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Chinese Migration to Russia and Japan after 1978 and the Role of State Policies: A Comparative Study

Nikita Kovrigin, University of Nagoya, Japan

Abstract: *Contemporary Chinese migration to Japan and Russia started almost simultaneously in the 1980s. Despite obvious differences between the two nations, the set of factors that preconditioned the start of migration was very similar. Over the past three decades, the Chinese community in Japan evolved greatly, integrating into the local society, while Chinese migrants in Russia continue to occupy the same niche. This paper explores the role of migration and domestic policies adopted by the two nations in the process of contemporary Chinese community's formation. Japan has clear economic and political goals and it constantly adjusts its policy toward different categories of migrants. Russia, however, demonstrates a contradictory approach to the issue of migration that has created barriers to incorporating the Chinese community and has generally had a negative effect on Chinese community as a whole.*

1. Introduction

Japan and Russia are very distinct countries with very different economic strength. However, recently they have both been facing problems associated with deteriorating demographic situation. Simultaneously, in the 1980s, they joined the "club" of major recipients of Chinese migrants. In the second half of the 19th century, both countries had already experienced mass migration from China and benefited from this in many respects. In the first half of the 20th century, despite favorable economic conditions, an absence of anti-Chinese sentiments, as well as policies comparable to those in North America and Australia, Chinese migration to Russia and Japan practically ceased, failing to establish any well rooted communities. This outcome was a result of Japan and the Soviet Union's overall international and domestic policies that had little to do with migration policies per se.

Nikita Kovrigin, University of Nagoya, Japan

In the 1980s, major global geopolitical shifts and domestic political considerations in Japan, Russia and China created preconditions for the resumption of Chinese migration. The Chinese poured into the sectors of national economies of both countries where they were much needed (unskilled low-wage labor in Japan and retail trade of cheap commodities in Russia), attracting widespread popular and mass media attention. Since the early 21st century, however, with similar preconditions and a continuing demand for Chinese migrants, their number and positions on the social and economic ladder in the both countries have come to differ substantially. In Japan the Chinese have penetrated almost all areas of economy and society, while in Russia, despite its more relaxed visa regime, Chinese continue to occupy the same niche as decades ago. How can this situation be explained? What are the underlying conditions?

The economic and social context in the two countries has been well covered in academic literature. The issue of Chinese migration to Russia, especially its historical and sociological component, is well studied in Russia (Kamenskikh, 2011; Larin, 2009; Datsyshen, 2008; Gelbras, 2004;). There are also some works by Russian and Western researchers published outside Russia (Datsyshen, 2012; Larin, 2012; Saveliev, 2002; Stephan 1994). In Japan, academic interest to various aspects of Chinese migration has, traditionally, been much higher (Nishikawa and Ito, 2002; Tan and Ryu, 2008; Cho, 2003). Western and Japanese academic accounts published in English on the topic are not numerous and mostly represent case studies (Kamachi, 2004; Friman, 2002; Yamawaki 2000, etc.). Chinese student migration to Japan, however, has attracted more academic interest and a few books were published on the topic (Liu-Farrer, 2011, Harrell, 1992; Huang, 1982). Despite the impressive scholarship, there are still relatively few attempts to put Chinese migration to Japan and Russia into a political framework. No comparative studies on the topic have been undertaken either. Based on the existing scholarship of Chinese migration, Russian and Japanese official statistics as well as interviews and survey conducted by the author, this paper is the first modest endeavor to fill this gap by comparing the effect of domestic and migration

polices (one of the key migration factors) on the process of the development of Chinese communities in Russia and Japan after 1978.

The paper consists of four main sections. The first section provides a historical overview of Chinese migration to Japan and Russia emphasizing the role of political factors in this process. The second and the third sections explore the contemporary stage of Chinese migration to Russia and Japan in the context of state policies. The fourth section provides a comparative analysis of migration policies in both countries as they are applied to Chinese migrants.

2. Historical background

From the historical perspective, Chinese migration to Japan and Russia differs in nature but is similar in terms of the influence that political factors have on shaping migration flows. The major factor that created opportunities for mass migration of the Chinese to Russia was the geo-political decision of the Russian Tsarist government to develop the territory of its Far East in the second half of the 19th century. Considerations of domestic and foreign policy created strong demand not only for cheap labor, but for any kind of labor. The population of European Russia was mainly reluctant to relocate to the Far East and the attempt of attracting Chinese workers appeared to be a viable political solution. Chinese migration was a tool for Russia to achieve its geopolitical goals. Russia's advance to the East caused the Qing government to begin its own campaign to populate the vast lands of Manchuria previously closed for settlement by the Han Chinese. The Chinese population of Russia was rapidly rising: 10.6 thousand in 1869, 57.5 thousand in 1897 and 111.5 thousand in 1910 in the Far East alone (Larin, 2009; Censu,s 1897). Domestic and foreign policy considerations not only created preconditions for mass migration of the Chinese to Russia but actively shaped and encouraged it (Larin, 2009: 37; Saveliev, 2002: 41).

Nikita Kovrigin, University of Nagoya, Japan

The initial stage of Chinese migration to Japan was rather different in nature. It was a product of the Western penetration to East Asia. The first Chinese migrants arrived in Japan after 1853 aboard western ships. Unlike Russia, not only was early Chinese migration not encouraged by the Japanese government, it was formally illegal until 1871 (Chu, Liu and Li, 1994: 164). The Chinese arrived in Japan taking advantage of opportunities provided by the 'opening' of the country. In the absence of Japan's own foreign economic ties, foreigners, including Chinese merchants, v capitalized on this situation (Kamachi, 2004: 199). In 1867, some 1700 Chinese resided in Nagasaki, Kobe and Yokohama (Hong, 2006). The Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, however, put an end to the privileged positions of Chinese merchants, who were the major group of Chinese migrants at the time. After the War, Chinese students and laborers replaced merchants as the principal groups. According to different estimates, before 1911, there had been from 7 to 20 thousand Chinese students in Tokyo and 6 thousand Chinese residents in Yokohama alone (Harrell, 1992: 2; Vasishth, 1997: 128).

