Simon	Nigerian	Pastor Trader	Christianity (convert) (Pentecostal)	Lucy Jim Kerr
Yun	Guangzhou	Office Worker	Christianity (Pentecostal)	Jimmy	Nigerian	Trader	Islam	0
Fang	Shenzhen	Shop Assistant	No	Merlin	Ghanaian	Trader	Christianity (Pentecostal)	0
Tuan	Chaoshan	Trader	Buddhism	Ramdy	Angolan	Trader	Islam	Lily
Pang	Chaoshan	Trader	Buddhism	Eric	Malian	Trader	Islam	Nana
Ling	Nanhai	Shop Assistant	No	Bard	Senegalese	Trader	Islam	0
Qi	Zhanjiang	Waitress	Catholicism	Paul	Ghanaian	Trader	Catholicism	0
Ma	Foshan	Shop Assistant	Catholicism	Iwan	Cameroonian	Trader	Catholicism	0
Shuang	Hunan	Housewife	Islam	Bauman	Nigerian	Trader	Islam	Miller,Peter
Hong	Hunan	Translator	No	Kevin	Guinean	Trader	Islam	0
Jing	Hunan	Housewife	No	Roger	Ugandan	Trader	Islam	Pregnancy
Hua	Hunan	Waitress	Islam	Keim	Congolese	Trader	Catholicism	0
Xuan	Guangxi	Trader	No	Tom	Nigerian	Trader	Islam	Mike
Lian	Guangxi	Trader	Buddhism	Eddie	Ivorian	Trader	Christianity(Pentecostal)	Mark
Yan	Guangxi	Trader	Catholicism	William	South African	Trader	Christianity (Pentecostal)	0
Liang	Jiangxi	Housewife	Islam	Oscar	Nigerian	Trader	Islam	0
Miao	Jiangxi	Trader	Christianity (Pentecostal)	Harry	Tanzanian	Trader	Christianity (Pentecostal)	0
Lan	Hebei	Trader	Catholicism	Zach	Nigerian	Trader	Catholicism (convert)	0
Wang	Liaoning	Housewife	No	Ford	Nigerian	Trader	Islam	Dick, Jack

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[8]On January 1st, 2016. The 5th plenary meeting of 18th session of Central Committee held in Beijing from October26th to 29th, 2015. The meeting examined and adopted the 'CPC central Committee for formulating nationaleconomic and social development recommendations of the 13th 'Five-Year-Plan', and put forward the policy of full implementation of the new regulation for couples to have two children.
http://news.xinhuanet.com/fortune/2015-11/03/c_1117027676.htm

| Nan | Shandong | Trader | No | Gene | Nigerian | Trader | Islam | Ken |
| | | Housewife | | | | | | Joe |

5.3.1 Chinese Spouses'/ Partners' Information

In my fieldwork, twenty couples were interviewed; all men were from Africa and all women from China. Chinese spouses or partners were mainly from Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhanjiang, Hainan, Foshan, Chaoshan area, Guangxi, Hunan, Jiangxi, Shandong, Hebei, and Liaoning. Among the twenty couples, there were four families with one child each, three families with two children each, and one family with three children. All of these children were between the age of two months and thirteen years old. Couples with only one child or no children said that they were considering having a child, or more children. Only three wives expressed that they did not want a second child.

The majority of female interviewees were from the town or countryside, and some may have experienced economic pressure in their natal family or been exposed to unique circumstances such as the divorce or death of their parents at a young age, numerous siblings, alienation among family members, etc. Only two women were born in Guangzhou and held local *hukou*; one woman met the requirements of Guangzhou *hukou*. In terms of occupation, the majority of female interviewees, belonging to the domestic 'floating population', were businesswomen, service personnel (in clothing stores, furniture stores, building materials stores, food stores, shops, restaurants, drugstores, beauty shops, bars, and karaoke), office workers in a small foreign trade company, preachers, translators and housewives. Most had graduated from middle school, high school, technical secondary school, or a junior college, while three had a bachelor degree. Most are unable to compete in the formal labor market due to continuous upgrade requirements in education and working skills.

Because of their low earning power, they suffered from high housing prices and expensive daily needs. Still, they insisted, "It is not easy leaving home and so one should not easily give up on his or her dream". They therefore continued to struggle on the fringes of society in Guangzhou. Because social belonging is formed within a culture and family of origin, these female respondents lacked an understanding of Guangzhou society before arriving there. Still, these women did not want to give up the convenient and diverse lives they had found in Guangzhou, nor did they want to lead the lives they had left behind in their villages. Due to personal experiences, some women held a strong sense of rejection from their family and culture of origin. However, the city of Guangzhou is not very accepting of poorly educated immigrants who neither belong to their original places nor their host regions. Sometimes these women attempt to dress themselves as belonging to Guangzhou, when in fact they are not local residents. They must survive in the cracks between the city and the village, the urbanite and the farmer. In this respect, they are dually marginalized women who have been

rejected by their home community and by Guangzhou's institutional systems. This rejection is most apparent in *hukou*, China's household registration system. For example, Lan from Hebei province who has a Nigerian ex-husband, Zach, talked about her hardships in Guangzhou.

> Everything is expensive here. I did not purchase medical and social insurance as it is not very useful for us outsiders…I need to go back to my hometown to register my marriage. It is difficult…They [the locals] look down upon us [outsiders]. When you handle your affairs, you get this feeling. To deal with anything, you have to learn Cantonese…Go back to my hometown? No, I do not go to my hometown frequently, because it is embarrassing without money. I've stayed here many years and am used to it. Anyway life is OK here. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

Tuan is a tough woman from Shantou and is raising her Chinese-African daughter Lily by herself.

> I learned Cantonese by myself, otherwise I could hardly do business with local traders…If you are a local, you can buy cheaper housing than outsiders. Now, I just rent an apartment. I have no money to buy housing here. It is too expensive…Shantou is not bad, but I am too familiar with Guangzhou to move to other places. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

Lian from Guangxi is in her early 40s, and separated from her Ivorian husband Eddie in 2014. She has lived in Guangzhou for more than 15 years, and suffers from the many stresses of life there. Particularly, the price of daily necessities is much higher than before, and business is not good. But she has no chance to work or earn money in her hometown, so she stays in Guangzhou. Her relatives are also always asking after her ex-husband. She has not told her parents that Eddie left her for another woman and in order to avoid gossip. She also recalled her experiences in her natal family.

> In the village, the son is always in favor. I am the elder daughter, so I have no choice but to raise myself...I send some money to my parents. They live with my older brother…I seldom talk to them about my business. They are famers and do not understand the situation. There is no help. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

Ning is a local in her early 30s, married to a Nigerian man named Simon. She was estranged from her father for a long time.

> My father is a seaman. I hardly met him at home. I was basically raised by my mother. When he came back home and accused me of something, I quarreled with him. I thought he knew nothing about me, but God led me to become a happy person…Simon always told me to talk with my father…After we had children, I felt different, and understood him [my father]…Our relationship is better than before. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

During their long stays in Guangzhou, the majority of these women were in the process of enhancing their economic status. Because they spent more than ten hours per day on establishing business relationships with foreigners and expanding foreign trade, there was no time for them to come into intimate contact with the culture of Guangzhou and find new Chinese friends. Their personal social networks were limited, and their dual lack of identity--

neither urbanites nor villagers, made them feel lonely. The trade environment increasingly pushed them towards choosing foreigners as life partners. For instance, Shuang comes from a village of Hunan province and her husband Bauman came from Nigeria. They have two sons. She had an unhappy life in her village. She said,

> My parents divorced when I was young. My mother was often beaten by my step-father. I could not tolerate it. I was not good at school. After I graduated from high school, my friend helped me get a job in Guangzhou. I wanted to earn money. My two brothers studied in universities. I needed to support them, so I came here. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

She also explained that her long working hours hindered her from making friends. She used to work from 10:30AM until 12:00AM. Although she has changed jobs to work for a different foreign trade store, she still works overtime. She did not have time to date some marriageable men who were introduced to her by friends, so they stopped pursuing her. Also it is harder to find a local man to marry, because they think villagers are inferior to urban people. Later Bauman employed Shuang and they worked together daily. When Shuang finished work, Bauman took her out to eat. He treated Shuang well and their marriage was natural. Before Bauman, Shuang had another African boyfriend. Both of them were poor, so they rented a small room in Xiatang, which was 500 RMB each month. She discovered he liked to go to bars, was lazy at work and did not save money. They quarreled many times, because he made no effort in making progress, so they separated.

Bauman talked about why he employed Shuang as a shop assistant:

> I had employed Chinese before. They are not good, but I need an honest one to help me contact factories. My Chinese is bad, and she seemed hardworking, so I hired her. (August 2014)

According to Bauman, even when he was not in Guangzhou, Shuang still worked her full hours. So he gave her some important orders to deal with. She was fully competent. Bauman felt very satisfied with her work. Shuang explained that she worked hard to earn money and never considered attracting Bauman's attention. In Xiaobei there are many trade markets. She is just a *dagongmei* (打工妹). If a boss told others that she is not serious about her job, she might develop a bad reputation, which would make it hard to find work in the future. Shuang thought Bauman's language barrier was the reason she took on more responsibility for Bauman's business and in taking care of the family. Bauman admitted that he is prepared to return to Africa in the future.

> Shuang worked hard, [and] has business experience. She is very helpful…I am not sure. I have been doing business here [for a] long time, but business is not so good now. It is difficult. I want to go back to my country one day, when I earn more money. (July 2014)

Qi is 24 years old. She comes from Zhanjiang and has a Ghanaian boyfriend Paul (aged mid-30s).

> I have already worked here [in foreign markets] for three years…I had a Chinese boyfriend but we

separated…We met in this store, Paul pursued me. He called me every day and asked me to go out with him, so I accepted…My friends do not understand why I am in a relationship with an African...I feel happy staying with him. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

Zhao (aged late-20s) is a shop assistant for a Malian store owner. Even though she feels bored by her job, and lacks opportunities to find a boyfriend, she spends more than ten hours in the store every day due to her mother's illness and family's financial plight in Chenzhou of Hunan province. Her Malian boss does not allow her to use the Internet in the store. He said Zhao should focus on customers to earn money, but sometimes there are few customers, and she wants to know what is happening in the outside world. Because the market mainly attracts African and Middle-Eastern traders, it is very hard for her to make new Chinese friends, let alone find a Chinese boyfriend. Zhao feels troubled by being pursued by some Africans, but she often questions whether she should accept their pursuits as she ages and experiences loneliness.

5.3.2 African Spouses'/Partners' Information

Two thirds of the African men interviewed are Muslims, mainly from Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Angola, Niger, Nigeria and Uganda. The remaining one third of African men in the group are Christians or Catholics, mainly from Nigeria, Cameroon, Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania, the Congo, and Cote d'Ivoire. All of them are traders and one works as a church pastor on the weekend.

For most Africans interviewed, their social position, both within and outside of Guangzhou, was not so important, as they were only focused on achieving economic gains as quickly as possible. However, Africans who marry Chinese consider long-term business development in Guangzhou and hope to create a new life by integrating into Chinese society. For example, African interviewees who have short-term (1-6 months) visas, said that that they did not have any intention of acquiring Chinese citizenship but it was good for business if they could gain dual citizenship. When only on a short stay in China, they did not sufficiently understand the local culture. However, those Africans who stayed in China for one year and continued to extend their visas seemed to have a deeper understanding of the language, habits and culture of the Chinese. Still, in order to understand a foreign culture, one must also have an understanding of his or her own culture as a reference point. Language training institutions and service organizations are not systematized in Guangzhou, leaving Africans without the tools to participate in local society. Africans who stay in China for more than three years and have Chinese wives say that they feel integrated into Chinese culture and society. They are focused on language learning and try to grasp the similarities and differences of living habits, value systems and ways of thinking between Africans and Chinese, so as to find ways to adapt to local life.

Nigerian trader Richard, who has a Chinese partner Gao, is a classic case of how language barriers and undocumented status impact a family's socioeconomic conditions in Guangzhou. Richard normally speaks simple Chinese to choose the patterns of goods, and Gao negotiates the details with Chinese traders and factories and in dealing with daily matters. Richard has a close relationship with his Nigerian friends from the same region or the same church, but he sometimes worries that useful commercial information might be stolen by other Nigerian traders.

Eric has been living in China with his Chinese wife Pang and daughter for nearly eight years. He said that he attempts to establish relationships in ways that are preferential to Chinese people. Once, an African customer met Pang's daughter and attempted to give her money. Pang was strongly opposed to this, and the African customer thought that he was not offering enough money. Eric explained to his African customer that his Chinese wife wanted to teach their children to earn money by hard work and that they did not want to spoil the child. At the same time Eric also told Pang the different opinions that Africans hold regarding giving money to children. He praised Pang for teaching Lily to say 'hello uncle / aunt' to their customers, which is considered very polite by Africans. But Eric is disturbed by discrimination against him, though he tries to maintain a positive attitude.

> At the beginning, I felt terrible hearing Chinese call me 'black' (*heiren*/黑人) or 'black ghost' (*heigui*/黑鬼)，but Pang said some Chinese are bad-mannered (*suzhi*/素质) or ill-bred, and they do not understand the words, they're just using it as others do. They also call all Westerners 'foreign ghosts/gweilos' (*yanguizi*/洋鬼子，*guilao*/鬼佬). Discrimination exists everywhere…They do not speak English, so they feel timid speaking with me. I do my business here, no problem. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

Ford (aged mid-40s) comes from Niger. He lives with his Chinese partner Wang from Liaoning province in northern China. He also tried to understand language and cultural differences between Africans and Chinese.

> The elder Chinese neighbors prefer to talk with my wife about our babies [in a small public area of a residential community in Tongdewei]…Chinese are too curious about foreigners…My neighbors know that I speak Chinese, so they ask me where I am from, what kinds of foods I eat, and touch my skin. I am not happy about this, but Wang said they have never met Africans before, [and] wanted to get to know me…When I went to work, they asked me 'have you eaten yet [chi le ma/吃了吗]?' I was very confused at first. Why did they care about my meal? Wang said it is the same as 'hello' or 'how are you' for Chinese, so when I ask them the same, they are happy. (October 2014)

Iwan, from Cameroon, lives with his Chinese partner Ma, from Foshan. He has had both happy and unhappy experiences in China. Ma tried to help him adapt to Guangzhou by learning the language, and introduced Chinese friends to Iwan to expand his social networks. But after one year of language practice, he still encounters language barriers. He seems likely

to leave China in the future, because his maladjustment and the work of trading in Guangzhou is too pressurizing, and it is too difficult to make money on the stagnant market.

> You know, I have just learnt Chinese, so I have problems. I wanted to say *ni meiyou xiangxiang* [you do not think over your ideas/你没有想想、仔细思考], but I said *ni meiyou naozi* [you lack your mind/你没有脑子] in Chinese. Ma and I quarreled [over this]. One cannot use *Ni guolai* [你过来/you come here]，Ma said it is rude. You know, I just put these words together. She said I should say *Ni neng guolai yixia ma?* [你能过来一下吗？ could you come here for a second]. I do not know how to use these words politely, and she tells me these things. (October 2014)

Zach married his Chinese wife Lan, but finds it difficult to run a small clothing store and live in an urban village with poor living conditions.

> My Chinese is not good. I am learning, but it takes time…our business is bad this year. Some customers did not pay, we wait for them. Every one earns little, buys few goods this year. mafan [trouble], uh, the rent [3000RMB/each month] here is higher. The big bosses [market operators] eat our money. (August 2013)

Richard seemed to face difficulties in adapting to the economic and social environment in Guangzhou. He had previously run a clothing store in Guangzhou for four years before moving to Yiwu in 2013. Richard believed that the business environment in Guangzhou had become hostile—the cost of daily items and the rent of the mid-sized rooms in urban villages and stores are higher than before, while less Africans are coming to Guangzhou to buy goods—so he and his Chinese partner Gao made the decision to move to Yiwu and look for other opportunities. Because she is self-employed, it is difficult for Gao to earn a stable salary and get a bank loan to buy a house, especially while her partner Richard is a transient trader. Richard said,

> I want to live in China. I told her [Gao] several times. It is a good place to do business. But I do not have enough money to buy an apartment here. [It is] very expensive. We already have a child [on the way], [so] we will get married, but we need to wait. (September 2014)

Richard makes less profit than before, and needs to extend his visa nearly every one or two months, which wastes time and money. In his opinion, that is the reason why some Africans overstay visas in China. As they do not have money to extend their visas or buy tickets to go elsewhere during this period of economic hardship. Some unauthorized Africans manage to earn large sums of money without paying taxes, and have never been caught. Richard seems to think of this as not necessarily bad. He said he will leave China to buy a house in his hometown, because policy is stricter and profits are lower in China.

5.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, two relatively disadvantaged groups who are usually residing in urban villages can be identified: the domestic 'floating population' from undeveloped areas in China, and

Africans who belong to an international 'floating population' (Guangzhou Municipal Public Security Bureau 2012). Both of these populations live as outsiders, suffer from poor living conditions, and are adversely affected by Guangzhou's regulations due to their informal positions and unstable business opportunities and income. There are complex external and internal factors that impact the stability or instability of Chinese-African marriages and partnerships, and affect their parenthood, kinship and interaction with the wider social networks.

Chapter 6, 7, 8 and 9 will explore the complex backgrounds of Chinese interviewees in greater detail. Because there are so many Chinese in contact with Africans in their daily lives and work environments, it is necessary to describe their diverse backgrounds in context. By discussing various aspects of legal regulations, cultural differences, relationships between Chinese in-laws and relatives, and social networks in later chapters, it will be simpler to understand the views of Chinese partners, relatives, friends, co-workers and other stakeholders, as well as the differences between Chinese and Africans. Moreover, I will deal with Chinese-African couples' statuses, perceptions of religious affiliation, gender roles, kinship and social networks. The next chapters also discuss the differing legal status and social belonging of domestic and international migrants. They will also deal with challenges faced by Chinese-African children, and their parents' attitudes, methods of raising children, and ways of dealing with discrimination impact children's attitudes towards China and Africa, their sense of social belonging and their legal status.

Chapter 6 Legal Regulations for International and Internal Migrants

As conditions change along with the world, different principles should be applied accordingly

Taken from: [The Period of Warring States] Fei HAN 'Five Vermin by Han Feizi'

世异则事异，事异则备变

摘自：【战国】 韩非《韩非子·五蠹》

This chapter stated that from a governance perspective, current regulations in Guangzhou government assign foreigners to the 'floating population' (Guangzhou Municipal Public Security Bureau 2012). Therefore, in the Chinese context Africans are not considered permanent immigrants but rather a mobile or transient people. Some Africans prefer short-term stays to conduct limited business, while some want to stay longer but cannot obtain long-term visas due to current policies of regulating 'floating population' or due to failure to meet the requirements of a long-term visa. In addition, the illegal actions of some Africans—such as entering without proper documents or with counterfeit documents, overstaying, working without permit, or involvement in drug and gang-related crimes—has induced the government to tighten security measures and more strictly regulate long-term visa applications. Even Africans married to Chinese do not easily obtain Chinese citizenship and access to related social services, but are treated rather as transient residents (Niu 2015). It is also hard for them to gain permanent residence status due to narrow requirements, and only a few obtain long-term family reunion visas.

From the African perspective, there is much concern about legal status and visa checks by the police in Guangzhou. Theoretically, Africans should know that different visas have different functions when they apply, but the specified purposes of their visas often do not match their actions after entering China. There is a lack on the side of the government or social aid to help Africans to fulfill all the demands of maintaining a legal status, so that even some Africans who have legal status are not sure they will be able to renew their visas. Those who are undocumented feel unsafe when they encounter police checks, but have to find any way to stay in Guangzhou or other cities in China to cover the costs of living and save enough money for their airfare back to their homeland.

From Chinese partners' perspectives, as members of the domestic 'floating population', they are constrained by *hukou*, and do not enjoy social welfare equal to the locals. Their Chinese-African children also lack social support and encounter barriers to attending local public schools. This is a clear example of the negative impact of *hukou*.

6.1 The Exit and Entry Administration Law and the Regulation of Foreign Migrants

This chapter outlines China's previous position as a nation of emigrants rather than a destination for immigrants (Liu 2013). Particularly southerners in China emigrated overseas historically (Hoe 2013), but now the country is facing its own issues of transnational and translocal immigration (Pieke 2012). In recent years, increasing numbers of foreigners from developing countries have entered China to seek business opportunities and socioeconomic improvement, which has accelerated reform of foreign policy.

As elaborated earlier, both Chinese domestic migrants and African migrants are considered part of the 'floating population'.

Furthermore, 'Foreign resident professionals' (*waiguozhuanyerenyuan*/外国专业人员) is not a term recognized by current law, and generally refers to foreigners who enter China with a valid work visa for non-diplomatic or official reasons including work and skill training (The 2013 Law). In China, foreigners with a foreign resident permit are usually experts in their fields with a high socioeconomic status, and they can generally be found in affluent areas with high-quality living facilities. For example, the Tianhe district of Guangzhou, an icon of the metropolis, is home to foreign professionals employed as joint-venture employees, teachers and representatives of foreign companies (Yu & Zou 2012). Some qualified professionals are able to obtain permanent residency. "Foreigners who have made remarkable contribution to China's economic and social development, or meet other conditions for permanent residence (green card) in China may obtain permanent residence status upon application approved by the Ministry of Public Security" (Article 47 2013), meaning many departments urgently need highly skilled professionals to contribute to China's development rather than short-term traders. As of 2013, 7,356 foreigners held permanent residence cards in China (CCG 2015). Liu (2010) argues that limited green cards are granted because China is already faced with the problem of managing a 1.4 billion population, and justifiably curbs foreign immigration. However, most Africans in Xiaobei and Sanyuanli are not highly skilled professionals, but rather retailers and wholesalers on the small business scale, or unskilled laborers (Zhu 2013). Some have lived in China for nearly ten years and have Chinese spouses. They are eligible for a long-term family-sponsored visa that may help them to socially integrate, but some choose to apply for business visa for commercial purposes, and some choose to apply for student visa that will grant them a long enough stay to get into business. Africans usually use student visas to do business in their spare time without obtaining work permits. Southeast Asian blue-collar workers who seek opportunities in the cheap labor markets in China have relative social security, while African laborers often have no social security (Wang 2009). Due to high underemployment and a mobile domestic population, there are few opportunities for Africans to find formal employment in China.

Although at the national level the government treats all foreign residents equally, the majority of local Chinese citizens do not know how to interact and communicate with African migrants. The media and researchers seem strongly focused on reporting on foreigners' illegal activities and exposing 'invisible groups', such as Africans gangsters, and drug trafficking organizations involving undocumented Africans (Huagen 2012; Lyons, Brown & Li 2012). For instance, Guangdong Province documented 5,435 cases of crime in 2004, and 6,362 cases in 2005 （Liu 2009). Among the 6,362 cases in 2005, 5,548 (87.2%) cases resulted from unintentional overstaying on visas, while 814 (12.8%) cases were intentional overstaying（Liu 2009; Zhu & Price 2013). On June 29, 2009, over 250 Africans gathered in the Huangqi area of Nanhai seeking a group of Africans involved in a robbery on June 27, in which an African was robbed of nearly 600,000 dollars in Guangzhou. The victim had discovered the robbers were living in Huangqi, and had asked his African friends to help recover the money. They shouted loudly on the street that night, attracting nearly 100 policemen of the Nanhai Branch of Public Security to deal with the situation (Pen & Qin 2011). On July 15, 2009, the Kuangquan Police Station of the Public Security Bureau of Yuexiu district sent policemen to check visas. They discovered an African had exchanged currency illegally on the second floor of the Tangqi Market. The man ran away, broke through a window with his arms and then jumped out. His back was scratched by glass and he barely escaped. He told policemen that he had lost his passport at the Baiyun Airport. Meanwhile, three other Africans on the same floor saw that the policemen were checking visas store by store. CCTV showed that two of them escaped, and the third jumped out of a window and was injured. Later, a crowd of Africans gathered around the Kuangquan Police Station to demand an explanation, leading to a long traffic jam near Guangyuan Xi Road (Pan & Qin 2011; Tang & Gong 2009). In 2012, a Nigerian took a motorcycle to a market and quarreled with the driver over the fee. The quarrel led to physical contact between the driver and the Nigerian, which resulted in masses gathering around and beating the Nigerian. The Kuangquan Police Station detained the two individuals for investigation, but the Nigerian suddenly died in the police station. In protest, nearly 200 Africans sieged the police station, again causing a long traffic jam on the same road (Branigan 2012; Xiong 2014). From 2009 to 2012, foreigners from 48 countries were detained as suspects in drug-related crimes in Guangzhou. Nigerians were the largest group of detainees, followed by Pakistanis (Liu 2009; Zhu 2015). According to Deputy Procurator-General Wang Jian of Guangzhou Municipal People's Prosecution Service, prosecutions of foreigners in drug-related crimes have increased in Guangzhou in recent years. 79 foreign criminals were prosecuted in 2013, 151 in 2014, and 31 from January to May in 2015 (Zhao & Sui 2015). According to data from the Yuexiu Prosecution Service of Guangzhou, during January and June in 2014, the Public Security Bureau arrested 45

foreigners involved in drug-related crimes—21 Nigerians, 23 from Niger, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Ghana, and one Indonesian. 15 African non-Nigerians claimed to be Nigerian, but had used other African passports to apply for visas because of the difficulty of obtaining a visa from the Chinese Embassy with a Nigerian passport. Of the 45 convicted, 23 were staying in Yuexiu District (Li & Chen 2014:154).

All of these incidents have led to negative attitudes towards Africans, generated discussion on foreign policy (Liao & Du 2011; Qiu 2011), and brought the African communities in Yuexiu district into the spotlight (Dyer 2008). Suddenly, Chinese citizens became very aware that a large number of Africans and their family members are living in Guangzhou and have established an 'African city' (Han 2013), 'ethnic enclaves' (Li, Ma & Xue 2009; Lyons, Brown & Li 2012) or 'transnational social spaces' (Mathews& Yang 2012) in Guangzhou.

Currently, foreign policy is based on three major laws and regulations:

1. 'The Exit-Entry Administration Law of the People's Republic of China' (2013),

2. 'Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Administration of the Entry and Exit of Foreigners' (2013),

3. 'The Measures for the Administration of Examination and Approval of Foreigners' Permanent Residence in China' (2004) which "was jointly published by twenty five authorities from the Party and the government including the Organization Department of the Central Committee of CPC, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and the Ministry of Public Security" (the 2012 Circular).

Additionally, the following regulations are important pieces of foreign policy:

4. 'Provisions on the Employment of Foreigners in China' (2011),

5. 'Interim Measures for Social Insurance System Coverage of Foreigners Working within the Territory of China' (2011),

6. 'Provisions on the Registration of Foreign-funded Partnership Enterprises' (2010)[9]

7. 'Regulations of the People's Republic of China on News Coverage by Permanent Offices of Foreign Media Organizations and Foreign Journalists' (2008),

8. 'Foreign Trade Law of the People's Republic of China' (2004),

9. 'Rules for the Implementation of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Control of the Entry and Exit of Aliens' (2004),

10. 'Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Cooperation in Running Schools' (2003),

11. 'The Ministry of provisions relating to further simplify procedures for foreign professionals to China' (2003),

12. 'Law of the People's Republic of China on Chinese-Foreign Equity Joint Ventures' (2001),

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[9]Measures of Establishment of Foreign Invested Partnership Enterprises, http://www.pathtochina.com/reg_pe.htm

13. 'Administrative Rules on the Acceptance of Foreign Students by Colleges and Universities' (2000)

14. 'Regulations of the People's Republic of China Concerning Consular Privileges and Immunities' (1990),

15. 'Provisions on Providing Entry and Residence Conveniences to Foreign High-level Talented People and Investors' (2002).

Moreover, different provinces implement national regulations according to the actual situations of foreigners in their territories, and local governments pass their own regulations. For instance, Guangdong Provincial Public Security passed the 'Interim Provisions of Guangdong Province on the Administration of and Provision of Services to Foreigners' in 2011.

Under Chinese law, foreigners can be granted visas to work, study and live in China. 'The Exit-Entry Administration Law of the People's Republic of China' (2013) is the most important piece of foreign-related legislation, and outlines the details of Chinese visa application processes and the rights and obligations of foreigners. Table 3 shows the various classes of visa applications and possibilities for extension.

Table 3: Chinese Visa Application (prepared by the author under the relevant ordinance)

Visa Categories	Primary Purpose of Visit	Description of Visa	Extensions
C	As a crew member or a motor vehicle driver	Issued to foreign crew of international transportation, including aircraft, trains and ships, and motor vehicle drivers engaged in cross-border transport activities, and to family members accompanying a ships' crewmember.	Extension of stay for no more than 30 days
D	Permanent Residence	Issued to those who intend to reside in China permanently.	
F	Exchanges, visits, study tours and other activities	Issued to those who intend to travel to China for exchanges, visits, study tours and other activities.	Extension of stay for no more than 180 days
G	Transit	Issued to those who intend to transit through China en route to a third country (or region).	Extension of stay for no more than 30 days
J1	As a journalist	Issued to resident foreign journalists/media staff of foreign news organizations stationed in China. The intended duration of stay in China exceeds 180 days.	
J2		Issued to foreign journalists/media staff on temporary news coverage missions. The intended duration of stay in China is limited to no more than 180 days.	Extension of stay for no more than 30 days
L	As a tourist	Issued to those who intend to travel to China for tourism.	Extension of stay for no more than 30 days

M	Commerce & Trade	Issued to those who intend to travel to China for commercial and trade activities.	Extension of stay for no more than 180 days
Q1	Family reunion, foster care or visiting relatives with permanent residence in China	Issued to family members of Chinese citizens or foreigners with Chinese permanent residency intending to travel to China for a long-term family reunion, or to those who intend to go to China for the purposes of foster care (intended duration of stay in China exceeding 180 days). 'Family members' refers to spouses, parents, sons, daughters, spouses of sons or daughters, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, and parents-in-law.	
Q2		Issued to those who intend to visit relatives who are Chinese citizens residing in China or foreigners with permanent residency in China; the intended duration of stay is limited to no more than 180 days.	Extension of stay for no more than 180 days
R	As an introduced talent and skilled worker	Issued to talents and highly qualified workers or those whose skills are urgently needed in China.	Extension of stay for no more than 180 days
S1	Visiting relatives working or studying in China or other private affairs	Issued to relatives of foreigners working or studying in China for the purpose of a long-term visit, or to those who intend to visit China for other private purposes (intended duration of stay exceeding 180 days). 'Relatives' refers to spouses, parents, sons or daughters under the age of 18 years and parents-in-law.	
S2		Issued to those wishing to visit family members that are foreigners working or studying in China, or to those who intend to visit China for other private reasons. The intended duration of stay in China is limited to no more than 180 days. 'Family members' refers to spouses, parents, sons, daughters, spouses of sons or daughters, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, and parents-in-law.	Extension of visiting relatives for no more than 180 days; Extension of other private reasons no more than 90 days
X1	As a student	Issued to those who intend to study in China for a period of more than 180 days.	
X2		Issued to those who intend to study in China for a period of no more than 180 days.	Extension of stay for no more than 180 days
Z	Employment, Commercial performances	Issued to those taking up a post or employment, or performing commercially in China.	

