Reflections on Their Motivations to Move

A Case Study of Wealthy Chinese Migration to Western Democratic Countries in the Past Two Decades

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Abstract

This thesis analyses the subjective reasons for the migration of wealthy Chinese to four Western democratic countries in the past two decades. It explores the subjective social, economic, political, and environmental factors that influence the migration decisions of those wealthy Chinese. The study uses qualitative data from 60 semi-structured interviews with mainland Chinese migrants to Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and analysis of the resulting data shows that wealthy Chinese move abroad due to a combination of subjective reasons that include securing better quality of education, cleaner air, personal freedom and wealth security, and a comfortable and more autonomous lifestyle in Western democratic countries. The thesis illustrates that no single theory can explain the reasons behind the emigration of wealthy Chinese due to the multi-faceted characterstics of the process. This study shows that wealthy Chinese migrants pursue the goals of increased freedoms and improved political status in the country of residence by taking advantage of their economic privilege in their country of origin. Moreover, the study resonates with Hirschman's argument that poor governance and limited access to rights in undemocratic countries are important factors driving people to leave their home countries (Hirschman, 1993), even when these countries have acheived rapid economic growth.

The findings contribute to the literature on Chinese migration in three ways. Firstly, they explain that the perennial problems associated with China's single-party communist rule remain significant in pushing the wealthy class to relocate to Western democratic countries. The findings also add nuance to earlier research results by revealing that the introduction of the Social Credit System, the 'original sin' problem[1], 'just one voice', and the perceived likelihood of political regression under Xi Jinping's leadership, together with weak protection of private property are identified by private entrepreneurs interviewed in this study as the most important drivers for leaving China. These political issues driving wealthy Chinese to leave their home country have been largely overlooked by prior research. Secondly, the present study illustrates Chinese migrants' heterogeneous demographic characteristics and unearths empirical evidence on the intergenerational dynamics surrounding the migration of wealthy Chinese. Thirdly, this analysis suggests that the correlations between the effects of air pollution and migration decisions may be related to the geographical region of migrants' hometowns and the specific year of migration. In short, the recent migration outflow from China has been politically motivated together with education, environmental, and lifestyle considerations.

[1] An accusation has been made that many successful entrepreneurs obtained their wealth by partnering with corrupt government officials and by illegally appropriating public resources (Liu-Farrer, 2016).

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Authors Declaration

‘I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this thesis is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution’.

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Introduction

Research Topic, Gaps and Question

Since the late 1990s, Chinese international students, investors, and better lifestyle seekers have been leaving China for democratic countries in the West on an unprecedented scale (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). Demographically, the recent migration flow to Western democratic countries mainly consists of wealthy individuals and highly-skilled individuals (Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b), who are generally from urban areas, including 'middle-class professionals, students, and the wealthy class' (Huang, 2017, p. 191). Noticeably, Chinese 'high-net-worth individuals' (HNWIs), who possess or whose family possess investable assets worth at least RMB 10 million (USD 1.5 million) are important segments of this migration flow. According to a 2013 China Private Wealth Report, the number of HNWIs had reached 840,000 and approximately 60 percent of HNWIs had already migrated to Western democratic countries or were planning to do so that year (Bain Company, 2013). Later, in 2016, the number of HNWIs had reached approximately 1.58 million in China (Bain Company, 2017). Hence, this migration phenomenon is significant in many ways: domestically, an unprecedented and large-scale Chinese migration outflow has raised concern about both wealth drain and brain drain; and globally, the vast number of Chinese emigrants is one of the largest and important segments of contemporary cross-border movement.

The puzzle is why those Chinese left the country in which they had accumulated a vast amount of wealth, which had experienced three decades of rapid economic growth, and which will continue to provide important economic opportunities. That is a paradox that is worth investigating as conventional wisdom suggests that generally, migrants aim to pursue their economic betterment via geographical relocation. In migration studies, there is abundant theoretical and empirical literature exploring the reasons for migration flows from undemocratic to democratic countries, but little work has been done to investigate the emigration of wealthy individuals from undemocratic countries. This cohort of migrants has attributes and a privileged economic status that distinguish them from other types of migrants from undemocratic countries, so whether their different economic status prompts different incentives to move merits careful attention.

Much of the Chinese migration literature explains the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese from social, economic, and environmental perspectives. There are three main lines of enquiry. First, a rigid and exam-oriented education system is a well-documented primary push factor for rich Chinese migration (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). Second, due to the rapid industrialisation in China in recent years, poor air quality and other environmental issues have caused significant health concerns for many urban citizens; at the same time, Western democratic countries with relatively unspoiled natural environments attract the rich in mainland China to move (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). Third, wealthy Chinese migrants are in search of a better and more comfortable lifestyle in Western democratic

countries (Igarashi, 2015; Tian, 2017; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). Fourth, the weak protection of property rights in China and its restrictions on capital outflow have also been viewed as important push factors (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Knowles, 2017). In short, the exodus of mainland Chinese abroad is specifically in search of a better quality of life for themselves and a better future for their children, rather than for better economic opportunities and political freedoms, and 'does not always represent informed decisions to vote with their feet' (Huang, 2017, p. 193).

There are several shortcomings in previous studies on Chinese migration. First, the reasons behind the wealthy Chinese migration to Western countries have not been examined in depth before, with some partial exceptions such as research on Shanghainese immigrants in the US and middle-class Chinese immigrants in Australia (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). Second, prior studies tend to overlook the political characteristics of the country of origin. My focus on political factors in China is in line with the literature about the causes of migration flows from undemocratic to democratic countries. Classic theories about the causes of international migration have suggested that structural factors in the country of origin greatly influence individuals' decisions to emigrate, and that this is particularly the case for those who emigrate from undemocratic countries. So far, little has been done to investigate the potential impact of political issues in China on Chinese migration, largely owing to the topic's sensitive nature and foreseeable difficulties in data collection in an authoritarian regime. Equally importantly, given China's leadership change in 2012, and the Party's shift in ideology placing nationalism over economic growth as well as intensified social controls (Dickson, 2016; Pei, 2016, 2020), the omission of political factors in prior research is critical given that China's shifting political landscape over the past decade has high significance in influencing the current and future migration outflow from mainland China. Third, it is worth noting that the findings of previous studies are mostly based on data generated from two commercial studies entitled '*China Private Wealth Report*', and '*Immigration and the Chinese HNWIs'* (Bain Company, 2013, 2017; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b; Hurun Report, 2018).

In addition, an analytical weakness in the extant research stems from scholars viewing wealthy Chinese migrants as a homogenous group, and simplifying the explanation of why wealthy mainlanders migrate, which has led to some findings being too general or even somewhat inaccurate (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). The approach adopted by previous studies has ignored important factors including migrants' age, year of migration, and the geographical locations of their hometowns, consideration of which is likely to reveal divergent incentives to move abroad. Such an approach is useful to investigate the drivers of individuals migrating on a small scale, but in a country like China, with huge population and wide diversity of geographical regions, an unprecedented three decades of rapid economic growth, together with a distinctive single-party political system, divergent motivations are likely among wealthy Chinese migrants.

According to a report by the Migration Policy Institute, the number of Chinese investor migrants in Western democratic countries reached approximately 90,000 in 2016 (Tian, 2017). As the motivations of the wealthy Chinese who have flocked to Western democratic countries have not yet been subjected to systematic and empirical investigation, this study aims to fill the identified research gaps by investigating the reasons for their migration to Western democratic countries within the past two decades. While previous studies have focused on studying the social, economic, and environmental perspectives of wealthy Chinese migration, this study aims to also investigate the political reasons driving rich mainland Chinese to leave China. Furthermore, this study aims to address a key empirical and analytical inconsistency in Chinese migration studies by investigating whether motivation variations exist among wealthy Chinese. Theoretically, this study integrates the push-pull model into the study of the cross-border movement of wealthy Chinese, with a strong focus on the push factors in the country of origin.

Overall, this thesis addresses the subjective reasons why wealthy Chinese migrated to Western democratic countries by providing self-reported evidence. It further argues that wealthy Chinese have taken advantage of their privileged economic status in their country of origin and converted it into an improved political status and increased freedom in their new countries of residence through the process of migration. The analysis shows that under Xi Jinping's leadership there has been an increasing intention among wealthy Chinese to improve their vulnerable political status in China through migration. This study also identifies the existence of intergenerational motivation differences among Chinese migrants. Based on the present analysis, younger Chinese tend to return to China for career development in the long run, and to reside in Western democratic countries temporarily in order to seek professional development opportunities. In contrast, many middle-aged and senior Chinese pursue the goal of long-term settlement in Western democratic countries through migration because of their fear of the risks associated with the single-party communist rule in China.

Methodology

China is an appropriate setting to conduct this study because of its distinctive single-party political system and three decades of rapid economic growth. First, although China is the world's second-largest economy, it is an autocratic regime firmly controlled by China's Communist Party, both socially and politically (Cabestan, 2019; Pei, 2020). Second, the three-decade-long rapid economic growth has turned China into a prosperous country with relatively stable single-party communist rule, and better social and economic environments than what it had three decades ago. In this regard, China's political setting and rapid economic growth are suitable for investigating the social, economic, and political reasons behind the recent migration outflow. Moreover, a prosperous country offers relatively better economic opportunities, which are likely to discourage its citizens from leaving their home country. However, in recent years many members of

China's emerging wealthy class have formed an unprecedented and massive migration flow to Western democratic countries. This puzzle merits careful attention. The term 'Chinese' in this thesis refers specifically to Chinese mainlanders. As the political settings and levels of economic development in Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan differ from mainland China in many ways, the central focus here is Chinese mainlanders whose improved economic status has largely resulted from China's rapid economic growth.

Wealthy Chinese are migrants with particular characteristics and privileges. Their economic and political status in the country of origin significantly differs from other migrants. They enjoyed privileged economic status in China as they made their fortunes in the context of China's economic opening-up and rapid economic growth. Importantly, wealthy Chinese face a unique set of political realities due to China's distinctive single-party communist rule, which may create divergent incentives to migrate and yield disparate migratory paths. Therefore, the motivations of this cohort of wealthy Chinese migrants merit close attention.

Semi-structured interview was chosen as a data collection method because it makes it easier to understand the contextual information within which a social phenomenon is formed and evolved (George and Bennett, 2005; Rubin and Rubin, 2012). I conducted 60 semi-structured interviews with wealthy Chinese migrants to Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States between January and April 2021. These four leading Western democratic countries are suitable for the purpose of this study as they have been the most popular destinations for rich Chinese migrants due to their language, educational opportunities, sustainable economic development, relatively highly civilised societies, and relatively unspoiled natural environments. The Chinese people interviewed in this study had completed their wealth accumulation before their relocation to countries in the West. An interview guide was designed to cover the reasons for migration, as highlighted in the theoretical framework. The interviews were conducted in Mandarin Chinese via WeChat, Skype, or Zoom, and each lasted approximately 45 minutes. The sample was constructed through a snowball sampling method, and the participants' recruitment was mainly advertised on WeChat, QQ, together with LinkedIn.

The participants were Chinese people living in Western democratic countries on investor visas, entrepreneur visas, or skilled worker visas. Skilled worker visas were included in the selection for participants because it was reported by the Migration Policy Institute that investor and skilled worker visas were the two preferred routes used widely by wealthy Chinese immigrants (Rietig, 2014). In the meantime, some participants in this research subsequently changed their visa status by applying for skilled worker visas to navigate immigration rules in Australia, Canada, and the US after failed attempts as investor visa applicants. Several interviewees were dependent visa holders because their partners had relocated to Western democratic countries via the investor or skilled worker routes. Specifically, the study only recruited well-off Chinese migrants and/or their family members who had already taken up permanent residency in any of the four Western countries covered.

Entrepreneurs and business owners comprised over a third of the sample, with the rest consisted of technicians, professionals, scholars, corporate managers, and former government officials. They were well-educated individuals, with more than half of the interviewees having obtained master's and/or doctoral degrees. Most of the participants were from coastal provinces in Eastern and Southern China or metropolitan cities (which are at the forefront of economic reform) including Shenzhen, Shanghai, Beijing, Tianjin, Jiangsu, Guangdong, Shandong, and Zhejiang, with a small number of participants from inland provinces such as Sichuan, Hubei and Anhui. The rapid growth in the number of upper-and middle-class Chinese, and their accrued wealth, accumulated in tandem with China's shift from a planned economy to a market regime in the early 1990s, has provided the necessary financial foundation for the emergence of migration outflows from China on an unprecedented scale (Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). Hence, the study focuses on rich Chinese migration during that period (2000-2020).

This exploratory study aims to advance knowledge of why wealthy Chinese migrated to Western democratic countries by gathering and analysing rich and in-depth empirical data generated from semi-structured interviews. Deductive thematic data analysis was used in relation to the concepts and themes derived from previous migration studies which have investigated migration flows from undemocratic to democratic countries. The literature review allows key themes to be derived for analysis, such as education problems, air pollution, and political factors (see Chapters 5, 6 and 8). The analysis of these themes was conducted at the level of sentences drawn from the interview transcripts. Several supplementary themes emerged from the data, including detailed information about the aspirations in moving of younger Chinese, and the lifestyle hopes and considerations of Chinese migrants across all age groups (see Chapter 7). To explore those emerging themes, inductive data analysis was adopted.

The Contribution of This Thesis

The findings of this study suggest that rich migrants are motivated by a set of complex reasons, and that the existing theories of economic migration, forced migration from undemocratic countries, and the new conceptual framework of lifestyle migrants alone cannot offer a thorough understanding of the reasons behind the migration flow being explored here. In migration studies, migrants from undemocratic countries have commonly been assumed to be seeking better job opportunities or higher incomes elsewhere, and they are considered economic migrants (Hoskin, 1991; Weiner, 1992; Keely, 2000). At the same time, migration flows from undemocratic countries have been considered to be politically motivated, because these migrants leave their home country due to dissatisfaction with poor governance, the restriction of their civil and political rights, and fears of economic and political catastrophe associated with a corrupt political system (Hirschman, 1993; Colomer, 2000; Castles, 2013; Harpaz, 2015; Dustmann *et al.*, 2017). More recently, an emerging trend in migration studies has been to classify rich migrants moving from the Global South to the Global North as lifestyle migrants (Dalsin, 2016; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019; Robins, 2019).

This is because rich migrants from countries in the Global South seek better social and natural environments in Global North countries (Liu-Farrer, 2016, Dalsin, 2016; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019; Robins, 2019).

Rich migrants from countries in the Global South like the wealthy Chinese studied here have made their fortunes in their home countries, and the theory of economic migration offers little help in understanding their non-economic incentive to move abroad. In fact, wealthy Chinese, as the primary beneficiaries of China's economic rise, are less likely to move abroad for economic gain due to their already established privileged economic status in their home country. This implies that they are concerned with something other than economic well-being. This study shows that the perennial problems pertaining to China's single-party communist rule have apparently fuelled the recent migration flow of members of the Chinese wealthy class to Western democratic countries. This finding is significant, because previous studies have neither examined the effects of China's single-party communist rule on the migration of wealthy Chinese nor studied the influence of Xi's strongman rule on the migration decisions of members of the emerging entrepreneur class. The findings suggest that Hirschman's (1970) theory could indeed be helpful in explaining the migration of wealthy Chinese. As Hess (2016) pinpointed, a growing number of wealthy Chinese have opted to exit China by emigration and capital flight rather than staying to use their voice to engage in politics and leverage their power and influence to push for policy change. Hirschman's voice-exit model could offer a better explanation for the wealthy Chinese's choice of exit instead of voice:

> Easy availability of exit was shown to be inimical to voice, for in comparison with exit, voice is costly in terms of effort and time. Moreover, to be effective voice often requires group action and is thus subject to all the well-known difficulties of organisation, representation, and free riding. By contrast, exit, when available, does not require any coordination with others (Hirschman, 1993, p. 176).

Some wealthy Chinese might reckon that the non-existence of group action in China might result in the high cost of raising an individual voice. At the same time, migration has become easy and accessible, and has a relatively low cost due to their increasing economic capability in tandem with China's fast economic growth. More importantly, whether people choose to exit largely depends on whether 'they have an ability to influence the organisation' (Hirschman, 1970, p. 77). In the case of wealthy Chinese, despite their privileged economic background, they can exert very little social and political influence (Li, 2013). The low cost of exit, together with the perceived inability to wield much power over political matters in China, has led many wealthy Chinese to choose to exit China.

At the same time, this study confirms, supplements, and complements the findings of previous studies on China's systemic education problems and identifies air pollution as an important driver for the migration of some wealthy Chinese. Moreover, the aspiration of a relatively autonomous and simple Western lifestyle as documented by the previous studies also drove wealthy Chinese to relocate to countries in the West. Hence, the theory of politically driven migration can partly explain the reasons behind this migration flow. In a similar vein, while the conceptual framework of lifestyle migrants can explain the lifestyle considerations of rich migrants, it overlooks the political characteristics in their country of origin,

which are also likely to influence their migration decision. Simply put, no single theory can unpack the reasons behind the emigration of wealthy mainland Chinese. Instead, the migration of wealthy Chinese was stirred by multiple and complimentary socio-political and environmental factors, all of which have to be considered in tandem with each other, and across different demographic groups, to offer a full picture of its patterns and motivations.

This study also shows that push-pull factors and cost-benefit calculations cannot offer a thorough understanding of why rich migrants were prompted to migrate to Western democratic countries. The overall complexity of the migration outflow from undemocratic countries has increased, largely due to the changing political and economic situations in migrants' country of origin, and has little to do with structural factors in their country of residence. In the case of these Chinese migrants, the complexities brought by the interplay between a distinctive single-party political system, unprecedented rapid economic growth, and a vast number of wealthy Chinese are beyond what the push-pull and cost-benefit approaches are able to explain. According to this study, education, environmental, and lifestyle considerations are widely cited among Chinese across all age groups. Specifically, age-related variations in political motivation exist among younger Chinese and middle-aged Chinese and senior Chinese citizens, which in fact contradicts the results of previous studies that have treated wealthy Chinese migrants as a homogenous group. This study suggests that younger Chinese are less likely to be influenced by political issues in China and, conversely, that the increasingly deteriorating political situation in China has disconcerted many wealthy middle-aged and senior Chinese citizens. The apparent age-related motivation difference among mainland Chinese migrants resonates with the growing scholarly attention towards intra-group heterogeneity in migration studies (Alba, Jiménez and Marrow, 2014; Keister, Vallejo and Aronson, 2016). So far, prior studies have focused on examining the effect of intra-group heterogeneity on intergenerational immigrant adaptation (Alba, Jiménez and Marrow, 2014; Keister, Vallejo and Aronson, 2016), but little has been done to examine whether the intra-group heterogeneity has influenced incentives to move abroad. This study provides empirical evidence of intra-group heterogeneity derived from differences in Chinese migrants' socio-demographic characteristics and their shared contextual features, which has yielded divergent incentives to migrate between the younger Chinese and the middle-aged and senior Chinese citizens.

This study challenges the theory of class reproduction according to which wealthy Chinese converted their economic privilege in their home country into a global citizenship by migrating to Western democratic countries (Liu-Farrer, 2016). Understood along these lines, the emigration of wealthy Chinese does not necessarily mean their permanent relocation to Western democratic countries (Liu-Farrer, 2016). Critically speaking, the core components of the theory are notions of 'global citizenship', and 'flexible residence', which extensively emphasise socioeconomic factors rather than political issues. However, the findings of this thesis contradict this theory by identifying several strong political incentives for wealthy Chinese to leave their country of origin.

With regard to further migration studies, this study suggests that more attention should be given to examining the political, educational, environmental, and lifestyle factors in the country of origin rather than in the country of residence when studying rich migrants from undemocratic countries. The present results suggest that the latest Chinese migration outflow is a mix of the political features of the cross-border movement from undemocratic to democratic countries with significant elements of elite mobility and privileged migration, which originated in economically developed Western democratic countries. More specifically, the migration of wealthy Chinese is motivated by politics, together with education, environmental, and lifestyle considerations because of migrants' serious concerns over their safety, health, freedom, family future, and wealth security. The approach proposed in this study can therefore best explain the multiple migration objectives of wealthy migrants from undemocratic countries. Moreover, this approach can unpack the common reasons for the decisions of wealthy migrants and the specific reasons for the emigration of the wealthy class. In Chinese migration studies, this study suggests that political issues in migrants' country of origin are key drivers, as political developments can put their personal safety, wealth security, and family future at great risk, as the data shows. The wealthy Chinese interviewed in this study mainly expressed a desire to exit from their home country but did not specifically address the pull factors in the four selected Western countries. So, more attention should be given to the political characteristics of the country of origin when studying the emigration of wealthy mainland Chinese.

Content and Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is organised into nine chapters, with the following contents and structure. The concerns and assumptions that frame this study are made explicit through a critical review of the broader migration literature in Chapters 1 and 2. An analysis of these migration theories is valuable for understanding the complex interplay of factors in the countries of origin and residence that directs and shapes the migration flow from undemocratic to democratic countries. Chapter 1 reviews the literature, covering the key concepts in international migration, and the relevant definitions and categories. This chapter goes on to review the theory of push-pull factors. The dichotomy of cost-benefit calculations is included in the discussion as it helps to understand which factors weigh far more than others in the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese. Next, Chapter 2 discusses the theoretical knowledge of the possible reasons for migration flows from undemocratic to democratic countries, with the aim of laying out the theoretical grounds for the argument. This chapter provides a brief discussion of whether political factors, environmental concerns, citizenship regimes, economic issues, and education considerations cause cross-border movements from undemocratic to democratic countries. Seven theoretical expectations are subsequently proposed after the theoretical discussion. Accordingly, this chapter is supplemented with information on the choice of control variables for the present study.

Chapter 3 describes the research design. This chapter discusses the reasons for choosing wealthy Chinese migrants as multiple case studies and selecting China and four Western democratic countries for investigation. This chapter goes on to discuss the rationale for choosing interviews as a data collection method, and to introduce data analysis methods that combine deductive thematic data analysis with inductive data analysis. Deductive thematic data analysis was used to analyse materials related to the theoretical expectations whilst inductive data analysis was adopted accordingly for the emerging themes. Ethical considerations related to data collection, data analysis and data preservation, together with variable operationalisation, are also included in the discussion. Chapter 4 provides an overview of contemporary Chinese migration flows to Western democratic countries. The chapter starts by providing some historical information on Chinese migration to Western democratic countries. It then discusses Chinese migration to the four selected Western countries. Importantly, the chapter also presents and examines the complex set of reasons that underpin contemporary Chinese migration flows to Western democratic countries.

The findings of this study are presented in the next four chapters. Chapter 5 presents the findings relating to political issues and the legal environments in China that are perceived to have triggered rich Chinese emigration. These include the common political considerations behind the migration of wealthy Chinese and the specific issues that caused the flight of many private entrepreneurs under Xi Jinping's leadership. The chapter also includes a discussion of the findings on the weak protection of private property as another important driver, and on how corruption and China's legal environment for business also contributed to the migration of wealthy Chinese. Chapter 6 sets out the findings on systemic education problems in China as primary push factors for the migration of wealthy Chinese. Chapter 7 then presents some unexpected findings that arose from the data, including the identification of career development opportunities that encouraged younger Chinese to seek employment in Western countries in particular, and the better work-life balance sought by wealthy Chinese across all age groups. Chapter 8 focuses on the issues relating to air pollution, food safety, and the medical system that are perceived by wealthy Chinese to affect their ability to live healthy lives in China.

Chapter 9 discusses the contributions and implications of this research for the relevant research fields. The findings on the political considerations of wealthy Chinese migrants in general are discussed, with a particular focus on their discontent about the tight control under Xi Jinping's leadership of private entrepreneurs. The finding on the heterogeneous demographic characteristics of wealthy Chinese is included in the discussion, as it contradicts previous studies which treated Chinese migrants as a homogenous group. The mixed migration objectives of wealthy Chinese are also discussed. The conclusion provides a brief overview of the findings, key contributions, and limitations of the present study, and suggests some avenues for further research.

Chapter 1: Reasons to Migrate: A Review of the Literature

This chapter provides an overivew of the existing research on the macro and micro level social, economic and political factors, which have been widely assumed to be important drivers for international migration. Migration policies are considered to be among the important factors driving international migration, and are included in the discussion[2]. This chapter also presents a discussion on lifestyle migrants, which benefits the research topic by providing some theoretical insight into the possible reasons for the migration of wealthy Chinese. As this study investigates the reasons for the migration of wealthy Chinese using the push-pull model, the theory of push-pull factors is also included in the discussion. Moreover, a theoretical discussion of cost-benefit calculations might offer insights into the rationale for the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese. In essence, the key concepts in international migration studies and the categories into which migrants can be placed are crucial to understanding the specific reasons why individuals or households leave their country, which are discussed first in this chapter.

Key Concepts

This section provides a discussion of the key concepts deployed in the thesis. International migration, and the definitions and categories relative to the research question, are thus discussed in the following paragraphs. The existence of inequality in the value of citizenship of different countries is considered to be a motivating force for individuals in Global South countries to acquire citizenship in wealthy democracies (Harpaz, 2015). Hence, it is worth introducing the concept of citizenship into the present discussion. As suggested by previous studies, a rise in the number of urban middle class in conjunction with China's three-decade of fast economic growth has constituted a source of Chinese migrants to countries in the West (Li, 2005; Zhou et al., 2019). The concept of the middle class is also included in the discussion.

Migration and Migrants

The International Organization on Migration (IOM) adopts an inclusive definition of migration as follows: 'The movement of persons away from their place of usual residence, either across an international border or within a State, temporarily or permanently and for a variety of reasons' (IOM, 2021). In the literature, international migration is defined as 'the movement of people to another country, leading to temporary or permanent resettlement' (Bartram, Poros and Monforte, 2014, p. 4). More specifically, international

[2] As this thesis sets out to investigate social, economic, political, and environmental factors in the migration of wealthy Chinese, migration policies are not in the scope of the investigation.

migration is ‘the movement of individuals and groups from one country, state or nation to another, to reside elsewhere at least on a temporary basis, often more permanently, the purpose is more than a visit or tourism’ (O’Reilly, 2012, p. 1). Four key components are explicitly identified in the definitions just mentioned: people, crossing borders, periods of stay, and purpose. At the individual level, an international migrant is deemed to be: ‘Any person who changes his or her usual residence and stays in the country of destination at least one year’ (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 1998, pp. 9–10). Migrants ‘include those of foreign birth, foreign citizenship or those who have moved to a new country temporarily or to settle for the long term’ (Lima, 2017, p. 12). Due to human movement beyond national borders, international migrants ‘have less attachment to specific geographical places’ (Stones *et al.*, 2019, p. 58).

The definitions and categories applied to migrants are always contested due to the different criteria used by scholars. Lima (2017) categorises migrants based on the period of stay attached to their acceptance by receiving countries, and labels them as ‘temporary or permanent’ migrants. Undocumented migrants are individuals ‘who have overstayed their visas’ and those ‘who cross international borders without being detected’ (Lima, 2017, p. 14). These migrants could therefore be categorised as illegal. Oliven (2016) groups migrants from the viewpoint of their financial conditions and motivations: when migrants embark on their journey seeking economic gain, they are thus labelled ‘economic migrants’. When they are in search of better education, they could be placed into the group of ‘international students’. With regard to economic migrants, a similar criterion has been adopted by several scholars (Dustmann *et al.*, 2017), while the definition used by the United Nations is slightly different. An economic migrant crosses a border voluntarily attempting to seek better economic opportunities (UNHCR, 2018). Broadly speaking, those who have already completed tertiary education, incorporating language knowledge and work experience, are categorised as highly-skilled professionals in migration studies (Csedö, 2008).

Forced migration, including refugee flows, asylum seekers, and other forms of human displacement, are the result of a number of factors. Wars, conquests, and political struggles have been widely identified as the most common causes of forced migration (Castles, 2003; Dustmann *et al.*, 2017; Lima, 2017). More precisely, forced migrants mainly comprise the residents of refugee camps outside their native country, recent repatriates, internally displaced persons, and besieged people, who fully depend on international relief agencies and fall into the category of ‘involuntary migrants’ (Wood, 1994). Conversely, economic migrants, who make their own migratory decisions, are defined as ‘voluntary migrants’ (Dustmann *et al.*, 2017). According to the definition given by the United Nations, refugees are individuals who flee from their country in fear of persecution, conflict, violence, or other circumstances, and who require international protection (UNHCR, 2018). In short, refugees are forced to move to somewhere outside their country of origin, largely due to situations such as wars and conflicts, which are likely to pose a risk to their lives

(Dustmann *et al.*, 2017). In return, those migrants are granted the official status of asylum seekers by the receiving countries because of humanitarian considerations (Dustmann *et al.*, 2017).

Temporary migrants became common in the 19th century, an era of mass global migration, including 'indentured or contract labour, regulated seasonal migration of foreign workers, and temporary foreign worker programs' (Cook-Martín, 2019, p. 1393). In more recent times, the German government recruited guest workers in the early 1990s to resolve labour shortages in certain sectors (Joppke, 2001). Prior research has acknowledged that governments and receiving countries prefer temporary migration to permanent as the former comes with low integration costs and is more acceptable to their citizens (Castles, 2014). A certain proportion of temporary workers have become permanent residents in the host societies: for example, European guest workers became permanent settlers amid the outbreak of the 1973 oil crisis (Castles, 2014). More recently, many temporary workers in agriculture or construction from Eastern Europe became permanent settlers in West European countries after residing for several years in the same country and expanding their stay (Gherghina, 2021). Thus, new temporalities of migration not only include the older typologies of temporary workers such as guest workers and seasonal labour, but also encompass 'international students, domestic carers, professional global knowledge workers, as well as those engaged in forced migrations' (Stevens, 2019, p. 296). Nowadays, as many governments such as Australia and the United States in the West provide temporary workers with pathways to permanent residency statuses, the boundaries between temporary transients and permanent migrants have been blurred (Castles, 2014; Stevens, 2019).

From the 1960s onwards, a large number of migrants from the UK and Germany, together with considerable numbers from other Northern European countries including the Netherlands, Belgium, and Switzerland, moved to countries in Southern Europe (Gustafson, 2008; Benson and O'Reilly, 2009, 2016; Torkington, 2012). The emergence of this social phenomenon has received considerable scholarly attention, and these earlier migrants who were not covered by migration typologies have been theoretically conceptualised as lifestyle migrants (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009, 2016; Torkington, 2012). This migration phenomenon has been defined as consumption-led, tourism-related, and leisure-based, and as retirement migration, residential migration, amenity migration, or privileged migration (Croucher, 2012; Torkington, 2012; Rainer, 2019). These migrants generally comprise retirees, younger adventure-seekers, and those seeking an economic opportunity in a global marketplace (Croucher, 2012). They are 'relatively affluent individuals of all ages, moving either part-time or full-time to places that, for various reasons, signify, for the migrants, a better quality of life' (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009, p. 609). Lifestyle migrants share some common features with other migrants, but were considered by scholars as 'migrants of privilege' because they can afford to choose to live and form their subjectivities across the borders of two or more nation-states at will (Croucher, 2012). In comparison with other types of migrants, they have both re-settled across

international borders and sustained multiple transnational ties, and economic factors have widely been assumed to have been predominant in their decision-making (Croucher, 2012).

The conceptual framework of lifestyle migrants tends to be associated with privilege, wealth, and whiteness, reflecting their home country's hierarchy in the Global North (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009, 2016; Torkington, 2012), so it seems useful to explore wealthy Chinese through the lens of lifestyle because doing so reflects the rising global economic status of their home country (China). However, wealthy mainland Chinese have arguably been defined as lifestyle migrants in some prior studies because they have some lifestyle considerations and their primary concern is generally not to seek economic gain through migration (Liu, 2015; Liu-Farrer, 2016; Huang, 2017; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). Conceptually, the term 'lifestyle migrants' is deemed 'an analytical tool' which provides 'an alternative way of thinking about migration' rather than seeking to 'capture a discrete or homogenous category of migrants' (Benson and O'Reilly, 2016, p. 20). Since the term 'lifestyle migrants' is a conceptual framework and an analytical tool, it is inappropriate to use it to define a particular and relatively diverse group of migrants like wealthy Chinese. Hence, lifestyle migrants are not a focus of this study.

Migrants who intend to return home have been called 'circular migrants', 'searchers', or 'nomads' because of their unclear future plans (Luthra, Platt and Salamońska, 2018). This group of migrants includes mainly highly educated younger individuals who take advantage of free movement by moving abroad temporarily and spontaneously, and who are relatively less economically motivated (Luthra, Platt and Salamońska, 2018). Fiji Indian immigrants in Australia are also labelled 'astronauts' because these elite women have maintained two households and shuttle constantly between the host country and Fiji (Chandra, 2005). In a similar vein, 'astronaut' families are prevalent among Hong Kong migrants, and are presented in particular by well-paid professionals and bureaucrats who have technically settled in Canada, but carry on their jobs in Hong Kong (Skeldon, 1994, 1996). 'Astronaut' migrants constantly shuttle between sending and receiving countries in order to balance their family life and career. According to earlier research, 'astronaut' families are more prevalent among rich Chinese migrants (Yeoh, Lin and Holloway, 2013). Hence, examining the definition and characteristics of 'astronaut' migrants is likely to be helpful in gaining insight into this new migration phenomenon in mainland China.

The movement of migrants also raises questions about 'national identities and social membership' (Bartram, Poros and Monforte, 2014, p. 6). Foreignness is undoubtedly a key feature of international migration (Bartram, Poros and Monforte, 2014). In brief, international migration is driven by a complex set of social, economic, cultural, political, and other factors. Thus, it has been argued that it is better understood as a 'social phenomenon' rather than a 'geographic phenomenon' (Bartram, Poros and Monforte, 2014, p. 4). The scholars mentioned above place particular emphasis on the sociological characteristics of

international migration by identifying race, identity, and citizenship within its definition (Bartram, Poros and Monforte, 2014).

International migration involves two or more states; therefore, at least two countries are involved in the process (Croucher, 2012). The country from which migrants depart is known as the 'sending country' or 'the country of origin' in transitional migration studies, while the terms 'receiving country', 'host country' or 'destination country' are used to label the state to which migrants have migrated (IOM, 2011). Due to the crossing of national borders, states and governments are key actors in directing, mobilising, and controlling international migration flows. They have been able to exert considerable controls over migration flows and decide what types of immigrants can arrive by tailoring and changing their immigration policies (Anderson and Keith, 2014).

Citizenship

Citizens, by definition, 'are persons who live in a national territory by right and participate fully in its governance and mutual benefits' (Freeman, 1997, p. 17). The early model of citizenship is regarded as the perpetual and immutable relationship between individuals and the state, having its roots in the laws of nature (Peter J. Spiro, 1997; Chung, 2017). More recently, 'citizenship is posited as normatively important in liberal, democratic states, or functional for securing rights and benefits' (Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017, p. 841). The core components of citizenship concern 'the legitimacy of a political unit bestowing rights, the political participation and equal treatment of its members' (Bauböck and Guiraudon, 2009, p. 440). In short, citizenship is institutionally defined, territorially grounded, and comprises a combination of status, rights, and identity; individual states determine who their citizens are and how such membership can be acquired (Joppke, 2007; Ataç, Rygiel and Stierl, 2016; Bauböck, 2019; de Haas et al., 2019; Harpaz and Mateos, 2019). In a real-world setting, citizenship by birth is like a property regime that plays a fundamental role in defining arbitrary and unequal access to scarce resources, opportunities, and security (Shachar, 2007).

Citizenship can be simply defined as the political and legal status of individuals with the state (Bauböck, 1992; Peter J. Spiro, 1997; Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017). Politically speaking, equality of citizenship is based on a particular membership (Bauböck and Guiraudon, 2009), and it is closely tied to positive conceptions of freedom as collective self-government (Geddes, 2004). It is therefore perceived as being more closely tied to political rights than to social and civil rights (Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017). More recently, it has been observed that 'citizenship in liberal democracies is ultimately premised on human rights, i.e., the defence of the essential rights of individuals by the state' (Ong, 2022, p. 600). For example, 'rights of free movement, choice of residence and employment between associated states can be seen as an initial and important element of a common political membership' (Bauböck, 1992, p. 53). In a welfare state,

citizenship also enables individuals who enjoy it to access medical care and the state school system (Ong, 2022). From a legal perspective, citizenship is regarded as 'a special legal status that signals a relationship between an individual and a sovereign state' because it is regarded as a form of membership in a political and geographic community (Bauböck, 2010; Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017, p. 824). With the global rise of dual citizenship, the legal ties between an individual and a state have loosened because 'the basic principle of state membership is being redefined from exclusive and territorial to overlapping and portable' (Harpaz and Mateos, 2019, p. 843).

With the growing toleration of multiple citizenships and the establishment of supranational citizenship by the European Union, citizenship is no longer regarded as a bundle of identity, rights, duties, and political engagement that links individuals to a particular state (Joppke, 2010). Citizens from second- and third-tier countries can achieve upward mobility and gain access to the higher-value citizenship of a first-tier state by acquiring a second citizenship in a Western democracy (Harpaz, 2019; Harpaz and Mateos, 2019). For individuals from non-democratic countries, acquiring a second citizenship in a Western democracy could be seen as a compensatory citizenship, in that by doing so they are 'making up for deficits in the original citizenship in terms of opportunities, security, rights, and travel freedom' (Harpaz, 2019, p. 898; Harpaz and Mateos, 2019). Thus, an increasing number of people from countries in the Global South are acquiring a second citizenship in a Western democracy for strategic purposes (Harpaz and Mateos, 2019).

On the other hand, states also seek out so-called elite migrants, namely 'wealth-bearing and talented foreigners' to enhance their economic development competitiveness (Ong, 2006, p. 501; Mavelli, 2018). In doing so, capital-linked migration is introduced, in that Western democratic countries sell residence status to wealthy individuals from countries in the Global South (Wong, 1993, 2003); in return, investment migrants receive 'economic citizenship'. Terminologically, 'economic citizenship is the process of granting citizenship, or residency, to foreign nationals who have a stated sum for investing in the migrant receiving country' (M.Jolly, Knapp and Kusumastanto, 1998, p. 2). Put simply, the introduction of citizenship-by-investment in many Western countries marks a departure from the traditional foundation of citizenship, which strictly adhered to social and cultural ties, as capital is now often used as the sole condition for granting citizenship to investors, and requirements such as residence, language skills, or ancestry are often waived (Shachar and Bauböck, 2014; Barbulescu, 2018). In fact, investment citizenship enables very few affluent individuals and their families from countries in the Global South to seek citizenship in countries in the West, and it immobilises less well-off individuals (Barbulescu, 2018). Thus, 'citizenship is becoming more a marker of privilege in an increasingly stratified world, less a badge of equality on a landscape of democratic equality among states' (Spiro, 2019, p. 880).

The Middle Class

The middle class has its roots in European cities in the late Middle Ages, and became a distinct class in the seventeenth century (Nathan, 2016). The formation and evolution of the middle class are closely associated with the modern nation-state and democracy, and it has a well-established identity (Nathan, 2016). Theoretically, the middle class is regarded as an independent class, and can pose challenges and present resistance to authoritarian regimes given that societal transformation amidst economic development can empower it and promote political autonomy (Lipset, 1981; Huntington, 1991; Tang, Woods and Zhao, 2009; Tang, 2011). When discussing any social class, it is a socially, economically, and politically constructed concept because economy plays a determinant role in social formation, but politics and ideology are also contributing factors (Poulantzas and Fernbach, 2018). The middle class is perceived as having a political inclination towards democracy due to a combination of material interests and cultural values (Lipset, 1981; Nathan, 2016). More specifically, its members support the rule of law as it protects their ownership of businesses and private property, their desire for self-respect, and their preference for freedom of speech and thought that comes with an independent economic status and free access to education (Nathan, 2016).

Three decades of fast economic growth have given rise to a Chinese middle class that mainly comprises government officials, corporate managers, private business owners, and technical professionals (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Nathan, 2016). The emerging Chinese middle class differs significantly from the Western middle class in their dependency on China's party-state (Hendrischke, 2013; Nathan, 2016). They are first-generation members of that class, which re-emerged during China's opening up period in the 1980s, and did not begin to grow fast until the economic boom of the 1990s (Nathan, 2016). The Chinese middle class is seen as dependent on the party-state, and thus not as an independent class, because 'this class heavily relies on the current political economic arrangement for their relatively higher socioeconomic status and thus would not challenge the authoritarian regime' (Tang, Woods and Zhao, 2009, p. 82; Nathan, 2016).

Chinese private entrepreneurs are owners of small or medium-sized enterprises, are a key part of the Chinese middle class, and are known as the 'entrepreneur class' (Li, 2013; Yang and Dai, 2013). They 'have emerged as a new economic elite only since the start of economic reforms' and are primarily embedded in the local party-state, and only secondarily in the Chinese nation-state (Hendrischke, 2013, p. 137). Chinese private entrepreneurs depend heavily on their close ties with government officials for their ongoing survival and business success (Tang, Woods and Zhao, 2009; Li, 2013; Yang and Dai, 2013). This means that they have a stake in preserving China's one-party state because the political system has allowed them to prosper, so in turn they tend to support the existing one-party status quo (Dickson, 2007). More specifically, the entrepreneurial class and other middle classes have little interest in pushing political and social reform, as they seek economic gain and the protection of their capital investments (Dickson, 2007; Tang, Woods and Zhao, 2009). In short, China's economic development path has subjected the Chinese

middle class to a status of permanent political and economic dependence (Chen, 2002; Tang, Woods and Zhao, 2009; Tang, 2011).

Chinese private entrepreneurs were restricted from joining the Party until 2001, the year Jiang Zemin's 'Three Represents' were introduced, marking the Party's shifting strategy of ideological legitimation (Pei, 2006; Dickson, 2007; Tang, Woods and Zhao, 2009). Both Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao prioritised economic modernisation for China as they saw attaining the fast economic growth as a foundation for the Party's legitimacy, and the Party therefore tactically integrated itself with the private sector by co-opting private entrepreneurs (Dickson, 2007, 2008a). Thus, a group of so-called 'red capitalists' was co-opted into the Party to facilitate economic growth and job creation, as well as to prevent them from becoming an organised opposition (Dickson, 2007). Approximately, a third of private entrepreneurs had become CCP party members by 2004 (Dickson, 2008a; Li, 2019).

In reality, these private entrepreneurs 'are excluded from the political power that wields political and economic power through control of the central party-state and the central state-owned enterprise sector' (Hendrischke, 2013, p. 136). Importantly, fear and suspicion of the possible influence of private entrepreneurs on the Party have persisted, as their alleged political ambitions appear to have been identified as a threat to the Party (Dickson, 2007, 2008a). Although they possess an unprecedented amount of economic capital, these entrepreneurs differ from their counterparts in the West in terms of their socio-political status, as they have accrued little social and political influence compared with government officials and the CEOs of state-owned enterprises (Li, 2013). Equally importantly, they are heavily reliant on state agencies and political elites for their continued survival and prosperity, placing them at a distinct disadvantage due to being exposed to the bureaucratic corruption and political harassment associated with China's party-state system (Fan, 2002; Tang, Woods and Zhao, 2009; Tang, 2011). The stark contrast between their economically privileged status and their social and political influence provides additional evidence of private entrepreneurs' subordination within China's one-party state, a situation that is likely to undermine their confidence in being able to pursue a better quality of life and business success in China.

Push and Pull Factors for Migration: An Overview

International migration has been predominately triggered by drivers that can be understood as 'forces leading to the inception of migration and the perpetuation of movement' (Van Hear, Bakewell and Long, 2018, p. 927). Such drivers are likely to be 'deeply embedded in the economic, social, political, cultural and environmental context', and they 'shape the broader context within which aspirations and desires to migrate are formed and in which people make their migration decisions-whether to move or not' (Van Hear, Bakewell and Long, 2018, pp. 930–931). In general, international migration from low-middle income countries in the Global South to high-income countries in the Global North is driven by income gaps, geographical proximity, and historical associations in tandem with political instability, natural disasters,

and the impact of climate change (Lima, 2017). Empirical research shows that internal and international migrations in modern Asia are generally driven by the same underlying forces: social and economic inequalities between regions and countries, and ecological degradation and natural disaster (Amrith, 2011). In essence, migrants choose to migrate for a complex set of reasons, and a single driver of migration is less likely to occur (Langley *et al.*, 2016).

In theoretical terms, the factors likely to influence migration decisions are defined by scholars at three levels: macro, meso, and micro (Timmerman, Hemmerechts and Marie-Lou De Clerck, 2014). Scholars from various disciplines have examined a set of determinants of international migration, including political factors such as conflicts (Richmond, 1994; Keely, 1996; Castles, 2003; Davenport, Moore and Poe, 2003), and economic issues (Massey *et al.*, 1993; Freeman and Kessler, 2008; de Haas, 2010; de Haas *et al.*, 2019). The explanations provided in one group of studies for migration flows emphasise macro level economic and political conditions both in the countries of origin and destination as causes of international migration. In contrast, another cluster of scholars explain migration flows with reference to individuals' micro level decision-making processes, and assume that a rational individual decides whether and where to move based on cost-benefit calculations (the cost of relocation versus potential job opportunities and higher wages) (Harris and Todaro, 1970; Borjas, 1989; Weiner, 1992; Skeldon, 1997). In practice, the factors at the macro level are generally in coordination with meso factors such as social networks, and also with micro level factors such as individual education and socioeconomic status in directing and shaping international migration flows (Timmerman, Hemmerechts and Marie-Lou De Clerck, 2014).

At the macro level, structural factors including immigration policies, a country's economic performance, and a country's political situation are deemed important in influencing individual decisions to move (Borjas, 1989; Timmerman, Hemmerechts and Marie-Lou De Clerck, 2014; Mas Giralt, 2017). Earlier research has shown that political instability, community insecurity, and economic factors are the main determinants of the flows and patterns of international migration over the past two decades (Chandra, 2005). However, socioeconomic security has subsequently been negatively affected by political instability, and social, economic, and political factors have exerted considerable influence on international migration (Chandra, 2005). In theory, the incentives for migrating are 'intrinsically mixed economic and political at the same time' (Ahmed, 1997, p. 172). For example, one study has shown that migration outflow from Kosovo was mainly triggered by weak governance and a grim economic outlook in the country of origin (Möllers *et al.*, 2017).

At the meso level, diasporic communities remain important in relation to migrants as they 'are intertwined to affect processes and outcomes of immigrant transnationalism' (Zhou and Liu, 2016, p. 48). For example, the Romanian MPs engaged in a dynamic relationship with the diasporic communities by responding to emigrants' demands and problems, aiming to seek their economic and electoral support

(Gherghina, Tap and Soare, 2022). In fact, migrants' socio-cultural skills and shared interests are likely to facilitate networking as well as improve access to and maintenance of diverse social ties (Ryan and Mulholland, 2014). For example, Chinese diasporic communities in America and Singapore not only serve as a linkage between individual migrants and state actors, but are also a means of simultaneous engagement with migrants' host society and their homeland, having become particularly notable in a rising China (Zhou and Liu, 2016). In the context of the Spanish economic crisis, empirical research illustrates that the increase in Bolivian return migrants is mainly due to their lack of support network in Spain and the existence of transnational families (Parella and Petroff, 2019). A meso level institutional analysis also shows that the interplay between labour migration schemes and the growing private brokerage sector in the context of the privatisation of migration control and management has catalysed a labour trafficking practice in Israel (Kemp and Raijman, 2014).

At the micro level, individuals' decision-making has greatly influenced the migratory pattern and processes, and migration orders are shaped by numerous macro and micro factors that encompass individual decision-making, motivations, concerns about safety and security, migration regimes, and the macro political economy (Van Hear, 1998). It has been acknowledged that migrants' human capital (particularly their education, work experience, and gender) are likely to influence their decisions to migrate, the migration process, and the potential economic gains. On the other hand, inequality has widely been assumed to be exacerbated by the existence of different types of citizenship, and highly skilled professionals and wealthy elites tend to move from less economically developed countries in order to resettle in developed countries attempting to reform citizenship (Bauböck, 2019). For example, earlier research reported that well-educated partner women in West Germany have made relative income gains from migration (Nisic and Melzer, 2016). Regardless of gender, highly educated and qualified skilled workers have been observed to foster their career progress through geographical relocation (Nisic and Melzer, 2016).

Transnational migration is largely triggered by the 'push factors' present in countries of origin and the 'pull factors' in countries of residence (Borjas, 1989; Stones *et al.*, 2019). These push factors have been described as the 'negative elements in the home country' which migrants wish to escape in order to take advantage of 'positive opportunities and experiences' in the host country (Stones *et al.*, 2019, p. 51). More specifically, economic hardship, religious or political oppression, the lack of opportunities to secure a better life, and the desire for adventure are among the primary factors that push individuals to leave their homeland (Oliven, 2016). On the other hand, a potential destination country which is perceived to offer better job and business opportunities, greater religious and political freedoms, and a broader cultural or intellectual social environment, also attracts some individuals to migrate (Oliven, 2016). Theoretically, the chosen push factor 'proves more or less enduring, typically reconfigures the place of departure as restrictive in significant ways, and reframes elsewhere as liberating' (Stones *et al.*, 2019, p. 52).

All these factors interconnect and intersect with each other at various levels to collectively shape migration decision-making processes, and 'any of the economic, political and environmental disparities – or taken collectively, disparities in human security' are likely to drive individuals to migrate (Van Hear, Bakewell and Long, 2018, p. 932). In short, a primary motivation of the majority of migrants, no matter what category they fall into, is the desire to secure a better life elsewhere (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009, 2016). Job opportunities in the desired destination matter to potential migrants, and non-economic incentives also sometimes influence decisions to migrate (Clark and Maas, 2015). In other words, apart from job opportunities, family needs, communities, and lifestyles, all of which are non-economic factors, are also crucial in migrants' decisions on where and how to migrate (Clark and Maas, 2015).

Economic Factors

Neoclassical economics emphasises on the importance of economic factors and 'inequalities related to the market formation and the structure of the global economy' in transnational migration (Dalsin, 2016, p. 164). The increasing demand for cheap labour in developed countries has been seen as a main driver triggering human movement across national borders (Langley *et al.*, 2016). The economic growth in the receiving country also has quite a strong effect on the decisions of potential migrants (Docquier, Peri and Ruyssen, 2014; Langley *et al.*, 2016). More specifically, income differentials between the origin and destination, and job opportunities in the destination have been considered crucial factors in the decision-making of potential migrants (Borjas, 1989; Hatton, 1995; Docquier, Peri and Ruyssen, 2014; Clark and Maas, 2015; Langley *et al.*, 2016).

In theory, a potential migrant is regarded as a rational decision-maker, with his or her migration decisions being made on the basis of careful cost-benefit calculations, precisely comparing the costs and benefits of residing in the country of origin with those of the desired destination (Ibáñez and Vélez, 2008; Docquier, Peri and Ruyssen, 2014; Clark and Maas, 2015). These cost-benefit calculations not only involve differences in wages and employment opportunities, but also include consideration of other factors such as age, gender, etc. Moreover, income does not solely mean earned wages, but also includes access to education, health, and housing, and so forth (Skeldon, 1997). These social factors work together with the economic incentives that are seen as key determinants in migration decisions (Skeldon, 1997). In practice, migrants spontaneously weigh the costs of moving and the potential benefits that are likely to be generated through migration before reaching a decision to move. In abstract, factors such as travel costs, the time spent searching for a new job and the possibility of being employed, immigration policies, and language barriers, are all considered collectively (Borjas, 1989; Weiner, 1992). Meanwhile, the potential benefits which might be generated through migration such as higher wages, better employment conditions and so

forth, are considered more thoroughly throughout the decision-making processes (Borjas, 1987; Weiner, 1992). In contrast to an individual's migration decisions, household migration theory focuses on the analysis of family migration strategies that aim to diversify the sources of family members' income to safeguard against risks (Massey *et al.*, 1993; Keely, 2000). To accomplish this, families or households attempt to maximise their income while minimising the risks associated with the relocation problems of family members (Massey *et al.*, 1993; Keely, 2000).

Neoclassical theory is particularly useful in explaining the migration flow from the Global South to the Global North, a process also referring to individuals moving from developing countries to developed countries. The migration flow from developing to developed countries has primarily been triggered by wage differentials (Langley *et al.*, 2016). For example, earlier research has shown that better income opportunities, higher growth rates, and increased short-run employment rates in OECD countries have been key drivers for migration flows from non-OECD countries to OECD countries (Ruyssen, Everaert and Rayp, 2012; Docquier, Peri and Ruyssen, 2014). It has been acknowledged that the large income gaps between Asia, Latin America, and the United States have caused a significant increase in the number of migrants looking for employment in the US since 1965 (Borjas, 1989). Similarly, the influx of migrants flows from Central and Eastern Europe to Western Europe has primarily been driven by better job opportunities, higher income, and the prospect of better living standards in Western Europe (Ruyssen, Everaert and Rayp, 2012; Park, 2015).

On the other hand, the economic insecurity in Eastern and Central European countries brought by the demise of the Soviet Union led to a mass exodus of migrants from the regions concerned. Indeed, high unemployment and poorly-paid jobs in Poland were significant drivers for Polish people to seek better job opportunities and higher incomes in industrialised countries in Western Europe (Elrick and Lewandowska, 2008). Despite not being low-skilled workers, well-qualified doctoral scientists from Bulgaria and Poland moving to Western European countries have been viewed as economically-driven (Guth and Gill, 2008). Scant job opportunities in Poland and Bulgaria each year have driven young PhD graduates to leave their countries and undertake science careers in Germany and the United Kingdom (Guth and Gill, 2008).

