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# China's Diaspora Policies as a New Mode of Transnational Governance

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## ABSTRACT

Existing studies of Chinese diaspora policies have mostly focused on the evolution and content of these policies, which tend to be confined within the realm of domestic politics. Against the backdrop of China's increasing integration into the global economy, as well as its expanding interests abroad, this article goes beyond the existing frameworks in the studies of both domestic Chinese politics and diaspora relations by analyzing China's diaspora policies from the angle of transnational governance. Relying on policy documents, relevant data from institutions involved, and interviews and participatory observation at both central and provincial levels, the article argues that a state-centered approach in which the Chinese overseas are 'coopted' neglects how the engagement with transnational social actors, especially the new migrants, alters existing state structures and how the actions of Chinese overseas are driven by various motives and interests.

## Introduction: Transnational Governance and Chinese Diaspora Policies

In the People's Republic of China (PRC), 'overseas Chinese work' (*qiaowu gongzuo*) entered a new stage with the advent of reform and opening up in the late 1970s. Already in 1995, Xi Jinping, then the Party Secretary of Fuzhou—the capital city of Fujian Province, a major emigration area—advocated a policy of 'big overseas Chinese work' (*da qiaowu*). As he put it, '[i]n a new era, overseas Chinese work must have a new concept, a new train of thought'.<sup>1</sup> 'Big overseas Chinese work' would witness broad and deep cooperation between China and the Chinese overseas. Two decades later, *qiaowu* is an integral part of the 'Chinese Dream' of economic modernization, scientific and technological innovation, and cultural revival. In an interview with the *People's Daily* in 2014, Qiu Yuanping, Director-General of the State Council Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO), emphasized the importance of consolidating both domestic and international resources and going beyond the 'narrow parameters of specific regions and institutions' to collectively and effectively carry out *qiaowu*.<sup>2</sup> The Action Plan for the 'One Belt, One Road' initiative, prepared by the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Ministry of Commerce, and announced in March 2015, underscored the need

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<sup>1</sup>Xi Jinping, "Da qiaowu" guannian de quelì ["Establishing the concept of "big overseas Chinese work"], *Zhanlue yu guanli* [Strategy and Management], (1995), pp. 111–113.

<sup>2</sup>Zhang Hong, 'Tuidong da qiaowu, buzhi da geju' ['Promoting big overseas Chinese work, structuring grand framework'], *People's Daily* (Overseas edition), (11 April 2014), available at: <http://cpc.people.com.cn/n/2014/0411/c83083-24879629.html> (accessed 20 March 2015).

to 'leverage the unique role of overseas Chinese and the Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Regions, and encourage them to participate in and contribute to the Belt and Road Initiative'.<sup>3</sup>

Existing literature on 'overseas Chinese work' or Chinese diaspora policies during the reform era mostly excludes the institutional aspect and its transnational implications, with increasingly more emphasis being placed on the role of talent return migration and ethnic minorities.<sup>4</sup> A recent work on *qiaowu* includes the aspect of cultural policies that imply de-territorialized visions of the nation, but the framework nevertheless remains that of the cooption of transnational elements by the state.<sup>5</sup> Another recent study on the Chinese diaspora focuses on its role in China's soft power initiative and the efforts at 'indigenising international communication to improve China's national image', which again leaves the role of the state unquestioned.<sup>6</sup> As early as 1985, Wang Gungwu highlights the importance and complexities of an 'External China Policy' (*waihua zhengce*) that includes policies relating to the Chinese overseas as well as domestic issues.<sup>7</sup> These policies, however, have rarely been analyzed from an institutional perspective and with the transnational dimension in mind.

This article fills the gap in research by examining the institutions and mechanisms behind the formulation of Chinese diaspora policies towards the ethnic Chinese who reside outside of Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan today, estimated to be over 60 million in 2014.<sup>8</sup> It pays special attention to interactions between the state and non-state actors through an analysis of policies and institutions from the angle of governance rather than government. Secondly, following China's increasingly global reach and its corresponding impact upon domestic politics and economy,<sup>9</sup> this article examines the transnational elements involved in diaspora policy. Relying on internal policy documents, publicly available data from institutions involved, and interviews with diaspora policy officials and participatory observation on both central and provincial levels,<sup>10</sup> the article explores the domestic and transnational elements of these policies.

## States and Diasporas

Two main approaches dominate the literature on the relation between states and diasporas. The first approach, the state-centered approach, understands the response of states to globalization and migration as an effort to extend their power beyond territorial borders. Accordingly, Gamlen has argued that 'diaspora engagement policies' form part of an effort to 'transnationalize governmentality', or to extend the monopoly of power of the state to nationals residing outside of its territorial borders.<sup>11</sup> To has similarly examined how the Chinese state seeks to 'cooptate' the Chinese overseas.<sup>12</sup> A second main approach, following the constructivist school of international relations, considers diasporas to be actors in their own right, with their increasing role implying a decline in the power of nation-states.<sup>13</sup> The

<sup>3</sup>Action Plan on the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative', (30 March 2015), available at: [http://language.chinadaily.com.cn/2015-03/30/content\\_19950951.htm](http://language.chinadaily.com.cn/2015-03/30/content_19950951.htm) (accessed 15 February 2016).

<sup>4</sup>See, among others, Mette Thunø, 'Reaching out and incorporating Chinese overseas: the trans-territorial scope of the PRC by the end of the 20th century', *The China Quarterly* 168, (2001), pp. 910–929; David Zweig, 'Competing for talent: China's strategies to reverse the brain drain', *International Labour Review* 145 (1–2), (2006), pp. 65–90; Elena Barabantseva, *Overseas Chinese, Ethnic Minorities and Nationalism: De-centering China* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2011); Chris Vasantkumar, 'What is this "Chinese" in overseas Chinese? Sojourn work and the place of China's minority nationalities in extraterritorial Chinese-ness', *Journal of Asian Studies* 71(2), (2012), pp. 423–446.

<sup>5</sup>James Jiann Hua To, *Qiaowu: Extra-territorial Policies for the Overseas Chinese* (Leiden: Brill, 2014).

<sup>6</sup>Sheng Ding, 'Engaging diaspora via charm offensive and indigenised communication: an analysis of China's diaspora engagement policies in the Xi era', *Politics* 35(3–4), (2015), pp. 230–244.

<sup>7</sup>Wang Gungwu, 'External China as a new policy area', *Pacific Affairs* 58(1), (1985), pp. 28–43.

<sup>8</sup>Zhang, 'Tuidong da qiaowu, buzhi da geju'.

<sup>9</sup>David Shambaugh, *China Goes Global: The Partial Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>10</sup>One of the authors of this article serves as Academic Advisor to the State Council Overseas Chinese Affairs Office and the Guangdong Provincial Overseas Chinese Affairs Office.

<sup>11</sup>Alan Gamlen, *Diaspora Engagement Policies: What Are They, and What Kinds of States Use Them?*, COMPAS Working Paper 32, (2006), pp. 3, 5.

<sup>12</sup>To, *Qiaowu*.

<sup>13</sup>Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth, 'Diasporas and international relations theory', *International Organization* 57(3), (2003), pp. 449–479.

second approach has paid more attention to 'transnationalism', which refers to 'the processes by which immigrants form and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement'.<sup>14</sup> Chin and Smith carve out a middle ground, advancing the notion of 'state transnationalism' to capture the inter-relational dynamics whereby nation-states act both proactively on their priorities and reactively to grassroots transnationalism instigated by their diasporas.<sup>15</sup> Recent studies have also pointed to the multidimensionality and complexities in diaspora's homeland engagement and have suggested that transnational linkages can actually coincide with (and sometimes reinforce) hostland integration.<sup>16</sup>

The question of the state's role also remains highly debated in research on contemporary China. Whereas the state-centered approach was dominant before the reform era, since then, scholars have employed society-centered approaches, state-society paradigms, or globalized and historical approaches.<sup>17</sup> The state-society paradigm argues in favor of a 'balanced alliance' between state and society and acknowledges the impact of social dynamics on the state, while the globalization paradigm recognizes the influence of global dynamics. Gilley argues that, in spite of modifications, the state remains central in these approaches.<sup>18</sup>

While the authors acknowledge the continuing importance of the state, the inclusion of the Chinese diaspora also transforms the state through transnational mechanisms that neither fit the state-society nor the globalized paradigm, but that support the position of 'state transnationalism'. Consequently, merely focusing on the 'cooptative' element of the system overlooks the fact that the Chinese overseas are actors who also influence policy structures. In this instance, both migration and trade have led and continue to lead to an increasing institutionalization of transnational mechanisms.

