

Three cases in China
on
Hakka identity
and
self-perception

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Summary

Study of Hakka culture has been an academic field for only a century. Compare with many other studies on ethnic groups in China, Hakka study and research is still in her early childhood. This despite Hakka is one of the longest existing groups of people in China. Uncertainty within the ethnicity and origin of Hakka people are among the topics that will be discussed in the following chapters. This thesis intends to give an introduction in the nature and origin of Hakka identity and to figure out whether it can be concluded that Hakka identity is fluid and depending on situations and surroundings. In that case, when do the Hakka people consider themselves as Han Chinese and when do they consider themselves as Hakka? And what are the reasons for this fluidness?

Three cases in China serve as the foundation for this text. By exploring three different areas where Hakka people are settled, I hope this text can shed a light on the reasons and nature of changes in identity for Hakka people and their ethnic consciousness as well as the diversities and sameness within Hakka people in various settings and environments

Conclusions that are given here indicate that Hakka people in different regions do varies in large degree when it comes to consciousness of their ethnicity and background. Assimilation to local culture and lack of which are some of the main reasons to these variations. Despite Hakka people are possessing multiple identities and, even if the nature of their identity does fluid depending on situations and circumstances, they seemingly do not have any dilemmas being both Han Chinese and Hakka.

Declaration

I hereby declare that all the materials in this thesis are entirely my own work except of where acknowledgments are made. Besides, its content has to my knowledge never been published or submitted to any universities or publications.

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This paper would not be a reality without the helps and assistants from many people. I owe them my most sincere gratefulness.

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Preface

I started to work with this thesis in 2009, and conducted my field work between August 2009 and November the same year. When I first started, I had nearly no prior knowledge to Hakka people and their historical background. Hakka was to me not much more but a name of a group of people. Two years afterwards, after spending times in three different Hakka communities, I realize it is so much more. In the following pages I am going to describe some of the experiences I had during the times I spent in the field. In addition to this, I aim to illuminate some problematic issues within this subject matter that I found on the roads, as well as the “problems” that never showed up.

A couple of terms and names may need to be clarified in order to understand this thesis. Following is a short list of a few of the terms I use frequently in this paper:

Bendi – I use the term “Bendi” in this paper, although some other version of the same word has been used in other works. The most common one is the Wade Giles version “Punti”. They all refer to the same word, 本地. In Guangdong areas, “Bendi people” refers mainly to Cantonese. But long-settled Hakkas in Jiangxi and Fujian provinces may also call themselves Bendi people.¹ In this paper however, this term replies mainly to the Cantonese living in Guangdong province and Hong Kong.

Chaoshan ren– The term “Chaoshan ren” 潮汕人 refers to the group of people coming from Chaoshan region in eastern Guangdong. The Chaoshan name itself has its origin in the region centers around Chaozhou and Shantou.

¹ Mary Erbaugh, ‘Secret History of the Hakkas’ (1992) p. 764

Hakka- The word Hakka is probably the Cantonese pronunciation of the word 客家, meaning “guest family”. This term is eventually accepted by this group of people who today call themselves the Hakka people.

Hakkaology – Study and research of Hakka culture and identity.

Han (Chinese) - The majority of people living in China are Han Chinese. According to the last National Population Census taken in November 2010², 91.51 % of China’s population was of Han nationality. In this text I will use both “Han” and “Han Chinese”

² See ‘Press Release on Major Figures of the 2010 National Population Census’ from “National Bureau of Statistics of China” http://www.stats.gov.cn/english/newsandcomingevents/t20110428_402722237.htm

Chapter One: The history of Hakka and its place of origin

A highly disputed and controversial topic among the Hakka scholars even today is the origin of their ancestors. Former Hakka historians, such as the respected Luo Xianglin³, had strongly advocated that the main body of the Hakka people origin from what we now know as the northern China. This view is shared by many other Hakka researchers, such as Cohen (1968), Constable (1994), Hsieh (1991), S.T. Leong (1985), Lo Wan (1965), Moser (1985), Jerry Norman (1988), Ramsey (1987)⁴. They do not entirely agree on the dates when these migrations of Hakka people from the north took place, and how many times they wandered southward, but they all agree that the current Hakka people are descendants from these people. Several Hakka scholars have recently made studies and published articles that defy this assumption.⁵ This new theory is controversial. The reason for this lies on the widespread belief that the ancestors of today's Hakka came from the north and emigrated to the south from around the fourth century⁶, and as we will discuss later on in this text, this belief may pay an important role in the identification of Hakka.

Even if the origin is still a matter of question, what may seem to be obvious is an awareness (historical imagination)⁷ of common history that serves as the factor to identify and unify the Hakka people together. As I have been to three different places where Hakka people are settled to conduct my field work, I do get the impression that this belief is common and believed by most of the Hakka people who are interested in their own roots and background.

³ Luo Xianglin was one of the first Hakka historians and regarded as the person who collected the history of Hakka as we know it. For further info please see Hakka Web (Ke Jia Wang) www.hakkaw.com

⁴ This list can be found in Nicole Constable, *Guest People* (1996) p. 9

⁵ Lozada, *Hakka Diaspora*, (2004)

⁶ Nicole Constable, (1996) Introduction

⁷ For further readings of "Historical imagination", please read R.G. Collingwood's *The Idea of History* (1946).

*A Hakka, as any other ethnic group, belongs to a group of people, which share common race, language, religion and custom.*⁸

The quotation above is just one of many quotations that define what it means to be a Hakka. The preferred definition, however, used by several scholars is that a Hakka is someone who claims himself or herself Hakka, and at the same time is labeled as Hakka by others.⁹ But as Nicole Constable emphasized in her research, this definition is not enough, and it is not shared by everyone. As for this reason, the estimates we use in this paper naturally should not be taken as given.

The knowledge and usage of Hakka language and culture varies in a large degree between different communities, sometimes also within a community. My experiences in the field have proven these tendencies in a large degree. In Hong Kong I met children who spoke Hakka regularly at home, playing with children of same age who never spoke a word Hakka. Both were living in the same Hakka village, both with Hakka parents. This, although just in small numbers, shows in some matter the huge differences even within communities. These differences sometimes seemed rather coincidental, meaning the main reasons for the wide distinctions may not be intentional, but results of convenience and practical reasons. Some children may live with parents in addition to one or several of their Hakka grandparents. Some of these grandparents may not be multilingual and subsequently, the language used within home would be Hakka and not Cantonese.