Under the new Exit and Entry Law, the number of Chinese visas increases from eight to twelve. Article 30 states that "the validity period of a foreigner's work-type residence permit

shall be 90 days at the minimum and five years at the maximum; and the validity period of a non-work-type foreigner's residence permit shall be 180 days at the minimum and five years at the maximum" (Article 30 2013). Therefore 180 days stay is the threshold for African traders with non-work-type permit. Individuals granted visas for stays over 180 days are considered long-term residents, whereas those granted visas for stays less than 180 days are considered temporary residents (Article 36 2013).

The Q visa refers to family reunion, foster care or visiting relatives with permanent residence in China. It is divided into two categories: Q1 (long-term) and Q2 (short term). Among my interviewees, only few have considered to apply for a Q visa due to its limitations. Firstly, the Q visa can only be issued to spouses who have been married for five years, and whose marriage certificate has been recognized by the Chinese administration. Moreover, the foreign spouse is required to stay in China for at least nine months in a year. Secondly, the Q visa does not entitle the spouse to take up employment. In the latter case, he/she needs to apply for an employment license or work-type residence permit (Chodorow 2016). Therefore, African partners need to weigh the benefits and disadvantages of the Q visa: Some choose a short-term M visa for doing business legally rather than a long-term Q visa without a working permit.

6.1.1 The Concept of the 'Three Illegals' and Coping with Regulations

Africans interviewed during my fieldwork mainly had short-term visas, such as L (Travel) and M (Commerce & Trade) visas. A few held long-term visas such as X (Student), Z (Employment, Commercial performances), S (Visiting relatives working or studying in China or other private affairs) and Q (Family reunion, foster care or visiting relatives with permanent residence) visas. None of them had a D (Permanent Residence) visa. Some Africans are granted L, X, and S visas without work permits, but still engage in business, or work illegally in language schools or the entertainment industry as part-time employees. Many Africans said they were not aware of the regulations on work permits. Some knew the rules but failed to comply due to the desire or need to earn an income. An African insider explained that in order to earn a living, he must live and work without documents. Relying on commercial activities at night, these 'invisible' Africans are able to cover living expenses and avoid visa checks in the morning. 85% of African interviewees who have Chinese spouses or partners held M or L visas, 5% held X visas, and 10% held Z visas. Some traders held F visas for conducting business before September 2013, after which the law was modified to separate M and F visas. The new F visa is issued to those who intend to travel to China for exchanges, visits, study tours and other activities, and the new M visa is issued to those who intend to travel to China for commercial and trade activities. So Africans turned to applying for

business (M) visas after 2013. F, M and L visas are valid for less than 180 days and can be renewed several times in a year.

Some media have reported on the African 'three illegals' living in the cheapest rental housing in Guangzhou. For obvious reasons, reliable data is not available on numbers of illegal Africans living in Guangzhou. 'Three illegals' refers to illegal entry and exit, staying illegally and working illegally in China. "The administrative penalties prescribed shall be determined by public security administrative bodies at or above the county level or by the exit/entry border inspection authorities. Penalties involving the imposition of warnings or fines of no more than 5,000 RMB may be decided by the exit/entry administrations of public security administrative bodies at or above the county level" (Article 70 2013). Due to the large number of foreigners entering China, China's Exit-Entry Administration Regulations was further modified in 2013, increasing penalties on the 'three illegals'. For instance, the minimum fine for illegal entry and exit was increased from 1,000 to 10,000 RMB, the minimum fine for an illegal stay increased from 500 to 5,000 RMB, and minimum fine for illegal work increased from 1000 to 10,000 RMB. To effectively dissuade breaches of the law, fines can reach 50,000 RMB.

6.1.1.1 Work Permits

Some Africans must ignore regulations in order to survive in China. Clark, a 20 year-old Kenyan college student, describes his experiences:

> Some language schools were hiring English teachers. They did not check my passport in the past, but now they check it. My friends told me to say I am American, and then there will be no problem. Now they check my passport, [and know] I am Kenyan, [so] they did not give me a job. They said I am not a native speaker, but you know English is our official language, so I speak [it] better than Chinese. But they prefer white people. It is silly. I need to work in nightclubs to make money. (August 2014)

He also expressed dismay at the inconsistency of punishment. He claims many foreign students work part-time jobs without a work permit. His university professors advised him not to work, because foreign students need to focus on studying, but he wanted to earn money to pay his education fees. He plans to continue to renew his student visa in order to conduct business in China in the future.

While studying or after graduating from universities in Guangzhou, African students quickly become merchants and try to stay in China for a long period to make money (Brebelow 2012; Haugen 2013; Le Bail 2009). Although some did not have work permits and were not allowed to engage in trade, their aim seemed to be to get visas first in order to establish a stable business later.

As a matter of fact, a student who needs to take a part-time job, should get an approval

from the education or training organization, then apply to the exit-entry administration authorities for a notation of work permit. Persons or companies that illegally employ foreigners may be fined 10,000 RMB per foreigner, not to exceed a total of 100,000 RMB. Any illegal gains shall be confiscated (Article 80 2013). "Foreigners who work in China illegally shall be fined not less than RMB 5,000 but not more than RMB 20,000 yuan; where circumstances are serious, they shall be detained for not less than five days but not more than fifteen days and shall also be fined not less than RMB 5,000 yuan but not more than RMB 20,000 yuan" (Article 80 2013).

One South African trader, William, is different from other Africans. He has a Z (one year work) visa and runs a company with his Chinese wife Yan. Their living conditions are better than most Chinese-African couples. William seems to have a happy life in Guangzhou.

> They may give me a green card next year. We have been married for a long time, seven years. My Chinese friend works for the government. He says I can get a green card, because I have been married for more than five years. I run this company, employ Chinese, and pay taxes, so he says I can apply for it. It is really good. (September 2014)

Malian respondent Eric has been in China for nearly eight years. He has been married to his Chinese wife Pang for six years. Each year he stays in China for more than nine months and is concerned about the visa policies. Under the new regulations he qualifies for a family reunion (Q1) visa, but first needed to make sure that the Q visa includes a work permit, as his company is in Guangzhou. He had to spend some time learning about the new regulations before changing his visa class. Eric has a 6-years old daughter, who worries about his business. Eric has always obeyed the laws, and wants to prove to his daughter that Africans are good people. He has tried to show his daughter how much he loves his family.

> Last time, Nana asked me whether I plan to leave one day. Her friend told her that some African fathers left and asked her about me. She [was] worried and asked me. [So] I must be good, [so that] she can feel it.... I know they say Africans leave, [and] leave children to their Chinese wives. It is just a few, very few. We care about family in Africa. [Although] we come here, it is the same. You know, I bought a small flat in Shiji Plaza, which is under her [Pang's] name. We are a family, and I give her money, you know. That is not what they say. (October 2014)

A very small number of Africans run businesses in Hong Kong and other cities, and open branch offices in Guangzhou. They can easily obtain work (Z) visas and help their family members to obtain private (S) visas that allow them to live in China. The company owners normally choose to live in upscale residential communities, with private cars, a driver and a Chinese nanny who can take care of children and pick them up from international schools. A Ghanaian boss, Ben, said,

> My brother and I registered a company in Hong Kong, and this one is a branch. I work here, and my sister is in Dubai. We work together. I send goods to them. My wife [Nigerian] is a lucky woman. She hardly does housework, because our Chinese nanny does that. Carl [a Ghanaian driver] takes my

kids to school. (September 2014)

6.1.1.2 Residence Registration

Though some African interviewees were dissatisfied with their short-term visas and felt that application processes waste time and money, and impede business operations, they continued to renew visas to do business in Guangzhou. Normally after being granted authorized entry into China, foreigners are required to register their residence. One of the most important provisions is that "where visas held by foreigners specify that foreigners need to apply for residence permits after entry, such foreigners shall, within 30 days from the date of their entry, apply to the exit/entry administrative bodies of public security at or above the county level in the proposed places of residence for foreigners' residence permits" (Article 30 2013). Thus, the period specified in the residence permit granted by local police stations is the legally allowed period of residence in China. Long-term residence permits are subject to annual inspection (Article 38 2013). In the case that foreigners in China live in hotels, "the hotels shall register their [foreigner's] accommodation in accordance with the regulations on public security administration of the hotel industry, and submit foreigners' accommodation registration information to the public security administrative bodies in the places where the hotels are located. For foreigners who reside or stay in domiciles other than hotels, they or the persons who accommodate them shall, within 24 of hours the foreigners' arrival, go through the registration formalities with the public security administrative bodies in the place of residence" (Article 39 2013). In Guangzhou, according to police officer Song, 'Interim Provisions of Guangdong Province on the Administration of and Provision of Services to Foreigners' (2011) states that foreigners staying in hotels should provide personal information and obtain a lodging certificate from the hotel. When foreigners lease private housing, they must register themselves at the police station within 24 hours to obtain proof of temporary residence (Article 18 2011).

According to my fieldwork, a few newly-arrived Africans were not aware of registration rules, claiming no one told them to go to local police stations to register and that even the landlords rarely mentioned it. Not until they encountered police visa and residence permit checks did they learn the rules. If they were lucky, they only had to go to police stations to pay a fine and register immediately, otherwise their visas would be cancelled directly.

But the landlord Bao, who works in the Xiatang community, disagreed that Africans were not made aware of the rules. She claimed that she and other landlords help African tenants to prepare documents and take them to the police station for registration nearly every time they take on a new African tenant.

A long time ago, I rented to some Africans who forgot to register. It caused me trouble. The police

said I did not help them fulfill their duties. From then on, I mentioned several times to them [Africans] to register. You can see I filled these documents and contracts for [an African tenant], and I will take him to the police station. It's a waste of time, but I can make sure they are here legally, and then the policemen cannot blame me. Dealing with it as soon as possible leaves no possibility for future trouble. If some Africans say they are not aware of the registration matters, they are lying. We mentioned it several times. You can ask him [an African tenant]. Every foreigner knows about this [registration]. Their friends can tell them. It is just an excuse. There must be other reasons. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

6.1.1.3 Overstay

For Africans, the most difficult matter is visa expiration and overstay. During interviews, Africans discussed the many strategies they employ to stay in Guangzhou longer. Nigerian trader Aaron found different degrees of management of foreigners in Guangzhou, Yiwu and Harbin.

My brother has a company. He is a big boss. He asked me to come here. Last time, I came here with F visa, but this time it was changed to M visa, a very short one, just lasting one month, *mafan* (trouble)…My friend applied for visa in Yiwu before, it was easier than Guangzhou, but now it [becomes] stricter there. They told me to go to Harbin [the capital city of Heilongjiang province in northeastern China], [where] I might get a six-month, but I do not want to go there, it costs money, and I do not know Chinese. Do you understand? I do not believe the Chinese [administrators]. They will cheat me. (August 2014)

Nigerian trader Tom, who has a Chinese partner, Xuan, told me about his visa application strategies:

We [Nigerians] have some parties, and my brothers give me some news…They [government administrators and policemen] thought Nigerians cause trouble, but just a few people [have done] bad things. You know, we are good traders. [We] do business everywhere. There is no problem….They have our names…[because] we register there. They can check, and not allow these bad guys [to] come, but they should give us visas…It is really hard to get visa this year. I wanted to open a store with friends…it is not a good time. (September 2014)

Nigerian trader Gene, who has a Chinese partner, Nan, complained about the short-term M visa, because he had to leave mainland China each month and go to Hong Kong to renew it. He feels this is a waste of time and money, and that the Chinese government should treat him better because he has family in Guangzhou and has been doing business there for a long time. As self-employed Chinese trader, Miao, submitted housing contracts, her identity card and other documents to support her Tanzanian partner Harry's visa application.

Photo 7: The Tip for Carrying a Passport in a Restaurant (Taken by author in 2014)

Qi is from Zhanjiang of Guangdong province. After she graduated from high school she moved to Guangzhou to work as a furniture shop assistant. Her partner Paul is from Ghana. At first neither of them told me that they do not have marriage certificate, but discussion of Paul's visa exposed their unmarried status. Paul had a one-month visa and asked me whether I knew any officials who could help him to obtain long-term visa. I suggested that he take their marriage certificate to the police station, because it would be easiest for him to apply for a family reunion visa. If he is lucky, he will be granted a visa with a duration longer than one year. Paul had to admit that they are not married. Qi asked me whether I knew of other couples that had obtained marriage certificates in Africa. I asked her why they wouldn't register their marriage in China. Qi told me privately that Paul has overstayed his visa. If they register their marriage in China, officials will check Paul's passport and discover his illegal status. She defended Paul, saying,

> Just this time. He usually renews it on time. This time, he forgot to do it, he was too busy…last time, I asked some intermediaries to prepare documents for Paul, but they said the management was very strict, so they could not help…In November, he will go back to Africa to sell goods, and apply for a new visa in his country, and if the police then find that his visa renewal is overdue, it is not big deal. Paul says he has a way out. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

According to their description, Paul stays at home until evening and then goes to markets that are open until midnight to purchase goods. The policemen who check visas during regular working hours would not catch him. This couple disobeyed the law for the purpose of financial gain. They rarely considered the consequences of their actions, which could lead not just to fines, but also rejection of future visa applications. At the time of the interview, Paul's expired visa had not been discovered, but when he tries to return to Africa by airplane, border control will likely check Paul's visa. If his overstay is noticed, he will be blacklisted. Qi chose to take the chance, because Paul had told her they did not need to worry about his visa issue. In a worst-case scenario, he could find friends to make another passport for him, although he would pay handsomely for it. He believes the Chinese government cannot find him because

too many foreigners enter and exit every day, making it impossible to check every visa carefully. Even if Qi did not believe Paul entirely, she felt it did not greatly impact their daily life, and Paul was still making money. Instead, she thought regulations had unfairly led to Paul's illegal status, because he had been busy with work and had not purposely allowed his visa to expire. She felt that Paul should be granted a long-term visa to conduct trade, because one cannot accumulate capital with only a short-term visa.

> A while ago he was ill, so he could not do anything. He spent so much money on plane tickets, rent, and deposits. Everything costs money...We make little profit, and we work from early morning until night. It is not easy. If they give Paul a visa, he will not overstay. These officials bully Africans and just want them to pay a fine. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

As self-employed traders, both Paul and Qi care about their personal economic conditions. They knew of some cases of overstaying and the consequences, but they still expected there was a chance to escape from punishment. Indeed, the Chinese administrative system does offer some loopholes in these cases, which encourages some undocumented individuals to try to find a way to stay in China. As interviewees said, they did not break the law on purpose. They were just trying to make ends meet during the valid duration of their visa, but came up far short of their targets. Thus, they had to take risks to make money without permit. Discrepancies in immigration and visa administration create a gray area, which gives rise to brokers who help illegal migrants escape punishment.

African interviewees complained about the hostile attitudes of the police when registering or checking visas. During fieldwork in Guangzhou, Bodomo (2009) recorded experiences similar to his African respondents. South African trader William said the visa application was easy for him, because he can speak Chinese and can communicate with officials. By answering a few standard questions, he could be granted a visa within a few workdays.

> My friends told me they met hostile police during passport checks in Xiaobei, but I rarely encountered this in Baiyun or Tianhe. I knew these policemen thought there were many illegal persons in Xiaobei, but not all of us are here illegally. Their [policemen's] attitudes should be better. Most of us have visas, and we do regular things here. We just do business. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

On the other side, Police officers have a different view of the management of Africans in China. Police officer Yong took me on a tour of neighborhoods with high concentrations of foreign residents. He said that the new law allows police to detain 'three illegals' suspects for 30 days, and complex cases are submitted to higher level public security administrative bodies or the border control authorities to extend the period to 60 days. However the regulations don't reflect the reality due to several reasons, including: 'three illegal' persons often do not give authorities their true names; it is difficult to verify their undocumented status or counterfeit document; certain countries are uncooperative in investigative measures;

and China lacks a coordinated, unified and complete foreign registry system between the ministry of foreign affairs and commissioned offices which issue visas. The management of foreigners in China is mainly divided into three parts: issuing of entry visas, entry-exit border checks, and resident supervision, which are respectively implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bureau of Exit and Entry Frontier Inspection Offices, and the Public Security Bureau above the county level and related authorities responsible for related issues. Tourism sectors, industry and commerce departments, Civil Affairs departments and education departments also play a role in the management of foreigners working in their sectors (Zhu 2015: 65). Each department has some level of autonomy, meaning it is difficult for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to know whom the Public Security Bureau has deported. Individuals who have been deported may be granted reentry visas (Huang 2009). Additionally, thousands of enterprises are able to invite Africans into the country for the purpose of commercial cooperation, Chinese store owners may lend their legal licenses to Africans without knowing exactly what Africans are doing with these licenses, or Chinese may take on African employees without thoroughly checking their information. Even if market managers know of illegal activities, they are often willing to turn a blind eye because African traders pay significant rent. There are also all kinds of agencies supplying various visa services (Lan 2015). Therefore, local policemen often need more than 60 days to verify the 'three illegals' status. When illegal status is confirmed, deportation costs should be supplied by the 'three illegals' themselves, or by relatives or friends, but generally no one is able to pay fines and provide return tickets for these individuals. Therefore the expense of deportation must be publicly funded. Meanwhile, police stations cannot prolong the detention of 'three illegals' suspects whose status they fail to identify, due to limited space in the stations. Therefore, policemen sometimes decline to thoroughly check documents.

> If you capture more illegal Africans, you have increased the workload to check documents and figure out who will pay for their deportation. We would like to get it right, but we need someone to cooperate with us willingly. We are officers at a basic level. Everything is clearly written in law, but it is hard to enforce. It is never easy. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

Police officer Yong also said that once they discovered five undocumented Africans living in one room and fined the landlord 5,000 RMB for accommodating undocumented foreigners. When discussing this case with some landlords, they seemed dissatisfied with the outcome. Landlord Quan argued,

> He [the punished landlord] worked here, and asked me to help him, so we gathered other persons [landlords] to visit the police station. We told them that he should not pay a fine. We took Africans for registration, and we did a lot of favors for the police. It is clearly not our business [to take Africans to register], but we help them [policemen], so they should thank us. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

He showed me current housing contracts with Africans, and said he checked Africans tenants' visas carefully, but later Africans did not extend their visas on time. Sometimes when he met African tenants, he would remind them to renew visas on time. These tenants continued to pay rent, so he thought they had visas. He normally took them to police stations on arrival, and thought thereafter they should go on their own. In his opinion, checking visas is the duty of the police who have the Africans' information, and the police should inform landlords when Africans overstay rather than just blaming the landlords. Now, he only rents to African tenants until the expiry date of their visa to avoid trouble. After they renew visas, he renews the lease.

The current system of regulation in China leads to an African 'floating population' with an uncertain future and a poor ability to integrate. Africans staying in China are more interested in transnational trade rather than permanent residency, leading to a low sense of social belonging.

6.2 The Hukou System for Chinese and Chinese-African Children

6.2.1 The Establishment and Development of Hukou

Aside from the discussion of the legal status and social welfare of Africans, there are also regulations that impact the social status and social welfare of the Chinese, and limit the rights of non-local citizens in Guangzhou. Barbalet's (1988: 67) analysis shows that normally citizenship rights means the right to participate "in a common national community" and that citizenship is absolute (Faist 2000; Ong 1999), but in China, residents from different regions have different rights, related to multi-level or limited levels of social services and citizenship in local contexts (Smart 2001). Unlike Western notions of citizenship (Keane 2001), China tends to focus on citizenship of "substantive issues of welfare entitlements" (Smart 2001: 1853). The most influential system—*hukou*—is closely tied to population management, social resource allocation, access to legal aid, and individual rights.

China founded the *hukou* household registry system in the 1950s, partly to gather statistics, and partly to control rural population flows to cities and keep daily consumption low in order to support a high rate of industrialization (Lu 2008; Xiang 2007). This system exacerbates inequality, such as distribution of social resources and economic opportunities, and individual rights (Lu 2004). Under the *hukou* system, Chinese born in urban areas are officially registered as 'residents' (*jumin*/居民) and those born in rural areas as 'peasants' (*nongmin*/农民) (Xiang 2007). The Chinese are divided into two distinct categories that entail different social statuses and rights, creating distinct first- and second-class citizens (Smart 1990: 1855). During the 1990s, the central government decentralized regulatory power, giving local

authorities some autonomy, particularly in relation to migrant issues, such as *hukou*. So it can be found that, although citizens can move anywhere to search for jobs as laborers or consumers, they cannot settle down anywhere they wish and are not always entitled to social services provided by the government, such as schooling, health care etc. (Lu 2003). Individuals moving from rural to urban areas to find employment who do not qualify for urban *hukou* make up the 'floating population', and have limited rights and access to social services compared to urban local residents.

Because the central government decentralized power to provincial and municipal governments, Guangzhou, as a capital of Guangdong province, has authority to administer the local population. In 2004, the registered 'floating population' in Guangzhou was 2.77 million. In the following years, the 'floating population' increased sharply, reaching nearly 4 million in 2007, 6 million by 2009 and peaking at 7 million in 2010 (GZGOV 2010). According to Chen Shaokang, the Director of the Guangzhou Personnel Service Authority, by the end of 2013, the 'floating population' registered in Guangzhou consisted of 6.867 million individuals, and considering inaccuracies in official data, the actual number of domestic migrants living in Guangzhou consisted of nearly 8.32 million individuals (GZSJS 2014). In order to manage this large 'floating population', Guangzhou authorities worked with the central government to establish special regulations of the *hukou* system for local population management and social development.

In early 2010, the Guangzhou government announced three steps to promote rural and urban *hukou* unification, leading to the elimination of the distinction between *hukou* as an agricultural family (*nongyejiatinghu*/ 农业家庭户口) or non-agricultural family (*feinongyejiatinghu*/ 非农业家庭户口). Both were merged into household residence of a family (*juminhukoujiatinghu*/ 居民户口家庭户). The so-called household of a family is different from the household of a collective. The former is mainly based on kinship and common life, and the latter refers to the various backgrounds and social relationsof members. The category of non-agricultural collective (*feinongyejitihukou*/ 非农业集体户口) was reclassified as resident household of a collective (*juminhukoujitihu*/ 居民户口集体户) (GZMPSB 2013). The amended *hukou* system does not mean that equal treatments of urban and rural residents take effect immediately—it is just the first step. The second step is the reformation of management of *hukou* by the Public Security Bureau. In essence, the reform of the household registration system does not solve problems of inequality[10]. With improvement of the second transitional step, the modified policies of *hukou* will be executed by different departments and will gradually enforce the same treatment and access to social services to all

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[10]The relevant department of the Ministry of Public Security will specially mark the original pattern to distinguish primary statuses of 'peasants' or 'residents'. Relevant functional departments such as social security, employment, family planning, and land management will also assign services depending on original statuses.

residents. Based on these actions, the Public Security Bureau will remove distinctive characteristica of previous registration categories and truly achieve a unified *hukou* system. The amendment of policies to bring about equal social status for all residents will surely take a long time.

Table 4: Four Ways of Entering the Guangzhou Hukou System (prepared by the author under the relevant ordinance)

Types	Approving authority	Basic requirements
Brain Gain	Guangzhou Municipal Human Resources and Social Security Bureau	At least a Bachelor Degree
Points accumulation	Guangzhou Municipal Bureau of Migrant Services	More than 60 points (see Table 5), or pay more than 5 years of social and health insurance
Housing purchase	Public Security Bureau	Purchase commercial property/residential housing in Guangzhou
Tax payment		Pay more than three years of taxes totaling 100,000 RMB
Reunion of relatives		Married for two years

Table 5: Integral System of Hukou Management in Guangzhou (prepared by the author under the relevant ordinance)

Index	The indexes content values	Note
Educational Level	Undergraduate (60 points); Junior or vocational college (40 points); vocational school or high school (20 points)	Only the highest score is calculated. Points are not cumulative. Education below high school does not score.
Technological capability	Intermediate certificate (60points)；third level senior engineer and public institution technicians (40points); fourth level intermediate engineer and public institution technicians (20points)	Only the highest score is calculated. Points are not cumulative.
Professional qualification; professional jobs	Subject to the Directory of Professional Qualifications and Vocational Types in Guangzhou (20 points)	
Social services	In the past 5 years, blood donation (2 points per donation) or volunteer service (2 points per 50 hours).	For each service, the maximum allowed score within a year is 2. The total score is no more than 10 points.
Paying taxes	Submit three years of tax records. Personal income tax is at least 100,000 RMB total (20 points)	A tax year refers to the calendar year from January 1 to December 31

6.2.2 Hukou and Social and Health Insurance

The household registration system determines the rights of Chinese residents. This system has

localized characteristics including access to medical service, compulsory education, social welfare and assistance, and other public services. All of these rights depend on the obtainment of a certificate of local household registration (Lu 2008). The Guangzhou household registration will discriminate based on a lack of marketable skills in the household and for this reason poorly educated immigrant women who have lived in Guangzhou for decades have not been able to register households in Guangzhou, meaning they are not eligible for social services and are alienated to a certain degree (Lan 2015). This causes migrant women to have complex feelings towards their social status and sense of belonging in Guangzhou.

As Xuan expressed, although she has been living in Guangzhou for more than ten years, she did not have Guangzhou *hukou* due to her low education, and was unwilling to apply for a health insurance card or buy private insurance in Guangzhou for which she would have to pay all fees. She didn't understand earlier regulations and did not buy the social insurance that the local government had encouraged migrants to apply for. An official told Xuan that she would have to pay about 550 RMB per month for insurance, and the government offered a few subsidies. But she did not heed his words, and when she later discovered she had breast cancer, she had to pay for the entire treatment herself. She said she would stop treatment, because the can crew as already at a terminal stage, and there was no need to waste money, rather she would leave her money to her Chinese-African son Mike.

Many domestic migrants who do not have Guangzhou *hukou* are formally hired by companies or markets in Guangzhou, and the employers pay social and health insurance for employees, equal to nearly 32% of their pay. These immigrants have local insurance cards procured by their companies. When they become ill, they are reimbursed for any medical treatment, particularly with serious illnesses like cancer. If the immigrants are not formally employed in Guangzhou, they must cover insurance fees themselves. Local governments give limited subsidies each year. The majority of Chinese partners of African interviewees are immigrants from towns or rural areas outside of Guangzhou, and just two Chinese partners have Guangzhou *hukou*. All of them are self-employed as traders, shop assistants, or servants in informal employment with unstable incomes and no insurance support from their employers.

Tuan comes from Shantou and is separated from her Angolan partner Ramdy. She talked about her personal experiences living without Guangzhou *hukou*.

> I have lived in Guangzhou for nearly ten years. My *hukou* is still in my hometown. I am just selling clothing, which is a small business. I checked the requirements for Guangzhou *hukou*. They are so high, and I never thought to get it. I know local people can buy cheaper housing, because they can easily get loans from the bank. I did not have money to buy such an expensive place. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

She also felt different from locals and felt that speaking Cantonese, as locals do, leads to less

bullying from the local traders. She still identifies with her Shantou roots and customs. It is easy to earn money in Guangzhou, and she is familiar with Guangzhou, so does not want to return to her hometown. She pays for social insurance in Guangzhou. It is not expensive—just 400 or 500 RMB per month. Her niece was insured by the same company and told Tuan to join it, saying when Tuan retires, she is eligible for a pension and can also use the card to see a doctor for a lower fee.

Although Tuan has some relatives and friends in Guangzhou, and holds parties with them to create the feeling of being at home, she still thinks of herself as an outsider. Like Tuan, other Chinese partners who have lived in Guangzhou for several years still think of themselves as outsiders.

6.2.3 Hukou and Education

As migrants, Chinese partners are not eligible for the same social welfare as locals, nor are their Chinese-African children, some of whom are born out of wedlock where neither parent has Guangzhou *hukou*. Normally, children are automatically given Chinese nationality when they are born in China and have at least one Chinese parent. They are required to register their *hukou* in their Chinese parents' place of origin. Because the *hukou* of their Chinese parents is outside of Guangzhou, African-Chinese children born and living in Guangzhou are not considered Guangzhou residents. In China, enrolment in the school system is based on the place of origin (属地) defined by *hukou*. The only way for migrants and African-Chinese children who do not have Guangzhou *hukou* to attend local public schools is to pay extra fees, known as 'sponsorship' fees (赞助费). They are allowed to attend private schools without restriction, but these may be even more expensive than local public schools. Like other migrants, African-Chinese children are only allowed to finish junior school in Guangzhou, and then have to return to the place of origin defined by their *hukou* to pass the exams for higher-level education. This means that sooner or later these children will have to break their ties with Guangzhou. It is therefore difficult for them to develop a sense of belonging in Guangzhou. Tuan thought the main problem in her family is the schooling of her daughter Lily.

> Lily studied in a [charitable-institution run]kindergarten in Baiyun that did not require [local] *hukou*. In kindergarten children are just playing, dancing and singing, just for fun. Now, it is different. In primary school children learn something. I need to find a better school for her. There are some good public schools with good teachers. They are very famous…We do not have local *hukou*, so it is difficult…The teacher told me to pay extra sponsorship fees, and then Lily can study there [the public school]…The one near my home asked for nearly 60,000 [RMB] for sponsorship, not including tuition…It is just primary school, but very costly. I do not dare to think how much it will cost for high school here…These locals are lucky. They pay nearly nothing, just a little for lunch in

school. The government said it will allow migrants' children to attend public schools for free, but I do not think there will be any change. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

In the end, Tuan had to enroll Lily in the private school not far from her working place, because sponsorship fees make it too expensive to attend public school and the head teacher of the private school could accompany Lily at the school until Tuan finished work. Tuan might go back to Shantou to find a public school for Lily.

Shuang also suffered from the constraints the *hukou* system placed on her Chinese-African children. Her second son Peter does not have *hukou* due to the one-child policy[11]. She plans to send her first son Miller to the kindergarten in her residential community, but felt too tired to look after Peter by herself, and tried to find a way to deal with schooling for him. While Bauman thought Shuang was too sensitive about childrearing and wanted her to take care of the children at home to save tuition, Shuang said,

My friends said if we pay a fine, Peter may be eligible for *hukou*. We will pay it before Peter goes to school. Bauman thinks we can apply for Nigerian nationality for Peter instead of *hukou*. I do not agree. Going back to his country also costs money, much more than the fine…If Peter has Nigerian nationality, I am not sure local schools will allow him to enroll. Maybe it will cost more. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

Shuang said that it is impossible for them to earn enough to pay for an international school, which costs nearly 200,000 RMB each year. Bauman does not understand the Chinese education system. If children have poor performance on standardized tests, they cannot attend good junior or high schools. Students must study hard and face harsh competition. Shuang insisted that public schools had better teachers, and children could learn things quickly there. Bauman complained about with the one-child policy and *hukou* system in China:

Just China has [a] one-child policy. This is not right. Children are important for a family. I lived with my brothers and sisters before coming here. We helped each other. This is good. I know China has too many people, but I am a foreigner. You see, I want more children. Your government should think about it…*hukou* is just trouble, Shuang always complains about it. (August 2014)

A Nigerian trader, Tom, and his Chinese partner Xuan have a son Mike. Tom does not seem to understand the *hukou* system, which will impact his son's educational opportunities.

Xuan told me [about] the *hukou*, but I do not understand. She said Mike cannot join good public schools. She always thinks too much. There are many private schools [that will] allow Mike to study…Mike plays football in a training school, a boarding school. It is very convenient. You see it is easy. (September 2014)

African fathers often fail to understand the Chinese administrative system, and so do a disservice to their children. The responsibility for children's education therefore often falls heavily on Chinese mothers.

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[11] As of 2016.1.1, one-child policy was improved, and every couple can have two children.

6.2.4 Hukou and Subsidized Housing

Hukou influences eligibility for subsidized housing for low-income groups, and also affects housing purchases and sales in Guangzhou.