### **Transnational Governance**

The article uses the term transnational governance to describe the nature of Chinese diaspora policies. The origin of the term 'governance' (κυβερνάω) and government refers to the 'steering' of a boat; in this original sense, the meaning of both terms overlapped. The rise of governance theory during the 1990s, however, was to reject 'simplistic dichotomies' in the social sciences, such as market/hierarchy in economics, private/public in politics and anarchy/sovereignty in international relations.<sup>19</sup> As Stoker notes, in Anglo-American political theory, 'government' indicates 'the formal institutions of the state and their monopoly of legitimate coercive power', whereas 'governance' refers to 'the development of governing styles in which boundaries between and within public and private sectors have become blurred'.<sup>20</sup> Crucial here is the concern with mechanisms of governance based on the interaction between various actors.

There are two reasons why the notion of transnational governance is useful to discuss Chinese diaspora policies. Firstly, the socialist market economy, embraced at the Fourteenth Party Congress in 1992, required a rethinking of the function of government (*zhengfu zhineng*) in the face of economic pluralization and the rise of transparency and accountability.<sup>21</sup> Jiang Zemin's 'Three Represents' further

<sup>14</sup>Linda Basch, Nina Glick Schiller and Cristina Szanton Blanc, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments, and Deterritorialized Nation-States* (Langhorne, PA: Gordon and Breach, 1994), p. 6.

<sup>15</sup>Ku Sup Chin and David Smith, 'A reconceptualization of state transnationalism: South Korea as an illustrative case', *Global Networks* 15(1), (2015), pp. 78–98.

<sup>16</sup>Ren Na and Hong Liu, 'Traversing between transnationalism and integration: dual embeddedness of new Chinese immigrant entrepreneurs in Singapore', *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 24(3), (2015), pp. 298–326; Min Zhou and Hong Liu, 'Homeland engagement and host-society integration: a comparative study of new Chinese immigrants in the United States and Singapore', *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 57(1), (2016), pp. 1–23.

<sup>17</sup>Bruce Gilley, 'Paradigms of Chinese politics: kicking society back out', *Journal of Contemporary China* 20(70), (2011), pp. 517–533.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup>Bob Jessop, 'The rise of governance and the risks of failure: the case of economic development', *International Social Science Journal* 50(155), (1998), pp. 30–31.

<sup>20</sup>Gerry Stoker, 'Governance as theory: five propositions', *International Social Science Journal* 50(155), (1998), pp. 17–28.

<sup>21</sup>Elaine Jeffreys and Gary Sigley, 'Governmentality, governance, and China', in Elaine Jeffreys, ed., *China's Governmentalities: Governing Change, Changing Government* (London: Routledge, 2009), p. 7; Sujian Guo, *Chinese Politics and Government: Power, Ideology, and Organization* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 47.

led to the inclusion of social elements in the Party and continued the transformation from a revolutionary to a ruling party.<sup>22</sup> The notions of a 'relatively well-off society' (*xiaokang shehui*) and 'people-centred governance' (*weimin zhizheng*) also indicated changed state–society relations.<sup>23</sup> More recently, the Communiqué of the Third Plenary Session of the Eighteenth Central Committee, passed in November 2013, emphasized that the market should 'play a decisive role in the allocation of resources'.<sup>24</sup>

Secondly, China has become part of globalization. Economically, it has become reliant on international trade and foreign direct investment, institutionalized through membership of both the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in the 1980s. Politically, China has cooperated more closely with the international community on issues concerning security, humanitarian aid and environmental regulation, and especially so since WTO membership in 2001 and partnership of the G-8.<sup>25</sup> China's soft power in world governance has also intensified through more outward investment and development aid, and through more diplomacy and reliance on Chinese culture.<sup>26</sup> Following these developments, the influence of outside forces on diaspora policies and institutions should be taken into account.

### **Governance and Networks**

China's global interdependence has led to augmented institutionalization; the Party has relied on a 'network mode of governance' to reorganize the Party's relation with society, economy and local governments.<sup>27</sup> The focus on networks in a Chinese context corresponds with the theory of a transformation from 'hierarchies' to 'networks' in the political order. The latter is a response to changes in both society and state, such as the increased organization of the former and the expansion of the scope of policy-making and decentralization of the latter.<sup>28</sup> As opposed to the 'Keynesian welfare state' (KWS) in which the main components were state and market, the 'Schumpeterian workfare regime' (SWR)—directed at competitiveness, flexibility and innovation—has made more room for networks, public–private partnerships, and local, regional and transnational economic spaces.<sup>29</sup>

There are several reasons why networks are important in the context of diaspora policies. As Castells notes, a social structure based on networks is 'a highly dynamic, open system, susceptible to innovating without threatening its balance'.<sup>30</sup> Overall, networks are marked by 'connectivity, flexibility, reciprocity and transnationality'.<sup>31</sup> Even though the state remains important, networks can connect with both state and society actors, both through formal and informal means, and crossing national borders. However, there is still a difference between networks and formal organizations, which have 'gatekeepers', are hierarchical and use majority voting rather than agreement through negotiation.<sup>32</sup> Apart from informal networks, especially business networks, formal organizations also play an important role in the 'network mode of governance' of the Chinese state, as will be discussed below.

<sup>22</sup> Joseph Fewsmith, 'Elite responses to social change and globalization', in Jude Howell, ed. *Governance in China* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004), pp. 19–36.

<sup>23</sup> Jeffreys and Sigley, 'Governmentality, governance, and China'.

<sup>24</sup> Shouquan fabu: Zhonggong zhongyang guanyu quanmian shenhua gaige ruogan zhongda wenti de jue ding ['Authorized release: resolutions of the Central Committee of the CCP on certain major issues regarding the comprehensive deepening of reform'], (15 November 2013), available at: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-11/15/c\\_118164235.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-11/15/c_118164235.htm) (accessed 14 March 2016).

<sup>25</sup> Hongying Wang and James N. Rosenau, 'China and global governance', *Asian Perspective* 33(3), (2009), pp. 7–8, 10.

<sup>26</sup> Zhenglai Deng, 'Global governance and good governance in the Chinese context', in Zhenglai Deng and Sujian Guo, eds. *China's Search for Good Governance* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), p. 9.

<sup>27</sup> Ming Xia, *The People's Congresses and Governance in China* (London: Routledge, 2008), pp. 23–24.

<sup>28</sup> Joachim Blatter, 'Beyond hierarchies and networks: institutional logics and change in transboundary spaces', *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions* 16(4), (2003), p. 504.

<sup>29</sup> Jessop, 'The rise of governance and the risks of failure', p. 35.

<sup>30</sup> Manuel Castells, *The Rise of the Network Society*, 2nd edn (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), pp. 501–502.

<sup>31</sup> Hong Liu, 'An emerging China and diasporic Chinese: historicity, the state, and international relations', *Journal of Contemporary China* 20(71), (2011), pp. 856–876.

<sup>32</sup> Blatter, 'Beyond hierarchies and networks', pp. 504–505.

## Diaspora Policy as the Nexus of Institutions: the 'Five Overseas Chinese Structures'

Both the transnational aspect and the interaction between public and private actors can be seen from the system for 'overseas Chinese work' (*qiaowu gongzuo*). This consists of five interrelated governmental and semi-governmental institutions operating on several levels, from the national to the local. Often referred to as the 'five overseas Chinese structures' (*wuqiao* 五侨), these institutions work together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries to formulate and implement policies towards the Chinese overseas.<sup>33</sup> The five institutions are: the State Council Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO) (*guowuyuan qiaowu bangongshi* or *qiaoban*); the China Zhigong Party (*Zhongguo zhigongdang*); the Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) (*quanguo renmin daibiao dahui huaqiao weiyuanhui*); the Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan Compatriots and Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee of the CPPCC (*quanguo zhengxie gang'aotaiqiao weiyuanhui*); and the All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese (ACFROC) (*Zhonghua quanguo guiguo huaqiao lianhehui* or *quanguo qiaolian*)

Following the Leninist party-state system's five levels of government, these institutions operate at each of these levels, namely central level; provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities; prefectures; counties; and townships. Beneath this level, there are also village and neighborhood committees.<sup>34</sup> On a horizontal level, there is cooperation between three different types of agencies, namely 'state administration agencies, the important structures of multi-party cooperation and political consultation under the leadership of the CCP, and the people's organizations.'<sup>35</sup> The relationship between the vertical dimension of 'lines' (*tiao*) and the horizontal dimension of 'pieces' (*kuai*) is referred to as *tiao/kuai guanxi*.<sup>36</sup> The integration of overseas Chinese affairs institutions into both vertical and horizontal structures of Chinese national politics serves as the foundation of their transnational expansion and increasing global reach.