1.1 Subject matter and focal point of my research

In my research I tried to narrow down my focal point to how Hakka people sense their own culture, history and identity. And for the foremost; in what degree do they being both Han-Chinese and Hakka affect their sense of identity. My questions are as

⁸ Mary Erbaugh, (1992) p.941

⁹ Nicole Constable, (1996) Introduction p. 3

follows: When are they Han, and when are they Hakka? Is it possible to see fluidness in the nature of their identity? Would it be correct to say that their sense of identity is depending on their surroundings and immediate situation? Are there any significant differences between Hakka people in various environments when it comes to coping and handling their identity? Are the Hakka people in a region like Yunnan, where their closest environment supposedly are other ethnic minorities, more conscious about their Han ethnicity and emphasizing themselves being Han, compare to Hakka people in Hong Kong where most of the people around them are Han-Chinese, or in Meizhou where Hakka people are fairly dominated and other ethnic minorities are hardly to be seen? This should be the case if we take into account theories suggesting that ethnicity is depending on circumstances and ethnic groups emerges only when they are in constant interaction with other groups.¹⁰ In Yunnan where other ethnic minorities are dominating, the “Han’nes” of the Hakka people should be standing out since they are both Han and Hakka. It is important to remember that in China, and especially among Hakka people, being Han-Chinese brings a certain status¹¹, and when surrounded by other ethnic minorities, their Han identity should be their “uniqueness” and the attribute that distinct themselves from others. The contrary, Hakka in Hong Kong should be more conscious about their Hakka identity and uniqueness because almost everyone around them would be Han-Chinese. What differ them from other people here is their Hakka identity, and it would be natural to believe it gets emphasized and preserved. When it comes to the people in Meizhou, we should assume their conscious to their ethnicity would be less clear compared to the others because the Meizhou Hakkas are relatively isolated from other ethnic groups, and thereby would have fewer opportunities to get the notion of them being different from others.

¹⁰ See for instance Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2002), *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, Introduction

¹¹ Hakka people have a strong sense of national pride, and are normally very proud of themselves being Han-Chinese. As Mary Erbaugh says it: “*Non-Chinese sometimes wonder whether the Hakkas are a national minority (shaoshu minzu), but this, implying that they fall outside the glories of Han civilization, outrages them*” Mary Erbaugh, (1992) p. 947

However, these were just my assumptions before starting the field works, and as I would describe in the following chapters, the results turned out to be quite different from what I expected.

I wanted to study Hakka community in a place where the Hakka are in a clear minority, where other non-Han ethnic minorities are (at least to a certain degree) dominating. So I chose Yunnan and Kunming as my first place to conduct my field work. Upon coming to Yunnan I learned that most of the province's Hakka people were spread all over the province, and almost impossible to locate. To me it was very fortunate that Yunnan Hakka Research Centre was to be found in the city of Kunming. This institution, despite of its name, is basically a local gathering place for Hakka people based in Yunnan, and particularly Kunming. Through this centre I got in touch with the Hakka community in the city and thereby I was able to conduct my field work. I stayed in Kunming for two weeks and spoke to a number of Hakka people living in the area. Most of the Hakka people I met were former students who came to the province from their hometown in Guangdong in the late 50s or beginning of the 60s, and their families.

I also wanted to see Hakka people in another setting. So I chose Meizhou as my next stop. In Meixian, or Meizhou as this is the official name of the city since 1988, the whole situation was completely different from what I met in Yunnan. While in Kunming the Hakka people were in a clear minority, and not easy to encounter, the opposite was waiting for me in Meizhou. According to the Hakka researchers I met, approximately 95 per cent of the people were Hakka. Indeed, the Hakka language was commonly used by almost everyone here no matter age.¹²

Hong Kong differs from both Kunming and Meizhou in this matter. The Hakka are few compare to the numbers of Cantonese living in the city. And most of their homes,

¹² This is my own interpretation based on observation and descriptions from others. I do not speak Hakka myself but know how to distinguish it from other languages and dialects

even if a huge number of people have moved to the city in recent years, are located in different parts of New Territories, more precisely within certain villages. While some of the villages are mixed with Bendi¹³ and Hakka people, there are still some more or less “pure” Hakka villages in Hong Kong, where most of its habitants are Hakkas. However, people within one village may differ in large degree when it comes to knowledge and interest for Hakka culture and language. This is something I will elaborate later in Chapter 4.

1.2 Methods: Case study

My focus before starting with my field work was mainly on how Hakka people within different surroundings feels and handle that they are having a dual identity, being both Hakka and Han-Chinese. I wanted to discover the problems they have within this ambiguity, and I wanted to know how, if they do, they cope with being both Han and Hakka at the same time. Finally, I want to see if their identity is fluid and will change according to circumstances that surround them.

In order to answer these questions in a proper way, a model of methods needs to be constructed so the results of my research that I present will make sense and not just appear to be disparate data. The model I have chosen in this paper is based on analysis of various theories and the data I collected in the field works which I conducted. The concept of ethnicity must be discussed and clarified before we can start to talk about the dual identity the Hakka people I met supposedly have. I will also need to have an idea of what is considered to be Hakka identity, and more importantly, how the Hakka people in these areas perceive their own identity. By doing so we need to explore the origin and history of Hakka, or more correctly, what is believed to be the history of this group of people. Finally I should combine these with my findings in the field works I have been through, and thereby be able to answer the questions I raised. My

¹³ See my “Definition of Terms” section in this thesis for a detailed description of what Bendi means

theories mentioned above are all based on theories that I find relevant for the topic¹⁴. It is however important to emphasize that the concepts I am trying to analyze, such as degrees of identity in different settings, are not easy to measure, if possible at all. My conclusions are based on my interactions with informants, and surveys during my field trips. Because of limited budget, I only got very short time in the field, spending only one month divided in three different places. The participants in the surveys were few, and I did not find a reasonable amount of people with various backgrounds. The surveys were often done in groups, making the possibilities for the participants to discuss with each other how to answer the questions were high. In the end I did not manage to complete a survey in Hong Kong due to shortage of time. When reading this text, we should keep in mind that my findings and conclusions are based on information that may be limited and the concept of analyzing identity and self-perception is rather difficult because these are processes that run *inside* people and are therefore hard to measure or negotiate. Still I believe my findings could provide an *indication* on the current status of the different ways Hakka people in these areas sees and display their identity.