In general, conditions were favorable for the development and rise of Chinese communities in both Russia and Japan. This is not to say, however, that the authorities and general public were pro-Chinese. Anti-Chinese sentiments had been constantly on the rise in conjunction with the increase of migration flows from China. In the both countries such sentiments culminated in mass slaughtering of the Chinese: in 1900, more than 5,000 Chinese were mercilessly murdered near Blagoveshchensk in Russia (Diatlov, 2006). In Japan, nearly 700 Chinese were killed in 1923 after the Tokyo Earthquake (Niki, 1991: 42). Perception of the Chinese in Japan and Russia was similar on the public level and in mass media. A vivid discussion had taken place among top officials in both countries that resulted in a series of laws designed to curb labor migration from China (Saveliev, 2002: 56; Yamawaki, 2000: 41-42). Anti-Chinese sentiments and anti-Chinese laws, however, did not have serious effect on the number of Chinese migrating, as there was actual demand for Chinese labor before, during and after the Word War I.

Given the economic situation and state migration policies in Japan and Russia in the first half of the 20th century, Chinese communities were supposed to develop in both countries, but political events of global and domestic nature repeatedly interrupted this process. For example, the Xinhai Revolution in China in 1911 stimulated massive outflow of Chinese students from Japan, whose number had been rapidly increasing previously (Harrell, 1992: 112). Despite Japan's aggressive policy towards China in the first half of the 20th century, its internal approach towards the Chinese migrants was never oppressive in nature. On the contrary, the major factor that determined the shrinkage of the Chinese community in Japan was the nationalistic reaction of its members to Japan's policy towards Chinas itself. The Invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and aggression against China in 1937 stimulated massive voluntary outflow of the Chinese back to the Motherland (Friman, 2002: 11).

Political changes in Russia include the October Revolution and the Civil War, imposition of communist ideology that could not tolerate private entrepreneurship and self-governance of any group of people, considerations of national security in the Far East and Stalin's further repressions, all of which lead to complete destruction of the Chinese community, even though there was in fact a strong demand for Chinese labor in the Soviet Far East (Zalesskaya, 2008: 59). The foundation of Manchukuo and the Anti-Japanese war of 1937-45 – the same events that caused the return of tens of thousands of Chinese from Japan – lead to mass deportation, resettlement and even elimination of a considerable number of the Chinese in the Soviet Union. This was a purely ideological campaign not against the Chinese as migrants, but against the Chinese (and many other nationals) deemed *politically unreliable elements*.

The end of the WW II, the split between the Guomindang and Chinese Communists, beginning of the Cold War and the ideological break up between the Soviet Union and China in 1960s. This effectively blocked any population flows from China to Japan and Russia. In the Soviet Union the Chinese migrants ceased to be a "community". It can be even argued

that they had stopped being Chinese and became a constituent part of what was called the Soviet people. Japan's Chinese community did not disappear, but in the absence of continuous ties with China it became oriented inward and its role in the life of Japanese society was hardy visible. After 1978, Chinese migrants of the new wave had to create new structures from the scratch because both in Japan and Russia a receiving base in the form of traditional community that maintained ties with the sending society simply did not exist.

The contemporary migration from China to various world destinations, including Japan and Russia, started in the mid-1980s. It was preceded by a set of important global and domestic political changes that made possible the resumption of migration and created favorable migration conditions in host countries. The pivotal event in this context was the decision of the new Chinese leadership to reform the country and make it a part of the world economy and political landscape.

3. Chinese migrants in Russia

3.1 Sino-Russian Relations and the Chinese Migration

The shifts in China's domestic policy had a positive effect on the normalization of Sino-Soviet relations. In September 1982, the XII Chinese Communist Party Congress endorsed the further development of bilateral cooperation on various levels. The launch of the Soviet Perestroika in 1985 gave further impetus to the extension of bilateral contacts. Eager to improve relations with China, the Soviet government signed a Visa-Free Agreement with China in 1988 (Datsyshen, 2008: 269). It was followed by the conclusion of numerous province-level cooperation agreements that stipulated the import of Chinese labor force. For example, in 1988-89, the administration of the Transbaikal district in the Chita Region alone singed six agreements that stipulated population exchange with the frontier town of Manchuria (Datsyshen, 2008: 270). Thus, the new wave of Chinese migration to the Soviet Union was a consequence of

normalization of Sino-Soviet relations. Intergovernmental agreements at different levels provided the framework for contemporary Chinese migration to the cities of Siberia and the Russian Far East and further to the European part of the country. The year 1989 marked the beginning of massive importation of the Chinese manpower ready to work in Soviet construction and forestry industry, as well as agriculture. In 1990, there were over 15 thousand Chinese workers in Russia, primarily from Heilongjiang province (Datsyshen, 2008: 271). It should be mentioned though, that Soviet workers were also sent to work in China, although in smaller numbers. Stimulation of Chinese migration to the Soviet Union was not a goal, but rather a tool to strengthen bilateral relations.

In 1991, the Soviet Union collapsed, which was accompanied by the crash of the national economy, weakening of the state and border control as well as a severe lack of daily use goods and food on the market. This geopolitical event dramatically shifted the role that the Chinese played in Russia. Under the Visa-Free Agreement, Chinese migrants flooded in and virtually saved the starving population of the Russian Far East bringing in relatively cheap goods in increasing volumes. Visa-free entry and Russia's market demand resulted in the 751, 000 entries to Russia in 1993 (Spravochnik, 1994: 76-77). Ever since, traders comprise the greater segment of contemporary Chinese community in Russia outnumbering other ethnic groups occupied in this sphere. The inflow of Chinese migrants to the Russian Far East in the early 1990s in the wake of the Visa-Free Agreement caught local authorities unaware. The new bilateral agreement on Visa-Free Group Tourist Exchange of 1992 (Sbornik, 1999) made the administrations of Russia's Asiatic regions panic as they were neither unable to control, nor regulate the sudden migration flow. In 1993, visa regulation procedures were introduced with respect to Chinese migrants and a Bilateral Agreement on Visa Requirements was signed (Sbornik, 1999). The enforcement of the new immigration regulations resulted in the dramatic decrease of migration volumes. Only after the economic crisis of 1998 in Russia, did the number of Chinese traders started to rise again.