### The Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO)

Among the five, the most important and powerful government agency, and also the agency that reveals most features of transnational governance, is the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO), an administrative office under the State Council that was reinstalled in 1978.<sup>37</sup> Its predecessor was the Overseas Chinese Affairs Commission (OCAC, *huaqiao shiwu weiyuanhui*), founded in 1949 and renamed in 1954. In terms of staff, before the administrative reforms of 1998, the Office had a staff of 264 people; with the reforms, this number was more or less halved. The OCAC also regularly recruited staff from its two affiliated universities (Jinan University and Huaqiao University, see below) to shoulder its workload, and this temporary staffing does not count as formal staff.

The OCAO's main tasks are the coordination of policy formulations with regard to overseas Chinese work by the CCP and the State Council, as well as monitoring their implementation. In addition, it seeks to advance the protection of the rights and interests of the Chinese overseas, and of the returned overseas Chinese and family dependents (*guiqiao qiaojuan*), which is also a central task of the other main institutions for overseas Chinese work. Although the OCAO engages in political work, such as promoting the unity between China and the Chinese overseas, and advancing reunification with Taiwan, there is also a significant economic and cultural dimension to its mandate. Apart from research and policy recommendations on attracting Chinese overseas capital, technology and talent, it develops cultural exchange and Chinese language education programs, which will be discussed further below.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>33</sup>Liu Hong, 'Huaqiao huaren yu Zhongguo de gonggong waijiao' ['Chinese overseas and China's public diplomacy'], *Gonggong waijiao tongxun* [Public Diplomacy Quarterly] 1(1), (2010), pp. 45–51.

<sup>34</sup>Guo, *Chinese Politics and Government*, pp. 137–139.

<sup>35</sup>Guowuyuan qiaoban qiaowu ganbu xuexiao [OCAO Overseas Chinese Work Cadre School], ed., *Qiaowu gongzuo gailun* [Outline of Overseas Chinese Work] (Beijing: Zhongguo zhigong chubanshe, 2006), p. 236.

<sup>36</sup>Guoli Liu, *Politics and Government in China* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2011), p. 79.

<sup>37</sup>During its initial years of operation (1978–1980), the OCAO was managed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>38</sup>Mao Qixiong and Lin Xiaodong, eds, *Zhongguo qiaowu zhengce gaishu* [A Survey of China's Overseas Chinese Affairs Policy] (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 1993), pp. 37–38; Ganbu xuexiao, *Qiaowu gongzuo gailun*, pp. 238–239.

Local offices are present in all provinces, the autonomous regions and municipalities. Governments of cities and counties of important areas of migration (*qiaoxiang*) also have their own local OCAOs.<sup>39</sup> In some cases, such as major *qiaoxiang* like Guangdong and Fujian, a separate OCAO office is integrated into government structures; increasingly, it is formed together with the Foreign Affairs office and constitutes the Office of Foreign and Overseas Chinese Affairs.<sup>40</sup> The OCAO is divided into eight departments that cover administration; policies and laws and regulations; domestic aspects; external aspects (including Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau); economy, science and technology; propaganda; culture; and, finally, agency Party Committees and personnel matters.<sup>41</sup> The OCAO publishes a bimonthly journal, *Qiaowu gongzuo yanjiu* (*Research on Overseas Chinese Affairs Work*). The agency has a wide reach to the public. For example, it was reported that there were 70 million accesses to its main website in 2014.<sup>42</sup>

The OCAO's transnational dimension is visible in several agencies and institutions that it directly administers. The first two are news agencies that foster the 'imagined community' transnationally by offering news to and about the Chinese overseas. Firstly, there is the China News Agency (*Zhongguo xinwenshe*), which was founded in 1952 and targets Chinese overseas, as well as Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. Secondly, the Voice of China Newspaper Office (*Huasheng baoshe*) is the only external news agency that is electronic-only. It became part of the China News Agency after 2005. Its main website, *Zhongguo qiaowang* (China Overseas Network, [www.chinaqw.com](http://www.chinaqw.com)) offers general information for Chinese overseas and also functions as a portal for overseas Chinese affairs in China. *Zhongguo qiaowang* claims to be 'the online homestead of the Chinese overseas all over the world' and is hosted by the China Overseas Exchange Association (*Zhongguo haiwai jiaoliu xiehui*).<sup>43</sup>

In addition, three universities are directly administered by the OCAO, namely, Jinan University, Huaqiao University and the Beijing Academy of Language and Culture (*Beijing huawen xueyuan*). Jinan University, which has its main campus in Guangzhou and branch campuses in Zhuhai and Shenzhen, carries out the policy guideline of 'oriented towards (the) overseas, oriented towards Hong Kong and Macau' (*mianxiang haiwai, mianxiang Gang'Ao*), attracting Chinese overseas students and students from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. Founded in 1906, it became part of the '211' university project in 1996. Huaqiao University, founded in 1960 and with campuses in Quanzhou and Xiamen, operates in tandem with Jinan University. In 1984, both were the earliest universities to attract students from overseas, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan under the opening-up policy. By not exclusively catering to the latter, the universities also operate as bridges between these groups and local students. Apart from their educational function, both universities also engage in research projects and joint conferences with OCAO affiliates, offer specialized training sessions for OCAO officials and those belonging to affiliated institutions, and promote Chinese culture through the organization of cultural events on their campus grounds.<sup>44</sup>

The Beijing Academy of Language and Culture was created through the fusion of the State Council's OCAO's Overseas Chinese Affairs Cadre School (*qiaowu ganbu xuexiao*) and the Beijing Overseas Chinese Students Extension School (*Beijing huaqiao xuesheng buxi xuexiao*) in 2000. The Academy cooperates with provinces and cities to support the local training of overseas Chinese affairs cadres. It also offers both long-term and short-term courses on Chinese language and culture, develops teaching materials, trains overseas teachers and dispatches teachers abroad.<sup>45</sup>

A less formal and more recent mechanism that is relevant for the discussion concerns the Overseas Expert Advisory Committee of the OCAO (*Guowuyuan qiaoban haiwai zhuanjia zixun weiyuanhui*). Founded in 2005, this committee had an initial membership of 30 prominent scientists, scholars and

<sup>39</sup>Mao and Lin, *Zhongguo qiaowu zhengce gaishu*, pp. 37–38.

<sup>40</sup>Ganbu xuexiao, *Qiaowu gongzuo gailun*, p. 240.

<sup>41</sup>OCAO website, available at: <http://www.gqb.gov.cn> (accessed 15 February 2015).

<sup>42</sup>'Guowuyuan qiaoban 2014 nian zhengfu xinxi gongkai gongzuo niandu baogao' ['2014 annual report of government information disclosure work of the OCAO'], (13 March 2015), available at: <http://www.gqb.gov.cn/news/2015/0313/35252.shtml> (accessed 14 March 2016).

<sup>43</sup>Ganbu xuexiao, *Qiaowu gongzuo gailun*, pp. 245–248.

<sup>44</sup>Fieldwork, Jinan University and Huaqiao University, July 2013; Ganbu xuexiao, *Qiaowu gongzuo gailun*, pp. 250, 258.

<sup>45</sup>Ganbu xuexiao, *Qiaowu gongzuo gailun*, pp. 251–252.

entrepreneurs from nine countries, including the US and Germany. Jia Qinglin, Chairman of the National Congress of the CPPCC, considered the membership of the committee as both 'an honor and a responsibility' and urged these members to contribute to China's modernization as advisors.<sup>46</sup> Through this mechanism, Chinese overseas with a strong social impact are invited to make policy recommendations and to give feedback on policies towards the Chinese overseas.<sup>47</sup>

For example, in 2011, the Third Overseas Expert Advisory Committee consisted of 72 members in the fields of physics, chemistry, mathematics, biology, economics, law, applied sciences, etc. One of them was a Nobel Laureate in Physics. All members had high-level impact and represented different professions.<sup>48</sup> One of the well-known members of the current Advisory Committee is Wang Huiyao, the head of a think tank in Beijing and an expert on talent migration.<sup>49</sup> He also serves as vice president of a semi-governmental organization, the Western Returned Scholars Association (WRSA), which plays an important role in the 'networked' *modus operandi* of the Chinese state (to be discussed below).