During the time of my field trips, and my encounters with the people I studied, I slowly realized that things are not as I thought they were in beforehand. Most of the people I met seemed to never have been realizing or contemplating about this “dilemma”; the majority of the Hakka people I met in the mainland seem to have the widespread believe that Hakka is just a simple sub group of Han, equal to Beijing-people, Shangdong-people or other groups of Han. The Hakka people in Hong Kong responded slightly different, and in order to understand the reason I need to explore more about how the Hong Kong people relates to phrases like “Han-people” or “Chinese”. There might be differences compare to how the mainlander react and feel about these words. However, after to have interacted with a number of Hakka from various places I tend to grow interest to when and how the preservation of Hakka culture within the groups are doing in practice. And not to mention in what degree do

¹⁴ See 1.3 in this thesis

the Hakka perceive themselves as different and unique compare to other people. In this matter the Hakka people I encountered reacted very differently.

1.3 Theories on identity.

My theories on how the Hakka people in these three places perceive themselves are based on the theories suggesting ethnicity will emerge when a group cease from isolation and interact frequently with other groups and that ethnic identity is fluid and will change when circumstances change.¹⁵ In order to deal with this topic I will try to prove whether or not Hakka group should be considered as an ethnic group. For this I will use Barth's definition of ethnic group¹⁶ as basis to my understanding of their ethnicity. I will also approach Hakka with different theories on defining ethnicity and try to see if these theories apply to Hakka people based on my findings. Finally, I shall be able to answer if my theories do apply to them as well.

¹⁵ Gregory Bateson (1979) p. 78, Frederik Barth (1969), Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2001) p. 262-263, S.T. Leong (1997) p. 20 among others all agree that ethnicity appears when group starts to interact with other groups. Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2002) p. 59-62 says that ethnic identity will change while society change and notion of shared origin are crucial for ethnic identity.

¹⁶ See Frederic Barth,ed, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (1969) (1998), p. 10-15

Chapter 2. Historical background of Hakka people

“There is no one version Hakka history to be established”¹⁷ These are the words of Nicole Constable. As mentioned in chapter 1, the place of origin of the Hakka people has and still is highly disputed across the academic fields, and will probably still be in the times to come. When the history of Hakka emerged is also not fully answered. Many of the records we have of Hakka are based on the writings of Luo Xianglin, which again rely most of his studies on genealogies and records he found from Hakka groups and families. However the tradition of keeping these records did not start before the Song dynasty¹⁸, around 1100 AD. This leaves the records we have on Hakka history pre-Song less reliable. In addition, many of these were destroyed during the Cultural Revolution¹⁹, and were rewritten afterwards, which also inevitably make family records as a historical source less trustworthy.

What definitely is for certain, is that Hakka is recognized as a subgroup of Han Chinese and their main settlement in Mainland-China scatter from Jiangxi in the east to Sichuan in the west.²⁰ In other words, Hakka is not among the 56 ethnic groups recognized by the People’s Republic of China.²¹

The estimations tell us there are approximately seventy-five millions Hakka people worldwide.²² Around 40 millions people of Hakka ethnicity can be found in People’s Republic of China according to members of Hakka associations both in Yunnan and Meizhou.²³ The Hakka people outside mainland-China left their home from as early as seventeenth century to recent days²⁴, and they still continuously move abroad.

¹⁷ Nicole Constable, *The Village of Humble Worship* (1989) p. 23

¹⁸ See Myron L. Cohen “Hakka or Guest People” (1968). p. 242

¹⁹ This information was told me during my visit to Meizhou and Jiaying University, see for instance Li Xiao Yin, *Ke Jia Zu Xian Chong Bai Wen Hua* (客家祖先崇拜文化) (2005)

²⁰ See Mary Erbaugh “Secret History of Hakkas”(1992)

²¹ Lozada (2004) p. 99

²² Nicole Constable (ed) “*Guest People*” (1996), p. 4

²³ 33 millions according to Mary Erbaugh in “Secret History of Hakkas” (1992) p. 936, however there is not specified whom she defines as Hakka. It is important to be aware of that, unlike national minorities recognized by the People’s Republic of China, the Hakka people are not registered as such, making the estimations to verify.

²⁴ Nicole Constable, “*Guest People*” 1996, p. 4

Naturally the diversity among Hakka people is very big.

The name “Hakka” origins most likely from Cantonese. Constable writes “*Hakka is a Cantonese term which means “stranger” or “guest family”*” As a Cantonese speaker myself, I can confirm that the characters used in Chinese for Hakka (客家) in fact is pronounced “Hak Ka” in Cantonese. Also Erbaugh²⁵ suggest the term has its origin in Cantonese, and it was first used as a hostile coinage. The Hakka term, however, was eventually accepted by the Hakka people as a term for their group.

2.1 Shared history

In my research I met Hakka people from three distinctively different areas. Some of them do practice their language and culture in a large degree, and do interact with fellow Hakka people every single day. Others do none of these, and hardly speak a single word Hakka. The divergence is in other words stretching from one edge to another. What do the people in these different communities, with different backgrounds, situations and life style have in common? Their name and appearance do not differ from any other Han people. What they do have in common is basically a common history, or at least, a common history or *imagined* history in which the actors, Hakka people in this case, believe in.²⁶ In the field trips I conducted, I did meet Hakka people with very different backgrounds, both economically, socially and educationally, however in all three places I did get the same subjective historical lesson from a number of Hakka people I met. This phenomenon shows clearly that Hakka people from various communities do have this in common. No matter of this common history is accurate or not, it certainly does create a bond between the Hakka people across all boundaries.

²⁵ Nicole Constable (1996) p. 197

²⁶ Please read R.G Collingwood. *The Idea of History* (1946) p. 234-237 where he explains his theory on how historical truth being made ready to actors to believe at, even if it does not have any accuracy to reality.

The common assumption or belief of what is Hakka history is that the Hakka people migrated from Hunan province southward during the fourth century AD. And there have been several waves of movement, five, according to Luo Xianglin (1933), from the north to the south, forming the southern based Hakka population we now have today. Mary Erbaugh, on the other hands claims there have only been four major migrations²⁷, starting between the Song and Tang dynasty where the Hakka people left Henan and Shandong to avoid the Jurchen attacks.²⁸ They supposedly settled in the highlands of the Fujian-Jiangxi border. The second wave happened during the transition between the Mongolian (Yuan) and Ming Dynasty, the Hakka people moved to Meixian (Meizhou) area, the third was when Hakka people were sent to untended areas in southern Guangdong to extend the borders to Taiwan during early Qing, and finally the fourth in the nineteenth century. Bloody turmoil between Hakka and Bendi in Guangdong, and aftermath of the Taiping Rebellion sent many Hakkas to Sichuan in the west, and Hong Kong and overseas.