Not being attempting to utilize the benefits brought by and provide conditions for the most numerous and the most important group of Chinese migrants (traders), the Russian government embarked on attracting another category of migrants – workers – having in mind promotion of closer political ties with China. A few large scale projects were initiated in the highest level of government in Moscow and St. Petersburg. The implementation of these projects was closely associated with the attraction of Chinese construction companies and, as a consequence, importation of Chinese construction workers. One of such large scale projects was the construction of a residential complex: The Baltic Pearl in Russia's northern capital, St. Petersburg. The total cost of construction was estimated at US$ 3 billion in 2006 (SP Reality 2007). In 2004, the Government of St. Petersburg and Shanghai Overseas Joint Investment Company signed the general agreement on the project. However, the principle investment decision was made by President Putin and the then Chairman Hu Jintao. The project was portrayed in Mass Media as a «local Chinatown». This sparked discontent among the public and cased the City Governor Valentina Matveenko to react by making the false promise that no Chinese workers would work at the construction (Gorodovoy 2007). In reality the Chinese migrants were working at the site, but their number was modest and did not exceed 600 people (Rosbalt 2009). Another high profile construction project is currently being implemented in Moscow – the Huamin Park (the Symbol of China) in which China has planned to invest US$ 500 million. The decision on the project was again made at the highest level and mass media have labeled it as a "real Chinatown" (Homeweek 2007). Other examples of successful employment of Chinese migrant workers includes their participation in construction of facilities for the recent 2012 APEC Summit in Vladivostok and even construction of an Orthodox church in center of Khabarovsk.

In 2011, China's largest automotive glass manufacturer, Fuyao Glass Industry Group Co., signed a contract with the Kaluzhskaya Oblast government, according to which an automotive safety glass manufacturing plant would be

constructed in Kaluga some 150 kilometers from Moscow. Fuyao Group planned to invest $200 million into this project (Fuyao 2011). The agreement signing ceremony was attended by the Russia's President at the time, Medvedev and Chairman Hu Jintao during his visit to Russia. In the interview with the author, Chen Chuqing, Director General of Fuyao Russia, said that Chinese workers and engineers work at the construction site was necessary as supervision and special knowledge was required at this stage. The plant is scheduled to commence operations in the end of 2013 and Chinese personnel are also supposed to be employed. However, their primary task would be the training of Russian staff. It is economically more feasible to hire local workers and specialist rather than bringing them from China (Interview 2013). The above examples demonstrate that the migration of workers from China to Russia is regulated by contracts and bilateral agreements. In this respect, it cannot seriously contribute to the formation of Chinese community in Russia as most workers leave upon completion of a project. Unlike traders, the Chinese workers are not so enthusiastic about coming to Russia, nor Russia provides favorable conditions, even though Chinese provincial administrations stimulate the Russians for wider use of Chinese labor force.

Chinese students plays an extremely important role in Chinese migration patterns worldwide China is a world leader in terms of the number of students studying abroad with 339.7 thousand in 2011 alone (BOSSA). In Japan they have pioneered the migration process. However, in Russia the number of Chinese students is rather small. Russia ranks only 11th among the destinations for student migration (Larin, 2009: 223). Despite China's desire to send more students to Russia (Renmin Ribao), the Russian government does not seem to be interested in increasing the number of Chinese in its colleges. In addition, Chinese youngsters themselves do not see Russian institutions of higher learning (with a few exceptions) as a source of up-to-date knowledge and Russian university degrees as a means to increase their social status back at home. The rise of anti-foreign violence and personal safety concerns are some of the

other reasons that Chinese students do not to choose Russia as their destination for higher learning.

3.2 Russia's Domestic Policy and Chinese Migration

Russia's policy toward Chinese migrants can hardly be described as consistent or thoughtful, while its domestic and internal migration policy sometimes had truly devastating effects on Chinese migration.

Being a society in transition with a developing economy, Russia is facing multiple social problems such as intolerance and mass xenophobia mostly directed against migrants from the former Soviet republics, especially from the Central Asia and Caucasus. Trying to ease social tension caused by the growing presence of non-Russian migrants from former Soviet republics and their business practices, in November 2006, the Russian Government introduced Regulation No. 683 (Rossiiskaya Gazeta 2007) that implied a zero share of foreign nationals in retail market trade (namely, market places and pavilions). The new regulation was not anti-Chinese per se and, possibly, the Russian government had not even considered Chinese traders when drafting it. However, the effect of this Regulation was disastrous – more than half of Chinese entrepreneurs were forced to return to China. The damage inflicted on their business was enormous, as the Chinese had no choice but to rapidly sell out their goods at extremely low prices. Under such circumstances the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs insisted on negotiating the issue with its Russian counterpart and the Federal Migration Service (Larin, 2009: 204). The consequence of introducing the Regulation was dramatic not only for the Chinese but also for local populations of Far Eastern cities, as Chinese migrants were their primary source of desperately needed cheap goods and food. Due to the outflow of Chinese traders, the Central Market of Khabarovsk, for instance, had lost 85% of its traders within just a few days (Larin, 2009: 205). The population of the Primorsky Krai petitioned the President to allow Chinese trade in the region. Local administrations found themselves up against a wall. On the one hand, they had to enforce the law; on the other hand, they had to meet

the real demands of local populations as in the absence of the Chinese traders caused prices to increase by 30%, according to Viacheslav Postavin, the Deputy Director of the Federal Migration Service of Russia (FMS 2007). The Regulation's incongruence with the real situation in the country made both the provincial authorities and the remaining Chinese traders look for a side door. Local governments were either turning a blind eye on the economic activity of the Chinese, helping them by changing the category of their business, or by taking bribes. The Chinese response was to employ Russian nationals to perform actual retailing operations. In reality, the formal restriction of trade at market places was never strictly observed, especially in the Far East. However, the effect was that the majority of Chinese traders suddenly became illegal migrants as their activities contradicted the new law.