Table 6: Housing Types and Eligibility of Guangzhou (prepared by the author according to the relevant ordinance)

Housing Types	Eligibility
Commercial housing	Anyone can purchase at market prices Only local Hukou holders with stable income can be granted a mortgage
Economically affordable house	Low-income urban Hukou residents can buy at a discount
Government's public housing	Long-term urban inhabitants can purchase property or have usage rights Other urban inhabitants can buy second-hand housing on the free market and sublet
Public institution's housing	Long-term urban residents buy housing (usually from state-owned enterprises) and transfer to second market or maintain as rental property
The Low-rent housing	Housing and per capital income is below the poverty line set by the government (in Guangzhou, the poverty line is defined as: housing 7 cm^2/person, per capital income 330 RMB/month)
Resettlement housing	Urban residents who have been resettled into new areas buy housing at a discounted price (normally the housing is located in remote areas)
Private Housing	Before 1949, the housing stays within the family inheritance. For self-built and self-maintained housing in rural areas, rural residents will be compensated for relocation
Renting	Anyone can rent commercial, resettlement and private housing

The above chart shows that the Guangzhou *hukou* is a significant determinant for a family in Guangzhou in choosing a residence, obtaining a residential property and receiving social welfare services and insurance from local authorities. The core feature of *hukou* is its aim to safeguard the interests of the locals. *Hukou* draws on external resources while preventing spillover of internal resources. The goal of urban *hukou*, particularly the first-tier cities' *hukou*, is to protect local residents' interests and limit migrant's housing options, relying on the segmented labor market and housing policy and resulting in the segregation of residential spaces. Most Chinese partners, as migrants who hold rural *hukou*, have informal employment that does not cover medical care or unemployment insurance, and seldom meet conditions for social welfare, subsidized housing or affordable housing purchase programs. Due to low income and low services, they are only able to rent low-quality housing. Only a few with rising incomes are able to settle down in Guangzhou.

Lian, whose ex-husband is African, has lived in Guangzhou for over 15 years and has insufficient funds to buy a home.

> Many years ago I had the money to buy a small house in Guangzhou, I was cheated out of most of my money by him [ex-husband Eddy]. Now the unit price of property has reached 20,000-40,000[RMB] per square meter, impossible for me to buy it. [If] I want a loan, the bank will check my credit. I am a private trader, without a stable income or Guangzhou *hukou*. It is not easy to get a loan. I just rent a small private house. The environment is just so so, but the rent is cheap. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

Shuang and Bauman live in a high-quality community in Nanhai, because they have worked hard. Earlier, they lived in city village of Xiatang, where prices are cheaper. In 2004, they had saved enough money; Shuang found their current residence and persuaded Bauman to buy it. He did not agreed with Shuang at first but now thinks it is a good choice. She said policies of *hukou* in Nanhai are much looser than Guangzhou and it's easy to buy housing without local *hukou*.

> In the past it was easy. I did not have *hukou*, I told the sales manager that we could give him a cash payment in two installments…they just sell the housing, few people buy it. They wanted to get the money back quickly, so sold an apartment to us quickly and did not check our *hukou*. Not like today, even if you have money, you still need some documents. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

Normally, Chinese-African couples rent rather than buy homes, due to high prices in Guangzhou and limited government support.

6.3 Conclusion

In summary, chapters 4, 5 and 6 revealed the legal status of Africans and their Chinese partners by presenting the historical, cultural and economic position of Guangzhou; discussing the various backgrounds of Africans and their Chinese partners as well as conditions of their residence and employment; describing the domestic and international migrants, legal and illegal statuses of Chinese and African partners, both of who are members of the 'floating population' in the regulatory context; and reviewing foreign policy and the *hukou* system.

Chapter 7 Negotiating Cultural Differences in Chinese-African Marriage/Partnership

Все счастливые семьи похожи друг на друга, каждая несчастливая семья несчастлива по-своему

---Лев Николаевич Толстой 'Анна Каренина'

All happy families are alike, but each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way

Taken from: [Russia] Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy 'Anna Karenina'

幸福的家庭都是相似的，不幸的家庭各有各的不幸

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Chapter 7 describes the social belonging of Chinese-African families. These couples' differing cultures, religious believes, values, and ideas on marriage, gender relations and child care lead to instability or breakup of the marriage or partnership. African partners struggle with language and cultural barriers, many have short-term visas and a few are undocumented immigrants who are mainly focused on business rather than adapting to the destination country. Chinese-African children face barriers in attending schools, religious choices and social adaptation. With the help of parents, relatives or teachers, some may overcome prejudice, but many struggle with a sense of social belonging and lack support from their family and wider society.

7.1 The Ups and Downs of Intercultural Marriage/Partnership

7.1.1 Dealing with Instability in Intercultural Marriage

Nineteen of the couples interviewed established their relationships in a trading environment; just one pair met in a religious context. Among these couples, some expressed romantic feelings towards each other, some associated their marriage with trade cooperation, some married for the sake of family planning, some did not plan to get married, and some had separated. Only five couples—Pang and Ramdy, Shuang and Bauman, Lian and Eddie, Ning and Simon, and Yan and William—held simple wedding parties or ceremonies, as these female interviewees considered the marriage ritual as not only important to them as a symbol of transition to another stage of life, but also important to their parents. In their opinions, marriage was not an individual decision, but an alliance of two families where parents, relatives and friends were closely involved. The other couples did not hold wedding ceremonies for various reasons. Some did not plan to get married, or did not want to spend much money on a ceremony; others wanted to get their marriage certificate first. Although a few Chinese partners said they did not care about marriage rites, when talking about their

parents' feelings, they claimed that they did not want to go against their parents' wishes, which would bring tension to their familial relationships. Their mixed feelings towards marriage and kinship were evident. On the one hand, they tried to make their marriage decision on their own; on the other, they were tormented by discord between their parents and their African spouses or partners. It seemed that they could not escape from traditional Chinese values of filial piety.

Eric has a relatively harmonious relationship with his Chinese parents-in-law, owing to his fluent Chinese and in-depth understanding of Chinese culture, as well as to his Chinese parents-in-law's willingness to understand him and integrate him into the Chinese family. He has lived in Guangzhou for over eight years and has been married to Pang for about seven years. Their daughter Nana attends a local kindergarten. His wife Pang expressed her romantic feelings for Eric:

> I do not know how to explain it. When he came into our office with his friends, he was the only one I could see. I felt butterflies in my stomach when talking to him. This was the first time I had this feeling. I had worked for many years in the foreign trade market and met many foreigners, and this feeling was totally different. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

But Pang suppressed her feelings at the beginning. She worried that her parents, who live in a small town and had never met foreigners before, might hold negative views of Africans, and that as devout Buddhists it might be hard for them to accept an African Muslim into the family. Pang also knew of a bad case of a Chinese-African family.

> I have been doing business for many years. There are both good and bad Chinese and African people. I knew one real case, where the African man took my [Chinese] friend's money and disappeared, and she lost her mind. She used to work not far from here [Xiaobei], and we used to chat. Now, if you find a woman dancing crazily at Xiaobei subway station, it is her, poor woman. There were some Africans pursuing me, but I never thought to date them. Eric was different. On our first meeting, I felt he was a good guy, for no reason, I just felt comfortable with him. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

Eric said he also had feelings for Pang at first sight:

> She was a pretty girl, [but] did not talk with me much. There were other workers helping me with business matters. She had a soft voice and always smiled. [She was] very attractive. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

Pang elaborated that Eric's friends tried to chat with her and invite her to clubs with them several times. Pang rejected their invitations, as she did not know much about them. But Eric was a gentleman and made a good impression. Later, Pang helped Eric to check the goods and found he was a reasonable and easy-going businessman. After their cooperation, Eric called Pang nearly every day, persistently pursuing her for one year. Pang became Eric's girlfriend, but they had different lifestyles. Eric preferred to go to the bar with friends. Pang went with him a few times, then let him go by himself. She tended to feel tired after work and preferred

to stay at home. She felt that staying in bars until midnight was a waste of time and disliked feeling low energy at work the next day. At the time Pang thought that Eric was not mature and asked him to spend time learning Chinese, but he wasn't interested. At the beginning, she wanted to take time to make sure he felt serious about their relationship.

After Eric introduced Pang to his parents and friends, Pang gradually got to know Eric's family and social networks. Then she introduced Eric to her parents. She regarded it as very important for her boyfriend to meet her parents. After living together for two years, they got married with both of their parents' blessing. It was hard for Pang's parents to accept Eric at first, but they knew Pang had not made a hasty decision. After talking with Eric, her parents gradually accepted him. They were uncertain about Eric's background, and afraid that he might deceive Pang, but in the end, they believed this was Pang's destiny and accepted the marriage.

A couple named Tang and Daniel, who only accepted two interviews due to concerns of privacy, were not listed in Table 2. African husband Daniel learned Chinese in a college in China, and his Chinese wife Tang, from Hunan, was smart and skillful in managing their logistics company and several employees. Tang said they met each other through business cooperation.

> I like his personality, very humorous and positive. Sometimes they say there are cultural barriers. I do not think so. We have different ideas about life and work, [but] normally we express our ideas, and understand each other. Even when two Chinese people are getting married, they also have different views. It is not about skin colors and cultural problems. If you love a person, you will try to understand him and accept him. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

They bought a flat in a good neighborhood in Baiyun district. Tang has a bachelor degree, had paid taxes for many years and was integrated into the social security system in Guangzhou, which allowed her to obtain a Guangzhou *hukou* in 2013. Their son Jeff goes to a private school rather than the tuition-free local public schools, and they plan to send him to study overseas in the future. They reckon that studying abroad is more eye-opening than staying in Guangzhou. Discouraged by the fiercely competitive educational system, air pollution and unsafe food quality, Tang thought that by learning a foreign language, Jeff would have the opportunity to live in a better place. Daniel also agreed with Tang and expected Jeff to study in the U.S. in the future.

> We hope he can learn many different languages in school. This school focuses on development of students' individual strengths. Students are divided into music classes, art classes, language classes and others. They learn basic Chinese, mathematics, chemistry, physics and other things, but are specially trained in music, art, and languages…We think languages are good tools. Jeff can speak English well, his second [foreign] language is French, so he can go to the U.S. or France to broaden his views. (November 2014, translated from Chinese)

Tang said they did not want to be interviewed because there were negative reports about

Chinese-African families. As more journalists interview couples like them, more people know about them, and troubles increase. If they have any problems in their marriage, the issue will be amplified. She did not want other people to know about them, and did not want to be disturbed.

Lian and Eddie had been an enviable couple, but ended their relationship due to Eddie's departure. Lian said that their relationship began with a spicy fish. Eddie ran a small store at the corner of a market, not far from hers. He saw Lian eating fish slices boiled in hot sauce, and asked her to order the same for him. While he was waiting for his dinner, they chatted a little just to kill the time. Lian described Eddie as a kind-hearted person, who treated his parents well and sent money to them regularly. Once, Eddie went back to his hometown for a while and asked her to transport some goods for him. After Eddie returned to Guangzhou, he gave her a gift made of cacao beans, which made her very happy. Later Eddie expressed his feelings for Lian and they became lovers. Lian thought he was reliable, because he had the ability to run a store by himself, and never depended on his parents. He was not like some Chinese NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) men who depended on their families.

They held a simple wedding party with a few friends in Guangzhou, and had the ceremony in Lian's hometown.

> I have many relatives in my hometown, and we needed to hold a wedding ceremony. My parents care a lot about their reputation…I wore a traditional Chinese dress, invited relatives and villagers to eat dinner and served them as they arrived [at the open-air banquet 流水席]. Eddie followed my instructions to prepare gifts and red packets for the guests and my parents were happy. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

In 2014, when I met Lian a second time, she had moved to another market. When people talked about Lian, they said she was so lucky to have met a very rich man, but people did not know the reality of her marriage. Eddie was an example of what may happen when Africans become rich in Guangzhou. As he became more successful, many people knew him and invited him to play important roles in communities and organizations, and invited both him and Lian to attend parties or festival celebrations. Eddie got to know many people and went out frequently. At first, Lian thought social activities with customers and friends could not be avoided. However, she later found out that Eddie had a lover, and always took the woman with him when he went out for entertainment. Lian and Eddie already had a son, Mark, and Lian thought Eddie's relationship with his lover was not serious. She assumed he would break up with her eventually, but he did not. He even gave her money. Lian believed that Mark would be hurt by a divorce, so Lian and Eddie lived separately for some time without telling anyone. Mark just thought Eddie was busy.

Lian tried to keep the family together, but was ultimately unsuccessful. She quarreled with

Eddie several times to urge him to leave his lover, but it was of no use. He argued that Muslims could have many wives. But in China, he would be punished for having multiple wives. So Lian did not divorce him, and he was unable to marry his lover. Lian wanted to see how long the woman could endure as a *xiaosan* (小三/an extramarital lover). Eventually Lian asked Eddie to pay alimony, only to find that Eddie had left Guangzhou.

> I hated him at that time, but now I have no feelings. My friends said I should divorce him. But why should I give up to make him happy? No way… He has moved to another market. I rarely contact him, except to ask him for money to raise Mark. As I could not reach him for a longtime, I contacted his friends. They were so surprised that we were separated, and told me Eddie had already gone back to his hometown for a while. I do not know, maybe his friends lied to me. Let it be, he is already like this, changed, heartless. Money has changed him. (Oct. 2014, translated from Chinese)

Lian said calmly that Eddie never came back to Guangzhou before his death and that she would not remarry.

> He died, cancer. His relatives called me, he died. And the woman went to Cote d'Ivoire with him. She had her retribution, he died, and she got nothing…No one wants to marry me with Mark. No one. I do not have any expectation of marriage. I am tired. Men are all the same. I just want Mark to grow up healthy, that is all. (Oct. 2014, translated from Chinese)

As Daniel and Tang said, many Chinese-African marriages or partnerships started like their own in the context of trade, and were deeply intertwined with trading. Miao and Harry met each other in Miao's store. Miao did not have feelings for Harry at first. She had met other Africans who had said that they liked her after meeting her just once or twice. Miao felt this was a nuisance, and disrespectful to woman; she liked to keep her relationships in trade professional. So when Harry said he liked her, Miao just pretended not to hear it. But Harry said it again and again which disturbed Miao, and she told him directly to stop. Previously, Miao had had a Chinese boyfriend, who wanted to go back to his hometown due to the high cost of living in Guangzhou. Miao insisted in staying, so they separated. She married Harry out of concern for her age.

> I became older and had to consider marriage…I worked in the store nearly every day with no weekends off and very few friends. I was too poor and I simply wanted to earn money before. When I wanted to find a man to get married, I was too old, these men wanted to find younger girls…He [Harry] had pursued me for a long time. And he often selected goods in this market, his reputation was ok, so I thought he was not bad and had a try, now we have had our family for many years. (Sept. 2014, translated from Chinese)

Harry thought Miao was a hard-working trader and a good wife to take care of the family. Also he admitted that Miao was helpful to his business.

> I can tell you, no problem, I think she helps with my business, some people say they love each other, I believe them, but we know money is an important thing, yeah, we love each other, we do business together, we are happy, no problem (Sept. 2014).

Miao claims both of them are practical people, who consider their trade more important than other matters.

> What is romantic? It is just a normal day. Romance is what young persons like to talk about. Sending flowers or chocolate, it makes no sense. We are not those kind of people. Making money is real work.
> (Sept. 2014, translated from Chinese)

The advantage of such a relationship is that the two of them can ease their feelings of loneliness, exchange trade information and take trade risks together. However, Miao needed to help Harry to deal with legal matters, and both of them were unsure about visa policies. Moreover, Harry does not plan to buy a home, which implies that Harry may not want to become a permanent resident and might eventually leave Guangzhou. This creates feelings of insecurity for Miao. Their relationship is impacted by many factors of instability.

7.1.2 Choosing Partnership rather than Marriage

Unlike married couples Pang and Eric, Tang and Daniel, Lian and Eddie, and Miao and Harry, some couples preferred partnership. For instance, Xuan and Tom have a long-term partnership and a son, Mike. Tom said both he and Xuan feel comfortable with the partnership, and Xuan said that she definitely did not want to get married again. She had divorced her ex-husband due to a long period of infertility. Because her ex-husband is the only son in his family, his parents and relatives put a lot of pressure on Xuan to give birth. They thought Xuan's inability to conceive was her problem and asked her to go to the hospital for treatment several times, but nothing worked. Her ex-husband married another woman soon after their divorce. Xuan thought she would never meet a Chinese man who could accept her infertility, so she gave up on remarrying. She felt lucky to have given birth to Mike, but still felt marriage is not suitable for her. Xuan said her parents could understand her decisions because they had seen her suffering. Xuan invited them to visit Guangzhou, but did not take Mike to her hometown in order to avoid gossip.

Other examples of unstable partnerships exist, such as that of Fang and Merlin. At first, Fang had a bad impression of Merlin. She found him a critical customer, who was demanding on many details, such as jeans texture, color and style. During their business cooperation, Fang got to know Merlin better. She appreciated his responsible and cautious attitude in doing business. She never thought she would have an intimate relationship with a foreigner, so she refused Merlin's advances at first. Moreover, she was only 25 years old, and Merlin was already 36. Normally Chinese men at his age were married, so when Merlin pursued Fang, Fang thought he was deceiving her. Merlin was wealthy, so there must have been women who would want to marry him. But Merlin said he had broken up with his last girlfriend a long time ago and he wanted to stay in China. Fang thought he would go back to Africa one day, so she continued to reject him.

But Merlin did not give up. He often invited Fang to meals, called her nearly every day, and promised that he would treat her well, and that if Fang felt still uncomfortable, they could end the relationship. She told me, "Merlin is not like other Africans, he is hardworking and a good man". Fang hoped Merlin could buy an apartment in Guangzhou or in her hometown but Merlin preferred to rent one. In fact, Merlin had a short-term business visa, which made it impossible for him to buy an apartment, and he did not want to register an apartment under Fang's name, although she could apply for a bank loan. He said:

> If I buy an apartment, I need to pay the whole payment at once. The bank refused to loan me money. And the apartments are very expensive here. A very small old one costs over 3 million [RMB]. I can buy a better one in Ghana at a much lower price. (September 2014)

Fang explained she is not a very materialistic person. Her parents own a home, and rent out another apartment, and do not lack money. The reason to persuade Merlin to buy a house was just to make sure that he would stay in China for a long time. In her opinion, women need to protect themselves. If she and Merlin separated, she could earn money by renting out the apartment. Fang perceives instability in her relationship with Merlin because he constantly travels back and forth between Africa and China. If he cannot get a long-term visa, Fang does not know whether they can continue their relationship. Fang's parents have said that if she marries Merlin, they would not attend the wedding. So she is afraid to talk to her parents about her concerns.

7.1.3 Ending the Relationship

Unfortunately, some couples end their relationships. Tuan and Ramdy had maintained a long-term partnership, but broke up in 2015. Tuan was good at business because many of her family members were traders and she had learned from them. Ramdy had business in ChungKing Mansion in Hong Kong, and I met him in Guangzhou in 2012 and 2013. Ramdy preferred Hong Kong to Guangzhou, and planned to migrate to Europe.

> I do business in the ChungKing mansions, there are many foreigners…Hong Kong is more westernized than Guangzhou, I like the restaurants and cafes there. (July 2013)

Tuan thought Ramdy was handsome and an honest young man. During our meeting in 2013, Tuan happily shared the story of Ramdy's persistent pursuit. Like other Chinese partners, she struggled mentally before she was able to accept the relationship.

> I am 8 years older than him. When he said he wanted to be my boyfriend, I was a bit proud that I looked younger than my age. I refused him at first, but he continued to pursue me…He came to my store every day, and if I was not here, he would call me…I believe in fate, I knew others would gossip about me, but he is different from other Africans. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

For Ramdy, earning money was more important than other things, and he did not consider that long separations from his Chinese partner and child would affect their relationship. Tuan said

she went to Hong Kong with Lily to visit Ramdy and needed to ask her sister to look after the store for one week. It was not good for business, but they were able to have a few days of happiness. Now that they are separated, Lily sometimes misses Ramdy, but Tuan does not. In her eyes, Ramdy only cared about himself.

> He said he worked hard for the sake of Lily, but he paid less for Lily's education than I did. I never depended on him, and our home for him is like a hotel. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

At an earlier time, Ramdy asked Tuan to take Lily to Beijing to meet him during his free time, which led to tension in the family. Tuan thought that if Ramdy had free time, he should visit them in Guangzhou, and thought Ramdy was selfish and did not consider her working conditions. From that time on, Tuan felt disappointed with Ramdy and finally made the decision to break up. Tuan said,

> We are done. If he comes here to visit Lily, OK, but for me, it is done. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

Before separating from Ramdy, Tuan defended Africans' interests. But in 2014, after their breakup, she tried to persuade other Chinese women to keep their distance from African men.

> That girl [next to her store] is too young, just 21 years old. She has not graduated from university, and does part-time work here. If her parents knew that she is living with an African man, they would fall apart…That Nigerian man has very bad reputation. Before this girl, he hired other Chinese girls. [You can tell] their relationships were not just as boss and employee. Now he hired this girl, I really did not want her to be destroyed by this old man…I told her, look at me, I made an impulsive decision, and I sometimes thought I put my Lily in harm's way…Don't think that you are the lucky one, these Africans will not stay here for a long time. Like me, I am raising Lily by myself…She is a good girl from Guangxi. I told her that man is not as good as she thinks, leave him and find other work. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

Now, Tuan raises their daughter Lily by herself, with help of her parents and siblings. Tuan lived with Ramdy and had Lily out of wedlock, which hurt her parents' reputation. For a long time they would not speak with her. But after her breakup, they helped to take care of their granddaughter, honoring the traditional Chinese value of supporting family during hardship.

Like Tuan and Ramdy, Hong also separated from her partner Kevin for social, family and religious reasons. Hong works in an office in Guangzhou, as does Kevin. They met each other through business cooperation. Kevin rents an apartment in the prosperous commercial center near Hong's working place, and he often invited Hong to go to dinner after work. Hong had a good impression of Kevin.

> He is different from other Africans. He graduated from a university here, and speaks Chinese very well, and he understands our customs...His brother is a trader, and now lives in Paris. He rarely makes friends with these traders in Xiaobei. They are on a different level than him. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

Even after they had been in a relationship for two years, Hong still felt awkward going out

with Kevin. Many people would stare at them when they walked side by side. She was also worried about her co-workers running into them while they were out and gossiping about her relationship with a customer. The other thing that bothered Hong was that Kevin had many female friends from different countries who were younger than her and they often invited Kevin to parties. Most of the time, Hong let Kevin go by himself, but she was unhappy that a Mexican girl called Kevin nearly every day. Kevin defended his friendship with the girl, while we met for dinner at a Korean restaurant.

> Not like that, we were classmates at the university, and became friends long before I met Hong. We were just talking about our daily lives, and we did not talk every day. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

But in Hong's opinion, Kevin should not have kept in touch with the girl that often. She gave another example of a situation that concerned her. Once Kevin and Hong went back to Kevin's apartment together, and found a girl waiting for Kevin there, who gave him her passport. Kevin told Hong that he was helping the girl to find a job and needed to give her copies of her passport to some potential employers. But Hong thought there was no need to do this. She thought the company could obtain copies of the passport directly from the girl, and that Kevin and the girl had a secret. Hong and Kevin quarreled in front of me in the restaurant. Kevin was angry that Hong did not believe him and left. Later, Hong tried to mend the relationship and went to Kevin's apartment to cook dinner before he came home. Unfortunately, Hong encountered Kevin with another girl when she was on the way to Kevin's apartment.

> I stood far away to watch them. It seemed that she came to meet Kevin. Kevin came downstairs and went out with the girl. It was not me giving him a surprise, but him giving me one. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

Hong quarreled with Kevin again, and Kevin became angry and said he felt manipulated by her, "She is getting more and more annoying, spying on me". Hong lost her temper completely. She said Kevin went out with a woman but lied and said that he was working. Later, Hong gave Kevin a chance to explain everything, but things only became worse. Hong suggested a temporary separation. Kevin explained that he had lied to Hong because he felt ashamed that he wasn't working, and did not want Hong to think of him as a lazy man, and he also did not want Hong to know he went out with another girl because Hong was sensitive. In October 2014, when Hong want to see a doctor and I kept her company, she told me,

> We broke up and he agreed it was for the best. I think he was also tired of our relationship. Before I met you, we had already had some problems regarding family and religious matters, so it is better for us to end the relationship. My mother seemed happy to hear this; she hoped I could get back together with my ex-husband. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

Even if young people are more accepting of such partnerships, they still think it is different from marriage, which involves the wider family. For example, in 2014, Yun worked in her

uncle's company. After she separated from her Chinese boyfriend, Yun started a romantic relationship with Jimmy.

> Jimmy invited me to some bars and places of entertainment where I met many foreigners. Jimmy is a star, he sings very well, everyone seemed to know him in the bars, so cool…He sang to me and gave me a birthday cake in a bar with other friends, it was really romantic. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

But Yun lived with her parents who were locals, and had to lie to them, saying that she was meeting a friend when she was dating Jimmy. After they had been together for a long time, conflicts began to arise. According to Yun, Jimmy flirted with a girl from Hong Kong via text messages. He did not think this was wrong. They quarreled about it several times, but she continued to find ambiguous conversations between them on Jimmy's phone. Yuan was sensitive to Jimmy's friendship with other girls.

When Yun's parents found out that she lied to them in order to go out with Jimmy, they stopped providing her with financial support and asked her to come home on time after work, aiming to force her to break up with Jimmy. Yun's family is well off, and her parents love her and try to meet all her needs. Jimmy could hardly depend on his family and needed to earn money on his own, so he cared about money. He also enjoyed making friends.

> Yun is spoiled by her parents, she spends too much money. I have jobs in many bars or pubs, they are very tiring, and money is hard to make. I do not waste money like her…I like making friends, but she does not trust me. I do not want to explain it again and again. (November 2014)

After my fieldwork, Yun was still in a relationship with Jimmy, and sent me some pictures of Jimmy's performances in bars by wechat. But in 2016 she sent me a message telling me that she had left Jimmy due to his disloyalty. Her parents had introduced her to a Chinese man,

> Now [Jimmy] still works in those bars, earning so little profit that he can only support himself. We were together for more than two years, but he did not try to communicate with my parents. He felt good about himself, saw himself as an artist. My parents are right, he is a dreamer, he thought he would certainly succeed in China, but he never asked himself how many singers are there in China…I was on his side, against my parents, but when I needed money, he did not help me. I did things for him, and he was only half a man…I have a new [Chinese] boyfriend, my parents introduced him to me. He works in a state-owned enterprise, and does not know about my past. I never want him to know. (February 2016, translated from Chinese)

Like Hong and Yun, Tuan, Lan and Lian also did not want to dwell on the past after separating from their African spouses or partners. Their relationships represented more suffering than sweet memories. Women like Fang, Miao, Pang, Tang and Xuan did their best to maintain their marriage or partnership with Africans. Africans, as transnational migrants, seem to depend on capital, personal experience and Chinese partners to do business. The majority of them, as small private traders, operate outside of the formal job market without formal social security. Many experience frustration, desperation, and isolation, because they

are unable to achieve higher status in Guangzhou. Africans' transnational businesses do not often help these couples attain their dreams of economic upward mobility. Family conflicts are common due to Africans' long-term absences from Guangzhou. Nevertheless, some couples do achieve better financial conditions than their previous lives had offered.

7.2 Cultural and Religious Differences in Marriage/Partnership

Africans honor various existent or non-existent entities within different ecosystems and cultures to invoke the power of God to protect their prosperity, health, and fertility (Skinner 1986). Africans' indigenous heritage differs from that of Arabic/Islamic and European/Christian cultures (Yaw & Takyi 2006: 3). Although some practices like arranged marriages, birth rituals, and polygamy are similar in both African indigenous customs and Islamic cultures, African Islam is its own unique blend of indigenous customs and Muslim tradition, and therefore differs from Arab Islam (Robinson 2004). African Muslims prefer marriages between cousins to secure property within a family, and marriages are characterized by strong male dominance and weak female self-reliance (Lesthaeghe 1989; Yaw & Takyi 2006). As colonial administrators and missionaries introduced European ideals and values to Africans, Christianity and Christian culture spread into Africa (Yaw & Takyi 2006:4). Although European Christianity was against indigenous religions and Islam in Africa, blending and systematism not only influenced African Islamic traditions but also formed distinctly African Christianity and Pentecostal faith. (Yaw & Takyi 2006: 5).

The majority of African interviewees are religious. They often said Chinese do not have religions, and therefore are not trustworthy. As a matter of fact, they did not know much about Chinese religious beliefs. Besides the large population of Han Chinese, there are also at least 55 ethnic minorities in China, and most of these groups have religious beliefs (Luo 2013). The Han group also has religious faith. Influenced by patriarchal traditions, Taoism and Buddhism, the Han religious system is complex and diverse (Feng 1995). The Han group has historically occupied agricultural areas. For them, family is the basic unit of social assembly, and blood is an important link. Traditional moral values, like filial piety, inform the family and clan's responsibilities and obligations and have a deep impact on the Han people. They believe that life is derived from parents. Taking care of the elderly and providing stable lives for their wives and children are men's duties, and the bloodline will be carried on by their heirs. Chinese are closely linked by bloodline and family units, which play important roles in various events, from deciding religious beliefs to arranging a marriage or funeral. Additionally, Han people worship gods and ancestors, which are seen as intertwined with each other. Sacrifices are offered to honor not only the ancestors but also the gods in heaven, and it is believed that people will receive protection from both ancestors and the gods. The

above concepts have also influenced other minorities' beliefs. Unlike the Catholicism and Pentecostal churches that spread into China sometime later, Chinese ethnic groups have practiced Islam and established Mosques from early on (Li 2011). The power of church organizations in Chinese faith is weak. It is generally believed that as long as an individual examines his thoughts and conduct, and cultivates morality in daily life, he can understand the meaning of existence. Universal values are thought to be naturally intrinsic, and ordinary people can become saints. In the past, Chinese did not see a need to have churches as intermediaries to receive divine revelation (Tong 2005). However, with a growing number of foreigners entering China, all kinds of religious beliefs have spread rapidly, with complex organizations and various gathering places. Religions in China aim to persuade people to be good and obedient, and live in harmony. Chinese also believe in an afterlife, even if most people prefer to live in the moment and enjoy the present life. More importantly, Confucianism has the strongest influence on Chinese values followed by Taoist naturalism, Mozi's philosophy of universal love, legal values, and other religious values. Foreign religions such as Buddhism need to adapt to the traditional Chinese ways of thinking, and blend with traditional Chinese values and morality in order to find roots in China. Chinese philosophy is therefore primarily based on Confucianism, and integrated with Buddhism and Taoism. Feng Youlan (1995: 1, 2, 3, 5-7, 13-14) said "Historically speaking, Chinese philosophy is to Chinese culture what religions are to other cultures" (*zhexue zaizhongguowenhuasuozhandediwei,lilaikeyiyuzongjiaozaiqitawenhuazhongdediweixiangbi*/ 哲学在中国文化所占的地位，历来可以与宗教在其他文化中的地位相比). "Chinese do not care about religions, because they care enormously about philosophy—they have fulfilled their earthly pursuits in their philosophy" (*zhongguoren budaguanxin zongjiao, shiyinwei tamen jiqiguanxin zexue—tamen zaizhexueli manzule tamenduichaohuxianshide zhuiqiu*/中国 人不大关心宗教，是因为他们极其关心哲学-他们在哲学里满足了他们对超乎现世的追 求). "A person should not necessarily be religious, but he must be philosophical" (*ren buyingdangshi zongjiaode,danshi ta yiding yingdangshi zhexuede*/人不一定应当是宗教的， 但是他一定应当是哲学的), and "according to the Chinese tradition, the purpose of studying philosophy is not to make it a profession, but to enable a man to become a man, rather than a certain type of man" (*zhaozhongguodechuantong,yanjiuzhexue bushi yizhongzhiye –xuezhexuede mudi, shi shiren zuoweiren nenggou chengwei ren*/照中国的传统，研究哲学不 是一种职业-学哲学的目的，是世人作为人能够成为人，而不是成为某种人). Normally, Chinese do not try to persuade others to believe in a certain religion. For example, when monks travel around to preach, their aim is to tell people about self-purification and self-reflection rather than persuade them to become Buddhists. If people reflect on themselves, they will be able to gain internal stability, which is more powerful than believing in anyone

else. As Chinese people often say, "if you believe in something, it exists, otherwise, it doesn't" (*xinzeyou,buxinzewu*/信则有，不信则无). It can be seen that Chinese have different beliefs from Africans, which may cause misunderstandings between the two groups.

