



The Economic-Cultural Patterns of Ethnic Minority Migrants in the Cities of China

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Abstract

Growing numbers of ethnic migrants from remote minority areas of China have contributed to the ethnic diversity of major cities. Whether these new ethnic migrants will live in fragmented communities in the urban areas and what would happen to their economy and culture are questions that raise concern. Both will find spatial expressions on the urban landscape in the form of economic-cultural patterns (ECPs) associated with each ethnic migrant community. It is inevitable that these patterns will represent a transformation of those in their native settlements. In order to understand the nature of this transformation, concepts of dichotomy in the form of “tradition-modern”, “rural-urban”, or “agriculture-industry” to categorize ECPs are no longer valid. In this paper, I address these issues through a comparative analysis of several minority groups, based on a survey in the cities of Qingdao, Kunming, Shenzhen, and Huhhot. Overall, ECPs have changed from those of the rural to more urban-market types. But there are also significant variations. In Qingdao, the Korean Chinese ECP might be classified as “dependent-transplantation”; in Huhhot, the Mongolian ECP as “innovative-transplantation”; in Kunming, the Muslim Hui ECP as “semi-innovative and semi-integrative”; and in Shenzhen and Kunming, other minority migrants’ ECPs as “integrative”. These different patterns suggest very different needs for, and approaches to, public policy on migration and on migrant adaptation to urban life.

Key words: economic-cultural patterns, ethnic migrants, ethnic communities, urban economy

Introduction

Since the economic reform and opening up of China in 1980, various ethnic groups have moved across regions to urban centres giving rise to “scattered” and “hybrid” trends of migration. There are concerns that rapid urbanization may generate “fragmented” ethnic communities in the cities (《中国民族报》/*China Ethnic News*, 2007). Some also believe that a “fragmentation phenomenon” may emerge among the original ethnic minorities (王希恩/Wang Xi'en, 2004). Will these migrants be “fragmented” and what are the likely changes that may occur in the economy and culture of each minority? This study is an attempt to seek answers to these questions.

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The Economic-Cultural Patterns (ECPs) Theory

The ECPs theory was introduced by Soviet scholars in the 1950s in an attempt to classify the world's nationalities as an alternative to the language genealogy method (Levin and Cheboksarov, 1956). This concept has spawned a classification method (sometimes used in conjunction with historical ethnicity zone) to explain a fundamental problem of ethnology and anthropology, namely, the reasons for cultural similarities or differences among ethnic groups with identical levels of socio-economic development. It is found that ethnic groups belonging to dissimilar language genealogies may share certain cultural commonalities, while those with similar language genealogies may show considerable differences. As these differences cannot be explained by the level of socio-economic development, scholars try to seek answers from living strategies and living types that are closely related to the natural environment (Levin and Cheboksarov, 1956: 30-40). The result was the introduction of the ECPs theory by ethnologists of the Soviet Union and which has evolved into an academic tradition. The fruit of this theory was a joint paper by Lin Yaohua and H. H. Cheboksarov entitled "The Chinese Economic-cultural Patterns" but published in China only in 1958. Three years later it was published in Russian and also appeared in Japanese in 1965-1967 (王建民/Wang Jianmin; 张海洋/Zhang Haiyang and 胡鸿保/Hu Hongbao, 1998; 宋蜀华/Song Shuhua and 满都尔图/Mandu'ertu, 2004: 240). This theory and its academic and application potentials were disregarded for over 20 years when Sino-Soviet relations deteriorated.

The introduction of the ECPs theory had a significant and lasting impact on ethnological studies in China (see 顾定国/Gregory E. Guldin, 2000; 宋蜀华/Song Shuhua and 满都尔图/Mandu'ertu, 2004; 胡鸿保/Hu Hongbao, 2006).¹ The Soviet influence was especially conspicuous in North China. Despite almost 20 years of tense Sino-Soviet relations, the Soviet imprint is still visible whether in terms of academic traditions or research directions in China (胡鸿保/Hu Hongbao, 2006: 130).

Definition of the ECP

Soviet scholars M.T. Levin and H. H. Cheboksarov define an ECP as the unique outcome of the historical interactions of the economy and culture of various ethnicities sharing a similar level of socio-economic development and living under similar physiographic conditions (Levin and Cheboksarov, 1956: 33). Soviet scholars sometimes use "economic-cultural patterns" interchangeably with "historical ethnic zone" and "historical cultural zone". The latter is defined as the common cultural zone that is formed when various ethnic groups living in a region interact and mutually influence one another over a common historical period (Levin and Cheboksarov, 1956: 30-40).

The famous Chinese ethnologist Yang Kun (杨堃, 1985: 138) paraphrases the Soviet definition of the ECPs as: peoples of various ethnic groups at a certain stage of socio-economic development living under similar physiographic conditions and forming, through a process



of historical synthesis, an area that is economically and culturally distinctive. Professor Lin Yaohua, from Minzu University of China, defines the ECP as a common historical economic and cultural synthesis formed by various ethnic groups under similar ecological environment and following similar living strategies (林耀华/Lin Yaohua, 1991: 86). These two definitions employ the concept of “ecological environment” to replace that of “physiographic conditions” and that of “living strategies” instead of “socio-economic development level”. Lin reckons that “living strategies” not only indicate the direction of socio-economic activity, but also connote the concept of “socio-economic development level” (金天明/Jin Tianming and 索士丁/Suo Shiding, 1998: 1).