Yet another blow toward Chinese migrants was made when the Moscow City Government decided to close down the popular Tcherkizovsky Market in 2009. The market was the largest consumer goods marketplace in Russia and the largest hub from which goods took their journey to dozens of cities and towns in the European part of Russia. According to Chinese data, the businesses of 60 thousand Chinese traders were affected in Russia while several thousand factories in China also took losses (Larin, 2009: 209). As in the case of the 2003 Regulation, damage to the Chinese interests was a by-product of domestic political considerations underlying the closing down of the Tcherkizovsky Market, which had become "a state within the state" and could not be tolerated any more by the Government. It is unlikely that the interests of Chinese or other traders were ever considered. On the final account, it was a number of Sino-Russian bilateral trade organizations, not the government that took measures to provide Chinese traders with new retail premises.

Certainly, commercial opportunities are not the only draw for Chinese migrants in Russia. The disintegration of the Soviet Union led to the meltdown of the agricultural sector, which created opportunities for foreign manual labor. In the East and Siberia that niche has been to a large extent

occupied by the Chinese. Roughly 25% of labor migrants, regulated by a foreign labor quota system, are engaged in agriculture, while another 20% work in the forestry industry (Larin, 2012: 59). Moreover, in some rural areas the Chinese farmers have even started to hire local citizens to work at their farms. The agricultural sector has also witnessed the ever-increasing interconnection between Chinese migrants and Chinese private capital. At this level anti-Chinese sentiments are especially visible, as they are based not only on the existing prejudices toward Chinese migrants and fear of competition, but also on Chinese illegal and semi-legal business practices. Given the vast lands, labor shortage, cheap product demands, lack of governmental control and widespread corruption, Chinese presence in Russia's agricultural sector is likely to become more active, hopefully contributing to the development of the Chinese community in Russia.

The end of the Cold War, Russia's rapprochement with the West in the 1990s and the easing of border-crossing procedures had made Russia attractive for Chinese transit migrants whose final goal was to find employment or establish businesses in EU countries. This migration pattern is of special importance as it involves human smuggling organized by Chinese and Russian traffickers. Some estimates suggest the number of such transit migrants via Russia can be as high as 100 thousand per year (Alexandrov, 2006). It is obvious that certain Chinese community structures and organizations based in Russia facilitate and serve this illegal flow and transit. This type of migration negatively affects Russia-EU relations. However, it facilitates further improvement of Sino-Russian ties in a certain way, as Chinese and Russian law enforcement agencies are forced to closely cooperate to fight human smuggling and illegal migration.

4. Chinese Migration to Japan.

4.1 Japan's foreign student policy as an important factor of Chinese migration.

Resumption of Chinese migration to Japan was not a direct result of improvement of bilateral relations, even though their normalization in 1972 did spark China's interest in Japan. Rather it was a consequence of overlapping of domestic policies and foreign policy considerations. Reaching the ultimate goal of reforming China was impossible without employing qualified specialists in a variety of fields. China's system of vocational and higher education was practically devastated during the decade of the Cultural Revolution and its aftermath (1966-76). Furthermore, China critically lacked qualified specialists. The only solution to this crisis was sending students abroad. In 1978, following Deng Xiaoping's statements, the Ministry of Education proclaimed the promotion of the study abroad policy. Due to spoiled relations with the USSR, the neighboring and highly developed Japan seemed to be the most obvious choice. In 1979, China and Japan agreed on launching an educational exchange program and the first 140 students arrived in Japan the same year (Wang, 2006). In 1981, the State Council adopted the Temporary Decisions about Self-Financed Education Abroad – it was the first document allowing Chinese students to go for studies without state support (Xiang Biao, 2006: 360).

Meanwhile, a favorable political environment began to form in Japan. Just like China, but having much more means to achieve it, Japan entered the 1980s with a goal to become an influential political player (if not a superpower). In order to succeed, Japan had to become much more internationally-oriented. Its leadership was very disappointed by the fact that at the end of 1982, there were less than 10 thousand foreign students in Japan. One of the ways Japan planned to achieve greater internationalization of the country was the Prime Minister Nakasone's plan to accept 100 thousand foreign students by the early 21 century (Japan Times 2010). Overlap of political considerations of both Japan and China opened the road to migration of Chinese students to Japan – the migration that went far beyond its

proclaimed academic purpose. Neither the first Chinese students, nor the Japanese government could have imagined that this would establish the base for the formation of what is now the largest foreign community in Japan. In 2011 there were 675 thousand of legal Chinese migrants in this country (JIA 2011).

The initial pattern of Chinese student migration suggests that despite Beijing's political desire to educate new elite, a great number of migrants went to Japan just to find employment. To create favorable conditions for foreign students, the Japanese government simplified the application procedures for student visas, especially for *shugakusei,* or students of language or vocational schools of pre-college level. Employment regulations for this category of migrants were amended to allow part-time employment up to 20 hours a week. The number of language schools skyrocketed from 40 schools in 1984 to 308 in 1988 (Herbert, 1996: 108). The number of Chinese *shugakusei* had risen proportionally: in 1983 there were 160 pre-college students, in 1990 there were 24 256 Chinese pre-college students composing 68% of all foreign language students in the country (Hatsuse, 2005: 161; Cho, 2003: 125). To be fair, the majority of "language schools" provided poor language education, if any at all. Those institutions rather served either as employment agencies or just hired Chinese people to work for the owners of such schools that in reality happened to be bars, restaurants and so on. Faked language schools were selling invitations, certificates and letters of financial and legal sponsorship. In this way, Japan received a considerable number of unskilled laborers.