In the interview process, some female interviewees said that although they were married to African Muslim men, they actually did not know about African religions. They had assumed that their husbands may change their ideas of strict abidance to doctrine in order to adapt to local conditions, and would allow the women to act freely as before, but in the end these women decided to appease their husbands and wear Muslim clothing for the sake of family harmony. For them, it was akin to a barter agreement—if they acquiesced to their husband's rules, their husbands would give them more emotional as well as financial support. However, because these women converted to Islam, the African husbands believed that their Chinese wives should become devout followers and, in accordance with Islamic law, must strictly obey their husbands, support them and not require too much in return. Some African Muslim men talked about their religious customs. In their view, men hold more rights than women. According to this belief, the father and the son have higher status than the mother, wife and daughter. Especially in the relationship between husband and wife, the husband can often make decisions for their wives. The men generally believed that childrearing is an important duty of the mother within the scope of the family, and that Muslim women must have a strong sense of responsibility for children's education. If the children are out of control, the mother will be considered a failure and the entire family disgraced. In this view, a father's main responsibility is to be the breadwinner. Some African Muslims said they accept that their wives work out of the home to support the family, but that they need to consider their dress and etiquette with other men. However, at present, even if Chinese women are influenced by different cultures, they tend to be at least somewhat educated and prefer to earn an income so that they can maintain some measure of independence from their husbands. When these Chinese wives felt that the family was under financial pressure, they were determined to go to work. In contrast, from the perspective of some African husbands, by going out to work it seemed as if the wife was challenging the husband's dominance while neglecting her responsibility to raise the children. These misaligned views were obviously a source of conflict in the family.

For example, Shuang is from a small village in Hunan. Her husband Bauman is from Nigeria. Shuang became a housewife and converted to Islam at her husband's request. In keeping with her new religious affiliation, she wore a headscarf. Four years after the marriage, Shuang wanted the children to go to kindergarten, which she felt would prepare them for the compulsory education system in Guangzhou. In addition, if the children went to kindergarten, she could return to work. Bauman thought that his wife, as a Muslim woman, should take care

of the children at home as well as deal with the housework. But Shuang maintained that their family business was, in recent years, not going well and that her husband only gave her a small amount of money for daily expenses and a little extra for herself. This, coupled with Bauman always being busy with his trading business, made it difficult for them to communicate about their daily lives with each other. In particular, Shuang did not know the best way to discipline children when necessary. In order to escape family pressures, Shuang wanted to find a job. Through a fellow villager's connections, Shuang was able to open a food shop near her home, but Bauman extremely opposed this business. His opposition, in addition to operating losses, caused the shop to close six months later. Now, unfortunately, the strife in the family is becoming more and more intense. Shuang is very frustrated with the task of childrearing, Bauman stays away from home longer than before, and the children are increasingly using behavioral outbursts to gain the attention of their parents. During one stormy quarrel, Bauman said he regretted marrying Shuang. She said that the feeling was mutual.

Like Shuang, Nan expressed feeling puzzled by her African partner's religion, and she thought it was unfair that Muslim men could have several wives.

> Most of the time, Gene prays in his office, and on Friday, he may find time to go to the mosque. He gave me the Koran [in Chinese] to learn, but I did not understand the rules…One rule said a man can have several wives, [and] every man would be happy with it. No woman can tolerate sharing her husband. It is only an excuse. They just want to do that. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

But Gene argued that most Muslims only had one wife, though some may have more. The Koran teaches that a man may take a second wife if the first wife is ill, infertile, or not liked by the parents-in-law. And when marrying the second wife, the man must first ask for his wife's approval. If his first wife does not agree to the marriage, he cannot take a second wife. However, Nan still did not believe what Gene said. Although Nan did not fully understand Islam, Gene was satisfied that Nan had become a Muslim, and did not force Nan to wear the traditional Muslim clothes.

> I was a Christian at first, and then I converted to Islam. I am not that conservative, as long as her clothes are not too tight and she wears long skirts, then it is OK. (August 2014)

Unlike Shuang and Nan, Hong found it impossible to convert to Islam, because all of her family members were Buddhists. Kevin did not force her to convert to Islam and wear Muslim traditional clothes, but it did not mean that he would be as tolerant after marriage. Once, Kevin suggested Hong wear knee-length skirts instead of hot pants in front of me. Hong said unhappily that Kevin was too conservative and did not understand women's fashion. She did not complain in front of Kevin, but never followed his suggestions, either. She thought Kevin agreed with everything that she did. If they were to get married, it would be totally different. She knew it would be a problem if she refused to convert to Islam,

because Kevin's family members are devout Muslims.

Conflicts over religion also occurred between Ford and Wang. Wang felt that childcare and business occupied most of her time, and she had no interest in learning the Koran. Marrying an African had already attracted much attention, if she wore a long skirt and headscarf, it would affect her daily life. Moreover, it was extremely hot during the summer, and she did not want to wear a long skirt to work in the market or to deliver goods, as it would be both inconvenient and uncomfortable.

> If I take my children to kindergarten wearing the long black clothing, other parents will look at me like a weirdo, and they will tell their children to keep distance from my children. This can be troublesome. He said I could wear only the hijab, but it would be the same…and how can I work? It is so hot in Guangzhou, and I need to carry goods going up and down the stairs. It is troublesome. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

Eric constantly expressed his hope that one day Pang would become a Muslim, but Pang maintained that if she could not believe in the religion with her heart, she would not convert. Eric even joked that when his Muslim friends and his wife discussed religious issues, he got a headache. Pang said that Eric had been fashionable before, and had dressed like a hip-hop artist. But after they had a child, Eric became conservative and dressed himself professionally for business, and also interfered with the way Pang's style of dressing.

> When we first got to know each other, I often wore short skirts, and he always praised me. But now I need to wear long skirts and long-sleeve blouses, otherwise he will nag. He is influenced deeply by his Muslim friends, and has started to go to the Mosque every Friday. He has become more traditional; maybe he is getting older. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

Unlike couples that experienced religious conflicts, Ning and Simon were aligned in their religious affiliation. Ning met her husband Simon in a church. A Christian friend who was working in an underground church over the weekend where Simon sometimes preached persuaded Ning to join the church. When Simon and Ning met, Ning was a university student who had a bad relationship with her father and an unhappy university life. Although Ning could not follow every word of Simon's preaching, she read the Chinese and English Bible by herself, and whenever she could not understand the content, she discussed it with Simon, who patiently explained the text sentence by sentence.

Ning told me that her father was a seaman, and they only saw each other once a year. Her father was like a stranger to her. When he returned home and criticized her, Ning quarreled with him and did not want him at home. Simon was ten years older than Ning, which made her feel comfortable and provided her with a sense of fatherly warmth. Simon shared his personal experience with his own father at length, and gave Ning advice on how to understand her father. With Simon's help, she was able to open up to her father. Ning said proudly,

> Simon is not only my husband, but also my best friend who is very reliable. He can speak Chinese and communicate with my parents…my mother likes him. God leads us to have a happy family. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

Simon also felt satisfied with his life.

> I encouraged Ning to become a pastor in the Chinese Christian church. She made it, and both of us share information and ideas on public preaching. She is good, a good mother and a good pastor. God bless us. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

Some Chinese partners not only lacked an understanding of Islam, but were also unable to support their African spouses and partners in adapting to Guangzhou. For the sake of a harmonious partnership, the Chinese interviewees tried to comply with the requirements of their African partners, but found it difficult. In such partnerships, Africans were not able to fit into the local society, nor were they able to help their Chinese partners to understand African cultures. This widened the distance from Chinese wives' relatives and friends, and increased their isolation or alienation from the larger society. A few Chinese refused to convert because they had their own beliefs, while they tried to balance religions differences. A few did not convert to their African partners' religions due to lack of understanding or an unwillingness to change their habits.

7.3 Gender and power relations

Bass and Sow (2006) show that compared to African women whose responsibilities are maintaining households and taking care of family members, African men normally are considered as heads of family and provide financial support. Traditional values also favor multiple generations living in the same household. However, modern China offers more equal opportunities for women to study, work, and make family decisions. Through interviews, I found that many African Muslim interviewees still viewed men as leaders of the family, while their Chinese wives or partners thought differently. For example, Bard thought it was normal to live together with family members, and that the father should have more authority as the head of the family, but he disliked the idea of polygamy.

> We live with the elderly, with our brothers and sisters…My father has three wives, and every wife has her own housing, living together with her own children. I have an elder brother from the same mother, we used to live together…I respect my father, he is a good trader, but I love my mum. My mum's life is not good. My father likes the youngest wife best, [and] he lives with her. It is a wrong thing, so I left. It is hard to treat them [wives] equally, I only married one woman, just one…I earn money to show my father that I am a strong man. (October 2014)

His wife Ling thought he was a bit of a chauvinist. Bard often made decisions without consulting Ling, and when Ling decided to do something, he would disagree, and she had to do as he said. If Bard made a decision and Ling did not agree, he lost his temper. Ramdy had

a similar attitude, often making decisions by himself and seldom consulting Tuan. It seemed that he also saw himself as head of the family:

> In my family, men do not discuss work with women. We can deal with that, and women look after the family. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

Moreover, in Ramdy's view, both he and Tuan could use their respective income to support their family. If Tuan spent more in maintaining the household, then he could invest his earnings in trading, and this would not affect the family's financial condition. Ramdy did not understand Tuan's view that both their incomes belonged to their family and therefore Ramdy and Tuan should decide together how money was used. Ramdy is failure to understand her perspective made Tuan feel disrespected.

The majority of Chinese-African families' work and personal lives were intertwined. As private traders, the African and the Chinese were usually business partners, which on the one hand was beneficial for family members to promote business and share profits, but on the other hand could easily cause conflicts within the family due to unequal power distribution at work. For instance, Miao told me privately that Harry was not her business partner, but her employee. Before she met Harry, Miao had already been running the store for many years and had accumulated many customers. They kept separate accounts and Harry could earn commission by recruiting new customers. Miao usually kept this information from the customers in consideration of Harry's feelings. But sometimes it affected their business.

> Men care about their face [reputation]. He did not want others to know about it. Once, some African customers thought he was the boss who made the decisions, and they could order me around. They said "call your boss". They wanted me to call Harry and let him make the decision on the price. I considered his feelings, and did as I was told. But some are unbearable, I just told them directly that I make the decisions. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

In 2014, Harry went to Vietnam to explore trading opportunities. He did not call Miao frequently. Although Vietnam is not far from Guangzhou, Miao did not want to move there with Harry because she already had many customers in Guangzhou. If Harry could earn more in Vietnam, she might go there. Their relationship had changed—Harry did not stay in Guangzhou very often, and she was not sure if they could maintain their connection.

Besides Miao and Harry, other couples faced similar business-versus-family complications. Hua was angry with Keim who was not considerate of business costs and daily expenses, and secretly lent money or sold goods at low price to friends. Hua said even if Keim brought some customers to her, they represented low profits. For each sold item they only earned 0.5 to 1RMB. Sometimes Keim took money from her register without telling her. Hua claimed that Keim made things very complicated. Keim had a business (M) visa but could not run a business without a work permit. He also preferred to run a store with Hua due his shortage of funds.

The visa [application] is *mafan* [trouble]. My visa is short-term, [I need to] extend it every month. We sell goods together. [If] I am not here, Hua can sell them…I do not need this [work permit], I just do business, my visa is for business, this store is business, so no problem. (October 2014)

Some Africans, like Keim, hold a business (M) visa but find jobs in the market without work permits, while others conduct commercial activities with visiting (F) or travelling (L) visas, whose holders are forbidden to work in China. Many of them are aware of the policies but choose not to follow them. This is one reason why the media often focus on illegal Africans when reporting on Africans in China.

In contrast to other Chinese partners, Pang played an important role in family and business matters, and supported Eric's career. Before their marriage, Pang helped Eric apply for a foreign company license in Guangzhou. Eric said,

The registration fee was no more than 50,000RMB at that time, but it is not less than 100,000RMB today. Pang knew the procedures. After filling out the forms, we went to the office to register. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

Pang descried the process in detail. She had checked all the documents, thought of a name for their company which had not been used by others, rented a place in an office building, made a personal seal, contacted an accounting firm to receive a bank levy consultation letter, took money to the bank, and got the capital verification from the bank. After opening a company account, according to their contribution to the company's capital investment, the bank issued each of them a demand note, and stamped the consultation letter. They took the demand note, the confirmation letter offered by the bank, the company name notification, and the rental contract to the Industrial and Commercial Bureau for Company Registration. They received the license after three working days. After obtaining the license, Pang applied for the tax registration certificate at the local tax bureau within 15 days. Ultimately, they were able to open their business.

To conclude, some Africans claimed a dominant position in the Chinese-African relationship, assuming the role as the head of the family and business. In other cases, Chinese partners exercised some financial control and had a greater say in personal and business relationships.

7.4 Raising Chinese-African Children

From the late 1950s to mid-1970s, in order to develop the country's economy, the central government encouraged people to have fewer children, but the policy was not well enforced (Liang 2014). After 1979, the one-child policy was fully implemented by laws, regulations and administrative measures (Greenhalgh 2003). However, the actual enforcement of the policy varied among provinces due to their different realities (Liang 2014). After many years of birth control, the government amended the policy in January 2016 so that each couple

could have two children, out of concerns over an aging society and labor management. Foreigners who marry Chinese in China should abide by the Chinese marriage law and family planning policy if they choose Chinese nationality for their children. If they choose to obtain foreign nationalities for their children, there is no control over how many children a couple chooses to have. Africans prefer to raise many more children, unlike Chinese, who generally prefer to limit the number of children due to the high cost of quality education.

7.4.1 Child Care Arrangements

With the growing number of foreigners entering China to work, study and live, society has become more tolerant of international marriage. Beginning in 2002, a large number of Africans entered China, many of whom came to Guangzhou (Li & Xue 2012). In subsequent years, they occupied trade markets, got married and had children with Chinese citizens.

A few of the interviewed couples went through abortion，some expected to start a family, and some already had school-age children. The African-Chinese children were generally young at the time of my interview, except for a scarce number of teenagers. These Chinese-African couples had different ideas of rearing children. They had different opinions on aspects such as the number of children, parenting styles, the children's nationalities and religions, school selection, and ways to deal with discrimination. For instance, Liang had an abortion due to the long-time absence of her African partner in China. In October 2014, Liang found herself pregnant and was faced with the dilemma of whether to give birth to the baby or have an abortion. She said,

> I want an abortion. We just started a relationship, and I never thought to have a baby. I do not want it, what can I do? (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

At 23-years-old, Liang did not consult her parents. She saw her parents as rural farmers who had always hoped for her to go to a big city to broaden her horizons and find a good job to make money, and expected her to marry someone with better family conditions. But at the time, she was working in Guangzhou with a low salary, and got pregnant without planning. Liang got little help from her African partner Oscar because he frequently stayed outside of China. Additionally, Liang worried that the pregnancy may cost her job in a private company, as she had not signed a formal contract with her employer. But Oscar did not agree with her idea of getting an abortion, and insisted on keeping the baby. They quarreled several times. For a time, Liang did not have the courage to go through with the abortion and Oscar promised to marry her and help her raise the baby. However, later Oscar went back to his hometown due to visa issues, and was stuck in Africa because of the Ebola outbreak. In June 2015, Liang sent me the message by wechat saying that she had had the abortion, quit her job, and had gone back to her hometown due to poor physical health. She had not seen Oscar for

more than half a year, and thought Oscar would not return to Guangzhou.

> He left for a long time, I did not understand why he did not come back. Many African traders returned to Guangzhou this year. I called him several times, and he told me to wait for a while…it was pointless, he was lying to me, he would not come back, I knew it…I could not wait, the baby was growing. I was scared…I went to the hospital, and the doctor said if I wanted an abortion, it must be done within the first three months of pregnancy, and after that it would be dangerous. I did not have money, and he was not here...so I did it, and I did not tell him. (June 2015, translated from Chinese)

Having regained her health, Liang found a job in Jinan of Shandong province, which was far enough from Guangzhou to avoid gossip and inquiry from acquaintances. She seemed to have deeply hidden her sadness, and had made up her mind to firmly break up with Oscar. She wrote me a message,

> I am a very stubborn person, and I want to show others that I am good. I only tell people good news and keep the bad news to myself…my parents just thought I was ill, they knew nothing…I found a job in Jinan, it is a nice place. If you have time, come here to visit me. (August 2015, translated from Chinese)

Unlike Liang, Yan was in instable economic condition and prepared to have a baby with William. Both of them wanted to have more children, as William said,

> You Chinese always think to save money for children, which is not a bad idea. But Chinese should help [children make money] instead of letting them rely on financial support from parents after adulthood. Children should make money by themselves….You Chinese think too much. Only God knows the future, we do our work. God will help us, do not worry. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

Through fieldwork, I learned that Chinese mothers paid more attention to rearing children. For example, Pang picked up Nana from kindergarten every day, and during the weekend she tried to keep her store closed to stay with Nana at home, take her to extra-curricular activities, or play with her in parks. Pang felt pressured by the stress of childcare and attempted to get Eric to share in the responsibilities by reminding him of his fatherly duties. Eric said he would spend more time with his family, but has not yet done so due to being busy at work. Eric defended himself awkwardly:

> I know she complained about it. She wanted me to spend time with Nana and have family time. But I have no choice; the customers call me whenever they want to. If I do not serve them, they will find someone else to do business with, and I will lose my credibility. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

Pang did not want Eric to take Nana to his company, because he did not understand Chinese characters and could not help Nana with her homework. She also did not want Nana go to the ground floor of Eric's working place, where thousands of customers pass through every day. She did not want Nana to play with strangers while Eric worked upstairs and could not keep

an eye on Nana. She is concerned that Nana is such a talkative girl and will talk with anyone she has just met.

Once, a friend of Eric took Nana to the convenience shop downstairs to buy snacks. Pang was unhappy, because it is not good for a child's teeth to eat too many sweet things and Eric did not prevent it from happening. Normally, after eating too many snacks, Nana will not eat dinner and becomes so excited that she has difficulty going to sleep. Pang told Nana not to accept other people's money without parents' approval and not to eat snacks before meals. Nana found it hard to follow Pang's rules. She said,

> The uncle liked me, I did not ask him to buy me chocolate, he gave it to me…I only ate one piece.
> (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

Wang experienced difficulties with childrearing in 2014. Her mother went back to her hometown to take care of her brother's child, and her partner Ford had left Guangzhou temporarily, leaving Wang to look after her first child Dick by herself. At the same time, Ford had asked her to prepare goods for customers, which exhausted her. She had to pay her neighbors to take care of her children. Under these difficult circumstances, she completely lost her temper and quarreled with Ford and wanted to break up with him. But Ford could not understand or listen to her, and thought about nothing but money. Now that her child has grown older, their relationship has become better. In 2016, a second child, Jack, was born to their family. Four months after giving birth to her second son, Wang went back to work to support the family financially. They did not hire a baby sitter, but took the child with them to the store.

During the interview in 2014, Wang and Ford' son Dick wandered off around the market by himself while his parents were occupied in the store. Wang said,

> Once we were talking with customers, and Dick disappeared. My neighbor told me that she had seen Dick on the ground floor. I went there immediately to look for him…It was terrible. I told Dick to play only on this floor. The ground floor is used for transporting goods, and there are lots of cars there, it is dangerous. We told him if he did not listen to us, we would call the police to arrest him.
> (Sept. 2014, translated from Chinese)

The policemen would not arrest a naughty child, and instilling fear of police may not be a suitable way of educating a child. Wang has different ideas on education than Ford. She tried to punish Dick and slap his hands when he was naughty. Ford was against punishing Dick. Now, Dick knows his father will protect him and Wang becomes the bad cop, while his father plays the good cop.

7.4.2 Assisting Children in Integration into Chinese Society

In September 2014, Lily began primary school. According to Tuan, Lily's classmates were very curious about Lily's different skin color. The teachers told Tuan that the Chinese students

stood around Lily and asked her lots of questions. At the beginning, they were curious about everything that happened in Lily's life, but gradually lost interest and stopped seeing Lily as different from themselves. Lily made some friends in her class. During the holiday, Tuan and other mothers took their children to Baiyun Park together for a picnic lunch and they shared their views on raising children. Lily said she was so happy to have friends. When Tuan was too busy to pick her up, she would go to her friend's home, which was not far from hers. Lily said that when a boy made fun of her skin color once and called her 'little black,' her Chinese friend Ran confronted the boy to protect her, which made Lily feel supported and happy. Once Lily and Tuan went to the subway station, and two elderly women pointed at them and whispered something. Tuan guessed they were talking about Lily. This made Tuan very angry. She walked up to the women and told them it was obviously very impolite to point at other people, and if they had any sense of morality, they should not gossip about other people and point at them. The two women seemed shocked and didn't dare to retort.

Photo 8: Chinese-African Child in Dancing class (Taken by author in 2014)

Another Chinese-African girl, Nana, was a strong communicator and had a cheerful and lively personality. Her teachers liked her and often exchanged views on education with her mother Pang. Once, I interviewed Nana's teacher, who confirmed that Nana is a very clever girl, but that she is so talkative that she sometimes disturbs the class. She and Pang had discussed Nana's education many times. The teacher said,

> Not all parents care about [education], some think that when children are in school it is the teachers' duty to educate them. But family education is more important. Some people have prejudices against Chinese-African children. These children are very good. Despite their skin color, they are totally Chinese. I think every child is good; it only matters how we educate them. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

Nana likes to go to kindergarten. There are some close friends there with whom she can play together. There are two African-Chinese children in her kindergarten, Nana said,

> They are not my best friends, my best friend is Haifang [a Chinese girl], we sleep together [during the noon break]. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

I accompanied Pang went to pick up Nana several times. Once a parent asked her why Eric had not picked up Nana in a long time. Even though Pang felt very uncomfortable, she still patiently explained that Eric was too busy at work to pick up Nana, and her store was near the kindergarten and more convenient. She hoped this could put others off the idea that she was a single mother, or other negative views.

Unlike Tuan and Pang, who tried their best to help their daughter to adapt to school and society, Xuan seemed worried about potential bullying in public schools, and sent Mike to a special football training school. Mike was happy to play well and have friends, and felt that the coaches treated him well. But he has epilepsy, and had an epileptic episode once while playing football. If it had happened again, it would have been very serious. So now Xuan lets Mike stay at home doing things he likes. Compared to Xuan, her Nigerian partner Tom was calm about the situation.

> Xuan worries about many things, it is pointless. Mike will understand [his Chinese-African background] when he grows up. This is not his problem, some people are very bad. (October 2014)

Similar to Xuan, Ning and her African husband Simon thought there was no need for their older daughter to study in a public school. Although Ning has Guangzhou *huk*ou, they felt Lucy would suffer from fierce competition and potential bullying. At the moment they allow Lucy to take online courses from home, where she can practice English and has less homework. They plan to send their children to America in the future. Ning explained that the international school is good, but it only accepts foreign children, and Lucy has Chinese nationality. Ning also did not want her children to attend local schools. There is too much pressure, and the children need to study very intensively. She expects to send them to the U.S. or Australia, as education is better there and children can easily attend university. Simon agrees with Ning's approach:

> I do not know much about Chinese education. Ning thought it was better to educate the children at home. It is ok, my mother-in-law takes care of them, and they are happy to learn. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

All Chinese-African children interviewed had never been to Africa, and they were deeply influenced by Chinese culture and values. Their behaviors and ways of thinking were no different from common Chinese children, but they had to face unfriendly attitudes from other Chinese people, and easily became anxious. A few children with inadequate guidance from their parents found it difficult to adapt to local society. They had strong feelings of inferiority, lacked self-confidence, or even felt marginalized. For example, 11 year-old Mike said,

> I hate my skin. Why don't I look like my mother? Why are they [Xuan and Tom] together? They [the Chinese] look down on me. I speak Chinese, just like them. Am I not a Chinese? Only because of this color, they dislike me...I like my [football] coach, he really cares about me. I have friends on my football team; they did not call me "black ghost" like other Chinese do. I really want to beat the

people who say that. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

Many African fathers were busy with work and rarely looked after their children, but Chinese mothers or other relatives were sometimes able to help children adapt to society and gain self-confidence. Once, Nana did not want to go to school, and she complained about it in front of Pang and me. "Mum, I do not want to go to school tomorrow, they call me little black", she said. Pang comforted her by telling her that she has African blood, and that is why she has darker skin. It was impolite for others to say bad things, but if Nana let them get to know her, they would change their views. Later Pang told me they often called Nana 'little black' at home to make her feel like it was just a joke. She also discussed solutions with Nana's teachers.

In general, some Chinese mothers, like Xuan, were distressed by the prejudices their children faced and frustrated with the lack of outside support. Others, like Ning, had hoped to send their children to international schools, but were prevented by the high cost of tuition. They hoped to send children to high-quality international schools overseas in the future. Some Chinese mothers like Tuan and Pang were actively involved in helping their children, frequently communicating with teachers or exchanging ideas with other parents. Eric was one of the African fathers who was able to help his children by joining sports associations and parents' meetings in school, thanks to his fluent Chinese. However, African fathers like Ramdy, Bauman, Tom, Ford and Gene seemed less understanding of the barriers of *hukou*, or less concerned about the prejudices their children faced than their Chinese spouses. While Chinese mothers worried about their children's future education, African fathers thought their partners were too sensitive and put too much pressure on the family.

7.4.3 Religious Education

The children's religious education also played an important role in family dynamics. For instance, Pang agreed to let Nana become a Muslim because Eric strongly insisted. But he did not allow Nana to join the dancing class, because Nana danced with Chinese boys there and always wore short skirts. He thought Nana's behavior was improper for a Muslim girl. Pang said,

> He said he felt heart-broken that he did not manage to convince me to convert, so his daughter has to be a Muslim. I did not want to make things complicated. When Nana grows up, she can negotiate with her father, at present, she is young and does not understand. He did not want Nana to wear short skirts while dancing with other boys. He is stricter than before. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

I once encountered Tuan and Ramdy arguing about religion in their store. Tuan was supportive of Lily joining a ballet training class, but Ramdy was not. Tuan said,

> Lily likes dancing, why can't she join?...It is a good way for her to make some friends. She always

feels ashamed in front of others and has no confidence. This is a good thing. Ramdy is opposed to it and said he would not pay for it. I do not need his money. I can pay the bill by myself. His is stubborn, and too old-fashioned. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

Tuan also said Ramdy shamed her for cooking pork for Lily. She hoped Lily could have the chance to make a decision by herself rather than being forced by her father. Tuan believed that some Muslims did not care about public health.

I rarely communicate with [Chinese Muslims]. They sell dry fruits, cakes, beef and mutton in Xiatang. They kill sheep on the street, it is disgusting, blood everywhere. They spit in public and contaminate the neighborhood, terrible. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

Compared with Tuan, Shuang seemed to have less power to negotiate issues of religious belief with her husband. Because she had already become a Muslim, her sons had no other choice. They saw Bauman pray at home, and followed his example. Other Chinese parents accepted their children's upbringing as Christian, because they had already followed their husband's requirement to practice the Christian faith themselves. For these couples, family conflicts seemed to arise less than in families of couples following different faiths.

Through interviews I found that Chinese-Jordanian or Chinese-Egyptian children were more likely to have visited often or spent longer periods of time in their non-Chinese parents' country, were bilingually raised and had contact with their non-Chinese extended families. African-Chinese children seem to be raised mostly by their Chinese parent. None of the Chinese-African children had ever visited their African parents' country and only two had met their African relatives in Guangzhou. Most children spoke only Mandarin or Cantonese. None of them speak English or French well, let alone their African parents' local language. They also tend to speak Chinese with their non-Chinese parents. They know more about Guangzhou than about their African parents' country of origin and fit most of the Chinese norms. So African-Chinese children can hardly be considered bicultural. This makes it difficult for these children to deal with prejudices because they have little knowledge or few positive images of their African heritage (Schans 2012).

7.5 Conclusion

Therefore, in a Chinese-African marriage, if both sides can trust and support each other, and work to reasonably solve disagreements, the marriage or partnership will be harmonious. When there are language barriers, cultural gaps, value differences, different levels of education, gender inequalities, long-term separation or economic pressure, these marriages or partnerships may be tumultuous.

In regards to children's education, Chinese mothers pay more attention than African fathers, joining in school activities and making efforts to connect with teachers. But some mothers also feel anxious about raising children, and wish to protect their children from local society.

Some allow their children to study or play at home instead of going to school. Because the majority of African fathers know less about the Chinese educational system—which is closely tied to *hukou*—some find it hard to understand their Chinese partners' decisions in regard to the education and religious upbringing of their children. This lack of understanding, combined with language barriers, means they neither join parents' meetings nor communicate with other parents or teachers to help children adapt to local society. Only one of the fathers interviewed uses his fluent Chinese to join school activities and help his child adapt to school.

These Chinese-African children are similar to Chinese children in their language and world-view, but different from Chinese children in that their skin color marks them as Africans. Some find integration into local society difficult due to their social environment, parents' means of education, their individual ability to adapt and confrontation with stereotypes.

Chapter 8 Relationship with Chinese Partners' Family

The attachment to native land and the unwillingness to leave it, is the essential need of the common people;

Family members as closely linked as flesh and blood is the most basic wish of the common people.

Taken from: [DongHan Dynasty] Gu BAN 'TheHistoryofHanDynasty'

安土重迁，黎民之性；

骨肉相附，人情所愿。

摘自：【东汉】班固《汉书》[12]

Chinese society used to be strictly arranged on patrilineal lineage. Usually, women depend on their natal families and obey their fathers before marriage. After marriage they rely on their husband's families and follow their husbands' commands. Family is a primary and fundamental element in Chinese society, where 'family' has two meanings: household and lineage. When extended families are divided into small *fang* lead by married sons, these separate *fang* are still closely connected to each other through joint celebration of festivals, sacrificial offerings to ancestors and shared responsibilities in many family matters, so family has considerable influence on individuals. Particularly, the family-orientation of Chinese society is present in all aspects of traditional life and kinship. Family-orientation is represented by familism, which emphasizes continuation, harmony, solidarity, wealth and honor of the family (Ye 1990). In the context of familism, individuals should put familial interests over their personal needs.