At the time of Luo Xianglin's writings, Hakka and Bendi were often in struggles and fights. In 1660, in order to suppress rebellions, the Qing administration launched a large evacuating in the south-east coastal areas where Cantonese and Min people traditionally predominates.²⁹ When resettlement was allowed in 1684, the Hakkas moved in. As a result, conflicts with the former local settlers, Bendi or Cantonese as they also are known as, were inevitable.

2.2 Southern origin

Professor Fang Xuejia at Jiaying University recognizes much of Luo Xianglin's work, but he strongly denies that the Hakka people and culture originates from the north. He claims that standard Hakka constructions and tools were found in the south already

²⁷ Mary S.Erbaugh (1992) p. 946-947

²⁸ The Jurchen attacks occurred between Tang and Song dynasty (907-959), in which they occupied the northern part of China and established the Jin Empire. See Mary Erbaugh, *Secret History of Hakka* (1992) p. 946

²⁹ See Mary Erbaugh (1992) p. 948

back in the Warring States period, suggesting those places, mainly Guangdong and Fujian were not unpopulated at that time.³⁰ The interactions and business connections between Nanman people in the south and the Zhongyuan people from the north are believed to have started out early, probably during that time of period. In his opinion, the main body of the Hakka people and its culture comes from the south, mainly Yue people, mixed with other minorities, in particularly She, and at last mixed with migrations from the north.

His research is supported by the works of professor Ye Zhizhang, a retired Hakka biologist, who spent some of the recent years after his retirement to investigate about Hakka and Hakka people in the Yunnan area. He has been trying to study Hakka from the perspectives of human biology and development of human beings, and concluded that the south were populated before the north, not the other way around like commonly believed.³¹ For this opinion professor Fang, according to his colleagues in Meizhou, was heavily criticized by other Hakka academics.³² In my field works I did notice quite a few, mostly educated Hakka people who were very proud of the widespread believe that they are of the heritage of the northern people, probably even of royal blood. It makes sense that some people may find it hard to believe otherwise.

The author of this paper has not taken any statement in this dispute. As a student interested in Hakka culture and history, it would be thrilling to know more of the origin of this people. However my thesis revolves mainly on the topics of self perception, ethnic consciousness and fluidness of identity, and therefore to me the most interesting point of this dispute is how it shows the common believe among the Hakka people, from different places, are like. And the reactions tell us that many Hakka people in fact do mind how they are being perceived.

³⁰ Fang Xue Jia, *Ke Jia Yuan Liu Tan Ao* (客家源流探奥), (1994)

³¹ Ye Zhizhang 'Cong Ren Lei Xue He Yi Chuan Xue Jiao Du Tan Tao Ke Jia Min Xi Ben Zhi' (从人类学和遗传学角度探讨客家民系本质) (2007)

³² According to a number of scholars and students at Hakka Research Institute in Jiaying University

Chapter 3: Hakka identity and concepts of identity

In my conversations with scholars both in Meizhou and Hong Kong, I frequently asked them whether there is anything at all that is exclusively Hakka. In media we very often symbolize Hakka culture with Tulou, Weilongwu,³³ famous cuisines, huge graves, massive ancestral worshipping and special rituals and so on. But it seems that none of these attributes are exclusively Hakka. According to the Hakka Research Institute in Jiaying University, there have been found traces from all these “trademarks” in areas where there are no Hakka people. It would be more correct to say that they are part of Southern China culture, rather than exclusively Hakka. In that case, what lays behind the term “Hakka identity”? Nicole Constable argues that it is the shared belief that they are having a common history and ancestry.³⁴ The Hakka identity is constructed by telling and retelling histories that connects to “Hakka trademarks”, such as language, food, buildings. By this an identity with certain characteristics automatically will emerge, even if these characteristics never were exclusively them.

Some sources claim Hakka identity has its root way back to fourth century AD³⁵, but it was not until recent times the Hakka label became a household title even for Hakka people themselves. Hakka culture probably existed in some form prior to this as well, but it was not until the Hakkas encountered other people that their distinctiveness became illuminated.

³³ TuLou is Stone Fortress or Roundhouse , Wei Long Wu is “circled dragon house”: Semicircular walled structures with the other half often containing a constructed fish pond, see Lozada (2004) for more details about Tu Lou and Wei Long Wu.

³⁴ Nicole Constable, (1994) “Christian Souls and Chinese Spirits” p. 20-23

³⁵ Lozada “Hakka Diaspora” p.93. However Lozada emphasizes that the historical evidence for this claim is questionable and limited.

3.1 Hakka people and nationalism

Accusations of Hakka for being not Chinese or barbarians were significant³⁶. When historians, in particularly Luo Xianglin, in their research strongly imply that the origin of Hakka are to be found in the north, the situation for the Hakka and their identity changed dramatically.³⁷

No matter if the genealogies, which Luo's research in large degree are based on, are reliable or not, they do have a certain effect to the Hakka people, and produce a common tradition and widespread believe, that they are bonded with the original Han people.

Nationalism is a rather new phenomenon, not only for the Hakka people, but also elsewhere.³⁸ The nationalistic character within the Hakka people provoked by hostility from the natives is believed to have played a major role in their participation both in the Taiping Rebellion and in the Nationalist Revolution.³⁹

This may also tell us that the loyalty of the Hakka people does not relies on Hakka alone, but also, maybe in a stronger extent, to China and to the Chinese people. It means although they may have some differences with other Han people, the nationalistic desire of being a Chinese seemingly started quite early on.

It is believed by several historians that it was the European missionaries who triggered the Hakka nationalism⁴⁰, and supported the Hakkas claims of their northern origin, probably because they see the Hakka people as the most promising group of people in terms of conversion to Christianity due to the oppression from the Bendi

³⁶ See for instance Constable (1996), Mary Erbaugh, 'The Hakka Paradox in the People's Republic of China' p. 197

³⁷ Lozada (2004) writes that the ancestors of Hakka people were prominent loyalists during several dynasties against foreign attacks. This is among the elements that form Hakka identity as we know it today.