The result of this inflow of 'non-academic' student migrants was that many of them overstayed their visas and even started to bring in their relatives and friends who either found employment in small Japanese firms or jobs in businesses run by Chinese newcomers. The growing demand of the Japanese economy for labor resources facilitated the increase in the number of shugakusei. While the inflow of new labor migrants met the nation's interests its illegal nature became obvious and demanded political reaction to this controversy on the part of Japanese authorities.

In November 1988, the Japanese government issued special Notice introducing new requirements for visa application and documents to be presented by language schools. In 1989, the government began cracking down on the schools for admitting students over their real capacities. Their number fell from 309 to 253 (Herbert, 1996: 108). The effect of the new regulations was a dramatic decrease of the number of new shugakusei to slightly over 9 thousand in 1989 (Liu-Farrer, 2011: 28). The sudden reduction of visas issued for the Chinese students even sparked demonstrations in front of the Japanese Consulate in Shanghai (Liu-Farrer, 2011: 29). However, legal limitations only reduced but did not restrict the inflow of Chinese pre-college students to Japan. This kind of migration was never interrupted and all the mechanisms and connections remained intact. Failing to reach the goal of accepting 100,000 foreign students by the turn of the century, the Japanese government eased the visa application procedures once again. This stimulated the second wave of student migration from China. In 2004, Japan announced the Nakasone's task completed and the number of visas issued to Chinese decreased again. However, since 2005 the inflow of Chinese shugakusei has been on the rise again reaching 25,143 in 2008 and 32,408 in 2010 (Immigration Bureau 2009, 2011).

The first student pathfinders from China established network mechanisms that facilitated the further inflow of newcomers. Over time, the structural composition of Chinese student migration has changed and an increasing number of Chinese students are now coming to Japan to learn rather than to work illegally in the service industry. Nonetheless, as Liu-Farrer puts it, "low-wage labor is still an important outcome of student migration from China to Japan in the late 2000s" (Liu-Farrer, 2011: 144).

Nikita Kovrigin, University of Nagoya, Japan

In January 2008, Japan took another step to further facilitate the inflow of foreign students. The Prime Minister at the time, Fukuda Yasuo announced implementation of a 'Plan for 300,000 Exchange Students' as part of Japan's 'Global Strategy' that would make it more open to the world. Fukuda stated that Japan "will increase the number of highly capable foreign nationals at graduate schools and companies in Japan, through collaboration among industry, academia and the government" (Fukuda Speech 2008). This plan makes Chinese student migration one of the core elements of a nation-wide policy that implies involvement of governmental structures, private companies, and institutions of higher learning. Despite the fact that the Chinese already form the majority of foreign students in Japan, their share is likely only to rise. This trend is not so important by itself, rather it must be viewed in conjunction with the transformation the Chinese community has been undergoing during the last 10-15 years. Many former Chinese students who came to Japan in the 1980s and early 1990s have later established themselves as successful businessmen running their own companies. In 2006, more than 20,000 Chinese in Japan were engaged in international business (Chen, 2008: 46). The trends suggest that now these numbers are much higher. Chinese migrants are increasingly educated: there are 2,507 Chinese teachers working in Japanese colleges, composing one third of all overseas teachers in Japan. More than 1,000 of them received their Ph.D. degrees and are teaching in universities all over the host country (Chen, 2008: 46, Immigration Bureau 2011). Japanese popular fiction authors of Chinese origin have even appeared. Moreover, the Japan-educated Chinese are employed by Japanese companies at consultant positions; they are a competitive advantage in doing business with China using their knowledge of both Chinese and Japanese business practices, specifics and connections and being bilingual. A large number of students who were engaged in doing 3K jobs (kitanai, kiken, kitsui - dirty,

dangerous and difficult) have now joined Japanese middle class. Newcomers blend into the Japanese society using their education and college ties, as well as connections among the existing Chinese community. Obviously, not only does the Japanese economy and society greatly benefit from the presence of Chinese migrants, but Japan directs its policies to create better opportunities for the migrants and optimize the situation for both sides.

4.2 Role of Japan's foreign labor policy in shaping Chinese Migration

An important event that greatly affected the Chinese migration to Japan was the introduction of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act in 1990. It was a reaction to the increasing number of illegal migrants and rising popular concern. The new law restricted the use of unskilled foreign labor and stipulated severe sanctions against its violators, including visa overstayers (Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act 1990). However, it also stipulated a substitution for this kind of labor by providing preferences to Nikkeijin – Latin Americans of Japanese descent. Even before the Act came into effect, tens of thousands of workers from South Asia left Japan in fear of being arrested. Between 1989 and 1992, Japan abolished visa exemptions for migrants from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Iran – Japan's major source of unskilled labor that time. The mass exodus of foreign workers in combination with Japan's rising demand for cheap unskilled labor created a strong pull factor for unskilled Chinese migrants including those who arrived under shugakusei visa. Due to their limited number, Nikkeijin and illegal workers could not fully meet the demands of small and medium sized companies for cheap labor. A 'side door' was required as a solution to the awkward situation that the Japan legislators put themselves in. This side door was found in the form of the Industrial Training Program for Foreign Nationals. The program was officially launched in 1981 but no political steps were taken to develop it into a large scale project at that time. From 1987, facing a growing shortage of labor, influential business organizations such as Japanese Committee for Economic

Development ('Keizai Doyukai'), Keidanren and the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry ('Nihon Shokokaigisho') requested that the Japanese government allow acceptance of foreigners as trainees (Weiner, 2003: 219). In 1990, the Program was revitalized and joined by Japanese major ministries, inter-departmental and other organizations. Ministerial and provincial bodies, as well as organizations in China also became active participants of the Program. The official purpose of the Trainee Program was to assist unskilled foreign workers to master their professions. However, the real goal of creating the trainee system was utterly clear: supply Japan's labor market with unskilled foreign labor, but keep the flow of labor migrants under control and prevent the workers from staying in Japan for too long (initially the term of training did not exceed two years, but in 2003 trainees or *kenshusei* had been allowed to stay in the country for a maximum of five years) so as to prevent potential problems, which foreign migrants had been known to create in the West. Obviously, the change in Japan's migration policy happened under the pressure of business circles and was a reaction to the internal situation in the country.