Additionally *yang* (养) and *xiao/xiaoshun* (filial piety/孝顺) are the key moral demands in family-orientation. When children do not obey parents' wishes, some parents feel their authority challenged. Some Chinese, like Fang, Tuan, Yun, Nan, Lan, Hong, Wang married or lived with Africans against their family's wishes. Family members shunned these individuals because they did not follow the advice of their elders, disrupted harmonious family dynamics, weakened the collective interests of the family and tainted the family reputation. But from the perspective of these women, they showed courage in pursuing personal happiness and reaching their own dreams.

For Chinese women, family relationships offer a significant sense of belonging. When family members object to a Chinese-African marriage or partnership, the partnership is strongly affected. Chinese women feel upset for failing to play the role of the daughter as dictated by tradition. If the family is supportive, Chinese women are generally more optimistic in dealing with social pressures.

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[12]Ban , Gu. 1962. *The History of Han Dynasty*. Beijing: Zhonghua Book Company, 292. Translated by the author.

Due to language barriers, cultural, religious and value differences, Chinese families experience different degrees of misunderstanding with their African sons-in-law. Some parents-in-law think that Africans have stayed in Guangzhou for a longtime, but cannot speak fluent Chinese, which means they have trouble doing business and are prepared to leave China one day. Language barriers also create problems in communicating with family members, and affect family relationships. When Chinese-African marriages encounter difficulties, Chinese family members blame the African husband. In most cases, Chinese parents eventually give in to their daughters' insistence and accept their African sons-in-law. As one mother said "they already have children. We are not going to bother."

8.1 The Transformation of Chinese Kinship and Family Values

As Holy (1996) points out, Chinese society is a clear example of a lineage system, where bloodlines are of high importance and reciprocal obligations among family members are shared. Particularly, the patrilineal clan is the core element in the lineage system. As Liu and Xue (1987), Wang (2002), Tang and Chen (2012) note, in the past, the father held primary rights in the family, embodied by the four following phenomena: (1) Economic tyranny. The whole property of the family belonged to the parents, who also had a dominant power over the handling of the property. (2) Ideological tyranny. Family members should follow parent's will. (3) Rulers in domestic discipline. In order to carry out the will of parents and to maintain the family order, the elderly can punish young people with according severity. (4) Formulation and implementation of rules (Yang 1992). Kinship is a continuum through descendant generations, meaning all offspring belong to a unit. In particular, the male descendant is "the personification of all his forbearers and of all his descendants yet to be born" (Baker 1979: 26-27). The function of marriage is procreation and the continuation of the patrilineal line (Fei 1998). Ye (1990) and Jin (1999) maintain that relatedness (关系) is the main characteristic of Chinese family, in other words, family is the fundamental and principal element of lineage system and relatedness in China (Fei 1985; Qian 1990).

Chuang (1994: 5-6) argues that some earlier studies noted that the Chinese term for family, *jia* (家), can be translated as 'household', which only refers to the economic function of the Chinese family. The term 'lineage' denotes the ritual and kinship of Chinese families, as in *zongzu* (宗族). In fact, both the English words 'household' and 'lineage' are inherent in the Chinese meaning of family. The usage of household, family (*jia*/家) and lineage (*zongzu*/宗族) are complexly intertwined in the Chinese context (Chen 1998: 151-153; Freedman 1958: 137; Pasternak 1976: 120). Traditionally, a household is a collective composed of individual *fang* (房)—normally a smaller subdivision of an extended family headed by a young married male. When the extended family divides into small units or households, then these small units each

become an economically independent *fang* (房), which share common property with the extended family and manage ancestral worship and hierarchies in the lineage together (Lu 2008:28). This division is called *fenjia* (分家). In *fenjia*, parents may keep their own household and live with the eldest son, or be cared for by other married sons in turn. Unmarried adult siblings may live with their eldest brother (Chuang1994). *Fenjia* may break family economic unity. Also, parental power is weakened, because the son becomes the new authority in each *fang*—he has more power in decision-making, and may not support this parents financially. Therefore, parents try to retain authority over their adult children to ensure respect and filial piety, and carefully consider the capacity of a married son to become a mature head of a *fang*. Then parents delegate their property gradually to these separate sub-units over a prolonged period (Fricke et al. 1994: 26). Traditionally, males hold inherent membership in a family and naturally share the property, while females do not belong in the family lineage, with no name in the family genealogy and lower inheritance rights. If a female dies before marriage, she may be buried elsewhere, rather than joining the ancestral grave. Wolf (1972: 32) states, "a woman is a temporary member of her father's household, but not a member of his family". When a female marries and joins a new family, she will thereafter be considered a 'polluting' outsider by her natal family and depends heavily on her husband's family (Stafford 2000).

It can be seen that, in the past, females heavily depended on economic and social capital within family and kinship networks. However, in current Chinese society, Chinese family structure and concepts of family have under gone considerable changes. First, due to the one-child policy, which has been enforced for decades, some girls have become the only child in their natal family. Therefore, parents fully cherish and support their only child without gender discrimination. Second, through education, females are empowered and more professionally prepared for jobs than ever before. Third, because of nearly 36 years' of policy changes geared to opening Chinese borders, Chinese society has been greatly influenced by extend values and ideologies—particularly in urban contexts where individuals engage in diverse lifestyles and are becoming more open-minded than ever before. People can easily pick up new ideas from different social media. Still, some rural areas remain untouched and continue to be bound by patrilineal concepts, where daughters are inferior to sons. Rural reform is a slow process.

Thus, Chinese individuals are not isolated, but constantly bound by relationships throughout the various stages of life. Generally, the traditional way of life and kinship is socially orientated (*shehuiquxiang*/社会取向) (Yang1992). Social orientation refers to the strategies used by an individual to adapt to various social environments, and can be divided into four prominent categories: familistic orientation, relationship orientation, authoritarian

orientation, and other-self orientation (*jiazuquxiang*/家族取向，*guanxiquxiang*/关系取向，*quanweiquxiang*/权威取向，*tarenquxiang*/他人取向) (Yang1992: 94). As previously explained, family relationships are highly valued by the Chinese. So social orientation is primarily familial, meaning family interests dominate individual needs or desires. The family is the core of economic and social life in traditional agricultural society where it serves the important functions of protection, continuity, harmony and unity (Li 1985; Yang 1992: 95). Recognition of familial orientation (*jiazuquxiang*/家族取向) in the Chinese context refers to the continuation, harmony, solidarity, wealth and honor of the family. From an emotional aspect, familial orientation emphasizes the sense of unity, belonging, responsibility (loyalty), security, and honor or disgrace within the family (Ye 1990). In other words, family survival is superior to personal survival; family honor is more vital than personal feelings; family unity is more valuable than personal autonomy; family goals are more important than individual goals. Through the process of familization, the concept of familistic orientation may spread outside a particular family, allowing familistic orientation to become the prominent orientation of a wider group (Yang 1995).

Traditionally, the parent-child relationship was more important in Chinese society than it is today. China used to be a primarily agricultural society, where people were attached to their farmland and therefore lacking in mobility. Laborers were vital resources for farming, which meant that greater numbers of offspring were advantageous to agricultural life, as well as to carry on the paternal lineage. Paternal lineage passed the inheritance from father to son, so parent-child relationships were the most important element in the family structure (Fei 1985). In current China, there is growing emphasis on the conjugal relationship, particularly in those families with only one child. When children leave home to study, work, or live in other areas, parents come to realize the significance of conjugal relations. However, in some single-child families, a parent might still focus on this only child entirely and care more about the parent-child relationship than the conjugal relationship.

Stafford (2000) believes that in the Chinese context the parent-child relationship refers to the concept of *yang* (养), which literally means raise, care for, or support in English. *Yang* also refers to the mutual responsibilities and obligations, and material and mental assistance within parent-child relations. Parents offer *Yang* to children and expect them to provide *yang* in return when they reach old age, also known as *feng yang* (奉养). *Yang* is abroad concept, which includes offering mutual support between foster parents and adopted children, and unlimited support in biological kinship. The absence of *yang* will lead to broken kinship. Compared with the bidirectional meaning of *yang*, *xiao* or *xiaoshun* (孝/孝顺) in English is 'filial piety', which stresses one-way obligation and obedience from children towards their parents and other elderly. *Xiao* is partly a feature of *yang* as seen in *feng yang*. *Xiao* is also a

key notion of family, linage systems and Confucian culture (Hsiung 2004). Usually Chinese working outside of their hometown will send money to their parents or visit their parents during festivals, and will following parents' advice in accordance with their material and spiritual understandings of *feng yang* and *xiao/xiaoshun*. When children do not behave in accordance with *xiao/xiaoshun*, they will be criticized by family members, friends or even neighbors.

Thus, filial piety and following the advice of elderly is an important form of familial orientation that is related to neo-Confucianism and mainly applies to the majority Han population. Actually, not just Han, but other minority ethnic groups adopt similar concepts of family relationship through interaction with the Han group. Therefore, it can be safely said that Chinese society is family oriented (*jiazuquxiang*/家族取向)

African families bear some similarity to Chinese ones. Some African interviewees confirm that the elderly rely on their families to satisfy their material needs, at the same time the elderly help care for grandchildren to support young parents. However, with the current economic stress in Africa, taking care of older people and assisting in childcare becomes difficult (Bass & Sow 2006). Eric said,

> I send money to my parents every month. They are old and do not work. Also I give some money to my brother. Everyone may encounter problems. I am a Muslim and I learn to share with others. Chinese also do the same thing, give parents money and visit them, so we are the same. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

A Senegalese female trader said it was her duty to support her family.

> I just stayed in school for a short time. I learned to do business with friends. My father is ill. Now I give money to[my parents]. (September 2014)

Although many conventions have changed in modern society, the idea of filial piety or listening to the elders' suggestions still has a quiet yet powerful grip on daily Chinese practices. Particularly, parents think children should respect and obey parents because their advice for their children is full of care and informed by personal experience, and they love their children more than others. When children act outside of parent's expectations, they often feel it is an act of rebellion.

8.2 Value Conflicts

8.2.1 Ideals of Marriage/Partnership

Chinese parents generally expect that their children will attain a better and happier life than their own, but they lack a sense of respect for children's personal choices to a certain degree and do not accept different understandings of what a better and happier life consists of. Particularly, when facing children's marriage choices, they are anxious and often interfere

with the process. An interviewee said, "we love them and worried that they are making the wrong decision, which will destroy their whole life", even though this appeared not to be the case.

Some Chinese families believe that Chinese-African relationships are far from the traditional ideal of the matching-door marriage (*mendanghudui*/门当户对) which refers to the matching of the two families' socioeconomic statuses (see chapter 3). Africans have less social capital in China and thus are unable to expand a Chinese family's interests. In some cases, Chinese families must even go out of their way to help African family members survive in China. For instance, Yun's parents thought Jimmy was a financial burden to their family. Yun heavily depends on her family financially. She works in her uncle's company and draws financial support from her parents. Also, Yun and Jimmy shared very few common values. Particularly, Yun hardly ever trusted Jimmy's friendship with other girls, which led to their separation in 2016. One time at the dinner table, Yun's father told me,

> We dislike him. His marriage to my daughter is simply a way for him to promote his own interests. Such a person is shrewd and sophisticated…He is just using my daughter. We have broad social networks in Guangzhou. [Jimmy] can benefit from us in the future. Yun does not understand that. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

Yun's parents refused to meet Jimmy because of his unstable and unpromising job. Jimmy is a full-time bar singer, which, from Yun's parents' perspective, is hardly a real job and cannot carry him comfortably into old age. In their opinion, Jimmy is just an entertainer rather than an artist, without the skills to face serious competition. With his poor Chinese, it will be difficult for him to expand his career in other places. If Jimmy always sings in bars, pubs or other such venues, he may be influenced by playboys and loafers who tend to frequent these locations. Yun's mother tried to persuade Yun to break up with Jimmy, because she believes in the Chinese proverb that nothing goes well with a destitute couple and that real life relies on a stable income instead of the romance and chemistry that Yun always mentions. Yun's uncle runs a company doing business with foreign traders, some of whom are really rich. They buy thousands of pieces of clothing at one time, while Africans just buy a few pieces of bargain items from time to time. Yun's mother believes her brother's opinion that African traders are poorer than other traders on average.

Like Yun's parents, Ma's parents refuse to meet her African partner, Iwan. Ma said,

> They thought we are not in a serious relationship, and I deserve a man much better than him. It may take a while, but I believe I can slowly persuade my parents to meet Iwan. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

In fact, Ma feels unsure of the relationship with Iwan due to their long-time separation and pressure from her family. Iwan goes to Hong Kong to extend his visa frequently, and travels on business back and forth between different countries, which makes Ma feel unsure about

their future. Her uncle's family moved from Foshan City to Guangzhou City a longtime ago, and these relatives also showed disapproval of African-Chinese relationships. Ma said her cousin, who is the same age as Ma, totally opposed her decision to stay with Iwan. Her cousin thinks African customs are different from Chinese customs. Ma has never been to Africa before, and has not connected with Iwan's family members, which makes it hard to check on his background. Because his work requires frequent travel, Iwan is unlikely to settle down permanently in China in the future. Even if Ma has explained to her cousin that Iwan will live in Guangzhou for a longtime, her cousin still thinks that Africans are troublemakers and not trustworthy. Her cousin told her that family members, relatives and friends would not easily accept their relationship. Ma said,

> She is the same age as me. I thought she would understand me, but no. She cannot. She said I should not waste time on Iwan, because he is older than me and his family is poorer than mine. He is not the right person to marry. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

Like the family members of Yun and Ma, Hong's family members also put pressure on Hong and Kevin, because they did not see the relationship as an ideal basis for marriage. When Hong took Kevin to meet their mother and her sister Shu, they were greatly impressed by his fluent Chinese and good etiquette. Shu praised Kevin as a 'well-bred man'. Even if Kevin made such a good impression on Shu, she still thought Kevin was just a special case.

> We think their countries are poor, and do not have good schools. Not many Africans like Kevin study here, are polite and have a good job. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

Shu still disapproved of the relationship, and said if Hong kept up her relationship with Kevin, it would impact the family ties and her social networks. Shu had divorced her ex-husband and now takes care of her daughter with the help of her mother and relatives. She knows it is difficult to rear a child as a single parent. Hong had also divorced her ex-husband. Their mother felt very upset with both daughters. Shu's and Hong's divorces make their parents look bad to their relatives and friends. If Hong insists on staying with Kevin, this might compound extended relatives' negative attitudes towards the family. They also cannot be sure that Kevin will stay in Guangzhou for a longtime. As he only has a working visa, his company could assign him to other cities at any time. Shu thinks Hong is just addicted to a fleeting, irrational happiness with Kevin, from which Hong gains comfort to get over her previous failed marriage. During the period of her divorce, Hong sank into a deep depression and totally lost her zest for life. Shu believes that Hong's relationship with Kevin will get her in trouble in the future.

> It hink she was just feeling lonely when Kevin pursued her. But she should be sensible. She has a good job. If her co-workers find out she's in a relationship with a customer, her career will be ruined. She needs to recognize reality. No need to destroy her life for a man again. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

Some Chinese relatives find it hard to accept long-term partnerships between family members and Africans. In their view, legal marriage is a much safer way for a woman to protect her property and children. For example, Xuan's brother Gang helps her run her company. However, Gang always complains that Xuan's partner Tom frequently asks Xuan to book a hotel with her own ID card for his African friends about whom they know nothing. If these friends cause trouble during their stay, Xuan would be held accountable.

Also Gang thinks that Tom is unreliable in business. More than once, Tom ordered unnecessary goods and then changed his mind later, which caused their company much trouble. Gang said in the beginning he did not understand Xuan and Tom's relationship, but later on, he understood that Tom's companionship swept away his sister's loneliness and their son Mike gave her a sweet taste of being a mother.

> I never thought she would stay with an African...I know life is not easy for her. She needs someone on her side…I treat him [Mike] like my own son. I always take Binbin [my son] and him out together. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

Gang felt pity for his sister when she was diagnosed with cancer. He felt even more pity for her when he discovered that Tom showed little care for her,

> He knows my sister is ill…A treatment costs 5,000 RMB. He just gave her 10,000 RMB. And he never accompanied her to hospital. He comes here just for business. My sister is only a tool for him. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

However, Xuan provided an explanation for Tom's absence, saying that she had told him not to go to the hospital with her, or there would be many eyes on them. In her view, Tom had given her some money for treatment, and he cannot afford more now.

Tom said he did not give too much money towards Xuan's treatment due to financial hardship:

> I earned very little last year and now I have very little money at my disposal. I gave her what I had. God bless her. (September 2014)

As a father, Gang thought Xuan and Tom should pay more attention to Mike's education. He thought Xuan was overprotective, while Tom was irresponsible. Xuan spoiled Mike and kept him from school for fear that he would be bullied due to his skin color. Gang thought Xuan should instead help Mike to face social bias. Otherwise, Mike will become socially isolated. Now Mike is moving into puberty, and seems more and more introverted and tacit. Tom travels often between China and Africa, and seems to rarely pay attention to Mike.

A further conflict in Chinese-African partnerships is differing ideals of marriage ceremonies between Chinese families and African husbands/partners. For example, Nan's parents considered the wedding ceremony an important ritual to prove the legality of the marriage, and a binding tool to ensure that their African son-in-law will take responsibility for raising his family. However, Gene's ideals were far from their expectations—he suggested

holding a small party and inviting a few friends in Guangzhou, which offended Nan's parents. Nan's father said,

> He should hold a ceremony in our hometown, not here. How many people does he know here? Our relatives and friends are all in our hometown, how can I explain it to them? A party is just for foreigners. We cannot ask every relative to come here. Does he pay for their travel? He shows no respect for our customs. We dislike foreigners for that. (September2014, translated from Chinese)

Nan's mother clearly agreed with her husband. She did not understand why Gene refused to have a proper wedding. She supposed that Gene did not want to take responsibility and was just playing with their daughter. If they married, at least Nan would be protected by law. Gene seemed resistant to explain his wish to not obtain a marriage certificate.

> I do business in Guangzhou. I'm very busy…I need to return to Nigeria, prepare documents and then register here. I do not have time for that now…I told Nan to prepare documents in China and that we would register in Nigeria. The process is much easier. But her parents said we should register here. So they should wait. (September 2014)

He explained that he wanted to hold a party in Guangzhou due to lack of money and time. He had very little money at his disposal, and could not afford an extravagant wedding. But Nan's parents did not listen to his explanation and accused him of cheating their daughter. He also cannot understand their urgent need for marriage registration. As far as he is concerned, he and Nan have been together for a long time and already have a child, so he will never leave them alone. Gene said his parents-in-law did not trust him—they thought he did not want to get a marriage certificate because he had been married in Africa, or he is undocumented, or he does not want to take responsibility, or for other reasons. Nan defended Gene, saying that her father was a stubborn man. Her father and Gene rarely meet eye to eye. When her mother comes to Guangzhou, Gene treats her well and gives her some money for shopping. When Gene comes to her hometown, he speaks Chinese with her mother—not well, but at least he tries. Nan's mother told Nan that they were concerned that Gene would abandon them one day. But Nan argued that Gene is not that kind of person and they would hold a better wedding when time permits.

Wang planed to register for marriage and hold a ceremony in her hometown with Ford after she gave birth to her second child. If they do not marry, their two children cannot get local *hukou* and cannot enjoy local schooling for free. At first, her parents disapproved of her partnership with Ford, because her extended relatives' opinions powerfully impacted her parents.

> My mother has no opinion of her own. She always listens to my aunts. They told my mother Africans were poor. There are poor Chinese, too. Why judge Africans? Every time I say Ford is good, my mother will say I'm taking his side. [I] quarreled with them several times. I know they are unhappy, but they should trust me. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

During the festivals, she went back to her hometown for a few days by herself to avoid family

tension, and quickly returned to Guangzhou, because her parents kept on insisting that she should break up with Ford. After she gave birth to her son Dick, her parents had to accept their relationship. Once, Wang's mother took homemade food to Wang and visited her grandchild. She said she and her husband were not so open-minded. They know that young people have their own lives, but they are old and unable to cope with her daughter's marriage. Be it good or bad, it is Wang's choice. Last year, Wang wanted to separate from Ford. But she thought it was not so simple, because they already had a child. After the birth of her first child, Wang was able to understand her parents more than before,

> Now, if Dick gets injured, I'll be worried to death. It is the same with my parents. They are worried about me. I was innocent in the past. I made them unhappy, now I can understand them. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

However, there are a few *dagongmei* (female migrant workers/打工妹) like Miao and Shuang, who left their hometown and moved to the big cities at a young age. Parents have far less influence on these women, so they are able to make decisions by themselves. These females have adopted a life view different from their parents', who live in rural areas. Their parents are aware of their powerless position and are unable to support their daughters in urban areas. In fact, they rely on financial support from their daughters, so they have to let their daughters make their own decisions.

For instance, Miao shares very limited information about her African partner Harry with her parents in rural Jiangxi Province. She feels that her parents are occupied with farming and taking care of her brother's children, and rarely are concerned about her. She called them just to let them know she had a foreign boyfriend and give them limited information about Harry. Her father said nothing, but her mother expressed concern about Miao's future, while acknowledging she cannot force Miao to leave Harry.

Shuang rarely returns to her hometown to visit her mother, who has remarried. She sends money to her mother regularly. During the festivals, she takes three or four days off to visit her mother, but seldom speaks with her step father. When her mother found out Shuang wanted to marry an African, she was shocked, but did not blame Shuang, because her mother had had an unhappy marriage before, and hoped that Shuang would find a good man. Shuang and Bauman celebrated their marriage with a simple ceremony and a small party in Guangzhou. On Shuang's side, only her mother showed up at the ceremony and gave her the dowry, while none of Bauman's family members took part. Shuang's younger brother Jie came to Guangzhou to visit Shuang once and rarely speaks with Bauman due to his poor English. When she married, Jie was busy working, so he missed the ceremony.

8.2.2 Ideals of Parent-Children Relationship

My fieldwork shows that some Chinese parents think their daughters lack social experiences and have been cheated into living with or marrying Africans. They attempt to persuade their daughters to stay away from Africans as a way to prevent misfortune in the future, such as a break-up or divorce due to conflicts of culture and customs. If the daughters do not follow their parents' advice and refuse to break contact with Africans, they are thought to lack filial piety.

A few parents tried to ignore or avoid discussing their 'rebellious' child's relationship with an African. Fang's mother expressed mistrust of Fang's African partner Merlin.

> If we had other children, we would not have cared so much whether Fang insisted on marrying [Merlin]. But we just have one daughter. If one day she goes to Africa, we will then be left alone. We do not want her to live far away from us…He does business here. Everything goes well so far, so he will stay here longer. If not, he will leave…People like him just crave for more money and a woman to accompany him. [He is] not reliable. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

Moreover, Fang's mother cannot accept Merlin due to her own life experience. All of her family members came from Hubei Province and went to Shenzhen City in the early 1990s. It took a long time for them to get Shenzhen *hukou*. Fang's parents struggled for many years to give their children a better life. Now Fang does not follow their advice, which they perceive as disloyalty. They believe that Fang will regret staying with Merlin in the future. As an elder, Fang's mother thinks she is not healthy enough to cover the long distance and fly to Africa to visit her only daughter if one day Fang should leave China. Fang assured her mother that she would not go to Africa. Her mother remains unconvinced, despite Fang's efforts. She also thought Merlin's hometown was much poorer than Shenzhen and would be harder to adapt to.

Fang does not want to break her close ties with her parents. So when her parents express incomprehension, she has to pretend to weaken her relationship with Merlin, but feels distressed by having to lie and by disobeying her parents, and at the same time feels unsafe in her unstable relationship with Merlin. She is tired of deceiving her parents and hopes they will come to understand her feelings.

Tuan is the youngest child in the family, and according to her sister Han, their parents are very fond of Tuan. In most cases, their parents give full support to Tuan's decisions. But when they found out that Tuan moved in with her African boyfriend, Ramdy, her father lost his temper and did not communicate with Tuan for quite a longtime to punish her disobedience. Han said she tried to persuade Tuan to break up with Ramdy before their father found out about the relationship, but Tuan did not take her advice. When their father found out, he told Tuan never to come back home. Tuan did not call her parents for a long time. Han complained that at that time, Tuan only trusted Ramdy. Now, Tuan has to rear Lily all by herself. Their

father felt pity for Tuan as a young single mother, and finally opened up enough to speak to her.

Han explained that her family has done foreign business for more than 20 years and they have met all kinds of people. They do not just judge people from the outside. They thought ill of Ramdy because they found him to be impolite. After moving in with Tuan, Ramdy never sent his regards to Tuan's parents. Even after the birth of Lily, he never visited Tuan's parents, which caused serious tension in the family. In their opinion, even if they were unhappy about Tuan and Ramdy's relationship, Ramdy should still visit them during festivals. He neither married Tuan nor showed respect for the elderly. Tuan's parents believed Chinese and African cultures and etiquette are so widely different that it would not be easy for Tuan and Ramdy to understand each other. In Han's opinion, Ramdy destroyed their harmonious family relationship, and left her sister to take care of a child on her own. Fortunately, Tuan's family members can help her to a certain degree.

> Honestly, I dislike [Ramdy]. You see how that man treats [Tuan]. If he could call my father to say something, things would not be like this. He never called, never visited my parents, very selfish person, did not care about others' feelings. As we say, he has no sense of filial piety…He did not come to Guangzhou for a long time, and stayed in Hong Kong. Why not come here, it is easy to come here by train, just two hours. Lily always says she misses him. Now, Tuan takes care of Lily on her own. When we have time we help her. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

Often, Tuan's mother comes to Guangzhou to help her pick up Lily from school, and stays in Tuan's store or cooks for them. Tuan's mother thought Ramdy did not respect her and her husband as Tuan's parents, because he never sent greetings to them. Tuan's father finds it difficult to accept the fact that Tuan fought with him over an outsider. Worse, they had a child out of wedlock. As a retired official, he was respected by others in his small hometown. Tuan's actions have tarnished the family's reputation. Although Tuan's father has a bad temper, if Ramdy had had good manners, they would have treated him better.

Tuan's mother has been bothered by the gossip surrounding Tuan. Tuan lived with Ramdy out of wedlock and had an illegitimate child Lily. Now she is a single mother. Tuan's mother thinks it was Tuan's bad fate to meet an irresponsible man, and so she must help her daughter deal with social pressure. But she is growing older and will not be able to help Tuan in the future, so she hopes Tuan will be able to remarry. Tuan's mother tries her best to ease family tensions. She not only persuaded her husband to accept Tuan's status as a single mother, but also helps Tuan to take care of her child. Tuan feels grateful to her mother. Since her separation from Ramdy, she has come to realize that her family is the most important support in her life.

> If I could choose again, I would not stay with [Ramdy]. My mother helps me a lot. I told her not to strain herself…She cooked meals for Lily everyday when she stayed at my place... She is afraid that

others bully Lily…Lily should be dutiful to my mother. My mother treats her very well. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

In fact, before the separation, Ramdy already knew that Tuan's parents disliked him. He thought Tuan's parents should try to understand him rather than judge him for his language and commitment to work.

I knew they said bad things about me. They asked her to leave me. They thought I was poor and only did bad things here. They taught Lily that I was a bad father or something. It is not good…They don't speak English, so we do not talk. I work in HongKong…I do not want to see them, they do not like me. (July 2013)

Tuan's parent's attitude hurt Ramdy's feelings, so he refused to connect with them. While some parents disagree with Chinese-African relationships, and complain that their children do not show filial piety when they live with Africans, children like Tuan said she felt guilty for making her parents so worried about her life and causing disharmony in the family. Normally, Chinese parents eventually have to accept African sons-in-law, because they felt deeply connected to their daughters.

8.2.3 Fate and Destiny

Chinese emphasize the importance of destiny or fate, as expressed by the Chinese word *yuan* (缘) (Li 1982, Yang & Ho 1988). A particular relationship is a matter of *yuan*—it is seen as predetermined and will happen inevitably. *Yuan* exists long before personal interaction happens and determines how and when a relationship occurs and ends. Traditional Chinese used *yuan* as a kind of faith to emphasize the necessity and inevitability of social relationships. This understanding of relationships applies both within and outside the family, but its importance is more visible within the family relationship. In Chinese people's minds, *yuan* determines all types of family relationships—particularly conjugal relationships and parent-child relationships, as well as wealth and health. So when Chinese parents cannot stop children from marrying or living with their foreign partners, and do not want to break the parent-child relationship, they consider the *yuan* of these interracial conjugal relationships as predetermined. They comfort themselves by attributing their children's choices to *yuan*. As Nan's mother said, a family has always been a family. Children's luck is innate; it's their fate, which they cannot control. Pang said that when she told her parents about her relationship with Eric, they were surprised at first, but still believed that she made the decision with serious consideration and asked her to bring Eric to their hometown.

My parents trust me. I often call them, sharing about my life in Guangzhou. I know they need time to take in all of this. I told them I was serious. I really want to stay with Eric. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

Pang's mother described her first impression of Eric, saying that Eric joined their family for

the sake of *yuan*.

> He is honest. He told us about his family, and came here to do business with his friends. He planned to run a store in Guangzhou. We have some social experience, and know he means what he says. We know if they really have *yuan*, [we] cannot control it. If they separate, it is just the end of their *yuan*. We cannot forbid her from doing this and that; she is an adult. We accept the result; it is her fate. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

In 2007, Eric's small company was able to earn profits with Pang's help, and now they are happily married and have a daughter, which satisfies his Chinese parents-in-law.

In fact, more and younger Chinese couples try co-habitation as a way to learn each other's habits and values before marriage. Normally, the elderly think the traditional way is much better than these new ways, which may bring about a single parent. If a couple has a baby out of wedlock, the elderly will push them to marry for the child's sake. The Chinese emphasize harmony in order to maintain social stability (Zhang1989). Everyone tries not to disrupt harmony in the family. Although some parents disagree with the relationship between their daughters and African men, they accept the reality in the end as not only their children's fate but also their own. For instance, at first, Nan's parents did not accept their African son-in-law. When they found out that Nan was pregnant, they felt ashamed, but had no choice but to accept their daughter's relationship, and attempted to push her to marry as soon as possible. But their would-be son-in-law Gene refused, which led to family conflicts.

8.3 Language Conflicts

In the interviews, Chinese parents and relatives expressed that language and cultural differences are the main obstacles to communication and mutual understanding, which brings about distrust. Zach is the case in point here. He spoke very little Chinese and therefore rarely communicated with his parents-in-law. He only visited Lan's parents once in her hometown, pretending to be a foreign friend then rather than her boyfriend. Lan's parents, relatives and friends knew very little English, and depended on gestures to communicate with Zach.

> My parents did not know he was my boyfriend, I just told them that I would like to bring a foreign friend home and show him around. Our village had not seen a foreigner before, so the children in the village waited anxiously to get a look at him. When he went out, they surrounded him. They had never seen an African before…They couldn't speak to him due to language difference. My mother tried to explain something to [Zach]. No use. They just watched each other, smiling. We stayed for four days before we took off. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

Later, Lan told her family members about her decision to marry Zach. They did not take it well. They thought Lan was making a hasty decision and did not take future pressures into consideration. Lack of communication with Zach made things worse. So when Lan and Zach married in Nigeria, none of her family members attended the ceremony, due to both the long

distance and their disapproval. Lan said they did not hold a wedding in her hometown, because her parents did not want to see Zach, so they flew to Nigeria where Zach's brother lives. In Guangzhou, they invited two Chinese friends and three African business friends for a small celebration. Lan's parents did not show up in Guangzhou either. They did not want their relatives to know that Lan had married an African.