In addition to these formal institutions based in China, all major Chinese embassies have consular departments dealing with overseas Chinese affairs, and some consuls (*qiaowu canzang*) are dispatched by the OCAO on a secondment basis. They regularly meet with local Chinese communities and are invited to attend various functions. Reporting not only to the respective ambassador, but also to the OCAO in Beijing, these consuls also serve as intermediaries between China and diasporic Chinese communities.

### **The China Zhigong Party**

The China Zhigong Party, which was founded in San Francisco in 1925 and can be traced back to the *Hongmen* society of which Sun Yat-sen was a member, consists mostly of returned overseas Chinese and family dependents. In 1947, after reorganizing itself in Hong Kong, it became part of the United Front led by the CCP. Its role today is still the advancement of multi-party cooperation and political consultation, in which strengthening ties with Chinese overseas organizations occupies a central role.<sup>50</sup> Through visits and exchanges, the Zhigong Party attracts overseas capital and strengthens ties with organizations in over 40 countries. Following more flexible policies, it both encourages Chinese overseas to return to China and to serve from overseas.<sup>51</sup> Functioning as a bridge with Chinese overseas organizations, the Zhigong Party is hence another formal institution with clear features of transnational governance.

This transnational aspect is reflected in the profile of its chairmen, vice-chairmen and members. The current chairman of the Zhigong Party's Central Committee is Wan Gang (b. 1952), a returned overseas Chinese (*guiqiao*) with a Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from Germany. Upon graduation, Wan worked for ten years as a senior engineer and technical manager at Audi in Germany, before returning to China and eventually becoming the president of Tongji University. Based on his own experience, Wan has emphasized the special importance of Chinese overseas students and returnees in overseas Chinese work.<sup>52</sup> Wan is also a Vice-Chairman of the Twelfth National Committee of the CPPCC and Minister of Science and Technology (since 2007). Wan is assisted by an executive vice-chairman and eight vice-chairmen, the majority of whom obtained doctorates, mostly from overseas.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>46</sup>Zhang Yong, 'Jia Qinglin huijian qiaoban haiwai zhuanjia zixun weiyuanhui weiyuan' ['Jia Qinglin meets with members of the Overseas Expert Advisory Committee of the OCAO'], (26 July 2005), available at: [http://www.gov.cn/lhdh/2005-07/26/content\\_17171.htm](http://www.gov.cn/lhdh/2005-07/26/content_17171.htm) (accessed 14 March 2016).

<sup>47</sup>Liu, 'Huaqiao huaren yu Zhongguo de gonggong waijiao', p. 46.

<sup>48</sup>OCAO website, available at: [www.gqb.gov.cn](http://www.gqb.gov.cn) (accessed 15 March 2015).

<sup>49</sup>See for example Huiyao Wang and Yipeng Liu, *Entrepreneurship and Talent Management from a Global Perspective: Global Returnees* (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2016); Huiyao Wang, David Zweig and Xiaohua Lin, 'Returnee entrepreneurs: impact on China's globalization process', *Journal of Contemporary China* 20(70), (2011), pp. 413–431.

<sup>50</sup>Mao and Lin, *Zhongguo qiaowu zhengce gaishu*, pp. 39–40.

<sup>51</sup>Zhigongdang website, available at: [www.chinazhigongparty.org.cn](http://www.chinazhigongparty.org.cn) (accessed 20 April 2015).

<sup>52</sup>Hu Qun, 'Zhongguo Zhigongdang zhongyang zhuxi Wan Gang qiangdiao, zhigongdang yao jixu jiji tuijin yu xinqiao de lianxi' ['Chairman of the Central Committee of the Zhigong Party Wan Gang emphasizes that the Zhigong Party must continue to positively advance relations with the new migrants'], *Huaqiao guangbo wang*, CRI online, (21 December 2009), available at: <http://gb.cri.cn/1321/2009/12/21/542s2710734.htm> (accessed 16 April 2015).

<sup>53</sup>Zhigongdang website.

### ***The Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee of the NPC and the Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan Compatriots and Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee of the CPPCC***

Although the other three main bodies of the *qiaowu* apparatus are more in line with domestic governance, transnational governance features have been deeply imbued in these bodies. The Committees in the NPC and CPPCC are noteworthy because Chinese overseas are increasingly represented in these two bodies.

The Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee (OCAC) of the NPC was set up as one of six permanent committees in line with clause 70 of the December 1982 constitution, all of which 'gained the rights to draft legislative proposals and to examine bills and inquiries'.<sup>54</sup> The OCAC of the twelfth NPC (since 2013) has five vice-chairmen and 13 committee members; its Chairman is Bai Zhijian. Whereas the profile of the OCAC is less international than that of the Zhigong Party, still, several members have received their education abroad (mainly in the US and Japan), and about a third of them have received doctorates.<sup>55</sup>

The OCAC investigates and deliberates legislative proposals by the presidium or the Standing Committee of the NPC and puts forward new legislative proposals. Furthermore, it deliberates and reports on regulations, resolutions, orders and directives of the State Council, its ministries, committees and local governments.<sup>56</sup> Overseas Chinese Committees also exist at the various lower levels of government. As is the case with the OCAO, cities and counties in important sending areas of migration each have their own Committees.<sup>57</sup>

Like the OCAC of the NPC, the Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan Compatriots and Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee of the CPPCC (Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference) has a consultative function. The National Committee of the CPPCC is composed of representatives from the CCP, the eight 'democratic parties'—one of which is the China Zhigong Party—and 25 other groups in society. These groups include 'personages without party affiliation, mass organizations, all ethnic groups, and sectors of society, compatriots from the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the Macau Special Administrative Region and Taiwan, returned overseas Chinese and specially invited public figures'.<sup>58</sup> As such, it is one of the 'special committees' of the CPPCC National Committee.

Its tasks are political consultation, democratic supervision and participation in the administration of state affairs. The Committee brings together organizations of returned overseas Chinese and Chinese overseas outside of Mainland China, which again reflects the transnational aspect of diaspora policy.<sup>59</sup> The current Chairman of the Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan Compatriots and Overseas Chinese Affairs Committee is Yang Chonghui, who has a medical background and experience in the Communist Youth League.<sup>60</sup> In addition, the committee has 15 vice-chairmen and 46 members, leading to a total of 62 members (out of 2,237 Twelfth National Committee members).

Overall, in the case of the both the NPC and the National Committee of the CPPCC, an increasing number of Chinese overseas has been attending the two meetings. Between 2001 and 2015, 437 delegates from 66 countries have been present at the NPC and CPPCC meetings.<sup>61</sup> Even though they attended as non-voting members, this consultative process has been increasingly institutionalized.

<sup>54</sup>Chien-min Chao, 'The National People's Congress oversight: power and the role of the CCP', in Kjeld Erik Brødsgaard and Yongnian Zheng, eds, *Bringing the Party Back In: How China is Governed* (Singapore: Eastern Universities Press & Marshall Cavendish International, 2004), p. 119.

<sup>55</sup>OCAC website, available at: [http://www.npc.gov.cn/npc/bmzz/huaqiao/node\\_1627.htm](http://www.npc.gov.cn/npc/bmzz/huaqiao/node_1627.htm) (accessed 20 March 2015).

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup>Mao and Lin, *Zhongguo qiaowu zhengce gaishu*, p. 37; Ganbu xuexiao, *Qiaowu gongzuo gailun*, pp. 240–241.

<sup>58</sup>CPPCC website, available at: <http://www.cppcc.gov.cn> (accessed 25 March 2015).

<sup>59</sup>Mao and Lin, *Zhongguo qiaowu zhengce gaishu*, p. 39; Ganbu xuexiao, *Qiaowu gongzuo gailun*, pp. 242–244.

<sup>60</sup>Yang Chongwen jianjie' ['Brief introduction to Yang Chongwen'], available at: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2002-03/04/content\\_299770.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/ziliao/2002-03/04/content_299770.htm) (accessed 20 February 2015).

<sup>61</sup>'Haiwai huaqiao huaren juji "lianghui"' ['Chinese overseas gather at NPC and CPPCC'], (12 March 2015), available at: <http://www.hsbcw.com/a/2015/0312/24541.html> (accessed 16 April 2015).