Ironically, the 1990 Immigration Act, instead of curbing the inflow of unskilled foreign labor to Japan, only slightly reorganized its composition and created preconditions for even greater influx of unskilled workers meeting the needs of the national economy. The number of trainees arriving from China had been growing at a break-neck speed since the early 1990s: 4,831 in 1990 and 10,187 in 1991 – in comparison to 3,496 in 1989 (JIA). In 1997–1999 Japan accepted an average of 20,000 Chinese trainees every year. In 2009, 53,876 Chinese trainees (66% of all foreign migrants in this category) entered Japan (Basic Plan 2010: 9). Between 1992 and 2005, only the leading organization involved in this project – JITCO – brought in as much as 287,000 Chinese workers (JITCO 2005). In 1993, the Technical Internship Program was introduced facilitating further migration of Chinese workers and extending their period of stay, as trainees could now be transferred to the Interns category. In July 2009, the Immigration law was amended to include the new residence status of `Technical

Intern` (JITCO 2010: 1). For those who did not happen to be a Nikkeijin or foreigner of Japanese descent, participation in the Trainee and Technical Internship programs became the only way to be legally employed in Japan as an unskilled worker. Even though the labor conditions for foreign trainees are often criticized in mass media (Japan Times, Mar 16, 2013) and academic circles (Herbert, 1996: 108), Japanese legislature and bureaucracy are constantly working on the improvement of this program, making it more suitable for both the recipients of this labor force and foreign trainees.

5. Differences between Russia's and Japan's State Policies as a Major Factor of the Chinese Community Transformation

In the 1980s, both Japan and the former USSR entered the 'new Chinese migration age' without having strong Chinese communities such as those of the United States and many other major migration destinations. Even though there was a small Chinese community in Japan, it had almost no ties with Mainland China. Chinese migration to Japan and the Soviet Union began almost simultaneously in 1980s and was preconditioned by the foreign policies of both countries: improvement of Russia's political relations with China and Japan's desire to improve its international status. In order to reach these goals, Japan and the Soviet Union had adjusted there immigration policies. In 1988, USSR signed the Visa-Free Agreement with China and multiple provincial-level bilateral agreements were also signed. Even earlier, in 1984, Japan, following the Nakasone's '100,000 Foreign Students Plan', simplified application procedures for student visas. These political shifts created favorable, even relaxed, legislative framework for the mass inflow of Chinese migrants to Japan and the USSR (and recently to Russia).

Meanwhile, the collapsing economy of Russia and the rising economy of Japan generated demand for different categories of foreign migrants. As China was a natural migration source for both nations due to geographical proximity and availability of human resources a number of

obvious reasons, Chinese rushed to provide supply for this demand. Thus, a combination of political and economic factors opened doors for the two major categories of migrants – petty traders in Russia and pre-college students (many of whom were unskilled laborers), in Japan. Basically, Chinese migrants had very similar starting conditions in these two countries. 30 years later however, the picture looks quite different.

Despite having matured and expanding geographically, the Chinese community in Russia has not demonstrated any serious qualitative change. Just like a quarter century ago, their primary occupation is supplying inexpensive Chinese goods to the Russian market. Unlike Japan, the Chinese do not penetrate the structures of Russia's national economy. Even though, similar to Japan, there is a demand for qualified specialists in Russia (at least in the Russian Far East due to its underpopulation). Over the same period of time, in Japan, social and economic positions of the Chinese have improved dramatically; they have now been represented in various sectors of the national economy at various levels. Why have Japan and Russia come to such diverse outcomes?

Maybe the problem is in the fundamental differences between Russia and Japan's economies. Maybe the Chinese have more opportunities in Japan since it is more economically advanced. But, developing economies provide more opportunities that developed ones. For instance, there are over 1 million Chinese migrants in Myanmar – one of the poorest nations in Southeast Asia (Zhuang and Wang, 2010: 189). In 2011, the total Russia-China trade turnover was $60 billion and it reached $88.16 billion in 2012. Out of this volume, the share of Heilongjiang province alone was as high as 18 billion dollars in 2011 (ChinaPRO 2013). Even though it is hard to distinguish the share of 'people's trade' in this volume, it is supposed to be quite considerable, while traders are the largest category of Chinese migrants in Russia. Thus, the state of Russia's economy cannot be a barrier for development of the Chinese community. Could the social context be the major problem? Indeed, xenophobic sentiments have been on the rise in Russia for more than a

decade (FOM 2005; Guriev, 2013). There is public concern over China's alleged 'occupation' or 'soft absorption' of Russia's Far East fuelled by mass media and a part of officialdom in the Far East. However, according to population polls, over 68% of Russians demonstrate tolerance towards Chinese migrants (Larin, 2009: 324). At the same time, there is a rising number of Japanese people who are opposed to the very idea of accepting foreign labor (Japan Labor Review 2002: 12-13). Again, there are no Russian politicians similar to the former Tokyo Governor Ishihara Shintaro known for his negative statements on Chinese migrants. Moreover, there are no serious bilateral problems between Russia and China that could have affected the local population's attitude toward Chinese migrants. In both Japan and Russia anti-Chinese sentiments are quite visible, but not so strong as to be an obstacle for the development of communities.