When Lan went back to visit her parents for festivals, her relatives often asked her about Zach and she usually excused his absence by saying he had to work. Her parents told others that Lan had actually remained single because she was so busy with work in Guangzhou. So when she separated from Zach and then returned home to marry her new partner in 2016, none of her relatives knew that it was her second marriage. Even her new husband was kept in the dark. She sent me messages, saying,

> My parents were right, we were different…I thought we could deal with these barriers, and that long distance and language are not problems. I was wrong. It was hard, very hard. Many differences…Very few people know about my past. If more people knew, I could not have married my [Chinese] husband…I didn't understand these things before, [I was] very thoughtless…My husband does many things for me. He treats me well, much better than Zach. (January 2016, translated from Chinese)

Some Chinese partners confirmed that the language barrier between their African partner and Chinese parents could be troublesome. Liang and Oscar are a good example. Although Liang tries to translate, still, her parents cannot trust Oscar, because they think Oscar is no match for their daughter. Liang said that her parents knew Oscar, and her mother came to Guangzhou once to meet him. She does not use standard pronunciation and Oscar's Chinese was poor. They couldn't understand each other. Liang became tired of translating every single word, but her mother thought Oscar did not deserve Liang anyway, because his financial condition was just so-so. She rebuked Liang when they were alone, but did not force her to separate from Oscar immediately. Oscar said he rarely talked with Liang's parents.

> They did not speak Chinese [Mandarin], but speak a dialect. I do not understand it, [so I] cannot speak with them [without Liang's translation]. I do not understand why they spoke ill of me. I told them I do business here. (November 2014)

In contrast to other African partners, thanks to his fluent Chinese, Eric seems to enjoy a better relationship with his parents-in-law. Actually, it was Pang who helped him to overcome the language and cultural barriers. Eric said,

> My Chinese was poor in the past, but now I have no problem also speaking Cantonese. I know Chinese have a strong sense of etiquette…you need to send greetings to the elderly, and give red envelopes [with money in them] to unmarried young relatives during festivals…We cannot address the elderly directly by their names. It's very impolite. I have learned these things gradually…In the past I made some mistakes, but my parents-in-law can understand that I do not know these things. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

He also thought his good practices such as avoiding smoking and drinking and keeping his promise of running the company in Guangzhou gained the trust of his parents-in-law,

> My mother-in-law is a really nice person. I am always busy doing business, so she cooks for us everyday…When both of us are occupied, she will look after Nana and walk her to school…Yeah, she knows I am a Muslim, so she buys beef for me from time to time, though both she and my wife are Buddhists and vegetarians…She treats me as if I were her own son. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

William also speaks Chinese well, and like Eric, made mistakes at first but now gets along well with his parents-in-laws. He laughed, saying,

> When I first learned Chinese, my pronunciation was not idiomatic. My parents-in-law did not understand me no matter how many times I repeated words, so I had to rely on gestures. But the problem was that sometimes they felt offended by my gestures. Yan said I couldn't point at the elderly and simply order them to do things. The truth is I did not order them. I just wanted to make myself understood…I am tall and speak loud, so they thought I was being impolite…Later, I learned to keep my voice down so as not to offend them. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

Once he came back home very hungry, and saw the dinner on the table and his parents-in-law watering flowers on the balcony. He thought they had already eaten, so he sat down and ate alone. However, it turned out that his parents-in-law were just waiting for him so that they could eat together. He knew he had been impolite, but his parents-in-law did not say anything and just sat and ate. The silence at the table was awkward. From that time on, he knew he must ask them before feeding himself. William felt that it was important to learn Chinese to communicate with family members, because his parents-in-law had less interest in learning English at their age. William feels proud of himself because he has not only a company in Guangzhou, but also a family. Both he and his wife Yan stay on good terms with their parents-in-law. Also, Yan loves his country, South Africa. They go there whenever they have the opportunity.

Chinese partners also face the same language barriers when dealing with African families. Shuang sends simple greetings to her African parents-in-law, but they have not visited each other yet, and do not know each other very well. Bauman seemed unhappy that Shuang rarely communicated with his parents in Nigeria until he told her that she should.

8.4 Religious Conflicts

Along with language barriers, religious differences are also a source of difficulty. Nan's parents have little knowledge about Islam, so Nan tried to explain Islam as simply and clearly as she could. She told her parents that it was a religion that would make her husband successful. Nan's mother said,

> We did not know about [Islam]. In our village there are no Muslims…Nan said Muslims have

nothing special except that they don't eat pork. We think we are ok with that…We met some Muslim women wearing long black clothes and hiding their faces. That's weird. Nan said she works, so she doesn't have to dress like other Muslim women…We believe in the god of earth. In our village, there is a big temple for him. Nan said Gene's god could make him rich, just like our god of wealth. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

Compared with other Chinese-African family relationships, Eric's parents-in-law treat him well, but held divergent beliefs when it comes to the rearing of his daughter Nana. Eric insisted that Nana should become a Muslim, which made his parents-in-law unhappy. His mother-in-law said,

We do not mean Eric is bad, but wearing a long skirt and a scarf would look weird in Guangzhou City since Muslims are only a minority here. We just think Nana can choose her belief when she grows up and we believe that like other children, Nana has every right to do everything she likes. But Eric does not want her to take dancing lessons, saying that she is a Muslim girl and that it's improper for her. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

Once, Eric got upset because his uninformed relatives made pork for the main dish. That accident made his parents-in-law feel awkward, yet at the same time they felt offended by Eric's crude reaction. His father-in-law said once, his distant relatives invited his family members to dinner at their home. Out of courtesy, his cousin wanted Eric to take a bite of the well-seasoned pork. Eric grimaced at the cousin immediately at the dinner table. His cousin apologized many times, because he did not know that Eric is a Muslim, and there were many other dishes on the table. But Eric remained unhappy, which made both the hosts and guests embarrassed.

Converted Chinese Muslims also face social alienation. For instance, since Shuang has become a Muslim, she has less contact with her friends than before, because Shuang has to wear a Hijab when going out and can only eat Halal food, which, in her friends' opinions, is an annoyance. When talking about her dress, she seems upset. In the past, she dressed however she liked. Now she has to wear a headscarf, long-sleeve tops, and loose, long skirts or trousers. This makes her very unhappy.

In addition, some parents said Africans were too much (eight to ten years) older than their daughters. They guessed that these Africans had already been married in other countries. To prevent their daughters from trouble, they strongly opposed their children's choices. It can be seen that Chinese family members find it difficult to understand and accept Chinese-African relationships, but in the end they may agree with children's decisions, because they want to preserve the harmonious family bond.

8.5 Conclusion

Marriage is an important connection between two families, not just between two individuals.

Finding a suitable Chinese partner can expand social networks and offer broader social support to individuals and families, while an African son-in-law can hardly do the same and in some cases can do quite the opposite. Although some families try to accept African family members, when considering practices that conflict with Chinese traditions, these families find it hard to change their stereotypes about Africans. Thanks to good economic conditions, social capital or marriage to Chinese, a handful of Africans may attain success and feel at home in China, but for most Africans, it is far from satisfying and comfortable to live in China. Africans are therefore socially distant to locals.

However, chapter 9 will show that religious support and social networks within African communities, groups, associations and business partnerships give Africans a sense of social belonging in their transitory places or places of residence. Through marriage or cohabitation with Chinese, Africans try to find ways to establish a 'home' in China, which encourages both Chinese and Africans to stand up to widespread social pressures.

Chapter 9 Social Networks

A bosom friend afar brings a distant land near

Taken from: [Tang Dynasty] Bo WANG 'Song Du Shaofu Zhi Ren Shuzhou'

海内存知己，天涯若比邻。

摘自：【唐】王勃《送杜少府之任蜀州》

Undeniably, language, religious, and family value conflicts are the most vital factors in problems with kin. For Chinese parents, Chinese-African marriages/partnerships are far from the ideal of a matching door marriage (*mendanghudui*/ 门当户对), parent-children relationships and familistic orientation (*jiazuquxiang*/家族取向). Moreover, due to the other orientation (*tarenquxiang*/他人取向) in China, hostile views on Chinese-African families impact Chinese marriage choices. Additionally, African and Chinese traders often have negative attitudes towards each other due to differing views on trade cooperation and harsh competition, which may cause strife among Africans themselves. Africans' poor language skills and economic conditions lead them to depend on their African communities to obtain useful information and assistance, isolating them from Chinese society. Their Chinese partners are seen as 'Africans' by relatives and friends, leading partners to tend toward joining African groups for social support and a sense of belonging. Overall, the majority of Chinese-African couples cannot easily realize socioeconomic upward mobility, some struggle with isolation and have to develop strategies to attain a sense of feeling at home, meanwhile encouraging their children to attain similar goals of upward mobility. It remains to be seen if Chinese-African children can reach such aims.

9.1 Social Relation

As stated in chapter 8, Chinese social relationships pivot on four orientations: family orientation (*jiazuquxiang*/家族取向), relationship orientation (*guanxiquxiang*/关系取向), authoritarian orientation (*quanweiquxiang*/权威取向), and other orientation (*tarenquxiang*/他人取向). Family orientation is the main mode of interaction in the Chinese social field. Relationship orientation is expressed in an individual's interpersonal interactions with others in horizontal context, where the two sides have similar rights. Authoritarian orientation explores individual's interpersonal interactions with others in a vertical context, where the rights of each party are disparate (Yang & Lu 2009: 92). Other orientation refers to a strong influence of others on the minds and practices of Chinese, particularly others' opinions, standards and criticisms. 'Others' are numerous, non-specific, or no-name (Yang & Lu 2009:

92). Psychologically, other-oriented individuals want to give others a good impression, and aim to be consistent with the behaviors of others (Yang 1992: 115). Traditionally, Chinese are very sensitive to others' opinions, so they often spend time understanding others' attitudes towards them for three possible reasons. First of all, typically, few people make decisions purely for themselves and air their own views. It is natural to want to know others' views, and cognitively compare social views, in order to make sure personal feelings and opinions do not go against those of others (Festinger 1954). Another possible reason is that many Chinese people do not want to make decisions themselves, so they follow others' ideas and actions. More importantly, even though they have personal ideas, they are afraid of being criticized, so they need to know others' opinions in order to express safe ideas. If necessary, they can seek common ground while reserving differences to avoid being offensive or inviting negative criticism, and to gain positive acceptance, recognition and approval from others. As Yang (1992: 116-118) argued, generally speaking, Chinese have a strong equivalence psychology that tends to support social conformity. Chinese society stresses unification or harmony, which is ingrained from childhood. As time goes by, this naturally informs such opinions and habits. So when Chinese meet any new or unusual thoughts or practices in their daily lives, they may feel anxious or panicky. Some people may not only experience anxiety about their own distinctive ideas or practices but also about others' distinctive characters. In order to deal with anxiety, they may criticize these different views or actions with words or suppress them by actions. Hence this creates both tangible and intangible social pressure within society. Chinese make efforts to perform their roles well in a variety of relationships and emphasize reputation, because they define themselves by these relationships, as well as others' impressions. For Chinese, reputation primarily refers to their image in family members' minds, as well as in acquaintances' and other strangers' minds.

Therefore, Chinese form personal identities via relationships, essentially addressing their roles in society. In the past, the typical social relations were quite formal (or even ritualized), not based on personal interests and resistant to arbitrary changes. Formalizations of relationship were implemented by different roles, and different relationships meant different practices according to roles (Yang 1992: 28). So in the process of social interaction, Chinese focus on social situations rather than the inherent self, and emphasize formalization and characterization towards the goal of harmonious social relationships. With harmonious relationship, social roles can be played in order, and meet expectations with respective specifications. Chinese fear social changes. This is partly due to China's history of war (Zhang 1989), and partly due to the need for stability in farming life and family within the agricultural society (Yang 1992: 103). When communal relationships are harmonious, society is stabilized, and people can farm on land and access slow-growing crops and other resources for survival.

Because they care about their roles in society and others' opinions of them, Chinese wives or partners are impacted more strongly by social pressures than Africans. Also, considering family ties and filial piety, social belonging of Chinese wives and partners is more complex than that of their African partners. Through semi-structured interviews, 40 Chinese and 10 Africans answered 30 questions about religion, customs, intimate Chinese-African relationships, neighborhood, child rearing, Africans' travel or work in China, and Chinese impressions of Africa. Additionally, more than 10 Chinese landlords and dozens of interviewees joined conversations. Their answers allow an analysis of various elements of Chinese-African couples' social networks that strongly impact their relationship, social adaption and sense of belonging.

9.1.1 Chinese Attitudes

9.1.1.1 Attitudes on Africans

Eight Chinese interviewees are from outside of Guangzhou Province, including two from Shandong, one from Henan, two from Ningxia, two from Guangxi, and one from Hunan; the other 32 are from Guangdong Province, including nine from the city of Guangzhou, and 23 from the Chaoshan area. Their occupations are: market manager, property manager, trader, restaurant operator, dentist, pharmacist, retired teacher, housewife, vendor, telephone booth center staff, waiter/waitress, and cosmetologist. Their ages ranged from about 20 years old to over 50 years old. 25 are male and 15 are female. Besides these 40 Chinese interviewees, more than 10 landlords were interviewed.

Forty interviewees expressed differing opinions about African neighbors. Among these interviewees, only two men actually had African neighbors, and four said they had encountered Africans in their residential communities but never connected with them. The other thirty-four people who lived far away from Xiaobei or Sanyuanli areas did not encounter African neighbors, but communicated with Africans in their workplaces. Two Chinese men from other provinces who had African neighbors expressed negative attitudes towards Africans, claiming that African neighbors disturbed their daily life. One said,

> That man [an African neighbor] listened to music loudly late at night. I told him not to do that. My kid needs to sleep, and gets up 7 a.m. to prepare for school. He still does the same thing. On the weekend, he and his friends dance. If they dance in the morning, it is ok. But it is night, we live downstairs, and want to sleep. How to tolerate this? Low quality [sushi]…I had no choice but to talk with the landlord. If he [the African tenant] does not stop, he should move. Not just me, other neighbors have also complained. (August 2014)

Another male trader who sold daily necessities and lived on Xiatang Street also thought a few African neighbors disturbed his daily life, because they often held parties, drank too much

and ended up sleeping on the stairs. However, considering the cheap rent and tending to his store on Xiatang, he has decided not move for the moment.

Three women and one man encountered African neighbors in their residential communities. One woman was a local who had lived near Xiaobei Railway Station since her childhood. She often encountered African neighbors but they did not greet each other. One 24-year-old woman who worked in a store and a nearly 30-year-old man who ran a clothing store chose to reside near Xiaobei for the convenience of commuting to work. Apart from business, they rarely had personal contact with African neighbors, nor did they care whether Africans were neighbors or not. They just wanted a quiet living environment. The remaining 34 interviewees said no African lived-in their residential neighborhoods, as they were far away from Xiaobei and Sanyuanli areas. They said they would accept African neighbors who tried to keep the neighborhood harmonious. But some women said if many Africans resided in their communities and disturbed them, they may negotiate with the neighborhood committee to control it.

In other words, few Chinese who had close contacts with Africans tended to understand them. Many Chinese traders cared about business relationships with Africans but had limited knowledge about African cultures and languages. Some had African neighbors but held negative attitudes towards them. These who did not have African neighbors showed relatively higher acceptance towards Africans as potential neighbors. Three Chinese women and one dentist said some Africans needed to take care of their personal hygiene.

Photo 9: Africans Take Bus and Subway to Trade Markets in Guangzhou (Taken by author)

Apart from neighborhood issues, there were religious differences between Chinese and African interviewees. Among the 40 Chinese interviewees, only three Chinese understood African's religions like Islam, Catholicism, and Pentecostalism, because these Chinese practiced one of those faiths. Five had gained some understanding of typical African religious

beliefs, one of them a property manager, one a marketing manager, and three traders. The two managers had gained knowledge of religious beliefs through market management processes and through dealing with African traders. The latter three traders had obtained knowledge from their African partners. The remaining 32 interviewees knew little about Africans' religious practices. This was mainly because the Chinese paid more attention to business and their own daily lives.

There are some cases of African and Chinese cooperation. Depending on long-time experiences in China, a few Africans have adapted to local society and have good relationships with Chinese. William is more or less adapted to Chinese life. He can read Chinese newspapers, watch Chinese dramas and share social news with his Chinese employees. Indeed, William had felt frustrated by managing Chinese employees in the beginning. But with the help of his wife Yan, he gradually understood that some employees kept information from him because they were afraid of being fired. He found a way to communicate with these Chinese workers to deal with this. Yan said William focused on results and was frequently hard on his employees without understanding the whole work process, which made his employees very nervous. She attempted to meet employees' requirements and develop their trade. William's Chinese employees said William was a good boss and understood local society very well, but at the beginning, they did not know how to work with a foreign boss. They wanted to do it this way, but William told them to use that way. Employees complained William did not contact factories himself, so he did not understand real conditions. But they felt that William focused on business and cared about working attitudes, and through working with him over a long period they learned how to communicate with him.

Moreover, over 10 landlords expressed their feelings about or experience with communicating with Africans. For example, landlady Xu said she had been living and working in the Xiatang community for over 40 years and had been leasing flats to Africans for more than 10 years. She thought some Africans were good, and just a few tended to listen to music loudly, which disturbed other tenants, or took friends in as roommates without registration. If they did that, Xu needed to charge a higher rent and ask them to register in the police station.

Landlord Quan said some Africans paid rent on time and kept rooms clean, but some made rooms dirty and ruined furniture. He prefers Chinese rather than African tenants because communication is easier. For example, if Chinese tenants made the room dirty, he told them to clean it, or forced them to leave. But Africans were not able to follow his words. He told an African that she could not put metal things in the microwave, otherwise it might catch fire. She did not listen and the microwave was totally destroyed. He was not compensated for the damage. In another incident, an African man drank too much and broke a door. He refused to

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pay for the repairs, so Quan called the police to help.

Another landlady Wu prefers renting places to established African migrants, because they know the rules and have money to pay the rental on time. She feels African students are also a good choice because they know some Chinese and normally stay longer than African traders. Wu said,

> Some established African traders have money and rent apartments in Jinlu Villa which they sublet to their friends to earn profits…Jinlu Villa has an office, and foreigners can register there, no need to go to the police station. Not like us, we have to take foreigners to the police station for registration…we have to help them [African tenants] to fill out forms, and prepare contracts. The policemen complain that we make trouble for them. They do not speak English, they should learn it…we need to earn money, Africans want to rent my flats. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

Indeed, many landlords have moved to better residential communities and have rented the old housing to foreigners, particularly Africans. Wu felt that they depended on renting housing to foreigners to make money. If the policemen did not help them manage foreigners, it would impact their family income. Landlord Li said it was not easy being a middleman between African tenants and the police. Landlords did business with Africans, while the police hoped they could cooperate with the landlords to make sure that the African tenants had valid visas. But these landlords did not want to check whether tenants had overstayed their visas. Even if they knew African tenants had invited some friends who may be unregistered to live with them, they did not want to provide information to the police and only sometimes forced undocumented Africans to leave.

Landlady Bao encountered problems renting housing to Africans, in particular in a case where she rented a flat to two African sex workers, and neighbors accused her of paying too much attention to money and not thinking about the neighborhood's interests. But Bao felt sorry for these two women, because their African friends had cheated them out of money, and they had to cook food to sell for survival but still could not meet their daily costs. Because they lacked skills and formal jobs, they were forced to become sex workers. Bao thought one of them had a baby and needed a place to reside, so she offered a place to them. In the end, she had to force them to leave due to tensions between neighbors.

> One of them gave birth to the child. This is really bad for a child. She needed some better job, otherwise it is hard to raise the child…I told her to go back to her hometown, does not [instead of] staying here. Too much trouble…A little while ago, she went out and locked her child in the room. When she came back her child had disappeared. She cried loudly in my working place and asked me to call the police to find her child. The police came here, asked her some questions and suggested she calls her roommate and friends to ask whether they saw her child. Stupid woman, her roommate took her child to eat something. She did not call her first…Silly, no money and no birth control, and she did not raise the child carefully…I had to ask them to leave. Neighbors complained to me a lot. They thought these women were too much and impacted children…This is a community. I did not

want to earn their money just to invite antagonism from the neighbors. Trouble. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

9.1.1.2 Attitudes towards Chinese-African Couples

Many Chinese accepted interviews because they were introduced to me by other interviewees or had some free time. During the interviews, only one Chinese woman had a positive attitude on Chinese-African marriages/partnerships; 16 Chinese thought couples should think twice and know each other's background; 20 Chinese thought if Chinese and Africans insist on getting married, people should respect their personal choice. Three men strongly opposed such marriages because of cultural differences and their own experiences. Chinese interviewees were mainly engaged in wholesale and retail business, and the service industry. There were four times as many interviewees from Guangdong province than from other provinces. 1.7 times more males than females were interviewed. Some women declined to be interviewed, or made excuses as to why they could not complete interviews.

There are examples of positive attitudes towards such marriages. One female (aged over 55) who worked in a small restaurant near Xiaobei thought marriage is a personal choice, whether for romantic feeling, or for socioeconomic gains.

They [Africans] live near here. Sometimes they buy foods from me and say hello to me, very politely...I met a few Chinese girls who lived with Africans. Young people are very open, different from the past. They like it that way, it is personal. If Africans have money, marrying them is OK. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

A market manager (aged over 50 years old) said that half of African traders did their part to conduct good business. Although a few African business people did not cooperate with the market management due to language barriers, they eventually solved problems through various channels. Moreover, he said there were some Chinese-African couples working in the market. They had met each other through trade or because the Chinese partner had previously worked as the Africans' translator. He believed that some of them had a happy marriage.

If a family member insists on marrying an African, we have no choice. We cannot stop them, useless…The smart way is to just let them do what they want to do. If they end up suffering, they will understand why…The important thing is to make a careful choice. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

Some interviewees held a neutral view on Chinese-African marriage/partnership. For example, Lu, a 25-year-old shop assistant from Shantou, thought it might be unwise to marry an African due to cultural and language barriers, but people should respect personal choices.

I saw some Chinese women accompany Africans here to buy goods. They seemed like lovers…I never thought about marrying an African. We are different from them—language, culture, many differences. They just stay here for a short time to do business. I just do my job, I do not have any

private contact with them. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

A 24-year-old Muslim woman, as a restaurant assistant, grew up in Guangdong province. In the interview, she mentioned that if an African was a devout Muslim, the marriage with him was acceptable. But taking cultural difference and language barriers into account, she prefers Chinese to African partners. Moreover, she prefers fair skin.

> Their skin color is unsightly. Fair skin can always make one look prettier. You see, these foreign stars have blonde hair, different eye colors, very beautiful. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

Other interviewees expressed opposition to Chinese-African marriages or partnerships. A 50-year-old man from Shandong province managed a private telephone booth center on Baohan Street. In conversation, he said he provides long distance phone service to Africans, and some fail to pay telephone charges. He complained about Africans' poor credibility. He said his Chinese neighbor lived with an African man and their son. Later, the African man moved away, and left his Chinese partner and child in Guangzhou. The Chinese woman, as a restaurant waitress with a low salary, worked hard to rear the child on her own. He felt that the African man lacked a sense of responsibility and morality. Meanwhile, he blamed Chinese women for being blinded by the wealth of Africans at the beginning and poorly considering the responsibilities of marriage.

> It is impossible for her to remarry as few men can accept a foreign stepson…She is pitiful. I often ask my wife to help her take care of child…You can ask her. She regretted staying with that African who destroyed her life and having not thought about it clearly....That man is a bad person, totally irresponsible. He abandoned his child. So girls should not marry Africans, or they will end up like this. (August 2013, translated from Chinese)

A 35-year-old fruit shop owner from Henan province also expressed disapproval of Chinese-African marriage:

> At night, when you go to Huantian street, you see Africans drink alcohol every day in the night markets. When drinking too much, they pee anywhere, so that street smells disgusting, [and they] fight each other…Last time, I met several Africans beating one African on the street. They do not want to get on with a safe life, [women] cannot marry them. (July 2013, translated from Chinese)

A female trader named Kuang, who is the neighbor of a Chinese-African couple in the same market, advised the Chinese woman not to stay with her African partners, because as a friend she knew of the couple's conflicts.

> I told her not to stay with an African. Much trouble. He took some money from her secretly, she quarreled with him for this. It is bad…We are friends, we have been doing business in this market for a long time. I told her to watch over her money and customers, so as not be cheated by him. (July 2013, translated from Chinese)

Furthermore, these Chinese interviewees had diverse impressions of Africa. Three people expected to work or travel in Africa in the future. They thought that the chance to visit different places would be an interesting experience. The market manager and other two

traders thought that making money in Africa would be a good opportunity. But they definitely would return to China due to living conditions and differences in customs. Others thought economic conditions and quality of life lag behind in Africa, where there are diseases, political conflicts, restricted living conditions and so on. Shop assistant Zhao said her Malian boss told her that African countries are actually very different in terms of economic conditions, religion, language and customs.

9.1.2 African Attitudes towards Chinese-African Couples

Apart from the 40 Chinese interviewees, 10 African interviewees accepted semi-structured interviews. Two were Nigerians, two Malian, one Nigerien, one Angolan, one Senegalese, one Ghanaian, one Guinean, and one Ugandan. There occupations are: shop manager, trader, housewife and student. Eight are male and two are female, all aged from about 20 years old to around 40 years old. Fewer Africans were interviewed than Chinese. Many Africans declined to participate in the semi-structured interview in order to protect their privacy. Some thought I was a reporter or an office worker working for the Chinese government to get their information. Some said they were busy at work and unable to do an interview. Some answered questions ambiguously or found excuses to finish the interview quickly. In fact, many researchers have already interviewed Africans to discover their attitudes on Chinese or China. Bodomo (2010), Haugen (2012) and Niu (2015) found Africans complain about Chinese traders breaking their promises, and the hostile attitudes of police and government management. Mathews (2011, 2015) found that Africans mistrust Chinese in many respects, in both personal and work contexts. Lan (2014, 2015) describes Africans working in different areas of China, who have different experiences of local governance. He found that some Africans doubt their Chinese wives or partners who may 'steal' their property or business. Xu (2009b) describes fractures in the social networks of Africans in Guangzhou. While Castillo (2015a) provides cases where Africans find ways to adapt in Guangzhou, some still lack a feeling of being at home. Li, Lyons and Brown (2012), and Zhang (2008) observed that through the establishment of ethnic enclaves, Africans are able to develop social networks and creates prosperous ethnic economies, but still cannot deal with hardships in Guangzhou. Many cases focus on Africans' lives, their views on Chinese, and their experiences working and living in various regions in China, but rarely were Africans interviewed on their opinions on Chinese-African marriage/partnership, which will be mainly discussed in this section.

Ten African interviewees expressed simple opinions on Chinese-African relationships, through which I was able to create some generalization. It seems that some African women are averse to Chinese-African marriages and partnerships. The majority of African male interviewees held positive attitudes towards such relationships. As a Madagascan student said,

It is good to have a Chinese girlfriend. We are lonely here, and if we can find a person to give us company, we are lucky. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

One Nigerian man directly asked me whether I had a boyfriend, and he wanted me to introduce him to a Chinese girl:

Do you have a boyfriend?...You introduce a girl to me, next time we can eat together…my friend said Chinese girls are good, to help me do business…Or do you have friends [who] want to earn money, tell them to work with me, I pay them money…a girl is better. (September 2014)

The other Nigerian trader also thought marrying a Chinese girl is okay:

This is in China, marrying Chinese is good…These people who don't make money, are stupid, money is good, everyone likes money…Chinese know how to make money, they can help, We know that, but some do not want to say that. (September 2014)

One Senegalese female thought neutrally of Chinese-African marriage.

I think it is OK, if the man likes the woman…Everyone wants to marry a rich person, their kids will be safe…Some persons' opinions are different from mine, they feel unfair. Many African men do not have too much money, if [you] met a rich man, [you would be] very lucky. So they are jealous, they do not like Chinese women [to marry rich African men], because these men did not choose them. (August 2014)

A Malian housewife felt negatively about such relationships and thought some Chinese used strategies to attract good African men.

Chinese do not have religion, so I don't believe them…These women wear some clothes that are too tight or revealing. They use [their] bodies to attract Africans...it is not good. I don't know, I do not like them. (September 2014)

Through interviews, I found that African traders rarely understand Chinese customs and social networks. Like Chinese traders, they mainly focused on business and their own daily lives and seldom connected with the wider society. Some Africans held negative attitudes towards Chinese spouses and Chinese-African families. For example, after Eddie became successful, more and more Africans asked Eddie for help, which was disruptive to his family's life. His Chinese wife Lian said some Africans visited them just to borrow money, and did not leave until they got the money. Some called them at night, and did not care about whether they were sleeping or not. Once, while an African woman was selecting goods in their store, she said that Lian had stolen their successful man. Another Chinese partner, Yan, encountered the same issue. All of them tried to focus on daily life and work to avoid conflicts with Africans who objected to their relationships. But Lian said unhappily that she cannot forget the comment.

I stole a successful man, ridiculous! He became successful because of me. When he came here, he was nobody. I helped him run his business. Without me, he would not have the life he has today. They [African women] are jealous. When they were asked to work as hard as me, they could not tolerate it…There is no free lunch. It was by hard work. He may have had some money, but I had my

own store before I met him. I did not depend on him. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

Tuan said many Africans were friendly to her, but a few were impolite. Once a male African trader told Tuan to follow her husband's orders, when Tuan quarreled with Ramdy about business issues.

> He said a Muslim woman cannot argue with her husband like I do. I am not a Muslim. It is none of his business. Ramdy caused big business trouble for me…It is totally annoying. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

An African woman condemned Pang because Nana fought with an African girl. Pang explained that Nana accidentally knocked down an African girl, and then the little girl hit Nana. Pang apologized to the girl and her mother, but the African mother scolded Nana and Pang with harsh words. Pang felt angry about the African woman's rude words because Nana did not do anything on purpose. Pang asked other store owners who had seen what had happened to clarify the event, and they supported Nana, which made the African woman shout loudly and try to fight with Pang. With the help of trade neighbors, the incident did not escalate. Pang also encountered harassment at her workplace from an African boss before she had her own store,

> My boss, after customers had left, told me I shouldn't talk too much with them and that I should focus on the job. He was a crazy man, I just did my job, introducing products to them…If he wanted to provide service to these customers himself, I would have been happy. He is really a strange person. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

9.1.3 Trade Competition

9.1.3.1 Competition between Chinese and African Traders

Aside from neighborhood and religious issues, there are also issues of trade cooperation and competition between Chinese and Africans. Although some Chinese have African spouses or partners, they think it is difficult to cooperate with African co-workers or traders. For instance, Pang had already learned how to communicate with Africans from her African boyfriend Eric before beginning to work in a Nigerian company. But she still felt uncomfortable about her Nigerian boss. He always stood behind Pang and required her to find certain information and send faxes to factories in front of him. He forbade Pang from doing business with factories secretly. If Pang called factories without the Nigerian boss's permission, she was seriously rebuked. After one year's work, Pang confronted her boss and quit the job. After Pang left the Nigerian company, the ex-boss called her to ask if she wanted to go out for an evening, which shocked her. Because she had a bad relationship with him, she denied his invitation, but he called Pang several times. Pang pretended to call the police to avoid his harassments and felt disgusted by his actions.