Application and Development of the ECPs Theory

The ECPs theory emerged at a time when the ideological camps of capitalism and socialism were in direct confrontation. Soviet scholars were particularly sensitive to the idea of spatial limitations implicit in such concepts as the “cultural circle”, “cultural zone”, “cultural cluster node” and “cultural model” put forward by Western scholars (Levin and Cheboksarov, 1956: 30-40).

After a lapse of 20 years of rupture in Sino-Soviet friendship, several Chinese scholars readjusted their focus on the ECPs theory in the 1980s. Applied in the context of China, they considered that there were four main ECPs among Chinese minorities (林耀华/Lin Yaohua, 1985: 104-142).

The first pattern is the gathering and hunting economy pattern, mainly in the Da Xingan and Xiao Xingan mountains and the Sanjiang Plain area in northeastern China. It comprises two sub-patterns, namely, the mountain hunting and gathering pattern of the Olunchun and some Ewenki minorities, and the riverine fishing and gathering pattern of the Hoche.

The second is the sprawling animal husbandry pattern that stretches from the Da Xingan Mountains westward to the Junggar Basin, and south to the arid, semi-arid and alpine areas of the mid-Hengduan mountain range. Embedded in this pattern are four sub-patterns, namely, the tundra forests animal husbandry pattern of the Ewenki, the nomadic pattern of the Mongolian, the basin nomadic pattern of the Kazakh, and the alpine pastureland husbandry pattern of the Tibetan.

The third is the farming pattern that dominates the greater part of China outside the areas mentioned above. This pattern is made up of six sub-patterns, namely, the mountain forest nomadic and farming pattern (the Moinba, Lhoba, Dulong, Nu, Wa, De’ang, Jingpo, Keno and the parts of the Lihsu, Miao, Yao); the mountain farming and animal husbandry pattern (the Qiang, Naxi, Yi, Bai, Lahu, Pumi and the parts of the Tibetan and Lihsu); the mountain hunting pattern (the Miao, Yao and She); the upland rice pattern (the Dai, Zhuang, Dong, Shui and Gelao); the oasis farming and animal husbandry pattern (the Uygur, Uzbek, Tatar, Dongxiang, and Baoan); and the intensive farming pattern (the

Manchu, Hui and Uyghur).

Research on these ECPs focuses on both the economic and cultural aspects. In the case of the former, attention is placed on labour and production technology, and in the latter on settlement, traditional custom, tools, diet and other items. Researchers put forward concepts at different levels, namely, system, pattern group, sub-pattern, and branch. A “system” is the totality of all ECPs falling under a single research area; “pattern group” is the aggregate area of different patterns that may be defined under similar ecological principles; a “sub-pattern” refers to regional variations within an ECP; and “branch” refers to local economic-cultural variants inside a sub-pattern. In elaborating the similarities and differences at various levels of ECP, Chinese scholars did not exclude the use of “cultural characteristics”, “cultural cluster nodes”, “cultural modes”, “cultural models” and related terms under the premise that such use shall not disengage the overall relationship between the economy and culture (金天明/Jin Tianming and 索士丁/Suo Shiding, 1988: 1).

In a study in 1991, Lin Yaohua (林耀华) published “The Socio-cultural Patterns and the Socialism Modernization Process of Chinese Ethnic Minorities” in which he integrates the ECPs theory and the social development stage theory, and introduces the concept of “socio-culture pattern” to analyse the course of the minorities’ socialist modernization in China. Clearly, up to the early 1990s, Lin Yaohua, as a representative figure among Chinese ethnologists, was still using the ECPs theory to explain new phenomena associated with the development of society and the economy.

Zhang Haiyang (张海洋, 2006) considers the explaining power of ECPs theory lies in its application. In ethnic classification, it complements the language genealogical classification theory and allows us to see the profound influence of the environment on human activities, and it can be used to explore the reasons behind human cultural similarities and differences. In describing Chinese culture, the theory reveals that the uniformity of Chinese ethnic groups is consistent with its diversity. These may be seen as new perspectives that may benefit current mainstream research (Zhang, 2006: 170). In order to adapt to the ecological environment, the Chinese have long developed various means of living strategies and patterns. Zhang Haiyang (张海洋, 2006: 171) also points out that Lin Yaohua’s 1984 study on Chinese ECPs is the general and meticulous summary and description of the various patterns.