In slight contrast to the general migration outflow from Eastern Europe to Western and Southern Europe since 2004, the year when European enlargement took place, irregular post-Socialist migration flows from Romania to Italy were primarily triggered by job insecurities and a noticeable decline in living standards brought by the restructuring of local industry in Borsa before 2004 (Anghel, 2008). When a radical restructuring of the mining industry was undertaken in 1997, a large number of Romanians in Borsa lost their jobs, and chose to migrate to Milan to escape the growing impoverishment in their hometown (Anghel, 2008). However, the impoverished social and economic conditions amidst the reform of the mining industry not only existed in Borsa, but nationwide. The youth in rural areas of Romania were badly

hit by the economic crisis discussed above and grim job prospects, and thus chose to look for job opportunities in foreign countries (Horváth, 2008).

Broadly speaking, the labour market and economic inequalities between Eastern Europe and Western Europe have led to the migration flows between these two regions. More specifically, the stark income gaps between them are the main driving force for Central and Eastern Europeans to look for job opportunities in Western Europe (Ruyssen, Everaert and Rayp, 2012; Park, 2015). In comparison with their European and North American counterparts, Asian countries have significantly benefitted from the expansion of global trade and commerce in recent decades, leading to a huge imbalance in economic growth and job opportunities which has acted as a crucial catalyst for both international and internal migration (Amrith, 2011). Strong economic performance, democratic political systems, and welfare provision are among the key factors attracting guest workers to East Asian countries (Surak, 2017).

To sum up, migration studies initially developed theories relating to the economy, and deemed economic disparities across states and regions to represent a global driving force of international migration. As more people obtain the necessary financial capability in line with countries' economic growth, emigration is likely to occur (Cummings *et al.*, 2015). Thanks to rapid economic growth within the past three decades, the emerging middle class in China has accumulated considerable wealth and been able to undertake the cross-border travel at will. Thus, a brief review of structural economic factors could shed light on the root causes of Chinese migration. As most rich Chinese seem to have accumulated their wealth before their departure, they have been widely categorised as non-economic migrants, and a review of factors beyond economic issues could therefore be useful to understand the migration incentives of rich Chinese.

Political Factors

Conflict, insecurity, and political instability are also viewed as key drivers for migration from specific regions, and are viewed as having a decisive effect on migration flows (Wood, 1994; Crawley, 2010; Langley *et al.*, 2016). The most common reasons widely regarded as driving forced migrants to flee from their native communities are as follows: 1) political instability, war and persecution; 2) life-threatening economic decline and ecological crisis; and 3) ethnic, religious, and tribal conflicts (Wood, 1994). Data collected from 129 countries illustrated that a serious threat to personal integrity is the most significant driver pushing refugees to flee from their own country (Davenport, Moore and Poe, 2003). Specifically, the threat to personal integrity, the threat incurred by dissidents, and the joint state–dissident threat are thought to have been the most prominent drivers of mass displacement between 1964 and 1989 (Davenport, Moore and Poe, 2003). Likewise, refugees and asylum seekers are forced to abandon their homeland either temporarily or permanently to escape violent discrimination, civil unrest, and other life-threatening

economic and ecological conditions (Wood, 1994; Castles, 2003). In this respect, 'displacement is a reaction to a violent attack and not a voluntary decision' as families are forced to flee from their homeland to save their lives, and to a lesser extent, protect their assets (Ibáñez and Vélez, 2008, p. 662).

Prior research shows that the tough social, economic, and political conditions brought by the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 led to several waves of migration outflows from many post-communist states from the early 1990s onwards (Anghel, 2008; Garapich, 2008; Park, 2015; Lima, 2017). In addition, a refugee crisis in Europe resulted from the Balkan wars and the demise of the former Yugoslavia during the early 1990s, leading to the influx of refugees from Eastern Europe to Western Europe (Dustmann *et al.*, 2017). More recently, the Arab Spring also caused the displacement of a large number of Africans (Dustmann *et al.*, 2017). In sum, the influx of refugees into Western Europe in recent decades has resulted from conflicts and instability in the former communist Eastern European bloc and Northern Africa.

More recently, the case study of Lithuania suggests that political conditions are likely to exert a substantial influence on the migration decisions of Lithuanians (Park, 2015). To a certain extent, citizens in Lithuania are forcibly deprived of their right to political participation, subsequently resulting in high dissatisfaction with governing political institutions and distrust of the state and statehood (Park, 2015). On the other hand, clan politics in the country have significantly impeded the process toward democracy and justice, and the freedom and common goods of its citizens have been ignored by the state (Park, 2015). In the end, Lithuanians have been left feeling without hope of improving political conditions because structural political reforms are perceived to be unlikely to take place (Park, 2015). In theory, social prosperity in a country is closely tied to political conditions. Citizens' living standards may be unlikely to improve due to obstacles brought by the state, which prevent them from enjoying a better quality of life in a socially unjust society. Hence, migration is chosen to escape unsatisfactory social and political situations in the homeland (Park, 2015).

War, conflict and persecution are regarded as the most significant push factors that drive refugees to flee from their countries and seek asylum in the UK (Crawley, 2010). In the receiving countries, only limited options are available to forced migrants when they flee from their home countries, and the pull factors that attract forced migrants to the potential destinations appear relatively less noticeable (Crawley, 2010). Nevertheless, the perceived independence of the judiciary, the rule of law, and public order have been seen as the primary pull factors which attract forced migrants to seek safety and asylum in the United Kingdom (Crawley, 2010). Earlier research has shown that people from the upper and upper-middle classes were forced to flee from Cuba to America between 1960 and 1976 largely due to a number of push factors (Pedraza-Bailey, 1985). Changes in government policy were the root cause of this elite emigration from Cuba, as due to the nationalisation of industries in Cuba, bringing all industrial, trade, and service activities into the hands of the state, richer Cubans risked losing their private assets, so they chose to flee to America

to protect their private assets (Pedraza-Bailey, 1985). The rich Cubans went into exile also because they feared having their children educated under the authoritarian regime (Pedraza-Bailey, 1985).

Two large civil conflicts that erupted in the 20th century led to a large number of displacement in Colombia, accounting for 7 percent of its entire population in 2005 (Ibáñez and Vélez, 2008). Furthermore, the political confrontations and unrest, unresolved land issues, and the uneven distribution of resources since the 19th century were also considered key drivers behind the mass of displaced Colombians (Ibáñez and Vélez, 2008). In particular, illegal armed groups carried out regular attacks against civilians and selective homicides were responsible for forced displacement (Ibáñez and Vélez, 2008). Similarly, it has been acknowledged that severe politically motivated violence was also a root cause for internal and international forced displacement involving Guatemalans between the late 1970s and the early 1980s (Morrison and May, 1994). These examples suggest that the fear of political violence has a strong effect on individuals' migration decisions in specific regions. Approximately one million Eritrean refugees living abroad left their homeland as a result of the struggle to gain independence from Ethiopia and the constant conflicts with their Ethiopian neighbour (Arnone, 2008). These Eritreans who fled from their country were mostly in search of safety and security for their families and themselves (Arnone, 2008). These Eritreans chose to move to Northern and Western Europe mainly because of their perception of the prospect of a better life. Many Eritreans aimed to earn money in Milan by moving to the city before the 1990s, attempting to finance the liberation of Eritrea (Arnone, 2008). Overall, the constant conflict pushed many Eritreans out of the country in search of a better life in Northern and Western Europe.

Hong Kong Chinese, in particular those forming the economic elites, also had a strong desire to emigrate due to the civil unrest that erupted in Hong Kong in the late 1960s (Wickberg, 1994; Skeldon, 1995; Wong and Ng, 2002). Despite the fact that Hong Kong was still under British colonial rule, the Hong Kong Chinese views on prosperity and stability were significantly undermined by the changeable political landscapes in mainland China. During that period, there were fears that the ongoing upheaval in China amid the Cultural Revolution were likely to cause social and economic chaos in Hong Kong, so many of the economic elites thus chose to leave Hong Kong (Skeldon, 1995). Hence, it could be concluded that migration outflow from Hong Kong during that period was political in nature (Wong and Salaff, 1995). Another mass exodus of Hong Kong migrants to Western countries occurred in the late 1980s as a result of deep concerns about the impending return to Chinese sovereignty in 1997 (Skeldon, 1994). This new wave of migration was comprised mainly of well-educated and highly-skilled Hong Kong Chinese with considerable wealth, who were therefore labelled 'reluctant exiles' (Skeldon, 1994). As Hong Kong Chinese deeply distrusted the communist regime in mainland China, their choice to leave Hong Kong was an attempt to avoid the political risk posed by the impending 1997 handover (Skeldon, 1994; Wong, 2003). Further, the 1989 Tiananmen student protests and a flare-up in the relations between China and Taiwan cast

a shadow over political stability in the region, and many business people in Hong Kong and Taiwan thus chose to migrate to Australia and Canada in the 1990s (Wong, 2003). As well as political motivations, the decision of Hong Kong Chinese to migrate was partly due to concern for the future of the next generation as they wanted their children to grow up happily in a relatively stable political environment (Skeldon, 1994).

In the case study of Hong Kong Chinese, and Taiwanese, the perceived political instability associated with the communist regime in their homeland became a driving force pushing them to resettle in Western democratic countries. Among Chinese from the mainland, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, Chinese communist rule has cast a significant shadow over the quality of lives which Chinese people believe they can pursue. Thus, it is worth investigating the political incentives behind the migration of rich mainlanders in this study.

Migration Policies

Due to the crossing of national borders by international migrants, scholars suggest that both the countries of origin and destination constrain and stimulate migration flows across their national borders by altering their migration policies from time to time (Borjas, 1989; Garapich, 2008). In particular, the immigration policies in place in Western democratic countries have directed and shaped international migration flows from countries in the Global South. With respect to the aggregate determinants of migration flows, strategic immigration policies that are designed to achieve economic growth in advanced economies, not only function as 'pull' factors, but also determine which immigrants are allowed to arrive (Schain, 2008). Receiving countries tend to attract economic migrants through the introduction of tailored immigration policies mostly designed to support economic growth, and especially to address the labour market shortages (Dustmann *et al.*, 2017).

As was discussed above, the enlargement of the European Union and the principle of free movement in the Europe, especially across the Schengen countries, have triggered an exodus of migrants from Central and Eastern Europe to countries in Western and Southern Europe since the collapse of the communist bloc (Anghel, 2008; Garapich, 2008; Guth and Gill, 2008; Docquier, Peri and Ruyssen, 2014; Park, 2015). For instance, a New Employment Act introduced in Germany in 2004 and a series of regularisation programmes introduced by the Italian Government between 1986 and 2002 removed legal obstacles for Polish migrants to seek employment in Germany and Italy (Elrick and Lewandowska, 2008). Similarly, the British government liberalised UK immigration rules in a way that enabled Polish migrants to look for job opportunities in the United Kingdom (Garapich, 2008; Lima, 2017). With a view to solving a shortage of highly skilled workers, selective immigration policies such as the Highly Skilled Migrants programmes adopted by the UK, appeared to be designed to attract highly skilled workers and talented professionals

(Schain, 2008; Lima, 2017). The liberalised immigration policies just discussed have also attracted a large number of Romanian labour migrants to work abroad (Gherghina, 2021). Regarding migration outflows from Eastern Europe, the relaxation of immigration rules in states across Western Europe encouraged workers and highly skilled talents from Central and Eastern Europe to resettle in Western Europe. Conversely, British retirees resettling in East Asian countries were facilitated by specific policies in those countries which encourage them to do so (Stones *et al.*, 2019).

Different immigration patterns began to emerge in the United States after Amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act were introduced in 1965 (Borjas, 1989). Before the Act was in effect, the United States had adopted a controversial and discriminatory immigration policy by encouraging Europe-origin immigrants to relocate to America. The 1965 Amendments shifted migrant inflows enormously as the number of immigrants from Asia and Latin America noticeably increased (Borjas, 1989). At that particular time, Canada shifted its immigration policy by allowing Chinese with skills and money to invest in the country (Wickberg, 1994). Similarly, Australia also abandoned its discriminatory and controversial 'White Australia' immigration policy by giving Chinese immigrants permission to seek job and business opportunities (Wickberg, 1994). When large numbers of Chinese from the mainland and Hong Kong were able to move to Canada, Australia, and the United States in the late 1960s, restrictions for Asian immigrants had ended in those countries (Wickberg, 1994; Wong and Salaff, 1995). People able to flee from Hong Kong to Western countries in the late 1980s also benefited from a set of Right-of-Abode schemes adopted by Singapore, the United States, the United Kingdom, and other European countries, which were designed to offer residency status to nervous Hong Kong Chinese (Skeldon, 1994).

In an attempt to secure economic gains through the emerging study-abroad migration sector, Western countries have tailored their immigration policies to attract international students. Australia opted to align its skilled migration programmes with international graduate students in an attempt to attract a large number of students to study there, and many other OECD countries have followed in its footsteps by introducing similar schemes (Zhang, 2003; Lima, 2017; Baas, 2019). Thus, immigration policies in Western democratic countries seem to have acted as a pull factor facilitating large-scale migration flows.

Regardless of what category a migrant is placed into, the macro level factors discussed above have, to a large extent, influenced individuals' decisions to migrate. Lifestyle migrants are explored in the following section due to the influx of rich Chinese mainlanders in Western countries who are arguably labelled as 'lifestyle migrants' in some prior studies (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019).

A Better Lifestyle

Relatively affluent individuals from well-developed countries in the West are generally thought to be searching for a better quality of life rather than looking for better employment opportunities or escaping from poverty or hardship (O'Reilly, 2012). Searching for a better way of life is considered the most common motivation and characteristic of lifestyle migrants (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009, 2016; Croucher, 2012; Stones *et al.*, 2019), and financial gain seems not to be a primary driver (Croucher, 2012; Igarashi, 2015; Dalsin, 2016; Stones *et al.*, 2019). When relatively rich people in Western countries migrate to economically less developed countries, political hardship in their country of origin is not considered to be a primary push factor because transparent political systems have been well established in their own countries (Croucher, 2012).

Overwhelmingly, social factors in the country of origin are primary features in lifestyle migrant's decisions to emigrate, and they are in pursuit of a better quality of life, and freedom from prior constraints (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009; Torkington, 2012). Prior constraints in the country of origin including high crime and unemployment rates, a lack of community spirit, and a highly pressured lifestyle could subsequently lead to a decision by relatively affluent people to go abroad (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009). For instance, Japanese families seek freedom from domestic social constraints and search for 'a more relaxed, healthier and happier' lifestyle' in Hawaii (Igarashi, 2015, p. 98). Such domestic social constraints include the fast pace of life, high living costs, and a materialistic and male-dominated culture that make their lives in Japan stressful, subsequently leading them to move abroad (Igarashi, 2015). In contrast, the objective of Brazilian migrants is different. Brazilians tend to be dissatisfied with their lifestyle and career in their home country, and wish to leave behind their comfort zone and make a life change by choosing to move abroad (Dalsin, 2016). Ireland appeals to Brazilians because of the entirely different European culture and lifestyle that represents adventure (Dalsin, 2016). On the other hand, many Brazilians view Ireland as a stepping-stone to entering other European countries, partly due to its geographical convenience (Dalsin, 2016).

Economic and environmental factors in the receiving countries are also among determining factors in attracting lifestyle migrants to move. European migrants are specifically interested in moving to destinations with warmer climates, cheaper costs of living, and a perceived high quality of life (Torkington, 2012; Rainer, 2019; Spalding, 2020). In a similar fashion, North Americans have relocated to Central or Latin America in search of a relatively low cost of living, cheaper (and thus more accessible) healthcare systems, and the relative affordability of services that would not be accessible in their home countries (Hayes and Pérez-Gañánz, 2017; Rainer, 2019). For example, North Americans who move to Ecuador do so primarily due to opportunities for geographic arbitrage that enable them to offset the loss of financial security or enhance material lifestyles in retirement by taking advantage of historical structures of global inequality (Hayes, 2014; Hayes and Pérez-Gañánz, 2017).

This chapter introduces the key concepts of international migration, migrant definitions and categories, which are vital in understanding which categories wealthy Chinese might fall into. A discussion of the macro and micro level political and economic factors will help us to understand how the different social and economic conditions in China and Western democratic countries might shape the migration choices of wealthy Chinese. An analysis of migration policies is also needed to understand whether the migration policies in China and Western democratic countries might influence the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese. As this study aims to investigate the subjective reasons behind the recent Chinese migration flows to Western democratic countries, a discussion of lifestyle migrants, which is considered a new phenomenon, might offer insights into the migration motivations of wealthy Chinese beyond purely economic and political considerations. A theoretical discussion of push-pull factors and costs-benefit calculations is necessary to understand the decision-making processes of wealthy Chinese migrants.

Chapter 2: Reasons to Leave the Home Country: Theories of Migration

This chapter starts with a brief review of the existing theories concerning the reasons for migration, then goes on to examine the correlation between political corruption and variations in liberties between democratic and undemocratic countries and the causes of migration, followed by an analysis of the environmental dimension of international migration. Then separate discussions are given to mobility rights and the welfare benefits attached to citizenship in Western democracies. Prior to a discussion of the economic incentives behind international migration, a section scrutinises the educational factors driving the South-North migration flow.

Several competing theories aim to explain why individuals migrate from undemocratic to democratic countries. This chapter briefly reviews these theories, which consider political corruption, liberties and freedoms, environmental problems, the entitlement of Western citizenship in terms of mobility rights and national healthcare services, economic opportunities, and education as determinants of the migration flow from undemocratic to Western democratic countries. Specifically, the term 'Western democratic countries' refers to democratic countries in Western Europe, North America, and Oceania that enjoy a high level of human freedom and economic prosperity. Previous studies have highlighted the importance of economic aspirations in motivating individuals or households to leave for Western democratic countries (Borjas, 1989; Weiner, 1992; Castles, 1997; Keely, 2000). At the same time, the earlier research has also revealed that the political situations in the country of origin can determine the migration outflow from undemocratic countries (Castles, 2003; Bygnes and Flipo, 2017; Dustmann *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, the theoretical analysis in this chapter focuses on the social, economic, and political contexts both in the countries of origin and residence, as these contextual factors influence individual and household decisions to migrate.

Previous studies about the causes of migration flows from undemocratic to democratic countries have illustrated that citizens' choices to emigrate from their home country are largely due to dissatisfaction with poor governance (Hirschman, 1993; Colomer, 2000; Fleck and Hanssen, 2013; Möllers *et al.*, 2017). Western democracies are perceived to provide their citizens with 'insurance against political or economic catastrophe', in contrast to the problems associated with the corrupt political systems in non-Western states which make their citizens feel chronically insecure, both economically and politically (Harpaz, 2015, p. 2087). Poor governance in undemocratic countries is usually associated with a corrupt political system, which means that the existence of systemic political corruption in their home country is likely to drive citizens to emigrate.

Turning to another political dimension of international migration, the question of whether citizens can access civil and political rights is important for them in evaluating their home country and government. Due to strict state control and dysfunctional political institutions in some undemocratic countries, citizens cannot enjoy freedom in the same way as many others in Western democratic countries. Those factors undermine citizens' desire to seek a higher quality life in their home country, and migration to a place where their rights and freedoms are safeguarded is therefore chosen (Bauböck, 1992; Schuck, 2000; Chung, 2017). Thus, I expect that individuals and households in undemocratic countries will be more likely to emigrate from their home country when they perceive that they are unable to enjoy the rights and freedom, which are necessary to maintain a safe, stable, and secure life.

More recently, the environmental effects on migration flows at a global level have also received considerable scholarly attention (Hsieh and Liu, 1983; Gawande et al., 2000; Wood, 2001; Xu and Sylwester, 2016). The research in this area shows that pollution contributes to the emigration of high-income households from affected areas, and that the willingness of households to relocate increases in line with the deteriorating natural environment (Gawande *et al.*, 2000; Hanna, 2008). Therefore, I expect that rich households from regions and countries that are affected by pollution will be more likely to emigrate when they perceive that the persistent deterioration in the natural environment in their hometown is putting their health at risk.

The relationship between international migration and Western citizenship has also attracted significant research recently. It has been acknowledged that the entitlements of Western citizenship attract individuals and households from undemocratic countries and motivate them to leave for Western democratic countries in pursuit of the mobility rights that are absent in their home country (Mau, 2010; Favell, 2014; Bauböck, 2019; Harpaz, 2019; Harpaz and Mateos, 2019). Full Western citizenship enables citizens to gain access to a wide range of welfare benefits (Balta and Altan-Olcay, 2016; Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017; Römer, 2017; de Haas *et al.*, 2019). In recent times, dual citizenship and dual nationality have become a new phenomenon in international migration (Harpaz, 2019; Harpaz and Mateos, 2019). Therefore, the rich in undemocratic countries often leave their home country behind because Western citizenship will not only enable them to enjoy visa-free travel abroad but also allows them to gain wide-ranging welfare benefits in Western democratic countries (Balta and Altan-Olcay, 2016; Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017; Barbulescu, 2018; Harpaz, 2019).

Wealthy democratic countries such as Western European countries, the United States, and Canada generally provide their citizens with a wide range of benefits including equal access to public housing, good quality healthcare services, national pension schemes, etc (Skeldon, 1997; Colomer, 2000; Bloemraad, 2004; Sainsbury, 2006). In comparison to the generous welfare and benefits provided by Western democracies, citizens in Eastern European states and countries in the Global South are only entitled to

access limited and insufficient social benefits that make them feel dissatisfied with their governments (Colomer, 2000; De Giorgi and Pellizzari, 2009; Kureková, 2013; Martinsen and Werner, 2019). The big gap in welfare provisions between Western democracies and countries in the Global South encourages individuals from poor countries to migrate to rich democracies. Based on the theoretical analysis of the correlation between Western citizenship and international migration, I expect that individuals and households from undemocratic countries will be more likely to migrate when they perceive that Western citizenship would enable them to enjoy mobility rights in the Western world, and beyond as well as gaining access to wide-ranging welfare benefits in Western democratic countries.

When analysing the underlying reasons for international migration, of particular relevance in the literature are the conditions necessary for international migration to take place. The prior research shows that individual and household decisions to migrate are generally conditioned by economic circumstances, both in the source and destination countries. It is historically evident that individuals in general migrate from economically poorly-developed or otherwise disadvantaged arears to economically developed or more advantaged areas (Skeldon, 1997). Thus, the influence of uneven macro level economic development and micro level wage differences between regions and countries in directing international migration flows have been closely analysed by a number of economists (Keely, 2000; Samers and Collyer, 2017). Some previous theoretical and empirical studies have found that perceived economic prosperity and higher wages in potential destinations are likely to increase migrants' propensity to migrate to them (Borjas, 1989; Weiner, 1992; Castles, 1997; Heisler, 1997; Keely, 2000; Samers and Collyer, 2017). Hence, I expect that individuals and households in a less economically developed country or a low middle-income country will be more likely to move to Western democratic countries with greater economic prosperity which are perceived to offer them better economic opportunities and a healthier investment climate.

Western tertiary education has been attractive to younger people from Eastern European countries as well as economically fast-growing countries such as China, India, and Turkey (Csedö, 2008; Favell, 2008; Hugo, 2008; Latham and Wu, 2013; Liu-Farrer, 2016). Western education has been widely assumed not only to sharpen students' English language skills but also to add value to their social and human capital, which as discussed above prompts many young people to embark on cross-border journeys (Csedö, 2008; Hugo, 2008; Latham and Wu, 2013). In particular, the rich in developing countries aim to transform their children into global citizens by sending them to study abroad (Hugo, 2008; Altan-Olcay and Balta, 2016; Liu-Farrer, 2016). At the other extreme, the systemic problems of China's education system are well documented as a primary push factor for the migration of rich Chinese (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). Hence, I expect that individuals and households in China, India, Turkey, and other developing countries will be more likely to move to countries in the West when they perceive that Western tertiary education would add value to their children's social and human capital.

The next section presents the extant theories concerning political corruption and restrictions on freedoms as causes of international migration. It formulates two theoretical expectations associated with these variables.

Political Corruption and Liberties

This section reviews the prior studies that have explored whether the accessibility of the liberties available in both democratic and undemocratic countries has subsequently influenced individuals' decisions to migrate. Migration is more likely to occur when individuals' rights are at a high risk of being violated, or the potential destination is perceived to offer more freedoms in comparison to their home country (Schuck, 2000). In essence, 'a state's control over resources and those within its territory allows it to determine and enforce additional rights and benefits attached to citizenship' (Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017, p. 842). Due to the universal norms defined by markets, neoliberal values, and respect for global declarations of human rights, citizens in Western democracies are entitled to access a bundle of rights including a choice of residence, employment, voting rights, and equal treatment in their own political community (Bauböck, 1992; Ong, 2006; Bauböck and Guiraudon, 2009). Most importantly, citizens are eligible to actively participate in a collective system of governance, while their counterparts in non-democratic or authoritarian countries are inactive in formal political systems either due to personal choice or formal exclusion (Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017). Regardless of their citizenship, most liberal democracies in Western Europe, North America, and Oceania not only accord basic civil and human rights to individuals on their territory, but are also more sensitive to human rights appeals than fledgling states (Bloemraad, 2004; Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017). In practice, national law 'defines individuals' rights to property and economic activity, political participation, physical security, religious and cultural identity and family relationships' (Schuck, 2000, p. 189). When individuals' rights are well protected through the implementation and enforcement of the law, they are unlikely to choose to migrate because human beings are usually emotionally attached to their native land and have an inherent fear of exploring a place unknown (Schuck, 2000).

In comparison to their Western counterparts, 'the rights associated with liberal democratic citizenship in the West are not necessarily guaranteed for nationals in non-Western countries, even in established democracies' (Chung, 2017, p. 434). More specifically, the freedoms of speech and association, access to public education, and social welfare benefits are not guaranteed outside democratic states (Bauböck, 2003). It is not uncommon that 'the exclusion of emigrants from membership status and rights at home humiliates them and diminishes their liberties and opportunities in social arenas in which they participate actively' (Bauböck, 2003, p. 719). For instance, when voicing discontent is thought to be much easier in the potential destination than it is in their home country, individuals are likely to choose to leave their home country behind (Heisler, 1997).

Nowadays, as many non-democratic countries embrace market-driven policies, new economic arenas open up for 'ordinary people to claim justice, accountability, and democratic freedoms' (Ong, 2006, p. 502). When these demands, such as freedom of political expression, and its association are not met in their home country, they will seek a potential destination which is perceived to have the rights and freedom that they strive for, which are likely to invoke strong incentives to migrate. For example, the Stalinist style of socialist states which 'provide less freedom and impose tighter political control over individuals' are highly likely to increase their citizens' incentives to emigrate to the United States (Yang, 1994, p. 457). Due to the undesirable economic and political conditions in the former socialist states just discussed, migrants are also more likely to settle down in receiving countries while the possibility of returning to their homeland is slim (Yang, 1994). The United States not only provided welfare benefits to its citizens but also granted them more rights and freedoms during the 1980s and 1990s. First of all, political rights, in particular voting rights (which influence political decisions and outcomes) are considered the most important privilege enjoyed by American citizens (Yang, 1994; Mazzolari, 2009). Second, the US citizens were eligible to sponsor relatives to move to America in the 1990s, which was beneficial to the entire family (Yang, 1994; Mazzolari, 2009). Individuals, particularly those from the former socialist states, sought to acquire US citizenship because the rights, freedoms, protection and benefits outlined here were either largely absent or less desirable and favourable in their native land.

A similar conclusion emerged when observing that the mass migration flow from East Germany to West Germany was illustrative of citizens' deep dissatisfaction with the GDR's poor governance, and that migration was therefore chosen by them to escape from the communist rule in their homeland (Hirschman, 1993). When citizens are deeply dissatisfied with the present state, they choose either to voice their opinions against their own government by taking part in protests, or to emigrate from their home country when they perceive that they cannot make their voice heard (Hirschman, 1993). As migration and would-be migration are interpreted as having been alternatives to actual resistance to poor governance in the GDR, and migration is considered a primary form of exit, Hirschman (1993) argues that the large differences in economic and political conditions in East and West Germany contributed to a mass exodus of Germans from the East to the West. He also observes that voice was non-existent largely due to the relatively easy availability of exit in East Germany in comparison with neighbouring countries such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary (Hirschman, 1970, 1993). In contrast, 'a high cost of "exit" for the individual can create incentives to consider "voice", and being involved in a political protest action may deter people from emigrating' (Colomer, 2000, p. 425).

Exit and voice were initially defined as 'two contrasting responses of consumers or members of organisations to the perceived decline in the quality of goods they buy or the services and benefits they receive' (Hirschman, 1970, 1993, p. 175). Exit means leaving because 'a better good or service is believed

to be provided by another company or organisation', and this act can, in turn, result in an inability to improve the good and service's performance in the long run (Hirschman, 1970, 1993, pp. 175–176). Voice refers here to complaint or protest in an attempt to restore quality that has declined (Hirschman, 1970, 1993). Loyalty is about strong attachment to an organisation it 'can serve the socially useful purpose of preventing deterioration from being cumulative, as it so often does when there is no barrier to exit' (Hirschman, 1970, p. 79). When the concept of loyalty is used in politics, it can translate into a sense of patriotism and national attachment to a specific state, and 'this sense of loyalty can raise the perceived cost of exit, thus increasing the relative appeal of voice' (Hirschman, 1970; Hess, 2016, p. 632). Whether citizens choose to voice or exit depends in part on their loyalty to the political regime (Hirschman, 1970). When citizens choose exit because they feel that the government in their home country has failed them, they vote with feet (Hirschman, 1970). With the fall of the Berlin Wall, interest in Hirschman's exit-voice theory revived because it was perceived to have passed an experimental test with the upheaval in the GDR (Hirschman, 1993).

Hirschman's theory of 'voice and exit' has also been applied to the analysis of emigration from Cuba in the period 1959-1995 (Colomer, 2000). As suggested by that study, 'a government to which its citizens can develop "loyalty" may be analysed as a kind of voluntary association if the citizens have not only the possibility to "protest" (voice) but also a migration alternative (exit)' (Colomer, 2000, p. 423). Compared to the former socialist regime in East Germany, Castro's regime in Cuba took a slightly different approach to consolidating its power. Dissidents who were deemed to have the potential to generate massive internal voices of protest and to weaken the stability of the regime were subject to exile to the United States (Colomer, 2000). The censorship imposed by the Cuban government on the foreign media also contributed to a massive migration outflow (Colomer, 2000). Overall, many Cubans lost faith in their own government and became extremely pessimistic about the economic and political outlook in their home country. Emigration was thus chosen, and they left to pursue a better life in the United States (Colomer, 2000).

Another example can be found among North Macedonians, who considered their government a failed entity because of its inability to meet the needs of its citizens before 2007, the year when Bulgaria became a member of the EU (Gupta, 1995; Neofotistos, 2009). In doing so, many North Macedonians acquired Bulgarian passports with the intention of escaping from political corruption and associated problems at home, including tight social networks and political patronage combined with a lack of employment opportunities (Neofotistos, 2009). Another study drawn from intra-European migration concluded that 'the economic component of migration was often related to bad governance and negative perceptions of the state' (Bygnes and Flipo, 2017, p. 199). Due to weak governance during the post-communist era, Romania experienced increased inequality and its citizens were offered few opportunities for economic betterment, and therefore chose to search for better job opportunities in Western Europe (Bygnes and Flipo, 2017). The grim economic outlook in their home country was thus a push factor that

influenced Romanian migrants' decisions to leave for countries in Western Europe. However, political discontent with domestic politics, in particular the lack of democratic accountability of political elites and institutions in Romania, was also regarded as one of the main drivers of the mass exodus from Romania (Bygnes and Flipo, 2017).

The burgeoning middle class and entrepreneurs in Asia aspire to democracy, security, the rule of law, and protecting the environment, signifying a process of cultural convergence with the West (Ong, 2006). However, their demands are often not satisfied because the East Asian states and Gulf States generally prioritise 'collective regulation over individual rights, contingent membership over universal membership, and subnational and supranational hierarchies over national democratic principles'(Chung, 2017, p. 435). With the help of advanced information technologies, these authoritarian states effectively construct citizenship based on collective surveillance rather than upholding individual rights (Ong, 2022). For example, citizens in Kuwait and other Middle Eastern rentier states 'enjoy a robust welfare system despite weak or absent democratic institutions', while the governments in South Korea and Taiwan 'guarantee citizens' civil, social, and political rights unless they run counter to national security concerns' (Chung, 2017, p. 435). Likewise, it is an acknowledged fact that freedom of political expression does not exist under Chinese authoritarian rule, which means that Chinese netizens use limited online platforms to expose hidden abuses of power by corrupt officials and 'protest against injustices and corruption, and demand accountability from the government' (Ong, 2006, p. 502).

The emergence of the possibility of multiple citizenships provides non-Westerners with an 'insurance policy' for their further prosperity (Harpaz, 2015; Balta and Altan-Olcay, 2016; Harpaz and Mateos, 2019). A passport from a wealthy democracy has many potential uses, including 'asset building, an exit strategy, risk diversification, intergenerational wealth transmission, family protection, welfare benefits, increased opportunities, tax avoidance and other uses' (Harpaz and Mateos, 2019, p. 849). Multiple citizenship is particularly attractive to rich individuals from poor, less democratic countries because it enables them to access to territory and associated rights and benefits in Western democracies which are largely absent in their homeland (Bloemraad, 2004; Ong, 2006; Mazzolari, 2009; Harpaz, 2015; Alarian and Goodman, 2017). One study concluded that a 'European passport' provided individuals from Latin America and Eastern European countries with 'economic opportunities in the EU, an insurance policy against war or persecution, the enhanced mobility and prestige' (Harpaz, 2015, p. 2085). Indeed, some rich Turks gave birth in the United States because they perceived that US citizenship could bring additional opportunities, a greater scope of freedoms, and possibilities for upward mobility for their children which were largely unavailable at home (Balta and Altan-Olcay, 2016).

In summary, corruption, injustice, lack of freedom, and uneven access to rights and benefits, all of which are associated with authoritarian rule in many states in the Global South, badly undermine their

citizens' quality of life, thus creating incentives for individuals to migrate from their homeland to democratic countries in the West. Based on these studies, I expect that:

> *Theoretical Expectation 1: Rich Chinese will migrate to Western democratic countries when they perceive the existence of systemic political corruption in their home country.*
>
> *Theoretical Expectation 2: Rich Chinese will migrate to Western democratic countries when they perceive that they have been deprived of their rights and freedoms under stricter communist rule in their home country.*

Environmental Issues

The theory of eco-migration highlights the likelihood of environmental issues being a driver of human movements (Wood, 2001). Regardless of migrants' circumstances, 'air and water quality, land availability or degradation, resource exploitation, locational attributes, etc' affect migration and migrants' livelihoods to varying degrees (Wood, 2001, p. 48). In particular, acute and chronic health effects caused by severe air pollution have been confirmed by research, and there has been growing health concern about severe air pollution (Kampa and Castanas, 2008; Song *et al.*, 2014). More specifically, the study suggests that exposure to pollutants contributes to a rise in mortality and hospital admissions (Song *et al.*, 2014). Moreover, the research also finds that short and long-term exposure to polluted air not only contributes to premature mortality but also shortens life expectancy (Kampa and Castanas, 2008). Geographically, megacities in South and East Asia have a large burden of disease from air pollution (West *et al.*, 2016).

In the early 1980s, the internal migration in the US was believed to be partially caused by differences in environmental issues across regions (Hsieh and Liu, 1983). In general, environmental issues have a considerable influence on the migration decisions of wealthy individuals. An empirical study concluded that there had been a deterioration in environmental conditions in the New England States in the 1980s, and that 'the increase in industrial pollution induced households to emigrate from the affected area, and the ability and willingness to migrate increased with income' (Hanna, 2008, p. 75). Put differently, industrial pollution partially drives high-income households to emigrate from the affected area. Another study investigated the correlation between American hazardous waste sites and the cause of internal migration, and similarly found that pollution caused by hazardous waste sites influenced the decisions of wealthy households or individuals to emigrate from the polluted area (Gawande *et al.*, 2000). In comparison with low-skilled workers, well-educated Hong Kong citizens have demonstrated a higher inclination to migrate when faced with pollution problems, and a higher income also increased their demand for clean air (Xu and Sylwester, 2016).

Based on the theoretical analysis set out above, wealthy and well-educated individuals or households in developing countries are expected to emigrate from their polluted homeland in search of cleaner air and environmentally friendly living conditions in the West. Based on this argument, I expect

that:

> *Theoretical Expectation 3: Rich Chinese will migrate to Western democratic countries when they perceive high levels of air pollution in their home country.*

Citizenship Regime

There is general consensus that 'citizenship regimes play a fundamental role in the general well-being, safety, and scope of freedoms and opportunities enjoyed by members' (Shachar, 2007, 2009; Balta and Altan-Olcay, 2016, p. 943). In Western democracies, states have a higher capacity to link citizenship to benefits in comparison with poor or non-democratic countries which have little capacity to provide social welfare that makes a difference to the life circumstances of residents (Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017). Simply put, some citizenships are more valuable than others in terms of the distribution of security and the provision of opportunities to their members (Balta and Altan-Olcay, 2016; Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017). Comparatively speaking, the world's highest-income countries in the West provide their citizens with the 'highest levels of security, rights and travel freedom', which are deemed to set the standard for the global ideal of citizenship, while their counterparts in the Global South suffer from various 'citizenship deficits' including a lack of opportunities, freedoms, and rights (Harpaz, 2015, p. 2086).

In contrast to Western democracies, citizenship in communist states is engineered by 'socialist ideals - the dictatorship of the proletariat' rather than liberal values of individual freedom or human rights advocated in the West (Ong, 2022, p. 603). In countries in Southeast Asia and the Middle East such as China, India, and the United Arab Emirates, individuals might not be entitled to enjoy the full privileges of citizenship because of their meso-level membership in a rural household, kinship system, or religious community, despite their formal membership of the state (Chung, 2017). For example, Chinese residency status is primarily determined by China's household registration system (*Hukou*), which divides the nation's population into two classes: rural and urban citizens (Chan, 2009; Chung, 2017). The consequence of this policy has been that two categories of citizenship were created in one nation. Institutionally and instrumentally, the *Hukou* system regulates how Chinese residents access education, employment, health care, housing, and geographic mobility (Chung, 2017). The Chinese government links its residents' education, health care, and other state-provided benefits to their parents' birthplace through the *Hukou* system (Chan, 2009). Essentially, the *Hukou* system has caused unequal access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities (Wu, 2011; Wu and Zheng, 2018).

States and individual people are the two key actors both in citizenship regimes and in driving international migration flows. Principally, 'the immigration regime consists of rules and norms that govern immigrants' possibilities to become citizens, to acquire residence and work permits, and to participate in economic, cultural, and political life' (Sainsbury, 2006, p. 230). Citizenship laws were introduced by

Western states as mechanisms designed to include and exclude particular groups of immigrants wishing to settle in them (Bauböck, 1992; Ataç, Rygiel and Stierl, 2016). Earlier studies have shown that Western citizenship has positive effects on migration flows from less democratic and poorer nations towards wealthy democracies (Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017). Theoretically and empirically, 'international migration can be seen as a strategic response to that global inequality, as individuals and families physically move in order to access the accumulated value of residence and/or citizenship in a Western country' (Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017, p. 838). Global mobility is arguably the greatest material benefit of acquiring citizenship in a democratic country in the West (Harpaz and Mateos, 2019).

As an example, some Turkish families strategically gave birth to their children in America because 'they can opt for an advantaged status with global citizenship inequalities for their children, by mobilising resources available to them due to their privileged position in their countries of origin' (Balta and Altan-Olcay, 2016, p. 940). These Turkish parents see US citizenship as insurance against the perceived economic and political uncertainties associated with the Turkish government and the weak rule of law in their home country (Balta and Altan-Olcay, 2016). In the Chinese case, having a foreign visa is also seen as a form of insurance that could strategically enable the emerging wealthy class to make money in booming China while enjoying the political security of sending their family members to Western democracies (Ong, 2022). This trend is not uncommon in other countries in the Global South. During the period of transition to market economies in those countries, the emerging middle class has disproportionately benefited from fast economic growth, and their increased financial capacity has led them to aspire to the rule of law and a liberal political order (Robison and Goodman, 1996; Balta and Altan-Olcay, 2016).

Mobility Rights

This section theoretically explores whether the mobility rights attached to Western citizenship create an aspiration for individuals in undemocratic countries to migrate to democratic countries. It has been acknowledged that 'the most important instrumental value of citizenship lies in the international mobility rights that come with it' (Bauböck, 2019, p. 1023). The free movement of persons across countries within the European Union is labelled the 'fourth freedom' alongside the freedom of movement of capital, goods, and services, which are regarded as the four pillars of a market-building economy (Favell, 2014). Most importantly, 'social mobility can be understood as akin to geographical mobility because movement in space allows people to leave uncomfortable social situations and positions and to pursue alternative life projects (whether successful or not)' (Mau, 2010, p. 342). In this sense, freedom of movement not only enables individuals to travel across national borders but also provides them with opportunities to improve their life quality (Mau, 2010).

It is an acknowledged fact that not everyone can equally enjoy privileged mobility rights largely due to the existence of a global hierarchy of nationalities (Harpaz, 2019; Harpaz and Mateos, 2019). In a real-world setting, the degree of travel freedom inherent in a given passport is closely tied to the position of the issuing country in global hierarchies of development, stability, and prestige (Harpaz, 2019; Harpaz and Mateos, 2019). Prior research has concluded that 'differential ability to move in space - and even more so to have access to opportunities for movement - has become a major stratifying force in the global social hierarchy' (Shamir, 2005, p. 200). Predictably, 'transnational inequalities' are likely to grow because of the unequal distribution of the rights, capacities, and resources needed to move across national borders (Shamir, 2005).

Due to their less developed economies, governments in the Global South might remove their individual subjects' political and civil rights such as freedom of movement by directly taking control of passports and exit permits or imposing other stringent measures in order to serve their own economic and political interests (Dowty, 1987). In democratic countries, freedom of exit is deemed to be a basic human right, whereas many authoritarian governments, including the GDR and North Korea, have prohibited the exit of their citizens (Mau, 2010). Individuals with a strong desire to emigrate are likely to encounter administrative obstacles imposed by their authoritarian governments to stop them from leaving (de Haas *et al.*, 2019). Most people in the former socialist states in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union were not allowed to move from their birth countries until the collapse of the Iron Curtain, which removed restrictions on travelling to Western European countries (Mau *et al.*, 2015). Border controls are widely adopted by regimes as mechanisms to regulate cross-border human movements. Liberal regimes and autocratic regimes are significantly different in their choice of border controls, as 'authoritarian, repressive regimes are threatened by open borders and cannot tolerate them. If compelled by circumstances to open their borders, they must either reform or collapse' (Anderson, 2000, p. 24).

Citizens in totalitarian regimes face higher mobility barriers to travelling abroad. According to the Henley Passport Index in 2018[3], individuals from poor and authoritarian states are largely excluded from Visa Waiver programmes (Mau, 2010). Citizens of Western democracies enjoy visa-free access to a large number of countries across the world while those from poor and undemocratic states cannot exercise similar rights, due to restrictions imposed by foreign states (Shamir, 2005; Mau, 2010; Mau *et al.*, 2015; de Haas *et al.*, 2019). This is because passport holders from authoritarian regimes are generally viewed with suspicion when they travel across national borders into another country (Mau, 2010; Mau *et al.*, 2015; de Haas *et al.*, 2019). Such suspicion tend not to be based on an individual's behaviour but on their nationality instead (Mau, 2010; de Haas *et al.*, 2019).

[3] Passport ranking has three components: visa free, visa on arrival, and visa required (www.passportindex.org).

Free movement within member states in the European Union is a core right granted to EU citizens regardless of their EU nationality (Bauböck and Guiraudon, 2009). The EU has facilitated more open, back-and-forth type borders rather than hostile, closed ones through the liberalisation of top-down control since its 2004 enlargement:

> All citizens of the European Union are in principle free to move, live, study, work, retire in other member states - subject only to economic demand in another member state. They enjoy equality of employment, and rights of non-discrimination; they can study at the same cost, or (as workers) claim the same benefits as residents; they even have incipient political rights (Favell, 2014, p. 282).

Free movement has thus provided privileged status to European citizens by removing a number of restrictions on traveling within the European Union, granting them equal access to a set of mobility opportunities, in particular those from relatively poor developed states (Favell, 2014; Balch, 2018). By early 2014, nearly all travel barriers were removed for the Eastern and Central European states, and citizens from those regions could freely move to states in and beyond the Schengen countries (Favell, 2014). Migrant workers from Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Slovenia were therefore eligible to enjoy the right of free movement within member states of the European Union due to the sudden transformation into European citizenship on May 1st, 2004 (Bauböck and Guiraudon, 2009).

Previously, the demise of the GDR is an illustrative example of the stark contrast between freedom to travel among democratic states and the restrictions imposed on human movement in an undemocratic country, and the potential political implications for the mobility variables. Hirschman (1993) has argued that political conflicts in an undemocratic country, in the particular case of the GDR, could be conceptualised as the interlacing between emigration movements and protests. When East German individuals expressed a strong desire to leave their home country, the strict restrictions on travelling to West Germany imposed by the GDR, including building a wall across the city of Berlin, failed to prevent its citizens from fleeing to West Germany (Hirschman, 1993).

Research on immigrants in Norway has found that ‘citizenship acquisition in a Western country frees immigrants from a multitude of travel restrictions, enables vast spatial mobility and thereby facilitates transnational connections’ (Birkvad, 2019, p. 809). More broadly, this could be applied to immigrants across Western democracies because of the highly-valued citizenship on offer. Given the fact of transnational inequalities, acquiring second citizenship in Western democratic countries is a widely-used strategy adopted by non-Westerners to satisfy their dreams of visa-free travel across the world (Harpaz, 2019; Harpaz and Mateos, 2019). Dual citizenship is considered to present a ‘transnational membership’ that gives migrants ‘an unconditional right of entry in both the state of origin and in the country of immigration’ (Bauböck, 2003, p. 715). Prior research suggests that the incentives for individuals to acquire second citizenship are negatively associated with the value of their original citizenship (Harpaz, 2015). Therefore, the acquisition of plural or multiple citizenships means they can strategically ‘avail themselves

fully of developed economies as citizens while remaining connected to their countries of origin will enjoy major advantages over their mono-national homeland counterparts' (Bloemraad, 2004; Spiro, 2019, p. 879). Nowadays, citizenship-by-investment schemes offer a fast track for the rich in the Global South to get a second passport in Western democratic countries that enables them to enjoy visa-free global travel (Barbulescu, 2018; Mavelli, 2018).

This framework suggests that individuals' decisions to migrate from undemocratic to democratic states are greatly influenced by the mobility rights attached to Western citizenship. Based on these arguments, I expect that:

> *Theoretical Expectation 4: Rich Chinese will migrate to Western democratic countries when they perceive the greater mobility rights associated with Western citizenship.*

Healthcare

The prior research has shown that major inequalities in benefits levels and standard of living between the welfare state and the outside world have considerable influence on the migration decisions of people from the undemocratic countries (Freeman, 1997). Western democratic countries have a greater state capability to link citizenship to benefits, as those welfare states offer their citizens 'a much wider and more generous array of rights, especially social rights than others can afford', which is how disparity occurs (Freeman, 1997; Altan-Olcay and Balta, 2016; Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017, p. 824). For example, Indian people move to the Netherlands largely due to the unequal access to healthcare and education in their own country (Kremer, 2016). Due to weak government systems, limited resources, and political indifference to rights in poor or non-democratic countries, citizenship in those countries offers their citizens little help or support with their life circumstances (Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017). Hence, research has concluded that individuals from states with lower levels of social protection are more likely to migrate in an attempt to diversify income risks, while their counterparts from states with higher levels of social security are less likely to migrate (Massey *et al.*, 1993).

Differences in the provision of education, healthcare, welfare, and social protection between countries of origin and destination have potentially strong effects on the pattern and direction of migration flows (de Haas *et al.*, 2019). Due to egalitarian norms, immigrants in rich democracies are eligible to access a broad range of welfare benefits (Römer, 2017), and 'citizenship is no longer a salient exclusionary boundary: generous welfare states and countries facing larger immigration flows tend to provide immigrants with more inclusive access to their general social protection schemes' (Schmitt and Teney, 2019, p. 53). Therefore, immigrants in Western Europe and Canada enjoy the same health coverage, education, unemployment insurance, housing, and other welfare benefits as citizens, and there is no distinctive difference in their access to a wide range of social benefits (Skeldon, 1997; Bloemraad, 2004;

Sainsbury, 2006). For instance, the Canadian government strategically reformed its social welfare policies to allow migrants equal access to the healthcare scheme, a move which subsequently attracted skilled migrants (Blachford and Zhang, 2014; Miao and Wang, 2017b). It can be concluded that a higher level of generosity and easier access to benefits in rich democracies encourages higher numbers of migrants to move to the countries in question (Borjas, 1987). In reality, individuals' migration to welfare states is not easily accomplished due to a complex set of constraints: first, some welfare states are deemed to be 'closed systems' that consist of 'mutual aid undertaken by members of a community according to socially defined conceptions of need' (Freeman, 1997, p. 17). Second, whether to let aliens in or not is 'at the discretion of the states', and individual migrants have little say (Ahmed, 1997, p. 172).

The welfare magnet theory argues that individuals with strong welfare preferences are generally attracted by countries with generous welfare states (Borjas, 1999). The empirical research shows that immigrants, in particular less-skilled immigrants, are heavily clustered in high-benefit states in America (Borjas, 1989, 1999). However, other research suggests that welfare state generosity is likely to 'play an indirect role in retaining settled migrants and discouraging return migration' (de Haas *et al.*, 2019, p. 898). Seemingly, the 'welfare magnet' has a relatively strong effect in attracting less-skilled immigrants. For example, Roma people from Central and East European countries migrated to Western and Northern Europe and Canada because they experienced systemic and normative discrimination preventing them from gaining equal access to public housing, education, and healthcare (Levine-Rasky, 2019). However, whether the 'welfare magnet' influences the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese is a question which requires empirical testing.

Theoretically, 'the welfare magnet hypothesis' is ambiguous, as new policies may be introduced to restrict immigrants access to benefits (Barbulescu and Favell, 2019; Martinsen and Werner, 2019). The implications for immigrants of the welfare benefits provided by Western and Northern European states differ across states. For example, social-democratic welfare regimes like Sweden have adopted inclusive immigration policies that enable non-citizens to enjoy similar entitlements to their citizens (Sainsbury, 2006). The empirical research also shows that no significant increase could be found in EU citizens claiming non-contributory benefits both in Germany and Denmark since 2004, the year of the first Eastern enlargement (Martinsen and Werner, 2019). Statistically, more EU citizens with low-income jobs apply for in-work benefits in Germany to maintain a sustainable standard of living (Martinsen and Werner, 2019). In contrast, its EU counterparts Netherlands and Denmark are dominated by anti-immigration politics, which concern the loss of national social and labour market protections, and the UK (which has now left the EU) has a much more effective welfare system that allows its migrant workers to gain equal access to its wide range of benefits (Favell, 2014). In practice, legal and policy mechanisms are tactically adopted by the UK government to selectively increase incentives for the highly skilled and highly employable immigrants and

decrease the chance of 'unwanted' EU nationals being admitted (Barbulescu and Favell, 2019). After the UK's Brexit in January 2020, a new, stricter immigration policy was introduced which was designed to end free movement and impose restrictions on low-skilled immigrants, while encouraging highly-skilled workers who could contribute to the UK economy[4].

Welfare regimes, forms of immigration, and immigration policy regimes differ significantly from each other, and their interplay also significantly influences the perceptions of potential immigrants and their choice of destination (Sainsbury, 2006). After the US Personal Responsibility Reconciliation Act was introduced in 1996, which denied legal access to means-tested federal benefits for non-citizens for the first five years upon their arrival, research has shown that state-level welfare policy variations did not affect the location preferences of the newly-arrived low-skilled immigrants into the USA (Kaushal, 2005). Newly-arrived immigrants appear to be less responsive to welfare generosity than residents, perhaps because they may know little about the details of state welfare policies (Kaushal, 2005).

As was mentioned above, a mass exodus from Cuba to the United States occurred in 1959 (Colomer, 2000). At the time, the American government generously offered Cuban political refugees not only resettlement, but also other material and social benefits including welfare payments, language training, help with job hunting, medical aid, and school assistance (Colomer, 2000). Compared with the citizens left behind in dire poverty in their homeland, Cuban refugees gained access to wide-ranging benefits in America, creating strong incentives to migrate from Cuba to the United States.

This framework suggests that the benefits attached to citizenship in welfare states may substantially increase individuals' incentives to migrate to countries in the West. Since equal access to national healthcare is generally considered to be one of the basic rights to which citizens are entitled in Western democracies, I expect that:

> *Theoretical Expectation 5: Rich Chinese will migrate to Western democratic countries because they want access to national healthcare services in those countries.*

Economic Factors

Economic factors are largely seen by researchers as the main determinants of internal and international migration flows (Borjas, 1987; Dowty, 1987; Weiner, 1992; Keely, 2000). Economic migration theories argue that the economic conditions in given states or regions are the cause for population movements (both internal and international), and that migration is a by-product of uneven economic development across regions in tandem with the expansion of capitalist markets (Castles, 1997; Samers and Collyer, 2017).

[4] GOV.UK. 2020. *New Immigration System: What You Need To Know*. [online] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/new-immigration-system-what-you-need-to-know> [Accessed 25 April 2020].