³⁸ Please read Benedict Anderson "*Imagined Communities*" (1991) and Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism* (2002) p. 100-103 for more information about the genealogies of nationalism

³⁹ Nicole Constable (1989)

⁴⁰ See Constable (1994) p. 36-37

they are receiving. This oppression managed to strengthen the Hakka pride and fellowship, and indirectly helped the Hakka people to assert Han identity, and away from claims of being a rootless barbarian tribe as they have been categorized by the Bendi for hundreds of years.⁴¹

3.2 Definition of ethnic group

Whether the group of Hakka people can be recognized as an ethnic group is interesting because in order to understand Hakka people's self perception, we need to know whether the group itself has the characteristics to serve as an ethnic group. Hakka is formally categorized as a sub-group of the Han people by the People's Republic of China⁴², and not as an ethnic minority. Nonetheless, if we use the definitions provided from Barth⁴³, and follow the criteria step by step, we shall find the Hakka people do fulfill many of the requirements listed by Barth in his definition. The group has been self-perpetuating for many decades, which is one of Barth's "requirements". In areas where Hakkas are predominating, such as Meizhou and the areas around, there are still customs for a Hakka to marry another, which again also is a major characteristic for ethnic groups. The Hakka people still exists and living even if their culture has not been properly preserved by any governments. It can be discussed whether the Hakka people do share common value. Following Taiping Rebellion, and the major influences the European missionaries had on the oppressed Hakka people in the 19th century, many Hakka people converted to Christianity.⁴⁴ But not all of them did that, in fact converting to Christianity is not unproblematic in the eyes of Hakka culture. One significant part of well known Hakka culture is their dedication to ancestry worship and traditional festivals, such as Qingming and

⁴¹ Mary Erbaugh (1992) p. 947 mentioned a Guangdong Hakka protest in the 1930s against a government publication describing Hakka people as "barbarous" and "speaking a bird-like chatter"

⁴² See footnote 21

⁴³ See Fredrik Barth (1998), Introduction p.10-11

⁴⁴ The leader of Taiping Rebellion, Hong Xiu Quan, claimed himself to be the younger brother of Jesus Christ, and promised his Christianity would "rescue the Hakka from the disintegration of South China" Constable (1989) p. 33, Bohr (1981), p. 136. As a result many Hakka people joined his God Worshipping Society, and eventually got in touch with Christianity. In addition, Christian missionaries considered Hakka as "more receptive to Christian faith than other Chinese", and went actively to convert Hakka to Christianity, see Constable (1989) p. 38 and Lau Yee Cheung (2004)

Chongyang⁴⁵, which among other things involved burning incense to ancestors, actions that contradicts with Christian belief. In other words there are now Hakka people with values that not just are different, but even contradict each other. I have also met many Hakka people that have more or less given away their Hakka identity and been, deliberately or not, totally assimilated to the surroundings, given nothing to show other people their Hakka identity.

However, even if they have some differences within the group, some fundamental common characteristics are still to be detected. Although not everyone speaks the Hakka dialect, this dialect and accent is a very significant trademark for the people. As one Hakka man in Yunnan put it to me, by hearing the accent he immediately could tell whether a person is Hakka or not. This, however, does not mean speaking the dialect is considered to be criteria for being Hakka. Many young Hakka people, especially in non-Hakka predominated areas, does not speak, or speak very little Hakka, but they are still considered as Hakka within the community. The dialect itself is not spoken exclusively by people considered as Hakka either. Some researchers, even foreign, speak some Hakka, and many villages in Guangdong and Hong Kong at least, are mixed populated. Sometimes within family members there are mixed Hakka and Bendi by marriage. I spoke to a few people in such a village in Hong Kong, and I was told it is quite common that Bendi learns to speak Hakka while interacting with their Hakka family members or neighbors. Still, the dialect serves as an important part of Hakka identity to a lot of people, and is one of the major factors that connects Hakka people together, and gives Hakka people with different backgrounds and upbringings an opportunity to communicate with each other. Even if the language probably is in decline, there are still Hakka people all around the world speaking it. According to Erbaugh at least 33 million people in People Republic of China alone

⁴⁵ Qingming Festival is a traditional Chinese Festival where people visit graves and pay respect for the deceased, Chongyang Festival originally was meant for people to climb mountains in order to protect themselves from danger. However, many people consider now Chongyang as a opportunity to visit graves in the mountains. For further readings see for instance news.xinhuanet.com/English/2008-04/03/content_7913320.htm and www.chinaculture.org/gb/en_chinaway/node_169.htm

speaks the language⁴⁶, and there are significant numbers of Hakka speakers overseas as well. To many Hakka people the dialect itself serves as a way to recognize fellow Hakkas.

A probably more significant sign of Hakka people being an ethnic group however, is the fact that Hakka people are identified as Hakka both within the group and by other groupings. No matter if they have any inner or outer characteristics that distinguished them from others or not, Hakka is known as a distinguished category that is different from other, and thereby must be considered as an ethnic group. This view is shared by another Norwegian scholar, Thomas Hylland Eriksen, in discussion on ethnicity where he claims *"in social anthropology it [ethnicity] refers to aspects of relationships between groups which consider themselves, and are regarded by others, as culturally distinctive"*.⁴⁷ The ultimate factor of when we have to define what ethnicity and ethnic group seems to be distinctiveness in the eyes of themselves and others. In this sense Hakka people should be known as an ethnic group. The Hakka people do believe they are culturally distinctive, although the accuracy of this assumption can and should be a matter of discussion, but important here is the fact they believe, and not whether they are or not. They do believe they share a common history and origin and that there are some aspects within them that are exclusively Hakka, and this view is shared by other groups that they have a minimum of regular contact with.⁴⁸ Basically that should be enough to legitimate their status as an ethnic group. However, even if we by this definition can conclude the Hakka as a distinctive ethnicity, we still have questions regarding how this ethnicity appeared and evolved and how they are dealing with it today. These are two separate fields worth further elaboration.

⁴⁶ Mary Erbaugh (1992) p. 952

⁴⁷ Please read Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2002) p. 4 where he also points out that race, nationality and recognition have nothing to do with ethnicity

⁴⁸ Hylland Eriksen describes in (2002) p12 the problem Michael Moerman (1965) encountered when he was doing research on the Lue people in Thailand and found out they do not have any exclusive attributes; the ethnicity of a Lue is verified simply by "believing and calling himself Lue, and of acting in ways that validate his Lueness"

The realization of Hakka identity took a serious burst during the periods around the Taiping Rebellion, where the hostility from the natives, combined with foreign influence, unified the Hakka spirit and “created” the distinctive Hakka group of people⁴⁹. However unlike many other ethnic groups, the Hakka seem not interested in seeking independence from the Han people, on contrary they have been searching for legitimacy for their claim as real Chinese, not barbarians.⁵⁰ By distancing themselves from their Han heritage would generate the opposite effect of what they have been fighting for in decades. Taiping Rebellion was mostly led by Hakka people, and their ultimate goal was to overthrow the Manchurian Empire and restore a new Chinese dynasty. Hakka people or people related to Hakka played a major role in the Nationalistic revolution that in the end managed to take down the Qing dynasty. By this they regain more respect and acknowledgement from the Bendis, and at the same time strengthened their solidarity.