Wang Jianxin (王建新, 2007: 4) reckons that Lin Yaohua has adapted the use of the ECPs theory according to China’s actual conditions in three areas. Firstly, he replaces the concept of “physiographic conditions” by “ecological environment” to highlight the interaction between man and nature, and to avoid the pitfall of environmental determinism. Secondly, to compensate for the neglect of spiritual culture, he stresses that ECPs should include ecology, living strategies, organizational forms and social mechanisms and its ideologies. Thirdly, he adds to the understanding and rationality of the categorization analysis and puts forward several concepts such as system, pattern group, sub-pattern, and branch.



Wu Xingwang (吴兴旺, 2004: 70-72) argues that the concept of ECPs combines economy and culture and is the only theory of this nature in ethnological studies. Also, the theory attempts a “synthesis” of the economy and culture in recognition of the existence of an economic-cultural nexus. However, the theory fails to take note of culture’s reaction to the economy, and lacks depth in its study on the decisive effects of the economy on culture. It shares many similarities with the theory of “ecological anthropology” (also known as “cultural ecology”), which was introduced by the American scholar Julian Steward (1902-1972) in 1955. However its analysis on the relationships between economy and culture lacks the depth of analysis of “ecological anthropology”.

However, Li Wei and Du Shengyi (李伟/Li Wei and 杜生一/Du Shengyi, 2002: 49-54) feel that the redeeming feature of Lin’s paper is that the “economic-cultural zone division” is based on the mode of production rather than ECPs. In the understanding and application of the concept of ECPs, which is an exclusive concept in ethnology, there exists several cognitional deviations. In terms of classification, the Soviet definition of ECPs is based on physical conditions whereas the Chinese revision, by which “physiographic conditions” is replaced by “ecological environment”, and “social-economic development level” is replaced by “living strategies”, seems to be more rational. At the same time, the concepts introduced by the Chinese revision make it more difficult to apply and cannot truly reflect the linkage between geographical conditions and the economy and culture.

Restructuring the ECPs Theory in Ethnic Migration Studies

This study will focus on ethnic migrants in selected cities of China and the ECPs that subsequently emerge. The ECPs theory was originally devised to analyse the economy and culture of ethnic groups found in different ecological environments. Some groups have recently migrated to the cities and are now living under radically different environments. What impact will this spatial shift in settlement have on their ECPs?

Applicability of the ECPs Theory in Urban Settings

To adapt the ECPs theory to the study of migrants in the city, it is necessary to reconsider the applicability of the theory in the urban environment. The ECPs theory of Lin Yaohua and Cheboksarov focuses on the relations among the ecological environment, production and living strategies, and cultural tradition. It was an attempt to understand the regional culture from the perspective of genetic principles and cultural ecology, and to examine the cultural features from the state of socio-economic development that largely emphasizes material culture. The purpose of the Lin-Cheboksarov inquiry was to differentiate and classify ethnic economic-cultural synthesis through a comparative study of the environments of various ethnic groups. It also explicitly pointed out that the cultural identity of each ethnic group depended on the direction of its economic development which was in turn constrained by the physical environment. The theory therefore presented a conceptual framework comprising the nexus of “geographical

environment-direction of economic development-cultural identity.”

This theory and its method are applicable mainly to the study of comparatively simple pre-industrial societies but not for complex industrial and urban societies. Explaining the survival and development mode of different ethnic groups by means of the “socio-economic level of development” paradigm lacks depth of analysis of social-economic and cultural changes caused by industrialization, urbanization and modernization. As a factor to express the survival and development of different ethnic groups, the concept of “geographical environment” is too static and rigid and incapable of any systematic and dynamic analysis of the survival and the development situation of modern societies. By the 1980s, it was realized that the ECPs theory was negligent of the importance of spiritual culture. Some scholars attempted to incorporate elements such as “organizational forms and institutional norms of society” and “ideologies (including the code of conduct, ethics, religion and ideology)” in the application of the theory in their research.

Although the ECPs theory is outdated, it may be adapted to the study of migrant groups to analyse changes or transformations of their economic and cultural patterns in the modern setting. In short, we may develop a “modern” or “market-oriented” version based on the theoretical foundation of Lin Yaohua and Cheboksarov’s “traditional version” or “ecological model” of ECPs.

Transforming the Paradigm: the ECPs of Urban Migrants

The idea of “dichotomy” has generally been adopted as a basic analytical framework in many earlier studies. Some classic models in Sociology and Economics highlight the opposition between status society and contract society by Maine (1861), mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity by Durkheim (1893), the manners-controlled society and the law-controlled society by Tonnies (1887), pre-modern society and modern society, or the formal rationality-substantial rationality against traditional ruling-legitimacy ruling by Weber (1922), special value and universal value by Parsons (1951), folk society and urban society by Redfield (1947), or traditional sector and capitalism sector by Lewis (1954). In these models that embody the idea of dichotomy, the basic viewpoints are: firstly, the historical trend from the traditional to the modern is irresistible and inevitable, and various economic and social patterns are merely in different states between the two poles of the “traditional” and the “modern”; and secondly, that, in essence, the traditional and the modern are antagonistic. An individual, a group, or a nation, existing in the modern economy and society should then shed its tradition, or else they may be caught in a variety of contradictions and conflicts. For example, the “tradition-modern” dichotomy implies that as time goes on, societies that keep to their traditional cultures may break with the past and lose their sense of special community and be absorbed into the modern culture (see Sauvy, 1966: 460-461). Louis Wirth (1938) proposes the concept of “urbanism”, and Robert Redfield (1947) adapts his idea of a “folk-urban continuum” to Wirth’s formulation. Redfield argues that culture can be divided into the “great tradition”, which is centred on



the city and reflects the cultural and political elites' culture, and the "little tradition" of folk culture, which is rooted outside the city among the rural community. This research orientation is subsequently known as the "Wirth-Redfield" model.