Economic structures and needs in industrial economies are generally viewed as the pull factors directing the international migration flows (Massey *et al.*, 1993; Keely, 2000). It has also been widely assumed that 'the scarcity of resources, the functioning of markets, and the individual maximisation of lifetime utility' are the primary factors greatly influencing human cross-border movements (Hammar and Tamas, 1997, p. 13).

At the micro level, the wage difference between the place of origin and destination, and the perception of better job opportunities in the destination are regarded as the main determinants of population movements (Dowty, 1987; Borjas, 1989; Weiner, 1992; Keely, 2000). In other words, individuals' migration decisions are considered to be the result of calculations of employment opportunities and prospective earnings (Freeman and Kessler, 2008). As migrants have been assumed to search for better economic opportunities elsewhere, migration is thus viewed as an economic phenomenon (Hoskin, 1991). Likewise, households appear to act similarly to individuals in attempting to improve their social and economic conditions through geographically relocating to a more desirable destination (Clark and Maas, 2015). According to this theory, migration is a family strategy in which family members are assigned to foreign labour markets in order to achieve income gains for the household (Stark and Taylor, 1989).

The late nineteenth century saw a mass exodus of European migrants to resource-abundant and labour-scarce destinations in the New World, which included the United States and South Americas (Hatton and Williamson, 1998). These European migrants were in pursuit of a more prosperous and secure life for themselves and their future families, and labour market conditions both at the place of origin and destination were, therefore, the main determinants of where to migrate (Hatton and Williamson, 1998). Since the Second World War, large scale migration outflows have occurred from countries in the Global South to countries in the Global North, providing sufficient empirical evidence to suggest that uneven economic development is the root cause of people's choices to migrate (Dowty, 1987). More specifically, income differentials between countries in the Global North and the Global South, together with poor working conditions, infrastructure, and the lack of professional opportunities available in countries in the Global South, have fuelled massive outflows of workers and professionals from the Global South to relocate in the Global North (Dowty, 1987). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Western European countries experienced massive migrant inflows from Eastern Europe (Castles, 1997; Heisler, 1997).

Based on these economic migration theories, I expect that:

> *Theoretical Expectation 6: Rich Chinese will migrate to Western democratic countries when they perceive the existence of good economic opportunities in the host country.*

Education

Historically, education has played a pivotal role in Chinese society as a legitimate and meritocratic means of social mobility (He, 1964). In the contemporary world, the middle and upper classes in countries such as China, India, and Turkey highly value education, and much of this esteem is directed towards the education of their children in Western academic institutions (Hugo, 2008; Latham and Wu, 2013; Altan-Olcay and Balta, 2016; Kremer, 2016). The rich in the Global South perceive that Western education adds value to their children's social and human capital, as it not only provides younger students with the necessary linguistic skills but also arms them with elite educational credentials and transnational cultural capital (Latham and Wu, 2013; Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016). Due to their privileged socioeconomic position in the country of origin, the rich in the fast-growing economies such as China, India, and Turkey have the financial capability to generate global upward social mobility. In doing so, they send their children to study abroad or even to give birth to their child in a Western democratic country to gain citizenship for them (Balta and Altan-Olcay, 2016; Liu-Farrer, 2016; Yang, 2018). In addition, an earlier study also suggests that many Chinese and Indian students see studying in Australia as an initial preliminary step to obtaining permanent residency in Australia (Hugo, 2008). For example, Canada is one of the top destinations for skilled Chinese workers and scholars, largely due to the equal educational opportunities provided by the Canadian government (Blachford and Zhang, 2014; Miao and Wang, 2017b). Similarly, Eastern Europeans are attracted by better education opportunities in Western European countries (Favell, 2008). For example, Hungarian and Romanian professionals who graduate from British universities stand a better chance of getting a job in the UK compared to those who obtained their qualifications elsewhere (Csedö, 2008).

The highly competitive Chinese education system has been widely assumed to be one of the primary factors driving rich Chinese to leave their home country behind (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). But at the same time, the perception of the high quality of post-secondary education in Western democratic countries is considered to be a pull factor for the migration of rich Chinese (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). The education system in China has faced constant and fierce criticism for its strong exam-based orientation, which has been accused of producing Chinese students who are deficient in creative thinking and problem-solving skills (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). Significantly, grave concerns over children's well-being amid excessive homework and exams have been well documented as a root cause of wealthy Chinese choosing to relocate to countries in the West in pursuit of 'a happy education' for their children (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). Thanks to China's education reforms adopted in 1993, the number of Chinese students who attended the national higher education entrance examination (*Gaokao* in Chinese) increased approximately threefold, from 3.2 million in 1998 to 9.57 million in 2010 (Cai and Yan, 2015). The sharp rise of Chinese students sitting the national higher education entrance examination indicates harsh competition in securing a place in good-ranking

Chinese universities. Aside from the factors discussed above, sending children to study abroad signifies the social superiority of the rich Chinese in the social structure of China, who may wish to prevent their children from mingling with those they perceive to come from a lower social background in schools (Liu-Farrer, 2016).

The preceding analysis suggests that Chinese students choose to study abroad as a means of escaping from the problems and stress caused by the rigid nature of the Chinese education system. The added social and human capital which can be gained through the acquisition of Western education not only ensures that Chinese students can stand out from the crowd in the future job market, but also provides them with the means to become global citizens. Most importantly, students from the Global South who study in a Western academic institution are more likely to seek permanent residence in the host country. According to these arguments, I expect that:

> *Theoretical Expectation 7a: Rich Chinese will migrate to Western democratic countries if they consider the Chinese education system to be harmful to their children.*
>
> *Theoretical Expectation 7b: Rich Chinese will migrate to Western democratic countries if they consider the Western education system to be conducive to their children's advancement.*

Theoretical expectations relating to political corruption, liberties, and air pollution are relative to the country of origin. While theoretical expectations about mobility rights, healthcare, and economic opportunities are formulated relative to the country of residence. Theoretical expectations 7a and 7b about education are relative to both the country of origin and the country of residence.

Control Variables

A migrant's age upon arrival and gender are likely to affect their mobility, so these are control variables in this research. In the study of international migration, prior research uses migrants' age-at-arrival to classify and group the foreign-born population for purpose of comparison. Critically, migrants' age-at-arrival not only directly reflects their duration of living in their home country but also signifies the different social, economic and political contexts within which they have spent their time living in their home country. Those circumstances will have had considerable effects on migrants' evaluation of their country and government, which can be expected to influence their decision to migrate. An age-at-arrival comparison allows a relatively accurate assessment of the relationship between age-at-arrival and incentives to migrate. In respect of family migration, there is a research consensus that men and women tend to play different roles in migratory processes (Geist and McManus, 2012; Bermudez, 2016). I therefore use gender as a control variable to measure its effects on a household's decisions to migrate. It has been suggested that migrants' age-at-arrival, gender, and social, economic, and political contexts both in their country of origin and their

residence mutually interact with each other, yielding joint effects on their decisions to migrate.

Migrants' age-at-arrival differences are revealed in the literature to influence various aspects of international migration. For example, prior research shows that age-at-arrival plays a crucial role in shaping Mexican and Asian immigrants' socioeconomic achievements and their integration into American and Canadian societies (Myers, Gao and Emeka, 2009; Lee and Edmonston, 2011). In a short period of time, Africans who arrive in the United States after the age of 18 earned more than those who arrived before the age of 18 in the 1930s (Elo *et al.*, 2015). In the long run, immigrants who arrive the United States at an earlier age enjoy better educational opportunities, which also helps them to more easily assimilate into the host society, and their average income is higher than those who arrive in the United States as an adult (Elo *et al.*, 2015).

Other scholars have reported on how gender operates in relation to many aspects of migration. Historically, the late nineteenth century saw mass migration flows from Europe to the United States and South America, which were comprised mainly of single unskilled young adults (Hatton and Williamson, 1998). The empirical research concludes that individuals working in female-dominated occupations are least likely to migrate or lead to family migration (Perales and Vidal, 2013). However, wives working in female-dominated occupations are more likely to relocate when their husbands choose to move to a place that offers better career prospects for themselves (Perales and Vidal, 2013). In comparison with single men and women, married couples are less likely to embark on a cross-border journey, particularly when they have children (Geist and McManus, 2012). Compared with single men or women or cohabitants, single-parent households, in particular single-mother families, are highly unlikely to choose to migrate (Geist and McManus, 2012). In contrast to single women, single men are generally more willing to relocate for better job opportunities (Geist and McManus, 2012).

Irrespective of the economic development disparity between Eastern Germany and Western Germany in 1992-2012, earlier research has suggested that married men profit relatively more than their female partners from spatial relocation (Nisic and Melzer, 2016). The findings of the study indicate that the destination preference for household migration is still directly determined by the search for better job opportunities for men (Nisic and Melzer, 2016). Strikingly, married partners in Western Germany chose to migrate by taking into account 'the possibility of simultaneous economic improvement for both partners', while their counterparts in Eastern Germany only considered job opportunities for the men in choosing a place to relocate (Nisic and Melzer, 2016, p. 1079). However, another study found that married women who move for family reasons, in contrast to their male partners, are more likely to face a decline in their earnings after resettlement (Geist and McManus, 2012).

Other factors including wealth are likely to influence individuals and households' decisions to

migrate. Prior studies have found that Mexican immigrants in the US were largely comprised of wealthy and well-educated people during the Age of Mass Migration (1850-1913) (Chiquiar and Hanson, 2005; Mishra, 2007). On the other hand, research also suggests that the poor showed a higher inclination to seek a better life elsewhere during the same period (Fernández-Huertas Moraga, 2011; Abramitzky, Boustan and Eriksson, 2012). The research also interestingly indicates that men who grew up in households with assets showed no interest in migration during the Age of Mass Migration (Abramitzky, Boustan and Eriksson, 2012). During that period, migration costs were relatively low and no restrictions were imposed by the United States on immigration (Abramitzky, Boustan and Eriksson, 2012). Wealth was not chosen as a control variable in the present study for the following reasons. First, the migration of the rich is the sole focus of this study, and therefore the academic argument about whether the rich or the poor are more likely to migrate is not relevant. Equally importantly, the social, economic, and political contexts under which the migration of the rich this paper is studying vary significantly from those of the Age of Mass Migration (1850-1913).

Figure 2.1 summarises the seven independent variables that are likely to influence the decisions of the rich in undemocratic countries to leave and move to Western democratic countries. According to the theoretical framework, structural factors such as systemic political corruption and its associated problems, and the deprivation of liberties in authoritarian regimes make life less desirable, driving the rich to consider leaving their home country behind. In addition, the persistence of air pollution in developing countries is another major contributing factor in pushing individuals to relocate to Western democratic countries. On the other hand, the entitlements of Western citizenship that include mobility rights and adequate access to healthcare services also attract individuals in authoritarian regimes to resettle in Western democratic countries, higher quality Western education encourage the rich in the Global South to send their children to study abroad. Last but not the least, economic opportunities in Western democratic countries also encourages the rich in authoritarian regimes to relocate in an attempt to find a safe place for investment purposes. Migrants' age-at-arrival and gender are selected as control variables in the hope of accurately measuring their effects on decisions to migrate to Western democratic countries.

Figure 2.1 about here

The framework proposed here to view migration outflows from undemocratic countries encompasses not only the pull factors in Western democratic countries but also the political conditions in their home countries (in this case, China). Employing migrants' gender and age-at-arrival as control variables permits a more accurate assessment of the complex interplay between various push-pull factors and migrants'

demographic characteristics in terms of their effects on the decisions of the rich in undemocratic countries to migrate. Additionally, it allows the study of the effects of macro level social, economic, and political constraints in the country of origin on the decisions of the rich to move abroad.

Chapter 3: Research Design

This chapter presents the research design of the study, with an emphasis on the case selection, the qualitative methods used for data collection and the combined deductive and inductive data analyses, the limitations of multiple case studies, and the potential ethical challenges which were faced at various stages of this study. The purpose of this study is not only to offer an explanation of the multiple case studies under investigation, but also to broadly apply migration theories to the rich, mutli-layered contemporary phenomenon of Chinese migration. The research design 'represents a structure that guides the execution of a research method and the analysis of the subsequent data' (Bryman, 2012, p. 45). Simply put, 'a research design links the data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn to the initial questions of study' (Yin, 2018, p. 58). The answers to the questions of which research design is adopted and what type of method is used fully depend on the research topic; the methods used to collect data should appropriately generate data that are sufficient and adequate to answer the research questions (Lewis and Nicholls, 2014).

Case Study Research

The case study method adopted in this study seeks to trace independent factors (independent variables) across 60 selected cases of rich Chinese migration decisions. In theory, case study research either involves a single case study or multiple case studies. A case study, by definition, 'may be understood as the intensive study of a single case where the purpose of that study is - at least in part - to shed light on a larger class of cases (populations)' (Gerring, 2007, p. 20). The outcome of investigation is defined as dependent variable, while the explanatory factors leading to that outcome are regarded as independent variables (George and Bennett, 2005; Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2012). Process-tracing in case studies can either be used to undercover evidence of causal mechanisms at work or to explain outcomes (George and Bennett, 2005). Case analysis 'does not aim at generalisation but rather, through the researcher's attempts, to understand and interpret the individual cases thoroughly in their own special contexts' (Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2012, p. 72).

Case study methods have their own specific advantages. Firstly, case studies are particularly useful to investigate the contextual conditions involved in the formation and evolution of events (George and Bennett, 2005; Gerring, 2007; Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2012; Rubin and Rubin, 2012b; Yin, 2018). Secondly, a case study method is most suitable for research which has as its objective not only explaining some contemporary circumstances, but also obtaining a detailed and in-depth description of some social phenomena (Gerring, 2007; Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2012; Rubin and Rubin, 2012a; Yin, 2018). Thirdly, a combination of within-case analysis and cross-case comparisons strengthens the comparative advantage of case studies in addressing qualitative variables, decision-making processes, historical and social contexts,

and path dependencies, providing more confidence in the emerging theory, and validating it both internally and externally (George and Bennett, 2005; Gerring, 2007; Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2012).

Case studies have been widely criticised for selection bias and supposed generalisation problems. In practice, recruiting a certain number of interviewees for each of the identified sub-categories of the research population is likely to reduce problems associated with selection bias (Small, 2009). Snowball sampling is also perceived to effectively reduce sample bias and to produce deep and rich data, because interviewees who are recruited based on personal referrals are likely to answer questions more candidly (Small, 2009). In summary, case studies are well suited to investigate the contextual conditions in which a social phenomenon is embedded, and excel in generating more in-depth and nuanced findings. At the same time, sample selection bias and the problem of generalising findings for wider research population are notable concerns (Small, 2009; Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2012).

Case Selection

The case selection can be defined as 'the rational selection of one or more instances of a phenomenon as the particular subject of research … The relevance of the case or cases for the research objective is the most important criterion for selection' (Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2012, p. 61). In the light of the migration motivations involved, wealthy Chinese migration is quite distinctive, as wealthy Chinese migrants appear not to seek better job opportunities or higher wage by migrating to Western democratic countries as the other migrants do. This is because they have already accumulated their wealth in the context of three decades of rapid economic growth in China. China is selected as a case on the basis of its suitability for investigating the underlying reasons for migration from undemocratic to democratic countries. Below, I discuss the reasons for selecting rich Chinese migrants as multiple case studies, and the grounds for selecting China and four destination counties as contextual units of analysis in the multiple case studies.

China

China was selected as a country to investigate because of its distinctive political context and the unprecedented three decades of continued and rapid economic growth it has enjoyed. Firstly, China is governed by the Communist Party and is defined as an autocratic regime (Cabestan, 2019; Pei, 2020). Secondly, China has had a relatively stable single-party political system and a relatively stable political-economic development model since it began to open up in 1978. Thirdly, China is a prosperous country with enormous economic opportunities. Lastly, a continuous and sharp expansion of the Chinese upper and middle classes in tandem with the fast economic growth in recent decades has generated a massive migration flow to Western democratic countries. This migration flow is the largest experienced by the countries in the West and will continue to dominate global migration flows. Such a massive migration flow to Western democratic countries concerns the Chinese government due to the brain drain and wealth drain,

so a US$50,000 limit on overseas transfers per year was set up to prevent Chinese citizens from transferring their wealth to overseas accounts in 2007 (People's Bank of China, 2008). Hence, China is unique in many ways, and the reasons for the migration outflow from China merit research attention.

China is the home country of rich Chinese migrants and its social, economic, and political situations, to varying degrees, condition their emigration. With a few exceptions, little attention has been paid to the contextual factors in China. According to the findings of existing studies on the reasons behind rich Chinese emigration, China's rigid education system and severe air pollution have cast a dark cloud on the quality of life (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). Hence, China's education system and environmental problems are seen as push factors in this study. However, China's structural factors go beyond educational and environmental problems, also encompassing issues related to China's single-party political system and level of economic development. These factors have not been comprehensively examined by Chinese migration scholars. Importantly, China's rapid and continuous economic growth over the past three decades has not only produced a large number of Chinese millionaires; it has also brought many political, social and economic problems such as high-level corruption and a growing gap between the rich and the poor. As such, those contextual factors in China, coinciding with the introduction or relaxation of investment immigration programmes in Western democratic countries, might contribute directly and indirectly to rich Chinese migration outflows.

Rich Chinese Migrants

Wealthy Chinese migrants are selected here for multiple case studies because of their privileged economic status in their country of origin. These Chinese made their fortunes within China's economic opening-up and rapid economic growth, and have enjoyed their privileged economic status in China. This is the puzzle because they left a country within which they accumulated their wealth. But at the same time, they gave up potential economic gains in China's continued economic growth and instead migrated to Western democratic countries. Their decisions to do so may suggest that wealthy Chinese aim to pursue goals beyond economic wellbeing in Western democratic countries. Chinese private entrepreneurs and business elites, who are important segments of wealthy Chinese migration, have little social and political influence even though they possess a large amount of economic capital (Li, 2013).

More broadly, according to earlier studies, the burgeoning middle class and entrepreneurs in Asia aspire to democracy, security, the rule of law, and a healthy environment, but their demands are not satisfied due to the political settings in Asian countries (Ong, 2006; Chung, 2017). China has maintained single-party communist rule on the political level, and political reform has not gone together with economic modernisation. Like people in other Asian countries, wealthy Chinese might have some political hopes alongside their growing economic influence. Overall, wealthy Chinese face different political settings to people in other countries, which may invoke different motivations to migrate. Lastly, wealthy Chinese

migrants are very important segments of global migration to Western democratic countries due to the size and scale of their migration.

Each Chinese migrant was treated as an individual case in this study, and 60 selected cases were investigated, analysed, and compared within the selected criteria. The criteria outlined here were used in selecting 60 individual cases for this study. However, the specific target participants to a certain degree presented heterogeneous characteristics in terms of their gender, age, wealth, types of visas used when entering receiving countries, and networks in host societies. Participants' gender and age were chosen as control variables in selecting interviewees, while other heterogeneous characteristics are also discussed below.

The defined research population was primarily determined by their social and economic backgrounds. The term 'rich Chinese migrants' under inquiry refers to mainland Chinese who possess or whose family possess investable assets worth at least RMB 10 million (USD $1.5 million), as that amount of money was accepted by Chinese banks as a threshold for being defined as 'rich' in 2009-2010 (Bain Company, 2013). This cohort of Chinese is also called high-net-worth-individuals (HNWIs) by Chinese banks. They include entrepreneurs, business people, corporate executives, professionals, and government officials.

The participants recruited for this study were HNWIs who had embarked on a migratory journey after 2000. Thus, special attention was paid to the post-reform era (the 2000s onwards). The China Private Wealth Report is a report on Chinese HNWIs' wealth released by China Merchants Bank and the Bain Company every two years based on data collected from rich Chinese HNWIs through interviews and surveys. According to this report, Guangdong, Shanghai, Beijing, Jiangsu and Zhejiang located in Eastern China, and the South-eastern coastal region, are ranked as the top five provinces and municipalities where large numbers of rich HNWIs clusters reside (Bain Company, 2011, 2017). Thus, the individual cases investigated here were migrants who mainly came from economically well-developed Eastern China and the South-eastern coastal provinces.

Although possessing investable assets of USD $1.5 million is the benchmark set for the term 'rich' in China, a large number of rich Chinese actually have far greater wealth than this benchmark level. According to China Private Wealth Report in 2013, there were more than 700,000 HNWIs in China at that time, including 40,000 ultra-HNWIs with at least RMB 100 million in investable assets and 100,000 HNWIs with investable assets exceeding RMB 50 million (Bain Company, 2013). A study has shown that the more wealth rich Chinese have, the more likely they are to emigrate (Tian, 2017).

Visa type is another selected criterion used here. Immigrant Investor Programmes in major Western democratic countries are used by rich Chinese as a fast track to overseas settlement. Rich Chinese were the largest group of recipients of business investment visas in Australia, Canada, and the United States in 2012, the year when Xi Jinping took office and launched his anti-corruption campaign (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang,

2016; Barbulescu, 2018; Mavelli, 2018). Apart from these visa holders discussed above, many rich Chinese also entered destination countries with talent visas, while other participants from wealthy families did so via applications for student visas and then changed to other types of visas after the completion of their studies. Having relatives and friends who have already migrated to destination countries may play a crucial role in rich Chinese people's choice of countries to migrate to. Therefore, participants' networks in host societies are also examined.

Rich Chinese migrants, in contrast to classic economic migrants in the West, choose to emigrate from their home country where they have already made their fortunes, suggesting that their motivations for emigration go beyond simply seeking economic wellbeing. In particular, rich Chinese migrants do not necessarily intend to reside in the receiving country permanently because they are likely to have kept their businesses running in China (Liu-Farrer, 2016). In particular, according to a survey conducted in early 2013, the year after the smooth leadership transition from Hu Jintao to Xi Jinping, approximately 90 percent of the Chinese HNWIs showed more interest in political and economic matters than they had two years before (Bain Company, 2013). In this sense, the problems arising from the one-party political system might be linked, directly or indirectly, to rich Chinese migration. Therefore, China was selected as a unit of analysis not only due to its status as the home country of a cluster of rich Chinese migrants, but also because its unique single-party political system might contribute to the political aspects of Chinese migration.

Four Selected Countries of Residence

Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States were selected as case study countries of residence in this research because they were the top four most popular destinations for rich Chinese in 2016, 2017, and 2018 (*Chinese Immigrants Index*, 2016; *Chinese Immigrants Index*, 2017; *Chinese Immigrants Index*, 2018). Importantly, these countries were selected on the basis of some similar features. Firstly, these countries are democratic countries offering their citizens a wide range of civil and political rights, which not only allow their citizens to participate in the collective governance but also to enjoy freedoms of speech and movement, in marked contrast to the absence of those rights in China. Secondly, the governments and political institutions in those countries operate within the framework of the rule of law and the protection of private property as guaranteed by law. Due to the factors previously discussed, these countries are therefore seen as ideal places for rich Chinese to park their assets abroad (Bain Company, 2017). Thirdly, they are developed economies (United Nations, 2014) with open and highly civilised societies and wide-ranging welfare benefits, all of which attract rich Chinese to migrate in search of better investment opportunities for their businesses, better education for their children, and a better quality of life for their family (Bain Company, 2017). Fourthly, those countries are English-speaking countries, with reputations for the best educational opportunities. Lastly, the fresh air, clean water, and relatively unspoiled nature on offer enable rich Chinese to improve every aspect of their quality of life.

Aside from differences in immigration policies, ease of investment, and property investment rules in host societies, whether a receiving country has established Chinese communities or not is also likely to influence the migration decision of rich Chinese in choosing a destination country. The immigration requirements and procedures for visa applicants differ across the four chosen countries. For example, the investment threshold for the EB5 visa in the United States differs from the Investor Visa in the United Kingdom. Equally importantly, it has been widely reported that rich Chinese investors often snap up luxury properties in Los Angeles, Seattle, San Francisco, New York, Vancouver, Sydney, and London (*Chinese Immigrants Index*, 2016; *Chinese Immigrants Index*, 2017; *Chinese Immigrants Index*, 2018), so differences in property investment rules and ease of investment in the four selected countries have also accordingly affected the decision of rich Chinese in selecting a preferred country to relocate to. Noticeably, rich Chinese have largely clustered in metropolitan cities in these receiving countries, such as New York, Vancouver, Toronto, Melbourne, Sydney, and London (*Chinese Immigrants Index*, 2016; *Chinese Immigrants Index*, 2017; *Chinese Immigrants Index*, 2018). The existence (or absence) of well-established Chinese communities in a city might have influenced rich Chinese people's decisions on potential destinations. The following section discusses the methods used to collect data in this study.

Methods of Data Collection

This thesis uses two types of data: primary data and secondary data. The primary data consists of data generated from online interviews, while the secondary data includes wealth reports and statistics from government and non-government organisations. The following sub-section briefly describes the types of data used in this research, starting with secondary data as this form has been widely used by scholars on the subject of rich Chinese migration.

Secondary Data

Wealth reports, statistics from governments and non-governmental organisations, and Chinese government policies were all used to verify the existing findings on the subject of rich Chinese migration. More importantly, secondary data provides background information that helps to build a comprehensive understanding of the rich Chinese migration phenomenon.

Citizens' quality of life is closely linked with social protection, economic wellbeing, equal access to political rights, healthcare, educational services, and environmental attributes. Migration occurs as a result of the varying levels of satisfaction individuals have with all aspects of their quality of life between the countries of origin and residence (Hsieh and Liu, 1983). Therefore, the level of freedom enjoyed by citizens is likely to have an effect on their quality of life, and to influence their decision to migrate. Political stability, the rule of law, and control of corruption are three key components used by the World Bank to evaluate the quality of governance because political corruption is likely to negatively affect citizen's ability

to gain equal access to welfare benefits. When citizens feel they are not being treated fairly and equally, their sense of social insecurity is likely to be intensified. China's freedom ranking as released by Freedom House is used as the criterion to estimate whether the Chinese are able to gain equal access to political rights and civil liberties. Political rights and civil liberties are two key issues used by Freedom House to evaluate each country's freedom ranking across the world.

Chinese HNWIs' wealth management objectives as suggested by the China Private Wealth Reports were employed in this study as one of the indicators of the causes of rich Chinese migration. Also, the Henley & Partners Passport Index[5] was adopted in line with theorectical expectation 4 in order to demonstrate whether Chinese passport holders face restrictions on travelling abroad in comparison to their Western counterparts (henleypassportindex, 2019). Furthermore, data on PM 2.5[6] values in the world's major cities published in World Air Quality Report (World's most polluted cities (PM2.5), 2019) was used to trace the air quality variations between major Chinese cities and cities in the West. As secondary data only provides background information on the subject but cannot answer the research questions comprehensively, primary data gathered via conducting semi-structured online interviews is discussed in the subsequent section.

Primary Data

Samples are strategically selected in case study research in line with the requirements at hand (George and Bennett, 2005). Qualitative methods have been widely used in the social and political sciences to generate data that not only offers insights into the life experiences of individuals or particular demographic groups but also substantially reflects the social, economic, and political contexts in which they are embedded (Lewis and Nicholls, 2014). In general, qualitative research methods are chosen because they are well-suited for their particular area of study, which aims to retain depth of data rather than breadth in terms of sample size (Ritchie *et al.*, 2014). Invariably, the objective of qualitative research is 'to gain an understanding of the nature and form of phenomena, to unpack meanings, to develop explanations or to generate ideas, concepts, and theories' (Ritchie *et al.*, 2014, p. 116).

Based on careful consideration of the research objectives, the sensitive nature of the research issues, the specific characteristics of the target groups, and the distinctive features of Chinese culture and the political system, semi-structured interviews were chosen as the best means of generating data. Semi-structured online interviews were conducted in order to collect large chunks of first-hand information from wealthy Chinese migrants. The migratory decision-making process undertaken by rich Chinese is by its nature very complex, so the data generated via semi-structured interviews would allow the complexities surrounding the issues concerned to be captured. In the interviews, rich Chinese were invited to elucidate

[5] Henley & Partners are a leading global immigration consultancy.
[6] Air-quality monitoring system.

how they had reached their decisions to relocate to Western democratic countries. The audio recordings are believed to 'provide a more accurate rendition of any interview than taking your own notes' (Yin, 2018, p. 161). Therefore, the interviews were conducted in Chinese and recorded after receiving consent from the interviewees.

Interviews are considered an effective method for qualitative research projects that aim to describe social and political processes (Rubin and Rubin., 2012; Yeo et al., 2014). Moreover, interviews are essential sources of evidence for case studies because they are particularly useful in answering 'why' and 'how' research questions and in gaining insights that are likely to reflect participants' relativist perspectives (Rubin and Rubin., 2012; Yin, 2018). Ultimately, the purpose of qualitative interviewing is to seek to formulate initial research ideas and generalise them to broader social settings from the interviewee's own perspectives (Bryman, 2012). Since the cross-border journeys made by wealthy Chinese appear not to have taken place on a regular basis, conducting interviews was viewed to be more appropriate to generate rich data than participant observation.

Qualitative interviews, namely semi-structured interviews or in-depth interviews, are particularly suitable for obtaining specific information about interviewees' life stories (Bryman, 2012). The relatively unstructured nature of this type of interview not only gives interviewees much more freedom to choose how to respond, but also allows them to give vivid and detailed accounts of, in this case, their decision to migrate. Theoretically, 'understanding people's motivations and decisions, or exploring impacts and outcomes, generally requires the detailed personal focus that one-to-one interactions allow' (Lewis and Nicholls, 2014, p. 56). The participant is the sole focus of the conversation in one-to-one interviews and great attention is therefore paid to his/her narrative, which not only provides an opportunity for detailed investigation of his/her views on the issues at hand, but also allows the researcher to gain a good understanding of the wider contexts within which they are situated (Lewis and Nicholls, 2014).

From a cultural perspective, rich Chinese are generally reluctant to share information about their fortunes, businesses, and migratory stories. Topics related to money and personal motivations for leaving China are extremely sensitive and highly confidential in Chinese cultural and political contexts, and the ongoing anti-corruption campaign and increasingly strict censorship in China have inevitably placed additional pressure on rich Chinese that are likely to prevent them from sharing their migratory stories, or to hesitate to do so. Therefore, one-to-one semi-structured interviews in private settings enabled participants to give in-depth accounts of their personal stories comfortably and securely (Lewis and Nicholls, 2014).

Sampling Strategy

A purposive sampling approach was adopted in this study, and participants' wealth, visas, residence status, age, and gender were all taken into account in recruiting and selecting the right participants for the study. Purposive sampling is 'conducted with reference to the goals of the research so that units of analysis are

selected in terms of criteria that will permit the research questions to be answered' (Bryman, 2012, p. 418). Moreover, it also ensures that 'enough diversity is included so that the impact of the characteristics concerned can be explored' (Bryman, 2012; Ritchie *et al.*, 2014, p. 113). Furthermore, the method helps to ensure the collection of sufficient, valid, and reliable data that can adequately answer the chosen research question (Lewis and Nicholls, 2014).

After careful consideration of the research aims, the characteristics of the research population, and the resource availability, snowball sampling was used to recruit participants, and the recruitment of participants was mainly advertised on WeChat, QQ, together with LinkedIn. The participant's recruitment also benefitted from the wide circle of personal connections I established through working as a writer. Moreover, sampling for range was adopted to recruit interviewees for this study. Sixty wealthy individuals were recruited to take part in interviews (36 females and 24 males). The interviewees were also proportioally selected with reference to their age, and the final study sample comprised 17 young Chinese (aged 35 years or below), 28 middle-aged Chinese (36-50 years old), and 15 senior Chinese individuals (above 50 years old). Entrepreneurs and business owners comprised over a third of the sample, with the rest consisting of technicians, professionals, scholars, corporate executives, and former government officials. As has been suggested (Small, 2009), snowball sampling and sampling for range are likely to reduce sample bias and increase the richness of the data generated. Theoretically, 50 participants or less is figure well recognised by scholars as a good sample size to conduct interviews (Ritchie *et al.*, 2014). In practice terms, a large sample size is considered to cause problems in achieving a high quality of data collection and analysis, while if the sample size is too small and there is too little diversity, the chances of identifying variations will inevitably be reduced (Ritchie *et al.*, 2014).

The selection criteria were as follows. First of all, individuals or their families must have accumulated wealth before their relocation. Secondly, those individuals or their family members must have already taken up permanent residency in one of the four selected Western countries. Thirdly, they must have arrived in the selected Western countries via business visas, investor visas, entrepreneur visas, talent visas, or dependent visas. These types of visas were selected for the following reasons: a specific amount of capital is required for individuals to be eligible to apply for the first three visas, thus satisfying the requirement to be categorised as 'rich'. Skilled worker visas were included in the participant selection because it has been reported by the Migration Policy Institute that investor and skilled worker visas are the two preferred routes used widely by wealthy Chinese immigrants (Rietig, 2014). In the meantime, it is also the case that some of the participants in this study subsequently changed their visa status by applying for skilled worker visas to navigate immigration rules in Australia, Canada, and the United States after failed attempts as an investor visa applicant. Several interviewees were dependent visa holders because their partners had relocated to host societies via investor and skilled worker routes.

Only a third of the interviewees had pursued their dreams of living abroad by applying directly for

investor visas, while the migratory processes of the remaining participants were much more complex. More than half of the participants had entered selected Western countries with skilled worker visas, a particular notable route in Australia and the United States, countries where most of the Chinese who entered did so when they were under 30 years old. The majority of Chinese who obtained their residency status via skilled immigration schemes had studied in the host society prior to migration, with the sole exception of Canada. These participants obtained skilled worker visas directly without having previously studied in Canada, and were mainly middle-aged professionals and business people, while in contrast, Australia and the United States accommodated much younger talent. These younger Chinese arrived in host countries on their own in their teen years or their 20s. They came from economically privileged backgrounds, and their parents either ran their own businesses, invested in the properties, or had well-paid jobs. Their parents' financial capability enabled them to further their education in the West.

The majority of participants had embarked on cross-border movement before they reached 40 years old. They were well-educated individuals, with more than half having obtained master's and doctoral degrees. Most of the participants were from coastal provinces in Eastern and Southern China (which are at the forefront of economic reform), including Shenzhen, Shanghai, Beijing, Tianjin, Jiangsu, Guangdong, Shandong, and Zhejiang, with a small number of participants from inland provinces such as Sichuan, Hubei, and Anhui. More than ten participants had investable assets of more than USD $ dollars 10 million, and more than half of the interviewees (36) had embarked on the migratory journey after the year 2010. Whether or not they had friends or relatives in the destination played an important role for these rich Chinese in choosing which country to relocate to, with more than two-thirds of participants choosing a destination where they already had friends or relatives. (see Table 3.1: Interviewees' Profiles).

Table 3.1 about here

Conducting Interviews

Interviews were conducted in order to obtain first-hand information about the reasons why each of the participants decided to leave China behind and relocate to a Western democratic country. During each conversation, particular attention was paid to contextual factors in China and each of the four selected Western countries and the complex interplay between them, leading rich Chinese to reach migratory decisions. The interviews were conducted online via WeChat, Skype, or Zoom and lasted approximately 45 minutes each. The interview guide was designed to encompass all reasons for migration as highlighted in the theoretical framework.

The interview questions were intended to be simple, easily understood, and open-ended, leaving space for the rich Chinese participants to elaborate on their reasons for choosing to emigrate from China. I guided the interviewees with the purpose of addressing the key research issues throughout the conversation.

Six questions were raised, and four to six sub-questions were included in each question. When relevant information on the research theme was mentioned by the participants, follow-up questions were then used to reflect the variable measurement as explained in the following section. The interview questions are presented in Appendix 1.

Variable Operationalisation

The independent variables were measured through the follow-up questions asked in the interviews supplemented by secondary data. The follow-up questions were only raised when relevant information on the research theme was mentioned by the participants. The dependent variable in this study was the decision to migrate, measured by the answers to the follow-up questions. Political corruption (TE1) was measured through six follow-up questions. A first question was asked about the rich Chinese interviewee's perception of the level of corruption in China. Then, the second question was enquired about whether the interviewees had experienced corruption in China. If the answer was positive, two follow-up questions were asked: how did corruption affect their business and life? A fifth question was also asked about whether they had experienced corruption in their country of residence. If the answer was positive, the follow-up question was: in what way did corruption affect their life?

Turning to freedoms and liberties (TE2), the follow-up interview questions were particularly focused on Chinese state-imposed censorship and the protection of private property. Four follow-up questions related to Chinese state-imposed censorship were raised accordingly. The first question was whether the interviewee was affected by restrictions on their freedom of speech in China. If the answer was positive, a follow-up question was asked: how did that happen? If state-imposed censorship was mentioned by the participants, then the follow-up questions posed were: what types of censorship, and how did it affect rich Chinese life? Regarding the protection of private property, four follow-up questions were asked: the first was about whether the interviewee was affected by the China Property Law? If the answer was positive, the follow-up question was: in what way? A third question related to whether the interviewee was affected by the protection of private property in their country of residence, then if the answer was positive, the follow-up question was: in what way were rich Chinese affected?

Air pollution (TE3) was measured through six follow-up questions. The first question asked about whether the interviewee had been affected by air pollution in their hometown. If the answer was positive, a follow-up question asked in what way? The third question enquired about whether rich Chinese or their family had suffered any sickness attributable to air pollution. If the answer was positive, the effects of that ill-health explored. Whether the interviewee was affected by other environmental problems was raised as a follow-up question. The final follow-up question asked about the interviewee's perception of the natural environment in their country of residence.

Mobility rights (TE4) were measured via five follow-up questions coupled with a statistical

comparison of the number of countries granting visas to Chinese passport holders and visa-free entry to Western passport holders, the data having been obtained from the Henley & Partners Passport Index. The first and second follow-up questions focused on the frequency and purpose of the overseas trips made by rich Chinese as Chinese passport holders. The inconvenience caused by holding a Chinese passport in cross-border travel was investigated by the third follow-up question. The final follow-up question asked about whether more overseas trips were made as a Western passport holder. If the answer was positive, a follow-up question about the reasons for more overseas trips was then asked.

National healthcare (TE5) was measured with the help of four follow-up questions related to national healthcare in China and the country of residence. The first question enquired whether the rich Chinese participants were entitled to access national healthcare in China. If the answer was positive, the issues of types of treatments covered by Chinese healthcare and the effects of this healthcare on rich Chinese were raised in the interview. The Chinese perception of healthcare in their country of residence was also raised in the interview.

The follow-up questions used to measure economic and investment opportunities (TE6) referred to Chinese business practice, and China's investment climate and business and investment opportunities. The first question asked about how Chinese business practice affected business. The second question enquired about how Chinese tax rates affected business. The third question was about whether Chinese economic growth offered plenty of business opportunities, and whether the local government helped businesses to grow. If the answer was positive, the interviewee was then asked in what way? The final question related to their perception of the investment opportunities in their country of residence.

Education (TE7) was measured through five follow-up questions addressing the systemic problems of Chinese education and the Chinese perception of Western education. The first question asked about whether rich Chinese children faced problems in Chinese schools. If the answer was positive, what kinds of problems and the effects of these problems were explored. Then, the interviewee was asked whether their children were admitted to local schools. If the answer was positive, then their perception of Western education was raised accordingly.

Data Management

With 60 interviews conducted, the research created large chunks of data. This meant that managing the data systematically and effectively was of vital importance in enabling a satisfactory analysis. Upon completing the interviews, audio recordings of each one were first transcribed into written texts in Mandarin Chinese, and were then translated into English in an electronic format. In practice, the transcription was carried out immediately after completing each interview as this practice helped me to avoid any pitfalls in the previous interviews and therefore to prepare well for the next interview.

In order to manage the data obtained from the interviews, each transcript was annotated with added information including the time and date each interview was conducted, and the length of the interview. While making the transcription, text suggesting concepts and research themes was marked down too, and relevant thoughts and ideas were jotted alongside the text. In the process of data analysis, memos were used in conjunction with thematic analysis in an attempt to speed up the data processing and to enable the relevant themes to be identified quickly and easily. Later on, these memos helped me to suitably modify the research questions, explicitly identify research themes, and pick up clues about further research directions. Carefully planned data management not only enabled me to quickly spot the information needed to address the research question, but also made it easy to identify emerging themes arising from the data. Moreover, it also enabled me to quickly label and categorise any unexpected insights emerging from the data, and systemically manage them. Well-planned data analysis and good data management saved me a lot of time and optimised the efficiency of the data analysis process as well as speeding up the entire research project.

The research was approved by the Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Research Involving Human Subjects at the College of Social Sciences at the University of Glasgow (Application No: 400200079). Ethical consideration was given to multiple different elements of the research process, including the data collection, data analysis, data storage, and the sharing of the data. Ensuring good ethical practice throughout the research process requires the researcher to 'anticipate what might arise but also to respond to the unexpected, working in a thoughtful and reflective way' (Webster, Lewis and Brown, 2014, p. 78). Conducting interviews via WeChat entails some risk of being censored by the Chinese government. To avoid that risk, I recorded the interviews because audio files are stored on my device. Prior to the interviews, interviewees were reminded not to reveal their identity in the conversation. Oral consent was obtained and recorded before the interview began. Before obtaining oral consent, the voluntary nature of participation in the research was explained, and the participant's right of withdrawal from the research was respected in all circumstances. Also, the guaranteed anonymity of the participants' identities and the confidentiality of research data were explicitly stated.

Regarding the ethical issues related to data storage and sharing, certain measures were adopted: first, each interviewee was given a false name in order to protect their personal information from being disclosed. Second, any information that potentially risked disclosing the participants' identity was removed. Third, all written notes were securely stored in a lockable cabinet only accessible by myself, and audio recording files and electronic documents were safely stored on my office computer and laptop protected by a password only available to myself. Last, the notes, audio recordings, and electronic documents were securely and safely stored for a period of ten years to comply with the school's ethical guidelines. In order to maintain the confidentiality of the data, only my supervisors were allowed to access it, and other third parties were prohibited from doing so.

Method of Data Analysis

Mixed methods were used to analyse the data by integrating case-oriented and variable-oriented approaches. The aim was to achieve richly detailed data, and to generalise the findings to a much broader population. Case-oriented analysis is good at finding concrete evidence to ensure that research questions can be answered, but generalisability is hard to achieve as a result of examining small sets of cases (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014). In contrast, generalisability is easy to achieve through conducting a variable-oriented data analysis but the absence of details of specific cases is a key shortcoming of this approach (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014). Therefore, a combination of the two approaches in analysing data not only maximally utilises the merits of both approaches but also strategically minimises their shortcomings.

Regardless of the case-oriented and variable-oriented approaches, comparative data analysis was adopted because of its advantages in terms of gleaning insight into the larger phenomenon of interest by comparing the similarities and differences within a small number of cases (George and Bennett, 2005; Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2012). Equally importantly, seeking to trace a correlation between stable independent factors that have produced certain effects under certain conditions is one of the primary tasks of data analysis for exploratory research (George and Bennett, 2005). Ultimately, the purpose of qualitative data analysis is to seek to answer the research questions in ways that allow the researcher to draw broader theoretical conclusions (Rubin and Rubin, 2012b). In practice,

> Data analysis is the process of moving from raw interviews to evidence-based interpretations that are the foundation for published reports. Analysis entails classifying, comparing, weighing, and combining material from the interviews to extract the meaning and implications, reveal patterns, to stitch together description of events into a coherent narrative (Rubin and Rubin, 2012b, p. 201).

Concepts and themes are two key terms which are frequently used during the data analysis process and have different definitions. By these definitions, ‘a concept is a word or term that represents an idea important to your research problem; themes are summary statements and explanations of what is going on’ (Rubin and Rubin, 2012b, p. 207). More broadly, a theme ‘provides the researcher with the basis for a theoretical understanding of his or her data that can make a theoretical contribution to the literature relating to the research focus’ (Bryman, 2012, p. 580). In practice, the thematic analysis process is closely tied with textual data and provides a particular focus when dealing with interview transcripts (Spencer *et al.*, 2014).

Thematic Framework and Analysis

During the data analysis phase, emphasis should be placed on interpreting data in ways ‘that specify the concepts of interest, causal relationships, the presence and effect of contextual relationships, and outcomes’ and findings that are based on intensive and contextual case observations rather than seeking generalisation (Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2012, p. 153; Rubin and Rubin, 2012a). Simply put, the primary task during this stage of data analysis is to build a logical chain of evidence (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014).

With the aim of matching theoretical expectations, deductive coding was adopted in this study to create a provisional 'start list' of codes before collecting the data. These codes are derived from the conceptual framework, the research questions, puzzle areas, and the key variables under inquiry (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014).

In the process of data analysis, I began to search for and allocate key terms and phrases from the raw data that could offer credible information on the theoretical expectations. Based on the identified terms and phrases, I narrowed down the scope of investigation in relation to these factors, and modified my theoretical expectations into more concrete terms. Then, I focused on identifying information relating to these terms and phrases when I re-examined the data. Critically, provisional coding is well fitted to qualitative research because it allows the researcher to build on or corroborate existing research findings. For instance, the impact of corruption on business is a subtheme under the theorectical expection 'political corruption and its effects', so I located key phrases such as rising cost, unfair competition, deteriorating investment climate, increased risk of capital loss, and similar terms in each interview text. Finally, I sought to establish the causal relationship between the corruption and the business and investment climate in China through a cross-case analysis. A causal chain was used to illustrate what factors are likely to be causing a certain phenomenon (see Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 about here

The current debate on the reasons why affluent mainland Chinese consider migration was taken into account when coding and labelling the data units. For instance, concerns over China's rigid education system have been widely recognised as among the main determinants leading some rich mainland Chinese to leave their home country behind (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). Examinations, homework, and fierce competition have also been widely cited by scholars to describe China's problematic schooling system. Having no weekends off, and no free time for after-school activities, interests, or hobbies have also been cited as key reasons why pupils feel unhappy, stressed, and even suffer from physical and mental health problems. Certain positive aspects of Western education such as a learning-friendly environment and the fostering of a pupil's potential, are often cited as pull factors attracting rich Chinese to relocate to Western democratic countries. These push and pull factors are shown in Table 3.2. Identifying the subthemes 'educational problems in China' and 'negative effects' came first, followed by investigating the subtheme 'merits of Western education' and the linkages of the three subthemes in the sequence. The causal network was used as an example to demonstrate how the rigid education system in China pushes some rich Chinese to relocate to Western democratic countries, where they believe their children can enjoy a more flexible and relaxed education (as outlined in Figure 3.2).

Table 3.2 about here

Figure 3.2 about here

This study aims to highlight the political dimension of wealthy Chinese emigration, a task that requires a cross-case analysis to trace and synthesise a series of subthemes into causal networks between theoretical expectation and political motivations. By definition, 'a causal network builds a progressively integrated map of case phenomena and, for multiple cases, aligns their maps to make a cross-case map that contains more generalisable causal explanations' (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014, p. 211). Therefore, a strong emphasis was placed in this study on tracing the outcomes of a series of subthemes 'political corruption', 'liberties and freedoms', and 'investment climate', and orchestrating them to more precisely illuminate how a particular subtheme is related to other subthemes, eventually leading to rich Chinese migration.

Descriptive methods were used at the first stage of coding to identify all the statements perceived as relevant to the reasons for rich Chinese migration, and structural methods were then employed to label and organise those statements in line with the coding structure. A process of redefining and modifying concepts and themes was carried out throughout the coding procedure because the concepts and themes outlined through the deductive coding method did not precisely fit into the raw data collected through the interviews. The interviews generated rich information on the theoretical expectations related to systemic education problems, air pollution issues, and the perennial problems associated with China's single-party political system, but only limited information emerged on healthcare, investment opportunities, and mobility rights. A cross-sectional analysis was also used in the data analysis due to the mix of contextual factors both in China and in each of the countries of residence.

Numerous concepts and themes emerged from the data which were deemed relevant to the central theme - this information was marked as 'unanticipated themes'. Inductive coding was thus adopted to analyse the concepts emerging from the data. For example, detailed information about the experience of moving provided by younger Chinese, and the lifestyle considerations of Chinese migrants across all age groups emerged from the data. With relevant new information on the political incentives at play, I further added Xi Jinping's tight control into the data analysis to respond to the emergent theme. Overall, all 60 cases offered information on the theorectical expectations; some offered rich information, while others offered more limited information, and no negative cases were found.

I performed the theme coding myself and in the absence of other coders (due to data confidentiality and anonymity), I tried to reduce a potential coding interpretation bias by engaging the respondents. More specifically, I asked ten interviewees, selected randomly, to review my interpretation and coding, and gave them the opportunity to explain whether they felt that something had been misinterpreted. None raised issues related to coding and interpretation, which gave me confidence that the procedures were systematic

and accurate.

Validity

Validity is a key issue at the data analysis stage, and considerable attention has been paid to 'whether operationalisation and the scoring of cases adequately reflect the concept the researcher seeks to measure' (Adcock and Collier, 2001, p. 529). In particular, 'external validity is clearly formative in determining whether representational generalisation (to the wider population) and inferential generalisation (to other contexts) can occur' (Lewis *et al.*, 2014, p. 357). In the later stage of generalisation, 'these causal interpretations gain plausibility if they are consistent with the available data and if they can be supported by relevant generalisations for which a measure of validity can be claimed on the basis of existing studies' (George and Bennett, 2005, p. 187).

This study involved multiple case studies in seeking to obtain explanations for rich Chinese migration from what participants said in their interviews. In order to ensure external validity and reliability, within case analysis and cross-case analysis were employed in the study to strengthen the reliability and validity of the findings. Also, a theoretical generalisation procedure was carried out to apply the collected data to parent populations where samples are drawn from wider settings, in order to provide a comprehensive explanation of the phenomenon of interest (Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2012). The final stage of data analysis is to report the results, which involves developing descriptions and themes from the data, and presenting these descriptions and themes to 'convey multiple perspectives from participants and detailed descriptions of the setting or individuals' (Creswell and Creswell, 2018, p. 276).

This chapter provided details about the rationales for adopting case study research, conducting interviews to generate data, and using thematic and comparative data analysis methods. With regard to case studies, China was chosen for a case study because of its distinctive single-party political system, three decades of rapid economic growth, and sharp rise in the number of people comprising its upper and middle classes. Meanwhile, wealthy Chinese migrants were selected as multiple case studies because of their privileged economic status in their country of origin. This study aimed to investigate the reasons for wealthy Chinese moving abroad, so case studies were adopted because they were a suitable way to investigate migration motivations. Due to the sensitive nature of the research question and Chinese culture, semi-structured interviews were used for collecting data, as the private setting and personal focus would enable interviewees to talk about their migratory stories in-depth. The interviews aimed to find out what happened to rich Chinese, why they migrated, and what it meant to them more broadly. This exploratory study aimed to further the current knowledge of the emigration of wealthy Chinese, so thematic deductive data analysis of concepts and themes derived from the findings of previous studies, together with inductive data analysis of emerging themes, would enable a thorough understanding of the investigated topics to be built.

Chapter 4: An Overview of Chinese Migration to Western Countries

Introduction

This chapter sheds light on the reasons for waves of Chinese migration to Western democratic countries in general, engages in the scholarly debate on the causes of wealthy Chinese migration in particular, and identifies research gaps in the study of the migration of wealthy Chinese. It explains the reasons of mainland Chinese for migrating to countries in the West by presenting the historical, contemporary and global contexts in which wealthy Chinese migration is embedded, and also traces the formation and evolution of waves of Chinese migration to Western democratic countries and the linkages between wealthy Chinese migration, skilled migration, and student migration. As this chapter aims to explain the impact of the relevant economic and political settings on wealthy Chinese migration to countries in the West, a set of structural factors, including economic development, policy incentives both in the countries of origin and residence, global economic growth, advanced information technology, and the internalisation of higher education, are examined. Although states and governments continue to play important roles in directing and shaping the migration of wealthy Chinese to Western democratic countries, individual incentives and the available material resources also play a key role in establishing whether cross-border journeys can be made. A section of the chapter is devoted to presenting individuals' intentions to migrate to Western democratic countries. Such intentions change over time in response to changes to the wider external political and economic environment, so a systematic view of the line of reasoning underpinning Chinese migration will help to better understand the causes of the current Chinese migration outflow to Western democratic countries.

A broad view of the evolution of Chinese migration and the similarities and differences between Chinese communities in four selected countries of residence will facilitate understanding of the big picture of contemporary Chinese migration to Western democratic countries. In addition, three forms of migration: wealthy Chinese migration, skilled migration, and student migration, are interconnected and overlap in the course of evolution. This chapter thus highlights the interrelationships between these three different forms of Chinese migrations in order to gain insights into the causes of wealthy Chinese migration.

The chapter starts with a brief overview of Chinese migration waves in a historical context, followed by tracing the emergence and interconnections of the three forms of Chinese migration, and the contrast and comparison of the composition of Chinese migration in four countries of residence. Special attention is given to studying the reasons for the waves of Chinese migration across time, and both macro and micro factors are discussed. Chapter 1 explores briefly meso-level factors such as migrant networks, and whether the existence of established migrant communities in the country of residence may sometimes also motivates

individuals to migrate. As this study lays its emphasis on examining the effects of structural factors in China on migration motivations, meso-level factors are excluded from the discussion in this chapter.

In unpacking the perceived reasons for the migration of wealthy Chinese, this chapter moves from examining the reasons for Chinese migration waves in general to presenting the views of prior studies on the causes of the migration of wealthy Chinese in particular. Subsequently, weaknesses in the existing studies and research gaps are identified after an overview of the causes of wealthy Chinese migration is given. Finally, the chapter discusses contextual information about Chinese migration waves and ends with a summary of the line of reasoning behind those waves. The contextual information presented in this chapter adds value to the research project as it sheds light on the causes of wealthy Chinese migration to Western democratic countries.