If social and economic contexts do not appear to demonstrate fundamental differences, then we should look closer at the political context. In the end of the 1980s and early 1990s, both nations faced an unexpected mass inflow of Chinese migrants. The number of the Chinese migrants in Japan was smaller than that in Russia. However, the effect on the state and society was similar given the *monoethnic* consciousness of the Japanese people and their much smaller experience of dealing with foreigners. The influx of petty traders and shyugakusei (pre-college students/unskilled laborers) met the demands of the two economies; however, it was clear that the governments had to adopt measure to put it under control.

The Russian solution to resolve the problem of the inflow of migrants, who were of vital importance to the Far Easter economies, was cancelling the Visa-Free Agreement and introducing strict visa regulations. This substantially reduced the number of Chinese in Russia for at least the next five years The Russian government did very little to structure and redirect this inflow for the benefits of the national and regional economies, leaving local administrations to deal with economic and social problems. It must also be noted that the first migration wave to Russia was primarily composed of legal migrants.

Nikita Kovrigin, University of Nagoya, Japan

In the end of the 1980s, Japan had to solve a more serious problem of illegal migrants. At the same time, the Japanese government and economic circles realized that the inflow of unskilled laborers migrants should have been preserved one way or another. The set of measures taken by the government seems to be consistent and quite logical. First of all, the uncontrolled inflow of unskilled laborers under disguise of pre-college students had been seriously limited by cracking down on faked language schools in 1989. In 1990, the new Immigration law was enacted together with the revitalization of the Industrial Training Program for Foreign Nationals. Even though the problem of illegal migrants was not completely resolved, the inflow of much needed unskilled migrants was redirected to serve the particular interests of Japanese society. Not only did the Japanese policymakers create conditions for migration of Chinese unskilled workers, they constantly improved them ensuring better social protection (Basic Plan 2010: 27). Japanese ministries, lawmakers, governmental organizations and NGOs tend to cooperate with respect to fine tuning relative legislation.

Russian migration and domestic policy demonstrate completely different characteristics from those of Japan. The federal policy failed to create a framework for channeling Chinese migration to the benefit of the local society. Inconsistent and thoughtless steps to restrict the actual sales operations by foreign nationals at marketplaces in 2006 and closing down the Tcherkizovsky market in Moscow in 2009 were made without any consideration to migrants' interests. Moreover, these steps had a negative impact on the poorer segment of Russian society, especially in the Russian Far East. Such policy or, better said, a lack of any well considered policy has strengthened Chinese migrants' distrust to Russia, resulting in migrants relying on underground mechanisms which thereby prevented their integration into the host society.

Japan actively cooperates with China in accepting trainees. This program has been joined by many governmental, ministerial and provincial organizations in

China, which reflects China's labor-exporting interests. Migrants from China play an important role supplying entire industries in Japan. Beijing has also repeatedly pushed Russia to accept more Chinese workers, but the Russian government takes such initiatives reluctantly. Meanwhile, Russia's Far East desperately requires manpower under deteriorating demographic conditions. In 1991- 2008, the population size of the Russian Far East saw a 19.8% decrease (compared to 4.5% Russia's total) (FSSS). Successfully implemented projects – the Baltic Pearl, Huamin Park, Fuqing Plant, APEC construction projects – suggest that importing Chinese contract laborers is a very promising area of bilateral cooperation. Generally, the Chinese can hardly compete with unskilled labor migrants from the CIS states. Indeed, Russia possesses of vast armies of unskilled laborers from Uzbekistan – 2.3 million, Ukraine - 1.4 million and Tadzhikistan - 1.1 million already residing in the Russian Federation (FMS 2012). However, in the Far East, the share of Chinese laborers is much higher than those of Central Asia and Ukraine (Motritch, 2010: 85). Chinese contract laborers in Russia do not create the problem the unskilled laborers pose in Japan – the majority leaves upon completion of their contracts.

Chinese students are a major and the most important category in terms of migrants in Japan – 134 thousand in 2011 (JIA 2011: 102). Chinese student migration insures the inflow of qualified and skilled professionals into national economy and the system of education (Basic Plan 2010: 26). The Japanese government actively supports the inflow of Chinese students to the country. Such support is explained not only by the desire to be the world leader in the number of foreign students, but also by a demographic factor – the lack of its own prospective students. Provisions have also been made in legislation to assist Chinese alumni to find jobs in Japanese companies, facilitating the incorporation of the Chinese into the host society. Although this process is going slow – only 10% of Japanese companies hire foreign alumni of national universities (Masato, JILPT Survey 2010: 86), from a historical perspective there has been huge progress over the past 10-15 years. Surveys and interviews conducted by the author clearly demonstrate that the

majority of Chinese students have plans to find employment in Japan, at least for a few years, rather than return home immediately upon graduation. Out of 32 Chinese students (and recent graduates) in the age between 23 and 30 interviewed during February-May 2013 in Tokyo, Nagoya and Fukuoka, 26 either had plans/thinking about finding employment in Japan or had already been employed. Interestingly, only 4 of them had employment plans before coming to Japan. The rest either did not initially plan to work in Japan or did not think about it. Even though they may have different motivations for getting full-time job in Japan, it is clear that employment opportunities created made the majority of respondents change or adjust their initial plans. Even the recent escalation of the Sino-Japanese territorial dispute had no significant effect on the future plans of Chinese students. Only 3 respondents replied that they would leave Japan upon graduation because of the political nature of the conflict and another 2 argued that the conflict affected Sino-Japanese business relation and it has become difficult to find job in Japanese companies doing business with China. However, as has been mentioned earlier, many former students establish their own business after graduation and working for Japanese companies.