## The All China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese (ACFROC)

The All China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese (ACFROC) is 'a people's organization' that functions as a 'bridge' or 'bond' between Party and government and the returned overseas Chinese and Chinese overseas. The current chairman is Lin Jun, a returned overseas Chinese from Indonesia. The 18 vice-chairmen and secretary are either returnees or dependents, the majority of whom are from Southeast Asia and the United States.<sup>62</sup>

With precedents in a network of federations to save the country during Japanese occupation in the 1930s, the ACFROC is one of the groups represented in the CPPCC National Committee.<sup>63</sup> All provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities have branches. In addition, affiliated organizations exist all the way down to the village level. Its main tasks include liaising with returned overseas Chinese, dependents and Chinese overseas, assistance with policy formulation, and supervision of policy implementation.<sup>64</sup> The ACFROC has its own publishing company, namely the Overseas Chinese Publishing Company (*huaqiao chubanshe*), which was founded in 1989. One of its recent publications is the magazine *Qiaoli* (*Overseas Power*), which aspires, among other things, to build a 'high-level business platform'.<sup>65</sup> It also has a research institute (China Institute of Overseas Chinese History) and a museum (China Museum of Overseas Chinese History), serving as the academic and cultural outreaching arms of the ACFROC.

The ACFROC emphasized in its report the importance of Chinese overseas in economic construction and technological advancement. They could not only offer capital based on policies (*yinzi* or 'attracting capital'), but also advanced management, technological and scientific innovation, and hi tech enterprises. It stated that international cooperation in these areas should be an important aspect of the 'going out' strategies. At the same time, it mentioned that the level of talent as part of the 'attracting knowledge' (*yinzi*) policy should be increased through the gradual establishment of 'networks of overseas talents' so as to encourage return to China to set up innovative businesses.<sup>66</sup>

Cultural exchange is another area of the ACFROC's transnational engagement that has both 'going out' and 'inviting in' aspects. By setting up 'overseas Chinese education camps' and cultural exchange programs abroad, the Chinese nation is imagined transnationally. The Cultural Exchange Department of the ACFROC has several arts troupes that perform and organize activities across the world in the context of the 'Family of China' (*Qinqing Zhonghua*) prerogative, which operates as a form of public diplomacy to engage both officials and popular audiences.<sup>67</sup> In the realm of cultural exchange, organizations also play an important role. For example, the ACFROC engages in dialogues with the Organization for the Promotion of International Cultural Exchange between China and the Chinese Overseas (*Zhongguo huaqiao guoji wenhua jiaoliu cujinhui*) and other organizations.<sup>68</sup>

For the 'going out' aspect, ACFROC delegations meet with local organizations abroad on a regular basis. In May 2011, for instance, delegations were dispatched to Poland, South Africa, the UAE, Brazil, Peru and Canada to visit local native-place organizations (*huiguan*), Chinese cultural centers and influential voluntary associations (*shetuan*). In June, Chairman Lin Jun met with 45 ambassadors and consuls of Chinese embassies and consulates abroad at a meeting in Beijing. For the 'inviting in', the focus is not only on uniting Mainland Chinese and diasporic Chinese, but also on bringing the 'new' and 'old' migrants together.<sup>69</sup> Just like other main organizations, the ACFROC also collaborates with local committees and

<sup>62</sup>ACFROC website, available at: <http://www.chinaql.org/sites/ql/index.html> (accessed 5 April 2015).

<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup>Mao and Lin, *Zhongguo qiaowu zhengce gaishu*, pp. 38–39.

<sup>65</sup>*Qiaoli* [*Overseas Power*], available at: <http://www.baik.com/wiki/侨力> (accessed 20 March 2015).

<sup>66</sup>Zhongguo qiaolian nianjian bianzuan weiyuanhui [ACFROC Yearbook Compilation Committee], *Zhongguo qiaolian nianjian* [ACFROC Yearbook 2012] (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 2012), p. 4.

<sup>67</sup>Xinqing jie xiangchou, wenhua zhu waijiao: Zhongguo Qiaolian 2015 "Qinqing Zhonghua" haiwai xunyan' ['Family resolves home-sickness, culture aids diplomacy: the 2015 "family of China" overseas performance tour of the All-China Federation of Returned Overseas Chinese'], *Renmin ribao*, (19 March 2015), available at: <http://politics.people.com.cn/n/2015/0319/c242004-26720388.html> (accessed 20 April 2015).

<sup>68</sup>Zhongguo qiaolian nianjian bianzuan weiyuanhui, *Zhongguo qiaolian nianjian*, pp. 205, 211.

<sup>69</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 5, 192–195.

local governments. For example, the national ACFROC, Zhejiang province ACFROC and the Hangzhou government organized in 2011 the 'China Venture Meeting in Hangzhou' to bring together around 200 talents in science and technology and representatives of main organizations.<sup>70</sup>

The importance of interlinked organizations and the interaction between public and private actors is clear from the organizations that belong to the ACFROC. For example, the ACFROC Youth Committee (*Zhongguo qiaolian qingnian weiyuanhui*), founded in 2001, promotes economic, scientific and cultural exchange with a special focus on youth. Of its 517 members, 338 are based abroad, 92 in Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, and 87 on Mainland China. Another affiliated organization, the China Federation of Overseas Chinese Entrepreneurs (*Zhongguo qiaoshang lianhehui*), established in 2003, promotes overseas Chinese enterprises and strengthens overseas Chinese entrepreneur organizations.<sup>71</sup>

### **The China Overseas Exchange Association**

Founded in 1990, this organization is affiliated with the OCAO and serves as a platform for people-to-people exchange through both individuals and organizations based within and outside of China. It promotes exchange and cooperation in the areas of trade, science and technology, culture and education, as well as tourism and media. It currently has 52 advisors from 88 different countries and regions (including Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan).<sup>72</sup> Since 2013, the Association's Chairman, Han Qide, has served as one of the Vice-Chairmen of the Twelfth National Committee of the CPPCC. Han, a medical scientist who obtained part of his training in the United States and is a member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, is also Chairman of the China Association for Science and Technology (*Zhongguo kexue jishu xiehui*) (CAST), Chairman of the Jiusan Society and former President of the Western Returned Scholars Association/Chinese Overseas-Educated Scholars Association (*Oumei tongxuehui Zhongguo liuxue renyuhan lianyihui*) (WRSA).<sup>73</sup>

The profile of Han Qide illustrates the interlocking nature of chairmanships and memberships, but also how organizations that are part of the Chinese diaspora policy system are interlinked with business organizations and organizations for the advancement of science and technology. Firstly, the China Association for Science and Technology, a non-governmental organization composed of over 200 member societies, advances international scientific and technological cooperation.<sup>74</sup> Secondly, the Jiusan (September Third) Society, one of the eight political parties represented in the CPPCC, promotes scientific and technological development through its members, mostly mid-level intellectuals in these fields.<sup>75</sup> Finally, the Western Returned Scholars Association, a semi-governmental organization founded in Beijing in 1913, has nearly 80,000 members. Apart from separate branches for returnees from respective countries and regions, it also contains business associations and organizations affiliated with talent plans such as the 'Thousand Talent Plan' as discussed below.<sup>76</sup>

The important role of the China Overseas Exchange Association in business networking is reflected in its contribution to the inaugural World Huaqiao Huaren Businessmen and Industrialists Conference, held in July 2015 in Shanghai. Jointly organized by the Association and the OCAO, the Conference brought together over 300 business tycoons from 79 countries. The new business conference serves the objectives of the 'One Belt, One Road' initiative. Aspiring to better connect China with both Central Asia and Southeast Asia, it pays greater attention to ethnic Chinese and urges them to reconnect with China.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>70</sup>*ibid.*, pp. 183–186, 201.

<sup>71</sup>ACFROC website.

<sup>72</sup>China Overseas Exchange Association (COEA) website, available at: <http://www.coea.org.cn> (accessed 3 April 2015).

<sup>73</sup>CPPCC website. The current President of the WRSA is Chen Zhu, who is the Minister of Health.

<sup>74</sup>Chinese Association for Science and Technology (CAST) website, available at: <http://www.cast.org.cn/english/> (accessed 10 April 2015).

<sup>75</sup>Jiusan website, available at: <http://www.93.gov.cn> (accessed 23 March 2015).

<sup>76</sup>Western Returned Scholars Association (WRSA) website, available at: <http://www.wrsa.net/> (accessed 18 April 2015).

<sup>77</sup>Leo Suryadinata, 'Why have two world Chinese entrepreneur conferences?', *Straits Times*, (2 September 2015).