A Historical Perspective of Chinese Migration Waves

In the first half of the 20th century, ethnic Chinese were rarely seen in North American countries due to the creation of an Asiatic Barred Zone in 1917 in the United States and the introduction of the Chinese Exclusion Act in Canada in 1923, with exemptions for skilled migrants, students and teachers (Lo, Li and Yu, 2019). The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act in the United States and the 1967 Immigration Act in Canada abolished race-based immigration policies, and limited numbers of Chinese were then allowed to move to both countries (Lo, Li and Yu, 2019). Similarly, the Australian immigration policy in the early 1900s also demonstrated signs of racism. A policy of 'White Australia' was introduced before 1901. At the time when this discriminatory immigration policy was introduced, there were already almost 30,000 ethnic Chinese residing in Australia (Ang, 2014). The number of Chinese migrants froze as a result of the passing of the Immigration Restriction Act in that year, which specifically banned Chinese and other Asians from moving to Australia. That discriminatory policy began to change from the late 1960s onwards, and was gradually removed up until the mid-1990s, when Chinese migrants began to arrive again in Australia (Ang, 2014; Hugo, 2014). In contrast to the countries mentioned above, the UK government adopted a 'zero immigration' approach, making it difficult for ethnic Chinese to migrate to the United Kingdom before 1976 (Somerville, 2007).

On the other hand, China was also isolated from the rest of the world by its own restrictions on cross-border travel from 1949 to 1976, which were not lifted until historical political and economic reforms were made in 1978 (Xiang and Shen, 2009; Yan and Berliner, 2011; Huang, Yan and Wu, 2016). In line with restrictive migration policies, only state-funded students and scholars were allowed to study abroad and do scholarly work in Western democratic countries and former socialist states. The restrictions were finally removed in 1981, at which point self-funded students and scholars joined the outbound migration (Tremblay, 2005; Cao, 2008; Xiang and Shen, 2009). Both Taiwan and Hong Kong subsequently surpassed

mainland China in terms of economic growth by the 1970s, and at the same time liberalised their migration policies. Ethnic Chinese from Hong Kong and Taiwan dominated the migration flows to Australia, Canada, the United States, and other Western democratic countries in the 1970s and 1980s, before the flow largely became Chinese mainlanders in the late 1990s (M.Jolly, Knapp and Kusumastanto, 1998; Wong, 2003; Li, 2005; Teo, 2007; Li and Lo, 2012; Huang, Yan and Wu, 2016; Keister, Vallejo and Aronson, 2016; Tian, 2017; Zhou *et al.*, 2019).

The wave of Chinese migration to Western democratic countries took shape in the 1980s after China's reforms and opening up, and reached its peak after 2000 when China shifted from a planned economy to a market regime. The past four decades have witnessed three waves of Chinese migration. The first wave in the 1980s was mainly 'family reunion-oriented' and 'student migration' (Liu-Farrer, 2016). The second wave emerged between the late 1980s and the early 2000s, when a large number of skilled professionals and students left China. The third wave started in the 2000s and was comprised mainly of wealthy Chinese, which was also called a 'migration out of post-reform China' (Liu-Farrer, 2016, p. 499). The latest wave of migration from China is not a single phenomenon, and it is linked to global migration flows.

The first large unexpected 'exodus' of highly qualified Chinese students came as a direct result of the policy changes in Western democratic countries after 1989. After the Chinese government's crackdown on student protests in Tiananmen Square in 1989, the US government passed the Chinese Student Protection Act in 1992, allowing many government-sponsored Chinese students to obtain permanent resident status in the United States, and several other OECD countries followed suit (Tremblay, 2005; Cao, 2008; Keister, Vallejo and Aronson, 2016). Correspondingly, a set of measures were introduced by the Chinese government to restrict Chinese students from studying abroad, which remained in place until 2003 (Ip, Wu and Inglis, 1998; Gao, 2006; Cao, 2008; Xiang and Shen, 2009; Ang, 2014). During that period, Chinese migration to Western democratic countries was temporarily suspended.

With the rise of China economy, 'the distribution of the benefits of its economic development has been quite uneven, with economic and social inequality increasing between different social groups' (Latham and Wu, 2013, p. 22). These issues have accelerated the volume of Chinese migration over the past four decades in the times it was permitted. In the meantime, the composition of Chinese migration has become increasingly diverse. A large proportion of Chinese migrants have moved to Western democratic countries, and developing countries have also received a significant number of Chinese migrants. In contrast to the rich Chinese moving to Western democratic countries, Chinese immigrants in developing countries have demonstrated different migration patterns based on different motivations. Chinese state policies have played a profound role in directing and shaping Chinese migration to Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa. A recent cohort of Chinese migrants in Vietnam has been mostly driven by China's state strategic

policies of globalisation through exporting labour, foreign investment, and economic aid in the Global South (Chinh, 2013). Similarly, Chinese manufacturers and traders in Nigeria have arrived a result of China's Go Out Policy, initiated in 1999 (Liu, 2019). Prior studies have concluded that economic factors have played decisive roles in the migration decisions, as many Chinese are in search of jobs and business opportunities in other developing countries (Chinh, 2013; Sullivan and Cheng, 2018; Liu, 2019).

In an effort to address a growing need for workers during the post-war economic boom, the Japanese government shifted its immigration policies to attract Chinese skilled trainees and students to work in Japan in the mid-1980s (Liu-Farrer, 2013). The competitive domestic labour market for young Chinese, a constricted opportunity structure, and regional developmental disparities all pushed these young Chinese to seek jobs and new lives in Japan (Liu-Farrer, 2013). Apart from economic factors in the 1980s, the political instability in mainland China was an underlying force driving many Chinese to flee from their homeland (Wickberg, 1994). Empirical research shows that the Chinese government's political crackdowns on the student protests in Tiananmen in 1989 resulted in a large number of students and scholars fleeing from China and becoming political or economic exiles in America (Wickberg, 1994; Orrenius, Zavodny and Kerr, 2012).

The arrival of strictly selected economic immigrants, as well as international students from the PRC since the 1990s in many Western democratic countries profoundly changed Chinese migratory trends (Zhou and Lee, 2013). In contrast to those from Hong Kong and Taiwan, primary sources of Chinese international migrants before the early 1980s, scholars have specifically categorised the latest wave of Chinese migrants as 'new migrants' (Liu, 2004; Miao and Wang, 2017b). This wave of new migrants mainly encompasses 'middle-class professionals, students, and the wealthy class' (Huang, 2017, p. 191), who are 'from a relatively affluent and privileged background' (Liu, 2004; Miao and Wang, 2017b, p. 10).

The Characteristics and Evolution of Chinese Migration

This section compares the evolution of Chinese migration in the four different countries of residence. It also focuses on the differences between three distinct streams of migration (wealthy investor migration, skilled migration, and student migration). There are many cross-linkages between wealthy Chinese migrants and skilled migrants, which share a number of common features. The emerging outflow of Chinese migration encompasses mainly wealthy elite and affluent middle classes, and investors and skilled worker visas are among two preferred routes they use to migrate to Western democratic countries (Rietig, 2014). Further, 'the number of skilled Chinese migrants moving abroad are not only skilled migrants, frequently they are migrating through applications as investor migrants' (Miao and Wang, 2017a, p. 36). Thus, the Chinese applying for skilled worker visas to Western democratic countries are also from the affluent

Chinese middle class. Therefore, Chinese skilled migration could be considered an integral part of the migration of wealthy Chinese.

Chinese student migration is closely tied to the migration of affluent Chinese. Chinese students who go to study abroad mainly come from the wealthy upper and middle classes whose desire to increase their education investment has been accompanied by a rising income during China's recent period of rapid economic growth (Zhang, 2003; Latham and Wu, 2013). Since the 2000s, the fast growth of the Chinese upper and middle classes has substantially increased the number of self-funded Chinese international students (Li and Bray, 2007; Xiang and Shen, 2009; Guo, 2010). Indeed, prior study shows that Chinese student migration is a strategy used by wealthy Chinese to pursue their families' migratory dreams (Yang, 2007; Xiang and Shen, 2009; Bodycott and Lai, 2012). Furthermore, many wealthy mainland Chinese aim to gain access to the Western education system for their children by participating in investment immigration programmes in Western democratic countries (Miao and Wang, 2017b). Therefore, Chinese student migration remains a very significant feature of the latest Chinese migration flows to Western democratic countries. In order to better understand the motivations of rich Chinese for migrating to Western democratic countries, it is worth exploring Chinese student migration in more depth, particularly in terms of its effects on the migration strategies and trajectories involved in rich Chinese migration. Before conducting case studies of individual countries, an overview of Chinese migration in four countries of residence is first presented.

An Overview of Chinese Immigration in Four Countries of Residence

As prior studies have traced, since the late 1990s the inflows of highly selected economic migrants and international students from mainland China to many Western democratic countries including the United States, Canada, Australia, and other OECD countries have reshaped global human mobility (Guo and Guo, 2011; Zhou and Lee, 2013; Ang, 2014; Xiang, 2016). According to these studies, 71.3 percent of Chinese in Canada and 63.7 percent of Chinese in the United States arrived after 1990 (Li and Lo, 2012). China thus became the largest source country of immigrants for the United States, Canada and Australia in 2007, with 65,000 mainland Chinese securing immigration or permanent residence in the US, 25,000 in Canada and 15,000 in Australia (Lam, 2010). Recently, the number of Chinese nationals granted permanent residence in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and other countries has been estimated at approximately 150,000 each year (Miao and Wang, 2017a). Globally, according to statistics released by United Nations, China was the third-largest source country of international migrants in 2019, with 10.7 million Chinese nationals living abroad (United Nations, 2019).

Overall, the United States hosts the world's largest overseas Chinese population, followed by Canada (see Tables 4.1 and 4.3). Australia has a large Chinese community, but the United Kingdom's is

much smaller (see Tables 4.2 and 4.4). In the past two decades, the number of Chinese migrants arriving in the United States has far exceeded the combined intake of Chinese migrants in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Simultaneously, the United States also tops the list of the largest number of Chinese nationals granted permanent residency, again with more than the total number of Chinese nationals who obtained residency in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Due to difficulties in obtaining statistics about the number of Chinese migrants in these four countries of residence, and in particular, a lack of information on Chinese migrants in the United Kingdom, the consistency of the data is poor, but it can be reasonably concluded that North America is the most popular destination for Chinese migrants.

Table 4.1 about here

Table 4.2 about here

Table 4.3 about here

Table 4.4 about here

In the past two decades, wealthy mainland Chinese have been the primary applicants for immigrant investor programmes in the United States, Australia, Canada, and some European countries (Bain Company, 2017; Tian, 2017). North America is also the most desirable destination for wealthy Chinese investor immigrants, with the USA housing the largest number of Chinese investors, followed by Canada (see Tables 4.7 and 4.6). Due largely to the American Business Migration Visa (EB-5) granted to investor immigrants by the American government and the Significant Investor and High-end Investor Visas introduced by the Australian government, 'China has been the largest source country of business immigrants in the United States and Australia for many years' (Miao and Wang, 2017a, p. 15). Moreover, the United States, Australia, and Canada each sought to attract Chinese investors by introducing multiple-entry long-term business visa policies in the period 2014-2015 (Miao and Wang, 2017a). Simultaneously, wealthy Chinese have become buyers of residential properties in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Liu and Gurran, 2017). In contrast to Canada where the majority of investment applicants are wealthy entrepreneurs from mainland China (Ley, 2017), mainland Chinese applying for investment immigrant visas to Australia are diverse, encompassing ultra-wealthy Chinese and middle-class Chinese, both groups being active investors in Australian housing market (Liu and Gurran, 2017). Compared with the countries discussed above, Chinese investor immigrants arrived in the United Kingdom relatively late, and started increasing in number after 2008, when the points-based system was launched (Salt, 2011).

In addition to this massive exodus of wealthy Chinese migrants to Western democratic countries, the number of Chinese students studying in Western democratic countries has also increased sharply over the past two decades. As the world's most populous country, mainland Chinese students represent the largest group by far of international students originating from non-OECD countries, accounting for 18.2 percent enrolled to study in OECD countries (OECD, 2011). According to the 2018 World Migration Report released by the United Nations, one out of six international students globally was from China in 2014. Mainland Chinese students are mostly clustered in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States, New Zealand, and other OCED countries (OECD, 2011). The number of Chinese students in OECD countries has risen steadily since the turn of millennium, and this trend has accelerated since the early 2000s (Chaloff and Lemaitre, 2009; Choudaha, 2017).

The United States is the most popular destination for Chinese students - more than half of all overseas Chinese students flow to the United States, while Australia and Canada also receive a large number of skilled Chinese workers (Zhang, 2003). Since the aftermath of the 1989 Chinese Student Movement, the United States has experienced a sharp rise in the number of Chinese students (Open Doors, 2021). The first decade of the 21st century has seen a stable growth in the number of Chinese students in America, while rapid growth has been witnessed since 2010, and 350,755 Chinese students enrolled in American schools in the academic year of 2016-2017 (Open Doors, 2021). In comparison to the United States, the number of Chinese students studying in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom is relatively small. The influx of Chinese students into these countries has become more visible since the late 1990s, later than was the case in the United States (Hugo, 2008; Australia Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2015; Wilson, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017a; Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2020; Open Doors, 2021).

The outflows of highly-skilled Chinese are composed not only of Chinese international students but also technical and professionals (Zhang, 2003). In the late 1990s, Australia, Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and other OECD countries saw significant rises in their intakes of highly skilled Chinese migrants (Tremblay, 2005; Chaloff and Lemaitre, 2009). Both the United States and Australia received a large number of Chinese skilled workers, which was also related to the growing number of Chinese students studying in those countries (Australia Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2015; Shih, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017a). Prior studies have shown that a significant proportion of Chinese students converted to work-related visas after graduation (Tremblay, 2005; Finn, 2010; Australia Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2015; Karaca, 2018). Unfortunately, statistics on employment-related migrants are hard to obtain in Canada because they are composed of Federal Skilled Worker and Provincial Express Entry Categories. Due to the relatively restrictive immigration policies adopted by the UK government in the early 2000s, Chinese skilled migrants to the United Kingdom were few in contrast to Australia, Canada, and the United States (Miao and Wang, 2017a).

Chinese Immigrants in Four Countries of Residence

This section focuses on the formation and evolution of Chinese migration in four individual countries and comparisons and contrasts are carried out within and across countries. This section discusses the composition of mainland Chinese migrants in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Australia

The mainland Chinese migrants coming to Australia after 2000 have generally been very wealthy individuals, but they are diverse in their geographical regions (Gao, 2006). Mainland Chinese have accounted for 35 percent of all newly-arrived migrants admitted by Australia since the 2000s, and China-born migrants increased sharply by 176,200 between 2001 and 2011 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012). China is the leading country of origin of business migrants to Australia, and Chinese business migrants account for four-fifths of the total business migration into Australia over the past two decades (Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). Approximately 79,097 Chinese nationals were granted business visas in 2014-2015 (Australia Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2015), while a relatively small number of Chinese moved to Australia via investor migration programmes (see Table 4.5). This influx of mainland Chinese had invested AUD$24,349 million into the Australian real estate market by 2015, almost double the total investment in 2014, and more than 10 times the amount in 2010 (Foreign Investment Review Board, 2016). In terms of market share, Chinese migrants and investors in Australia purchased 20 percent of the new-build market in Melbourne and 23 percent in Sydney in 2016 (Ley, 2017).

Table 4.5 about here

Similar to Chinese immigrants in the United States, the majority of mainland Chinese who relocated to Australia did so through the skilled migrants category (Guo, 2010). Highly educated mainland Chinese migrants form a large share of skilled migrants in Australia (De Alwis, Parr and Guo, 2020). The rise in the number of skilled Chinese workers in Australia after 2000 is directly linked to the sharp rise in the number of Chinese students studying in Australia. According to one study, ‘the number of Chinese students in Australia increased almost six-fold between 1999 (7411) and 2005 (43,367), and their share of the total overseas student population more than tripled from 6.2 percent in 1999 to 20.3 percent in 2005’ (Guo, 2010, p. 145). China became the largest source country of international students moving to Australia in 2014-2015. Compared with 2013-2014, 65,737 Chinese students enrolled in Australian schools, colleges and

universities, a rise of nine percent (Australia Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2015).

A large proportion of these skilled workers are former Chinese students who converted to skilled worker visas after their graduation. In the early 2000s, 20 percent of all skilled visas were granted to Chinese students, and the number of Chinese students converting to skilled visas rose steadily (Tremblay, 2005). In 2012-2013, 60 percent of Chinese nationals who migrated to Australia did so via the skilled worker category (Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). In 2014-15, Chinese migrants topped the list of Temporary Graduate visa applicants, with 7,635 Chinese students applying for those visas, nine percent more than in 2013-2014 (Australia Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2015).

Compared with North American countries, which generally attract ultra-wealthy Chinese investors, Australia appears to attract middle-class Chinese, specifically skilled workers, professionals and students. This category of people has dominated and will continue to dominate the migration flow from China to Australia.

Canada

The early Chinese migration flows to Canada were primarily skilled workers, and nearly 44 percent of mainland Chinese moved to Canada through skilled workers and professionals immigration categories in 1980-2000 (Li and Lo, 2012). Since the late 1990s, the composition of mainland Chinese immigrating into Canada has changed, and the number of Chinese migrants has also risen dramatically. The majority of mainland Chinese moving to Canada since the late 1990s have been economic migrants, including highly-qualified professionals, entrepreneurial elites, and college students from middle-class families (Li, 2005; Pieke, 2007). Between 2005 and 2012, mainland Chinese were major recipients of Canadian investment immigration visas, accounting for 65 percent of overall investment immigrants (Ley, 2017). Mainland Chinese topped the list of permanent residents admitted to Canada in 2007 (27,014) and 2008 (29,336) (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2008). Due to the considerable influx of wealthy mainland Chinese migrants since the late 1990s, this group replaced Hong Kong Chinese and Taiwanese as the largest group and became primary buyers of luxury homes in Canada (Ley, 2017). However, the Canadian government terminated the investor immigration programme in 2014 because it did not bring the expected benefits to the country's economic growth. At that time, over 45,500 mainland Chinese had their visa applications cancelled (Young, 2014). This high number of mainland Chinese waiting for investor visas offers a glimpse of the scale of migration of wealthy Chinese into Canada. Compared to other English speaking countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, Canada has a relatively small number of

mainland Chinese students, but China has still been one of the leading countries of origin of international students in Canada since 1995 (Lu, Zong and Schissel, 2009; Li, 2016).

In general, the early mainland Chinese immigrants arriving in Canada were students, skilled workers, and professionals who had moved to Canada on a large scale since the early 1990s. In the late 1990s wealthy mainland Chinese began to arrive in Canada, and a massive influx has occurred since 2005, taking up most of the quota for investment immigration programmes (see Table 4.6). Compared with Australia and the United States, Canada takes in a high proportion of business and investor migrants, while only a relatively small percentage of migrants to the United States are granted investor visas under the investor migration scheme (Wong, 2003).

Table 4.6 about here

United Kingdom

Due to the relatively restrictive approach adopted by its government in the early 2000s, the United Kingdom has received a very small number of Chinese skilled workers, professionals and investors compared to the other three selected countries (Miao and Wang, 2017a). A points-based immigration system was introduced by the Labour Government in 2008, which included the Investor Scheme and Business Person schemes, specifically designed to attract foreign nationals with financial capital rather than human capital (Somerville, 2007). Foreign nationals who invested £2 million in the United Kingdom qualified for a 'golden visa' and permanent residence was granted after five years of residence (Transparency International UK, 2015). Approximately 1,128 Chinese were granted 'gold visas' in 2008-2015, accounting for more than half of such visas granted by the UK government in 2014 (Transparency International UK, 2015). Comparatively, the number of Chinese nationals applying for investor visas in the United Kingdom has remained relatively small in comparison with the United States, Australia, and Canada (Migration Advisory Committee, 2014; Transparency International UK, 2015; Miao and Wang, 2017a).

The number of Chinese who applied for work permit visas has risen steadily, but remained low during 1995-2008 until the points-based system launched in 2008. Fewer than 2000 migrants in total were granted work permit visas in 1995-2000, and fewer than 5000 migrants in total were granted work permit visas in 2001-2008 (Salt, 2011). In contrast to its low intake of Chinese investors and skilled workers, the United Kingdom received the second largest number of Chinese students after the United States (Jena and Reilly, 2013). The past two decades have witnessed a continuous sharp increase in the number of Chinese students studying in UK higher education with 47,035 China-born students studying in British universities

in the 2008-2009 academic year compared to just 2,883 Chinese students who enrolled in British universities 11 years earlier (Counsell, 2011). In 2014, a total of 93,419 Chinese students enrolled in schools, colleges, and universities across the United Kingdom, almost double the Chinese student intake in 2009 (Counsell, 2011; Cebolla-Boado, Hu and Soysal, 2018). More recently, 143,820 Chinese students were registered for courses in British schools, colleges, and universities in the 2020-2021 academic year (HESA, 2021).

Overall, as Chinese migrants only accounted for 2.3 percent of the foreign-born population in the United Kingdom in 2019, ranking 10th on the list of foreign-born population groups, the Chinese community in the United Kingdom remains very small (The Migration Observatory, 2020). Apart from the high intake of Chinese students since the early 2000s, the United Kingdom has received a very small number of Chinese investors and skilled workers and professionals partly due to its relatively restrictive immigration regime.

United States

The United States is the most preferred destination for Chinese migrants, taking in more than a quarter of the total migration numbers from China. Chinese migrants were the second largest ethnic group in the United States after Mexican migrants in 2011-2013 (Miao and Wang, 2017b). Along with the emergence of Chinese investor migration to Canada and Australia in the early 1990s, America has seen an influx of wealthy Chinese investors since the mid-2000s. China became the largest source country of EB-5 investor migrants in the United States in 2009, and the US intake of wealthy Chinese investors peaked in 2014 with 8308 mainland Chinese being granted EB-5 investor visas (Miao and Wang, 2017a; Congressional Research Service, 2021) (see Table 4.7). Simultaneously, the large influx of Chinese investor immigrants has boosted the American residential property market. In 2014-2015, Chinese families became the leading foreign buyers of residential property both by value and number of transactions. Respectively, California, Washington, DC and New York were the most popular destinations, and the total sales from mainland Chinese buyers were forecasted to rise to $22 billion in the 12 months ending March 2014, up from $12.8 billion at the time (Yun, Smith and Cororaton, 2015).

Table 4.7 about here

Going back further in time, upon a 1978 agreement to exchange students and scholars was reached between China and the United States, the number of mainland Chinese studying in the United States soared, increasing from nearly zero in 1978 to approximately 20,030 in 1988 (Yan and Berliner, 2011; Open Doors,

2021). Mainland Chinese student numbers surpassed students from Taiwan in 1989 and China became the largest source country of international students to the United States in 1989-1994 (Open Doors, 2021). China has remained one of the leading source countries of international students to the United States, and mainland Chinese students accounted for 28.7 percent of foreign-born students in the 2012-13 academic year (Han *et al.*, 2015; Shih, 2016; Open Doors, 2021). Respectively, Chinese doctoral students show a strong desire to settle in the United States after their graduation (Tremblay, 2005). China also became the largest source country of international doctorate recipients in the 1990s, accounting for 39 percent of the total, when doctoral students could legally obtain permanent residence in the United States (Finn, 2010; Karaca, 2018). In 1995-2007, More than 90 percent of Chinese doctoral students resided in the United States five years after graduation, many having received permanent residence while working on their doctoral research (Finn, 2010). There were approximately 62,500 Chinese PhDs working in the science and engineering fields in the United States in 2006 (Cao, 2008). In 2014, China was the second-largest source country of employment-based visa applicants in the United States, including skilled workers and professionals (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2016). Thanks to China's rapid economic growth, the willingness of Chinese doctoral students to return to China has slightly improved, but more than 83 percent of them intended to stay in the United States upon their graduation in 2008-2014 (Karaca, 2018).

To sum up, both Chinese skilled migration and student migration to the United States began in the early 1980s. Both rose sharply after 1989, the year of the student protests in Beijing, and continued to grow after 2000, reaching a peak around 2014. As a large number of Chinese students convert to work permit visas after completing their studies, the evolution of Chinese skilled migration to the United States is closely linked to Chinese student migration. In comparison to the two migration streams discussed above, wealthy Chinese investor immigrants arrived relatively late in the United States, having only migrated there on a large scale in the mid-2000s. Despite the fact that the United States has received the largest number of wealthy Chinese migrants since the mid-2000s, its intake of Chinese investor migrants has been dwarfed by the sheer number of Chinese students and Chinese skilled workers and professionals. The next section presents an overview of the reasons for these waves of Chinese migration to Western democratic countries.

An Overview of the Reasons for Chinese Migration

The focus of this section is to study the reasoning behind the waves of Chinese migration described above. The analysis includes structural factors in China as the country of origin and the chosen countries of residence, while Chinese motivations for moving are also discussed. Regardless of what aspirations individual Chinese migrants might have, 'the liberalisation of visa policies at home and abroad enables high-skilled and wealthy Chinese migrants to enjoy ever-greater freedom in permanent settlement and back-

and-forth transnational movement' (Xiang, 2016, p. 3). The macro level factors in China and the countries of residence are first discussed.

Macro level Factors

Chinese migration in the latter half of the twentieth century was initially due to the PRC's open-door policy since 1978 and the subsequent expansion of the market economy (Latham and Wu, 2013; Liu-Farrer, 2013, 2016). In tandem with the rapid economic growth, both the upper and middle classes have accumulated substantial wealth that has provided the necessary financial foundation for unprecedented migration outflows from China (Zhang, 2003; Li, 2005; Cao, 2008; Huang, Yan and Wu, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017a). The sharp rise in the numbers of wealthy upper and middle classes has generated a source of economic migrants and students to Australia, Canada, the United States, and other OECD countries (Zhang, 2003; Li, 2005; Li and Bray, 2007; Cao, 2008; Xiang and Shen, 2009; Guo, 2010; Huang, Yan and Wu, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017a). After the Chinese government's relaxation of controls on overseas investment in 2007, Chinese global investment has risen sharply from less than US$1 trillion in 2004 to $6.4 trillion in 2015 (Hanemann and Huotari, 2015; Miao and Wang, 2017a). In short, China's fast economic growth, the sharp expansion of the upper-middle classes, and China's rapidly expanding global investment have together boosted wealthy Chinese migration on a massive scale.

After the Cultural Revolution in 1976, the Chinese government decided to send students abroad to receive high-quality training in order to raise the level of Chinese science and education (Zweig, Changgui and Rosen, 2004; Tremblay, 2005; Cao, 2008; Xiang and Shen, 2009; Yan and Berliner, 2011; Ma and Pan, 2015). After the short disruption brought by the 1989 student protests, the Chinese government resumed its policy of liberalising overseas education in the early 2000s, which encouraged short-term student migration that could engage in building up diaspora networks (Zheng, Sang and Wang, 2004; Tremblay, 2005; Salamońska and Unterreiner, 2019). A prior study noted that the massive migration outflow of Chinese students 'is largely due to the marketisation of China's higher education system and liberalisation of the state policy towards commercialised brokerage services' (S. Lan, 2019, p. 266). In practice, Chinese students have widely used the services provided by educational intermediaries (there were 10,000 intermediary agencies in 2014) in both the state and non-state sectors to fulfil their dreams of studying abroad (S. Lan, 2019). Meanwhile, the Chinese government has fostered this migratory trend through the introduction of new policies designed to relieve the problems caused by the uneven distribution of educational resources in China (S. Lan, 2019). Strategically, the Chinese government further added political value to foreign degree holders in the national context, and encouraged and assisted them to 'cash in' their human capital (Xiang and Shen, 2009).

In the Global North, economic development together with the introduction and liberalisation of immigration, foreign investment and education policies in several Anglo-sphere countries have attracted new middle class and ultra-wealthy investors from China to Western democratic countries (Javorcik *et al.*, 2011). Economic citizenship schemes have been introduced by Western democratic countries in attempts to encourage capital mobility and economic development through granting citizenship and residency to foreign nationals willing to invest capital that would create jobs (M.Jolly, Knapp and Kusumastanto, 1998; Tian, 2017). Indeed, policymakers in Australia, Canada, and the United States intentionally tailored investment immigration programmes to attract millionaires wishing to escape the political uncertainties associated with the Hong Kong handover. More recently, wealthy mainland individuals have replaced Hong Kong Chinese as the main recipients of investor visas (M.Jolly, Knapp and Kusumastanto, 1998). Earlier research showed that the introduction and expansion of business immigration programmes in North America and Australia in the 1980s subsequently attracted ethnic Chinese capitalists 'to search for profits and capital accumulation globally' (Liu-Farrer, 2016, p. 502). More recently, a large percent of HNWIs have left mainland China to take advantage of the investment immigration programmes offered by Western democratic countries (Hess, 2016).

The US investor programme allows entrepreneurs who invest in new commercial enterprises that would generate a significant number of jobs to migrate to the United States (M.Jolly, Knapp and Kusumastanto, 1998). In 2014, more than 85 percent of EB-5 were granted to Chinese nationals (Miao and Wang, 2017a). The rising number of EB-5 investor migrants is closely linked to the rapid escalation of residential purchases by individuals from mainland China (Ley, 2017). Back in 1986, the Canadian Business Immigration Programme (BIP) added 'investors' as a new category to encourage wealthy individuals to invest in Canada (Wong, 2003). BIP has attracted a large number of ethnic Chinese from the Greater China region (i.e., Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Mainland China) to seek Canadian residency through property investment (Ley, 2017). In a similar way, the Australian government tailored its Business Skills Migration Programme to place a greater emphasis on the business skills and educational attainment of potential immigrants in 1992 (Wong, 2003). The recent massive influx of Chinese business migrants into Australia has partly been due to the introduction of a three-year, multiple-entry visa in 2014 which greatly eased travel restrictions for foreign nationals engaging in investment activities (Australia Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2015). In the United Kingdom, the new points-based system introduced by the government aims to attract Chinese entrepreneurs and investors who want to make a 'substantial financial investment (a minimum of a million pounds)' (Knowles, 2017, p. 465).

The development of the global information economy demands a large number of highly qualified and skilled workers, therefore many Western democratic countries have liberalised their immigration policies to attract global talent to meet market demand, especially in science and technology (Tremblay,

2005). These skilled workers and entrepreneurs have been widely assumed to possess the higher levels of human capital required by a market economy (Wong, 2003). For example, Australia, Canada, and the United States offer permanent residence without a job offer to migrants who are highly-educated and highly-qualified in order to attract global talent (Tremblay, 2005; Chaloff and Lemaitre, 2009). At the same time, Australia opted to align its skilled migration programmes with graduated students, attempting to attract a large number of international students to study in Australia, and many OECD countries have followed in its footsteps with introducing similar policies (Zhang, 2003; Baas, 2019). In an effort to attract talent from non-European countries, the UK government launched a points-based managed migration system in 2008 (Salt, 2011; She and Wotherspoon, 2013; Consterdine, 2018).

On a global level, Chinese student migration is closely correlated with the global student movement that has been driven by 'the overall growth in higher education worldwide, particularly among high-income economies, and the perceived value of enrolling at prestigious institutions' (Abbott and Silles, 2016, p. 622). The policies of the internationalisation of educational courses and allowing students to apply for residency have been adopted by Western democratic countries as part of an immigration recruitment strategy (Tremblay, 2005). The US's 1990 Immigration Act not only steadily increased the annual quota for employment-based immigrants to 140,000 but also introduced an H-1B visa category that enabled college graduates to become permanent residents after completing three years of work in the United States (Antecol, Cobb-Clark and Trejo, 2003; Li and Lo, 2012; Shih, 2016). To maintain competitiveness, the Canadian Post-Graduation Work Permit Programme allows graduates to work for up to three years after graduation regardless of the subjects they have studied in an attempt to attract international students (Tremblay, 2005; Chaloff and Lemaitre, 2009). In 1999, the Australian government shifted its immigration policy by focusing on admitting skilled migrants and international students, with many mainland Chinese migrants obtaining residency through the skilled migrant visa category, in particular those who had completed their tertiary education in mainland China (Gao, 2006; Tang *et al.*, 2014). In 2008, the policy was reformed and multi-step migration policies were launched, including the Graduate Work Stream and the Post-study Work Stream, aimed at eligible international students wishing to obtain work visas after their graduation from Australian academic institutions (Chaloff and Lemaitre, 2009; Australia Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2015). In 2001, the rise in UK work permit visas was closely linked to the introduction of the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme (HSMP) allowing foreign talents with exceptional skills to seek work there (Tremblay, 2005; Somerville, 2007; Mulvey, 2011).

Micro level Factors

The early outflows of Chinese talents were as a result of the gaps between China and Europe and North America at the scientific, technological, and education levels and in the respective research environments, together with changes in immigration policies in those developed Western regions (Zhang, 2003). Because highly educated Chinese are well prepared to fit the employment needs of the global economy, China has been one of the major sources of skilled labour, highly skilled workers, and professionals for Canada and the United States since the late 1990s (Tremblay, 2005; Li and Lo, 2012). Compared to its rapid economic growth, China's standard of higher education has been widely assumed to have remained unsatisfactory. Although 'the gross college enrolment ratio in China has increased from the less than 3% in 1990 to 51.6% in 2019' (China's Ministry of Education, 2020; Jin, 2022, p. 899), Chinese higher education degrees are considered devalued, and 'the competition of entry examination for top university is increasingly fierce' (Zhai, Gao and Wang, 2019, p. 3). Therefore, a large number of Chinese students choose to study abroad after failing to score highly enough in the university-entrance examinations to allow them to enter an elite university in China (S. Lan, 2019). Most importantly, China is the world's most populous country, a situation that has exacerbated the already existing domestic educational problems (Abbott and Silles, 2016; Choudaha, 2017). Indeed, limited access to high-ranking universities and the fierce competition to gain a university place together with the Chinese government's liberalisation policies on overseas education have subsequently led to a mass exodus of Chinese students.

As many Chinese families accumulated wealth in tandem with country's rapid economic growth over the past three decades, more and more families found they could afford to send their children to study abroad (Yang, 2007; Bodycott, 2009). A survey conducted in 2001 by China's National Bureau of Statistics suggested that more than 60 percent of mainland Chinese families had invested one-third of their annual income into their children's education (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002). Spending on children's education is the second largest item of family expenditure after food (Bodycott, 2009). Parents from the economically well-developed cities and provinces and/or those with personal experience of studying abroad were particularly keen to send their children to study abroad (Bodycott and Lai, 2012).

The desire of many Wealthy Chinese to invest in overseas residential properties also motivates them to migrate to Western democratic countries. There has been a notable surge in wealthy Chinese individuals' investment in the global real estate market since 2011 (Ley, 2017; Liu and Gurran, 2017). HNWIs and Chinese have strong investment interests in residential property, and prefer to buy residential property in cities like London, New York, Los Angeles, Sydney, Vancouver, and others in the Global North (Anderlini, 2015; Ley, 2017; Liu and Gurran, 2017). For example 'the largest British property developer Barratt Developments sold 2250 houses to Chinese buyers in 2012, accounting for 15% of their total sales in that year' (Miao and Wang, 2017a, p. 24). Similarly, many middle-class mainland Chinese choose Australia as an investment destination, influenced by their prior experience of being a student or working in Australia

(Liu and Gurran, 2017). The statistics provided below illustrate the scale of the residential investments undertaken by wealthy mainland Chinese:

> The Chinese HNWI with an overseas presence have an average of 2.3 properties overseas in 2015. Investment is the main purpose of their overseas home ownership, accounting for 75%; this is followed by their children obtaining a foreign education, accounting for 56%. The US is definitely the Chinese HNWI overseas home buyers favourite country, with a section rate up to 66%. The top five countries are Australia (14%), Canada (10%), the UK (5%) and Japan (4%) (Miao and Wang, 2017a, p. 23).

Compared to China, many English-speaking countries have better living and working conditions, relatively high wages, better research facilities, better employment and career development opportunities, and greater personal freedom (Zhang, 2003; Chaloff and Lemaitre, 2009; Yan and Berliner, 2011; Tu and Nehring, 2019). Due to these factors, those countries have been able to attract a pool of highly skilled workers, especially fresh Chinese graduates seeking employment after graduation. According to one study, a significant percentage of Chinese students who received their higher education in Western democratic countries then chose to become permanent residents during or after their studies in the West (Lu, Zong and Schissel, 2009). According to the official Chinese report, from 1978-2013 about two-thirds of Chinese students obtained employment in the host societies after graduation and nearly 90 percent of those students live in the United States, Australia, United Kingdom, Japan, Canada, and Singapore (Tremblay, 2005; Zhou and Liu, 2016).

Universities in Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States have been widely assumed by Chinese students to be high quality, with good rankings, and there were 126,498 Chinese students in the US, 87,588 in Australia, and 55,496 in the United Kingdom in 2010 (Wilson, 2016). Beyond the simple objective of obtaining overseas qualifications, mainland Chinese students believe that seeking education abroad will provide them with opportunities for increased wealth and migration (Mazzarol and Soutar, 2002; Li and Bray, 2007). Moreover, both mainland Chinese parents and their children also consider higher education as a means of maintaining their upper-middle class status or climbing up from a lower social status (Li and Bray, 2007). In Chinese contexts, overseas education provides a 'distinction from outside of the Chinese system for those who are not part of its concentrated elite with close party connections and privileged positions in the logic of wealth accumulation' (Knowles, 2017, p. 461). In contrast with their counterparts who remain in China, students are able to gain social and cultural capital through studying abroad (Tu and Nehring, 2019). Based on the assumption, students and their parents have strong belief in overseas study experience, and degrees which are perceived to add value to their employment in the country of origin (Tu and Nehring, 2019).

Arguably, international education and migration are always intimately interconnected with each other. Students, and Asian students in particular, aim to gain a return on investment beyond the education received, and permanent residency status after graduation represents a significant incentive in the selection

of study-abroad destinations (Baas, 2019). In a Chinese context, studying abroad is often a collective decision, widely used by wealthy Chinese for the migration of an entire family or selected family members (Yang, 2007; Xiang and Shen, 2009; Bodycott and Lai, 2012). Two-step migration pathways have been widely adopted by Chinese students to strategically achieve their migratory objectives. Whether specific Western democratic countries have favourable post-study immigration policies has a profound influence on the decisions of Chinese students on where to study (Zhang, 2003; Tan and Hugo, 2017; Baas, 2019; Zhai, Gao and Wang, 2019). For example, the studies about Chinese students' post-study migration trajectories suggests that they mainly decide to study in Australia due to its attractive immigration policies, which allow them to seek permanent residency by applying for skilled worker visas upon graduation (Guo, 2010; Tan and Hugo, 2017). Having now provided an overview of the reasons for the Chinese migration waves in general, the next section engages in scholarly debate on the causes of wealthy Chinese migration in particular.

Rich Chinese Migration

Existing studies place great emphasis on examining the social, economic and environmental motivational factors behind the migration of wealthy Chinese (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Huang, 2017; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). By and large, the quality of education in Western democratic countries has been widely assumed to be the main determinant of overseas investment for wealthy Chinese (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Huang, 2017; Tian, 2017; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). Chinese people hold high expectations of their children's education and tend to perceive that China's higher education system does not prepare their students for real-world challenges and future employment well enough (Anderson, 2016). Thus, rich Chinese have sent, or plan to send, their children to study abroad with the aim of securing a better future for them. Due to rapid industrialisation and urbanisation in China, poor air quality and other environmental issues have caused significant health concerns for urban citizens, which could be viewed as a newly emergent driving force behind the migration of wealthy Chinese (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). In contrast, the clean air in countries such as the US, and Australia is considered an important factor in attracting rich Chinese to immigrate (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Huang, 2017; Miao and Wang, 2017b; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). Additionally, factors such as China's non-existent food safety regulation has discouraged wealthy Chinese from trying to secure a better future for themselves and their families in their home country (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Huang, 2017).

In the literature, various contradictory perspectives on the reasons for the migration of wealthy Chinese have been presented. Overall, economic considerations are not seen as a primary driver for rich mainland Chinese or talents relocating to the United States, Australia, and New Zealand (Liu, 2015; Liu-Farrer, 2016; Huang, 2017; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). As has been suggested by an earlier study, rich

Chinese have a strong desire for ‘a version of a good life’ rather than going in search of ‘economic gain’ in Western democratic countries (Liu-Farrer, 2016, p. 503). They are generally in search of a better and more comfortable lifestyle in Western democratic countries because they seek to improve their quality of life by migrating to Western democratic countries they believe will offer them better working and living environments (Xiang, 2016; Tian, 2017). Thus, mainland Chinese are searching for a better quality of life rather than better opportunities and political freedoms, and the decisions to migrate ‘does not always represent informed decisions to vote with their feet’ (Huang, 2017, p. 193). Hence, the considerations of Chinese in moving abroad are deemed more socioeconomic than political in nature (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Huang, 2017).

On the other hand, another group of scholars argue that the wealthy mainland Chinese flocking to Western democratic countries are motivated by concerns about political instability and economic slowdown in China as well as by seeking the protection of their families and their private property in their new countries of residence (Chow and Loten, 2012; Knowles, 2017; Miao and Wang, 2017b; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). The weak protection of private property in China has caused deep concern among the rich, many of whom choose to relocate to Western democratic countries like the United States, and Canada where they will have legal safety and the ability to protect their assets (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Knowles, 2017). The Communist Party has followed a historical policy of persecution of the wealthy, which has given modern Chinese little reassurance regarding their assets (Dickson, 2007).

Xi Jinping's anti-corruption campaign has also pushed more wealthy Chinese mainlanders to resettle in Western democratic countries (Liu-Farrer, 2016). After Xi Jinping entered office in late 2012, the central government began to engage in a series of anti-corruption campaigns, cracking down on corrupt government officials and party members (Hess, 2016; Liu-Farrer, 2016). A large number of wealthy Chinese from China’s political and business elites have made their fortunes illegally by abusing the political system and taking advantage of loose government policies that allowed them to profit from bribery and corruption (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Pei, 2016a; Knowles, 2017). With growing risk amid a change in the political winds with a CCP leadership shift, Chinese private entrepreneurs might be under great threat as their business success has primarily depended on close relations with corrupt government officials (Hess, 2016).

Prior research has also argued that wealthy Chinese aim to achieve class reproduction and become global citizens by geographically relocating to Western democratic countries. More specifically, it has been argued that ‘emigration is in fact a form of class-based consumption, a strategy for class reproduction, and a way to convert economic resources into social status and prestige’ (Liu-Farrer, 2016, p. 499). Possessing a business investor visa ‘signals the recipient’s class position and provides access to a perceived wholesome living environment and an imagined elite lifestyle overseas’ (Liu-Farrer, 2016, p. 500). Moreover, ‘emigration (*Yimin*), a form of mobility that may not entail settling abroad, is a path created by wealthy

Chinese striving to be among the global elite' (Liu-Farrer, 2016, p. 499). In short, wealthy Chinese attempt to convert economic resources into social status at the transnational level by moving abroad because such international mobility 'allows the first-generation rich to secure and advance the class position of their children among global elites' (Liu-Farrer, 2016, p. 500; Tian, 2017; Tu, 2017). Critically, the theory of class reproduction on wealthy Chinese migration is established on consisting of two key components, which include notions of 'global citizenship' and 'flexible residence' in the process of migration.

Through economic reform, China has transformed itself from a relatively egalitarian society into one in which the gap between the rich and the poor has become wider and increasingly visible, especially in urban areas (Liu-Farrer, 2013). The social unrest created by this widening gap between the rich and the poor has caused widespread unease amongst the rich and the poor. High inflation and a lack of domestic investment channels are among the main reasons pushing wealthy Chinese mainlanders to buy properties in the United States (Simons et al., 2016). In contrast to their Western counterparts, few developed economies offer Chinese passport holders exemption from visa applications, a situation that has restricted Chinese citizens from hassle-free overseas travel. To a certain degree, wealthy Chinese have attempted to make international travel easier through migrating to Western democratic countries (Miao and Wang, 2017b).

On the whole, rich Chinese moving overseas 'are motivated by a complex mix of political, economic and social concerns about China' (Xiang, 2016, p. 1). Wealthy Chinese moving abroad do so in search of a certain kind of lifestyle, good quality and less stressful education, and better natural and social environments (Liu, 2015; Huang, 2017; Liu and Gurran, 2017; Tian, 2017). Hence, earlier studies have tended to categorise rich Chinese migrants either as investor migrants, international students, or lifestyle migrants (Liu, 2015; Liu-Farrer, 2016; Huang, 2017; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). The earlier studies have shown that wealthy Chinese have multiple reasons for international migration. Hence, the migration of wealthy Chinese should not be studied in isolation from the social, economic, and political conditions both in China and the chosen countries of residence within which it is embedded. While the earlier research on Chinese migration focused on studying social and economic conditions in China and the implications brought by large numbers of Chinese migrants, in particular Chinese international students, professionals and Chinese investors in Western democratic countries (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Huang, 2017; Miao and Wang, 2017b; Tu, 2017). Little attention was given to the underlying political factors in China, which condition and shape the migration outflows of rich mainlanders. Hence, the existing understanding of wealthy mainlanders' own reasons for migration is patchy. Therefore, the present study aims to provide a more thorough understanding of the reasons for the migration of wealthy Chinese. It is important to recognise that the economic and political conditions in China in the past two decades are dynamic and

changing, and exploring whether these changes have influenced the migratory decisions of wealthy Chinese is one of the objectives of this study.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a broad overview of contemporary Chinese migration flows to countries in the West. The chapter has explored the reasoning behind contemporary Chinese migration, the evolution of Chinese migration, and contrasted and compared the emergence of Chinese migration and the characteristics of Chinese migration in four main countries of residence. According to the analysis set out above, in terms of wealthy Chinese migration, skilled migration, and student migration alike, North American countries have been and will continue to be the most desirable destinations for mainland Chinese migrants. The United States not only hosts the largest Chinese overseas population, far more than the combined Chinese migrants in Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom, but has also housed the largest number of wealthy Chinese migrants, student migrants and skilled workers and professionals over past two decades. Unsurprisingly, Canada has traditionally been another popular destination for migrants across the world and has admitted a significant number of Chinese migrants over the past two decades. Canada has remained attractive for ultra-wealthy Chinese migrants partly due to its geographic location, being a northern neighbour of the United States. Along with these countries in North America, Australia has lured a considerable number of Chinese migrants, especially middle-class Chinese, Chinese skilled workers, professionals, and students. Apart from a large influx of Chinese students, the United Kingdom has a much smaller Chinese community due to its restrictive immigration regulations.

In the light of the reasons behind the different waves of Chinese migration across time, such as China's fast economic growth, growing number of upper and middle classes, the liberalisation of Western immigration regulations, the emergence of economic citizenships, and the internalisation of the higher education industry in many OECD countries, it is clear that these have all had an enormous influence on Chinese migration flows to Western democratic countries. Significantly, China's domestic education problems paired with the sheer size of the Chinese population have also contributed to the Chinese migration waves to countries in the Global North. On a micro level, high quality Western education and the residential property market have also attracted a large number of middle-class Chinese to embark on cross-border journeys. Apart from many Chinese families' intention of seeking a better quality of education and clean air in countries in the West, push factors in the country of origin have been largely omitted from the study of the causes of wealthy Chinese migration, largely owing to the lack of qualitative data resulting from difficulties in data collection in an authoritarian regime.

The earlier Chinese migration waves were comprised mainly of Chinese students and skilled workers and professionals since China opened up in the 1980s, while wealthy Chinese migration to Western democratic countries has taken shape since the late 1990s, and as such came along relatively later than the initial Chinese student migration and skilled migration. However, the current Chinese migration to Western democratic countries is made up of three streams wealthy Chinese migration, skilled migration, and student migration, which are overlapping and interconnected. The existence of interrelationships among these three forms of Chinese migration has substantially influenced the current forms of wealthy Chinese migration in many ways, especially after 2010. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that an influx of wealthy Chinese investor migrants together with skilled workers, professionals, and Chinese students to Western democratic countries since the early 2000s has become a migration phenomenon both within and beyond China.

Chapter 5: The Political and Legal Environment

Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the political freedoms and legal factors that push wealthy Chinese to migrate to Western democratic countries. It investigates whether the pull factors of freedoms and rights and mobility possibilities, along with the push factors of poor legal protections of private property, and corruption could help to explain rich Chinese migration. According to the 2013 China Private Wealth Report, wealthy Chinese were more concerned about systematic risks and the continuity of current economic policies than the risks arising from the financial fluctuations (Bain Company, 2013). Correspondingly, the 2012 leadership change was a source of considerable anxiety among the wealthy class (Hess, 2016, 2017). These concerns were more likely to be associated with structural factors including the political system and the state's chosen political economic development model. Previously, professionals and managers from Hong Kong relocated to Canada because of their anxiety about losing middle-class status for themselves and their children amidst the socio-political uncertainties associated with the political system in Beijing (Lui and Curran, 2020). As the emerging middle class on the mainland, wealthy Chinese are likely to share similar concerns to those of their counterparts in Hong Kong. Hence, this chapter is devoted to presenting the findings on the political incentives that respond to the concerns of wealthy Chinese.

As discussed in Chapter 2, previous studies have shown that migration from undemocratic to democratic countries is related to widespread political corruption, gross violations of personal freedoms and rights, and restrictions on mobility rights in the country of origin. These factors dash migrants' hopes of seeking a better quality of life and greater personal freedoms in their home country, as well as obstructing their ability to travel across borders, and have resulted in individuals moving from undemocratic to democratic countries. The factors of freedoms and rights in Western countries are relative to the restrictions on freedom of speech, strict media censorship, and weak protection of private property found in China. The chapter builds on the answers gathered in the interviews to shed light on how limited freedom of speech, strict media censorship, Chinese government propaganda, the tight control exerted under Xi Jinping's leadership and associated political instability, as perceived by the respondents, affected their migration decisions. Equally importantly, the results from the interviews suggest that lack of confidence in the legal system and its associated problems, which include the weak protection of private property and a poor quality legal environment of business in China, have also driven wealthy Chinese to migrate to countries in the West. With regards to corruption, the analysis suggests that petty corruption is a contributing factor as it discomforts wealthy Chinese by causing great inconvenience in their daily lives and business activities. Likewise, the analysis suggests that the mobility rights associated with Western citizenship act as a

contributing factor in wealthy Chinese migration. Significantly, the data suggests that the increasingly tight control experienced under Xi Jinping's leadership has acted as one of the key drivers for the recent Chinese migration flow to Western democratic countries.

The findings on the political issues behind the migration of wealthy Chinese can be viewed from three perspectives. With regard to Chinese citizenship, wealthy Chinese, like migrants from non-democratic countries, aim to make up for deficits in their original citizenship by geographically relocating to countries in the West (Harpaz, 2019; Harpaz and Mateos, 2019). Western citizenship has various advantages in terms of political, social, and civil rights (Bauböck, 1992, 2010; Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017), while in contrast, Chinese citizenship prioritises collective regulations over individual rights (Chung, 2017; Ong, 2022). According to the findings of this study, wealthy Chinese were disgruntled with the limited freedom of speech, strict media censorship, and Chinese government propaganda experienced in China, so they aimed to obtain rights and freedoms in these areas in the West via migration. The findings also indicate that Chinese citizenship offers little protection of Chinese people's political and civil rights. Due to the lack of these rights and freedoms, Chinese citizens cannot participate in collective governance, and cannot engage in political activities that might lead to potential political reforms, so they choose to emigrate to escape from an increasingly repressive political environment in China. Equally importantly, the poor protection of private property and autocratic law-making acting as drivers or contributory factors in recent waves of emigration from China suggest that many wealthy Chinese are discontented with their Chinese citizenship because it offers them little legal protection in relation to their private property, or their political and civil rights. Thus, wealthy Chinese choose to move to Western countries which depend on the rule of law, which are perceived to offer their citizens adequate legal protections.

Turning to the concept of the Chinese middle class, the findings on limited freedom of speech, strict media censorship, poor protection of private property, and autocratic law-making together create a precarious legal and political status for the emergent Chinese middle class, as has been found by previous studies (Li, 2013; Nathan, 2016). Likewise, the lack of a stable legal environment for business and the reliance on the support of government officials for business success also indicate the dependence of the Chinese middle class on China's party-state, as other scholars (Hendrischke, 2013; Nathan, 2016) have already found. Because of their precarious legal and political status, and the dependence of the Chinese middle class on the state, they have not emerged as an independent class, and they are unable to engage in domestic political activities that may bring positive political outcomes. They have thus opted to emigrate from China instead. Theoretically, the findings of this study also highlight the importance and plausibility of Hirschman's theory. First, these citizens opted to exit from the rule of an authoritarian regime because they perceived that their voice could not be heard. Second, as citizens they opted to exit an authoritarian regime instead of engaging in domestic political activities because exit was deemed less costly than protesting and other forms of political engagement. Indeed, the findings throw new light on Hirschman's

theory that, despite the improved economic status of the emerging middle class in the Global South countries, restrictions on access to political rights and the lack of a rule of law are still likely to drive them to emigrate from their home countries.

The first section discusses political rights and freedoms with particular emphasis on freedom of speech and the Chinese government's media censorship as important drivers for the migration of wealthy Chinese. The section also elaborates on the tight political control exerted under Xi Jinping's leadership as one of the key drivers of recent wealthy Chinese migration. Additionally, the section discusses the finding relating to the *Hukou* restrictions on rights, which sometimes cemented the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese. The second section presents the findings relating to the flawed Chinese legal system and its weak protection of private property that have also contributed to and caused the migration of wealthy Chinese. The section also discusses the findings on corruption and the unstable legal environment for businesses, which have contributed to the exodus of Chinese private entrepreneurs. The final section briefly discusses the effects of immigration policies in the host countries on the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese. The conclusion section summarises the core argument of this chapter.