The "tradition-modern" dichotomy has been widely used in the study of city migrants, particularly with reference to the "opposition-assimilation" analytical mode. W. I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki's joint publication (1918-1920) is regarded as the earliest work of this kind. Park (1987), as the leader of the Chicago School, in the study of the relationship between migrants and the city, emphasize not only the differences between the "traditional community" and "urban community", but also note that "the ultimate product of the urban environment is a variety of new personalities that it nurtures." Applying the "opposition-assimilation" dichotomy, Kearney (1986) points out that migration from rural to urban areas is a process in which the original interpersonal relationships will weaken and finally lose their original cultural identity of and connections to their former community.

The "opposition-assimilation" dichotomy in studies of city migrants argues that culturally the migrants and the city they live in represent the traditional and the modern, which are essentially antagonizing and conflicting with each other. The outcome of migration is that, to be accepted, rural migrants have to break their ties with the traditional society, and let their consciousness, worship, customs, or organizational systems gradually disintegrate, and be assimilated into the urban culture.

The "opposition-assimilation" concept cannot explain all the phenomena of the city migrants, so that sociologists and anthropologists put forward the "coexisting" concept, while the economists and politicians put forward the idea of "articulation" to refute the simple dichotomy of the "assimilation assumption" and the "opposition-assimilation" mode. In China, Li Peilin (李培林, 2002) advocates the "continuous spectrum" as opposed to the dichotomy method. He points out that in the polarized world of today, there in fact exists a "continuous spectrum" between the two poles. We cannot explain the complexity of the world by relying on the idealized binary opposition of rural and urban, traditional and modern, or private enterprises and state-owned enterprises.

The theoretical basis of the "coexisting" mode is rooted in social network theory and cultural relativism. Researchers find that migrants and their traditional social background can coexist with that of the modern cities. In discussing the distinction between China's "little tradition" and "great tradition", Yu Ying-shih (余英时, 1999) stresses these two interdependent and mutual communicating relationships. The "little tradition" of the rural and the "great tradition" of the urban are not antithetical but are in fact complementary. Instead of just living within the confines of their "little tradition", rural migrants who work in the cities are also exposed to the forces of the urban "great tradition".

The theoretical basis of the "articulation" model is rooted in the world system and the core-periphery theories, and the economic equilibrium migration and the embedding theories. Andre Gunder Frank (1967), Michael Castell (1975), Raymond E. Weist (1979) point out that,

in the world system, the expansion of the production system from the core (developed area) damaged the traditional economic system structure (of the underdeveloped area) and causes local unemployment and loss of incomes; at the same time the development of the core increases the need for cheap labour force thus leading to large population inflows from the periphery. Why is it that the marginal area continues to provide cheap labour while the core area grabs the value?

In a thorough study of African workers in France, Claude Meillassoux (1981) makes an observation on the real division of labour between the marginal and core areas. The marginal area is mainly the production and reproduction of labour force. As its economy is non-market oriented, the costs of labour are low. When rural workers enter the cities, they bring with them a large number of hidden values part of which are realized through the production system of the core area. When these migrants become old and unable to work, they have to return to their rural home. The fragmentation of rural labour's production and use is the answer to the secret as to why core areas continue to grab the labour surplus from marginal areas. Migrants from the marginal area provide cheap labour to depress the price of labour of the core area. Cheap labour disrupts the labour market and consequently brings benefits to the capitalist sectors of the core area. Rural migrants also generate an ideology of dependence of the periphery on the core area and a mentality and inability to seize opportunities for their own development.

The dual labour market theory has been modified by Alejandro Portes (1998) and Robert Bach (1985) to take into account the "ethnic minority areas" factor as a market. They employ the embedding theory of social networking to analyse the ghetto areas of migrants. After migrating to developed countries, migrants tend to form their own ethnic ghetto areas. The closed ethnic society increases the dependence of its members on its own unique structure and rich "community resources" which in turn enhance the attracting power and social networking of the community. For example, the Chinatown in the U.S. was once a sanctuary for Chinese immigrants, but it has since evolved into a huge "ethnic gathering" and economic zone with great resilience and vitality (Zhou, 1992). The "Zhejiang Village" in Beijing, as a gathering area for Wenzhou businessmen, not only cuts across geographic boundaries, but also bridge a series of intangible borders including the administrative system (the central, municipality, provincial government, and Wenzhou governments; the business and tax administration systems, urban management and public health management systems, and others), the organizational structure (such as government agencies, institutions, state-owned enterprises, private enterprises, party organizations, and rural community organizations), and identity systems (city dwellers and country folks, farmers and workers, cadres and the masses), forming a dynamic socio-economic area powered by a clothing market with a unique set of operational mechanisms (see 项飏/Xiang Biao, 2000; 王春光/Wang Chunguang, 1995). These examples show that the "coexisting" and "articulation" models may be merged to form a more comprehensive "coexisting-articulation" analysis model.