## Other Institutions

The United Front Work Department of the CCP Central Committee (*Zhonggong zhongyang tongyi zhan-xian gongzuobu*) also contributes to the formation and implementation of China's diaspora policies. Its function is to 'lock in support for the Party in power centres outside of its direct purview'.<sup>78</sup> In this work, the so-called 'democratic parties and groups' (*minzhu dangpai*) play an important role.<sup>79</sup>

The 1992 *Outline of United Front Work for the 1990s* reflected a new emphasis on economic growth. The minor parties and groups (MPGs) in the United Front were allowed to recruit more members—up to 30%—from those groups that could directly contribute to economic growth, such as technocratic elites and entrepreneurs. In addition, the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce (ACFIC) was designated to function as a bridge to non-state enterprises; it recruited, among others, representatives of companies owned by Chinese from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan.<sup>80</sup> Institutionally, the Western Returned Scholars Association is affiliated to the United Front Work Department. Some local United Front Work departments, such as that in Shenzhen, incorporate elements of religious policy, ethnic minority policy and overseas Chinese affairs (which is in turn divided into 'domestic overseas Chinese affairs' and 'external overseas Chinese affairs').<sup>81</sup>

In addition, for each core area of Chinese diaspora policies, such as economic development, science and technology, propaganda, policies with regard to Taiwan, and public diplomacy, additional actors are involved. For economic development and science, ministries such as the Ministry of Commerce, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, and the Ministry of Science and Technology play a role. For policies with regard to Taiwan and public diplomacy issues, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office are central actors. Finally, in general, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and the Ministry of Public Security are also important players in the attraction and employment of ethnic Chinese talents.<sup>82</sup>

## Diaspora Policies in Action: 'Going out and Inviting in'

The preceding pages have demonstrated that a number of integrated policy mechanisms at both the central and local levels play a role in the transnational arena and link domestic affairs with external affairs. This section will focus on the implementation of Chinese diaspora policies and the manner in which transnational governance gradually takes shape. Outlining the importance of the 'new migrants' and how this has affected policies, the section looks at the role of organizations and the attraction of overseas Chinese talent in relation to broader talent policies.

During the early reform era, policies towards Chinese overseas were closely and intimately tied up with the goal of economic development, with the so-called Special Economic Zones (SEZs) strategically located in the traditional emigration areas of Guangdong and Fujian.<sup>83</sup> During the second stage of reform in the 1990s, the focus shifted from rehabilitation and the granting of social, political and economic benefits to returnees and dependents during the 1980s to a more active policy of liaising with the 'new migrants'.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>78</sup>Richard McGregor, *The Party: The Secret World of China's Communist Rulers* (New York: Harper Collins, 2010), p. 17.

<sup>79</sup>For a history of the development of the 'minor parties and groups', see James Seymour, *China's Satellite Parties* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1987).

<sup>80</sup>Gerry Groot, *Managing Transitions: The Chinese Communist Party, United Front Work, Corporatism, and Hegemony* (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 184–187.

<sup>81</sup>Shenzhen United Front Work Department of the CCP website, available at: [http://www.tzb.sz.gov.cn/jgsz\\_2/nbjg/](http://www.tzb.sz.gov.cn/jgsz_2/nbjg/) (accessed 14 March 2016).

<sup>82</sup>Both authors of this article were invited in June 2014 to attend a closed-door forum on Chinese skilled immigration policy, which was jointly organized by the CCP Ministry of Organization and the State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs (SAFEA). Attendees of the meeting included officials from the Ministry of Public Security.

<sup>83</sup>Paul Bolt, 'Looking to the diaspora: the overseas Chinese and China's economic development, 1978–1994', *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 5(3), (1996), p. 470; Alan Smart and Jinn-Yuh Hsu, 'The Chinese diaspora, foreign investment and economic development in China', *The Review of International Affairs* 3(4), (2004), pp. 544–566.

<sup>84</sup>Thunø, 'Reaching out and incorporating Chinese overseas'.

Since 2000, the Chinese state and local governments have changed the SEZ model to knowledge-intensive development models, building hi-tech industrial development parks, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) laboratories, and other research and development (R&D) facilities and crucibles, to attract new generations of diasporic Chinese to invest in China. The vision of Xi Jinping to revitalize the nation and to realize the Chinese Dream, since 2012, has provided a foundation for the current efforts in China's diaspora engagement. The hi-tech investors and technopreneurs have disproportionately been new Chinese immigrants from the US, Japan and other advanced Western countries. Increasing attention has been paid to attracting Chinese talents overseas because of their technical know-how and their exposure to international practices.

It is estimated that the number of 'new migrants' who left China since 1978 surpassed 9 million by 2013.<sup>85</sup> They possess wide transnational networks that are a crucial factor in understanding China's transformation, as well as its changing place in Asia. An important advantage for China is that those who return to China, the so-called *haigui* (returnees from overseas or 'sea turtles') remain professionally and personally connected with Western countries.<sup>86</sup> In addition, the 'seagulls' (*hai'ou*) are those businessmen, scholars and investors who travel back and forth between China and their country of residence. Since the majority of the 'new migrants' consist of students-turned-immigrants, legislative frameworks and mechanisms have been designed for students.

At the Third Plenum of the Fourteenth Party Congress in 1993, in response to the low number of student returnees, the Chinese government launched the so-called 'twelve words' policy of 'supporting overseas studies, encouraging the return of Chinese students, and upholding the freedom of their movement' (*zhichi liuxue, guli huiguo, laiqu ziyou*). Newly set up programs such as the Changjiang Scholars Programme or the Hundred Talents Programme offered high salaries and research funds. Simultaneously, the official slogan of 'returning to serve the country' (*huiguo fuwu*) was replaced with 'serving the country' (*weiguo fuwu*), or contribution to economic development without physically returning to China.<sup>87</sup>

Based on data of the Service Work Department for Returned Students under the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, by 2011, about 2.25 million students had been sent abroad, out of which an estimated 818,400 had returned. In addition, in 2011, 38% more students returned than was the case in 2010.<sup>88</sup> In his keynote speech to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Western Returned Scholars Association (WRSA) held in 2013, Xi Jinping expanded the 'twelve words' policy by adding four additional words '*fahui zuoyong*' (playing a role), pledging that the CCP and the government would ensure that the Chinese diaspora could play a significant role when returning to China, and that it could contribute to China's development when remaining overseas.<sup>89</sup> Having worked for nearly two decades in Fujian and Zhejiang, major emigration areas of China, prior to taking up the top leadership position in China, Xi Jinping had an intimate knowledge of the Chinese diaspora and their significance. This is evidenced by his 1995 writing on '*da qiaowu*' mentioned in the beginning of this article, and by his frequent trips to Southeast Asia, the region where more than 80% of Chinese overseas reside (for example, he has visited Singapore seven times since the late 1980s).

It is against the background of the overall policy shift from economic development to the attraction of talent and the emergence of the so-called 'new migrants' that more recent efforts to liaise with

<sup>85</sup>Wang Huiyao, ed., *Zhongguo guoji yimin baogao* (2014) [*Chinese International Migration Report* (2014)], available at: <http://www.ccg.org.cn/Research/View.aspx?Id=512> (accessed 29 February 2016). On the composition and characteristics of new migrants, see Hong Liu, 'New migrants and the revival of overseas Chinese nationalism', *Journal of Contemporary China* 14(43), (2005), pp. 291–316.

<sup>86</sup>David Zweig, Stanley Rosen and Changui Chen, 'Globalization and transnational human capital: overseas and returnee scholars to China', *The China Quarterly* 179, (2004), pp. 735–758.

<sup>87</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 739–740.

<sup>88</sup>818400 overseas students return to China, *People's Daily Online*, (16 March 2012), available at: <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90882/7760545.html> (accessed 9 April 2013).

<sup>89</sup>Xi Jinping: shi liuxue ren yuan huiguo you yongwu zhidi, liu zai waiguo you baoguo zhimen ['Xi Jinping: Assuring that students abroad who return to China can use their skills, and that those who stay abroad can serve the country'], (21 October 2013), available at: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-10/21/c\\_117808372.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/politics/2013-10/21/c_117808372.htm) (accessed 14 March 2016).

overseas Chinese organizations and the 'talent plans' as discussed below have been shaped. Both cases demonstrate how governmental, semi-governmental and non-governmental actors cooperate, with policies and activities being located at both central and local levels.