Political Freedoms

The Chinese government's strict media censorship and limited freedom of speech were mentioned by many interviewees as one of the most important drivers for their departure from China. In theory, migration is more likely to occur when individuals' rights are at greater risk of being violated or the possible destination is perceived to offer more freedoms in comparison with their home country (Schuck, 2000). As freedom of speech and association are not guaranteed in undemocratic states, individuals are likely to choose to leave their home country behind when voicing discontent is perceived to be much easier in the potential destination countries (Heisler, 1997; Bauböck, 2003). As suggested by Freedom House and Global Press Freedom Index, Chinese freedom, press freedom and internet freedom are classed as 'not free' (Freedom House, 2021; World Press Freedom Index, 2021). The interviewees, to a large extent, confirm these insights in the literature.

Wealthy Chinese are unhappy with the Chinese government's restrictions regarding access to information and the right to express their views on the political system. This is an important driver for their migration to Western countries because they feel their voice cannot be heard within China. They feel that the Chinese government has deprived them of their freedom of expression, and more importantly, of their right to political participation. This has left them without a sense of national belonging and with limited prospects for changing their lives in China. Migration has thus become a last resort to enjoy rights and freedoms that are limited in their home country. CP 60 revealed the complex correlations between deprivation of political participation, a sense of belonging, and the cause of migration, complaining: 'The government has deprived our right to participate in politics, so it is difficult for us to have a sense of

belonging to the country, unless we are willing to be slaves, to make money quietly and not to say anything, as the government would like us to do'.

Freedom of Speech

Professionals and managers in Hong Kong chose to relocate to Canada because of the loss of freedom of speech in Hong Kong, a core value which is greatly valued by the middle class (Lui and Curran, 2020). Many wealthy mainland Chinese share a similar concern. Media censorship and limited freedom of speech feature prominently in the stories that wealthy Chinese related concerning their decision to relocate. Respondents' concerns were manifold. Firstly, they were in fear of being punished by the government for voicing their opinions. Secondly, they were deeply concerned because they were deprived of the right to be informed about what was going on in the country through censorship. Thirdly, they feared that social problems and social instability would result from the Chinese government's strict speech and media control. The concerns mentioned above have subsequently led wealthy Chinese to reach the decision to leave China.

The respondents repeatedly criticised that there is no freedom of speech in China and that the Chinese government has exercised strict control over the media. The interviewees explained that they could not express their views publicly on political issues or voice their discontent with the Chinese government and its political system including government policies. This happens despite their being allowed to comment in the media and social platforms or speak up in WeChat groups. According to them, it is common practice for the government to block and censor communication. CP 5 was invited to 'have a tea'[7] with the local police officers because she accessed information that was banned by the Chinese government. What she said on social media was monitored by the local police officers, who banned her from speaking up on social media. Moreover, her WeChat account was blocked by the Chinese government several times and this led to a loss of her contacts. CP 46 shared similar views on the control of free speech in China: 'You do not even dare to say anything, including in articles and social media, and you can imagine how scary this political environment is. We are all afraid to speak up in the group because we are saying something that is likely to leave evidence, which is also very scary' (CP 46).

The Chinese government's media censorship is not only limited to media outlets within China such as Weibo and WeChat but also reaches Western social media platforms such as Twitter, and Facebook. Even if mainland Chinese have left China, they still feel unsafe posting on Twitter because the posts are likely to reveal personal information that might bring trouble to their friends and relatives back in China. One respondent described the situation as follows: 'The powerful Chinese government has extended its tentacles all over the world; one cannot say anything bad about the Chinese government even in foreign countries' (CP 05). As a result, she is very cautious about tweeting unfavourable news about the Chinese

[7] Having a tea means being questioned by the Chinese police.

government. She sometimes could not resist tweeting, but then she thought about it and got scared and deleted the messages she had posted earlier. She also warned her son not to post bad news about the Chinese government on social media to avoid trouble for his family living in China.

Rich Chinese worry that they are not properly informed about socio-political events taking place in the country because of the government's media and speech control. At the same time, the respondents are worried about the great difficulty of accessing factual information not only about domestic events but also social and political events happening outside mainland China such as the Hong Kong democratic movement and 'Black Lives Matter' in the US. CP 05 shared her views on how information on national political events, big or small, is blocked:

> From the smallest things that are happening around us to the largest things that are happening in the district, the city, the province, and the country, including how policies are made, there is no information about them. All information is opaque, the government can show the people if they want to, and if they don't want to, the government blocks all information (CP 05).

CP 33 shared her concern about the negative impacts of limited freedom of speech on her children:

> I have some considerations about freedom of speech. Not only is our own freedom of expression important, but we also feel that our children should grow up in a more free and relaxed environment. I do not want them to grow up in such an overly restrictive environment as China. I think there is less freedom in terms of speech in China (CP 33).

Some interviewees' concerns about the possibility of increasing societal problems and political crises due to the restrictions on different voices as they believe that different voices would contribute to finding solutions to societal problems. As suggested by CP 12 'both people and countries have to be willing to listen to different opinions, only then can they be clear about what their problems are. If not, that would be a big problem'. Others feel very uncomfortable living in such a narrow-minded Chinese society, which is to a large extent brainwashed, and which rich Chinese perceive as being due largely to the single source of official information they receive as well as the Chinese government's crackdown on freedom of thought. Along the same lines, one respondent argues that 'In theory, economic development should have a catalytic effect on the change of mindset. But it is very sad that the Chinese government improves the economic conditions of the people through economic reforms and then clamps down on their thinking' (CP 46).

The respondents were uneasy at the rising domestic patriotic sentiment, which they perceive is mainly due to the Chinese government's propaganda and its attempts to manipulate public opinion. The ultra-patriotic and anti-Western social and political environment in China makes rich Chinese feel uncomfortable living and running their businesses in China. Chinese government propaganda is perceived by many respondents as a means to cultivate domestic patriotic and anti-West sentiments. As suggested by CP 19, some Chinese view the United States and other Western countries as their number one enemies partly because they are under the delusion that Westerners are bullying China and cursing Chinese as a result of the anti-American, anti-Japanese, and anti-Western ideologies permeating in Chinese TV and film productions and daily Chinese government propaganda. As indicated by CP 03, many Chinese not only

love watching films about the war against Japan, keen to see fighting against 'little' Japanese and Westerners but also feel patriotic when saying something derogatory about Westerners. The sentiment of patriotism in China now is 'a little extreme and radical', which made CP 03 uneasy. Some interviewees disliked the forcibly instilling of patriotism and promotion of Chinese Communist Party ideology in Chinese schools. They regard this forcible indoctrination as nonsensical and useless and at the same time were worried about its negative effects on the formation of their children's values. As CP 19 concluded in the interview about the content of media programmes 'there is all the stuff on the Internet that comes out of the regular party media, it's all positive stuff, it's all harmonious, nothing bad is allowed to be reported. The government and the Party have strict control over the media' (CP 19).

As the country is 'a little too indoctrinated with patriotism' (CP 03), rich Chinese are very much against it. CP 12 criticised the Chinese Communist Party for advocating 'the socialist values of the country, including realisation of socialism and communism for all mankind', which he regarded as 'being too vague and having no relevance to ordinary people'. CP 03 elaborated on the correlation between rising domestic patriotic sentiments, the overly restrictive domestic political environment, and 'objective' media reports, saying: 'The domestic patriotic sentiment has developed somewhat radically. I think the reason is that the more closed the country is, the fewer people can see the outside world, the more their ideas are driven by the mainstream media, the more they would lose their own judgment'. CP 19 disliked the Chinese Communist Party conflating the four concepts (country, nation, government, and the ruling party) together to serve the party interest. He estimated that approximately 80 percent of mainland Chinese believe media reports and only twenty percent of mainland Chinese have differing views. He had a very successful business in Shenzhen but decided to return to live in Canada due to the increasingly deteriorating political environment in China. He was disgusted by the way that 'objective' media reports scandalise American lives: 'You see the Chinese media now, all the talk about Americans living poorly and miserably but Chinese people living happily. The Chinese believe the Communist Party is saying the right things and doing the right things, so now the Communist Party has benefitted from the Chinese media propaganda' (CP 19). He also highlighted how the Chinese Communist Party strengthens single-party rule through propaganda and media censorship as well as the connection between independent media and the possibility of political reforms:

> I love China. However, the concepts of the country, nation, government, and ruling party differ from each other and the Chinese government attempts to manipulate people by mingling the four concepts together and using people's nationalism for the party's interests. Media outlets are under government control and act as propaganda mouthpieces by delivering news in favour of the Communist Party. Without free and independent media, there is almost no chance to pursue political reforms that would lead to ultimately democratic governance (CP 19).

Respondents' fears and concerns resulting from the Chinese government's control over free speech and media are demonstrated in the responses of CP 50, who worked in a provincial media outlet in China. He shared insights on how the Chinese government regulates the TV production industry in practice. The

Chinese government restricts the production of TV and film programmes on particular subjects, which the government perceives to be bad for social harmony. Due to the strict regulations on the contents TV and film programmes, there is limited space for TV producers and film directors to be creative, leading to a period when anti-Japanese dramas flourished.

> The General Administration of Radio, Film, and Television has so many restrictions on the subject matter that many dramas cannot be made. The space for production is getting smaller and smaller, so they can only make these tedious dramas. The space for film and television production, both from an institutional and personal point of view, is very much compressed (CP 50).

He regarded his job in the television industry with risk because of the strict political regulation over the sector. He worried something might go wrong and he would be out of luck. Eventually, he became tired of such a stressful job and decided to quit his job and move to Australia.

> There is no mistake in the general political direction of television production, but the government's red lines are drawn very broadly and the position of each red line varies from time to time, so it is difficult to keep track of what can and cannot be said in television production without making mistakes. There is not one red line for the whole country; there is a red line for each region and a different one for each city (CP 50).

The Chinese government's ruthless disregard for the interests of Chinese people angered the respondents and made them feel that the government is using the Chinese people, solely serving the Communist Party's interests. As stated by one of the interviewees, 'the Chinese government would not even consider the interests of the people. When the people are needed, the government speak in the name of the people; when the people are not needed, the government turns their backs on them' (CP 46). CP 53 was a witness to the 1989 Student Protests and could not accept the Chinese government shooting its own students. She felt she could not live in a country whose government was shooting its own people just because they voiced their dissent 'I cannot accept the government shooting its own students. I cannot accept that the Chinese government puts the consolidation of the communist regime first, even above lives' (CP 53). CP 52, who once worked in the army, shared his view on changes in the ideological principle of the Chinese Communist Party. He felt that the Communist Party has betrayed Chinese people, which is something he could not stand:

> I was brought up with a notion that the government and the Party should serve the people, but the Chinese society nowadays has moved away from the ideological principles advocated by the old revolutionaries. I am unhappy with this development mode, so I want to emigrate, change my place, live in a free and fair society and develop my career (CP 52).

CP 55 worked in a Chinese university and loved reading investigation reports in *Southern Weekly*, a newspaper that made a name for reporting social injustice issues. He was very sympathetic to those vulnerable people who are unfairly treated by government officials. Even though he had a very comfortable life in China and such issues did not impact him directly, he still could not stand the way the Chinese government treat their own people and felt upset about it. When he got a chance to migrate, he left China decisively. He shared his psychological journey to reach a decision to migrate 'I empathise with the

powerlessness of families and individuals who are treated unfairly by the government and have no way to complain. The feeling of powerlessness towards the government authorities has had a profound effect on me'.

In the interviewees' discourse, the words such as 'scary', 'chilling', 'not dare' and 'fear' are repeatedly used by respondents to describe their feelings about the Chinese government's control on free speech, media, and public opinion. CP 23 made a summary statement about the psychological impact of deprivation of rights and freedoms in China by saying 'Living as a human being one is supposed to have a mind of one's own, and a freedom of one's own, but it's actually quite scary to have all that wiped away'. Strict control over free speech, media, and public opinion create a strong sense of insecurity among wealthy Chinese, while widespread political propaganda and patriotic sentiment permeate every fabric of society and create a strong feeling of fear. When insecurity and fear reach an extreme level but their public expression is not allowed within China, rich Chinese feel they have no choice but to migrate to Western democratic countries where they perceive that their rights to free speech would be safeguarded; as stated by CP 28: 'Canada is not only democratic but also safe and I don't have the fear of saying the wrong thing and being censored as I experienced in China'. In a similar fashion, CP 18 stated her overall objectives for migrating to the United Kingdom and the interview reveals her desire of living in a free and liberal society, 'We want to live in a free society and we want and learn more information. The information has not only enriched us, but also given us an open mind' (CP 18).

Figure 5.1 about here

Crackdown on Freedoms under Xi

The data demonstrates that the high degree of social and political controls under Xi Jinping's leadership causes wealthy Chinese qualms, acting as one of the main drivers for the Chinese migration flow to Western democratic countries. Sixteen out of 18 investor immigrants, who are entrepreneurs, and most of them have investible assets worth 10 million US$, left China after Xi Jinping took power in 2012. The most notable change at the beginning of Xi Jinping's rise to power was the tightened speech and media controls. A rapid deterioration in the environment of public opinion, together with increasingly strict media censorship since Xi Jinping came to power in late 2012, became a source of serious concern. Wealthy Chinese acknowledged the existence of a system monitoring public opinion in China, which was relatively relaxed before 2010, becoming stricter after that, but then was completely tightened up after Xi Jinping came to power in 2012. The stifling surveillance of public opinion disgusts the rich Chinese and strengthens their resolve to leave China.

CP 03 indicated that Xi Jinping's speech on Youth Day (May 4th) in 2013 was a sign of the changing political landscape in China. Chinese people noticed policy changes following that speech, including the

implementation of very strict censorship on the media and free speech. He pointed out that the monitoring of public opinion in China reached a very serious moment that made him feel uncomfortable. CP 50 shared his overall views about changes regarding control of opinions for the past two decades:

> We clearly felt that the period from 2005 to 2010 was relatively relaxed. Then, after the second decade of the 21st century, the regulation of television production became tighter and tighter. I think it was after 2012 that there was a relative tightening. There were more restrictions on television production, and many of the things that used to be said, such as by news commentators, had to be said in a different form or not at all after 2012 (CP 50).

CP 33 expressed a similar view on the changes to control of opinion after Xi Jinping came to power 'opinion control was fine at the time. Before 2010, it felt relatively loose, but around 2010 it started tightening up slowly and got tighter and tighter later. I think it's been tightening up since Xi Jinping came to power'. CP 19 resented having 'just one voice' in China by criticising:

> All the media is one voice, from the central to local media, from television, radio, newspapers to the Internet, especially after Xi Jinping came to power. Obviously, the media is under very strict control. All the public opinion guidance is completely on the one hand and would not hear any dissident things, a little bit different voice has been quickly censored (CP 19).

After Xi Jinping came to power in 2012, the anxiety of Chinese entrepreneurs was continually rising because they felt the Chinese government was becoming more repressive. More specifically, the introduction of the Social Credit System, the 'original sin' problem, and the likelihood of political regression under Xi Jinping's leadership, all left wealthy Chinese feeling that their personal freedom, their business, and their wealth were at risk if they continued to live in China. Moreover, the likelihood of political instability and regression under Xi Jinping's leadership has caused considerable alarm among many wealthy Chinese. Migration is thus chosen to escape from the increasingly deteriorating political conditions resulting from Xi Jinping's tight control. CP 23's husband together with a group of business friends from the high-tech industry are becoming increasingly worried about their businesses and their wealth. With regard to current domestic Chinese laws and regulations, it is assumed that the enterprise is the original sin. She described her husband's anxiety in the interview: 'At the time when we applied for immigration, my husband was reluctant to migrate to Canada, but later he urged me to move to Canada as soon as possible, and I noticed that he was changing because the whole political wind has changed in 2013' (CP 23). CP 60 shared his similar views over the change of leadership and his fear about potential risks posed by the process of his capital accumulation. He closed down his factory and quickly fled from China aiming to protect his fortune and navigate the potential risk of being prosecuted. He shared his thoughts on his objectives of migration:

> To be honest, making money in China is all about making money, but it does not dare to guarantee that every penny is very clean. If the government was to take stock of the process of the original accumulation of capital, business people would be wary of such a business environment and of such a government. Now we all do not know what will happen in the future in China and we are all worried (CP 60).

There are reasons for entrepreneurs' fears and the introduction of the Social Credit System is one of them. CP 14 chose to move to the United Kingdom after the introduction of the Social Credit System because he was worried about its worst implications on his family members:

> Now the government has created a blacklist called the Social Credit System. If my business practice is improper, I can actually accept being blacklisted by the government. But it is said that if I am on the blacklist, my children would not be allowed to take the civil service examinations or to do this or that, I think this is very scary (CP 14).

The poor performance of the Chinese Communist Party is partly reflected in the fact that the wealthy Chinese do not see any hope for political reform, which the interviewees constantly mentioned as leading them to become disillusioned and migrate to the West. In particular, under Xi Jinping's leadership, political reform is no longer an option, as stated by one of the respondents: 'We knew that the political situation was not something that we could influence or change. We actually took it into account subconsciously when we made a decision to emigrate. The current political situation told us that political reform was not an option anymore, that is, we couldn't change anything' (CP 46). CP 43 recalled a time in the 1980s when China's domestic politics seemed to have been liberalised a little that offered a glimpse of hope for political reforms, but lamented the increasingly deteriorating political situation in mainland China that dashed hope for political change. In contrast to other entrepreneurs, CP 60 not only terminated his business but also sold three properties and left China rather assertively because he perceived that there was no hope of political reform in sight and a potential crisis resulting from the extreme imbalance between economic and political development. He stated in the interview: 'I feel that the development of the country requires different policies at different times. When the country has reached a certain level of economic development… China's political system cannot remain unchanged, it is not in line with the level of economic development' (CP 60). With Xi Jinping in power, the hopes for political reform are very low and there are also fears of political regression. CP 14 stated clearly that political regression was the cause of his family's emigration from China and talked about his fear over political backwardness under the current leadership in his interview:

> I have my own business, so I didn't think about migration. In 2016, I changed my mind. At this stage of development, Chinese people don't really have much demand for democracy and freedom, we can accept that democracy and freedom can come step by step, but we can't accept driving backward, social and political are moving backward. I was a bit frightened by the political regression. I could accept a slower development of democracy, but we were frightened by the reversal of the trend, and this was the main reason for emigration at that time (CP 14).

Many of the wealthy Chinese interviewed felt that political stability is a prerequisite for a stable life and successful business. They considered that the one-party Chinese communist rule was very unstable, and made them feel insecure about living in the country, particularly under Xi's leadership. CP 4 interpreted Chinese socialism as 'people's democratic dictatorship' because 'all private property can be nationalised' and considered the single-party political system in China as unstable. As he has no faith in the single-party communist rule in China, he aims to escape political upheaval as well as protecting his fortune through

migration. Like CP 04, CP 46, who was also a very successful entrepreneur, was worried about the existing political risk under the single-party communist rule. He believed that it could cause a qualitative change if things festered to a certain extent (CP 46). In order to protect his business and wealth, he migrated to the US.

The respondents also considered the potentially disastrous impact of political instability on their family, in particular their children. CP 28 was witness to many tragic events that happened in the Cultural Revolution, which he perceived as caused by the brutality of the Chinese communist rule. He was scared of the possibility of a return of the Cultural Revolution and did not want his sons to live in such a repressive regime. He thus moved to Canada where he felt safe:

> The Communist Party is very powerful in controlling people. Anyone who disagrees with the Party can be monitored by the police or by the management of the community. Such controls as those of the Chinese government, which oppress people to a certain extent, can lead to political unrest and the possibility of a return of the Cultural Revolution (CP 28).

CP 12 had many years of studying overseas experience prior to migration. He started planning for his child's future after he formed a family. He felt that people living under an authoritarian regime are risk-taking and he then decided to migrate to the country where he did his undergraduate course. He was very critical of China's single-party political system:

> If a society does not have a relatively fair and effective political mechanism in place and relies solely on the will of individuals to operate arbitrarily, the risks are great. If the person in power is wise, when he is in power, the people have a good time, but when he has gone, what will the country do and what will the people do (CP 12).

CP 14's statement reflects the fear of wealthy Chinese about political instability in China and the close link between his decisions to migrate and political instability:

> If I were to put it more bluntly, if I were to return to China as a foreign investor, whether China is politically stable or not, it would have very little to do with us. If the political situation in China is unstable and I go back to the United Kingdom and do not invest in China, I don't have to pay too much attention to the Chinese government's policies. Taking a British status makes both our business and our lives much easier; at least the worst things won't happen to us. When I first emigrated, this was something I thought about very seriously (CP 14).

Two individual cases also reflect the increasingly deteriorating political situation in China after Xi Jinping came to power, influencing the migration decisions of Chinese private entrepreneurs as well as their migratory trajectories. CP 19 was motivated to find a well-paid job and applied for a talent visa in Canada in 1999. However, with the introduction of the 10th five-year plan, China's economic growth was fuelled by enormous state investment in infrastructure developments, and the first signs of an economic boom became apparent. Upon seeing this, CP 19 quickly changed his mind about moving to Canada and chose to continue to work and make money in China instead. In a similar fashion, CP 46 moved to the United States aimed to find business opportunities in the destination in the early 2000s but returned to China to run a toy factory at his hometown with his products mainly exporting to the American market.

Thanks to China's three-decade fast economic growth, their businesses have been successful and they have accumulated huge wealth. However, they both decided to leave China and move back to Western countries (Canada and the United States) in 2015 because they felt that they could not cope with the increasingly restrictive political environment in China that resulted from the Chinese government tightening its control over people through restrictions on free speech and media censorship under Xi Jinping's leadership. They felt that they could not live and do business in such a restrictive environment. Comparatively, they were initially motivated to migrate to Canada and the United States for economic reasons in the early 2000s. After they had accumulated their wealth in China, they decided to move back to Canada and the United States in 2015 due to strong considerations regarding the Chinese government's tight control over free speech and media and the likelihood of political regression. The difference in their objectives for moving reflects China's increasingly deteriorating political situation under Xi Jinping's leadership acting as one of the primary drivers for the migration of rich Chinese.

Figure 5.2 about here

Mobility Rights

The mobility rights associated with Western citizenship and passports present one of the contributory factors in the migration of wealthy Chinese. As suggested by a prior study, migrants from Hong Kong consider that a foreign passport could bring them flexible mobility when political conditions became unbearable (Lui and Curran, 2020). As for their counterparts in mainland China, a prior study has observed that 'the Chinese nation can rarely get its citizens exempted from visa applications when they are travelling to developed economies' (Miao and Wang, 2017b, p. 5). CP 04 complained about the inconvenience of being unable to travel to Western democratic countries freely because there is a visa requirement for Chinese passport holders, while CP 14 praised the convenience of being a British passport holder for cross-border movement. CP 04 told a story that may shed light on how ultra-rich mainland Chinese have achieved their dreams to live in the West strategically.

With three-decade fast economic growth and the rise in the number of mainland Chinese travelling abroad, CP 04's international travel business had been very successful and he made a fortune in the past 15 years. CP 04 took the first step to migrate to South Korea with his family, mainly due to his dissatisfaction with the rigid and problematic Chinese education system, which he felt was doing more harm than good to his two daughters' wellbeing. As his business was international travel, he was required to travel abroad frequently, but few countries grant visa-free access to a Chinese passport holder, so he migrated to South Korea, which had more visa-free access than a Chinese passport. After CP 04 learnt that having a Cypriot passport would enable him to travel freely in countries in European Union, he then obtained an immigrant

investor visa in Cyprus. There were no language and residency requirements for an immigrant investor in Cyprus, which made it easy for an applicant like CP 04, a businessperson without language skills, to settle in a European country. However, he did not intend to live in Cyprus and only used his immigrant investor passport as a stepping-stone to Europe. With a Cypriot passport in hand, he eventually moved to London with his family because the perceived good business opportunities and better quality of education in the United Kingdom would greatly benefit his business and his daughters' education. As his ultimate aim is to move freely in the West, a Cypriot passport does not allow him to visit the United States without restrictions. Thanks to his careful planning, his wife gave birth to their third child in Canada and thus, his youngest child received Canadian citizenship. As there is no visa requirement for Canadian citizens to enter the United States, as a parent of a Canadian citizen, he would therefore enjoy a relatively higher degree of freedom to enter the United States. His strategic three-step immigration plan not only enabled him to move freely in the Western countries but had also made him a global citizen. The desire to become a global citizen also corresponded with another respondent's narrative. CP 12 described his objective to move to the United Kingdom as follows:

> I want my children to be global citizens in the future, rather than limited citizens of a single country or a single nationality or culture. It is only through living in the West for many years that they can adapt, experience, and understand Western values, and it is for these reasons that I want my children to live in the UK as much as possible (CP 12).

Hukou Restrictions on Rights

Some respondents emigrated from China in disgust at specific policies such as Chinese household registration, which has dire impacts on their lives and business. The Chinese household registration system (*Hukou*) was introduced in 1958 and once constrained mainland Chinese from moving freely within the country and regulated their access to education, employment, healthcare, and housing but has gradually relaxed in line with Chinese economic reforms and three-decade fast economic growth (Chan and Zhang, 1999; Chung, 2017). Despite the fact that *Hukou* is not as important as it used to be in China in terms of spatial mobility and its associated rights and benefits, in a few metropolitan cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, *Hukou* is still considered as 'valuable' in the provision of social benefits and resource allocation as highlighted by the respondent.

CP 39 disclosed that the main reason behind her decision to live in the United States after she completed her doctoral degree was that her children did not have Beijing *Hukou*. This was a difficult situation because children and teenagers without Beijing *Hukou* are not entitled to access public schooling, and she could not afford private schooling in Beijing. Hence, she decided to live in the United States after graduating with a doctoral degree. Similarly, CP 06 shared a similar story, saying: 'Because my husband worked in Beijing but did not have a Beijing *Hukou*, this affected the schooling of my kids. The kids would not be able to attend good public schools'. Another interviewee, CP 35, was frustrated that she and her

husband could not obtain Shanghai *Hukou* despite having paid income taxes for many years. As she explained in her interview:

> We lived, worked and paid taxes in Shanghai, but the local government did not even recognise what we had done in Shanghai… There was a real problem with the way the household registration department handles issues, the government policy, including the attitude of the staff, made it pointless for me to live in Shanghai. I might as well go to another country to work and live (CP 35).

In the cases of CP 06 and CP 39, the parents opted to emigrate from China because they could not access public schools for their children there. The participants were Chinese citizens, but were denied access to public schools simply because they did not have Shanghai or Beijing *Hukou*. Whether or not Chinese are entitled to state-subsidised schools is primarily determined by their 'meso-level membership' instead of their national membership; in other words, it depends on their membership of the Chinese *Hukou* system (Chan, 2009; Chung, 2017). Despite the fact that these participants (CP 06, CP 35, and CP 39) were working and living in Beijing or Shanghai, and had contributed income taxes for many years, they were not allowed to enjoy the full privileges of Chinese citizenship purely because the host cities were not their birthplace. They therefore aimed to make up their Chinese citizenship deficit in public education by migrating to Western countries.

CP 01, CP 15, CP 16, and CP 54 all complained about the inefficiency of local government in their countries of residence due to the bureaucratic systems they encountered. CP 01 and CP 15 illustrated their views by providing examples of the system taking years to construct a bridge or investigate a criminal case. CP 15 perceived that time-consuming public consultation procedures contributed to the British government's inefficiency, and CP 16 felt that the British government's inefficiency was a waste of taxpayers' money. CP 54 identified it as a cause of slow economic growth in his country of residence.

In summary, the Chinese government's restrictions on free speech, strict media censorship, the Chinese Communist Party's propaganda, and the manipulation of public opinion, all of which were expected to be push factors for wealthy Chinese, acted as key drivers for their migration. This result demonstrates that wealthy Chinese consider the ability to express their opinions on political matters as an important sign of political participation, and the inability to make political statements as equivalent to a denial of their right to political participation. Since their desire to have a say on political matters could not be satisfied within China, they voted with their feet by moving to Western democratic countries where they perceived that their voice could be heard. Similarly, the right to mobility was expected to serve as one of the primary factors driving wealthy Chinese to leave China. Indeed, the data validates that the mobility rights associated with passports act as a contributory factor in migration decisions.

In comparative terms, political conditions in China carried a little more weight in Chinese men's migration decisions than in Chinese women. Nearly a third of the respondents were entrepreneurs, mostly men, who had deep concerns about the impact of China's political environment on their businesses. For

example, CP 04, CP 14, CP 19, CP 46, CP 52, and CP 60 all decided to move abroad due to their concerns over a serious deterioration in political conditions under Xi Jinping's leadership, which left them feeling unsafe about continuing to run businesses and live in China. Although female participants like CP 05 and CP 53 also took problems related to China's political system into account when they decided to leave China, this was not a dominant theme in the discourses with the female participants.

Legal Protections

China's autocratic legal system and weak protection of private property also places the wealthy class at a disadvantage within China's one-party state. The results of this study confirm and supplement the shared finding of several prior studies that the weak protection of private property in China is one important driver for entrepreneurs and business elites to decide to leave China (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Knowles, 2017). Due to China's weak legal protection, the security of private property is always one of the primary concerns of wealthy Chinese. Thus, Western countries like the United States and Canada, with their clearly defined legal systems and property protection, have been chosen as favoured destinations for wealthy Chinese in order to protect their assets (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Huang, 2017; Knowles, 2017). In addition, this finding adds to the earlier studies by suggesting that the autocratic law-making process and arbitrary law enforcement in China also contribute to the migration of wealthy Chinese.

Protections of Private Property

Many of the wealthy Chinese migrants interviewed for this study considered China's laws to contain many loopholes, both in terms of the law-making process and enforcement, especially in terms of weak protection for private property, which left rich Chinese people feeling insecure about living in China. China's flawed legal system and its weak protection of private property were criticised by the participants. According to previous research, when individuals' rights are well protected through the implementation and enforcement of the law they are less likely to choose to migrate, because human beings are emotionally attached to their native land and tend to have an inherent fear of exploring an unknown place (Schuck, 2000). The theory of a flawed and problematic legal system in the country of origin being a cause of migration is empirically supported by this study. Rich Chinese feel that Chinese laws are autocratically made and arbitrarily enforced, leaving their freedoms and rights unprotected and perhaps most importantly, their private property unprotected. They believe that Western societies are more legally sound and able to protect their private property and safeguard their rights. CP 16 criticised China's arbitrary law-making process and law enforcement in the following way:

> Chinese laws are made in a rather arbitrary and uncritical manner, without a system in place. Today this regulation is enacted, tomorrow it may be abolished, leaving people at a loss as to what to do. Law enforcement is at times influenced by the will of officials, and subsequently, the right of each citizen to get a fair trial comes with great difficulty (CP 16).

CP 60 criticised the lax enforcement of China's laws and expressed his dissatisfaction with the way the Chinese government was handling certain issues:

> China's laws are incomplete and there are problems with the impartiality of the judiciary, including some cases that have caused public outrage, which I think are not handled fairly. When the people question, the government has a very strong voice and dismisses all the people's questions immediately, or treats them coldly, and in time, the matter would fade away and the people would forget. These are the problems with China's law, instead of helping the people solve their problems in a fair and impartial manner, and the problem is watered down by cold treatment (CP 60).

CP 18 migrated to the United Kingdom because she felt that her family could live safely there, where the rule of law prevails: 'We like the British society, which is very legalistic. As ordinary people, we don't have to worry about the safety of our lives and property, everyone is equal before the law. As long as I don't break the law, I can live easily, and the psychological and financial pressure is less than in China'. CP 12 indirectly shared his concerns through a positive appraisal of the legal protection of personal assets in the United Kingdom 'In my own case, I would like to plan my wealth. I don't want my wealth to be concentrated in one country, I want to put some of it in a safe country, like the UK, which is a country where the rule of law prevails'. CP 04 was fearful for the safety of his wealth and elaborated on his interpretation of the Chinese currency by saying:

> The Chinese currency (*Renminbi*) is also called the people's currency, meaning that the money belongs to the people, not to an individual, and the individual is only holding it for the people for a while. So if you have a lot of money you have to emigrate; you are not safe in China, there is no protection of private property (CP 12).

In general, the present data suggests that the weak protection of private property in China acts as key driver for the migration of wealthy Chinese. The country's flawed legal system has fuelled resentment among wealthy mainland Chinese and served as a contributing factor in their decisions to emigrate from China. The data also shows that the richer a Chinese person is, the more they fear that their assets are unprotected in China and the more they are likely to want to migrate to Western countries. This anxiety about weak protection for their assets is common among private entrepreneurs with assets of up to 10 million USD.

The findings also indicate that the interviewees believe that Chinese citizenship does not offer sufficient legal protections to its citizens' private property. As suggested by previous studies, citizenship is also regarded as the legal status of a citizen (Bauböck, 2010; Bloemraad and Sheares, 2017). Western citizenship provides legal protections for individual rights such as the protection of private property because of the prevalence of the rule of law in Western countries (Bauböck, 1992; Balta and Altan-Olcay, 2016). In contrast, Chinese law is subject to Chinese Communist Party rule (Pei, 2006; Peerenboom, 2009), which means it has offered little protection to Chinese citizens' political and civil rights. Indeed, legality is merely a tool used to strengthen authoritarian rule (Pei, 2006, Peerenboom, 2009; Chen and Fu, 2020). For example, the Chinese government has adopted an approach of selective enforcement over the years that allows the state to expropriate private property in its own interests, such as the mass confiscation of land from millions of farmers when communist China was newly founded (Cai, Murtazashvili and Murtazashvili, 2020). More

recently, even though a law protecting private property was officially enacted in 2004, its enforcement has been weak, and local governments at different levels have only provided a minimal level of protection of private property (Du, Lu and Tao, 2015). Hence, China's law has not, and will not provide adequate legal protection to Chinese citizens' wealth and private property due to the supreme political power of the Chinese Communist Party.

Corruption

Corruption was expected to be one of the push factors driving wealthy Chinese to leave their home country behind. The results demonstrates that widespread corruption was among the contributing factors in the migration of wealthy Chinese. Corruption encroaches on every aspect of the lives of wealthy Chinese, from their daily life, study, and work, to business operations thus adding fuel to their anxiety and motivating their move to Western democratic countries. Moreover, the problems stemming from the highly bureaucratic government structure together with the arrogance of government officials that consistently emerged from the discourse of the interviewees discourage wealthy Chinese from trying to secure a better quality of life and sustainable business development in China, also contributing to wealthy Chinese migration.

According to the respondents' discourse, corruption has encroached on Chinese people's lives, work, and business and made them feel uncomfortable about living in China. The respondents rarely talk about grand corruption that involves top-level government officials in the central government or in provincial governments. There are some exceptions, especially among the businesspersons like CP 52, whose business has a lot to do with government officials at the provincial level. He ended his business in China mainly because of corrupt government officials. Although his family background is closely linked to the local government in his hometown and he worked in the Chinese army before starting his business, he felt disgusted and could not tolerate the greedy behaviour of government officials. CP 52 criticised the systemic political corruption and its roots:

> After the reform and opening up, a small group of political elites became too arrogant and used the power in their hands to create wealth for themselves with the resources and capital of the state, so there are many profiteers in China. Instead of creating wealth through their own skills and hard work, this group of political elites took advantage of loopholes in the political system to enrich themselves (CP 52).

Petty corruption was repeatedly mentioned by the respondents. Gifting government officials is common practice for Chinese people to access resources or to make their lives easier. As CP 41 commented on the reasons for not returning to China after her graduation 'In China, I have to know some powerful government officials or give them gifts and money to bribe them in order to get a good job'. Such practice brings greater inconveniences to Chinese people's daily lives and increases the cost of living. CP 57 talked from her own experience how a bureaucratic system negatively impacted her working practice 'I worked in a state-funded

college and I did not like the bureaucratic environment where staff had to listen to the headmaster and had no autonomy. I dislike that working practice'. So she migrated to Australia because she longed for an autonomous working model. CP 43 was a dedicated researcher in a state-funded research centre but decided to quit his job because he disliked working in a bureaucratic organisation that made him unable to focus on his research. He complained in the interview:

> Government departments and state-run units were very bureaucratic in their work and I did not like it at all. All the projects were done at a low level, and when they were completed, we had to invite government officials to dinner for assessment and approval. These people did not want to concentrate on academic work, research, and projects, and it was disappointing (CP 43).

CP 35 was also very upset with the arrogant attitude of the government officials and complained in the interview 'I feel that government officials are on a high horse, putting themselves in a very high position and then making the people beg them to do what they should be doing for them. I just do not think I can put up with that kind of attitude from the registry department'. Similarly, CP 28 has a bitter memory about how badly his father was treated by government officials at the county level in the Cultural Revolution. He emigrated from China in disgust at the Chinese communist rule and corrupt and the arrogance of government officials, whom he criticised fiercely: 'Anyone with a little power is very powerful to do whatever they want, like the city police. In China, government officials who are in the office enjoy a degree of privilege'.

Legal Environment for Business

The results of this study show that wealthy Chinese are discouraged by the unhealthy legal environment for business in China, as opposed to being attracted by economic or investment opportunities in the West. As Chinese entrepreneurs and business owners make up a large segment of the emerging migration outflows, and a considerable number of Chinese migrants seek foreign passports visa investment immigration schemes, this has raised the question of their immigration and investment objectives (Bain Company, 2011, 2017; Simons *et al.*, 2016). A past survey showed that Chinese entrepreneurs are concerned about the lack of regulated business norms and the weak rule of law in China, which cemented their decisions to move abroad (Wang, 2013). Despite these concerns, China is considered by the entrepreneurs to offer opportunities to accrue wealth as they know how to play the game (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Simons et al., 2016). Predictably, the likelihood of wealth accumulation and the rate of return on investment through business success in destination countries are deemed to be less important for wealthy Chinese in making their migration choices (Simons et al., 2016; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). For example, Chinese investment migrants are observed to 'keep their business roots in China and continue to make money while exploring opportunities for a future for some family members in the United States' (Simons et al., 2016, p. 86).

As the prior research suggests, Chinese enterprises are exposed to different risks due to operating in a highly fragmented Chinese market that relies on personal relationships for vital information, together

with having to cope with constant interference from local government (Gregory, Tenev and Wagle, 2003). Business owners are also discriminated against by the unclear and uncertain rules imposed by different levels of government that considerably increase the risk and costs of their business operations (Gregory, Tenev and Wagle, 2003). The extra fees imposed by the local government under different guises, and the need to bribe government officials, are perceived by wealthy Chinese as raising many obstacles to business operations and increasing the costs of running businesses. CP 59 shared her husband's experience of running a business in China that had led him to migrate to Australia:

> They are the government departments that impose fees on companies in different names, which are not at all helpful to business growth. Another point is that my husband already registered a technology company at the time. I was particularly disgusted when our own company was registered and the Commerce and Industry Bureau immediately came over to ask for money. They also asked us to give them benefits privately, on the pretext of checking your company's business license, asking us to treat them to dinner, buy concert tickets. They made all kinds of unreasonable demands and made us bear all the expenses (CP 59).

CP 19 shared similar views on the unhealthy business environment in China and explained that his departure was largely due to his dislike of the widespread corruption that infects all parts of Chinese society:

> This is the main reason, a lot of political things, a lot of governmental regulations with which I was a little less used to and I was a little resistant to that stuff. For example, the Chinese have ways of bribing government officials who carry them out so that the implementation is not as strict or as thorough as it could be, and that's how it is. So corruption widely exists in China. This means that when we say corruption, it actually has something to do with power, and it also has to do with government officials at all levels, in the process of enforcing the law, but in the middle, there are loopholes, and it becomes corrupt (CP 19).

CP 30 compared the investment climate of China and his host society, Canada, by saying: 'Doing business in Canada is very safe, transparent and there is very little business fraud, but business fraud is common in China'. CP 14 worried about the introduction of a Social Credit System that was likely to make him bear unlimited liability. He perceived that doing business in China was risky, and shared his worries:

> China now has a social credit system blacklist. For example, your business is supposed to be a limited company by definition, and since it is a limited company, the owner of the business bears limited liability, but the government has implemented the social-credit blacklisting system, which makes entrepreneurs bear unlimited liability. Let us say I have invested in 10 companies and I have a small share in these companies. If something goes wrong with one of these companies, such as tax evasion or other problems, it would involve me and the other shareholders who have invested in it, and this makes me feel very insecure (CP 14).

CP 52 elaborated on the flawed financial system in China that disgusted him:

> The operation of the financial system is a kind of vicious circle. China's lending relationship in particular has put many people under invisible pressure, leading to the gradual elimination of many businesses. You have to pay before someone will do something for you. Sometimes, they take the money and do nothing (CP 52).

CP 54's business is to integrate Chinese supply chains abroad. He intended to expand his business to Australia through migration because he felt it would be less risky in terms of the contract based business environment:

> Things are done in China via personal connections and favours. Chinese culture is still influenced by the old agrarian culture, and China has not been industrialised for a particularly long time, which may lead to family bonds and connections being more important than the contracts of the business itself (CP 54).

CP 60 shared a similar view on the legal environment for business by saying that 'China also does not have a fair business platform, and the success of a business depends on its connections, especially with government officials'. Discontented with the unhealthy legal environment for business in China, many wealthy Chinese migrants, particularly business owners and entrepreneurs, migrate to countries in the West because of the perceived relative transparency, fairness, and integrity of their business environment. The increasingly tight social and political control under Xi's rule, especially through the introduction of the Social Credit System, has also contributed to business termination by some Chinese migrants including CP 14, CP 19, CP 46, CP 52, and CP 60 who participated in this study.

Figure 5.3 about here

Immigration Policies

The immigration rules in Western democratic countries have, at least to a limited extent, also influenced the destination preferences of wealthy Chinese, and their chosen migration routes. On the one hand, the perceived liberality of the immigration policies in Australia and Canada have attracted wealthy Chinese to migrate there, while on the other hand, the strict immigration policy and complex application procedure in the United States have more recently pushed wealthy Chinese to relocate to other Western countries rather than the US. For example, one group of participants including CP 23, CP 32, CP35, and CP 45 is comprised mainly of professionals who moved to their chosen Western countries through skilled immigration programmes. These professionals became successful in tandem with China's fast economic growth, and present the main source of Chinese investor immigrants (Miao and Wang, 2017b). It is also the case that several participants like CP 49, CP 50, and CP 59 subsequently applied for skilled worker visas after an unsuccessful initial application as investors to Australia, Canada, and the US. In so doing, they circumvented immigration rules, and increased their chances of success in obtaining a visa.

According to the stories shared by many of the participants, the US is still the most popular destination for rich Chinese migrants. However, although some participants would have preferred to relocate to the US via an investor immigration scheme, they instead immigrated to Canada or another country because of the long and complex immigration application procedure in the US, as CP 06 explained in their interview:

> We applied to the United States at the end of 2016, but after Trump took office, the US visas were tightened up and we were not able to get a visa. In addition, according to our understanding, it is very difficult to get a green card in the US, and it takes at least ten years to get one. So, we gave up our application to go to the US after a careful consideration (CP 06).

Like CP 06, CP 14, CP 26, CP 28, CP 30, CP 33, and CP 60 all initially planned to migrate to the United States but ended up moving to another country instead because they perceived that the immigration policy in the US and the long application procedure would make it difficult for them to secure a visa. CP 04 has a Cyprus investor visa. He also arranged for his wife to give birth to his young son in Canada because of Canada's geographical proximity to America. He believed that his son's Canadian citizenship would make it easier for both his son and him to travel to the US. In this sense, the US is still the most popular destination for wealthy Chinese migrants, but its complex immigration policy and lengthy application procedures in recent years have made it less appealing to Chinese migrants. Meanwhile Australia has attracted a significant number of wealthy Chinese migrants, particularly, younger Chinese talents, because of its relatively loose immigration rules. As one respondent (CP 53) suggested, 'the Australian government has a liberal immigration policy'. The United Kingdom differs from the other three countries in terms of attracting Chinese migrants, as due to its relatively restrictive immigration policies, the UK has become a less attractive destination for wealthy Chinese and Chinese talents.

Conclusion

This chapter has investigated the role played by political factors in the migration of wealthy Chinese to four Western countries. The analysis reveals that limited freedom of speech, strict media censorship, and Chinese government propaganda were the main determinants of why these wealthy Chinese opted to emigrate from China. Wealthy Chinese are also worried about their wealth security because of the poor protection of private property in particular, and the flawed legal system in China in general. Furthermore, the analysis confirms that Chinese private entrepreneurs were dissatisfied with the legal environment of business because of a perceived weak rule of law. Politically speaking, the weak legal protection of private property, autocratic law-making, and arbitrary law enforcement can all be regarded as largely due to the authoritarian nature of the Chinese state. Most importantly, the chapter has highlighted the stronger political incentives for wealthy Chinese to leave China under Xi Jinping's leadership.

The data demonstrates that growing anxiety among wealthy Chinese under Xi Jinping's leadership has served as an important driver for wealthy Chinese migration. Wealthy Chinese have become increasingly dissatisfied with tight media control, resent 'just one voice', are fearful of the likelihood of political backwardness, and are terrified both by the Social Credit System that was recently introduced, and by the 'original sin' problem, panicking that their accumulated wealth may be confiscated if they stay in China. Equally importantly, the increasing likelihood of political regression, and the perceived political instability have also caused panic among wealthy Chinese. Most importantly, the Chinese communist government's inability to initiate political reforms to accommodate fast economic development has caused many wealthy mainland Chinese to lose faith in their own government and to be unable to see a future for

themselves or their families in their home country. Therefore, these wealthy Chinese migrate to Western democratic countries in order to escape from the perceived political turmoil in China, and to protect their wealth, secure personal freedom, and a brighter future. Based on the fact that several respondents mentioned issues pertaining to mobility rights, the inconvenience of being a Chinese passport holder when traveling abroad, largely owing to the small number of visa-free countries available to them, was addressed by the respondents as a contributing factor for their migration.

The analysis also revealed that the push factors for wealthy Chinese in choosing to leave China were closely linked to restrictions on their political rights. Regardless of the enhanced economic strength of the wealthy Chinese based on three decades of fast economic growth, they perceived that their lack of political rights as Chinese citizens barred them from initiating political campaigns that might lead to possible change. Put another way, the likelihood of improvement in the precarious political status of the emerging Chinese middle class has remained unchanged, in stark contrast with their enhanced economic status. The restrictions in place on political rights and the poor protection of private property have left the rich in China without a sense of security, leading to the emigration of many of them from China. The present findings confirm the conclusion of previous studies that poor governance in undemocratic states is closely associated with a corrupt political system, which leaves citizens feeling chronically insecure both economically and politically, and drives them to move from undemocratic to democratic countries (Harpaz, 2015). These findings on the political factors driving wealthy Chinese to move abroad also provide new empirical evidence supporting the plausibility of Hirschman's theory.

Chapter 6: The Education System

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings drawn from the interviews conducted for this study on the topic of the perceived problems with the education system in China, which together with the perceived high quality of Western education have contributed to triggering the latest Chinese migration wave. According to the China's Private Wealth reports, wealthy Chinese believe that providing their children with quality education could help them to preserve their wealth, which is also the primary reason they would decide to move (Bain Company, 2011, 2013, 2017).

Previous studies have widely documented that China's rigid and exam-oriented education system is an important driver for the migration of wealthy Chinese. According to these prior studies, the Chinese education system puts great pressure on students and their parents, and restricts their all-round development, leading wealthy Chinese to seek a less stressful and more nurturing education for their children in Western democratic countries (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). More precisely, Chinese children's education is a source of considerable anxiety for many wealthy Chinese because it demands excessive homework and encourages cramming, with little concern for students' wellbeing (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). At the same time, rich Chinese believe that the higher quality of Western education will be more conducive to their children's independent thinking and personal development, and therefore that migration will enable their children to obtain English language skills and elite educational credentials (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b).

The findings drawn from the present interview data demonstrate that the systemic problems associated with the rigid Chinese education system are the main reasons why many wealthy Chinese left China. Fierce competition in university entrance exams has been widely assumed to place a heavy burden on Chinese students. In fact, this issue is just the tip of the iceberg of China's education problems. China's exams-oriented education system, which is solely focused on students' academic scores and grades, has exhausted students and their parents, blocked out students' interests, and hindered the development of their potential. The oppressive learning environment associated with fierce competition among students to get into high-ranking schools, colleges, and universities has put extreme pressure on students, resulting in highly stressful school lives. Perhaps even worse, harsh criticism and physical punishment from uncaring teachers have hurt many students' self-esteem and done considerable harm to their mental and physical health. After-school tutorial classes have meant that students tire of their studies, and are left physically and mentally exhausted. The need for expensive tutorials and private schooling have become additional financial burdens to Chinese parents. In contrast, gaining access to a learning-friendly environment, an encouragement-based learning model, caring teachers, and a focus on cultivating students' interests and

developing their potentials, all attract wealthy Chinese and their children to migrate to Western countries to secure a decent education.

Observing that the findings respond to a previous study which reported that the Chinese middle class opted for private schools because they did not want their children to mingle with migrant workers from rural China in public schools (Liu-Farrer, 2016). Seemingly, the participants in the present study who migrated to Western countries might have similar concerns because of their higher economic status, which led them to pursue a different schooling for their children than that of the perceived lower classes. Moreover, the participants opted to migrate for their children's education because they shared a similar educational aspiration with wealthy parents in the Global South, aiming to get their children familiar with 'middle-class Western ways of thinking and living' (P. Lan, 2019; Lan, 2023, p. 9). More specifically, they believe that their children should acquire English language proficiency, moral comportment, and a cosmopolitan outlook via studying abroad, to help them to maintain middle-class status and to enable a better future (Li and Bray, 2007; Waters, 2015). Thus, rich Chinese families move abroad for their school-aged children's education because they consider Western education conducive to maintaining the middle-class status of the next generation (Li and Bray, 2007; Waters, 2015).

This chapter starts by presenting the study's findings relating to the fierce completion mechanism in Chinese schools that causes stress and places a huge burden on Chinese students and their parents, followed by the results of China's exam-oriented education system and its associated problems that cause anxiety among Chinese students and drive them to seek quality education in Western countries. The section also includes the findings on the social norm of gifting to teachers that has disgusted many Chinese, and cemented their decision to seek quality education in the West. The following section discusses the results relating to after-school tutorials that have brought extra stress to students and placed a financial burden on their parents. The findings on the quality of Western education that motivated Chinese to move abroad are presented in the final section.

Competition

As indicated by their study (Lui and Curran, 2020), Hong Kong's education system is regarded as more competitive, but as counterproductive by Hong Kong migrants in Canada. Chinese students who have done well in *Gaokao* enjoy a particular advantage in the domestic job market because recruiters relate their success in *Gaokao* to their ability to absorb new knowledge efficiently and effectively (Ren, 2022). However, the fierce competition mechanism in Chinese schools, starting from kindergarten, persisting through primary and secondary schools and ending with university entrance exams, has to a large degree intimidated Chinese students and parents, and migration is thus chosen to escape from unsatisfactory domestic education. Participant CP 20 is a father of a boy and a girl. Having worked as a senior administrator at an elite university in Eastern China for over two decades, he has a deep understanding of

the competitive mechanism of Chinese education. His wife worried about its negative effects on their children, and the family thus migrated to Canada. CP 20 shared his story, saying 'my wife wanted to migrate to Canada for the sake of our children's education. In China, the education is very competitive and children are under greater pressure'. They wanted their children to grow up in a relaxed environment through migration. He further elaborated on why migration is the only way to escape from fierce competition in Chinese schools:

> The so-called university entrance examinations are a relatively fair set of systems to select talent in China. As long as this system exists, children must compete from primary school onwards, and their goal of studying is to get into a high-ranking university. Children start competing at an early age. The aim of education is now alienated; it is all about exams and going to university. The so-called burden reduction advocated by the education bureau is superficial and cannot be achieved (CP 20).

CP 23 shared CP 20's view on the Chinese university entrance examinations and considered that there was little hope of reform. She moved to Canada based on careful consideration given to her daughter's schooling. She complained:

> I personally do not appreciate the Chinese education model, which only focuses on exams and not much on other abilities and skills, but this is the only way for children in China. We all know it is problematic, but the university entrance examinations are now the only so-called fairness among the unfairness, so it is impossible to reform the education system in the short term (CP 23).

CP 26 is a mother of a very young daughter. Even when her daughter was still at kindergarten in Shanghai at the time, she started feeling anxious:

> There is fierce competition in schools in China, and I want my child to grow up in a more relaxed environment. We were living and working in Shanghai. I could feel the pressure of moving from kindergarten to primary school, although my daughter was in the kindergarten. The first year of kindergarten was definitely stressful for my daughter, as she was so young but had to follow all the rules at kindergarten (CP 26).

The stressful school life in China thus starts in kindergarten and continues through to primary schools, becoming even worse when students try to get into a good-ranking junior high school. CP 27 explained his objective in moving to Canada:

> I migrated mainly for the education of my boy. I think that domestic education was too stressful for my boy. My boy was in fifth grade in Nanjing and he was required to take exams to get into a good junior high school. Then he was required to take another set of tests from junior high school to high school, and it was too much pressure for him (CP 27).