Businessman Cai also had difficult experiences doing business with Africans. However, he continued to work in the foreign market because he is familiar with it. Business woman Kuang thought doing business with Africans was not easy and hopes to find another job in the near future. Although she has cooperated with Africans several times, some still played tricks on her that caused her financial losses. Kuang told me, for example, that once an African ordered some goods and only gave her a small deposit, no more than 200 RMB. The African trader did not have enough cash at that time, but asked Kuang to prepare goods worth nearly 8,000 RMB for him to pick up the next week. Kuang thought it was okay, as some African customers also did the same thing. Later, when she called him, he said he did not want the goods, which were already stored in her shop. She was angry and anxious to sell them. In the mean time, another African customer offered to buy the goods at cost. In the end, she discovered the two Africans had worked together to cheat her. She told her neighbors and friends about it to protect them.

Another Chinese seller said it is difficult to negotiate prices with some Africans,

> It is hard to do business with some Africans, they ask me to give them a price lower than the cost. They do not consider the quality of goods and just want to cut the price. I told them materials and technological procedures were different, so the prices were different…One African man wanted a large TV at a very low price. I told him to buy one second-hand …Some Africans have no common sense in business. They just keep bargaining...They need profits but we also need to make money. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

Usually Africans only pay small deposits to order goods, buy the goods on credit, and then transport them to other countries for resale. Chinese sellers must wait for several months to receive the entire payment from African traders. If an African trader cannot re-sell goods, Chinese do not get their money back. One Chinese trader said,

> Some Africans buy goods from other stores with a small deposit. When buying goods from me, they say other traders agreed with the amount of the deposit…if I did not do the same thing, they would buy goods from others. You see, because of the competition here, I have to let him pay a very small deposit. But it is really unsafe—if they take goods from me and do not make the whole payment in the end, it will be hard to find them. They'll have already gone back to their country. Those Arabic traders are much better than Africans. They have money and credit. If they make a deal with you, they will pay on time. (September 2014, translated from Chinese)

A Chinese partner, Jing, said there was very harsh competition in the foreign trade markets. Once an African trader bargained the price with her but did not make a deal, and then this African trader asked a Chinese co-worker to pretend to be a buyer to get clothing information from Jing. Jing said she saw both of them discussing something in the corner by chance, and this Chinese trader entered into Jing's store to buy the same pieces of clothing as the African trader ordered before, and tried to lower the price. At the time he checked carefully about the sewing and material, which normally other traders do not do. Jing directly asked him whether

he came from the factory and wanted to copy her clothing. Even though he denied it, she strongly requested that he leave her store. She felt that some Chinese factories only cared about their own interests and helped Africans to copy others' designs, which should be punishable by law.

9.1.3.2 Competition between African Traders

Trade competition and fraud occurred not just between Chinese and African traders, but also among Africans. Malian trader Eric speaks Mandarin well, and said that African competitors stole his customers, and his customers were also not loyal to him.

> I took a customer from Mali to a factory and checked the goods. Later he connected with the factory by himself and fired me, this person was not good…I spent much time selecting goods for him and negotiating with that factory, he could not have done that…but he called me to help him. When he went back, the factory had some defective items mixed into the goods to be transported to him, and the colors were different. He asked me to go to the factory to change it or get a refund. I really did not want to go. He did a bad thing to damage our relationship. Now it is trouble. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

In the end, Eric went to the factory to deal with the defective goods for his customer. He said everyone wanted profits, but only some knew how to deal in partnership, while some tended to play tricks to earn interest on their own. Since then, he asks his customers to pay the agent fee first, otherwise he would not be able to manage his business for long. He still believes that doing business honestly will gain him a good reputation and maintain his long-term cooperation with customers and factories.

Some Africans maintained loose relationships within the African community. An African partner, Keim, said that he did not often communicate with fellow Africans, because he had no interest and no time to join group meetings. His Chinese partner Hua told me that Keim had donated money several times to help some of his country mates who encountered financial or legal problems, but the community leaders did not tell him how the money was used in detail. Keim had also lent money to some friends in his community—sometimes it is just 100 or 200 RMB for food, sometimes thousands for buying goods. A girl in that group knew him, and often looked after the store. She convinced him to lend her money several times, and did not pay it back. At first, Hua felt sorry for her, as it is hard to make a living, but over time she could not tolerate it anymore.

> We are not an ATM…Keim said he was a Christian and needed to help them…A while ago, his friends borrowed 6,000 RMB from us, and borrowed 2,000 RMB later…he could not find his friends for half a year, no news. He did not say anything, but seldom lends money to anyone since then. (Sept. 2014, translated from Chinese)

Keim does not deny that there is fierce competition among African traders. Sometimes he has

to hide useful information rather than share with his best friends to secure his profits.

> If I tell them, they take their customers to these factories, I cannot earn money. [If] they give me a middle [man's] fee, I tell them about some shops or give them cheaper goods from my shop, but do not tell them about a factory. This is business. (Sept. 2014, translated from Chinese)

One Chinese trader said there are no eternal friend, only permanent interests. Doing business means balancing many things, particularly for Africans who rarely have relatives or friends to support them in China. If they make bad names for themselves in the trader environment, there will be fewer people to help them when they are faced with hardship.

9.2 Social Support

Social networks can offer social support and a sense of social belonging. Social support, defined as both the structural characteristics of a social network and the perceived availability of resources, has been conceived as influencing the occurrence of stress and depression in an individual. The exact role of social support, however, varies across studies depending on the theory of social support that drives a particular investigation. Social support is believed to enhance a person's ability to cope with stress or to alleviate the impact of a stressful event on the individual (Cohen & Willis 1985). Social support promotes well-being in and of itself regardless of the presence or level of stress (Rhodes & Lakey 1999). Ye (1990) observes that family ties are the most important source of social support in many respects. A first definition of social support is social interaction. When a person is beset by a crisis, he or she receives social assistance from someone with whom he or she has a direct or indirect linkage, such as a family member, friend or colleague. In this definition social support is the process of resource exchange, which is not necessarily limited to material resources, and includes emotional and information resources. A second definition refers to the support or assistance with specific acts that are carried out by enthusiastic supporters. A third meaning refers to the person being aware of connection with others, and of feeling satisfied with others' help, support, caring, encouragement and praise. According to my fieldwork, Chinese interviewees were not only unable to get family support, but were subjected to pressure from family members and faced negative social opinions towards themselves. So their social support and networks were limited which led to social isolation. As a unit, the family is the most important social resource to support Chinese spouses or partners when facing negative situations. But some Chinese spouses or partners cannot get support from their natal family, and need to face social pressure alone.

9.2.1 Chinese Social Support Systems

9.2.1.1 Chinese Fellow Villages

A small number of Chinese women obtain mental and social support from religious communities when facing problems. Or, by communicating with other Chinese-African families, they gain mental and social support from each other, and see each other as sisters and brothers. This could be seen as 'Pan-Familism' or 'Pan Family Orientation' (Yang 1992: 97). Pan-Familism is a model process of family formation and operation. Lin (1988) argues that, when participating in some organizations or social activities, Chinese naturally project and generalize family structures and relationship models onto these organizations or groups. It keeps group members within a so-called 'familization,' and relationships among group members simulate relationships among real family members. These groups or organizations are managed based on experience from real family life. Although somewhat unnatural, this collectivism is the best way to strengthen relationships within organizations or groups. So when Chinese partners lack family support, they try to look for social support from other groups or organizations to establish family structures and close relationships in the absence of blood ties.

Tian and Pang come from the same village, do business in the same market and both have African partners. Tian went to Pang's store nearly every day to pass the time. She admired that Pang had a good African husband, who worked hard and treated his parents-in-law well. Tian thought it was a one chance in a million to meet a good husband, and particularly to meet a good African husband. Her African boyfriend proposed to her, but she did not accept, due to her feelings of insecurity. Once she shared her personal story with Pang, Pang said she knew Tian had had a bad experience with her rich ex-boyfriend, who had had another lover. Tian found out about their relationship just before the wedding, and the woman had created a disturbance before the ceremony. So Tian chose to separate from her ex-boyfriend, and stayed single for a long time.

Pang said Tian's African partner was Eric's friend, and had pursued Tian over one year. Tian had tried blind dating, but she did not meet the right person. Her parents were very worried about her marriage status and pushed her to marry as soon as possible due to her age.

> Maybe they have fate [yuanfen], because Tian tried the blind dating, but she had no feelings towards those men. Some were good. I accompanied her to meet them, and one man pursued her for a while. But she did not accept…Lately she told me that Chinese men cannot be believed; when they become rich, they may find another woman. I told her not all of them do that. She went to extremes. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

As Pang observed, Tian thought compared to Chinese, Africans seemed inferior in social capital, resources, and networks. Tian's African boyfriend mainly depended on her to improve

his social life and financial condition. He would not recklessly find other Chinese women outside of their relationship. Otherwise he would lose many social resources from Tian. But still, Tian was afraid of marriage and preferred partnership due to her previous unhappy experience. If they separate, she will only lose a few economic benefits.

Partners tend not depend on each other too closely. Pang, Tian, Tuan and Mei, all come from the same area and do business with Africans. They often get together to share personal life and work experiences. In particular, three of them have African partners, and two of them have bicultural children. Tuan said that when they have time, they take their children to the park and have a picnic together. Lily and Nana are good friends, and talk to each other often. They do not ask their men to join them, so they can use their dialect to chat, which makes them feel comfortable.

All of them thought Pang's African husband Eric was a believable and easy-going man who was different from other Africans. For example, Eric was good at earning money, took his marriage seriously, spoke fluent Chinese, knew how to communicate with others, knew how to educate children and had a higher education. Because Tuan's parent did not accept the partnership between Tuan and her partner Ramdy, Tuan renounced her natal family for a while. During Tuan' pregnancy, her elder sister Shu visited her very often, but failed to ease conflicts between Tuan and her parents. At that time, her friends gave her much support and shared advice on raising children. These four women can be seen as a small fellow-towns women group that strengthens their sense of belonging and allows them to vent negative feelings by chatting and supporting each other in dealing with family and social matters.

However, some Chinese groups were disbanded due to different values and lifestyles. For instance, as a housewife, Chinese partner Nan needed to take care of Chinese-African children at home. When she felt bored, she invited her fellow-towns women to her apartment to chat, and her mother would cook a meal for them. Once while Nan's friends and I were enjoying supper in Nan's apartment, her friend joked that Nan was like an African woman who always said good things about Africans and joined parties held by Nigerians rather than meeting with her Chinese friends.

> She often joins parties held by Gene's friends. Before meeting him, she always went out with us. Now she just follows Gene around. (November 2014, translated from Chinese)

The other friend said,

> I cannot understand how to deal with family issues with an African. He does not speak Chinese, and is a Muslim, very different from us. (November 2014, translated from Chinese)

They started to complain about Nan. They said she had changed, and their relationships were not as close as before, and thought that Nan was very submissive to Gene. Since she had become a Muslim, Nan rarely went out with them for fun. Nan thought that she did not follow all of Gene's demands. She wanted to go out with her friends, but considering that she had to

take care of her children, she had to abandon some social activities. She said her friends did not understand her situation, because they were not married and did not have their own families yet. Sometimes she felt that she was becoming narrow-minded by staying at home. She had few topics to discuss with her friends, and preferred joining African parties.

> They [Chinese friends] talk about fashion or travelling. It is far away for me…I just wanted to talk about rearing children, but they had no interests. No topic, we did not get on like before…It is more relaxed with Africans. Some older women said they welcomed me…I cannot follow their discussions, and they use Nigerian dialects, but I just felt they are easygoing people. (November 2014, translated from Chinese)

As time goes on, some Chinese partners have developed more and closer relationships with their friends who become important supporters in resisting wide social pressures, while others have lost some friends due to differences of values, religions, and life experiences. Some Chinese partners strongly depend on their African husbands or partners or African communities to gain a sense of belonging.

9.2.1.2 Chinese Religious Groups

Many Chinese became religious believers under the influence of Africans partners. Ning believes in God and runs an underground church with her Chinese friends. As a pastor, she preaches a sermon every Sunday in front of less than a hundred Chinese followers, and many of the rites practiced are the same as in her husband Simon's church. She is satisfied with her job.

> I learn a lot from Simon and discuss principles of religion with him. We are close. If he had not encouraged me to share my ideas with my sisters and brothers, I would not have discovered I could help so many people become children of God. (October 2014, translated from Chinese)

In her church, there were two other Chinese women who had African partners. These three women have much closer relationships with each other than with other believers. They make appointments to eat together when they have free time. As Ning said, they shared religious beliefs, but also shared about their personal life with each other and did business together. Her two Chinese friends were like her family members, closer than her distant relatives. Particularly, as they experience the same social problems, they have common ground and encourage each other.

> Sometimes they visit my family. They also have good relationships with Simon. We have a lot to talk about…Simon works with their husbands, we share many things…when our children celebrate their birthdays, we go to restaurants to celebrate together. The children are happy; they can play together…During some festivals we celebrate together at my home. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

There are also some Chinese who separate from their African partners but do not change the

beliefs introduced to them by Africans, and continue to visit the church or mosque as before. For example, Lan followed her ex-husband Zach's advice and became a Catholic. Even though she has separated from Zach, she still tries to find time to go to the Sacred Heart Cathedral on Sundays, where she feels at peace.

> After I learned to believe in God, I found everything depends on fate, no one has more power than God, no need to fight with something that you can never overcome. So I am not worried about others saying that I am not a good person for living with Africans, just for money or other things. I made friends here, they have had much worse experiences than I have, but by believing in God, they are happier than before. They are nice people, the father holds a small class every week, and we can connect with him by e-mail. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

She also gave me some magazines produced by the Cathedral, in which many believers wrote their personal stories. Many photos show the process of baptism and celebration of festivals. She was happy to share her faith with me and wanted to persuade me to believe in it.

> If you believe in God, you will find it is easy to forgive everyone and everything. If you do not do good things, you will be punished by God. You know the underworld—the people who do not believe God will fall into it. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

Some Chinese partners believe in Buddhism, but their African Muslim partners tried to persuade them to convert to Islam. For example, Tuan and Pang are Buddhists and fought against their African spouses' pressure to convert. They support each other and share information on raising children. Particularly, when African partners asked their children to become Muslim and prevented them from joining some social activities due to strict doctrines, these wives discussed with each other to find ways to help their daughters participate in various classes. Pang said,

> Tuan has a definite view, she insists Lily should do what she wants, and does not believe in Islam. Lily continues to join dance class. But Eric is a bit of a male chauvinist. If I do the same thing, he must quarrel with me—trouble—so I let him make decisions. When Nana encounters problems, he will understand me. (Sept. 2014, translated from Chinese)

Both Tuan and Pang's extended families are Buddhists in the same hometown. During festivals, they present flowers to Buddha together, which made her and Pang become best friends. When facing problems, Tuan thinks her faith supports her to believe life will be better in the future.

> A person receives rewards for virtuous deeds; evil is rewarded with evil. Someone said bad things about us [because we are in relationships with Africans], I thought they just made a bad thing of their own lives, and do not fault them, they are ignorant. Buddhism has made me peaceful, I hope I receive rewards for my virtuous deeds, and Lily will benefit from my good deeds. (Sept. 2014, translated from Chinese)

When Chinese spouses or partners lack support from their natal families, they may join an association or groups to make friends and gain social supports outside of the family sphere.

9.2.2 African Social Support Systems

9.2.2.1 African National and Business Association

Africans often join migrant associations to widen their social networks, and find support that may guarantee a better social life and business prospects. Normally, they depend on different religious, national, and occupational communities, and associations or groups, which also represent a kind of Pan-Familism—or more precisely Pan-Africanism, as such groups often not only help family members, relatives, friends or country mates, but also support other Africans from different nations (Niu 2015). These organizations may have the same or overlapping members, which create more complex social networks among Africans in China and strengthen their sense of belonging.

One African interviewee said that Africans harbor a sense of collectivity and enjoyed sharing with each other, as an important process in interacting with family members, relatives and friends. Another reason that drives Africans to establish groups, communities or organizations is the severe law enforcement in Guangzhou. With a large number of Africans in Guangzhou, local governments and police stations try to control the foreign 'floating population' by checking visas and enforcing accommodation registration, which force some undocumented Africans to seek help from religious or national communities (Haugen 2012, Niu 2015). Moreover, as Yu (2013) observes, after Africans besieged a police station in 2009 and 2012, the Guangzhou police attempted to find a way to strengthen dialogue and cooperation with Africans communities. So thriving African communities play a vital role in mediating relationships between Africans and Chinese authorities.

Leo is a leader of a Congo community, who said he is often pressured to negotiate with Africans who have overstayed their visas,

> They are pitiful…lost money in business…everyone wanted to make money, so they overstayed…The police called me to pay the fine for a man and help him to leave China…He knew nothing here, no money, should go back…I asked friends to give him money…He is old, no skills. Why [did he come] here?…I have police friends. They gave me time, [and] I dealt with that…They knew me, I promised them I could do that, no problem, so he went back. (November 2014)

Some communities, which function as a bridge to channel information between Africans and Chinese authorities, can protect undocumented Africans to a certain degree. Gene said that Nigerian communities protect their members' interests.

> Everyone comes here to earn money. Everything eats money…we need help. Joining the group, it is good…My brother, his business was a failure, and [he] needed money. He talked with the leader, and they raised some money for him…Money is very important here, our group is important. (September 2014)

A Cameroonian student said gratefully that the Cameroon association helped him to get an

operation in Guangzhou.

> I have a job in my brother's shop, but I am ill, no money. The doctor said I need [to] do an operation, but I have no money. My brother gives me some, but [the] hospital eats money, a lot. I cannot tell my father, he has no money, he hope me make money. But I am ill, I cannot give him money, [so] our group helped me, the leader held the meeting, and then gave me 50,000 [RMB]. My teacher and classmates gave me some money. I am good now, thank God. I make money to send to my family, they did not know I am ill here. (July 2014)

Because the local government does not supply sufficient services to Africans to help them adapt, they have to develop many strategies to survive. National communities are vital social supports for Africans in Guangzhou.

9.2.2.2 African Religious Groups

Religious group activities also strengthen Africans' sense of unity. During Ramadan, many Africans share food, such as Eric, who asked Muslim friends to eat together in his office after sunset.

> Ramadan is important for us. Allah teaches us to know the suffering of hunger, so we can be strong. Sharing food is good. We are friends. Allah teaches us this. (July 2014, translated from Chinese)

Simon, who is a pastor, said that religious groups have strongly supported African believers in Guangzhou. China gave him a chance to do missionary work and attract more followers. He believed God would lead him to earn money and become successful in China. He tries to help more Africans believers who expect to gain power and become rich in China.

> I am a good example. If you believe in God, you will find a way. God will lead us to success in China…I always tell this to my brothers and sisters. We should listen to God…he told us to come here, and it is hard, but he will guide us…We will be rich and successful. (August 2014, translated from Chinese)

One of Simon's followers said he got much help from the church—both spiritual and material support. When he struggled with an illness, his church brothers and sisters raised money for him.

> Thanks to God, I can stay here. He leads me, [and] gives me power…My brothers and sisters are led by God. We will be rich…They help me, so I will help them. God bless us. (August 2014)

Because of his church attendance, he knew many people and shared his life and business issues with them. They often made appointments to eat together, and had e-mail groups to exchange ideas. While Simon said that believers do not share business matters in church, when I was visiting this church, some Nigerians did talk about trade after the prayers. Once, an African woman accepted a proposal from an African man. The couple stood in front of us, talking about their romantic relationship and future life plans. Many believers sent greetings to them and they danced together to celebrate the beginning of their life together. The couple

promised to hold their wedding in this church, and hoped members would support them. For African believers, the church is an important place as home, because it is a spiritual haven and a center for exchange of information and material exchange. Africans expand social networks and gain useful supports that help them to live in China, demonstrating the function of Pan-Africanism.

Unlike Simon, who thinks religion can lead believers to success and wealth in China, African Muslim Bill studied electronic business in a college in Guangzhou and during holidays worked for his brother who ran a store. He thinks places of prayer are sacred, and people should not discuss business matters there. He dislikes some Africans who combine religion with business, and discuss issues like marketing information or government policies, or share information about how to marry a Chinese citizen.

> I do not like their ideas. We should earn money by ourselves, Allah helps us to face hardship…If they tell you God can help people become rich, everyone would be a millionaire. Do not believe them…Some want to marry Chinese women, you know, and then they can stay longer and make money…they talked about these things in church, I do not mean they are bad, or something, but it is not right. (October 2014)

Unlike Bill, Jimmy is a fashionable man, who sometimes goes to the mosque, but some traditional African Muslims shamed him for his choice of dress.

> I wear fashionable clothing in bars, and sometimes wear them to markets. It is cool. You know, they do not understand. I don't care much. If I go to the mosque, I wear simple clothing...They are old minds. My heart is sincere…working, sometimes is not so happy a thing, so I go to the mosque to pray. (September 2014)

9.3 Conclusion

Chinese-African marriages and partnerships are very different from traditional relationships in China and tend to pivot around African trade practices. For Chinese, an individual's value depends on the success or failure of performing his or her family and social roles in different contexts, while social values are centered on personal reputation and others' judgments (other orientation) which is poorly understood by Africans. Chinese criticize African practices that are not in accordance with Chinese culture or norms, such as divorce or separation without paying alimony. African men are often seen as playboys, or irresponsible fathers who seldom care about their children. At the same time Chinese spouses or partners have been accused of seeking Africans' money, and of rarely paying attention to children's education. As foreigners, Africans are closely connected with African communities or groups. Those with short-term visas clearly do not intend to adjust to Chinese society. To a certain degree, they choose to keep distance from Chinese society due to their legal status, language barriers and business strategies. Even though Africans are subjected to bias or negative judgments, they are often

still able to make some money in Guangzhou, which is their primary concern. On the contrary, Chinese spouses or partners experience higher levels of stress than their African partners. Modern Chinese women are less exposed to traditional concepts of carrying on the family line or clan, but still think filial piety and obedience to parents are important morals, which affect their choice of spouse and marital decisions. Additionally, Chinese care very much about others' judgments and their own personal reputation, which is deeply related with the concept of 'other orientation'. So if there is a wide range of negative attitudes towards Chinese-African marriage and partnerships, the Chinese partners are influenced and find it hard to stick to their own decisions. Some Chinese partners try to keep others from knowing about their African partners, because they think gossip may affect their personal decisions, as well as their parents' and siblings' lives. Some said they did not care about others' opinions. But through the interviews, it seemed that things were not as simple as they said, because disharmonious family relationships forced them to depend on religion or to join secular groups that gave them social support. These Chinese partners attempted to establish close relationships similar to family ties with some group members, as a form of Pan-Familism (Yang 1992), but all of them found that Chinese partners were inevitably affected by broader society.

Chapter 10 Comparison with Japanese-African Marriage/Partnership

No Two Identical Leaves in the World
Taken from: [German] Philosopher Leibniz
世界上没有两片相同的树叶
摘自：【德】莱布尼茨

The dominant view is that women enter intercultural marriages either for economic gain, citizenship, welfare, or lifestyle in an affluent society—so called 'marrying up'—in order to extricate themselves or their families from poverty (Lu 2007). The same view is held for some men from developing countries who seek partners or spouses in rich countries in order to gain permanent resident status or better living conditions (Fleischer 2012; Kudo 2015; Schans 2012a). However, in China, African-Chinese marriages seem to differ from this stereotype, which make them well worth studying. The majority of Chinese-foreign marriages from the late 1990s to the mid-2000s were registered outside of mainland China with Chinese nationals marrying Westerners and other Asians in order to gain socioeconomic upward mobility (Clark 2001; Kim 2010; Liaw et al. 2010; Ma et al. 2010). However, Chinese women also choose to marry African men, which seemingly falls outside of the normal paradigm of women from developing countries marrying men from wealthier countries (Jones 2012: 288). These couples, both from developing countries, have to face many social difficulties and lack social welfare and security in China. Moreover, African societies are significantly different from Chinese society in regards to administrative systems, customs and the value assigned to marriage.

Through my research, I found that in the Asian context, there are studies on immigrants in Japan (Agyeman 2013; Chiu 2003; Cornelius and Tsuda 2002; Cornyetz 1994; Dreux 2011; Edmond 2015; Gao 2008; Igarashi 2014; Jackie 2004; Liaw, Ochiai and Ishikawa 2010), and Japanese marrying Pakistanis (Kudo 2002, 2008, 2012). I also found studies on Japanese-African marriages and partnerships (Schans 2009, 2012), which share many similarities with Chinese-African marriage but also differ in several key aspects. Although Japan and China have many historical and cultural connections, their development, governance, social structures, values and influence of foreign culture are somewhat different. These differences can be seen in foreign-related marriages and partnerships within the two countries, especially with regards to legal status and social belonging.

10.1 Legal Status: Power and Gender Relations

10.1.1 African Spouses/Partners in Japan vs. in China

Migrants immigrate and emigrate a cross the boundaries of multiple nations as a vital factor of societal change in globalized economic and political contexts (Castles & Miller 2003). However, even with an increasing number of foreigners entering Japan, Japan still does not consider itself to be an immigration country, and is generally resistant to immigration (Cornelius & Tsuda 2004). In fact, immigrants of various backgrounds make up less than 2% of the total population in Japan. Some immigrants migrate to Japan from developing countries as trainees, such as Africans who come to learn industrial skills and become low-skilled workers in Japan (Terasawa 2003).

As Agyeman (2013) and Schans (2012) observe, during the early 1980s, African migrants began to arrive in Japan. Later, they gained the opportunity to study in Japan due to Japanese government sponsorships and gradually established communities, associations and business hubs in Tokyo, Osaka and Nagoya. Africans in Japan are mainly from Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Senegal, Cameroon, and Congo, plus a small number of Ethiopian and Somalia refugees. Except for refugees, African migrant groups have more men than women (Schans 2012: 76). During the late 1980s and 1990s, young Japanese women preferred African-American entertainers as lovers. Because hip hop became popular with the youth and young Japanese women, blacks like African-Americans who engaged in hip hop or related matters, get guarantees from Japanese women to start business. Some nationals from Africa also benefited during this period (Cornyetz 1994; Yamashita 1996). After the 1980s, African immigration to Japan increased quickly. It was easy for Africans to get a tourist visa or cultural visa such as a language-learning visa. Visa regulations have since become much stricter in Japan, but established African immigrants still try to help relatives to get student visas in order to live in Japan.

Due to migration laws and economic recession, Africans are underemployed in the Japanese labor market. Because they often hold tourist or student visas, they have difficulties finding jobs, and often overstay their visas or engage in informal or underground labor without a work permit. However, foreigners who marry Japanese can obtain a temporary residence and work permit, and later are eligible for a permanent residence permit. Marriage provides the only option for low-skilled workers to obtain a long-term residence permit and work permit in Japan, so marrying a Japanese citizen is the best option for most African immigrants wanting to obtain legal residence (Agyeman 2013; Schans 2012a).These Japanese wives also act as business partners, or guarantors, or translators to prepare legal documents for Africans to set up stores, restaurants and transnational second-hand car and car parts

dealerships. It is also easy for Japanese wives to prepare applications and help their African husbands navigate job interviews (Schans 2012a, 2012b).

Africans rely heavily on their Japanese wives or partners to find work, because Japanese often mistrust foreigners and their ability to integrate in the Japanese workplace. Japanese women are a kind of 'in group' who can help Japanese employers to trust African partners. Although some Africans must work as blue-collar workers or in small businesses in jobs that do not match their high level of education, they are able to obtain a legal salary, long-term visa and secure position in Japan (Schans 2012).

Yamashita (1996), Russel (1991) and Schans (2012b) observe the lack of acceptance of African-American exchange students and complaints against the African business community in Tokyo (Richard 2011), noting that stereotypical attitudes and ambiguous or negative views of Africans are still common in Japan. Africans are also portrayed negatively by politicians and the media, focusing on issues of entertainment business, credit-card fraud and other illegal actions (Japan Times 2008, 2011). Africans complain that their papers are checked by the Japanese police simply because 'they are black' (Schans 2012: 77). Africans also seem to think that Japanese have a biased image of Africans from developing countries in Africa, whereas African-Americans from developed areas are considered cool (Cornyetz 1994). Cornelius and Tsuda (2002) find that levels of education and personal experience are less important than ethnicity and gender in Japanese labor markets. Africans are controlled by Japanese policies regulating entry, stay and work, and particularly the regulation of labor offers few opportunities for Africans to become eligible for employment.

In my fieldwork, I found that like Africans in Japan, some African travelers and traders in China apply for student visas because they have longer validity than business and tourist visas, allowing Africans to study and do business at the same time. Later, they find Chinese spouses or partners in business-related or educational contexts. Then, they depend on marrying or inviting Chinese to cooperate in trade, rent shops, collect market information, and travel to other cities to make orders or purchase goods (Lan 2015). Even with Chinese spouses, Africans are rarely eligible for citizenship in China, and depend on their Chinese spouses or business partners in order to easily qualify for short or long term visas (Mathews 2015). With Chinese help, Africans may live in China and find increasing opportunities to earn profit and enhance trade. However some Africans stay in China without legal documentation, protected by their Chinese partners or other African friends or relatives, and limited to working in night markets. Some Africans without work permits find jobs in underground or informal labor markets, or engage in illegal drug and gang-related activities. As in Japan, Africans from developing countries face stereotyping in China.

In the Japanese context, a few Africans can obtain permanent residence, and are seen as established immigrants. In the Chinese context, Africans are transient visitors, or members of

the 'floating population'. Yet they still manage intercultural marriages and partnerships with Chinese domestic migrants, rear Chinese-African children, and deal with the problems of legal status and social belonging, all of which strongly impact the social systems and governance of both sending and receiving countries.

10.1.2 Japanese Spouses/Partners vs. Chinese Spouses/Partners

Apart from comparison of Africans in both Japan and China, Japanese and Chinese spouses and partners also have similarities and differences. Japanese marry foreigners for many different reasons. Toyota and Thang (2012) examine Japanese women's personal choices with Japan's social constrains. They find that Japanese women seeking gender equality and a cosmopolitan lifestyle depend on good economic conditions to travel around Southeast Asia (Toyota 2006), marry Southeast Asian men and settle down in the local society to escape from structural constraints in Japan. These Japanese are economically independent and educated, and their incomes are higher than those of their younger husbands. After marriage, they are the main breadwinners in the family yet still play a traditional role as mothers and wives. These women have close ties with Japan, both because family businesses are geared to Japanese markets—such as businesses providing tour services for Japanese tourists in Southeast Asia—but also due to the responsibility of taking care of parents and rearing children according to Japanese norms.

Schans (2012) finds that until recently, gender biases were prevalent in Japan, but Japanese women are now gaining more career and lifestyle choices. However marriageable partners are limited, because modern women may not want to live in rural areas and take care of aging in-laws. Some Japanese men prefer women from developing countries, because they often hold more traditional values. A growing numbers of Japanese are working, studying, or traveling overseas while foreigners are finding jobs as English teachers in Japan, increasing the occurrence of intercultural partnerships (Goodman, Takenaka & White 2003; Ma 1996), including Japanese-foreign romantic marriages (Imamura 1990; Ma 1996; Nitta 1990; Suzuki 2000),

Kelsky (2001) and Schans (2009) argue that Japanese-African marriages fall outside of traditional gender roles and the strict social system in Japan. Japanese women who marry Africans hope to continue working, to play an important role in the family, and to find openness and romantic love with their African partners (Schans 2012a). Because African partners depend on Japanese to gain legal status, and to cope with employment and Japanese bureaucracy, Japanese wives have more power in Japanese-African marriage and partnership. Japanese parents often assume that Africans depend on their daughters to gain residence permits, and may hold negative views of Africans. The bias of relatives impact Japanese

women's marriage choices and family relationships. Sometimes, giving birth to a child may pave the way for Japanese parents to accept Japanese-African marriages and support these new families.