### **Strengthening Ties with Diasporic Chinese Organizations**

As seen from the discussion of the 'five overseas Chinese structures', Chinese overseas organizations play a crucial role in the *qiaowu* work. Before World War Two, there were about 4,000 Chinese overseas organizations; today, it is estimated that there are several tens of thousands.<sup>90</sup> Even though these organizations may still be organized based on kinship or locality, membership today is more open in practice and oriented towards business networking. In addition, new types of organizations have emerged, such as those based on profession or alumni organizations.<sup>91</sup>

Global organizations already existed in the 1960s and 1970s (for example, the Global Chinese Language Press Association, founded in 1968), but their number increased rapidly after this period. A well-known example is the World Chinese Entrepreneurs Convention (WCEC) (*Shijie huayi shang dahui*), first organized by the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI) in 1991, with the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong and the Thai-Chinese Chamber of Commerce in Bangkok as founding members.<sup>92</sup> Biannual conventions have been organized since then, with two being held in Mainland China (2001 in Nanjing and 2013 in Chengdu). Officials took part in these conventions to appeal to the Chinese overseas. In his congratulatory letter to the 12th WCEC held in Chengdu in September 2013, Xi Jinping urged the Chinese overseas to take advantage of the opportunities presented by China's dynamic rise by partaking in China's development as a means to 'realize the China Dream of reviving the great Chinese people.'<sup>93</sup> This demonstrates that the Chinese state not only appeals to diasporic Chinese networks, but that it plays an active role in creating these networks through interactive platforms where state, society and capital actively interact.

As noted earlier, several types of organizations are involved in Chinese diaspora policies as a means of transnational governance. Apart from professional organizations such as alumni organizations and Chambers of Commerce, semi-governmental organizations such as the WRSA also play an indispensable role. Finally, certain think tanks are indirectly involved in policy-making with special reference to transnational governance. A case in point is the Center for China and Globalization (CCG), ranked among the top think tanks in China and headed by Wang Huiyao.<sup>94</sup> Wang, Vice-chairman of the WRSA, was also a member of the Global Talents Strategy Study Group of the Department of Organization of the CCP, an advisor to the State Council (*guowuyuan canshi*), Vice-Chairman of the China Talent Research Society, President of the China Global Talents Society, and economic team leader of the Overseas Experts Advisory Committee of the OCAO mentioned above. He was involved in the drafting of the National Talent Development Plan 2010–2020.<sup>95</sup> This shows that there is a direct linkage between diaspora policies and the recruitment of foreign talent through interlinking organizations.

Officials from several agencies and of the OCAO in particular are dispatched regularly to connect with the Chinese diaspora through meetings with leaders of the respective communities; delegations from the Chinese overseas are also invited to China. Specific activities organized by the OCAO to increase

<sup>90</sup>Ganbu xuexiao, *Qiaowu gongzuo gailun*, p. 57.

<sup>91</sup>Hong Liu, 'Old linkages, new networks: the globalization of overseas Chinese voluntary associations and its implications', *The China Quarterly* 155, (1998), pp. 582–609.

<sup>92</sup>WCEC website, available at: <http://www.wcec-secretariat.org/en/index.php/about-us/about> (accessed 11 March 2016).

<sup>93</sup>'Dishi'erjie shijie huashang dahui Chengdu kaimu, Xi Jinping zhixin zhuhe' ['Twelfth WCEC opens in Chengdu, Xi Jinping sends congratulatory letter'], *Xinhua* (25 September 2013), available at: <http://www.chinanews.com/gn/2013/09-25/5322593.shtml> (accessed 15 March 2015).

<sup>94</sup>James G. McGann, '2015 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report', available at: [http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1009&context=think\\_tanks](http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1009&context=think_tanks) (accessed 29 February 2016).

<sup>95</sup>Wang Huiyao, 'The role of government and NGOs in Chinese migration policy development', paper presented at the 'International Symposium on Talents Exchange and Skilled Migration Policies', Bureau of Talents Management, Organization Department of the CCP Central Committee and State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs, PRC (Beijing, 15–17 June 2014).

networks with Chinese overseas are the 'Grand Union of Global Chinese Overseas Organizations' (*Shijie huaqiao huaren shetuan lianyi dahui*), the 'Global Ethnic Chinese Forum' (*Shijie huaren luntan*) and the 'Global Chinese Language Media Forum' (*Shijie huawen chuanmei luntan*). The latter two are examples of the global 'fora' (*luntan*) that the OCAO has organized since 2000 to gather the main representatives of the Chinese overseas on a regular basis. Especially the large organizations that are set up for political, economic, cultural, educational, service or welfare purposes are important for networking purposes because of their broad representation and large impact on society.<sup>96</sup>

The sixth Grand Union of Global Chinese Overseas Organizations, for example, was held in Beijing in 2012, with more than 550 leaders of overseas Chinese organizations from 109 countries taking part in the event. They were received by Hu Jintao and by top local officials from different provinces, thus providing a platform for deliberating policies and measures relating to the diaspora.<sup>97</sup> In addition, the Global Chinese Language Forum, organized by the China News Agency under the guidance of the OCAO, invited several hundred media professionals and organizations from within China and from abroad to create a platform for media exchange. One of the recent global forums led to a joint declaration calling on 'the media in China cooperating with overseas Chinese media to act as heirs of the Chinese culture and spirit, and tellers of "Chinese stories" in the world, and to create a fair, balanced, and rational environment of international public opinions.'<sup>98</sup>

### **Attracting Foreign Talent of Chinese Origin**

The attraction of capital, technology and talent—the so-called 'three imports' (*san yinjin*)—became more central to diaspora policies during the 1990s. Apart from 'going in' or bringing the diaspora to China, policies also contain a 'going out' component, as Chinese businesses have been encouraged to cooperate with foreign businesses in the realm of economy and science and technology. Since 2000, the focus has been on the attraction of talent and high-caliber talent in particular. In a 2014 news conference, OCAO officials again highlighted the organization's priority of attracting capital and well-connected talents.<sup>99</sup>

One aspect of overseas Chinese science and technology work is to guide diaspora Chinese specialists who return to China to advance the high-tech sector. For example, the OCAO has organized 'Doctors' Groups' (*boshituan*) at which Chinese overseas Ph.D.s engage in scientific and technological exchange through participation in symposia.<sup>100</sup> In addition, exchange between overseas specialists and Chinese industry and commerce has been promoted in the form of the bi-yearly 'Chinese Business and Science and Technology Innovation Cooperation and Exchange Conference' (*Huashang qiye keji chuangxin hezuo jiaoliuhui*) organized by the OCAO in cooperation with relevant ministries such as the Ministry for Science and Technology and local governments. The OCAO and its local affiliates selected and recommended in 2013 a total of 234 teams in the high tech areas for special funding support.<sup>101</sup> The OCAO also organizes conferences that allow for exchange between specialists overseas and those who have already established high tech businesses; local high tech parks (Hangzhou, Wuhan, Nanjing, Jinan, Changchun, Ningbo, Shanghai, Shijiazhuang and Nanning) are partners that offer advice and support in matters of attracting overseas specialists, technology and capital. The overseas Chinese specialists

<sup>96</sup>Ganbu xuexiao, *Qiaowu gongzuo gailun*, p. 58.

<sup>97</sup>"Diliujie shijie huaqiao huaren shetuan lianyi dahui" jianjie' ['Brief introduction to the sixth Grand Union of Global Chinese Overseas Organizations'], (31 March 2012), available at: <http://www.chinanews.com/kong/2012/03-31/3789465.shtml> (accessed 14 March 2016).

<sup>98</sup>Ding, 'Engaging diaspora via charm offensive and indigenised communication'.

<sup>99</sup>"Zoujin guoqiaoban" xinwen fabuhui zhaokai, jujiao qiaowu yinzhizhi yinzi' ["'Coming in OCAO" press conference convenes, focus on overseas Chinese affairs attracting knowledge and capital'], (20 June 2014), available at: [http://news.xinhuanet.com/2014-06/20/c\\_126649090.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/2014-06/20/c_126649090.htm) (accessed 14 March 2016).

<sup>100</sup>Ganbu xuexiao, *Qiaowu gongzuo gailun*, 86, pp. 92–93.