Clearly, the transformation of the ECP of an ethnic or any group is not only possible, but also



realistic. The “gathering zone” of urban migrants and its economic circle has become a binding body of the modern and traditional or the centre and the periphery, to tie up different social patterns, different production modes and different sectors of the rural and urban, constituting a survival and development model with its own characteristics among the “core-periphery” model of the world system. In other words, they form a new ECP or the “little community under the big social system” in the city that they have migrated to. The paradigm of ECPs now faces a shift from the dichotomy to multi-dimensional analysis.

The Research Hypothesis and Analysis Model on the ECPs

Based on the ECPs theory and various theories and methods in migrant studies, and according to the “opposition-assimilation” and the “coexisting-articulation” analysis modes, and from the two dimensions of “integration-transplantation” and the “creative-transplantation” of “economic life”, we may now present a fresh hypothesis and analysis model.

The economic and cultural patterns of China’s ethnic minorities, despite their diversity, are essentially associated with the “original ecologies” of geographic environments where each minority has settled down. In their migration to the city, the ethnic migrants will first encounter the opportunities and challenges of the urban market economy. This migration will involve a process of adaptation to the market economy that encompasses the city, businesses, services, housing, education, language, social exchanges and many other aspects of adjustment. In short, ethnic migrants to the city will face the transformation of their original ECPs that are “nature-oriented” to those which are “market-oriented”.

The transformation of the ECPs of city ethnic migrants may produce four types of outcome (Table 1):

Table 1. The Economic-Cultural Patterns of Urban Ethnic Migrants

Social Cultural Life	Economic Life	Economic-Cultural Patterns
Opposition-assimilation	Integration	Type 1
	Innovative	Type 2
Coexisting-articulation	Dependent	Type 3
	Transplantation	Type 4

Type 1 (Integration): The ethnic migrants are gradually integrated into the city’s mainstream economy, and assimilated by the city’s social and cultural systems. As their number is small and they are engaged in different industries or are dispersed throughout the city, they do not form their own neighbourhoods or networks of economic exchange. Their regional or cultural characteristics are thus not conspicuous.

Type 2 (Innovative): The ethnic migrants establish their own outward-looking economic

model, but possibilities of cultural assimilation into the mainstream urban social culture are real.

Type 3 (Dependent): The migrants obtain employment or start their own businesses in the procurement, production, sales, service and other areas of the economy. They are thus dependent on or fully integrated into the city's economy. They perform professional and business services that are essential to the development of the local economy. Their social and cultural life retain ethnic or regional characteristics, but at the same time absorbing a variety of new cultural elements of urban life to form their own distinctive ethnic or regional culture.

Type 4 (Transplantation): The migrants have their own dwelling and gathering zone and evolve their own outward-looking economic model in the city. On the one hand, their social and cultural life is relatively exclusive and largely confined to their own social space; and on the other hand, it also contains elements of "articulation" between the area of origin and that of resettlement, between the urban and rural, and between tradition and modernity. Sharp dichotomies are not evident in Type 4 pattern as their social-economic and cultural identities are infused with elements spanning the two opposite poles.

Each of the major types may be divided into smaller ones, and may change by forming new combination types.

The Survey Data

The main sources of information for this study are derived from a priority project of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences entitled "Floating Urban Minorities and Their Residential Trends". The project was officially established in the second half of 2006, with field research in the form of questionnaires, in-depth interviews and data processing completed in the first half of 2008. Four cities were selected as representative samples. These are Hohhot in the north, Qingdao in the east, Shenzhen in the south, and Kunming in the west.

The ECPs of Ethnic Migrants: Change from Natural Type to Market Type

Although the ECPs theory and approach introduced by Lin Yaohua and Cheboksarov cannot fully explain the ECPs of ethnic migrants, it does provide a useful conceptual framework comprising the tripartite framework of geographical conditions, economic development direction, and cultural characteristics. Based on this framework, this study will apply various migration theories and approaches to further develop the ECPs theory. The objective is to explore the path of transformation of ECPs from the natural or rural type to that of the market-oriented and to develop a new ECPs analysis framework adapted to China's market economy. The issues to be addressed are: what is the cause of the transformation of ECPs, how does it happen, and what form does it take?

The research hypothesis puts forward four types of transformation of ECPs of ethnic minorities in the cities, namely, the processes of integration, innovation, dependence, and



transplantation. Genetically, we may analyse the kind of transformation of the ethnic migrants' ECPs that has taken place, and to ascertain the possibility of attributing it to any of the four types of processes.