Another aspect of the significant Chinese nationalism we can find in the Hakka people can be traced to *the ideal of Han unity*.⁵¹ Many Hakka people seem to share the idea of establishing and preserving a unified and strong Han identity. Nicole Constable gave an example of an ordinary man acquainted that did not like to talk about Hakkas and other Chinese, because it “*disturbed the unification of the Chinese race*”.⁵² From the experiences in the field works I myself carried out, similar reactions and responds were given to me from several ordinary Hakka people from different places. I experienced some of them to nearly getting offended when I ask them if they consider themselves as Han Chinese. Many people would ask me how come I ask such a strange question, sometimes follow up with a statement where they clarify they surely are Chinese.

⁴⁹ According to Nicole Constable (1989) the Taiping Rebellion had a strong effect to Hakka identity, and became an important symbol in Hakka claim for Chinese identity, p. 24

⁵⁰ Hakka is historically often being categorized as barbarians by their surroundings. Reasons for this can be traced back to Hakka women not binding their feet, see Lozada (2004) p. 96

⁵¹ Introduced to me by Mary Erbaugh in “Secret History of Hakka” in she relates this tendency to the obscurity of Hakka in the public eye in China

⁵² This is from a personal conversation Nicole Constable (1989) had with a Hakka male

This observation is further elaborated by Erbaugh. She believes the Hakka people consider themselves as even more Chinese than other Han people, since they supposedly are preserving the ancient northern Han culture.⁵³ There have been many confrontations between Bendi and the Hakka people during the 18th and 19th centuries. A war between these two groups in 1864-1867 killed nearly 1 million people.⁵⁴ Most of the confrontations were results of disagreement about land. Wide areas have been settled by Hakka during periods when they were more or less unpopulated. When the Bendi returned, they wanted the land back, and confrontations were inevitable. Hakka was presented as a group of people without any origin, and was looked upon as a cultural underdeveloped barbaric people that had overworking women with unbound feet. Because of the uncertainty regarding their origin, rumors about them not being Chinese came.⁵⁵ Origin and a home place play major roles in Han Chinese culture.⁵⁶ Being without roots, home place and origin, as the Hakka people supposedly were, further indicates they were not “real” Chinese. As a result, Hakka people seem to cherish their “newfound” Chinese heritage in order to respond to the claims and insults from the Bendi people. And in many ways, it may seem that being a patriotic Chinese have been a part of what a Hakka should pursue to be, and thereby also a part of Hakka culture and identity.

3.3 Using various theories to identify Hakka as an ethnic group

After the People’s Republic of China was founded in 1949, the government launched a list of “common trademarks” in which all the nationalities which have been applying for national minority status needs to meet before getting they approved. The so-called Stalinist criteria or the “four commons”⁵⁷: common language, locality, economy and cultural makeup. If we use this criteria as a formula to identify Hakka

⁵³ Mary Erbaugh (1992), p. 948

⁵⁴ Mary Erbaugh (1992), p. 951

⁵⁵ Hakka was stigmatized as rootless, which is an atypical trademark for Chinese society. ME (1992)

⁵⁶ As a half-Chinese myself, I do have a certain knowledge in the importance of roots and homes in Chinese culture. Both Constable (1989) and Erbaugh (1992) writes also about how problematic it was for Hakkas to be considered as Chinese while not having a place of origin.

⁵⁷ Dru C. Gladney, *Ethnic Identity in China*, p.44-45

people as an ethnic group we will see that these criteria are only met by the Hakka people in some degree. They do share a common language or dialect⁵⁸, but the numbers of people speaking the language are declining. In addition to this, seemingly most scholars and ordinary people Hakka people do not regard the language itself to be a definite requirement for Hakka status. When it comes to locality, even if the area around Meizhou in northern Guangdong are being considered as “hometown” for Hakka people, the people are still normally seen as a rootless ethnic group that spreads from Jiangxi in the east to Sichuan in the west, and also to Taiwan and Hong Kong. Meizhou may serve as the place where Hakka people are mostly centered and the language being the most standard one⁵⁹, but it is not widely considered as the place of origin for Hakka people, and therefore it may be problematic to define Meizhou as their “place”. Neither in terms of economy or cultural makeup is it easy to find anything that is exclusively Hakka. Stone fortresses and Circled Dragon Houses are widely accepted as Hakka trademarks, but both can be found in non-Hakka areas, made and lived by non-Hakka people. Traditionally Hakka customs are in many places not being practiced anymore, and when Christianity became a part of some Hakka villages, new customs took over and replaced the old ones because they may contradict Christian belief.

The conclusion is that they do meet the Stalin criteria in some degree. There are groups recognized as ethnic minorities in China who meet less.⁶⁰ However if we use the culturalist method to identify Hakka, the results may become different. This theory suggests identity of ethnic groups is based on the group’s loyalty to certain *primordial traits acquired by birth which includes cultural features such as language, religion, economy, place of origin, and biogenetic physical features.*⁶¹ To start with the last “requirement”, physically the Hakka people are no different from other Han

⁵⁸ Hakka dialect is being recognized as one of the seven dialect group in Chinese. The other ones are Mandarin, Wu, Gan, Xiang, Yue and Min. Hakka is linguistically southern Chinese with some Northern Chinese features. S. Robert Ramsey *The Language of China* (1987) p.110-111

⁵⁹ According to this article from Global Times : http://en.huanqiu.com/life_arts/news/2009-04/426753.html

⁶⁰ Dru C Gladney (1998) p. 44

⁶¹ Dru C Gladney (1998) p. 45

groups. There would be not possible to pick out one Hakka from a group of Han people based on his looks. The other trademarks however, should be more interesting to look at. As previously mentioned, the Hakka people do have their own language, or dialect. The language itself belongs to the southern Chinese tradition with certain northern Chinese characteristics.⁶² It is however problematic to identify the Hakka as a group by the language because it is commonly known that the numbers of people who speak this language are declining and these people are still widely accepted as Hakka. And certain people do speak the language even if they do not consider themselves as Hakka. The Hakka are spread all around in China, and they do not have a place of origin which is widely accepted or confirmed. The Hakka was originally seen as a group which emphasizes ancestor belief and worship in a larger degree than other Han Chinese, but this has been changed dramatically after the missionaries converted many Hakka and other Chinese to Christianity. Nowadays, many Hakka villages in Hong Kong and also some other places are famed for being Christian Hakka villages. The religious aspect of Hakka culture is now rather unclear and absolutely not singular. How loyal and strict people are to follow old customs and routines are also very divided. I met people who cease any form for traditions normally associates with Hakka culture, but still proudly claiming they are Hakka. Economically Hakka people divides from poor to rich, they do not share the same economy or jobs. The culturalist method to identify ethnicity seemed not be applicable to the Hakka people in much degree.