<sup>101</sup>'Guoqiaoban wei huaqiao huaren chuangye tuandui shou pai' ['OCAO awards plaques to Chinese overseas venture teams'], (11 October 2013), available at: <http://www.8610hr.cn/docs/jgsz/2013-10-11/1381457496473.html> (accessed 14 March 2016).

are also engaged in scientific and technological matters related to the opening of the Western part of China, such as in the field of agriculture.<sup>102</sup>

The OCAO's attraction of talent operates in tandem with a number of important talent plans in recent years. The 2008 Thousand Talents Plan (*qianren jihua*) focused on four areas, namely national innovation, science and laboratories, SOEs, and hi-tech parks. Other talent plans that followed were the 2010 Thousand Young Talents Plan (*qingnian qianren jihua*), the 2011 Thousand Foreign Experts Plan (*waizhuan qianren jihua*), the 2011 Special Talent Zone (*rencai tequ*) and the 2012 Ten Thousand Talents Plan (*wanren jihua*).<sup>103</sup> Since talent plans are based on a cooperation between central and local governments, research institutes and business organizations,<sup>104</sup> the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, the Ministry of Education, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the All-China Youth Federation, the Western Returned Scholars Association, and the China Association for Science and Technology are some of the institutions and organizations centrally involved. Important to mention here are the Bureau of Talents Management of the Organization Department of the CCP and the State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs (SAFEA), an administrative agency under the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security. Whereas the former is in charge of strategic talent plans such as the Thousand Talent Plan, the latter handles 'Overseas Expertise Introduction' (OEI) work and training of Chinese professionals with technical and managerial specializations.<sup>105</sup>

An example of the cooperation between local governments and the OCAO in recent efforts to attract overseas Chinese talent concerns the establishment of an Overseas Chinese Economic and Cultural Cooperation Pilot Zone (*huaqiao jingji wenhua hezuo shiyanqu*) within the Shantou Special Economic Zone in Guangdong province. These policies, approved in 2014, are part of the deepening of reform and the foreign and economic policy of 'One Belt, One Road', with South China offering a strategic gateway to the Maritime Silk Road. The 'pilot zones' serve to foster further economic integration, cross-border investment and trade, but also integration in the realms of culture, tourism, education and health services, with one of the aims being to build an 'overseas Chinese cultural exchange platform'.<sup>106</sup>

In 2013, after several decades, a new Exit–Entry Administration Law came into effect in China, which introduced a separate category of 'talent visa'.<sup>107</sup> A new development in policies to attract talent and to lower the 'green card' threshold concerns local government initiatives. In July 2015, a 'Talent Deal 20' (*rencai xinzheng ershi tiao*), consisting of 20 immigration measures, was conducted in Shanghai to attract more high-level foreign talents and to facilitate the return of ethnic Chinese. The same scheme has been implemented in the National Innovation Model District of Beijing's Zhongguancun, China's Silicon Valley, on 1 March 2016. Apart from lowering the threshold to obtain a 'green card', the 'Beijing Talent Deal 20' scheme aims to reduce barriers for foreigners regarding visas, entry and exit, and residence. The scheme also targets youth and ethnic Chinese through student internships and the introduction of 'ethnic Chinese cards' (*huayi ka*).<sup>108</sup> Laws and regulations are slowly beginning to catch up with the transnational elements as incorporated in *qiaowu* institutions.

<sup>102</sup> Ganbu xuexiao, *Qiaowu gongzuo gailun*, pp. 111–114.

<sup>103</sup> Wang, 'The role of government and NGOs in Chinese migration policy development'. For a detailed discussion of the Thousand Talents Plan, see Jinjing Zhu, 'China attracting global top talent: central and local government initiatives', in Wang Gungwu and Zheng Yongnian, eds., *China: Development and Governance* (Singapore: World Scientific, 2013), pp. 361–368.

<sup>104</sup> Zhu, 'China attracting global top talent', p. 362.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*; State Administration of Foreign Expert Affairs (SAFEA), *Annual Report 2014*.

<sup>106</sup> 'Guowuyuan guanyu zhichi Shantou jingji tequ jianshe huaqiao jingji wenhua hezuo shiyanqu you guan zhengce de pifu' ['State Council policy reply on supporting Shantou Special Economic Zone setting up Overseas Chinese economic and cultural cooperation experimental zones'], (19 September 2014), available at: [http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2014-09/19/content\\_9085.htm](http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/content/2014-09/19/content_9085.htm) (accessed 29 February 2016).

<sup>107</sup> 'Exit and Entry Administration Law of the People's Republic of China', available at: <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/visas/zyxx/t1055481.htm> (accessed 12 March 2016).

<sup>108</sup> 'Beijing rencai 20 tiao' chutai, waiji rencai liudong bilei pobing' ['Beijing Talent Deal 20' launched, foreign talent flow barriers break'], (18 January 2016), available at: <http://www.chinahightech.com/html/hotnews/yuanchuang/2016/0118/272366.html> (accessed 29 February 2016); 'Beijing 20 xiang churujing xinzheng: jiakuai xiaochu guoji rencai liudong bilei' ['Beijing 20 Exit–Entry New Deal: speed up the elimination of barriers to the international flow of talent'], (14 January 2016), available at: <http://world.people.com.cn/n1/2016/0114/c1002-28052241.html?from=groupmessage&isappinstalled=0> (accessed 29 February 2016).

## Conclusion: Transnational Diaspora Governance at a Time of China Rising

This article demonstrates that the ‘cooptation’ of the Chinese diaspora in a state-centered model is too simplistic and one-sided. Diaspora policies imply an active and changing engagement with transnational social actors that bring new dynamics and that alter existing structures. The Chinese state also responds to this transnational logic brought about by its engagement with especially new migrants who have ties to more than one nation-state. The Chinese overseas are not just passive recipients of a state policy, but actors in their own right who benefit from this cooperation with the Chinese state.

The Chinese model of diaspora management is characterized by the following institutional and ideological features. In the first place, cultivating diasporic financial and knowledge capital has been a national policy since the beginning of the reform and opening-up policy in the late 1970s, and the Chinese leadership from Deng Xiaoping to Xi Jinping has unequivocally articulated and implemented this vision. The attention given to the diasporic Chinese has been further strengthened under Xi Jinping, who has had extensive experience of working with the Chinese overseas. Secondly, there is a sophisticated and integrated set of institutional mechanisms from the central to the local levels, and they have been intimately embedded in China’s bureaucracy and political structure. This institutional structure has been supported and facilitated by other mechanisms, such as consular departments in overseas embassies and a variety of universities and research institutes providing policy consultations and training of *qiaowu* officials pertaining to overseas Chinese policy. These institutions collectively formulate and disseminate a series of discourses pertaining to the important roles of Chinese diaspora.

Thirdly, the state policy towards the Chinese diaspora has been pragmatic and changing in its focus, in tandem with China’s changing priorities in national development. Hence, while ‘attracting trade and luring capital’ (*zhaoshang yinzi*) constituted the focus of overseas Chinese policy in the first two decades after the reform—and which has successfully uplifted China to become the second largest economy in the world—‘attracting talent and luring knowledge’ (*zhaocai yinzi*) has constituted the catchword for the new policy formulation at a time of China rising. The latter focuses on recruiting global talents of Chinese ethnicity, especially those new migrants who were born and grew up in China, and who share cultural and (sometimes) political identities with compatriots in the mainland. This strategy is in line with China’s new national policy of moving away from a low-end production workshop of the world to an innovative country that produces high value-added products. Finally, these mechanisms have the built-in capacity in dealing with tensions arising from nation-state interests that are the foundation of Chinese state policy and the transnational logic that is the defining characteristic of highly skilled Chinese new migrants who are part and parcel of the burgeoning trend of brain circulation.

This article demonstrates that it is imperative to place China in the perspective of transnational governance. In a recent review of changing paradigms of Chinese politics, Gilley examined five paradigms (state-centered, society-centered and state–society approaches, as well as historical and globalized approaches) and concluded that ‘the state-centered paradigm remains the most appropriate one for the study of China’s politics.’<sup>109</sup> While there is no denial that the state remains a central and most fundamental actor in Chinese politics, other conceptual frameworks such as governance can enhance an understanding of a rapidly changing China.<sup>110</sup> Some scholars have discussed new perspectives that reflect China’s recent preferences and interests about global governance, but this new approach ‘remains fundamentally state-centric.’<sup>111</sup> While this case study also demonstrates the critical importance of the state, this state-centrism works closely in tandem with transnational social forces and ethnic networks, which in turn have an impact on the state’s policy preferences and implementation options. Governance in the transnational arena, both as a concept and as a practice, therefore, can and should be brought into a more comprehensive understanding of a changing China/Chinese state that is simultaneously going global and strengthening its domestic foothold.

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<sup>109</sup>Gilley, ‘Paradigms of Chinese politics.’

<sup>110</sup>Tony Saich, *Governance and Politics of China*, 3rd edn (Houndmills and New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011).

<sup>111</sup>Lai-Ha Chan, Pak K. Lee and Gerald Chan, ‘Rethinking global governance: a China model in the making?’, *Contemporary Politics* 14(1), (2008), pp. 3–19; see also Wang and Rosenau, ‘China and global governance.’

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