The economic development of ethnic minorities in China lags behind that of the country as a whole. When they move into and settle down in the cities, the ECPs with which they are associated are subjected to different processes of change. However, this process may only be tentative rather than definitive. Our investigations of ethnic minorities in the selected cities point clearly to a shift in the ECPs that are based on the original "natural setting" to that of the "market". The ECP of the Korean migrants of Qingdao city shifts to a "dependent-transplantation" pattern; that of the Mongolian migrants in Hohhot shows evidence of an emerging "innovative-transplantation" pattern; the Muslim Hui minority of Kunming tend to be "semi-innovative and semi-integrative"; and that of other ethnic migrants in Shenzhen and Kunming is one of "integration".

The "Dependent-Transplantation" ECP of Korean Migrants in Qingdao

Qingdao has the largest number of Koreans among Chinese cities. This number includes 120,000 ethnic Korean migrants especially from Yanji city in the Northeast. At the time of the field survey, there were more than 8,000 South Korean enterprises employing the majority of the nearly 100,000 Koreans working in the city. More than half of them worked in the manufacturing (23.5%), food service industry (15.3%), and trade (14.1%) sectors. The Chengyang district, the gateway for South Korean companies in Qingdao, had a large number of Koreans and Korean migrants. Apart from the Korean factories, there were more than 800 commercial establishments, of which 90 per cent or more were hotels, karaoke lounges, food shops, and other service businesses.

Korean migrants are heavily dependent on South Korean investments and enterprises and this dependence has marked the development of their ECP in Qingdao. In the context of the local residents and government, this ECP is a type of "transplantation" that is inseparable from South Korean businesses. In terms of government policies, employment and business, education, religious and community life, language, cultural heritage and related aspects, though Korean migrants have evolved a new prototype of "dependent-transplantation" ECP, it is as yet indefinite in content and form. The Koreans of Qingdao are mostly professional managers or ordinary employees in South Korean enterprises, and few Korean migrant entrepreneurs or enterprises have appeared. In religion, despite the prevalence of Christianity among the South Koreans, the Korean migrants have not been influenced to the extent of forming their own ethnic-based and independent Christian organization.

The "Innovation-Transplantation" Pattern of Mongolian Migrants in Hohhot

Thanks to its excellent natural pasture, the dairy industry of Hohhot has in recent years developed rapidly to turn the city into the "dairy capital" of China. Rapid development of

the economy and urban infrastructure has stimulated the vigorous growth of the local tourism industry. This has stimulated the growth of “Mongolian food street” and the swift rise of Mongolian style service sector and the ubiquitous stores peddling Mongolian handicrafts and native products. Known as a “Green Town”, perhaps in recognition of the pastoral background of the Mongolian migrants, a new Mongolian ECP is emerging through the commercialization and marketing of Mongolian products and their intangible cultural resources to help transform the city into a modern metropolis. The diet of the Mongolian is intimately linked to their ecological environment and resources, culture, and religious beliefs.

The success of economic and cultural changes among Hohhot Mongolians is tied to the strong driving force of all levels of government, entrepreneurs and consumers resulting in a transformation forged by innovative migrants that is able to meet the demands of the market. Migration and subsequent transformation have not caused social and cultural conflicts between the local urban Mongolians and the pastoral migrant Mongolians because of their common ethnic identity. Thus, the pastoral migrants of Hohhot are able to “transplant” their original ECP to adapt to the needs of the city.

Pastoral Mongolian migrants leaving the ranches for the city have been sufficiently innovative to “urbanize” and commercialize prairie products by starting commercialized food services, ethnic handicrafts trade and other economic activities to build a new ECP through the process of “innovation-transplantation”. The Hohhot Mongolian migrants form relatively concentrated business clusters and the ethnic enterprises represent an outward-looking economic model in the urban economy. This model is associated with the grassland and pasture on the one hand, and the greater China and the international markets on the other. Their social and cultural life is relatively exclusive and carried out within their own independent space, and characterized by an element of compatibility and “articulation” between the area of origin and that of the city, between the rural and urban, and the traditional and modern. Their social-economic and cultural identities are complex and can no longer be described in terms of a simplistic dichotomy of two poles.

The “Semi-innovative and Semi-integrative” Pattern of Hui Muslims in Kunming

Kunming is the home of about 10,000 Hui migrants from Xinjie town of Huize county in Yunnan province. They operate nine cattle farms that account for 90 per cent of Kunming’s red meat market and supplied by the two largest Hui enterprises of Mu Shengda and Mu Hongda. In December 2007, Mu Hongda controlled 60-70 per cent of the cattle slaughtering business in Kunming. Economically, the Hui migrants dominate the trade and slaughtering business of live cattle and the beef and mutton market of Kunming.

Despite the pastoral origin of their outward-looking economic model in the urban economy, it is possible that they are assimilating into the mainstream social and cultural life. They use Chinese characters and some are Communist party members. A Communist party branch is present in Mu Hongda’s company for reasons of politics. Assimilation is possible to the extent



of not interfering with their right to religious freedom and participation in religious activities. What we see is a partial integration into mainstream social and cultural life. Hence, the Kunming Hui migrants' ECP may be categorized as the "semi-innovative and semi-integrative" type.