3.4 Hakka identity today

Hakka identity does not centre around birthplace but on ancestry and culture according to Erbaugh.⁶³ I asked many of the Hakka people I met during field work whom they consider being Hakka. Many of the Hakka people living in non-Hakka predominated areas, have never been to the home town of their ancestors, and are

⁶² Ramsey (1987)

⁶³ Mary Erbaugh (1992) p. 948

grown up and raised without any clear influence of Hakka culture. However, many Hakka people, maybe even themselves, regard them as fully Hakka. What makes them Hakka when they neither speak the language, practice the culture, nor been to the Hakka dominated areas? A few Hakka people answered me that as long as somebody feel they are Hakka, they will be perceived as Hakka. Some other is of the opinion that if ones parents are Hakka, they will automatically be Hakka no matter what they feel about it. Cheung Min-kuang made a study of the future trend of Hakka dialect and culture in Taiwan and he refers especially to the serious decline of the Hakka language in Taiwan as a preface to the annihilation or “ethnic doom” of the Hakka identity.⁶⁴ In his study, he strongly and emotionally refers to the Taiwanese government, media and Hakka people themselves as responsible to this tendency and suggests this would eventually lead to the end of the Hakka culture and identity. Why Hakka people themselves are responsible, is also entirely described by Cheung in his article. Even if a language does not get any help from the government, media or anyone else, one should be able to preserve by using it frequently. As we may find out and discuss more in this text, this is not always the case, and obviously the lack of usage of the language at home and other social and informal settings have been a major cause of the decline. Many of the young Hakkas today in areas where they are in minority, speaks local dialect at home.⁶⁵ Many Hakka people born in the 60s and 70s got married with non-Hakkas, thus speaking a neutral or maybe even the local dialect within home, leaving their children unable to speak Hakka.

Nicole Constable also gave emphasize to the decline of language among young Hakka when she refers to a conversation she had with an elder in Shung Him Tong, a Christian Hakka village in Hong Kong.⁶⁶ In this conversation we can sense an emotional elder expressed how the young people in the village refuse to speak Hakka and had no interest in use of or preserve the language. I myself have been to Shung Him Tong to conduct one of my field work years after Constable’s book was

⁶⁴ Cheung Min-kuang “A Study on Trends of Hakka Language and Culture in Taiwan, p 261-262

⁶⁵ According to many researchers and informants I spoke to in my field trips

⁶⁶ Nicole Constable (1994) p 72

published. I found no sign of any radical improvements of Hakka language for the Hakka youngsters of today I had informal conversations with in Shung Him Tong. This observation appeals for the mostly also the other places I visited as well where the Hakka people were not predominated. Apparently, this tendency is accurate and may also serve as an indicator of what young Hakkas think of their identity. Among the people I interact with during my field works, which includes people in every age and of various backgrounds, there is no doubt that in terms of devotion and interest for their origin and culture, the younger ones seemed, with a few exceptions of course, much more indifferent to everything about Hakka. To them Hakka is just a label someone placed on them, or, as a young Hakka male from Hong Kong told me, to him he always connect Hakka with the food his mother cook for him.

However even if the Hakka language is in decline, and the trend tells us that the language is in danger of extinction, there are still 33 million people using this language on daily basis, and in the areas where Hakka people predominates, hardly anyone, even many outsiders who happens to live there, are not able to speak Hakka. In those areas Hakka is the most used language overall, and may only be omitted in official settings, such as school, police stations, TV etc, and it serves as an “*important attribute of our identity.*”⁶⁷

3.5 Multiple identities in different settings

While I am investigating the concept of identity and how identity may change according to changes of circumstances, and the fluid nature of identity to individuals with multiple identities, it is important to remember that this is not a solely Hakka phenomena. A Hakka may have multiple ethnic identities, being Chinese, Han and Hakka in the same time. But other groupings may face the same dilemma. Mette Halskov Hansen made an in-depth research on Han settlers in non-Han areas in her book *Frontier People*. Her field works were conducted at Xiahe and Sipsong Panna.

⁶⁷ Quote from one of my informants in Meizhou

The Han settlers in these areas can be divided into several groups. Some of them are being sent to the areas, others moved voluntarily. Some are newly settlers, other have been there for generations. What the majority of these Han settlers have in common is that they do not seem much assimilated to their surroundings and the local culture compare to the people I myself met in my field trips. According to Halskov Hansen only the oldest men in Han peasant families in the Tibetan dominated city Xiahe would normally be able to understand Tibetan.⁶⁸ Others, like older women, and young people hardly understand anything but a few words. Migrants in these areas very often return to their places of origin for major festivals, and they usually do not take active part in local festivals.⁶⁹ Han-students in a state farm middle school in Sipsong Panna laughed when asked if they believe it would be useful or interesting to learn something about the local society.⁷⁰ To them this question seems to invoke nothing but laughter, this despite them being born and raised in Panna. If we make a parallel to the Yunnan Hakka or Hong Kong Hakka, the differences are tremendous. The clearest difference is not displayed among the older generations, because they tend to be closer to their origin in many places including the ones I have been to in my field work, but at the younger people. Not even middle school students here show any interest to local culture and society. This is by far the exact opposite of what met me in my field trips. Both in Yunnan and Hong Kong, the young people I met were all assimilated to the local communities, and a major part of them hardly ever participate in activities connected to their place of origin, nor speak the language. I believe there are several reasons for these differences. One may be the image Han migrants in minority areas have on the local people as groups of less civilized and less developed than themselves,⁷¹ and thereby many of the migrants, also the youngsters, wish to keep distance from them. This is very different from the image Hakka people in Hong Kong and Yunnan have for their surroundings.