Russia does not demonstrate any clear policy to attract Chinese students. As Alexander Larin, one of Russia's leading specialists on Chinese migration puts it: "The impression is that China is more interested in educational cooperation with Russia… than Russia itself" (Larin, 2009: 251). Don't the Russian companies with commercial ties to China need educated Chinese professionals to help them promote their business interests in China? Surveys conducted among Chinese students reveal the number of students who would like to connect their future professional or business life with Russia is increasing (Gelbras, 2004; Larin, 2009). However, Russia does not attempt to create conditions for incorporating this category of migrants. Working students do not integrate into the national economy or joint Russian businesses either – their primary employers are Chinese migrants. Russia's restrictive legislature creates serious obstacles for Russian companies to hire even skilled professionals, not to mention unskilled migrants. Russia has

a very strict foreign labor quota system and, more importantly, extremely complicated procedures for acquiring permissions to hire foreign employees.

Incorporation of foreign migrants into the Japanese society is facilitated by the efforts of local governments that create the framework for migrants to participate in the life of local societies, by exercising the 'foreign nationals, local citizens' approach. Numerous organizations and centers have been established throughout the country to assist foreign migrants in a wide range of issues (See: Nagy, 2012; Shipper, 2008). Local governments as well as many politicians and Diet members are pushing for the adoption of a law that would grant local voting rights for foreigners (Chung, 2010: 111). Observations suggest that in Russia foreign migrants are, probably, the most abused group and with the fewest rights of any group within the population. Moreover, the abuse often comes from the state and law enforcement agencies. Local administration in Far Eastern regions realizing the role played by the Chinese in regional economies conduct more reasonable policy towards them. However, they are more concerned with 'cleaning up the mess' created by federal policies and their assistance to Chinese migrants often bears unofficial character.

Probably, Russia's only successful policy towards the Chinese is the attraction of tourists from China. The year of 2012 was proclaimed the Year of Russian Tourism in China and 2013 is the Year of Chinese Tourism in Russia. In 2012, 343 thousand Chinese tourist visited Russia, compared to 234 thousand in 2011 (Rosstourism 2013). According to a Federal Tourism Agency official, Russia has ambitions plans to become Europe's leading destination for Chinese tourists (DV-ROSS). Chinese tourism in Japan is of equal importance for Japan. In 2011, over 1 million temporary visitors from China entered Japan (JNTO 2011). However, this type of migration is seriously affected by fluctuations of Sino-Japanese political relations. In October 2011, 109.1 thousand Chinese tourists visited Japan, however in October 2012 this number fell down to 69.3 thousands following the aggravation of the territorial dispute concerning the Senkaku/Diaoyu Islands and has remained low ever since

(JNTO 2012-13). In the interview conducted by the author, a Suifenhe City Administration official (Liaoning Province) explained that a charter air connection between Shenyang and Fukuoka had been cancelled to the dramatic drop in the number of tourist going to Japan. Another interviewee who is working for a Japanese HR company engaged in business with China suggested that "some Chinese travel agencies temporarily stopped sending tourists to Japan out of protest".

6. Conclusion

When Chinese international migration resumed in the mid-1980s, both Japan and Russia had very similar starting positions in terms of accepting Chinese migrants and existing migration conditions. It can be argued that the initial legislative and psychological conditions in the Soviet Union and early Russia were better than those in Japan. Also, neither country had a well-rooted Chinese community that could serve as a receiving base for new migrants. The Chinese had to create and develop their communities from scratch. By attracting Chinese migrants, Japan and Russia were motivated by foreign policy considerations that were also accompanied by economic demands. Both nations succeeded in reaching their initial goals. Japan received the desired number of foreign students, most of whom were Chinese. Russia improved its relations with China and had its market saturated with cheap goods and food, which was in high demand by its Far Eastern population. However, the by-product of these policies was an uncontrollable influx of labor migrants. When Chinese migration started to pose a problem, the two countries had demonstrated different approaches towards this issue. At the first glance, both Japan and Russia succeeded in the partial resolution of this problem. However, although Russia managed to put under control migration flows from China, it failed to put under control the Chinese migration itself. Due to absence of clear and consecutive migration policy, the Chinese community in Russia developed on its own with a large part of migrants' activities going on in the dark. Japan, instead of recklessly curbing Chinese migration, began creating control

mechanism and conditions for those categories of migrants it required the most. In modern days, Chinese migrants serve Japan's national interest in many areas. Russia also benefits from the presence of the Chinese, however, the major benefactor in the Russia relationship is China, as it is the recipient of large amounts of money and natural resources.

Japan and Russia face severe unskilled and even skilled labor shortages in many industries. Japan established the Foreign Trainee program supplying such demand, and is constantly improving it. On the other hand, Russia's complicated legislature and bureaucratized system prevents more active employment of Chinese laborers. Even Russia's top governmental initiatives have little success causing popular anxiety and fear of the "yellow peril" or Chinese prejudice even in the regions with low Chinese presence. Russia's official policy towards Chinese migrants mostly serves its own foreign policy interest and has limited effect of the development of the Chinese migration itself.

Despite often being criticized, Japan's migration policy and conditions for foreign migrants in Japan have demonstrated tremendous improvements over the past decades. Japan has been visibly internationalizing and is on its way to turning into a multiethnic nation. Russia has always been a multiethnic nation, however, its domestic and migration policy as well as its treatment of migrants effectively prevents their integration into the local society. Moreover, some of its thoughtless political actions make Chinese and other migrants turn away from the mainstream society and rely on shadow or community structures. It is happening in sectors where the Chinese are presented the most – cheap manufactured goods trade. This is a predominantly Chinese economic niche where they cannot by replaced by migrants form CIS. Being visibly more relaxed, Russia's migration policy has not created conditions for improvement of social positions of Chinese migrants mostly due to the lack of concrete political goals. Meanwhile, formally stricter Japanese policy has proven to be more flexible. Controlling does not necessarily mean restricting.

The impression is that the Chinese migration to Japan has carefully been guided by Japanese policy, sometimes unintentionally. The Chinese community in Japan has greatly transformed over the past decades towards greater diversity and has undergone qualitative change. Russia's Chinese community has also matured but it has not changed substantially in terms of structure or social organization. Chinese migrants in Japan can be characterized as a new 'model minority' for the lack of better term, yet in Russia they still perform a function of "middlemen minority".

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