Such competition gets fiercer when students move to high schools, where students are burdened with excessive homework and endless exams. Meanwhile, they are worried about their chance of getting a place at a high-ranking university. The fierce competition for university places panics both students and their parents. For example, CP 47 stated that 'it is very hard to get into prestigious universities such as Tsinghua, Peking, Fudan, and Jiaotong unless students have achieved super good grades in the university entrance exams'. Even though CP 47 achieved good grades across subjects in a junior high school in his hometown, he still decided to further his higher education in the United States after having completed high school in Singapore.

Such pressure is even worse for students who do not do well in their studies. CP 42 considered her chance of getting an elite university place in China as rather remote, and also had doubts about the quality of Chinese higher education. She complained that 'apart from well-known universities such as Tsinghua University and Peking University, other universities are not very good in terms of teaching quality or academic ranking'. She foresaw a poor outlook by studying in China and thus chose to study in the US instead. CP 01, CP 02, and CP 51 shared similar stories and moved to countries in the West because they did not want their personal development and career prospects to be restricted by the domestic education system due to the uneven distribution of educational resources and China's household registration system. The competition for entering prestigious universities facing students varies from province to province. CP 23 moved to Canada for her daughter's higher education. She shared her views about competition in Jiangsu province:

> Competition is now so strong that all pressure in Jiangsu is shifting towards the younger ones. Nowadays, only 50% of the children in Jiangsu can get into good high schools. It is more difficult for students in Suzhou to enter elite universities than it is for students from Shanghai. Local students in Shanghai can get into Jiaotong University and Fudan University with lower marks than students from Suzhou, so this is indeed unfair (CP 23).

School Curricula and Ethos

Chinese school curricula and educational philosophy are also driving forces behind wealthy Chinese migration. China's exam-oriented education model and its associated principles and problems affect Chinese families negatively as a whole. CP 35 has two boys, and was concerned about their wellbeing and all-round development under China's fill-in-the-blanks learning model. She complained in the interview that:

> I disagree with the teaching philosophy in China. Schools focus on standard answers to questions, which I think is harmful to children and kills their interest and creativity. Many of our friends have children who take extra tutorial classes every day, and I just do not think this model of education is ideal for our children. Our children are rather introverted and they do not adapt particularly well to school life in China. Education is a very important aspect that motivates me to emigrate (CP 35).

CP 34 shared a similar story about her son's learning experience. Her son was a slow learner and could not keep up with the pace of learning at school. Even though he worked very hard, waking up very early and not getting enough sleep, his grades were not very satisfactory. Her narrative was echoed by another interviewee, CP 05, who migrated to the United Kingdom with her teenage son on an entrepreneur visa. She explained the reasons behind her migration:

> My son's education is a major factor in migration because I dislike Chinese education. The children grow up with a dysfunctional education system, waking up at 6 am and studying until 11pm or 12 midnight, except for a 40-minute PE lesson a week that allows students to do outdoor exercise. It is perverse that the teachers require students to do their homework at lunch break (CP 05).

CP 08 expressed dissatisfaction with Chinese school curricula and teaching styles. The oppressive learning environment in Chinese schools was a major factor pushing him to move to the United Kingdom for his higher education:

> I am curious and enjoy trying new things and dislike the rote method of teaching. I dislike sitting still to learn things from textbooks. I also think that the way they are taught in China is too oppressive to students' individual personalities because schools do not teach students according to their abilities (CP 08).

CP 55 was a lecturer in a Chinese university and a father of two children. As he had worked in the Chinese education sector for over two decades, he was very clear about the major education problems in China. He migrated to Australia because he did not want his children to be victims of domestic education and its associations:

> I disagree with the philosophy of domestic education, which is definitely not comparable to Western education and lacks the cultivation of children's potential and interests. In terms of values, my values may be a little different from those advocated by domestic education, and I do not want my child to be educated with the values advocated by Chinese schools (CP 55).

CP 60 is a father of two boys. He moved to Australia because of his concerns over his sons' schooling:

> I am not in favour of the Chinese education model as it is against the child's nature. Children should be allowed to have the freedom to grow into who they like. I am more in favour of stimulating children's interest in learning. When children are interested, they will enjoy the learning process. I just feel that if I have the means, I should give my children a high-quality Western education (CP 60).

CP 17 shared her daughter's story of unhappy school life in China. They were both stressed by her poor academic performance. She therefore aimed to build up her daughter's self-esteem by migrating to the United Kingdom to escape what she perceived as a restrictive learning environment, and an unfriendly social environment in China, which did her daughter more harm than good:

> Chinese education does not encourage children enough and it pays little attention to their self-esteem, only focusing on scores. My daughter was in Year 4 in China, but she had a heavy academic burden and found it difficult to keep up with the pace of learning. Teachers, friends, and colleagues, even relatives generally thought my daughter was a dumb child, and had no future because she did not do well in her studies. They thought that she would not get into a good school, might not even get into a university. Not only was my daughter under a lot of pressure, but so was I (CP 17).

Like CP 17's daughter, many students were badly treated by their teachers just because they had not achieved good grades. CP 24 is a mother of two boys, and her young son loves outdoor activities that are largely absent on Chinese campuses. She considers Chinese education to be unsuitable for her sons and be harmful to their mental health. She migrated to Canada rather decisively, aiming to provide her boys with a learning friendly environment:

> I was very anxious and angry at the time. I was often called to school by the teachers because of my boy's poor grades. As the teachers considered my boy's poor grades were holding the class back, my boy was almost expelled from school and downgraded to kindergarten from the primary school. At the time, we were too scared to go to school. My husband was very angry because the teacher twisted my son's ear and scolded him for being useless in front of his classmates, saying that he would grow up to be a rubbish collector, and that was very harmful. It felt like a knife was stabbing my son's tender heart (CP 24).

CP 49 was sent to a high school in Australia after completing her junior high schooling in her hometown. She spoke from her own experience of how she was mistreated by her teacher:

> It was more stressful for me studying in my hometown because I was not the kind of person who did particularly well at my studies. For example, I was just not good at maths and chemistry. No matter how hard I worked, I just was not good, you know, right? You know at that time teachers posted the students' grades on the wall. Everyone knew my poor grades; teachers and students looked down upon me. Parents asked their children not to socialise with me; they regarded me as a bad student. I disliked that environment and I wanted to get out (CP 49).

Harsh words from uncaring teachers and physical punishment are not uncommon in Chinese schools. CP 49 was hit with a wooden stick on the palm of her hands by her English teacher when she could not dictate English words. After her father slipped money into her English teacher's hand, he stopped beating her. Studying in such an unfriendly learning environment is difficult; CP 01 was depressed at high school. Some students even attempted to commit suicide, and CP 08 was one of them:

> When I was suicidal at school, my teachers showed absolutely no hint of compassion or concern and they asked me not to come to school. When I recovered and returned to school, teachers avoided me, thinking I was a bomb and a nuisance. When students are depressed and suicidal, schools and teachers just push parents to take them home, without showing care or offering support (CP 08).

The bad culture of gifting to teachers in Chinese schools has received widespread criticism, and has driven wealthy Chinese to leave China. The culture of treating students differently in line with the social status of their parents causes a headache for parents. Many parents and students have become victims of this culture. CP 59 expressed discontent in the following way: 'I particularly resent the idea of gifting to teachers so that they give my daughter extra attention. Because I did not give a teacher a gift, and although my daughter was one of the best students in her class, she was never praised by her teachers'. CP 04 encountered similar problems; he was very upset about his daughter being unfairly treated at kindergarten. He first migrated to South Korea and sent his two daughters to study in an international school, but he felt it was not good enough because international schools in South Korea are dominated by Korean local students. Finally, he obtained an investor visa to Cyprus that enabled him to travel freely to countries in Europe. His two daughters were sent to a boarding school in England because he had strong belief in elite education in the UK:

> Schools in China are more bureaucratic. To give the simplest example, my youngest daughter went to kindergarten, and that school was good and the monthly fees were expensive, but the teacher scolded her every day. I did not know the reasons behind it, so I asked my friend. My friend told me that the teacher took it out on my daughter because I did not give her gifts. My daughter was unhappy and her self-confidence was also undermined because her teacher treated her badly. Later, my daughter attended a public primary school where students were seated according to their parents' positions in the local government. In China, whether a child goes to a good school and gets attention from teachers has a lot to do with their parents' social status and position in the government (CP 04).

Tutorial Classes

After-school tutorial classes also upset students and their parents. CP 45 is a mother of a teenage daughter from Shanghai and she expressed her dislike of after-school tutorial classes, saying that 'Chinese schools have many tutorial classes, which are very tiring and do not allow my daughter to develop her interests, I do not want my daughter to grow up in such an environment'. Similarly, CP 20 was tired of sending his children to tutorial classes, and described his hectic schedule and the financial burden that came as a result of these classes:

> Children attend maths, English, language training, and so on, in addition to the so-called in-class learning. Before attending primary school or before the fourth grade, children have to take many other cultural and sports tutorials, which can be very expensive. In China, it is common for children to learn to play the piano, paint, dance, play chess, swim, and so on. I have two children, and one needs at least two or three tutorials a week. We had to take them to various tutorial classes five or six days a week, and we were exhausted (CP 20).

Like the after-school tutorial classes, private schooling is also expensive in China. CP 10 was married without a child and worked as a sales manager in a big property development company. She was planning to have a child. So, she moved back to London where she had gained her master's degree mainly because she disliked the restrictive learning environment in China. She also complained about the high tuition fees in Chinese schools, saying: 'Domestic education fees are horrendously high. My sister-in-law's family is an ordinary, well-off family, but they spend over 100,000 to 200,000 RMB a year on tuition for my nephew, which the average family cannot afford' (CP 10). CP 06 is a young mother with two daughters, and even though her husband worked in a world-leading investment company, they still felt it was unaffordable to send their daughters to good private schools. She complained that in the interview that: 'Sending our children to a good international school in Beijing, such as Dewey, was very expensive. My husband earned 700,000 RMB a year, but after paying taxes, he did not have much left'. Extra tutorials and unaffordable tuition fees are perceived to be major hurdles for Chinese parents seeking quality education for their children in China. The practice of bribing teachers is also a serious blight that undermines the quality and equality of education in Chinese schools.

Quality of Western Education

China's problematic education system has clearly driven some wealthy Chinese to leave China, but at the same time, the more relaxed and friendly learning environment and better-quality education offered by Western schools attracts wealthy Chinese to move to countries in the West. CP 60 perceives Western education as quite good in all aspects. His children's education was a serious consideration when he was planning his migration. CP 45 shared her daughter's learning experience in the United States, saying: 'The US education is very humane, very suitable for my daughter's all-round development. My daughter loves musical instruments, so she has time to play the piano, violin, and computer games. She does pretty well in her studies'. CP 45's view on Western education was echoed by other participants, such as CP 15, CP 21,

and CP 43, who moved to Western countries because they wanted their children to grow up in healthier and more learning-friendly environments. CP 10 has a strong belief in the high quality of British education. Although she has not yet had a child, she made early preparations by moving to London. Similarly, CP 14 migrated to London with his three children:

> I got information from a friend that the United Kingdom and the United States have the best education. British education is not utilitarian and starts from the perspective of nurturing students' all-round development. Even students who major in science and technology subjects learn to build up the right values and sense of social responsibility, and to develop their independent thinking. Such education will not make students paranoid. It helps them to go a little further in life and career and makes them more thoughtful and more tolerant (CP 14).

CP 17 moved to England with her family because she thought that it would be good for her daughter to be educated in the UK. She talked about the philosophy of British education by making a direct comparison between the two countries, saying: 'British education is about encouraging students to do what they think they cannot do. British schools are good at recognising students' strengths, but Chinese teachers focus on students' weaknesses'. CP 35 considers American education more fitted to her children' personal development, and elaborated on her understanding of American education:

> I think the American education system as a whole is better, with many new educational concepts that are more in line with the physical and intellectual developmental characteristics of children. The American philosophy of education is progressive- children learn less in primary schools and focus on developing reading habits, and when they move on to high schools, and then to universities, they learn more extensively, they have more learning tasks, and their workload becomes heavier. I think this teaching model is more in line with the growth pattern of children (CP 35).

CP 24 moved to Canada with her two boys because she wanted them to study in a world-leading university. She explained that: 'My boys came to Canada to get into top universities and they were educated at schools ranked a little higher than Tsinghua University and Peking University, and it opened up an international perspective'. Like CP 24, young Chinese migrants also want to enter a high-ranking university in the West, and prefer the more interactive learning environment offered by Western universities. CP 08 left China and moved to the United Kingdom for college due to his bitter learning experience in China, explaining: 'I like the education here, the teachers and parents value the students' ideas. They are not as restrictive as the teachers in China, they focus on exploring the students' potential and helping them to progress, which I agree with'. CP 07, who is an artist, came to the United Kingdom because she appreciated the opportunity of free sharing her thoughts with her supervisor. CP 13 shared her experience of reaching a decision to study abroad:

> Western education is not as stressful as in China; students are actively engaged in class and teachers are more concerned about what students think. When I watched American films in China, I felt that American students interacted a lot with their teachers, and that sparked my idea to go abroad and see what the outside world was like (CP 13).

Figure 6.1 about here

Although the Chinese participants in this study gave credit to Western education for its perceived better quality, at the same time, they also voiced concerns about negative aspects of Western education, in particular issues about poor maths skills and unsatisfying primary education. CP 10 and CP 16 perceived that learning maths well requires a lot of exercises and drills, and that learning practice appeared to be absent in Western schools. As explained in the interview 'Western schools devote more time to students' sports and extra-curricular activities while not providing them with sufficient time to drill their math skills, leading to poor performance in the subject'. Similarly, CP 06, CP 16, and CP 56 consider primary education in the West less satisfactory because more time is given to extra-curricular activities at the expense of learning subject knowledge. These findings are in fact in line with a previous study which suggested that Chinese parents appreciate American schools' emphasis on students' all-around development, but also have concerns about the light homework load and being weak in maths and science (P. Lan, 2019). Likewise, CP 01 talked about her experience of feeling socially isolated and lonely when she studied at a boarding school in the UK. CP 15 and CP 34 also shared the difficulties facing their children in learning due to their poor language skills when they had just arrived after migrating to Western countries.

In relative terms, Chinese women are more willing to move abroad for family reasons, in particular for the education of their children or the career development of their partners. For example, CP 05 moved to the UK based on consideration around her son's schooling. Her son was attending in a junior high school at the time, and she was desperate to apply for migration, as she did not want her son to go to a high school in China. CP 15, CP 23, CP 26, CP 34, and CP 35 all left China in search of better quality of education for their children in the destination countries, while CP 18 moved to the UK to support her husband's career. She believed that the British research environment, in which researchers enjoy a high degree of autonomy, would be conducive to her husband's scholarly work. Similarly, CP 44 and CP 57 moved abroad because they perceived that the receiving countries would be good for their partners' career development. CP 06, CP 17, CP 21, CP 45, and CP 59 all migrated to Western democratic countries to benefit their children's education and their partners' careers.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored whether factors pertaining to the Chinese education system influenced wealthy Chinese decisions to move abroad. The analysis validates the educational problems in China as the country of origin as an important driver for the migration of wealthy Chinese. The exam-oriented teaching model, the overwhelming pressure to study, endless tutorial classes, and the bad culture of gifting to teachers in China have all faced widespread criticism, not only from students but also from parents. Students and their families have borne the strain of an increasingly problematic Chinese education system for over a decade. According to the data, stressful school life is mainly due to fierce competition as exam results are the main criterion used to assess students' progress; stress is also partly due to extracurricular tutorials. The results

also show that students suffer from unfair treatment, and even physical punishment in schools, due to poor work ethic of some teachers. The problematic education system together with an unfriendly learning environment are perceived by respondents to stifle students' interest, and neglect their all-round development. These education issues are major factors in driving wealthy Chinese to leave China. Competition, exams, stress, extra tutorial classes, uncaring teachers, and physical punishment dominated the discourse when this study's participants talked about their reasons for migrating to Western democratic countries. The results confirm that the high quality of Western education has acted as a pull factor for the migration of wealthy Chinese.

The finding that China's systemic educational problems are a primary driver in the migration of the wealthy class suggests that the emerging middle class in mainland China share similar education concerns for their children to their counterparts in Hong Kong. According to a previous study, some of the Hong Kong middle class opted to move to Canada because they regarded the Canadian education system as relaxing, fun, and homework-free, and believed that it would help their children acquire multicultural experiences, community-oriented attitudes, exposure to world issues, and proficiency in English (Lui and Curran, 2020). Overall, the middle class in Hong Kong has a strong belief in the superiority of Western education systems in Europe, North America, and Australia (Lui and Curran, 2020). Regardless of whether Chinese live in mainland China, Hong Kong, or Taiwan, they are known to place a high value on children's education because it has played a pivotal role in Chinese society as a legitimate and meritocratic means for upward social mobility (He, 1964; Gao, 2015). Chinese parents therefore strongly believe that obtaining a high quality education is the key to their children's success, and upward social mobility. However, getting a place at China's top-ranking universities is extremely difficult, and the grim outlook has left Chinese students and their parents frustrated, as confirmed by the present study. So, many wealthy Chinese choose to move abroad for their children's education. Explicitly, the findings reveal that China's severe systemic education problems concern the wealthy class the most. Implicitly, the findings imply that providing their children with a quality Western education is a strategy adopted by the emerging middle class as a means to maintain their class status. In short, wealthy Chinese opt to migrate to countries in the West because they believe that the perceived quality of Western education will help them and their children to maintain their middle-class status.

Chapter 7: Career Prospects and Working Conditions

Introduction

This chapter presents role of career development and work-life balance considerations in the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese. According to reports by the Bain Company (2011, 2013, 2017), career and business development and quality of life are among several major concerns weighed up by wealthy Chinese. According to this study, a wealthy Chinese individual's age has a significant effect on their migration decisions, in that young Chinese prefer something different from middle-aged Chinese and older Chinese. A section thus presents the specific incentives of young Chinese in moving abroad.

The post-study migration trajectories of Chinese students suggest that young Chinese often remain to work in their chosen Western countries after their graduation with the aim of enhancing their employability, as the job market in China has become increasingly competitive (Tan and Hugo, 2017; Tu and Nehring, 2019). However, some prior research suggests that the income disparity between China and Western democratic countries is one of the major drivers for younger Chinese seeking employment in the West (Miao and Wang, 2017b). Specifically, better job opportunities and higher incomes in the West attract younger Chinese to move abroad (Miao and Wang, 2017b). Moreover, young Chinese migrants aim to gain overseas professional experience after having graduated from Western universities, before heading back to China to pursue their future career development (Tan and Hugo, 2017; Tu, 2017; Tu and Nehring, 2019).

As has been indicated by previous research, lifestyle migrants prioritise work-life balance, high quality of life, and a feeling of freedom in their destinations instead of occupational considerations (Benson and O'Reilly, 2009). For example, Hong Kong migrants in Canada emphasised their middle class identity by imbuing it with lifestyle distinctions from what they had experienced in Hong Kong (Lui and Curran, 2020). In mainland China, wealthy Chinese try to maintain a healthier lifestyle by reducing their time for socialising (Liu-Farrer, 2016). They are labelled 'lifestyle migrants' because they aspire to a version of a good life instead of seeking economic gain in destination countries (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Huang, 2017).

The present analysis suggests that the younger Chinese who participated in the interviews had secured employment in Western democratic countries after the completion of their studies because they aimed to escape fierce competition in the domestic job market and undesirable working conditions in China. The young participants also aimed to gain overseas working experience in the West in order to enhance their employability and boost their future career prospects in China. They viewed Western countries as offering them relatively better job opportunities and career prospects, as well as the chance to learn about advanced technology and innovation. Similarly, some younger Chinese also set up businesses because of the perceived good business opportunities in Western countries. Differing from the young Chinese, the middle-aged Chinese interviewed for this thesis, especially the entrepreneurs and business owners,

repeatedly complained about the fierce competition and vicious cycles that prevail in China's business circles, which they believed made it more difficult for businesses to survive.

Turning to wealthy Chinese generally, the analysis also suggests that they migrated to countries in the West in pursuit of a better work-life balance. Wealthy Chinese interviewees expressed disgust with the tight social networks and the prevalence of materialism, utilitarianism, and social comparison in Chinese society, which they perceived as negatively affecting their work-life balance. In short, they aimed to improve their quality of life by migrating because they perceived the Western lifestyle to be likely to give them more autonomy. Issues of discrimination and social exclusion, together with a lack of business opportunities and low economic gains, were viewed by the participants as negative effects of living and working in the West, and these findings are presented in the final section.

The present findings indicate that career and business development concerns and lifestyle considerations are in the minds of the Chinese wealthy because these issues are related to the socioeconomic status of the Chinese emerging middle class. Younger Chinese, having been born into upper-and middle-class families, are an important segment of the latest wealthy Chinese migration outflow. The majority of younger Chinese migrants have had many years of overseas study experience prior to migration. The findings suggest that younger Chinese aim to maintain their privileged economic status by seeking professional development and business opportunities in the West. Likewise, wealthy Chinese seek a better work-life balance in the West via spatial relocation because they regard their chosen lifestyle not only as a symbol of their middle-class status, but also as a distinction from the perceived lower classes. In short, regardless of career and business development issues or lifestyle considerations, many wealthy Chinese opt to migrate to Western countries due to their primary concern of maintaining their socioeconomic status as Chinese middle class.

The first section of this chapter mainly discusses the findings on the perceived difficulties and challenges facing younger Chinese in the domestic job market, leading to their decision to secure employment in the West after completing their studies. The section also presents the findings relating to perceptions of good job opportunities and improved career prospects that resulted in younger Chinese settling in the West. The second section of the chapter presents the results on perceived social constraints, such as *Guanxi* and a few others, that have negative implications for work-life balance that discourage wealthy Chinese from pursuing a better quality of life in China. This section also presents the finding that the desire for a relatively autonomous Western lifestyle encourages wealthy Chinese to move abroad. The third section summarises the findings on the perceived difficulties and challenges of living and working in the West, as revealed by the participants.

Career Prospects

Young Chinese form an integral part of the latest wealthy Chinese migration outflow to Western countries because of the financial status of their families. Notably, the majority of younger Chinese migrants are highly educated (most holding master's degree and doctorates), and have many years of overseas study experience prior to their migration. This cohort of young participants initially landed in Western democratic countries on student visas. Their parents accumulated wealth through running businesses, investing in property, or through having well-paid jobs in China, and were able to send them to study abroad. Most of them were under 30 years old when they first arrived in countries in the West. Many young participants went abroad to study for bachelor's and master's degrees, while others were sent to study in overseas high schools. Upon their graduation from colleges and universities, they sought to satisfy their migratory dreams either by applying for a skilled worker visa, a talent visa or an entrepreneur visa. The next section presents the findings on the factors that have influenced younger Chinese migrants to secure employment in the West after their graduation.

Competitiveness and Demands of the Job Market

In comparison to Western democratic countries, China was criticised by the respondents for offering fewer job opportunities to fresh graduates and junior scholars. Fierce competition in the Chinese job market for fresh graduates and grim career prospects are primary issues pushing young Chinese to seek employment in Western democratic countries after they have completed their studies. This phenomenon is particularly common in Australia and the United States. CP 48 moved to Australia to pursue his master's degree having completed his bachelor's at a Malaysian university. He then obtained his residence via a skilled immigration route. He explained why he did not want to return to China after he obtained his master's degree: 'I do not want to work in China; I was a bit scared of looking for a job in China, where the competition is fierce in the large companies.' CP 40, CP 42, CP 49, and CP 51 shared similar reasons behind their decisions to obtain employment in Western democratic countries. CP 51 gave a detailed description of the job market in China:

> Many talented young Chinese return to China after obtaining a degree in Western universities. If you want to go to the first-tier cities in the North like Beijing, it is very competitive in the job market. China's domestic economy is a rat race. It is impossible to be financially independent in the real sense of the world. I felt that was not the life I wanted (CP 51).

Finding a good job in China is difficult not only for fresh graduates but also for highly qualified doctorate graduates. CP 41 moved to the United States for her master's degree then continued her studies up to doctorate level and got a job there. She recalled the reasons why she decided to live in the United States:

> It is very difficult for a freshly graduated PhD student to find a good job in China, because they have no work experience and academic achievements. If you return to China as a post-doc, your salary is very low and your workload is hard to manage. China offers relatively few employment and career advancement opportunities for young scholars, but there is a need for established and renowned scholars, and the Chinese government offers many incentives for famous professors to work in China. My friend

> found a good job in China. He had been a post-doc for many years in the US and published many academic articles. However, young scholars who have not yet made a name for themselves in their field have very limited scope for career development and advancement in China (CP 41).

Like CP 41, CP1, CP 39, CP 43 had all studied in Western countries before obtaining residence. They chose to work there after having obtained doctorates in Western countries for similar reasons. As CP 39 stated, 'Chinese universities do not have supportive policies to help young scholars to carry out their research projects and advance their career. So I would rather stay in the United States because of the greater opportunities here'. CP 01 is in a similar situation and elaborated on her reasons behind her decision and her plan, saying: 'China only wants well-established scholars; I have not reached that level. The day when I reach the level they require, I would consider going back'. CP 39 gave an example of how well-established scholars are welcomed by the Chinese government and enjoy their privileged status in China:

> I have a relative who was back to work in Beijing under the Chinese government's Thousand Talents Programme[8]. There are many preferential policies for scholars who return to work in Beijing through the Thousand Talents Programme, including giving their children a Beijing *Hukou* and free access to public schools. We are not as accomplished in academic research as my relative, and if we returned to China, we would solve the problem of our children's education on our own. If we really had such good opportunities as my relative in China, we would develop our career in China, but we do not have such opportunities now, so it is better to live in the US (CP 39).

CP 18 and CP 43 are in their early 50s. CP 18's husband worked in a senior position in the city council in Shenzhen, then decided to quit his job and started a master's degree in the United Kingdom when he had just turned 30 years old. He chose to work in the UK after he completed his PhD programme for similar reasons. CP 43 came to the United States for her master's degree and transferred to a work visa after she completed her PhD studies in 2004. In addition to the considerations just mentioned, CP 43 also thought from her subject's perspective and explained: 'I am studying optics and there are not many opportunities for optics researchers in China. At the time, China's domestic research in optics had not yet caught up with international standards, and employment opportunities were a little scarce'.

By contrast, young Chinese were attracted by the good job opportunities and better career prospects together with opportunities to work with the world's leading companies, learn advanced technology, and engage in innovation in the West. Ultimately, younger Chinese were motivated to gain professional experience in the West before heading back to China for future development. CP 36 had moved to Australia for high school and then did his MBA in the United States upon completing his bachelor's degree in an Australian university. He shared his thoughts on why he wanted to get a job in the US, saying: 'After I got my MBA in the US, I wanted to gain international work experience, so whether I return to Australia or China in the future, having work experience in the US will be beneficial to my future'. His views were

[8] The Thousand Talents Scheme was launched by the Central Organization Department of the Chinese Communist Party in December 2008. It attempted to recruit 2000 world leading talents including academics, senior professionals and entrepreneurs in the coming 5-10 years (Li, Yang and Wu, 2018, p. 229).

shared by other respondents like CP 39, and CP 40. CP 40 elaborated the reasons behind her decision to stay in the United States:

> I also want to gain work experience, to learn more about advanced science and technology in the United States. A foreign degree alone might not have been enough for me to find a good job in Beijing. Many employers in China are still looking for candidates with solid overseas work experience. So, I thought I should gain work experience in the US first and then consider whether to return to China to develop my career (CP 40).

CP 47 is a graduate in finance and shared a similar story:

> I would have the opportunity to work with world-leading companies in the consulting industry, understand the management models of the world-leading companies, and gain a global perspective. If I want to return to China in the future and get a job in the consulting industry or in an investment bank, I need overseas study and work experience, especially in world-renowned companies (CP 47).

Like CP 47, CP 48 perceived that working experience in Australia would help him to find a job in an international company back home. Training and promotion opportunities are also crucial to younger migrants' decisions to seek employment in Western countries. CP 09 moved to the United Kingdom after she completed junior high school in China. She continued her studies in the UK up to master's degree level. She shared her views on working in the UK: 'I prefer the working atmosphere in the UK, where there is little competition; the company offers me a lot of opportunities for training and promotion'.

The United States is still the most popular destination for highly-qualified young Chinese talents because of its good job prospects. The US is particularly attractive to Chinese doctoral graduates like CP 38, CP 39, CP 41, CP 44, and CP 44. Australia is also a popular destination for Chinese talents because of its loose immigration policies. In a similar vein, the young participants also found business opportunities in host countries. For example, the younger generation of businesspeople, as represented by CP 02, CP 03, CP 07, and CP 08, had all set up or expanded their businesses in their countries of residence.

CP 02 is a young entrepreneur. His father ran a very successful business in China, and wanted him to study, and at the same time to explore the European market because his firm's products sell to European clients. After graduating from a university in the UK, he expanded his family's business to the UK. He shared his view on doing business between two countries: 'In doing business in China it is hard to succeed even if you put a lot of time and effort into it, because there is more competition within the industry with many people doing the same business. There is a business opportunity in the UK and there is less competition'. Like CP 02, CP 03 set up his own business in the UK. After completing his master's studies in the UK, he returned to China and worked for a company, but he was unhappy there. So, he planned to return to the UK and did market research. He then discovered a business opportunity in planning weddings for Chinese people in the UK. Finally, he moved to the UK via an entrepreneur visa and started up his wedding planning business in the UK. He shared his thoughts on why he decided to start a wedding planning business in the UK:

> There are very few companies that plan weddings for Chinese people in the UK, and there is a market demand for this. I did a calculation and it was impossible for my business to be unprofitable. I officially

> started in February 2015 and by 2016 I was getting orders, and business gradually stabilised in 2017; 2018 was double the growth in 2016 (CP 03).

CP 07 also spotted a business opportunity in the UK and decided to run a fine arts workshop after she graduated from an Art School. Within three years she had expanded her business, and had just opened up a new branch in England. Her clients mainly comprise the children of British Chinese who want to develop their interests in fine arts. In a similar fashion, CP 08 set up an online business to provide Chinese language training to the children of British Chinese families after completing his bachelor's degree at an English university.

Working Condition and Business Practice

In addition to the greater scarcity of job opportunities in China, low wages and undesirable work conditions and research environments also discouraged young Chinese from returning to China after graduation. CP 37 initially moved to the United States as a master student and found a job after graduation. She talked about why she wanted to work in the United States instead of China: 'The domestic companies emphasise dedication and require employees to work overtime and do extra work for the company. I do not think you need to sacrifice your family time for your work, as is the case in China'. CP 18 shared a story of why her husband prefers working in British academic institutions:

> After my husband finished his PhD, he felt that the United Kingdom has a better research environment in which he can concentrate on his academic research. There are many mandatory requirements in China, including the need to publish a certain number of articles in order to be promoted. Academic forgery and plagiarism of others' work are very common in China. Many scholars in China, perhaps influenced by the social environment and economic development, are eager to make quick profits and do not concentrate on their research, but wish to use their power and resources to make financial gains for themselves and their families (CP 18).

CP 10 moved to the United States with her husband mainly due to the work environment in China's state-owned enterprises, with which her husband was unhappy:

> My husband worked in a state-owned enterprise. He actually disliked its working environment and atmosphere, and he could not fit in. Working in state-owned enterprises, many people are just muddling through and it is easy for young people to lose their motivation and drive to move forward both in their career and life (CP 10).

CP 03, CP 10, CP 31, CP 33, CP 37 and CP 49 also expressed dislike of the complex interpersonal relationships in workplaces. CP 03 worked in a Chinese company after completing his studies in the UK. He felt tired of the complex interpersonal relationship within his company because handling such relationships is energy draining. He complained about how hard it was to implement a new policy in the interview:

> I dislike the workplace ecology in China. If I want to do a good job, I first divert 30-40 percent of my energy to do some peripheral work and engage in interpersonal relations. The internal consumption is particularly serious; you simply have no way to wholeheartedly do things well. You cannot implement a new financial system because of certain interpersonal relationships, and you have to compromise (CP 03).

CP 37 chose to live in the United States after she completed her studies because she considered that working in the United States saves her hassle from complex interpersonal relations. She explained in her interview that: 'I work in the technology field, and communication between colleagues is relatively simple. There are not many interpersonal relationships to handle, and I do not need to get close to my senior mangers'. These complex human relations also prevail in Chinese universities. CP 43 also complained about how bad human relations affected her work:

> I dislike the work culture in China. Shanghai's economy had not yet taken off in 1997. When I first worked as a researcher at the Shanghai Academy of Sciences, the personnel relations in the research centre were quite complicated. I had to deal with it. I wanted to focus on my research, I thus moved abroad where I am able to concentrate on what I like to do (CP 43).

CP 58 shared a slightly different story of her migration journey. She moved to Australia for a master's degree when she had just turned 30 years old. She found a job as a wealth management advisor after she completed her programme. She explained why she wanted to leave her job in China behind:

> I chose to leave the country because I was at a bottleneck in my career, so I migrated to Australia to see if there were other career paths. I was working for a large entertainment company in China. The company had some ideas about the concert business at the time, and I felt it would be difficult for me to move up the career ladder. So, I decided to do a master's degree in Australia to recharge my batteries (CP 58).

Apart from the undesirable work conditions that disappointed the participants, they were also dissatisfied with business practices in China. For example, vicious business competition, connection-based business practices, and an unhealthy investment climate disappointed the wealthy Chinese. CP 52 elaborated on the business practices in China that disgusted him:

> The vicious competition leads to low prices for products, while our own products may be higher than the market price, resulting in us not being able to sell our stuff. The Chinese like cutting prices to compete viciously; cutting prices down to the lowest possible level, so that in the end no one can survive (CP 52).

CP 60 also talked about deceptive business practices, leading to his decision to terminate his business in China and move to Australia:

> We are very honest and supply our customers with good quality products, but we often encounter customers who do not pay us what they owe. If we ask our customers to pay when they buy, they feel that we are not supportive enough and it is difficult to get orders. If we let customers pay in arrears, they do not pay when the time comes. This kind of non-payment is too much and it is difficult to do business (CP 60).

CP 60 gave a detailed elaboration of how business practices work in China:

> The Chinese do things very roughly; as long as the products can be sold, they do not care about product quality, leading to shoddy work. The Chinese are in a hurry to make quick money, and no one is able to sink his or her teeth into a product and plan for product quality improvement. I do not want to do business in this kind of environment, because if I stay in such business environment for a long time, I will be complicit with them, and I feel uncomfortable when I run a business in such a way (CP 60).

In contrast, some of the participants also commended the working conditions and relatively high wages in their host countries. CP 40 came to the United States in 2006 on a student visa. She was on a 7-year joint

programme in medicine and did master's studies at an American university after having completed her undergraduate degree at the Peking University of Medicine. She finally converted to a work visa in 2009. She explained the reason behind her decision 'I think salary is a major consideration because there is a big difference between China and the US for fresh university graduates'. Like CP 40, earning a good salary was also an issue for CP 09, CP 37, CP 42, and CP 47 to take into account when they decided to work in Western countries. In addition to the issues just mentioned, a conducive research environment is also a very important factor to encourage young scholars to seek a job in the West. CP 01 is a junior scholar and works in a British university. She explained the reasons behind her decision:

> I want to do research and find a job in the United Kingdom because it is more suitable to do academic work for a junior scholar. The UK is still doing a little bit better in terms of inclusiveness and providing more developmental opportunities for junior scholars. In particular, scholars have more autonomy in governing their own research projects (CP 01).

Like CP 01, CP 44 lives in the United States mainly to support the development of her husband's career. He got a job in the US having completed his PhD in computing based on similar considerations. She explained why her husband chose to work in the US, saying: 'The American academic environment is more conducive to his professional research and career advancement. Doing research in the US is a little more autonomous, and the administration does not have as much power and does not interfere too much with the operation of specific research'. The reasons why young Chinese chose to migrate can perhaps be summarised using CP 49's statement: 'It is simpler and less complicated in workplaces in Australia, and then it's not as competitive as it is at home when it comes to finding a job. There is a relatively generous scope for development'.

Figure 7.1 about here

Work-Life Balance

Wealthy Chinese, as the emerging middle class in China, are likely to be more concerned about work-life balance because of their improved economic status. Their accumulated wealth allows them to allocate relatively more time and resources to achieve a better work-life balance. The previous studies suggest that wealthy Chinese migrants have lifestyle considerations when they decide to move abroad (Liu, 2015; Simons *et al.*, 2016; Huang, 2017; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). For example, some Chinese have migrated to Australia because of their desire for a better environment and lifestyle (Cooke, Zhang and Wang, 2013; Liu and Gurran, 2017). In a similar vein, mainland Chinese placed lifestyle choices higher than economic considerations and career development opportunities when they chose to move to New Zealand (Liu, 2015). Broadly speaking, aspirations for a better social environment and living condition have motivated many wealthy Chinese to migrate to Western democratic countries (Huang, 2017).

Guanxi

Wealthy Chinese emigrants, like rich Japanese families who relocated to Hawaii, seek to escape social and cultural constraints in China in search of a better and more comfortable lifestyle in Western countries (Igarashi, 2015; Tian, 2017; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). In China, social constraints manifest in many ways, and connections are a very important component. It is well- known that personal connections, known as *Guanxi* in China, are an important feature of Chinese society (Hsiung, 2013). *Guanxi* is defined as a form of social capital that includes the network of ties between people and access to resources (Qi, 2013; Wu, 2013). *Guanxi* can be used by a person to find help or support (Fan, 2002). For example, personal connections are often needed to find a school place for children or a bed in a hospital for a sick family member (Hsiung, 2013; Wu, 2013). Personal networks are crucial to success in job applications in China because officials assign jobs to candidates who are directly or indirectly connected to them (Bian, 1997). Similarly, business success primarily relies on personal connections (Gregory, Tenev and Wagle, 2003). Many respondents in this study were deeply troubled by the tight social networks within Chinese society and referred to the greater inconvenience brought to their daily life. As CP 03 complained:

> When you do things in China such as dealing with issues relative to hospitals, schools or government departments, you have to go to people and ask for connections, which is a social norm, and it is probably an abnormal thing if you do not ask for connections. I am very uncomfortable with it, because I reject this kind of behaviour of asking for connections and going through the back door (CP 03).

CP 02 gave an example too, saying 'when I go to see a doctor in a Chinese hospital if I cannot find someone I know, I feel I will be treated unfairly'. CP 28 and CP 33 shared similar stories. Such bad customs have also prevailed in the education sector, as CP 55 described in their interview:

> In China, you rely on connections to do things. From kindergarten, I needed to get my son into the best kindergarten through connections, and then secondary school and university. I have social connections, but I do not want to get my child into a good school by taking advantage of my own connections, which is also not in line with my values (CP 55).

CP 54 also shared his frustration of being a parent who is required to use his connections to pave the way for his children's future, by complaining:

> I feel scared that I am required to help my son find a good school, a good job, and help him find his way in life. In fact, I do not want to do that. For me, living in a society like this is very tiring. Within China, it is the parents' connections that help children to progress their lives, rather than through the children's own struggle (CP 54).

Job seekers face similar problems. CP 01, CP 07, CP 18, and CP 49 all elaborated on the importance of connections in getting a job. CP 18's husband had decided to work in an English university instead of returning to China after he completed his doctorate studies. She explained in detail why he made the decision to remain in the UK:

> If you do not have connections, it is very difficult to find a good job, no matter if you are a PhD or a post-doc, no matter how well educated you are. Even if you do, you are at the mercy of the dean and the professor, so it is hard to concentrate on your research and produce academic results. Many PhD students

> who have returned to China are working in research institutions because their supervisors have project funding, and they collaborate with their supervisors (CP 18).

CP 53 provided a critical summary of how *Guanxi* functions in Chinese society as a whole:

> Since I left China, I do not want to go back China. It is very difficult to succeed in Chinese society through personal struggle. You have to rely on connections, kiss ass, and make connections with government officials to succeed, and this does not suit my personality. I just want to live a simple life on my own, and I do not want to do anything that goes against my conscience. I want to live in a fair world where I can live the life I want through my own abilities and efforts (CP 53).

In the meantime, some respondents expressed unhappiness with the materialistic and utilitarian nature of Chinese society, where money is paramount and comparison is prevalent, and which cemented their decision to move abroad. CP 19 was dissatisfied with the money-oriented Chinese society and said in the interview that: 'Basically, many Chinese are trying to use their power to cash in money by all means. I dislike this kind of human nature'. He then gave an example: 'When parking is tight, a neighbourhood security guard can use his power to make some personal gain. He would say no parking space is available, and then you secretly slip him 100 yuan, he could immediately find a parking space for you'. CP 15 expressed similar views, saying: 'Many Chinese people would do anything for profit and have lost all traces of human personality in the expulsion of profit'.

A comparison culture prevails in Chinese society, making Chinese life stressful. CP 39 had graduated from an elite university in China, from which the graduates are likely to build a successful career and enjoy a privileged lifestyle. She decided to work in the United Sates partly because of this bad social norm. She explained that: 'When we return to China, we have to face our classmates, especially the classmates from Peking University, and we would compare our careers and lives'. CP 51 was disgusted by this phenomenon, and migrated to Australia in order to escape from it:

> Put bluntly, Chinese society is very utilitarian. After I leave my parents and relatives, no one would point their fingers at my life, no one would judge my life, because this is how the social and cultural norms in China are, there is an invisible comparison, whether the children go to famous universities or whether they marry well (CP 51).

CP 08 moved to the United Kingdom when he was a college student partly because of these social norms. He felt that his personality was unsuited to Chinese society. He explained the root cause behind such a bad social environment:

> From my point of view, there is also a problem with the values of Chinese society, a single value based on profit and money, little focus on quality education, no religious beliefs, and so on. People wear tinted glasses, they use money and power as the standard to evaluate people, to see whether you have money and power, whether you have known powerful people, if you do not have these, you are inferior, you are despised by the society (CP 08).

A similar story was also found in CP 50's interview. He moved to Australia due to pressure in his job and in Chinese society. He felt tired of this negative social phenomenon:

> Many Chinese people seldom follow their own inner voice and live their own lives without paying attention to the judgments of others. Chinese care a lot about what other people say, which leads to

> comparisons, especially among the middle class, comparing cars and houses and children's grades. In Australia, no one judges you and you can focus on doing your own stuff (CP 50).

CP 55's statement arguably summarises why Chinese who are constrained by social norms left China: 'At the time I wanted to emigrate from my home country, I wanted a change of life, a change of destiny, and an escape from the stifling life in China. Migrating abroad was like a bird escaping from a cage'. In fact, many Chinese feel tired of the tight social connections, the money-oriented Chinese society, and the prevailing utilitarianism, and try to get away from this tiring life through migration. On the other hand, they also choose to move abroad partly because the Western lifestyle and culture appeal to them. A similar statement made by CP 37 also offers a glimpse of what life in China looks like and why many Chinese choose to reside in the West:

> After working in the United States for a few years, the main reason why I chose to stay and not return home was the pace of life. Many of my classmates in China have talked to me about their economic pressure and work pressure, especially in the first-tier cities like Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou. Compared to my current living situation, I do not think I can necessarily adapt to the pressure back home in China. Overtime work is often done in China, but rarely in the US, and if it is, there is an overtime allowance (CP 37).

Western Lifestyle

Respondents not only long to explore Western society and culture but also to embrace the Western lifestyle. They perceive Western countries to have better, more humane environments, life in the West as simple and easy, and Western people as friendly and trustworthy. Many respondents (over a third) said they were curious about the Western world and wanted to experience the Western lifestyle. CP 13 has resided in the UK since she was a master's student and shared her story: 'I was interested in the outside world and wanted to move abroad. I grew up aspiring to live abroad and my parents were very supportive of me exploring the outside world. I was curious and love languages, I decided to study and live in an English-speaking country to see what life was like there'. CP 22 was semi-retired. She was planning her retired life with her husband in Canada through migration. She shared a similar story, saying:

> We thought what if we lived in a different way, in a different place, in a different city, in a different country. I thought I would like to give it a go, just like that. Because we have always lived in the same city and never left, there is always a yearning to see what the outside world is like, and although we do travel to those places, it is impossible to get to know those places well when you travel, right? (CP 22).

CP 38 shared her childhood dream, saying: 'I mainly wanted to see the outside world. I have always wanted to migrate to the United States since I was a child. My English is not bad, I am curious about the US and I have a lot of fantasies about it. When I first started high school, I set my life goal of migrating to the US'. Similarly, CP 06 explained how she developed an interest in moving abroad:

> I used to work as a tour leader, taking customers abroad. I went to the United States and Canada many times; I quite liked the US. I felt that the Chinese in the US gave me a completely different spirit from the Chinese in China. The Chinese in the US enjoy a slow and easy life. Many people in Beijing give me the impression that they are very grumpy and busy all day long, and this just does not feel like a good quality of life (CP 06).

Those respondents, who had overseas study experience, work experience, or taken business trips to the West prior to their migration, explained how the humane environments there had influenced their decisions to settle down in countries in the West. CP 18 explained that:

> I think the British people are more compassionate than the Chinese. They are very caring towards the poor and those who came from disadvantaged backgrounds. During our studies, we also experienced the superiority of the British system, including the difference between the British mind-set and the Chinese, which was still very appealing, and was the reason why we decided to settle in the UK later (CP 18).

CP 18's views were echoed by other respondents like CP 07, CP 15, CP 17, and CP 60. The latter, a successful businessperson, disliked deceptive business practices in China. He moved to Australia partly due to its much more humane environment.

> I think that Australia is mainly developed in terms of its human environment, and the quality of people is better than that in China, and I believe that the human quality in many developed countries is probably better than that in China. The spiritual cultivation of the people is also much higher than that in China (CP 60).

CP 50 disclosed what he felt was the root cause behind the humane environment in Australia by suggesting that: 'People trust each other in Australia, and they assume you are a good person first, unlike in China where they assume you are a bad person. Because Chinese people have a stronger sense of insecurity, when people have insecurity, they feel they have to be wary of others'. CP 21 is a musician and moved to Canada with her family. She shared the reasons behind the migration as being that her husband's personality did not fit Chinese society well, and he longed for a simple life in the West. She described how her husband perceived life in the West: 'Relationships in the West are relatively simple; Westerners mainly deal with their family members, and colleagues, there are not too many complicated relations to deal with. So, he thought we could give it a try as we were still young.' CP 08 also considered his personality as incompatible with Chinese society. After a failed suicide attempt while at a Chinese high school, he moved to the United Kingdom when he was a college student. He described his feelings for the UK as follows: 'I do not have the pressure of living here. It is a relatively quiet social environment and I can focus on what I want to do. That is what I like about this place'.

Many respondents mainly developed an interest in going abroad based on family and peer influence, as CP 42 explained in the interview: 'Because so many people around me were studying abroad, I wanted to study abroad and see the outside world myself'. CP 57 also moved to Australia due to influence from her classmates: 'At the time, all the students around us were preparing to migrate, so we did not think too much about it and followed suit. So that we could have an additional identity and be free to come and go'. CP 51's move to Australia was similarly influenced both by her family and by friends around her. She described how she reached her decision to study abroad:

> When I was in my second year of high school, my family wanted me to study abroad. I also had the idea of studying abroad because I was influenced by my friends around me. At the time, I was only 19 years old and I was just a bit curious to see what was different abroad. I wanted to run away and see the outside world (CP 51).

CP 53 also shared a similar story:

> I have had a very strong desire to go abroad since 1991. As a young person, it is normal to have an appetite for the outside world. When my brother and sister were planning to move abroad, I had the idea of going abroad. At the time, a wave of emigration was developing in Shanghai and quite a lot of people were leaving the country (CP 53).

In addition to dreams of the exploring outside world and experiencing Western culture, some respondents wanted to have additional choices in life. For example, CP 39 described in her interview that: 'My husband felt that if he returned to China with a US green card, it would give him an additional life choice and protection, as domestic life is still more competitive and foreign life is relatively easier'. CP 10 also had similar considerations: 'I would like to have more choices in my life. My idea is that when I get my permanent residence, I would not necessarily live in the UK all the time, I maybe go back to my home country, but I want to have the choice'. The narratives of these respondents correspond with the findings of previous studies that wealthy Chinese tend to secure permanent residency and a second nationality in the Global North as 'an insurance against legal, economic and political uncertainties at home' (Wong and Ng, 2002; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019, p. 235).

Figure 7.2 about here

Whether or not the destination is an immigrant-friendly country also has an impact on the decision on where to relocate to. Some wealthy Chinese moved to Canada and Australia because they considered them to be immigrant countries, which are more open, friendly, and inclusive of immigrants. For example, CP 60 stated that: 'Australia is a country of migrants, and there are many Chinese, and it is multicultural and friendly to migrants'. CP 53 stated a similar view: 'Australia is a migrant-friendly country and people in Australia welcome migrants from all over the world'. Similar perceptions were also shared by Chinese migrants in Canada. CP 19 commented that: 'Canada is a migrant country, just like we came to Shenzhen at the time, because there were fewer locals and it felt a bit better for foreigners. As there are many migrants, it is a relatively inclusive society'. CP 26 expressed a similar view on Canada. Overall, 'Canada and Australia are relatively easy to migrate to, and are more friendly to immigrants, and they are countries of migrants. For comparison, Canada borders the United States, and is more attractive to Chinese migrants'.

Difficulties of Living in the West

The participants also shared their views on the various difficulties and problems associated with living and working in the West. Issues of discrimination, inefficiency, the lack of good business opportunities, and low returns on investment, were cited by participants as major hurdles that hindered their efforts to pursue a high quality of life in the West. Discrimination and social exclusion are issues that are hard for migrants to navigate. For example, rural migrants face institutional discrimination and social exclusion due to the

urban-rural divide that originates from China's *Hukou* system (Lan, 2014). More recently, the outbreak of COVID-19 has made the matter worse among migrants because of the politics of sanitisation in Asia-Pacific regions (Chan and Lan, 2022). More specifically, migrants might find it hard to find jobs in receiving countries; for example, migrants from Hong Kong experience de-professionalisation and salary reductions in Canada because they lack the necessary Canadian work experience and Canadian qualifications (Ley and Kobayashi, 2005; Lui and Curran, 2020).

Similarly, participants in this study also complained about discrimination in the job market. CP 06, CP 31, CP 32, CP 40, CP 42, CP 50, and CP 55 all felt disappointed about not being able to find professional jobs despite possessing many years of solid working experience in the relevant industry. They consider their qualifications and working experience, which were obtained in China, as devalued by employers in the receiving countries. For example, CP 42 complained that 'Because I am a migrant, I have disadvantages in finding a job, partly because I studied in China for my undergraduate degree, so the employers here are more interested in locals'. CP 20 and CP 32 expressed their difficulties in finding jobs and commencing their business as newcomers in Canada, nothing that the outbreak of COVID-19 made their job prospects even dimmer. CP 32 complained that 'I just came to Canada last year and I have to start all over again. I can't use my previous qualifications and work experience that I obtained in China, so it's hard for me to find a job in Canada. Now with COVID-19, many people are being made redundant so it's even harder for me to find a job'. CP 06 and CP 47 were also dissatisfied with the relatively low salaries offered by companies in their receiving countries. CP 06's husband worked in an investment bank but the salary package is lower than this earnings when working in Beijing.

Participants also felt that they faced discrimination in terms of promotion and climbing the career ladder. CP 01 is a lecturer at an English university and felt that her chance of promotion was relatively slim because of her Asian ethnic background. CP 40 also shared a similar story, saying:

> In America, Chinese men have limited opportunity to climb their career ladders. Let's say a Chinese man wants to be a director or a vice president of a big corporation, unfortunately, the senior positions in those corporations are all white males, and high-tech companies may have Indians, but these corporations rarely see Chinese faces' (CP 40).

CP 01, CP 18, CP 36, and CP 41 all mentioned the importance of connections in job hunting and job promotion. CP 41 explained that: 'Actually, I am not qualified for that job, but my husband's supervisor is head of the department, he wrote a recommendation letter for me, so I got that job'. CP 36 expressed his view about job promotion in America, saying: 'There is a saying in the US about finding a job that it's not what you can do, but who you know'. Similar customs also applied to the UK, as CP 18 elaborated on her husband's friend's career promotion, saying 'my husband's friend has got a research position at a leading British university just because his former supervisor got a job there'. Participants also talked about issues of discrimination beyond their workplace. CP 38 shared her worries about the issue:

> The US has a very strong guard and hostile mentality towards China. I feel Donald Trump was particularly unfriendly to the Chinese. In class, I was often shocked by the ignorance of my American classmates, which I hadn't thought of before I came to the US. I used to think that Americans were disciplined and very kind, but after I encountered not so nice things, I got to know the downside of American society (CP 38).

CP 02 and CP 12 also complained of similar discriminatory issues in the UK:

> British society does have discrimination, but it is not easy to spot because of British hypocrisy. That is why I recruit local salesmen to deal with my British customers; and they know their culture well. If I dealt with my customers directly, I would encounter many problems because of my Chinese ethnic background (CP 02).

CP 52 complained that the outbreak of COVID-19 had made matters worse: 'After the outbreak of COVID-19, Australia got unfriendly towards Chinese, both people and politicians'. Apart from this discrimination, CP 01, CP 31, CP 41, CP 43, and CP 51 all complained of feeling of loneliness and social isolation in the West because of the lack of well-established networks in their host countries. CP 51 said that: 'Australian society is characterised by loose interpersonal relationships, and a lack of social activities, sometimes I feel remote and alienated from the Australian society'. Similarly, CP 54 described in the interview that: 'Life in Australia is a bit monotonous, unlike Chinese cities, which bustle with activities'.