China differs from Japan in its household registration system. Although Japan does register households, the system exists for the purpose of statistical data and information management and does not limit Japanese families in their choice of residence. China's household registration system is not only concerned with statistical data collection but also connected to social welfare and resource allocation. Chinese can migrate anywhere, but cannot settle down wherever they want, and Chinese migrants rarely enjoy the same access to social welfare as local residents. Additionally, Japanese women more often have independent economic resources or are able to take advantage of their position in Japanese society to actively participate in social spheres, so they are capable of guiding their African partners in integrating into Japanese society and gaining upward mobility. In contrast, the majority of Chinese partners come from less developed areas in China and are attracted by employment and business opportunities in developed cities like Guangzhou. They dream of socioeconomic upward mobility but are constrained by the *hukou* system and cannot access equal rights and social welfare. Meanwhile, as domestic migrants, they suffer from a shortage of personal networks and social supports for themselves and their partners (Lan 2015), and are therefore less able to help African partners than the Japanese. Moreover, Japanese meet their African partners in various contexts such as travel, work, education, and entertainment environments (Schans 2009, 2012b), while Chinese-African marriages are mainly entwined with business and trade-related environments (Lan 2015). Furthermore, compared with Japanese women who are able to help African partners integrate into their Japanese communities (Schans 2012a), Chinese partners seem more or less integrated into African partners' communities because they are considered outsiders and confronted with alienation in urban environments such as that of Guangzhou. Lan (2015) argues that the experiences of Chinese-African couples reflect both structural constraints in integration into Guangzhou and the quest for economic prosperity.

Like Japanese parents, Chinese parents worry about their children marrying or living with Africans, due to Africans' legal status, unstable income and uncertain future, as well as opinions of extended relatives and broader society's stereotypes of such relationships. However, Chinese experience much more pressure in managing such marriages or partnerships.

10.1.3 Japanese-African Children vs. Chinese-African Children

African fathers seem less concerned about prejudice and discrimination against

Japanese-African children, and Japanese mothers mostly or completely raise their children according to Japanese norms (Schans 2012a). African fathers seem to assume children will stay in Japan in the future, making it unnecessary to learn about African culture. Japanese mothers shoulder the bulk of responsibilities in caring for children and therefore have more impact on children's cultural learning (Fatimilehin 1999). There are a few Japanese-African children in Japan who have to face racism in their neighborhoods and at school (Schans 2012). Unlike Japanese-Western children who are raised bilingually and communicate with Western relatives, Japanese-African children are mostly or completely educated in Japanese and rarely meet their African relatives or gain knowledge of their African fathers' culture.

Different from Japanese-African children, Chinese-African children are restricted by the *hukou* system. They must register their *hukou* in their Chinese parents' place of origin, and cannot become official residents of Guangzhou, unless their parents have Guangzhou *hukou*. In China, the entire school enrolment system is based on the child's place of origin (*shudi*/属地), as defined by *hukou*. So when Chinese-African children, like other Chinese outsiders in Guangzhou, want to attend local public schools, they must pay extra sponsorship fees (*zanzhufei*/赞助费). Furthermore, Chinese-African children born out of wedlock are subject to complicated legal proceedings to gain *hukou*.

Chinese mothers are distressed by the prejudices their children face and frustrated with the lack of available support. Some hope to send their children to international schools, where they think diversity is more easily accepted, but are often barred by the high tuition of international schools in Guangzhou. Additionally, some international schools only accept foreign national students, and not Chinese-African children with Chinese nationality. Some Chinese mothers, like Japanese mothers, are actively involved in helping their child cope with discrimination by frequently engaging in discussion with teachers.

Like Japanese-African children, Chinese-African children also have to cope with stereotypes. Most of the children I encountered in my research speak only Mandarin or Cantonese, and none of them speak English or French very well, let alone their African parents' languages. They know more about Guangzhou than about their African parents' country of origin and appear to be 'normal' Chinese in their manner and worldview, so Chinese-African children can hardly be considered bicultural, in the same way that Japanese-African reared in the Japanese context are hardly bicultural. This creates difficulties for both Japanese-African and Chinese-African children in dealing with prejudices because they have less positive images or knowledge of their African parents' cultures.

10.2 Social Belonging: Social Networks and Collective Strategy

Schans (2012) documents the 'African Festa' organized in Japan, which is a 2-day outdoor event

where visitors can enjoy African culture, food, and music and dance performances. The African Festa is supported by NGOs. But such events are not enough to help bicultural families deal with social barriers. Africans are obviously racially and culturally different from Japanese, and struggle with geographic isolation, ethnic homogeneity and a culture of exclusivity in Japan. Some established immigrants have been able to adapt well to Japanese culture and obtain formal employment, which is dependent on Japanese language skills and legal status. Blue-collar workers have a difficult time reaching managerial positions due to hierarchical systems that exclude foreigners, but still they enjoy better conditions than other migrants. Most Africans have difficulty assimilating to local society due to language, cultural and administrative constraints. For example, cultural differences are problematic for some Africans in Japan. Because Africans are mainly Christians, some say that it is hard to persuade Japanese partners to convert to Christianity. Although there are no official statistics for Japanese-African divorce rates, Schans (2012) finds a high rate of separation between Japanese and Africans, due to personal differences, hostile family relationships, friendships and social environments, which show that few Africans succeeded in adapting to Japanese society.

Moreover, Japanese-African children face discrimination in their neighborhoods and at school. Some Japanese mothers have founded a Japanese-African children's club to connect these children with each other and support them in dealing with social pressure (Schans 2009). Japanese parents generally also eventually accept the reality of their daughters marrying Africans and having children, and are supportive of these families.

Compared to Japanese-African children, Chinese-African children need to deal with the difficulties of *hukou*. Because Chinese-African children most often do not have Guangzhou *hukou*, they have limited rights and access to social welfare compared to local residents, and feel isolated from local society (Lan 2015). Chinese-African children without urban *hukou* are only allowed to finish junior school years in Guangzhou, and then have to return to their official places of origin to pass the exams for a higher level of education. This means that sooner or later these children will have to break their ties with Guangzhou, making it difficult for them to establish a sense of belonging in Guangzhou.

Like Japanese mothers, Chinese mothers try to join groups such as religious groups, fellow-townsman groups, and Chinese-African family associations to gain social supports and a sense of belonging, and help their Chinese-African children to make friends. Like Japanese elders, Chinese elders generally accept Chinese-African relationships due to the birth of grandchildren.

10.3 Conclusion

By comparison, it is easy to see that Africans have similar problems of legal status and social belonging in Japan and China, due not just to language barriers and cultural differences but also to administrative constraints. More African men than women stay in both Japan and China and pursue local women, few African men join the formal labor market, some overstay on visas in both countries, and African fathers tend to show a lack of enthusiasm in rearing children according to their own cultural traditions. However, in China, Africans are more diverse and belong to more complex social networks than in Japan, such as African national communities, religious groups, business associations and so on.

Chinese spouses and partners are somewhat different from Japanese spouses and partners. Due to *hukou* constraints, most Chinese partners hold second-class status in Guangzhou. Due to their limited economic and social capital, Chinese have less capacity than Japanese to support African partners' businesses. But both Chinese and Japanese help African spouses/partners prepare documents to obtain visas or residence permits or for the purpose of finding employment. Socioeconomic upward mobility remains a strong driver for many Chinese-African couples, but proves difficult to achieve under the current economic and legal conditions in China.

In terms of rearing children, Chinese are similar to Japanese mothers in that they pay more attention to children's education and social adaptation than African fathers. Most children are raised according to the cultural traditions of their mothers, and rarely meet African relatives or gain knowledge of African cultures. Both Japanese-African and Chinese-African children face stereotyping, and both Japanese and Chinese grandparents accept foreign-related marriage for the sake of their grandchildren.

Chapter 11 Conclusion

> The reason for the sea being of so great width is that it can accept all rivers.
>
> The couplet of Lin zexu, selected sentences from: 'The Book of History' and
>
> 'The Analects of Confucius'
>
> 海纳百川，有容乃大
>
> 林则徐所写对联，摘句于：《尚书》与《论语》

While there is a wealth of studies on cross-border/transnational marriage around the world, and while some researchers have focused on Chinese marrying foreigners (in particular Asians) inside and outside of China, this is among the first in-depth studies of Chinese-African families in China. In my thesis, I have focused on the legal and social conditions which impact Chinese-African couples and families in China. I have discussed the phenomenon of cross-border/transnational migration and factors of marriage-related migration, such as gender imbalances, matchmaking industries, cultural practices, gender hierarchies and individual experiences.

As I have shown, many Chinese-African couples share the desire for socioeconomic upward mobility. While most studies of marriage-related migration are concerned with women who try to marry up (e.g. Southeast Asians women marrying European men), the situation of Chinese-African marriages is exceptional, because both groups – Chinese domestic migrants and African traders/migrants – are caught in structural marginalization in urban China. They are subjected to diverse regulations that impact their incomes, family lives, business opportunities and social relationships.

I have also argued that the term intercultural marriage is better suited to capture the situation of Chinese-African couples and families in China than the concepts of cross-border or transnational marriage, or the notion of Chinese-foreign marriage commonly used by the Chinese administration. While I have shown that legal aspects are highly relevant, cultural and social differences play a crucial role and shape the couples' relationships with each other, with their relatives, friends and the wider social environment. Here, Chinese family values (familistic orientation, matching door marriage, filial piety and other orientation) as well as divergent ideas about religion and children's education have proven significant.

11.1 The legal Status of Chinese-African Couples and their Children

11.1.1 Internal Migrants

Ye (2000) and Yu (2002) state that Chinese migration has a long history, and management of migration can be found as far back as 685BC (Zhou dynasty). Since 1987, manufacturing industries in China have developed so quickly that a massive number of low-cost laborers

have become necessary. Due to China's Special Economic Zones plan, eastern and southern coastal provinces have become much more developed than western regions (Spence 1999), which has created a wave of migration from the rural west or north. In the 1980s, there were less than 11 million internal migrants in China (Liang 2001). Over the space of a decade, Chinese domestic migrants grew to nearly 247 million, making up 18% of the total population in China (NHFPC 2016). Many migrants from rural areas working in urban environments are called *nongmingong* (peasant workers) and *dagongmei* (peasant women working in cities/female migrant workers). These women officially belong to the 'floating population,' and face issues of legal status and social welfare created by the *hukou* system.

The majority of Chinese spouses and partners belong to the 'floating population', mainly coming from rural areas of other provinces to Guangzhou for employment. They are engaged in trade-related jobs and are given a secondary status under the *hukou* system. According to Xiang (2007) and Lu (2003, 2005, 2009), China founded the *hukou* household registry system in the 1950s, on the one hand to gather population statistics, on the other to control random rural population flow into cities and keep daily consumption low in order to support a high rate of industrialization. Under the *hukou* system, Chinese born in urban areas are officially registered as residents (*Jumin*/居民) whereas those born in rural areas are registered as peasants (*nongmin*/农民). Although citizens can move anywhere they choose to search for employment, they cannot settle down wherever they wish because their *hukou* attaches them to their natal locations.

The head of Guangzhou Personnel Services Authority, Chen Shaokang, said that Guangzhou, as one of the four biggest metropolises in China, hosted about 2.8 million domestic migrants in 2007, and that number gradually increased to 8.37 million by the end of 2013. At the same time, 8.32 million permanent residents needed to be managed (Huang 2015). The local government did not have the financial capacity to pay billions for social welfare for the 'floating population', because other projects were in need of investment. However, the local government worried that they would be blamed for accidents related to the mobile population in their jurisdiction. The strict requirements of Guangzhou *hukou* allow the government to control expenses related to the 'floating population' and prevent them from becoming permanent residents in order to manage resource allocation in Guangzhou.

Only two of the Chinese partners encountered in my fieldwork have Guangzhou *hukou*. Others have lived in Guangzhou for several years but do not meet the requirements of Guangzhou *hukou*, which include: high-level education, stable salary, living in Guangzhou and paying tax over a certain number of years, or buying commercial property (GZG 2015). In the beginning of 2010, Guangzhou authorities put forward a proposal to amend the *hukou* system and consolidated the two different classes of *hukou*. But Guangzhou has not been able

to effectively implement these changes because of its huge number of permanent residents and domestic migrants, underemployment and fierce resource competition. The *hukou* reform process will take longer than expected, leaving Chinese spouses/partners and Chinese-African children with limited access to social services.

11.1.2 International Migrants

Currently, transnational mobility plays an important role in shaping migration patterns and migrant experiences. In this context, African migration to China has increased, and the sizable number of Africans living in the city of Guangzhou has influenced social norms. As the capital of Guangdong Province, Guangzhou is well known for its commercial position, and its 'chocolate city'—where many Africans engage in trade or manage their own stores and employ Chinese and Africans as translators, shop assistants and porters—has attracted public attention.

Moreover, Guangzhou authorities and local residents seem ill-prepared to deal with this sizable African population, and the administrative and law enforcement systems cooperate poorly, leaving gaping legal loopholes and making it easy for foreigners to get around the rules. Africans are treated as a 'floating population' in Guangzhou rather than as transnational migrants. Reports on African 'three illegals' issues and Africans involvement in illegal activities like drug abuse and street violence have created a situation of 'one rotten apple spoils the barrel' where all Africans become subject to prejudice based on the actions of a few. Legal status is the most important topic for Africans in China, and the hostile attitudes of some administrative staff and police tend to aggravate social tensions.

The majority Africans interviewees do not have a deep understanding of the culture and values of their host country, and depend on national, religious or business associations to survive. Chinese citizens rarely communicate with Africans, and seldom make an effort understand them, leading to the propagation of stereotypes. Through my analysis, I concluded that: (1) The flawed Chinese legal system and disunited provincial and municipal administration generate problems in administration of Africans. (2) The hostile attitudes of some authorities cause a great deal of mistrust and resentment among Africans, and their Chinese partners and cooperators. (3) A few Africans engage in illegal activities, such as overstaying visas, working without a work permit, visa fraud, drug trafficking, gang violence, robbery, and sieging police stations. In particular, a small number of Africans hide in African communities or religious places, work night jobs, and survive without legal documents. These activities are reported on by the media and lead to biases against Africans. (4) The majority of Africans gather in places where there are African restaurants, bars, salons, food stores, underground churches and so on, so that Africans can communicate with fellow nationals to

access necessary information rather than adapting to the wider Chinese society. They find heavy labor jobs in their friends' stores or companies to survive in Guangzhou. Indeed, due to language barriers, the majority of Africans do not go to other places in China outside of the Yuexiu and Baiyun districts of Guangzhou. Many Chinese have heard about the 200,000 Africans living in Guangzhou, but have rarely had contact with them and have no understanding of African migrant's daily lives. (5) Although a few Africans can speak simple Chinese and few speak fluent Chinese, most Africans only engage in private business in the markets. They cannot find formal jobs in Chinese stores or companies, and rarely adapt to local life. Furthermore, language barriers and cultural differences between Chinese and African private traders mean the two sides are unable to exchange complex trade information and obtain limited information on each other's personal backgrounds, which causes misunderstandings. (6) The separations or divorces of Chinese and African couples normally lead Chinese partners to resent Africans and convey their unhappy experiences to relatives, friends and media, which further influences existing prejudices.

11.2 Social Belonging

11.2.1 Chinese-African Couples and their Children

Currently, the emergence of Chinese-African marriages and families is impacting traditional Chinese family structures. Chinese-African couples are faced with a number of internal and external problems, resulting from policy, culture, language, value and social pressure.

In this study, the twenty African spouses or partners interviewed are from different African countries including Angola, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Congo, Guinea, Mali, Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda. Among them, 55% are Muslims, and the others are Christians or practice other faiths. Africans often apply for short-term visas with one to six months validity, and very few hold long-term visas that allow them to work under secure conditions. Some Africans who live with their Chinese partners in China for more than three years try to learn Chinese and find ways to adapt to life in Guangzhou. But others who have lived in China for a longer period still do not speak Chinese very well, and those who stay short-term generally speak very little Chinese, saying they need to deal with commercial issues rather than wasting time on learning the local language or Mandarin. This may be because their intention is not to permanently reside in China, but rather to earn profit over a short period of time (Haugen 2012). There are some Chinese NGOs that support Africans in some respects (Niu 2015), but language training institutions and service organizations for Africans are disorganized. This is another reason why Africans cannot easily participate in local society. Also, it is hard for Africans to find formal jobs in China, because their visa types

do not include work permits and they don't have the necessary language skills. Li Peilin (2013) notes that given the dimensions of domestic mobility, serious underemployment in China, and competition with thousands of Western professionals, there are few opportunities for Africans to find employment in China.

Among the twenty couples, most Chinese are unable to help their African spouses and partners adapt to Guangzhou. Because they desire a harmonious relationship, Chinese spouses or partners often try to comply with the demands of their African partners, which may lead to legal problems. For instance, Jing protected her African partner so that he could overstay his visa in Guangzhou. Some lose the ability to balance Chinese traditions with African cultures, and are inconsistent in their actions, which is difficult for their family members, relatives and friends to understand. For instance, Chinese spouse Shuang wore Muslim clothes in public, but sexy or tight clothing at home. When leaving the house, she had to wear loose clothing and a headscarf, and shamed other Chinese women for revealing clothing that was exactly the same as what she wore at home. These women's action neither help their African partners adapt to local society, nor help themselves to gain a better knowledge of African cultures, and may cause their Chinese relatives and friends stay away from them, increasing social alienation. Some Chinese convert or practice the same religions as their African spouses or partners, but they insist on wearing normal Chinese clothing rather than following religious traditions. Some Chinese interviewees do not attend religious rituals, saying that it is a process that takes cultural and psychological adaptation, while African spouses or partners think Chinese should obey the religious teachings first, and then gradually understand them through daily practices. Indeed, some Chinese did not have significant knowledge of a religion before converting, and simply followed Africans' demands that they wear Muslim clothing for the sake of harmony in the relationship. They struggle with social exclusion related to dress, because they come from villages or towns and have invested in adapting to Guangzhou for many years, yet due to their African spouses' or partners' requirements, they now have to wear different clothing than the locals. African partners are unable to understand why Chinese want to integrate into Guangzhou society and the price they have already paid, and are unable to grasp the unequal distribution of resources under *hukou* system. They cannot understand that Chinese with secondary status have struggled to move from being marginalized outsiders to adapted outsiders, and yet by marrying Africans become marginalized outsiders again. Some African spouses or partners simply think the actions of their Chinese partners are contrary to their expectations. In fact, social and cultural differences should be dealt with from both sides through negotiation rather than concession on one side.

Only three of the families interviewed own an apartment in Guangzhou. Others rent rooms or apartments in commercial building or urban villages. The living conditions in urban

villages are very poor, which reflects the unstable or low income of these couples. A small number of couples are able to achieve upward mobility, which inspires the next generation to similar aims.

Furthermore, these Chinese outsiders need to find ways to access full social services for their Chinese-African children, particularly those born out of wedlock. At the time of my interviews, there were twelve Chinese-African children and one pregnant mother among the families interviewed. These children are automatically eligible for Chinese nationality if they are born in China. But like their mothers, these children are restricted by the *hukou* system, and have to pay sponsorship fees (*zanzhufei*/赞助费) in order to attend local public schools. Although many cities offer nine years compulsory education without tuition-fees for domestic migrants, due to limited resources and higher competition, Guangzhou only supplies free public school education to 40% of young outsiders (GZP 2014). While it is easy to attend private schools without *hukou*, these schools require a higher tuition fee or provide a lower quality of education than public schools. Particularly, Chinese-African children born out of wedlock struggle with complicated legal proceedings to gain a *hukou* status that would allow them to attend public schools. They can apply for the *hukou* where their mothers are registered, but must eventually return there to take exams for higher education. Thus, it is difficult for these children to establish a legal status and develop a sense of belonging in Guangzhou. African-Chinese children born out of wedlock challenge state institutions and social systems, impacting Chinese society and creating potential for transformation

With respect to childrearing, African fathers often seem to believe that Chinese wives are too sensitive in regards to children' education. Some mothers are actively involved in helping their child by communicating with teachers and other parents. Some may feel anxious about sending their children to local schools because of bullying, and would prefer to send children to international schools in Guangzhou. However, either because of high tuition or restrictions on Chinese nationals, most Chinese-African children are not able to attend international schools. Only one African father makes significant attempts to help his child in school, aided by his fluent Chinese. Because most Chinese-African children only speak Mandarin or Cantonese, are raised in Chinese culture, and have limited positive images or knowledge of their African parents' cultures and countries, they can hardly be considered bicultural. Meanwhile, Chinese-African partners have conflicts over religion, which influence their decisions in rearing children. African Muslims generally insist that their children should be Muslim, while Chinese mothers consider the greater social context and hope that children are free to choose a religion when they grow up.

11.2.2 Family Relations

There is mutual misunderstanding between Chinese-African couples and their parents-in-law. Firstly, Chinese partners speak English but rarely learn French or other foreign languages, which often means they are unable to communicate with their African parents-in-law. Most African partners cannot speak Chinese well, and Chinese parents-in-law generally do not speak foreign languages. It is clear that language barriers impact communication and cause misunderstanding. Indeed, some African spouses or partners recognize that language barriers are a problem, but their business activities are time-consuming and learning Chinese does not seem so important to them. Their passive attitudes towards integration and communication with Chinese relatives create tensions in the family, and lead some Chinese parents to believe that Africans are just looking for someone to accompany them and help them earn profits over a short-term period rather than a serious long-term partner. African partners who speak Chinese well have much better relationships with their Chinese family than non-Chinese speakers.

Secondly, family relationships and familistic oriented values are very important in Chinese social relationships. When Africans do not find ways to communicate with their Chinese parents-in-law, their actions are considered disloyal and disrespectful of the elderly. Some Africans rarely send greetings or gifts to their Chinese parents-in-law. Some persuade their Chinese partners to convert to Islam or Christianity without negotiating with their Chinese Buddhist families, which lead Chinese parents-in-law to believe that Africans do not respect their faith. Chinese parents may pressure their daughters to keep their Buddhist faith, furthering tensions within the Chinese-African relationship.

Thirdly, short-term stays or undocumented status of Africans create unstable family ties. Also, negative attitudes towards Chinese-African marriage or partnership impact Chinese parent's traditional concepts of 'matching door' marriage and family honor. Some parents felt they had failed in their parental duties, and had not educated their child to stay within traditional norms. Parents are even more distraught by daughters who choose to live with 'distrustful' foreigners but do not marry, which is seen as a deviant practice that damages the family's honor. Despite the many problems between Africans and their parents-in-law, Chinese parents still try to help their daughters care for grandchildren, due to traditional ideas of family support and acceptance of destiny. Chinese-African couples who receive family support are more capable of facing social pressure. Some Chinese partners abandon jobs and become housewives to raise children, and gradually drift apart from their Chinese friends to avoid social stress. Some Chinese establish closer relationships with African groups in order to find social support and belonging. Some Chinese fought with parents and broke family ties to stay with Africans, so some Chinese parents were angry with Africans, who as they see as

destroyers of family harmony. Chinese spouses/partners who lack support from natal families often try to make friends with fellow townsmen or other Chinese-African couples or join religious groups to build belonging and face social pressure.

11.2.3 Social Networks

Aside from the 20 couples interviewed, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 40 Chinese and 10 Africans and observed numerous other Chinese and Africans. Among the 40 Chinese interviewees, 7.5% held passive attitudes towards Chinese-African marriage and partnership, 90% interviewees held restrained attitudes towards such relationships, and 2.5% regarded such relationships positively. Chinese generally seem to think Africans frequently travel back and forth from China to other countries, and rarely take care of their Chinese families, which creates potential problems. Some stories of Chinese-African separation reveal that Chinese partners carry the burden of rearing children, which goes against traditional values of familistic orientation, harmonious family ties and responsible parenting, and triggers heated discussion about African morality. Chinese interviewees differ from their African neighbors, and desire not to be disturbed by these neighbors. Chinese more or less admire African ways of enjoying the moment and having fun, which also reflects the fact that Africans rarely seem to plan for the future. Compared to African interviewees, Chinese interviewees pay more attention to the future, prefer to work hard and save money for their children's education, housing or a car, and seek job promotions. As one Chinese trader said, the individual did not only work for her survival, but also lived for the people who cared about her. She felt she had a primary duty to raise children and care for the elderly.

Among 10 African interviewees, all men had positive attitudes towards marrying Chinese while a few African women had negative attitudes towards Chinese-African relationships, believing that Chinese women steal rich African men. All of them held indifferent attitudes towards local society and paid more attention to making money during their short-term stays.

Chinese and African interviewees were mainly small commodity wholesalers or retailers. Many Africans are short term traders dependent on buying and reselling goods with limited purchasing power and uncertain credibility. This leads Chinese traders to believe that Africans are unreliable customers, who prefer quick profits rather than long-term cooperation. At the same time, Africans accuse Chinese of not considering long-term cooperation by mixing some bad quality items into their goods, which causes loss of profits. In fact, both sides of such commercial transactions are informally contracted and lack legal protection. The difficulties Chinese and Africans encounter in trade cooperation with each other seem to be widely known.

Competition is cruel in foreign trade markets, and Chinese sellers are forced to decrease

goods' prices, ask for small deposits, store goods, or transport goods at a low fee to attract African customers. As one Chinese seller said, Chinese spoil African customers due to the vicious competition, and have to suffer the consequences. Both Chinese and African traders take risks in business cooperation, because some Chinese traders mix low-grade or nonconforming products into African customers' orders, ruining Chinese traders' credibility. During trade cooperation, Chinese and Africans encounter frictions caused by disreputable transactions, language barriers, hard bargaining, and different ways of thinking. Both groups harbor strong resentment towards each other. These sentiments are disseminated to the wider population, causing widespread misunderstanding of both groups. A few established African traders are able to develop a good reputation over their long-term stays, and eventually find it easy to do business with Chinese.

In fact, trade competition is not only between Chinese and African traders but also among African traders, who also sometimes cheat each other. Some African middlemen are pushed out without payment by their African customers after customers make personal contact with Chinese factories, some Africans are not repaid on loans to their African business friends, some sell poor quality goods to their country mates, and some trick their friends into coming to China and then take off with their friends' money.

Another important issue is that Africans seem to isolate themselves from local society in part because they want to immigrate to developed countries rather than stay in China, and are therefore not prepared to adapt to Chinese society. Only a small percent of Africans with Chinese partners and stable economic conditions attempt to adapt to local life. Massive numbers of Africans have to depend on their African friends, groups or communities to get information and engage in business. Many newcomers operate completely within African communities. Some African interviewees said they had been to many developed countries to do business and had had many experiences abroad, and therefore look down on Chinese who have never traveled outside of China. They also seemed to think developed countries have much better living conditions than China, but in fact, these Africans live in poor residential areas and rarely visit other areas of Guangzhou, let alone other cities in China. So their actual conditions did not match their presumed middle-class statuses and social networks. Some rich Africans are able to move away from urban villages, thanks to language skills, financial capital and strong social networks.

Africans are further isolated due to language barriers. Language may be not so important to foreigners who stay only a short time in a host country, but it does impact the social networks of long-term residents. Even if foreigners have no plans to integrate into their host country, those able to speak the local language well are likely to experience more convenient and comfortable daily lives and have access to greater social resources. Often, a foreigner who lives in a place for a long time will try to learn languages and local customs and develop a

relationship with host country. However, this does not seem to be the case for Africans in China. Many Africans hold short-term visas and tend to conduct business with the aim of earning profits as soon as possible, and are treated as transient groups in China (Niu 2015). The majority of Africans hold short-term visas like travel (L), business (M), and visitor (F) visas, stay in China for a short time only, and move between different countries frequently. Their primary mode of appropriate adaptation is for business purposes. Those who continually extend their visas and stay in China over several years but still speak poor Chinese seem to develop some understanding of local society via comparison with their own cultures. In summary, due to poor language skills, many Africans isolate themselves from local society to a certain degree. Due to harsh trade competition, Africans neither gain sense of belonging in Chinese society, nor do they necessarily gain belonging within African communities.

11.3 Conclusion

Although some Chinese-African spouses or partners make efforts to improve their living conditions and create a harmonious family life, they still cannot avoid the negative views prevalent in Chinese society. Many Africans have difficulties obtaining a long-term visa and managing their family life in China. Some Africans leave their Chinese partners and children for personal reasons and do not pay child-care expenses. A few African men may already have wives in other places, and their Chinese partners become the second or third wives or partners, leading to both moral and legal controversies.

The legal status and social belonging of Chinese-African couples are not constrained solely by institutional systems or social environments, but also depend on personal finances, social networks, commercial interests, life experiences and future plans. Given the complex social conditions in which they live, Chinese partners have to find ways to help Africans to resolve status issues and cultural differences so as to adapt to Chinese society. Chinese partners and Chinese-African children need to deal with difficulties resulting from their secondary status, unequal access to social welfare and social biases in Guangzhou. Only a few couples attain socioeconomic upward mobility. However, while the majority of Chinese-African couples do not realize their socioeconomic aims, they continue to encourage their children to strive towards similar goals. Whether their children can change present conditions or not remains to be seen.

In an interviewee's words, "marriage and co-habitation take work and effort regardless of nationality," which is to say perhaps all cases of marriage require some measure of sacrifice.

GLOSSARY

Asalam leik	真主保佑	God bless
baoernai	包二奶	Keeping mistresses
chengzhongcun	城中村	Urban village, housing areas not yet bought by commercial housing companies and managed by its original owners, mostly is low-end accommodation
dagongmei	打工妹	Country women working in cities
fang	房	A sub-unit of family
feinongyejitihuhou	非农业集体户	Non-argicultural collective
feinongyejiatinghu	非农业家庭户	Non-agricutlural family
fenjia	分家	Division of a family
fengyang	奉养	Respectfully care for parents and elders
guanxi	关系	Human relations
guanxiquxiang	关系取向	Relationship orientation
hukou	户口	Household registration system in the PRC
jia	家	General term for family and kinship
jiahu	家户	Household
jiazuquxiang	家族取向	Familistic orientaion
jiewenlou	接吻楼	Kissing-buildings for hair-breath distance between buildings
jumin	居民	Residents
juminhukoujitihu	居民户口集体户	Resident household of a collective
juminhukoujiatinghu	居民户口家庭户	Resisent household of a family
kaizhaijie	开斋节	Eid al- Fitr
liudongrenkou	流动人口	Floating population
mafan	麻烦	Trouble
mengdanghudui	门当户对	A well-matched marriage；Matching-door marriage
ming	命运	Fate
nongmin	农民	Peasants
nongmingong	农民工	Rural migrant workers
nongyejiatinghu	农业家庭户	Agricultural family
quanweiquxiang	权威取向	Authoritarian orientation
renlun	人伦	Confucian idea of the order between human relations
tarenquxiang	他人取向	Other orientation
tianzuozhihe	天作之合	Union made by Heaven
woshoulou	握手楼	Handshaking buildings' for hair-breath distance between buildings
xiao/xiaodao	孝道	Filial piety
xiaosan	小三	An extramarital lover
yang	养	to care for
yuan	缘，缘分	Destined bond or affinity between two persons
zaishengjie	宰牲节	Eidal-Adha
zongzu	宗族	Lineage; Clan

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