In Kunming, the Dai and the Bai groups are also engaged in the food service, ethnic handicrafts and cloth trade. The transformation of ECPs of these minorities is partially creative and integrative, but less creative and more integrative than those of the Huis.

The "Integration" Pattern of Other Ethnic Migrants in Shenzhen and Kunming

In the formation of neighbourhoods and circles of economic exchange, the size of an ethnic community is an important consideration. Our field investigations show that the small numbers of Miao, Dong, or Yao in Shenzhen and the Yi, Zhuang, or Bai in Kunming are widely dispersed and show no evidence of clustering either as communities or businesses. In fact, they are largely integrated into the mainstream urban economy and social-cultural systems.

Factors Affecting the Transformation of ECPs

This study is an initial attempt to a more in-depth discussion of the subject of ECPs. Many issues await further exploration. These include the nature of the relations between the urban ethnic minorities' "fragmentation" and the ECP; the links between the ECP in the original domains and the new settlements; or the relationship between the original culture and that which is "transformed" by the "market-oriented" economy. The transformation of the ECP is a continuous and dynamic process and changes in an ECP breed further changes or subject it to change due to new lifestyles or economic environments (Clyde, 1989: 41; Kotak, 2005: 84).

Four broad categories of factors that influence the transformation of ECPs may be identified, each with its own set of features.

Objective and Subjective Factors of the Migrants

The transformation of the ECPs of ethnic migrants to the cities are influenced by factors such as population size, original living strategies and economies, occupational clustering, residential density, and the ties to traditional cultures, religions, ethnicities, social networks, languages and others. Additionally, personal or subjective factors are also taken in consideration in the analysis.

Economics and living strategies are fundamental factors in determining the nature of the ECP of a migrant group in the city. Our survey shows that the Korean, Mongolian, Hui and Bai have gained access to their current employment through their own initiative (48.1-60.0%), while the Yi and Dai tend to depend on the recommendations of their friends or colleagues (26.7-36.1%) (Zhang, 2012a). In the choice of occupations, many work as "general staff" in business corporations. This is most obvious among the Yi, Hui, Mongolian, and Bai respondents. Korean migrants are engaged in a range of occupations, among which the more important ones

are as “enterprise mid-level cadres”, “enterprise grassroots cadres”, “private entrepreneurs”, and “professional technical personnel”. Among the Mongolians, 12 per cent are self-employed in their own “commercial households”. Of the six ethnic groups, Korean respondents earn relatively higher incomes than other groups, among whom 36.7 per cent receive 3,001 yuan or more per month. In contrast, half the Dai respondents earn less than 1,000 yuan a month, while the Hui, Bai, Yi and Mongolian respondents do slightly better (Zhang and Yin, 2013).

Clustering by industries is an important factor in the formulation of ethnic socio-economic enclave theory. Among the ethnic groups, Mongolian respondents show the highest industry clustering in the catering services (83.9%); the Hui, Bai and Dai respondents also tend to cluster in catering services (64-69%); but Korean respondents are not overly concentrated in any industry. Among the Hui and Mongolian respondents, only one industry (catering) accounts for more than 10 per cent of their populations. The catering and entertainment services each absorbs more than a tenth of Bai and Yi respondents; while Dai respondents are similarly engaged in catering and domestic services. As for the Koreans, three sectors that absorb at least 10 per cent each of the respondents are manufacturing, commercial trade, and catering.

Despite the permanent move to the cities, the children of the migrants still maintain a strong awareness of their own ethnic identity, ranging from 71 per cent among the Yi to 95 per cent among the Dai. Most are ready to learn their own ethnic languages, particularly among the Mongolian, Korean, and Dai, and less so among the Yi. In the choice of languages spoken at home, 44 per cent of Mongolian families and 41 per cent of Korean families prefer to speak in their own “ethnic languages” with their children, whereas more than a third of the Yi, Hui, and Bai speak in Mandarin, and 41 per cent of the Dai use both their own dialect and Mandarin at home. The Korean respondents use their native language both “in school” and “at home”; while the other ethnic migrants mainly use their native languages in school.

The Roles of Ethnic Enterprises and Entrepreneurs

Among the factors that influence the formation of ECPs, ethnic enterprises and entrepreneurs play a crucial role as they epitomize the living strategies and economic well-being of the minorities. The ethnic enterprises in China have been likened to a butterfly: weak and fragile, and often treated as “specimens”. The butterfly develops from its own eggs and larvae, and survives on the environment of a host-plant. Ethnic enterprises may grow to maturity to spawn many more “butterflies” in the environment of the city to give rise to “broods” of ethnic businesses.