Participants also shared their views on the inefficiency of living in the West in particular and the decline of the West in general. CP 54 talked about inefficiency by giving an example: 'Applications for an American Green Card brought great difficulties. I needed the school's sponsorship to apply for the Green Card, and the school's lawyer was inefficient and made me wait a long time to get my card'. Meanwhile, CP 02 complained about safety issues in his neighbourhood: 'My bicycle was stolen in my front garden, and I reported it to the police. The policemen came and wrote a report about it without further investigation. China was much safer as there were cameras everywhere, which at least could keep thieves away'.

CP 13, CP 36 and CP 38 each lamented the perceived decline of the West. CP 13 shared her disappointment: 'When I first arrived in the UK, I felt the country was dilapidated, which was very different from what I thought of a Western country'. Similarly, CP 38 also shared that: 'The United States might have been really prosperous when I was in high school, but it has declined badly in the last 20 years'. CP 36 shared his thoughts about younger people in the US: 'Young people in the US are too spontaneous and lazy. They seems to earn more in terms of cash, but in terms of purchasing power, they earn less than their parents' generation, so they're a bit cynical, and they don't bother working hard'. He continued by making the following observations:

> After the Second World War, people in the US and other Western countries had a very good life. There were plenty of jobs, and life was easy. Even those who worked in gas stations, they could raise a family and afford their own house. But now, it has changed, and it is impossible to afford a house just by working at a gas station, so I think this is the reason why young people become less responsible and their lives are getting worse than their parents' (CP 36).

Differentiated from the young participants who found business opportunities in host societies, participants like CP 19, CP 20, CP 30, CP 46, and CP 60, who formerly (or still) ran businesses in China, complained

about what they saw as the very limited business opportunities in Australia and Canada. CP 60 was disappointed with the fewer business opportunities in Australia: 'Before migrating, I was a little too optimistic about the Australian economy. After moving here, I got to know that Australia's population is even smaller than Shenzhen's, with a very small domestic market and very few business opportunities'. Participants in Canada shared similar stories. CP 27 complained: 'I feel it is very difficult to run businesses in Canada as I know very few people here, so I became an astronaut migrant and shuttled between China and Canada for my business and my family'. CP 19 also shared his thoughts about running a business in Canada:

> White people run businesses because they just want to find something to do. They are not interested in making much money, and just a little more than a basic salary makes them happy. It is impossible to make much money from business except for a very few oligarchs. I didn't want my neighbours to think I was idle and had nothing to do at home, so I bought a bakery and ran it without expecting it to make money, just making me look busy (CP 19).

He continued to give an in-depth description of his experiences:

> I've lost a lot financially by being an astronaut migrant. For example, if I had been in China, I might have bought several houses, but I didn't buy a house in China because I migrated to Canada and bought a house here, so I lost a lot of money on house investment alone. Also, I have gone back and forth between Canada and China, and I missed a lot of business opportunities. It is definitely easier to make money in China, but I could only earn enough to cover living expenses in Canada, which is the biggest difference between Canada and China (CP 19).

CP 02 and CP 19 also complained about high taxes in their receiving countries. CP 02 complained about high labour costs and taxes by saying: 'In the UK, employing staff is very costly because of high wages and holiday pay. I am not familiar with the tax system in the UK. As a migrant, I do not know how to legally navigate taxes, possibly because I am poor in English and many legal documents are hard to understand, so I pay extra tax'.

Conclusion

This chapter has summarised the incentives for young Chinese and the considerations of work-life balance for the emerging wealthy class in moving abroad. Different from middle-aged Chinese and older Chinese, younger Chinese work in countries in the West after completing their studies, aiming to gain professional experience. They believe that doing so is conducive to their future personal and career development. China's relative lack of job opportunities for fresh graduates and junior scholars and unfavourable work and research environments discouraged younger Chinese from returning to China after they completed their studies in Western democratic countries. Most notably, the higher wages, better career prospects, and opportunities to work with international companies, and to learn advanced technology and innovation were the stated pull factors attracting young Chinese to settle down in the West after completing their studies.

Likewise, the business opportunities on offer in the West have also attracted wealthy Chinese, especially younger Chinese, to make cross-border movements. The findings also suggest that a simple and

easy Western lifestyle remains attractive to Chinese across all age groups, encouraging them to embark on cross-border movement. The participants interviewed in this research perceived that China's social constraints including tight social networks, complex interpersonal relationships, the utilitarian and materialistic Chinese society, and a culture of social comparison, had made their lives in their home country tiring and stressful. They therefore chose to emigrate partly to escape a stifling life in China. On the other hand, aspirations to explore Western society and culture paired with a longing for a simpler and easier Western lifestyle, cemented their decisions to move abroad. The chapter also discussed the downsides of living and working in the West, as disclosed by the interviewees.

The migrants' age was chosen as one of the control variables in this research. There are 17 younger participants (under 35 years old) along with 28 middle-aged Chinese (35-50 years old) and 15 older Chinese (over 50 years old) participants. Despite the differences in demographic background between the younger Chinese and middle-aged and senior Chinese citizens, the migrants' age also influences their decisions to migrate. In this study, the inclinations of younger Chinese to move abroad differ significantly from those of the middle-aged Chinese and senior Chinese nationals. Their desire to move abroad is rather more social and economic in nature than political. More precisely, they gave careful consideration to the career and professional development opportunities in the countries in the West, while in contrast, the political situation in China weighed heavily in the middle-aged Chinese and older Chinese citizens' decisions to move abroad. They particularly noted the tight control exerted under Xi Jinping's leadership as one of the key drivers for them to migrate.

The younger Chinese migrants appear to have sought temporary residence in Western democratic countries because they plan to return back to China for career advancement in the long run after they obtain overseas work experience. In contrast, many the middle-aged Chinese and older Chinese citizens aim to escape the political catastrophe arising from the single-party communist rule in China by seeking a long settlement in Western democratic countries. This apparent age-related motivational difference between younger Chinese and their middle-aged and senior counterparts is likely to yield divergent migration patterns and trajectories. The intergenerational motivation difference infers that younger Chinese and their middle-aged and senior counterparts grew up in very different social, economic, and political environments, which in turn provoked divergent migration motivations.

Chapter 8: Living Healthily

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings on air pollution and food safety issues, as issues mentioned by the wealthy Chinese interviewees. The chapter also details the perceived systemic healthcare problems in China that might affect wealthy Chinese migration decisions. As indicated by the China's Private Wealth reports, healthcare and healthcare-related services face high demand among the Chinese wealthy class because personal health risk is one of their top concerns (Bain Company, 2011, 2013).

Due to China's industrialisation in recent years, poor air quality and other environmental issues have emerged as significant health concerns for urban citizens, while Western democratic countries with relatively unspoiled natural environments have attracted rich Chinese mainlanders to move (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). As has been indicated by prior research, many wealthy Chinese also aim to secure residence for their elderly parents and young children in a high-quality living environment (Xiang, 2016). More specifically, the desire for better air quality has been cited as an important factor in Chinese migration to Western democratic countries (Miao and Wang, 2017b). Because poor air quality has numerous serious health effects, medical care in China has become a concern for wealthy Chinese (Miao and Wang, 2017b), who perceive that Western medical systems are better than China's, so migrating to Western democratic countries will enable them to access a better quality of healthcare (Simons *et al.*, 2016). In a similar vein, food safety issues in China were also identified in past research as among the factors driving the migration of wealthy Chinese (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). Wealthy Chinese feel a lot of anxiety about food safety as issues have repeatedly been reported in the media.

Haze pollution has been found to be one of the major push factors for the migration of wealthy Chinese after 2010. In particular, Chinese migrants who come from non-coastal cities gave serious consideration to haze pollution and its associated effects on their health when they made their decisions to migrate, as severe haze pollution attracted widespread media reports and public attention after 2010. Those migrants whose family members suffered from air pollution-attributed illnesses had particularly deep concerns over the poor air quality in China. In addition to haze problems, polluted water is another cause of public concern. Thus, some wealthy Chinese chose to migrate to Western democratic countries to enjoy fresher air and cleaner water. However, the wealthy Chinese migrants from Eastern and Southern coastal cities did not address air pollution in their interviews, as they perceived that the air quality in their hometowns was not cause for concern. The analysis suggests that food safety issues in China also influenced wealthy Chinese migration decisions to some degree.

Apart from issues of air pollution and food safety in China, the present chapter also details the results related to China's medical system. The data suggests that growing discontent with China's medical

system and worries over unaffordable healthcare have contributed to the migration of wealthy Chinese to a limited degree. Moreover, the poor quality of Chinese healthcare, and in particular, the perceived lack of humanistic care for patients, have become causes for concern. Such concerns were explicitly expressed by Chinese migrants whose families had endured financial hardship due to the sickness of family members. In some cases, the bitter hospital experiences of their family members had even cemented individuals' decisions to move abroad, to countries where perceived free and better quality healthcare could assure their family of a better quality of life. These findings not only reflect a desire of members of the wealthy Chinese middle class for a healthier life but also imply a deficit in affordable Chinese healthcare. As Western citizens are entitled to access healthcare services, wealthy Chinese, despite their higher than average economic status, are still attracted to relocating to those countries.

The chapter starts with a discussion of the results relating to influence of haze pollution and its health effects on the decisions of wealthy Chinese to move abroad, followed by the findings on food safety in China, which contributed to the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese to a more limited extent. The second section presents the findings on poor quality and unaffordable healthcare in cementing the decisions of wealthy Chinese to move abroad. The conclusion summarises the key findings relating to air pollution, food safety, and healthcare in terms of their negative effects on wealthy Chinese people's ability to live healthily in China.

Air Pollution and Food Safety

The section presents the findings relating to air pollution and food safety in China. The previous studies have suggested that poor air quality in China's big cities and its associated health effects have become major concerns for wealthy Chinese, resulting in decisions to migrate to Western democratic countries with cleaner air (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). Over the past decade, it has been widely reported that many Chinese cities suffer from severe air pollution due to rapid industrialisation and urbanisation (Fung and Hunt, 2013; Roberts, 2015). More specifically, cities in South-Eastern regions of China have experienced severe environmental problems over the recent decade due to massive outbreaks of haze pollution (Fung and Hunt, 2013). Air pollution not only causes respiratory diseases and asthma, but also is linked to other health effects (Brunekreef and Holgate, 2002). These effects are likely to become severe for children and older adults, as well as individuals with certain medical conditions (Brunekreef and Holgate, 2002).

Air Pollution

Haze pollution was cited as one of the main drivers for migration of wealthy Chinese who left China after 2010. Participants who left China after 2010 complained about the haze's effects on their lives and the physical health of their family members. China's air pollution was one of the major reasons for CP 20's

decision to migrate. Before doing so, he had a year of working experience in a Canadian university as a visiting scholar. He felt that living in Canada would be conducive to the physical health of his wife and son. He shared his psychological journey to reach the decision to migrate to Canada:

> Haze has been a problem in Suzhou for many years. I think it started to get worse a few years ago and visibility was poorer. It is a big environment, and most cities in China are like that, so there is no way to eradicate it all at once. My wife and my son both have rhinitis, and they had it every winter. When they arrived in Canada, the air is so fresh that their rhinitis cleared up and never came back, that is the major reason (CP 20).

CP 12 shared her daughter's experience, saying 'haze was very serious in Beijing at the time; my daughter was also badly affected by the haze. When she was a child, she was quite unfit and was prone to coughs and colds, fevers and runny noses due to the haze'. CP 21, CP 24, and CP 54 all said they chose to leave China because their children suffered air pollution-attributed sickness. Similarly, senior Chinese have grave concerns about the severe health effects of air pollution. CP 24 moved to Canada mainly because of worries about her mother's health:

> My family has chosen to live in Canada because my mother is old and has cardiovascular disease, such as high blood pressure. We were very worried about her health, so we were more concerned about whether there was haze, which was more serious in Shanghai at the time, but not as serious as in Beijing (CP 24).

CP 50's wife also suffered from the haze pollution, leading his family to move to Australia in 2015. He gave an example of haze problems in his hometown: 'One of the main reasons we left China probably had to do with poor air quality. On those days, my home city had haze every winter for sure, and it started in 2012. The winter was always grey and the air quality was poor. My wife had rhinitis and she got sick at least twice a year in China'. CP 22, who was a chemist, was soon due to retire. She made an early plan for her retirement by moving to Canada where she perceived the fresh air would be good for her health:

> At the time, I thought air pollution was a big problem. There was not much haze in Suzhou in the old days. In the spring, there was no yellow sand in the past, like in the North, but then it started to happen in Suzhou too. The environment was getting a little worse every year. When we started applying for visas in 2012 there was still pollution and a lot of dust in the air. I needed a change of natural environment (CP 22).

Air pollution also influenced the migration decisions of those who had prior overseas study experience. CP 03 studied for his master's degree in the United Kingdom before migration. After he had spent around five years back in China, he decided to move back to the UK by applying for an entrepreneur visa. Air pollution formed part of his consideration in moving to the United Kingdom:

> I was more worried about the haze problem. I was in Beijing when the haze was at its worst and the air was very bad. I did not know when the haze would end. In time for the APEC meeting, the government controlled the air pollution and the sky turned blue, so there was a term at that time called 'APEC Blue' (CP 03).

In a similar fashion, CP 56 had previously studied in Australia and decided to live there after graduation because of concerns over air pollution in China:

> I am more conscious of my health. The air pollution in China is very bad and can cause me to become unwell, which is a serious problem for me, so I chose to live in Australia after graduation. Australia has a much better natural environment. The air is also very good, and you can see a blue sky and lots of sunshine every day (CP 56).

Like CP 56, CP 21's husband aspired to move to a country with a blue sky and white clouds. Thus, they decided to move to Canada where both her husband and children are satisfied. As CP 25 took many business trips to North America before migration, she migrated to Canada because it offered them a variety of outdoor activities. She stated: 'We both like the natural environment here. Air, water, and natural environment are definitely better than in China such as beautiful Lake Ontario. Skiing in winter, hiking in summer, all kinds of outdoor activities, we both love these outdoor activities'. CP 07 is an artist who moved to the United Kingdom because of her artistic work: 'the UK has a beautiful natural environment and my paintings are based on the theme of people and the natural environment. In the UK, I can drive ten minutes to the countryside and see nature, which gives me inspiration for my work. Therefore, I feel that UK is a better place for my work'.

When air pollution hit China's cities, it not only badly affected people's physical health but also caused disruption and inconvenience to their daily lives, for example due to the resulting school closures. CP 38 described the situation at the time:

> During the winter in 2016, schools were often closed because haze warnings were often issued. At the time, the PM 2.5 was often over 500. When the air quality was bad, my elder son got asthma. This was not a major factor for me, but it was a consideration. At the time, it cemented my decision to move abroad. I thought if I had this opportunity, I should throw in the towel, both as a childhood dream and as a means to enable my children to live elsewhere with better air quality (CP 38).

Like CP 38, the school which CP 46's children attended was also affected by severe haze pollution in Shanghai:

> The pollution issue is a big consideration. Because we were in Shanghai from 2008 to 2015; it was the time when many problems were exposed, especially PM 2.5, and that was also the time when the US Embassy had just conducted PM 2.5 tests. The haze at the time was quite scary because the international school my children attended had many foreign children whose parents were very sensitive to haze, and then every classroom had air purifiers (CP 46).

Haze pollution is a big environmental issue that affects Chinese people's daily lives. However, other environmental issues also concerned the participants. China's environmental problems contributed to CP 05's decision to move to the UK:

> The air pollution in China has become more and more serious over years, and you feel the air pollution all the time. In the countryside, you used to see crystal clear rivers, but now they are full of rubbish and the water is all polluted. Factories discharge their untreated wastewater directly, and the groundwater is polluted, and people who consume the polluted water are prone to cancer, which is the reason for the high incidence of cancer (CP 05).

In stark contrast to the preceding statement, interviewees who came from coastal cities in Guangdong, Zhejiang, and Shandong provinces, along with those who left China before 2010, thought little about air pollution because their perceptions regarding air quality at the time were not negative. CP 57, who migrated

to Australia in 2002, stated that: 'Hangzhou was actually quite a nice environment at the time, not too much different from Australia'. CP 01, CP 14, and CP 19 also shared similar views about the air quality in Shenzhen, CP 19 stating that 'In fact, Shenzhen was relatively better than Western inland and Northern China; for example, the number of hazy days per year was definitely less than cities in Northern China, and even later in Eastern China. There were still blue-sky days for most of the year'. CP 02 explained why there was no air pollution in his hometown: 'My hometown is a sea island, the sea breeze blowing inwards, the air pollution cannot reach the island, and the environment and weather are very good in my hometown'. CP 59, who comes from Dalian, left China and moved to Australia in the early 2000s, and she perceived the air quality in her hometown to be very good.

Figure 8.1 about here

Food Safety

The findings of previous studies suggest that problems related to China's food safety have contributed to the latest wealthy Chinese migration flow (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). Food safety issues in China concern many respondents, and have cemented their decisions to move abroad. Over ten respondents addressed the food safety issues in China, including CP 22, who explained that: 'Food safety is definitely a big factor, because I work in the chemical and pharmaceutical industry and I know a bit more about this, so I do think food safety is a big issue, I was very concerned about it'. CP 12 expressed similar concerns with regard to this issue 'the food safety problem in China was really serious, and I was not sure about many things I ate'. CP 35 gave examples of how the food safety issues affected her life:

> Because there are food safety problems in China, the problem has existed for many years; for example, water-injected pork, vegetables cultivated with excessive doses of pesticides and chemical fertilisers, and the extensive use of antibiotics in the farming industry are common. I think the food regulation in the US is a bit stricter, so it is more reassuring to eat here (CP 35).

CP 49 claimed that 'foreign countries are good at controlling food quality', while CP 56 shared her feelings on food safety issues by saying 'I am more of a foodie, and I am relieved that Australian food is safe. I do not worry about the food safety issues that have been reported in China'. CP 45 made a comparison of food safety issues in China and in the US, and explained:

> There are concerns about safety. When buying food from supermarkets, you should be very careful and try to choose branded food or go to a large online supermarket such as Jindong. Other online shops such as Pinduoduo may not guarantee food safety. In the US, there are not as many food choices as in Chinese supermarkets, and there are no food safety issues either in large supermarkets or small convenience stores (CP 45).

Figure 8.2 about here

Healthcare

Moving on to the next theme, this study shows that China's poor quality but unaffordable medical care was another concern which to a limited extent has driven wealthy Chinese to move abroad. Based on previous studies, the perceived better health system in the destination country is one of the driving forces behind the migration of Chinese investors to America (Simons *et al.*, 2016). China's healthcare is known to have been unaffordable for the majority of Chinese as the state offers little financial protection from out-of-pocket spending on health, which has caused growing public discontent (Yip and Hsiao, 2014). Recently, the Chinese government has expanded its health insurance coverage and subsequently increased insurance reimbursements, but it has not reduced the illness-related financial burden faced by households, improved the quality of care yet (Meng *et al.*, 2012; Yip and Hsiao, 2014). Although Chinese urban citizens are covered by publicly-funded basic medical insurance, they are burdened by the high cost of healthcare. The Chinese interviewed in this study, whose family members had been through financial hardship due to the lack of affordable healthcare in China, took this issue very seriously when they decided to migrate. CP 11 moved to the UK partly out of concern about healthcare in China. He learned from his mother's hospitalisation that patients would not receive sufficient care and financial aid when they got sick:

> My mom died of cancer in China. Before my mother was sick, I thought China was a pretty good place to live, but when my mother was hospitalised for cancer, the whole family was paralysed. The medical system in China is very messy and poor and the facilities in the hospitals are not good. So, I want my family and myself to be looked after if we fall sick, as nobody can escape that (CP 11).

CP 53 was not only disgruntled with the lack of affordable healthcare in China but was also very frustrated by the lack of humane care for patients in Chinese hospitals:

> My brother died of cancer. I was very sad and disappointed to see the dark side of the Chinese medical system, which was both disrespectful and uncaring to patients. As my brother was still at school, he was not covered by the national medical insurance. Even though our family worked and earned a good income, all of the family's savings were spent on his treatment. This made me realise that if a person is not covered by the national medical insurance, a serious illness can leave the family financially stretched (CP 53).

CP 51 was still young but had decided to move to Australia partly due to concern over unaffordable healthcare in China that was likely to become a burden to her family. She explained her thoughts by saying 'Although my family is financially well off, if my parents or I were not well, medical care in China would cost a lot of money, and not every family can afford it. Many medical services in Australia are free, which saves people's worries'. CP 05 aimed to make early plans for her retirement and seek affordable and quality healthcare through migration. Although she was covered by China's national medical insurance, she was still worried about her retirement and healthcare:

> The main concern includes healthcare and then retirement. I always feel that there is absolutely no protection for Chinese people's medical care and pensions, which I actually think is a very important reason, perhaps even more important than political reasons. I always think about what will happen when I get sick and old. Now the government has thrown its hands up and left it alone, there is no security in life. Although everyone in China has a medical insurance card, very few drugs are covered by medical

> insurance and the reimbursement rate is very low. The United Kingdom has free healthcare, and does a better job of providing welfare than the United States (CP 05).

CP 02's wife gave birth to his daughter in an English hospital and he made comparisons between the Chinese and the UK medical systems by saying: 'When you see a doctor in hospitals in the UK, you feel a bit more dignified, unlike in China, you do not feel respected when you go to the hospital'. His views on the humanistic care given to patients in hospitals in the UK were echoed by another respondent, CP 11, whose wife had surgery in an English hospital. He stated in the interview that 'My wife at the time had the operation in a hospital. I was basically amazed, astonished by the healthcare that was offered in this country. In China, I could end up paying thousands of pounds. It is not just the fact that it is free. Yeah, also amazing. Everything was taken care of'.

Figure 8.3 about here

On the other hand, some participants also complained about inefficiencies in Western medical systems. CP 19 drew a contrast between his home and resident countries by giving an example: 'Western countries are good for the poor because of generous welfare, but no good for the rich. In China, if I was sick, I could visit a doctor at any time I wished; here, I had to join the queue with the poor to access the medical care in Canada'. CP 20 shared a similar story of inefficiencies in the Canadian healthcare system: 'In Canada, medical treatment is slow, and not very convenient. In China, you can go for a quick check-up if you want. In Canada, you have to go to a general practitioner who agrees to the check-up. The patient is required to wait for a long time to get the test, which is inconvenient'.

Conclusion

This chapter summarises the findings relating to air pollution, food safety, and healthcare as factors affecting the desire for a healthier life for wealthy Chinese, which in some cases cemented their decision to migrate. The air pollution issue as a cause of the migration of wealthy Chinese was only partly validated by the findings drawn from the interview data. Differing from the findings of previous studies, the present study suggests that air pollution was an important consideration for Chinese migrants who came from non-coastal cities and those who left China after 2010. The findings also suggest that fresh air, clean water, and the perceived superior natural environment in the West also motivated wealthy Chinese to relocate to countries there. Further, the analysis reveals that healthcare issues in China played a part in the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese to a limited extent. Based on the analysis, unaffordable healthcare in China is one of the contributory factors in the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese, particularly those whose family members had suffered sickness causing the family to experience financial hardship. Higher quality and more accessible healthcare in the West were cited as reasons that cemented the migration decisions of

some wealthy Chinese. The present data shows that some wealthy Chinese also took food safety into account when they decided to migrate. However, food safety issues in China have only influenced the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese in choosing to move abroad to a limited degree.

Some participants such as CP 05, CP 11, CP 51, and CP 53, chose to emigrate from China due to concerns over the unaffordable and poor quality health care there. These findings could be interpreted as indicating that these Chinese chose to emigrate from China because Chinese citizenship does not entitle them to access what they regard as adequate medical care. According to previous studies, Western citizenship offers individuals access to good quality medical care (Ong, 2006, 2022; Petryna, 2013). However, despite three decades of fast economic growth, China has yet to establish to an inclusive welfare system (Miao and Wang, 2017b). Although the *Hukou* system appears to be less important than it used to be two decades ago in domestic mobility, it is still a main determinant of whether Chinese citizens are allowed to access adequate healthcare at home (Chan, 2009; Wu and Zheng, 2018).

Chapter 9: Scientific Contribution and Research Implications

Introduction

This chapter presents the nuanced findings of this empirical study, explaining its contributions both to Chinese migration studies and the broader field of migration studies concerning migration flows from undemocratic to democratic countries. In the literature, the problems relating to China's restrictive education system, high levels of air pollution, mobility rights associated with a Chinese passport, and weak protection of private property are all part of the considerable consensus on the causes of wealthy Chinese migration (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). Likewise, the findings of this study mainly relate to the social, political, and environmental factors in China that have exerted substantial influence on the decisions of wealthy Chinese for moving abroad. Specifically, the wealthy Chinese interviewed in this study were not drawn to individual countries (out of the four under investigation); they mainly expressed a desire to leave China and select a country that met their expectations. In this regard, structural factors in China have strong effects on the subjective reasons why wealthy people leave China, their home country. These results confirm and add nuance to the findings of earlier research, according to which push factors carry more weight in individuals' migration decision-making process when they consider their home country to be restrictive in significant ways in comparison to the potential destinations (Stones *et al.*, 2019).

The empirical implications of case studies of Chinese migrants are manifold. Firstly, the findings of this study illustrate that the perennial problems associated with China's single-party political system in general, and the tight control under Xi Jinping's leadership in particular, have substantially disconcerted wealthy Chinese, leading to their exit from China. More specifically, many Chinese private entrepreneurs left China under Xi Jinping's leadership because migration gave them a better political situation in their country of residence at the expense of the economic opportunities and potential economic gains through the ongoing rapid economic growth in their country of origin. Hence, the migration of private entrepreneurs can be considered a form of politically-motivated migration, and this movement has become increasingly noticeable under Xi Jinping's leadership. Significantly, the finding on Xi's strict governance as the most important driver for the exit of China's entrepreneur class is particularly relevant, as he has continuously strengthened his grip on power as prior scholars have suggested (Cabestan, 2019; Pei, 2020), and thus has exerted and will continue to exert considerable influence on the migration decisions of China's wealthy class.

In the literature, contradictory perspectives have been presented on the relative political factors in the migration of the China's wealthy class. On the one hand, scholars have explained wealthy Chinese migration from social and economic perspectives, but denied the vital role of the political issues associated

with China's single-party rule in the migration decision-making process (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Huang, 2017). In contrast, little research has been conducted into the political considerations behind wealthy Chinese migration, with the exception of one study, which suggested that a growing number of wealthy Chinese have sought foreign citizenship due to their outrage and dissatisfaction with elements of the status quo in China (Hess, 2016). Yet, little is known about how the distinctive political setting in China may have directed and shaped the latest Chinese migration flow to Western democratic countries.

Secondly, the results of this study contribute to the research field by identifying that the effect of air pollution on migration decisions is associated with the geographical location of migrants' hometowns and the specific years of their migration. These findings are important for the following reasons. Earlier studies have provided a brief overview of the effect of severe air pollution on the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b), and their findings were mainly based on data from two commercial studies '*China Private Wealth Report*', and '*Immigration and the Chinese HNWIs'* (Bain Company, 2013, 2017; Hurun Report, 2018). The present study fills gaps not only by providing empirical evidence of air pollution as an important driver but also by adding nuance to the existing knowledge in this field of research.

Thirdly, the results of this study suggest that wealthy Chinese migrants can be placed into several categories based on their diverse motivations for leaving the country, an approach that differs from the prior studies that simplified the reasons for wealthy Chinese migrants' decisions to leave by treating them as a homogenous group. According to the present analysis, the young migrants seek to develop professional opportunities (including finding better jobs) in Western democratic countries, while the middle-aged and senior migrant groups are more concerned about the political situation in China. Meanwhile, motivations such as the quest for better education, healthcare and overall lifestyle cut across all age groups of Chinese migrants. In this respect, the findings of this study rationalise the motivations of several sub-groups who fall into the category of wealthy Chinese migrants rather than attempting to generalise the common reasons for the latest migration outflow from China.

Lastly, the analysis detects that the reasons behind wealthy Chinese migration are multifaceted, as they include educational, political, and environmental factors in China as well as aspirations of a relatively autonomous lifestyle in Western democratic countries. These findings are important as the earlier research has either classified wealthy Chinese as investor migrants or lifestyle migrants (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Huang, 2017; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). This analysis suggests that wealthy Chinese migration shares the political features of emigration from undemocratic countries in the Global South, as well as features of elite mobility and privileged migration which have widely existed among the countries geographically located in the Global North. A dramatic expansion of the Chinese middle-class and their accumulated wealth in tandem with China's three decades of rapid economic growth, together with the distinctiveness of China's

single-party political system have all contributed to making this social and migratory phenomenon even more complex.

This chapter starts with a discussion of the nuanced findings on the relevant political issues in China, which are largely absent from the prior Chinese migration studies, followed by an elaboration of China's haze problem that has acted as another push factor in the migration of wealthy Chinese. The third section elucidates the heterogeneous demographic characteristics of Chinese migrants. The final section presents the multiple migration incentives of wealthy Chinese, and includes brief discussions of the findings on lifestyle, education and healthcare issues in China.

Political Factors

Poor access to freedoms and rights in the country of origin was expected to be a push factor that could prompt some wealthy Chinese to leave China. This study details the limited freedom of speech, strict media censorship, and weak protection of private property that together have led to the departure of wealthy Chinese. Wealthy Chinese tend to have a deep aversion to restrictions on these freedoms and rights, and their aversion intensified under Xi Jinping's leadership. The results of this study provide credible information on corruption acting as one of the contributing factors, instead of a primary push factor, as had originally been expected. More specifically, the interviewees in this study repeatedly complained about the negative effects of petty corruption on their daily lives and business activities. This section details the findings in relation to the theoretical expectations and beyond.

The results of this study add significant insights into the scholarly debate on the reasons behind the exit of China's emerging bourgeois class, also known as 'the entrepreneur class' in China. Empirically, the results reveal that they left their home country due to incremental fears for their safety and wealth security under Xi Jinping's leadership. According to the data, wealthy Chinese felt increasingly alienated by the set of policies and initiatives introduced under Xi Jinping's leadership, including the anti-corruption campaign, the introduction of the Social Credit System, the resurgence of the 'original sin' problem, restrictions on free speech, and tighter media censorship. Wealthy Chinese migrants had a vulnerable domestic political status that originally resulted from their subordination within China's one-party state, and this was perceived to have become even worse under Xi Jinping's leadership. In conclusion, wealthy Chinese felt they were forced to leave China because of perceived deteriorating social and political environments largely resulting from tight social and political controls under Xi Jinping's leadership, which were likely to put their safety and wealth security at great risk. The findings of this study are consistent with media reports and a report released by the Migration Policy Institute stating that well-heeled Chinese outflows started to grow dramatically after Xi Jinping came to power in late 2012 (Frank, 2014, 2018; Tian, 2017).

Wealthy Chinese comprise a cohort of migrants with particular attributes. The large majority of the entrepreneurs interviewed in this study were aged between 40 to 50 years old, and thus belonged to the group of middle-aged Chinese. Political issues in China can be considered as primary push factors as they have substantial impacts on Chinese private entrepreneurs' perceived security in relation to their accumulated wealth and personal safety. Thus, the results of this study suggest that political motivations carry more weight in the migration decisions of Chinese private entrepreneurs as they choose to leave China despite continued economic opportunities. At the same time, these findings also indicate that wealthy Chinese migrants regard the political situation in China as having deteriorated rapidly, leading to the decision that they could not continue to live and run businesses in China. They thus decided to give up good economic opportunities in China and migrate to Western democratic countries rather than countries in the Global South. Based on the present analysis, they were prompted to migrate to Western democratic countries because they perceived that these countries offer them with protection of private property, rule of law, increased freedom, and a bundle of civil and political rights such as freedom of speech, and free access to Internet contents. This indicates that these better-off Chinese migrants aimed to improve their vulnerable political status within China one-party state via geographical relocation. This also suggests that wealthy Chinese aimed to compensate for their Chinese citizenship deficit via geographical relocation because Western citizenship offers them rights that are absent in China.

The findings of previous studies have mainly drawn either from small-scale and regional-based empirical research (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019) or quantitative research (Simons *et al.*, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b) mostly derived from the two commercial studies previously discussed. Little research has investigated the political motivations behind the migration of wealthy Chinese because, on the one hand, the previous studies have tended to overlook the political characteristics in the country of origin (Xiang, 2016; Huang, 2017; Miao and Wang, 2017b). On the other hand, China's government prioritised economic growth, and decentralised power and resources from the central government to governments at subnational levels during the post-Mao reform era, which subsequently relaxed state control over the economy and society (Yeo, 2016; Hess, 2017, 2020). The reasons mentioned above may have led scholars to pay less attention to possible political factors in the country of origin.

Little research has been done to explore the effects of the political issues associated with Xi Jinping's leadership on the migration of Chinese wealthy class. Previous studies have provided a brief overview of Xi's anti-corruption campaign, the resurgence of the 'original sin' problem, and political instability amid the leadership change in 2012 that created fear among entrepreneurs and business elites about their wealth security and personal safety (Osburg, 2013; Hess, 2016; Liu-Farrer, 2016). However, a systematic investigation is absent, as the prior research mainly used data collected before 2014 (Hess, 2016; Liu-Farrer, 2016; Xiang, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). During his early time in office, it is hard to examine whether the policies introduced by Xi Jinping influenced the migration

decisions of wealthy Chinese. In fact, this study finds that China's changing political landscape under Xi Jinping's leadership has exerted and will continue to exert considerable influence on the decisions of wealthy Chinese to emigrate. The findings of this study are thus particularly significant and relevant as they offer empirical evidence of the underlying political factors that have driven wealthy Chinese to leave China under Xi Jinping's rule.

Tight Political Control

This study contributes to the body of work on Chinese migration by revealing that tight control under Xi Jinping's leadership has been the most important driver for the migration of private entrepreneurs and business elites. The present analysis shows a stark contrast in the political motivations of wealthy Chinese who left China before or after 2012, the year Xi Jinping took office. This study reveals wealthy Chinese who left China before 2012 concerned over limited freedom of speech, strict media censorship, weak protection of private property, and the autocratic legal system. In contrast, wealthy Chinese who left China after 2012 had serious political considerations. The results reveal that the anti-corruption campaign, the introduction of the Social Credit System, the resurgence of the 'original sin' problem, and the perceived political regression and restrictions on free speech under Xi's rule have caused widespread panic among business people. The large majority of businesspersons interviewed in this study exited China via an investor immigrant category after Xi came to power in 2012. The analysis illustrates that incremental fear for their safety and wealth security among the Chinese entrepreneur class in the context of the leadership change and the subsequent policies introduced led to their migration on a large scale. These findings reflect the results of one prior study, which reported that Stalinist-style socialist states 'provide less freedom and impose tighter political control over individuals', factors which are likely to drive people to flee from the country (Yang, 1994, p. 457).

Under the decentralised economic development model initiated by former Chinese leaders Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao, private entrepreneurs enjoyed political patronage at different levels of government and a relatively high degree of autonomy in their business activities, together with a minor voice in terms of influencing the adoption and implementation of policies at subnational government levels (Dickson, 2007, 2008b, 2008a; Hess, 2017, 2020). They were also offered informal protection of their business and property rights through the Party, and enjoyed a generally cosy relationship with the Party (Nathan, 2003; Dickson, 2007, 2008a). However, the leadership change in 2012 marked a shift from a decentralised political-economic development model to strongman rule as Xi Jinping prioritised party ideology and nationalism over economic growth, and intensified social controls (Dickson, 2016; Pei, 2016b, 2020). The anti-corruption campaign he launched aimed to crack down on corrupt and bribe-taking officials, but since the businesses run by Chinese entrepreneurs are inextricably linked to these government officials, when the officials are investigated and possibly jailed, the entrepreneurs are likely to be implicated too. Equally

importantly, their wealth has broadly been assumed by the Chinese government to represent ill-gotten gains. It has been widely acknowledged that a large number of business elites made their fortunes illegally by abusing the political system and taking advantage of loose government policies, which allowed them to profit from bribery and corruption (Frank, 2013, 2014; Yang and Dai, 2013; Liu-Farrer, 2016; Pei, 2016a; Knowles, 2017). Entrepreneurs and business elites therefore worry about the possibility of their wealth being confiscated, particularly because the Chinese Communist Party has historically followed a policy of persecution of the wealthy (Dickson, 2007; Liu-Farrer, 2016). Specifically, in the years after the new China was created in 1949, the government quickly restructured the ownership of land and businesses by seizing rich people's property, businesses, and other valuable assets for redistribution (Guo, 2003; Cai, Murtazashvili and Murtazashvili, 2020). Unsurprisingly, the policies introduced more recently have fuelled anxiety among the entrepreneur class.

This thesis also contributes to the existing knowledge in Chinese migration studies by suggesting that limits to freedom of speech and strict media censorship, in particular the 'just one voice' policy under Xi Jinping's rule, which requires Chinese to toe the party line when they make political statements, have led to the emigration of wealthy Chinese. In China, the new rich have used limited online platforms to protest against injustice and corruption due to the weak protection of free speech (Ong, 2006). However, the analysis suggests that the space for online discussion has been further narrowed under Xi Jinping's leadership. Simultaneously, this study illustrates that online information is carefully filtered, and TV entertainment programmes are closely scrutinised by the government, making anti-government political statements impossible. Among the most notable changes in Xi Jinping's rise to power were the tighter speech and media controls instilled by placing the government departments of culture, information, and media under the direct supervision of the Party's Central Propaganda Department in 2012 (Cabestan, 2019; Veg, 2022). The sudden change from a minor voice during the post-Mao reform era to 'just one voice' under Xi Jinping's rule has generated fear among entrepreneurs, leading to their flight from China.

The results of this study indicate that entrepreneurs and business elites were fearful of political instability and the likelihood of political regression resulting from the set of policies introduced under Xi Jinping's leadership. Earlier research has suggested that political instability could exert a substantial influence on individuals' migration decisions, as it has negative effects on their social and economic security (Chandra, 2005). Evidently, the political instability brought by China's authoritarian regime has also pushed individuals in Hong Kong and Taiwan to resettle in Western democratic countries (Skeldon, 1997; Ho and Atkinson, 2018). In mainland China, entrepreneurs previously enjoyed relatively loose and liberalised policies which enabled them to develop their private enterprises, and accumulate vast amounts of wealth during the post-Mao reform era, and they were worried about the instability associated with the looming leadership change in 2012 (Hess, 2016, 2017), which may have put their personal safety and wealth security at risk. Their fear of political instability was later validated by the subsequent introduction of a

series of policies outlined above (including the anti-corruption campaign and the Social Credit System) after Xi came to power in late 2012. In addition, these introduced policies further validated their fear of political regression, with concerns arising of China's possible return to resembling the Mao Era, when all politics and economic activities were under strict state control.

China's rapid economic growth has improved the economic status of its upper-and middle-classes by offering enormous business and profit opportunities and well-paid jobs, providing them with sufficient financial capability to pursue their migration goals. However, their subordination within China's one-party state has remained unchanged, and has even become worse under Xi Jinping's leadership, in stark contrast to their privileged economic status. This imbalance has in fact been rapidly exacerbated by Xi's tight social and political controls, which have generated fears among this group for their personal safety and wealth security if they were to continue living and running their businesses in China. Strategically, many Chinese business elites and entrepreneurs therefore attempted to become 'foreign investors' via participation in investor immigration schemes in Western democratic countries, but were likely to maintain their lucrative business operations at home to accrue more wealth (Hess, 2016). Such a strategy was widely used by the entrepreneurs interviewed in this study who migrated before 2012, aiming to circumvent the perceived political risks associated with China's single-party communist rule and taking advantage of the Chinese government's policies towards 'foreign investors'.

The present analysis shows that there has been a movement towards more entrepreneurs completely terminating their business activities in China, then moving abroad with their families under Xi Jinping's leadership. This is because they could not continue to pursue their goal of rapid accumulation of wealth under the new leadership as they had used to do. They felt frustrated because they suddenly found that the political-economic development model that had enabled them to rapidly accrue wealth under former leaders Hu Jintao and Jiang Zemin had changed significantly under the country's new leadership. Moreover, entrepreneurs and private business owners felt that the initiatives brought additional risk not only to their personal safety, business activities, and wealth security but also to their family members, as they have assumed unlimited liabilities under new regulations including the Social Credit System. Despite these facts, China has still maintained relatively fast economic growth, but as this study's data shows, many wealthy Chinese have decided to give up their economic interests in China; indeed, several private entrepreneurs interviewed in this study stated that they had terminated their business in China. They considered that they could not continue their business activities within increasingly deteriorating and restrictive social and political environments. Due to their domestic political status, wealthy Chinese may have lacked a fallback position for bargaining in areas of wealth security, personal safety and continuous wealth accumulation under the new leadership.

Unlike some previous studies (Hess, 2016; Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b), this thesis provides empirical evidence by detecting that the perennial issues pertaining to China's single-party

communist rule have fuelled the recent migration of wealthy middle-aged and senior Chinese to Western democratic countries, particularly Chinese entrepreneurs and business elites. Importantly, their migratory paths clearly demonstrate a desire to move to democratic countries in the Global North, which differ significantly from their home country in terms of their political systems. In summary, the deep resentment of China's rich against Xi Jinping's strict controls together with China's weak protection of private property are primary push factors for the migration of private entrepreneurs.

According to Hirschman's theory, if citizens are loyal to a political regime then they are less likely to migrate (Hirschman, 1970). Moreover, in the conventional theory, the middle class prefers democracy to autocracy (Lipset, 1981). Theoretically, the Chinese middle class is likely to push for political reform in China rather than seeking to migrate to Western countries. However, the Chinese middle class has been relatively underdeveloped, has very little say over social and political issues, and has not emerged as an independent class (Li, 2013; Liu-Farrer, 2016; Nathan, 2016). Moreover, although their dependence on China's party-state has helped them to accumulate wealth because of their links with Chinese government officials (Tang, Woods and Zhao, 2009; Li, 2013; Yang and Dai, 2013), this has become an obstruction to the evolution of an independent class. Furthermore, the Chinese middle class has high level support for the China's party-state and prefers the status quo because it looks after their economic interests (Pei, 2006; Dickson, 2007; Nathan, 2016). So, they are generally very loyal to the ruling Chinese Communist Party. Theoretically, they are less likely to emigrate from their own country.

However, some scholars have recently argued that in the context of a political regime, 'loyalty may actually encourage exit because loyal members are more sensitive to the performance decline of the regime' (Wong *et al.*, 2023, p. 101). At the same time, wealthy Chinese have a greater stake in Chinese Communist regime because the country's rapid economic growth has facilitated their wealth accumulation. Given the finding of previous research and the reasons just mentioned, a relatively large number of wealthy Chinese may have opted to emigrate from China after Xi came to office because they were well aware of the increasingly deteriorating political environment and alarmed at his strict rule. People might question why the Chinese middle class have not become a voice of dissent and pushed for political change as their counterparts in Western countries have historically done. They could not do so, or are reluctant to do so, because Chinese citizenship does not offer them political rights (Ong, 2006, 2022; Chung, 2017), meaning they are subordinated to China's party-state (Dickson, 2008a; Hendrischke, 2013). Hence, they are more likely to migrate to Western countries instead of participating in domestic politics or protesting to push for political change. In summary, the precarious political status of the Chinese wealthy class, in conjunction with the defects in Chinese citizenship (no entitlement to political rights, or poor protection of private property), has left them with no sense of security, especially under Xi's strict rule.

The exit of wealthy Chinese is well explained by Hirschman's theory, which proposes the following line of reasoning: firstly, citizens emigrate from undemocratic countries largely due to their discontent with

poor governance and corrupt systems (Hirschman, 1993; Colomer, 2000). Secondly, the freedoms of speech and association are restricted or prohibited in the country of origin, while voicing discontent is thought to be much easier in the potential destination, so individuals are therefore likely to choose to leave their home country behind (Hirschman, 1993; Heisler, 1997; Schuck, 2000; Bauböck, 2003). Thirdly, rich people in undemocratic countries are keen to move to a country with stronger property rights where their wealth will be safe and secure (Hirschman, 1993; Hess, 2016). Lastly, 'when the costs of exit are low, individuals choose emigration instead of applying voice, a more confrontational and often more costly endeavour' (Hirschman, 1993; Hess, 2016, p. 631). The findings of this study confirm that political conditions in the country of origin direct migration from undemocratic to democratic countries (Castles, 2003; Bygnes and Flipo, 2017; Dustmann *et al.*, 2017).

Air Pollution

Air pollution was expected to represent a push factor for the migration of wealthy Chinese. However, the findings of this study show that air pollution was a reason behind the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese only in specific years of migration and for people from specific geographical locations. Prior studies have briefly suggested that poor air quality was a significant health concern for urban citizens due to the rapid industrialisation in China (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). The analysis illustrates that haze air pollution was a serious consideration for wealthy Chinese from non-coastal cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, and Suzhou. On the other hand, those Chinese from coastal cities such as Shenzhen and Qingdao perceived air quality as not being negative at the time they emigrated from China. Aside from this finding, this thesis also complements the findings of earlier studies by suggesting that Chinese migrants who left China after 2010 had deep concern about the widespread haze air pollution. Equally important, this study offers empirical evidence of the severe health effects of haze air pollution on the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese. More broadly, these results match the findings on the migration of high-income households which include the consideration that pollution is an important reason to leave affected areas, and that the willingness to relocate increases with wealth (Gawande *et al.*, 2000; Hanna, 2008).

Furthermore, the results of this study are consistent with environmental research and media reports on the year of severe haze air pollution and the regional differences in PM 2.5 concentrations in China in 2016 (Fung and Hunt, 2013; Wei *et al.*, 2019). According to one study, higher PM 2.5 concentrations were observed in Beijing, Southern Hebei, Henan, Shandong province, and the Sichuan Basin; the PM 2.5 concentrations were high in Shanghai, Jiangsu, and northern Anhui province, while the Pearl River Delta region was exposed to the lowest PM 2.5 pollution in 2016 (Wei *et al.*, 2019). In line with cities including Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, and Suzhou were repeatedly mentioned by interviewees for their severe haze problems and the associated health effects on their family members, as these cities were listed as the worst

polluted cities in China in 2014 (Tan, 2014). In contrast, migrants from Shenzhen thought little of air quality when they decided to move abroad. Shenzhen is geographically located in the Pearl River Delta, one of the least polluted areas in China. Thus, this study accurately reflects the variable effect of severe haze problems on the motivation of wealthy Chinese from various regions to migrate.

According to the research and media reports, extremely high pollution hit northeast China in January 2013 with PM 2.5 daily average concentrations exceeding 500 gu/m3, 20 times the 24-h World Health Organisation air quality guideline (West *et al.*, 2016). According to a report, 'China's air pollution in 2013 was at its worst for over 52 years, with 13 provinces hitting record-high levels of air pollution' (Fung and Hunt, 2013). Air pollution in Beijing was indeed bad back in 2008. However, many Chinese were not aware of how bad it was until the American Embassy in Beijing officially tweeted the PM 2.5 air pollutant data in 2010 (Roberts, 2015). As air quality started to become a cause of public concern, the State Council of China launched the Air Pollution Prevention and Control Action Plan and set up 500 PM 2.5 stations in over 70 cities by the beginning of 2013, aiming to lower PM 2.5 concentration in cities (Roberts, 2015; Yue *et al.*, 2020). The tweets by the American Embassy on PM 2.5 and nationwide media reports thus raised awareness of air pollution among Chinese after 2010, with the result that many Chinese started thinking seriously about the severe health effects of haze pollution.

The nuanced findings of this study are important in many ways. Firstly, they identify the relationship between the influence of air pollution on migration decisions and the geographical location of migrants' hometowns and year of migration. Secondly, the findings are also in line with the spatial variation of PM 2.5 concentration in China. Lastly, the findings match media reports about the specific year of severe air pollution in China. In summary, this thesis provides a more thorough understanding of whether air pollution has been a factor in rich Chinese decisions to migrate.

Heterogeneous Demographic Characteristics of Chinese Migrants

This study contributes to the existing research on Chinese migration by stressing the motivation variations among several subgroups and the subsequent differences in their migration patterns and trajectories. These findings indicate that migrants with particular characteristics responded to shifts in China's social, economic and political environments differently. The prior studies have failed to detect the existence of motivation variations among wealthy Chinese migrants. This study illustrates that younger Chinese migrants have no specific political motivations to move, and instead demonstrated a strong desire to seek professional development opportunities in Western democratic countries. Apparently, young Chinese differed from their middle-aged and senior counterparts in terms of their migration incentives. The finding of this study responds to the growing scholarly attention to intra-group heterogeneity in migration studies, prior research has focused on studying its effect on intergenerational immigrant adaptation and assimilation (Alba, Jiménez and Marrow, 2014; Keister, Vallejo and Aronson, 2016), little has been done to investigate

whether intra-group heterogeneity influences migrants' incentives to move abroad. This study has provided empirical evidence of the effect of intra-group heterogeneity on wealthy Chinese migrants' incentive to move. The United States was viewed as the most popular destination for highly qualified young Chinese because of its better career prospects, and autonomous study and research environment. The US is particularly attractive to Chinese doctorate students. Australia is also seen as a popular destination for young Chinese talent because of its liberal immigration policy.

The present findings on young Chinese migrants are consistent with the conclusions of previous studies on Chinese skilled migration, which have suggested that the US and Australia are the preferred destinations for highly-qualified younger Chinese (Zhou and Liu, 2016; Tu, 2018a; Tu and Nehring, 2019). Overwhelmingly, younger people make up the fastest-growing segment of this migrant population. These young people were born into upper-or middle-class Chinese families, were highly educated (most having achieved master's and doctoral degrees), and had many years of overseas study experience before they settled in Western democratic countries. This cohort of young Chinese migrants does share some features with the emergence of the Chinese wealthy class due to their financial status and family background, but they also demonstrate divergent motivations, which merit careful attention.

The findings of this study hint that the previous research treating wealthy Chinese as a homogenous group is, in fact, inaccurate (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). The prior studies ignore important elements including the age of migrants, their year of migration, and the geographical locations of their hometowns, which are all likely to have invoked divergent incentives to move abroad. In terms of the social demographic profiles of wealthy Chinese migrants, they mainly consist of 'middle-class professionals, students, and the wealthy class' (Huang, 2017, p. 191). However, they are in diverse occupations, mainly encompassing entrepreneurs, business owners, corporative executives, professionals, scholars, government officials, and young and middle-aged mainland Chinese (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Bain Company, 2017). Such a general approach is useful in investigating the drivers of individuals migrating on a small scale but in a country like China, its large population and geographical region, and distinctive single-party political system are likely to create divergent motivations among wealthy Chinese.

Professional Development Opportunities

The results of this study confirm the findings of the earlier research on Chinese student migration by suggesting that many younger Chinese migrants intend to return to China in the long run but temporarily reside in Western democratic countries. They aim to gain overseas professional experience before they head back to pursue their future career development (Tu, 2017; Tu and Nehring, 2019). The thesis complements the previous studies by revealing that scarce job opportunities, grim career prospects, unfavourable work conditions, and the poor research environment in China all pushed Chinese students to find employment in Western democratic countries. Moreover, this work supplements the prior studies by suggesting that good

job opportunities, higher wages, better work conditions, chances to learn advanced technology, and working with world-leading companies all appeal to young Chinese who are thinking about settling down in the West after they have completed their studies (Yan and Berliner, 2011; Tan and Hugo, 2017; Tu and Nehring, 2019).

The study also supports the previous findings on the post-study migration trajectories of Chinese students in Western countries, particularly those in Australia and the US, by suggesting that a significant proportion of Chinese students converted to work-related visas after graduation (Tremblay, 2005; Finn, 2010; Australia Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection, 2015; Karaca, 2018). In this study, the majority of middle-aged Chinese migrants who obtained their residence status via a set of 'skill-selected' immigration schemes in Australia, and the US were former Chinese students who had previously studied in their countries of residence. They first landed in Western democratic countries as student visa holders before their early 30s, and then converted to skilled worker visas or other talent-related visas after they completed their studies. This cohort of migrants mostly moved abroad for their master's degrees before they applied for 'skill-selected' immigration programs. In fact, this finding of the present study is indeed consistent with an official Chinese report stating that approximately two-thirds of Chinese international students obtained employment and immigrant visas after graduation from 1978 to 2013, and nearly 90 percent of these student migrants live in the US, Australia, the UK, Japan, Canada, and Singapore combined (Tremblay, 2005; Zhou and Liu, 2016). The finding also responds to the conclusions of prior research by suggesting that the Chinese students who move to Western democratic countries have become much younger (Tu, 2018b). In addition, this thesis adds to the earlier study by revealing that seeking business opportunities and a desire to expand markets for products have also motivated younger Chinese to move abroad.

In theory, the experiences of individuals' formative years shape their memories and political attitudes (Jennings and Zhang, 2005). This notion can partly explain the existence of motivational differences between young Chinese and middle-aged or senior Chinese migrants. Firstly, the so-called 'post-1990' generation is 'a generation born during China's golden era of rapid growth and overall stability. It is a generation growing up with the Olympics, high-speed rail, and mobile payments, but with few direct personal memories of poverty or turmoil' (Huang, 2021, p. 120). Secondly, a younger Chinese person 'has no memory of 1989, much less the Cultural Revolution; they have grown up in a milieu that emphasises career and consumption; and they tacitly understand that politics is a third rail' (Nathan, 2016, p. 14). Thirdly, young Chinese have easy access to money and luxury, which makes them 'blindly optimistic, overestimating China's prosperity and power while unaware of the country's inequality and potential fragility hidden behind some shining urban skylines' (Huang, 2021, p. 121). Compared to younger Chinese who neither care about politics nor have patriotic sentiments, middle-aged Chinese and senior citizens have few illusions about the regime (Nathan, 2016). Domestically, the CCP's leaders were relatively more open

to public discussion on sensitive issues, even political reforms in the mid-1980s (Pei, 2006). Therefore, middle-aged Chinese and senior Chinese who were brought up in the 1980s or before, were raised in what 'had been a time of hope, of openness to the outside world and to Western ideas, and of economic and social reforms that were also supposed to bring about political and ideological reforms' (Bonnin, 2016, p. 758).