Chan Kwok Bun and Claire Chiang (1994) argue that little has been done to study the links between immigration and entrepreneurship to help us understand how immigrants transform themselves into businessmen, entrepreneurs, or even industrialists. They adopt an analytical framework by proposing a new socio-economic structure in their study of the development of Singapore Chinese entrepreneurs from the stage of the “pupa” to that of “butterfly”. They demonstrate that the growth of ethnic enterprises is built on ethnic resources such as cultural



distinctiveness, ethnic values, family, community, social networks, among others. These features and advantages have worked in such a way as to guarantee the success of businesses after the Chinese migrated and settled down in the new environment (see also Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). Chan and Chiang point out that facing the harsh reality of the host society, Chinese immigrants often fall back on their kinship and social networks to raise funds, venture capital and gain access to financial credit. Chinese enterprises, now and as in the past, are established with the aid of the ties with the same dialect groups, especially within the families and clans (Chan, 1991: 158). In America, Chinese restaurants employ Chinese workforce based on cultural and dialect affinities. Peter Li argues that Chinese restaurant owners often have to work as hard as the waiters and other workers who may also be their relatives, thus blurring the boundaries between employers and employees (Li, 1976).

The ethnic migrants in China may behave in a similar manner as the Chinese migrants overseas to create their own economic and cultural patterns. Ethnic enterprises are a form of social organization and the foundation for evolving ethnic ECPs. It is only with the existence of this structural base that new types of ECPs establish their footholds. Ethnic entrepreneurs will utilize their own cultural identity, ethnic values, family and community networks to gain access to venture capital, cheap labour, commercial credit, and other resources to create favourable environments for the development and sustenance of ethnic enterprises.

Furthermore, in the emergence of the ethnic migrants' ECPs in the cities, the entrepreneurial spirit, the number, economic strength and extent of industrial clustering of ethnic enterprises as well as social influences are significant factors to ascertain the degree of success of the transformational process. Conversely, if an ethnic migrant group is widely dispersed in various industries in a sea of city enterprises, or has nurtured few enterprises or entrepreneurs, it is unlikely to evolve an ECP of its own.

Government Policies and Institutional Factors

In China, the state rules supreme and where national and local policies on population movements, household registration, and economic development have an impact on the emergence and transformation of ECPs of newly-settled ethnic migrants in the cities. These are state-imposed factors that affect economic behaviour. For instance, the Hukou (residential) system was established more than 50 years ago to restrict rural-urban migration by keeping people in the areas where they are registered. Unregistered city migrants are denied access to education, food, housing, employment and a variety of other social services. It was only in 1982, when unskilled labour was in short supply in the fast-developing coastal cities, that a programme of gradual reform was initiated to relax the regulations. As the degree of liberalization varied from one province or city to another, marked differences in the regulatory framework have emerged (Zhang, 2012b).

The industrial structure and economy of the city affect the employment and entrepreneurship of the migrants and are thus the foundation on which ethnic minorities

may evolve new ECPs. Our survey shows that 64 per cent the Yi and Hui respondents work in the private sector, much more so than the Bai, Mongolian, Dai and Korean. Korean respondents are more prone than other ethnic groups to work in joint ventures in which are found 35.4 per cent of the respondents, whereas the Mongolian prefer self-employment (46.0%).

Conclusion

The transformation of the ECP of an ethnic migrant group is not only possible but also inevitable. This study is an attempt to restructure the ECPs theory in ethnic migration research and is based on an examination of the tripartite framework of geographical environment, direction of economic development, and cultural identity. Avoided are the concepts of dichotomy in the form of “tradition-modern”, “rural-urban”, or “agriculture-industry” in the classification of ECPs. This study has attempted an analysis of the path of transformation of ECPs of selected ethnic migrants in four major cities of China from their original ecology to that of a market-oriented setting. Four types of transformation of the ECPs are detected, namely, the “dependent-transplantation” pattern among Korean migrants in Qingdao, the “innovation-transplantation” pattern of Mongolian migrants in Hohhot, the “semi-innovative and semi-integrative” pattern of the Hui in Kunming, and the “integration” pattern of other ethnic migrants in Shenzhen and Kunming.

Each of the patterns is associated with four categories of factors. These are the objective and subjective factors of the migrants themselves; the roles of ethnic enterprises and entrepreneurs; clustering or dispersal of their economic, social and cultural milieux; and government policies and institutional factors. The roles of ethnic enterprises and entrepreneurs are emphasized because without a fairly strong degree of their presence to promote the emergence of ethnic industrial clusters and ethnic-based economy,² it is unlikely that ethnic ECPs would develop. It is this attempt to reconstruct the ECPs theory from the perspective of ethnic migrant studies that this study is undertaken.

Notes

- 1 Guldin (1994) argues that “cultural pattern” is one of the most significant theories introduced to China by Tolstoff, Levin, and Cheboksarov. He considers Lin Yaohua as the leading figure of the Soviet school in China. But Lin is of the opinion that China’s ethnology never imitated the Soviet method but merely used it as a reference.
- 2 Such as the bus transport business in Chinatown New York, which reflects the entry of Chinese migrants into the mainstream economy (see 龙登高/Long Denggao, 2007).

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