The results of this study show that wealthy Chinese migration is heterogeneous by nature, as several segments of this migrant population mentioned divergent incentives to move abroad. This study thus detects a clear difference in terms of objectives to move abroad between younger Chinese on the one hand, and middle-aged and senior Chinese citizens on the other. The analysis suggests that younger Chinese seek professional development opportunities in the West because of concerns about the competitive job market in China, while middle-aged and senior migrants have stronger political considerations. As the findings presented in the preceding section show, wealthy Chinese concerns about haze air pollution are closely associated with the specific years of migration and the geographical region of their hometown. Compared with Chinese who left China before Xi entered office in 2012, the analysis shows that those who moved abroad after 2012 demonstrated relatively stronger political considerations.

Migrants' age and gender are the control variables in this study. This analysis suggests that migrants' age has a considerable effect on their migration decisions, as the economic and political environment in which younger Chinese were raised and brought up differs significantly from that of their middle-aged and senior counterparts, who are likely to develop different motivations to migrate. At the same time, the data suggests that there is no big division in motivation between male and female Chinese migrants. However, male entrepreneurs comprised of a third of the research population, with only a couple of female entrepreneurs; these business people were more concerned the deteriorating political conditions in China. The analysis also shows that most married female participants relocated to Western democratic countries with their children. These married female participants resettled in Western democratic countries largely because of concerns for their children's education and husbands' careers. This result supports the findings of previous research which reported that Chinese women are more likely to move abroad for family reasons (Liu, 2004; Cooke, Zhang and Wang, 2013).

Education and Living

This study demonstrates that many rich Chinese migrants considered issues relating to education, healthcare, and lifestyle when making their migration decisions. These considerations reflect their middle class status, as well as the deficits in what Chinese citizenship provides. As has been discussed in the empirical chapters, children's education is perceived as helping to maintain wealthy Chinese middle class status, while pursuing a healthier lifestyle could also distinguish them from the perceived lower class. At the same time,

they may choose to migrate to make up for the deficit in what is provided by Chinese citizenship in terms of social welfare (specifically, in access to good education and public health services).

Education Problems

China's systemic education problems were expected to be primary push factors for the migration of wealthy Chinese, and this has been validated by the present study. The results confirm and supplement the findings of the prior research that China's rigid and problematic education system is the key driver of Chinese migration (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). This study provides a compelling narrative of significant educational issues, which include the fierce competition for elite university places, China's exam-oriented educational system, and extra after-school tutorial classes, all of which are stressors both for students and their parents, leading to an exodus in search of less stressful education in the West. In fact, the results show that mainland Chinese, like their counterparts in Hong Kong, choose to study abroad because they have been failed by the local education system (Waters, 2005). This finding also confirms the high quality of Western education as a pull factor for wealthy Chinese migration. Further, the results are in line with earlier studies in suggesting that the high quality of Western education attracts Chinese students to study abroad (Wilson, 2016; Tian, 2017; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). More broadly, the results correspond to the findings of extant research about East Asian transnational families which have stated that 'children's education has emerged as a particularly important project which provides a strong impetus for the family to go transnational' (Waters, 2005; Yeoh, Huang and Lam, 2005, p. 307; Igarashi, 2015). Asian students seek a return on investment beyond the education received, and a permanent residency status after graduation incentivises them to select the country which has the most favourable post-study immigration policies (Tan and Hugo, 2017; Baas, 2019; Zhai, Gao and Wang, 2019).

Healthcare

High quality affordable healthcare in the West was also expected to act as a pull factor behind the migration of wealthy Chinese. However, the interviewees in this study, in particular those migrants whose family members had suffered from sickness, shared their financial worries over unaffordable healthcare in China and its poor quality. The respondents talked more about poor healthcare in the country of origin than the quality of Western healthcare. This result supplements the findings of previous studies by suggesting that China's poor quality and unaffordable medical care is one of the concerns which, to a limited extent, is driving wealthy Chinese to move abroad (Simons *et al.*, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). The present findings are also illustrative of the problems associated with the Chinese medical care system that have been highlighted by Chinese healthcare scholars (Meng *et al.*, 2012; Yip and Hsiao, 2014). Thus, even though Chinese urban citizens are covered to some extent by the publicly-funded basic medical insurance, they are still burdened by the high cost of healthcare. This thesis confirms the findings of previous studies

by suggesting that the perceived better health system in the destination country motivates wealthy Chinese to move abroad (Blachford and Zhang, 2014; Simons *et al.*, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). More broadly, the present findings correspond to the prior theoretical studies about the effect of welfare in Western democratic countries on migrants from undemocratic countries. In theory, inequalities in provisions of education, healthcare, welfare, and social protection between the countries of origin and destination have exerted considerable influence on the pattern and direction of migration flows (de Haas *et al.*, 2019).

Lifestyle

The results of this study complement the findings of previous studies by suggesting that a dislike of the stifling social environment in China is another reason why wealthy Chinese migrants choose to leave China. The previous studies have briefly explained a number of factors in the chosen country of residence, including a better social environment and living conditions, and lifestyles that have motivated wealthy Chinese to migrate to Western democratic countries (Liu, 2015; Liu and Gurran, 2017; Colic-Peisker and Deng, 2019). Moreover, one scholar has specifically argued that a longing for the elite lifestyle that is associated with global citizenship and the high degree of global mobility has lured many wealthy Chinese to make cross-border movements (Liu-Farrer, 2016). Based on these findings, earlier studies have concluded that wealthy Chinese aim to achieve class reproduction by transforming themselves or their children into global citizens through migrating to Western democratic countries or sending their children to study abroad.

This work completes the earlier studies by providing a plausible account of how a tight social network, a culture of comparison, and the prevailing materialism in Chinese society together prevent the Chinese from seeking a higher quality life in their country of origin. Specifically, the findings of this study provide a detailed account of how *Guanxi* in China has brought great inconvenience and difficulties to Chinese daily lives and business activities, as well as increasing the cost of living and business transactions. In the light of the stated pull factors, this study supplements the findings of the prior research by suggesting that the perception of a better human environment in the West and the desire to embrace Western culture and society have cemented the decisions of wealthy Chinese to move abroad. Coincidentally, wealthy Chinese share similar features with Brazilian migrants as they aim to 'experience' a higher 'quality of life' in London rather than settling for financial accumulation (Robins, 2019). In that regard, this study confirms the conclusion of that earlier research by suggesting that migrants from countries geographically located in the Global South also have lifestyle considerations (Robins, 2019).

Similar to Japanese migrants (Igarashi, 2015), wealthy Chinese, regardless of their gender, seek to escape social constraints in China to seek 'a free self' and improve their wellbeing in destinations countries. More specifically, wealthy Chinese pursue the goal of a relatively autonomous lifestyle by moving abroad, as the analysis suggests that their lives are badly affected by the tight social networks in their country of

origin. All age groups of wealthy Chinese interviewed in this study expressed the desire to take control of their own lives instead of their lives being impacted by family members and people around them, and constrained by social norms. Thanks to their improved economic status, they can achieve the goal of their desired lifestyle through geographical relocation.

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of previous research that China's rigid and problematic education system is a primary driver for the migration of rich Chinese. More broadly, the results also resonate with a broad debate on the importance of Western education in Chinese migration and Chinese student migration. In the light of healthcare, these findings suggest that the high cost of healthcare in China has played a limited role in the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese despite their financial background. Likewise, the results also support the findings of the previous studies that wealthy Chinese migrants have lifestyle considerations. More precisely, they have a strong aversion to China's tight social networks, money-oriented society, and social comparisons, together with a desire for a Western lifestyle, leading to their decisions to relocate to countries in the West.

Conclusion

This study contributes to the relevant research field by arguing that the perpetual political issues associated with China's single-party communist rule together with its weak protection of private property are the most serious concerns of wealthy Chinese, which have often led to their exit from China. In particular, the strict governance implemented under Xi Jinping's leadership has driven the flight of entrepreneurs and business elites. The present findings do not claim that political motivations can be generalised to the entire wealthy Chinese migrant population, but the data provides robust self-reported evidence of the political issues that drove some wealthy Chinese to leave China. These findings are largely absent from the prior research on Chinese migration but are consistent with a broad consensus concerning migration flow from undemocratic to democratic countries.

The findings of this study have provided the migration motivations for several segments of wealthy Chinese migration. Issues with China's domestic lifestyle, education system, and unaffordable healthcare all exerted considerable influence on the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese across all age groups. Furthermore, worries about the perennial political issues associated with China's single-party political system were common among entrepreneurs and business elites, and had substantially pushed them to move abroad under Xi Jinping's leadership. The deteriorating political situation in China prompting the migration of Chinese entrepreneurs and business elites could be explained by their subordination to China's party-state and their vulnerable political status in their home country. In contrast, younger Chinese migrants often seek professional development opportunities in Western democratic countries. In addition, this work contradicts the findings of earlier studies by suggesting that the way in which how environmental

considerations influence Chinese migration decisions is closely associated with the specific years of migration and the geographical locations of the migrant's hometown.

This study argues that the movement abroad of wealthy Chinese is motivated by a complex set of reasons including education, environment, personal freedom, wealth protection, and finding a comfortable and secure life in Western democratic countries, rather than simply falling within categories under the existing definitions of international students, lifestyle migrants, or investor migrants. The latest Chinese migration outflow can be defined as the international mobility of the rich with Chinese characteristics, as this hybridised migration is a product of China's distinctive single-party political system, together with its unprecedented three decades of rapid economic growth.

Wealthy Chinese represent a cohort of migrants who are widely assumed to a hard-to-reach research population as they are deeply embedded in China's authoritarian political system, something that brought foreseeable constraints to the data collection. However, the empirical evidence provided by this study offers fascinating insights into the migration of China's emerging wealthy class to Western democratic countries, which combines features of politically-motivated migration from undemocratic countries in the Global South with elite mobility and privileged migration that have primarily originated in democratic countries in the Global North. Therefore, despite its limitations, this study has broader implications in terms of studying the reasons for the migration of the rich from the Global South.

Conclusion

Answering the Research Question

This study furthers the knowledge and understanding of Chinese migration by providing self-reported evidence of the motivations of wealthy Chinese migrants from the educational, environmental, and lifestyle perspectives that have been studied by previous research. Further, this study adds nuances to the existing knowledge of Chinese migration studies by revealing the political incentives of wealthy Chinese for leaving China, in particular under Xi Jinping's leadership. Based on qualitative data generated from 60 semi-structured interviews conducted with mainland Chinese migrants to Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, it can be concluded that issues related to China's education, environment, and politics have pushed wealthy Chinese to relocate to Western democratic countries. Among the push factors, the perennial problems associated with China's single-party political system have been found to have had strong effects on the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese, even though China has achieved rapid economic growth over the past three decades. I do not claim that the findings of this study can be generalised to the entire population of wealthy Chinese migrants. Rather, this study offers robust self-reported evidence of some of the subjective reasons wealthy Chinese gave for leaving China.

The implications of these Chinese migrant case studies are manifold. The wealthy from undemocratic countries are a cohort of migrants whose particular characteristics have been widely assumed to make them hard to reach. This study has provided a feasible approach to study this cohort of migrants, and its findings suggest that more emphasis should be placed on examining the political, educational and environmental issues in the country of origin together with the aspirations of a Western lifestyle in the country of residence when exploring the underlying reasons for the migration of wealthy people from undemocratic countries. Political issues in undemocratic countries are likely to exert considerable influence on the migration decisions of the wealthy there, who moreover, tend to invest in their children's education because of the perceived added value to their social and human capital. Furthermore, with their improved economic status and enhanced financial capability, these rich people have serious concerns about their social and natural environments and consider the quality of life beyond the point of economic wellbeing. More broadly, the results indicate that the social, political, and environmental situations in combination in undemocratic countries are likely to direct and shape the migration flow from undemocratic to democratic countries even though these countries have achieved rapid economic growth. The following paragraphs set out to discuss the contributions and implications of this study, then go on to discuss its limitations and to recommend future research directions.

Contributions and Implications

The implications of this study are both empirical and theoretical. Theoretically, the study responds to theories of economic migration and forced migration from undemocratic countries as well as recent developments in the scholarly debate on lifestyle migrants from the Global South. The findings further challenge theories of push-pull factors and cost-benefit calculations, and reveal that these theories are unable to fully explain the emigration of wealthy people from undemocratic countries. The present study also resonates with Hirschman's theory of 'exit and voice' by suggesting that political issues in undemocratic countries remain important drivers even though these countries have achieved fast economic growth. Alternatively, the approach proposed in this study suggests that rich people's migration from undemocratic countries can be better explained through the lenses of politics, education, environment, and lifestyle considerations.

Empirically, this study challenges the perspective of class reproduction by arguing that wealthy Chinese aim to convert their economic privilege in their country of origin into improved political status and increased freedom in their country of residence, rather than transforming their identities with an idea of global citizenship as one scholar argued in an earlier study (Liu-Farrer, 2016). As the data suggests, migration provides wealthy Chinese with increased access to a wide range of civil and political rights in Western democratic countries that ensure their personal safety and protect their assets. In contrast, access to these rights and freedoms in their country of origin generally requires having political contacts at different levels of the Chinese government (Dickson, 2007, 2008b, 2008a; Hess, 2017, 2020). Moreover, the present analysis detects an intra-group heterogeneity surrounding the migration of wealthy Chinese, which has not been previously explored by scholars in Chinese migration studies. More broadly, the subject has not been studied extensively by scholars in migration studies either. This study thus provides empirical insight into the intergenerational dynamics concerning Chinese migration.

Theoretical Contributions

Theories presented in the prior research have argued that rich migrants from countries in the Global South can be considered either economic migrants, forced migrants, or lifestyle migrants (Weiner, 1992; Keely, 2000; Castles, 2013; Harpaz, 2015; Dalsin, 2016; Dustmann *et al.*, 2017; Robins, 2019), but this study challenges these assumed reasons by suggesting that rich Chinese do not simply fall into these categories en masse. According to this study, the migration of wealthy Chinese is multifaceted, and their reasons for migrating are mixed and complex. More specifically, wealthy Chinese people's moves abroad may be politically motivated, but at the same time, education, environmental, and lifestyle issues in their country of origin also drive many of them to leave their home country.

Neither classic theories about economic migrants and forced migrants from undemocratic countries nor the relatively new conceptual framework of lifestyle migrants from countries in the Global North offer

comprehensive understanding and explanations of the complex reasons behind the emigration of wealthy people. This is because these approaches do not explain, or only partly explain, the reasons behind this migration. Often, the point of departure in migration studies is that migrants from undemocratic countries are commonly assumed to be seeking economic opportunities in potential destination countries. However, some undemocratic countries like China have witnessed rapid economic growth in recent decades, which has offered relatively better job prospects and more business opportunities, so their citizens are less likely to be incentivised to move abroad for economic gain. Furthermore, as rich migrants like wealthy Chinese have accumulated considerable wealth in their home country, they are highly unlikely to move abroad for economic reasons. The theory of economic migrants from undemocratic countries therefore cannot apply to wealthy migration.

The theory of forced migrants alone cannot comprehensively explain the reasons behind the wealthy migration either. Citizens in undemocratic countries leave their home countries largely due to dissatisfaction with poor governance, and they are assumed to be forced migrants (Hirschman, 1993; Colomer, 2000; Fleck and Hanssen, 2013; Möllers et al., 2017). According to this study, the limited freedom of speech, strict media censorship, weak protection of private property, introduction of the Social Credit System, and the 'original sin' problem remain important drivers for the migration of wealthy Chinese. In this regard, dissatisfaction with the perennial problems associated with China's communist rule has prompted many wealthy Chinese to leave their home country. However, the migration incentives of wealthy Chinese are complex and include education, environmental, and lifestyle considerations, which go far beyond what the theory of forced migrants could explain.

There is a tendency in migration studies to categorise migrants without economic incentives like wealthy Chinese as lifestyle migrants. The emerging wealthy class in undemocratic countries who have an increased financial capability pursue a better quality of life which goes beyond just economic wellbeing, as they desire to pursue a relatively autonomous lifestyle in the West as this study has suggested. Moreover, if rich migrants seek to improve their social and natural environments through migration, they can perhaps be viewed as lifestyle migrants, but the conceptual framework of lifestyle migrants appears to overlook the political characteristics of the country of origin that are likely to influence emigration from undemocratic countries. In fact, political issues in countries like China remain important for emigration because their political systems remain unchanged, or the changes which occur are not in line with the rapid economic growth. This study thus offers a new approach to studying the migration of wealthy people from political, educational, environmental, and lifestyle perspectives.

In migration studies, there is often a dichotomy between the country of origin and the country of residence. The push-pull and cost-benefit calculation approaches are primarily associated with comparing the respective social, economic, and political characteristics in the countries of origin and residence (Borjas, 1989; Ibáñez and Vélez, 2008; Docquier, Peri and Ruyssen, 2014; Clark and Maas, 2015; Oliven, 2016;

Stones et al., 2019). In this study, the primary push factors include limited freedom of speech, media censorship, the weak protection of private property, the introduction of the Social Credit System, the 'original sin' problem, perceived political regression, systemic education problems, unfavourable environmental conditions, and a stifling life largely resulting from complex interpersonal relationships. Conversely, the principal pull factors comprise increased freedom, strong protection of private property, higher quality education, and better social and natural environments. According to the present data, it is the push factors in China that have a decisive effect on the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese.

The push-pull dichotomy simplifies the explanation of the migration process by only considering negative elements in the country of origin and positive opportunities in the country of residence, overlooking the existence of positive opportunities in the country of origin. In theory, the push factors can be seen as 'negative elements in the home country' from which migrants wish to escape in order to take advantage of 'positive opportunities and experiences' in the host country (Stones et al., 2019, p. 51). However, China has offered business opportunities and potential economic gain amid its rapid economic growth that differ from what scholars have assumed. In this regard, push-pull cannot fully apply to the migration of wealthy Chinese, as although it offers a sound understanding of the pull factors in Western democratic countries, it cannot explain the implications of business opportunities and potential economic gain in China on the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese.

Similarly, the cost-benefit calculation approach does not consider the potential financial losses resulting from leaving the country of origin as it only explains the cost of residing in the country of origin. Theoretically, migration decisions are made on the basis of careful cost-benefit calculations by comparing the costs and benefits of residing in the country of origin with those of the desired destination (Ibáñez and Vélez, 2008; Docquier, Peri and Ruyssen, 2014; Clark and Maas, 2015). This approach is primarily based on the assumption that migrants seek better employment opportunities and prospective earnings (Freeman and Kessler, 2008). Even though the primary objective of wealthy Chinese in moving abroad is not economic by nature as the data suggests, they made careful cost-benefit calculations in a slightly different way. Wealthy Chinese calculated the costs of living in China, the benefits of residing in Western democratic countries, and the losses resulting from leaving China.

Wealthy Chinese differ from other migrants by taking the potential losses resulting from leaving China into account when they make their migration decisions. According to the data, the costs of living in China include the risk of losing private property and personal safety, health problems resulting from air pollution, their children's lacking of independent thinking, and possible physical and mental problems. The benefits of residing in Western democratic countries include access to a wide range of freedoms and rights, strong protection of private property, better education for children, and better social and natural environments. The losses resulting from leaving China mainly consist of potential business opportunities as there have been many opportunities to run businesses or secure well-paid jobs since China's opening up

took place in the early 1980s. However, this approach does not take the benefits of living in the country of origin into account. Hence, the cost-benefit approach can better explain economic migrants but is not well suited to non-economic migrants like wealthy Chinese.

The two approaches also fail to account for how various sub-groups with different attributes under the general category of wealthy Chinese migrants respond to social, economic, and political changes in the country of origin differently, then invoke different motivations to move, and yield different migration patterns and trajectories. The present analysis illustrates that younger Chinese migrants tend to have no specific political motivations to move, in contrast to their middle-aged and older counterparts. The results also suggest that educational, environmental, and lifestyle considerations commonly exist among wealthy Chinese migrants and cut across all age groups, while political motivations mainly exist among middle-aged Chinese and senior Chinese citizens, especially Chinese entrepreneurs. Those seeking professional development opportunities tend to be common among younger Chinese migrants. These younger Chinese migrants and the private entrepreneur class, comprising two large and important segments of wealthy Chinese migrants, demonstrate divergent migration incentives to move abroad. The migration of wealthy Chinese thus consists of several sub-groups with different attributes and complexities reaching beyond what the two approaches can explain.

The findings on education, environmental, and lifestyle considerations are consistent with those of previous studies. Western tertiary education has been attractive for young people from China, India, Turkey, and Eastern European countries, as it has been widely assumed to add value to their social and human capital (Csedö, 2008; Favell, 2008; Hugo, 2008; Latham and Wu, 2013; Liu-Farrer, 2016). For this reason, the rich in Global South countries often send their children to study in the West (Hugo, 2008; Altan-Olcay and Balta, 2016; Liu-Farrer, 2016). As regards environmental issues, highly populated regions such as Asia have a heavy burden of disease from air pollution, and this risk has caused widespread health concerns (West *et al.*, 2016). In China, poor air quality and other environmental issues have caused significant health concerns for urban citizens (Liu-Farrer, 2016; Miao and Wang, 2017b). Significantly, earlier research has shown that pollution contributes to the emigration of high-income households from affected areas, and that the willingness of households to relocate increases in line with the deteriorating natural environment (Gawande *et al.*, 2000; Hanna, 2008). In terms of a better lifestyle, earlier studies have suggested that wealthy Chinese migrants aspire to a version of 'the good life' in countries in the West (Liu, 2015; Liu-Farrer, 2016; Simons *et al.*, 2016; Huang, 2017).

Based on the present data and the findings of previous studies, emphasis should be given to studying political situations, education systems, and environmental issues in the country of origin, together with lifestyle aspirations in the country of residence. These factors should be considered when examining the migration incentives of the rich migrants from undemocratic countries. More importantly, these factors must be considered together rather than separately. This approach is likely to offset the identified

shortcomings of the theories of economic migrants, forced migrants, and the dichotomies of push-pull factors and cost-benefit calculations, which all extensively focus on economic and political characteristics in the country of origin and residence. At the same time, this approach also offsets the shortcomings of the theory of lifestyle migrants that overlooks the political landscape in the country of origin.

The approach adopted in this study examines four key issues (personal freedom, wealth security, health, and family future) about which the rich in undemocratic countries are concerned. Firstly, the political conditions in the country of origin have exerted strong effects on the wealth security and personal freedoms of the wealthy class. Secondly, educational issues in the country of origin mean they put their future on hold as this factor appears to have impeded their children's all-around development from many perspectives. Thirdly, their increased economic capability has enabled them to direct more attention to the health effects of a polluted natural environment. Lastly, with improved economic status, rich migrants want to pursue a lifestyle with more personal autonomy. In short, this approach not only explains the common reasons for wealthy migrants, and the specific reasons for specific segments of this migration but also takes the political situation in undemocratic countries and rich people's aspirations for a relatively more autonomous lifestyle into account. In essence, wealthy people represent a cohort of migrants with particular characteristics whose financial privilege in their country of origin allows them to seek a higher quality of life in areas beyond purely achieving economic betterment through migration. The approach proposed in this study is valuable in understanding political situations in the undemocratic countries within which migration is embedded, but at the same time helps to understand the education, environmental, and lifestyle issues that cause serious concerns among the rich in undemocratic countries.

Voice and Exit

The findings pertaining to political motivations demonstrate the plausibility of Hirschman's theory of 'voice and exit'. The case studies of Chinese migrants illustrate that, regardless of fast economic growth and advanced economic development in an undemocratic country like China, political conditions in the country of origin still play a vital role in pushing citizens to move abroad (Hirschman, 1993). Despite three decades of rapid economic growth, China's one-party political system has remained unchanged or even worsened under Xi Jinping's leadership, a factor which has conditioned and will continue to shape the Chinese migration outflow. More broadly, the findings of this study resonate with classic theories in migration studies concerning migration outflows from undemocratic countries. First, the problems associated with political systems in undemocratic countries have considerable effects on the migration decisions of their citizens to move to Western democratic countries (Hirschman, 1993; Colomer, 2000; Castles, 2013; Harpaz, 2015). More specifically, dissatisfaction with poor governance, restrictions on access to civil and political rights, and fears of economic and political catastrophe associated with a corrupt political system are the key issues driving people to move from undemocratic to democratic countries

(Hirschman, 1993; Colomer, 2000; Castles, 2013; Harpaz, 2015; Dustmann *et al.*, 2017). Last, the narratives provided by the participants in this study disproportionally focused on push factors in China, while the pull factors were not specifically addressed. This suggests that the push factors are more enduring than the pull factors when the country of origin is restrictive in so many significant ways (Stones *et al.*, 2019).

Economic growth in undemocratic countries such as China has created a large wealthy class with the necessary financial capability to move abroad. The political landscape in the country of origin differs significantly from those of Western democratic countries and is therefore likely to invoke politically motivated migration flows. More specifically, wealthy people are likely to migrate when their desire for greater human autonomy and demand for the rule of law are hard to satisfy in their home country. Compared with North-South migration, South-North migration will continue to grow, and wealthy Chinese migrants moving to Western democratic countries is one such example. Importantly, considering the improved economic situations in the country of origin, rich people like the wealthy Chinese migrants studies here are likely to develop post-materialist values alongside their improved economic status and to pursue a better quality of life beyond the point of economic wellbeing.

Empirical Contribution

This study argues that wealthy Chinese prioritise a goal of improved political status by migrating to Western democratic countries over achieving class reproduction and becoming global citizens as suggested by one prior scholar (Liu-Farrer, 2016). Earlier research has argued that wealthy Chinese attempt to convert their economic resources into social status at the transnational level by moving abroad because migration 'allows the first-generation rich to secure and advance the class position of their children among global elites' (Liu-Farrer, 2016, p. 500; Tian, 2017; Tu, 2017). However, the findings of the present study challenge this perspective by arguing that wealthy Chinese migrants view their country of residence as a place where they can best secure personal freedom and wealth preservation and realise the goal of escaping their subordinated political status within China's party-state. I am not claiming that this is the case for the entire research population, but rather that there has been increasing attention to and concern about politics among the wealthy Chinese who left China under Xi Jinping's leadership. The data shows that the majority of private entrepreneurs who have migrated China after 2012, indicating that their migration was in response to the dramatic economic and political changes taking place under Xi Jinping's leadership. Several of the entrepreneurs interviewed in this study had terminated their businesses and sold their properties in China, and relocated to Western democratic countries with their entire families during Xi Jinping's leadership. This differs from the earlier research which argued that 'emigration (*Yimin*), a form of mobility that may not entail settling abroad, is a path created by wealthy Chinese striving to be among the global elite' (Liu-Farrer, 2016, p. 499). In other words, earlier research has considered the migration of wealthy Chinse to be

a family strategy to ensure flexible residence (Liu-Farrer, 2016). However, the results of this study indicate that some Chinese private entrepreneurs changed their migration strategy in response to tighter social and political controls under Xi Jinping's leadership. They now prioritise the goal of long-term settlement in the country of residence over 'flexible residence' as they perceive that this changed strategy could better help them to hedge against the potential economic and political risks of continuously living and running businesses in China, their country of origin. The pursuit of improved political status in potential destination countries and transformation into global citizens can take place simultaneously in the process of migration. However, the former reason seems to have weighed more heavily with some private entrepreneurs when they made their decisions to move abroad.

Comparatively speaking, the wealthy Chinese migrants who left China after 2012 demonstrated much stronger political concerns. They had serious issues with China's single-party communist rule, resulting from a set of new policies and initiatives introduced under Xi Jinping's leadership. More specifically, this study provides empirical evidence that the introduction of the Social Credit System, the 'original sin' problem, perceived political regression, and 'just one voice' have had far stronger effects on the migration decisions of Chinese private entrepreneurs. These policies have created fears for their personal safety and wealth security among wealthy Chinese, particularly Chinese private entrepreneurs, leading them to pursue a new strategy to protect their wealth and secure their personal safety. Due to their economic privileges in China, migration is considered by them to be the most feasible strategy to convert their financial capability in their country of origin into increased political freedom in their country of residence.

Wealthy Chinese who left China before 2012 also had some political considerations, mainly concerning China's limited freedom of speech and media censorship. However, they still hoped to run businesses and make money in China, as the unprecedented and continuous economic growth had turned China into an economic paradise which had produced approximately 1.58 million HNWIs in China by 2016 (Bain Company, 2017). Conversely, Western democratic countries seem not to have had similar economic opportunities, and migration is highly unlikely to have generated as much economic gain for wealthy Chinese as they could have obtained at home. However, the new policies and initiatives introduced under Xi Jinping's leadership validated their worst fears and dashed their hopes of making money continuously in China. Their fears for their personal safety and wealth security resulted in them giving up their business opportunities and leaving China where they had made their fortune.

The continuous rapid economic growth in China further validates the significance of the finding of this study that wealthy Chinese migrants have pursued the goal of improved political status in Western democratic countries. It has previously been widely assumed that individuals generally aim to improve economic wellbeing via geographic relocation, and that economic growth in the country of origin is likely to discourage them from considering emigration. China's rapid economic growth has improved Chinese

living standards to a great extent, which may seem likely to discourage Chinese from moving abroad from an economic perspective. Nevertheless, migration can be contemplated even if it carries significant economic losses as wealthy Chinese give up good economic opportunities in their home country in an attempt to enjoy the better political environment in Western democratic countries. Put simply, these wealthy Chinese migrants gave weight to political issues in the country of origin in their migration decision.

Migration benefits wealthy Chinese most by enabling them to enjoy improved access to a wide range of freedoms and rights in their countries of residence. As the present study's data suggests, Western countries offer wealthy Chinese protection for their private property, increased freedom, and a bundle of civil and political rights such as freedom of speech and free access to Internet content, and these rights help to safeguard their wealth and personal safety. Most importantly, as an earlier study has argued (Harpaz, 2015), Western democracies provide assurance against the political and economic catastrophe which might be visited on them by China's party-state. Like other migrants, wealthy Chinese weigh the potential benefits of resettlement in Western democratic countries and the economic losses resulting from leaving China behind. Apparently, their migration indicates that they mainly seek to escape their domestic political vulnerability by migrating to Western democratic countries instead of transforming themselves or their children into global citizens. However, they are able to do so largely due to their privileged economic status in their country of origin.

The results reveal the effect of intra-group heterogeneity on Chinese migrants' incentives to move abroad. This intra-group heterogeneity among Chinese migrants occurs largely due to their social demographic characteristics and shared contextual features. Recently, intergenerational dynamics surrounding migrants have been gaining growing scholarly attention, but little work has been done on the subject, with a few exceptions. Prior research has studied the effect of intra-group heterogeneity on intergenerational immigrant assimilation in the US (Alba, Jiménez and Marrow, 2014; Keister, Vallejo and Aronson, 2016). So far, the influence of intra-group heterogeneity on the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese has not been explored empirically or theoretically. Chinese immigrants to countries in the West are a large and growing group, and their intra-group diversity is very likely to yield disparate migration patterns and trajectories. This study thus contributes to Chinese migration studies in particular and the broader field of migration studies in general by providing empirical evidence of the influence of intra-group heterogeneous demographic characteristics on the migration decisions of wealthy Chinese.

Limitations

The data collection method used in this study has a few limitations. Selection bias and supposed generalisation problems are regarded as primary limitations in case study methods (George and Bennett, 2005; Mills, Durepos and Wiebe, 2012). A small number of cases makes findings less convincing if the aim

is to represent broader social phenomena (Gerring, 2007). According to the China Private Wealth Report, there were 1.6 million HNWIs in 2017 (Bain Company, 2017). In contrast to the unusually large Chinese population and the large number of wealthy individuals, the size of the sample was relatively small, which could affect the applicability and transferability of the findings of this study. Apart from the issues discussed, a certain degree of sample bias was also inevitable because the interviewees were primarily from the more economically developed Eastern provinces and metropolitan cities of China; the poorer, less developed inland provinces were scarcely covered. Moreover, the US has accepted the largest number of Chinese investment immigrants, but the number of interviewees does not reflect the proportion of Chinese investors residing in the US. Therefore, the findings generated from this study might not apply to the entire rich Chinese population.

As this study focuses on wealthy Chinese migration, the participants recruited for the study appeared to have met the criteria to qualify as rich in a Chinese context. However, it is hard to access credible information on the wealth of the participants, as such questions are too sensitive. However, the data suggests that the wealthier a migrant is, the stronger their migration motivation could be. Thus, this research offers insufficient information on whether there is a correlation between the amount of wealth and wealthy Chinese migration motivation. However, it has opened up a new avenue for future research, which could have done with a strong focus on the investigation of linkages between the amount of wealth a migrant has and their incentives to move abroad.

Apart from the limitations just mentioned, problems also arose from generating data by conducting interviews. Firstly, interviews were used as the single source of evidence for this study. This approach was therefore unlikely to provide adequate evidence to support the research claims. Secondly, interviews are deemed to be verbal reports with common problems, including data bias, poor recall, and poor or inaccurate articulation (Yin, 2018). Thirdly, because the research population is geographically dispersed, the interviews were conducted online and 'physical cues of body language or facial expression could be missed, which could be very important pointers for probing for further detail or indicating different points of view than those being communicated verbally or in writing' (Yeo *et al.*, 2014, p. 182). Also, the case study method is sometimes criticised because of its relative inability to render judgments on the frequency of particular cases and its weak capability for estimating the average causal effect of variables of a sample (George and Bennett, 2005). The findings of this study thus offer subjective reasons for rich Chinese migration, but might be less convincing in indicating how much each causal factor matters to all rich Chinese when making migration decisions.

The research topic is deemed to be sensitive in the Chinese context. Politically, issues related to China's single-party communist rule cannot be openly discussed in China, especially under Xi Jinping's leadership. Thus, while each respondent was open to discussing the pull factors in the country of residence, some were reluctant to discuss the political push factors in China, as they worried about the safety of their

family members and relatives still in mainland China. It can therefore be inferred that the sensitive nature of Chinese politics prohibited some interviewees from talking candidly about the political motivations behind their migratory decisions. With regard to variations in political motivation across migrants who settle in the four selected countries of residence, the growing tension between China and Australia, and between China and the US within the past three years cannot be ignored. This may suggest that the increasingly deteriorating relationship between the migrants' home country and their country of residence during the time when the interviews were conducted is likely to have had a psychological effect on their accounts of their objectives for moving. The tensions between the migrants' home country and their host states also likely manifested itself in the great difficulty encountered in recruiting participants in Australia and the US, as well as unhappy moments when an interview with a mainland Chinese in Australia had to be interrupted. Despite these limitations, this study offers fascinating insights into the subjective reaons behind the emigration of wealthy Chinese.

Avenues for Further Research

Further research could investigate the migration of wealthy class in other countries such as Russia, which are undemocratic countries with large numbers of wealthy individuals. Moreover, this study opens up possibilities for more focused research on the political motivations behind the emigration of wealthy Chinese, especially under Xi Jinping's leadership. Furthermore, as the data shows that the entrepreneur class and younger Chinese have specific motivations to emigrate, further research should consider the heterogeneous demographic characteristics of wealthy Chinese migrants, with a separate focus on the two cohorts of wealthy Chinese migrants. Furthermore, future research could be conducted with a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods that are likely to complement this study by offering a thorough explanation of why wealthy Chinese have migrated to Western democratic countries. More recently, according to media reports, stringent ongoing COVID-19 lockdown measures in Shanghai have caused citywide panic, provoking a wave of Chinese emigration to the US and other countries in the West, so further research may aim to investigate the correlation between the Chinese government's stringent lockdown measures and wealthy Chinese incentives to move abroad.

In short, wealthy Chinese migration is a by-product of the distinctive feature of China's single-party communist rule and three decades of rapid economic growth, and it subsequently possesses the combined characteristics of politically motivated migration from undemocratic countries with some features of elite mobility and privileged migration. It appears that Chinese migration could be classified as South-North migration due to the authoritarian nature of the Chinese government; however, the existing knowledge of the causes of migration flow from undemocratic to democratic countries alone cannot offer a thorough explanation of wealthy Chinese migration as it shares some features that commonly exist in the migration flow originating from Western democratic countries. In brief, further theoretical and conceptual refinement

must be completed in order to examine the intersection of politically motivated migration from undemocratic countries with the characteristics of elite mobility and privileged migration. In summary, this exploratory study provides explanations of rich people's motivations for emigrating from an undemocratic country, including the desire to improve their quality of life as well as political, educational, and environmental considerations.

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Appendix 1: Interview Questions

1. Could you tell me a little bit about your life in Australia/ Canada/ the United Kingdom/the United States?
2. How long have you been living here?
    a. Was Australia/ Canada/ the UK/ the US your first choice?
    b. What visa did you apply for?
    c. Why did you choose Australia/ Canada/ the UK/the US?
    d. Did you migrate to another country before living in Australia/ Canada/ the UK/the US?
3. Is your family here or do they still live in China?
4. How did the migration happen?
    a. Could you describe the process?
5. Why did you leave China?
6. Could you tell me a little bit about yourself? (age/hometown/occupation)

Follow-up questions from 5:

A. If participants mention corruption, prompts:

How widespread do you believe corruption is in China? I would like to know whether you experienced corruption in China. If the answer is positive, follow-up: how does corruption affect your business? In what way does corruption (where in China) affect your life? Do you experience corruption in your country of residence? If the answer is positive, follow-up: in what way?

B. If participants mention liberties such as freedom of speech or protection of private property, prompts:

Do you feel that freedom of speech has an impact on your life in China? If the answer is positive, follow-up: how did that happen? If the state-imposed censorship is mentioned, follow-up: what types of censorship and in what way? And what consequences have you faced when you did not obey the Chinese Censorship Law? Is there state-imposed censorship in your country of residence? If the answer is positive, how does it affect you?

Do you feel that the Property Law in China affects your life? If the answer is positive, follow-up: in what way? Do you feel that the protection of private property affects your life in your country of residence? If the answer is positive, follow-up: in what way?

C. If participants mention environmental problems, prompts:

Do you feel air pollution in your hometown affects your health? If the answer is positive, follow-up: in what way? And I would like to know whether you and your family have suffered any air pollution attributable sickness. If the answer is positive, follow-up: how does such sickness affect your health and health of your family members? Could you tell me whether there are any other environmental problems in your hometown? If the answer is positive, follow-up: what environmental problems and how do those problems affect your health? What do you think about air quality and the natural environment in your country of residence?

D. If participants mention mobility rights, prompts:

I would like to know how often you travel abroad. Do you often travel abroad for business or leisure? Did you experience any difficulties and inconvenience in getting a visa for your overseas trips as a Chinese passport holder? If the answer is positive, follow-up: in what way? Do you take more overseas trips after obtaining a Western passport? If the answer is positive, follow-up: why?

E. If participants mention healthcare, prompts:

Are you entitled to access national healthcare in China? If the answer is positive, follow-up: what treatment is covered by the national healthcare? How does it affect your health? Also, could you tell me a little bit about the healthcare service in your country of residence?

F. If participants mention the economic and investment opportunities, prompts:

How does Chinese business practice affect your business and investment? How do you tax rates affect your business and investment? Does economic growth offer business opportunities and do the local governments help businesses to grow? If the answer is positive, follow-up: in what way? What do you think of the business opportunities in your country of residence?

G. If participants mention education, prompts:

Do your children face problems in Chinese schools? If the answer is positive, what kinds of problems? How did these problems affect your children? Are your children admitted to local schools? If the answer is positive, how do you think about their school life?

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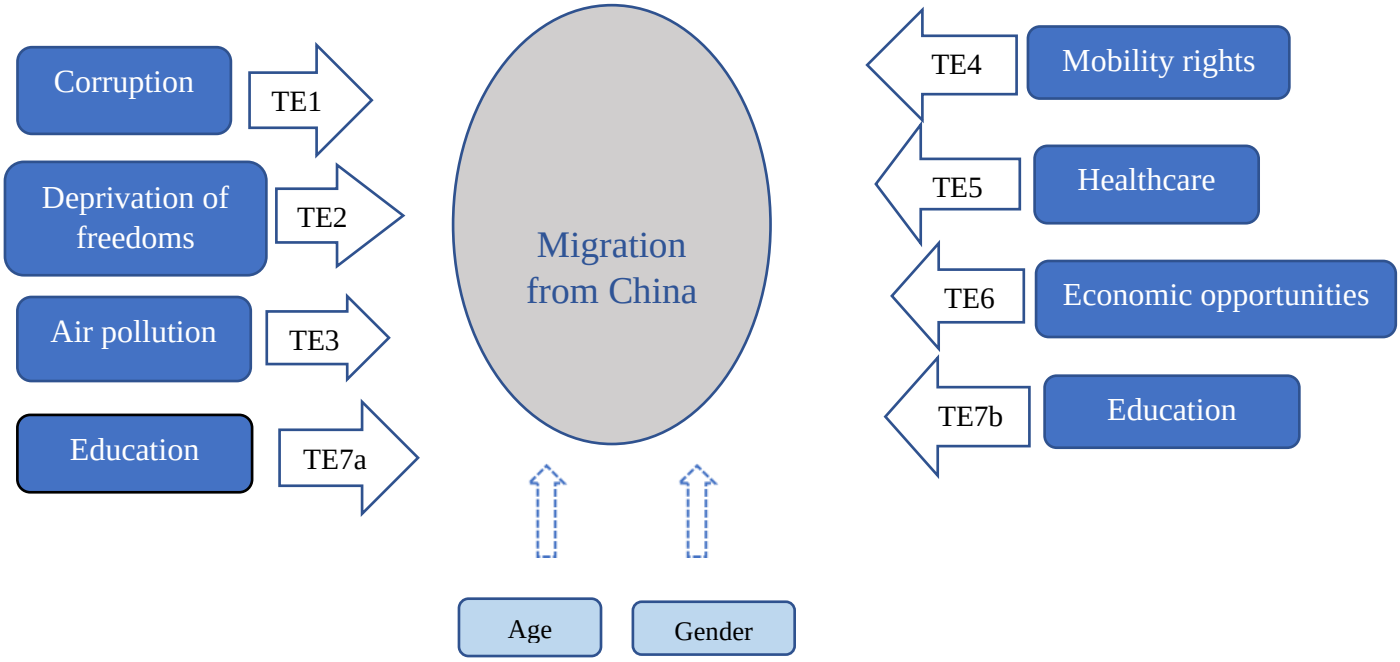

Figure 3.1: Causal Chain: Corruption Effects on Business and Investment Climate

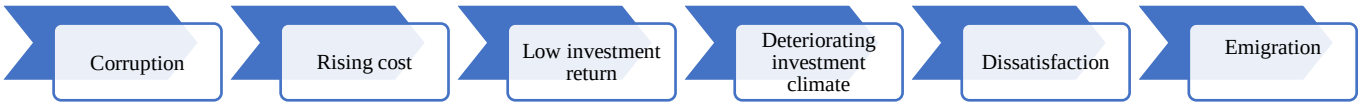

Figure 3.2: Linkage between Phenomena: Education Problems in China and the Higher Quality Western Education

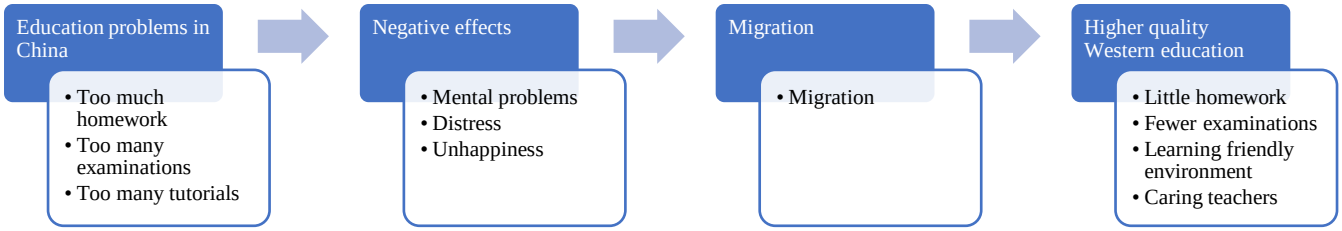

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Table 3.1: Interviewees' Profiles

Interviewee	Sex	Age	Year of Migration	Hometown	Visa	Host Country	Occupation	Education	Network	Household Wealth Chinese in $ Million
CP 01	F	33	2007	Guangdong	Skilled	UK	Lecturer	Doctorate	✓	10
CP 02	M	30	2009	Zhejiang	Entrepreneur	UK	Entrepreneur	Bachelor	✓	12
CP 03	M	34	2015	Beijing	Entrepreneur	UK	Entrepreneur	Master	✓	1.5
CP 04	M	40	2015	Hebei	Investor	Cyprus/UK	Entrepreneur	Bachelor		12
CP 05	F	45	2019	Jiangsu	Entrepreneur	UK	Entrepreneur	Bachelor	✓	2
CP 06	F	34	2018	Beijing	Skilled	UK	House wife	Bachelor		1.5
CP 07	F	28	2017	Tianjin	Entrepreneur	UK	Entrepreneur	Master	✓	1.5
CP 08	M	24	2014	Shandong	Entrepreneur	UK	Entrepreneur	Bachelor		1.5
CP 09	F	36	2002	Sichuan	Skilled	UK	House wife	Master	✓	1.5
CP 10	F	31	2019	Sichuan	Skilled	UK	Executive	Master	✓	2.5
CP 11	M	44	2002	Shandong	Skilled	UK	Teacher	Master		1.5
CP 12	M	39	2014	Beijing	Skilled	UK	Executive	Master		4.5
CP 13	F	44	2000	Guangdong	Skilled	UK	House wife	Master	✓	1.5
CP 14	M	47	2019	Shenzhen	Investor	UK	Entrepreneur	Master		16
CP 15	F	53	2013	Jiangsu	Investor	UK	House wife	Diploma	✓	7.5
CP 16	F	52	2001	Hubei	Dependent	UK	Administrator	Master		1.5
CP 17	F	52	1999	Jiangsu	Dependent	UK	House wife	Master		10
CP 18	F	51	2007	Shenzhen	Dependent	UK	Former government official	Master		1.5
CP 19	M	48	2007	Shenzhen	Skilled	Canada	Entrepreneur	Bachelor	✓	12

CP 20	M	45	2017	Jiangsu	Skilled	Canada	Former government official	Bachelor	✓	2
CP 21	F	34	2018	Jiangsu	Skilled	Canada	Musician	Bachelor		2
CP 22	F	52	2018	Jiangsu	Investor	Canada	Chemist	Bachelor	✓	8
CP 23	F	46	2019	Jiangsu	Investor	Canada	Educator	Master	✓	15
CP 24	F	56	2016	Shanghai	Skilled	Canada	Technician	Master	✓	4
CP 25	F	51	1999	Tianjin	Skilled	Canada	Entrepreneur	Master	✓	3
CP 26	F	42	2017	Shanghai	Skilled	Canada	Chemist	Master	✓	2
CP 27	M	44	2014	Jiangsu	Investor	Canada	Entrepreneur	Bachelor	✓	10
CP 28	M	56	2007	Guangxi	Skilled	Canada	Doctor	Bachelor		1.5
CP 29	M	60	2012	Anhui	Investor	Canada	Entrepreneur	Bachelor	✓	3
CP 30	M	55	2012	Beijing	Investor	Canada	Entrepreneur	Bachelor	✓	6
CP 31	M	51	2003	Beijing	Skilled	Canada	Accountant	Bachelor	✓	4
CP 32	M	45	2020	Shanghai	Investor	Canada	Executive	Bachelor	✓	3
CP 33	F	44	2013	Yunnan	Skilled	Canada	Lecturer	Doctorate		1.5
CP 34	F	49	2005	Guangdong	Investor	US	Entrepreneur	Bachelor	✓	4.5
CP 35	F	44	2017	Shanghai	Investor	US	House wife	Bachelor		4
CP 36	M	32	2016	Jiangsu	Skilled	US	Manager	Master	✓	10
CP 37	F	31	2012	Jiangsu	Skilled	US	Data analyst	Master		1.5
CP 38	F	37	2017	Beijing	Skilled	US	Doctor	Doctorate	✓	1.5
CP 39	F	39	2004	Beijing	Skilled	US	Researcher	Doctorate		3
CP 40	F	38	2006	Beijing	Skilled	US	Doctor	Master	✓	2
CP 41	F	38	2008	Sichuan	Skilled	US	Researcher	Doctorate	✓	1.5
CP 42	F	28	2018	Shanghai	Skilled	US	Technician	Master	✓	3
CP 43	F	54	2004	Shanghai	Skilled	US	Researcher	Doctorate	✓	2

CP 44	F	34	2013	Anhui	Skilled	US	House wife	Doctorate	✓	1.5
CP 45	F	46	2017	Shanghai	Investor	US	Accountant	Master	✓	2
CP 46	M	49	2002	Jiangsu	Dependent	US	Entrepreneur	Bachelor	✓	12
CP 47	M	26	2015	Jiangsu	Skilled	US	Financial advisor	Bachelor		1.5
CP 48	M	26	2017	Jiangsu	Skilled	Australia	Programmer	Master		1.5
CP 49	F	28	2011	Jiangsu	Skilled	Australia	Nurse	Bachelor	✓	1.5
CP 50	M	46	2015	Jiangsu	Skilled	Australia	Wealth manager	Master	✓	1.5
CP 51	F	30	2010	Guangdong	Skilled	Australia	Graphic designer	Bachelor	✓	3
CP 52	M	42	2012	Beijing	Skilled	Australia	Entrepreneur	Bachelor		5
CP 53	F	54	1998	Shanghai	Skilled	Australia	Entrepreneur	Master	✓	1.5
CP 54	M	48	2015	Beijing	Dependent	Australia	Entrepreneur	Bachelor	✓	5
CP 55	M	55	2000	Guangxi	Skilled	Australia	Entrepreneur	Master	✓	1.5
CP 56	F	34	2012	Guangdong	Skilled	Australia	Teacher	Master	✓	5
CP 57	F	42	2002	Zhejiang	Skilled	Australia	Former government official	Master	✓	1.5
CP 58	F	39	2013	Shanghai	Skilled	Australia	Wealth manager	Master	✓	1.5
CP 59	F	55	2000	Shandong	Skilled	Australia	Lecturer	Master	✓	6
CP 60	M	45	2018	Shenzhen	Investor	Australia	Entrepreneur	Master		11

Table 3.2: Details of the Provisional Coding Structure for 7.1 Education

7:1a: Educational problems in China	7:1b: Merits of Western education
1. Too many examinations 2. Too much homework 3. Too much after-school tutoring 4. Harsh competition 5. No time for after-school activities 6. No time for hobbies and interests	1. Fewer examinations 2. Less homework 3. Less competition 4. After-school activities 5. Hobbies and interests 6. Learning environment 7. Curriculum focus 8. Potential development

Table 4.1: The Number of China-Born Residing in the US during 1960-2018

Country	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2006	2010	2018
United States	99,735	172,132	366,500	676,968	1193,685	1551,316	1,808,000	2,455,000

(Suggested Citation: Li and Lo, 2012)

Table 4.2: The Number of China-Born Residing in Australia during 2006-2020

Country	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2018	2019	2020
Australia	206,589	-	313,029	344,983	371,550	-	-	432,043	466,506	508,870	557,700	650,703	677,241	650,640

(Suggested Citation: Australian Bureau of Statistics, no date)

Table 4.3: The Number of China-Born Residing in Canada in 1960-2006

Country	1961	1971	1981	1991	1996	2001	2006	2016
Canada	36,724	51,150	52,395	157,405	231,050	332,825	466,945	649,260

(Suggested Citation: Li and Lo, 2012; Statista, 2021a)

Table 4.4: The Number of China-Born Residing in the UK during 2009-2017

Country	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
United Kingdom	197,891	185,500	199,965	224,791	202,818	193,741	199,524	199,941	220,234

(Suggested Citation: Statista, 2021b)

Table 4.5: The Number of Chinese Granted BIIP in Australia during 2009-2015

Country	Information	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Australia BIIP SIV	Business Innovation and Investment Program, Introduction significant investor visa in 2015 and high-end investor visa	4294	4791	4614	5058	4614	4870

(Suggested Citation: Miao and Wang, 2017a)

Table 4.6: The Number of Chinese Granted QIIP Investor Visa in Canada during 1986-2007

Country	Information	1986-1990	1991-1995	1996-2000	2001-2005	2007
Canada QIIP Quebec immigrant investor program	Introduced in 1986 and terminated in 2014 Invest 1.2 million Canadian dollars. The Investor Program is reopened in 2018	1136	5456	10215	-	947

(Suggested Citation: Guo and DeVoretz, 2007; Ware et al., 2010)

Note: After 1999, mainland China became the leading source country, accounting for 53% of all investor immigrants (Ware et al., 2010)

Table 4.7: The Number of Chinese Granted EB-5 Investor Visas in the US during 2007-2019

Country	Information	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
United States EB-5	Introduced in 1990 with investment USD 500,000-USD 1 million changed to USD 900,000-1.8 million	73	293	1828	581	2233	5683	6250	8308	7616	-	-	-	4327 46%

(Suggested Citation: Congressional Research Service, 2021; Miao and Wang, 2017a)

Note: China became the largest source country of EB-5 investor immigrants in the US in 2009: (Miao and Wang, 2017a).