⁶⁸ Mette Halskov Hansen, *Frontier People* (2004) p. 91

⁶⁹ Mette Halskov Hansen, (2004) p. 93

⁷⁰ Mette Halskov Hansen, (2004) p.102

⁷¹ Mette Halskov Hansen could tell that the data she collected in her field work to a certain extent support the image of Han migrant patronizing local minorities and regard them as inferior, MHH (2004) p. 83

Another difference being that many of the Han migrants, like state farm employees in the county capitals and their families, usually have very little contact and interaction with the local people. Their housing may be provided automatically within secluded work units. The farms were organized as special units and provides besides housing also schooling and medical facilities, leaving the need and opportunities for frequent interaction with local people relatively small. While the Hakka people are mixed with local Han people in both Yunnan and Hong Kong, the Han children in minority areas often go to their own school and subsequently hardly ever play with any non-Han children. Even if Han people not living in state farms have more contact with the local minorities, they usually also group and live with fellow Han people both within work and spare time, and many choose to send their children in school age back home to their grandparents so that they can attend school there without paying school fees.⁷² Halskov Hansen also points out, that the few early Han immigrants who have been living for generations among non-Han in the mountains of Sipsong Panna, have in a large degree adopted the local customs and traditions.⁷³ By this it would be natural to assume that separations between the Han settlers and the local minority people probably played a vital role in the lack of assimilation within the Han settlers, especially when comparing with Yunnan and Hong Kong where the people are much assimilated; the Hakka people are mixed together with the local Han people.

The importance of the fundamental differences between cultures and languages should not be forgotten either. While Hakka culture and language do have certain trademarks that distinguish from many of the local culture in the areas they are settled in, the differences may not be as significant as the ones between Han immigrants and local Tibetans in Sipsong Panna. Many Han immigrants there are Buddhists as the local people, but find it hard to adopt all the Tibetan customs regarding religion, for

⁷² The new individual Han immigrants and their families are often just in the minorities areas temporarily and do not possess household registration in the area. MHH (2004), p. 106

⁷³ MHH (2004) p. 92

instance to send off their child to study in the monasteries.⁷⁴ Another aspect being that many permanent Han settlers immigrated to minority areas because they were ordered to do so. They were organized by government to stay in the minority areas in order to make changes, not being changed themselves. These people may have no interest to assimilate to the local culture or traditions simply because their mission suggests them to do the exact opposite.

To further illuminate how dual identities and the dilemmas that follow with it also apply to other groups, we may draw another parallel to how overseas Chinese are dealing with their situation being ethnic Chinese but living outside China. Wang Gungwu made a study on Chinese living in South East Asia (1988),⁷⁵ and she could tell that there have been many studies on Chinese descends living in South East Asia that shows the divergence are significant when it comes to self-perception and “Chineseness”. Some of them may have abandon their Chinese heritage and perceive themselves fully and only as an ordinary citizen of the country they have adopted as their own. Yet other sees it unproblematic being Chinese while identifying with the country they live in. One aspect of Chinese identity the overseas Chinese had, was something Wang Gungwu called “historical identity”.⁷⁶ Traditional family values, origins, ethnic loyalties, glorious past civilizations were the values that brought the overseas Chinese together and made them feel what it means to be Chinese. This is very similar to the way many Hakka people, especially in Yunnan and Hong Kong, connects to their Hakka heritage. Many Hakka people in these areas perceive themselves as descends of officials in Song dynasty and express a pride being part of a people that played a vital role in building the Chinese society. Also among the overseas Chinese we can find fluidness in the nature of their Chinese identity. During the period between the First and Second World War, Chinese people in South East Asia were changing from a historical approach to their Chinese identity to a

⁷⁴ MHH (2004) p. 111

⁷⁵ Wang Gungwu “Study of Chinese Identities in South East China” (1988)

⁷⁶ Wang Gungwu (1988) p. 2

nationalistic approach.⁷⁷ Many of them eventually became important members in works of nation-building in their respective countries, and ready to accept new identities. Wang Gungwu listed up six concepts of identities⁷⁸ that the Chinese continuously were changing upon. She emphasizes that the Chinese in South East Asia were not necessarily changing from one identity to another, but in possession of multiple identities⁷⁹ and living them out simultaneously. People with Hakka background growing up in non-Hakka dominated areas are being Hakka, Han and local at the same. They often switch between identities depending on where they are and who they are having interaction with.⁸⁰ This is something they have in common with the overseas Chinese.

⁷⁷ Inspired by Sun Yat Sen concept of “min zu” WG (1988) p. 2-3

⁷⁸ These are “historical identity”, “Chinese nationalist identity”, “communal identity”, “national identity”, “cultural identity”, “ethnic identity” and “class identity” WG (1988) p. 9

⁷⁹ WG (1988) p. 10

⁸⁰ See chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Hakka people in Yunnan

In the following chapters I would be talking about my works in the fields. There is a reason behind my choice of Yunnan as the first of my 3 field trips. I wanted to make a comparison case study where I shall discover how Hakka people within different surroundings deal with their multiple identities being Han and Hakka at the same time. Yunnan is interesting because of the province's diversity. 33 % of the province's population is ethnic minorities⁸¹, and it has the largest number of ethnic groups among all the provinces in China. Han Chinese in Yunnan should probably have more contact with minorities than most other Han Chinese. In that case it would be interesting to find out how the Hakka people perceive themselves at in this region. Officially, they are Han Chinese, since Hakka is a sub group of Han. Will they consider themselves less Hakka, and subsequently more Han Chinese, when they are confronting non-Han frequently, or will they find more in common with the minorities? These were the questions I had in mind before taking the trip. Based on the theory that social groups and ethnicities will become more conscious and aware of their own identity in areas where they are few and in constant interactions with other ethnic groups⁸², I was actually expecting to meet Hakka people that are more conscious about their Han-uniqueness, rather than Hakka. The reason for this lies on them being in an environment where many of the people around them are non-Han, and their Han-identity would be that of which distinct themselves from other people.

⁸¹ The numbers comes from the sixth National Population Census published in May 2011: http://society.yunnan.cn/html/2011-05/09/content_1603043_2.htm

⁸² Thomas Hylland Eriksen writes a description about this theory originally Bateson came up with that ethnic groups when they are in a minority and frequently in contact with other groups will become more conscious about their distinctiveness and uniqueness. THE (2001), *Small Places Large Issues*, p. 262-263

4.1. Hakka community in Kunming

The Yunnan Hakka people are widespread within the province. As far as I know, there are no areas in Yunnan where a large number of Hakka people have found settling.⁸³ During the whole Qing dynasty, spread migration from Jiangxi supposedly took place⁸⁴, but they settled in different parts of the province. As time goes by, not much of the originally Hakka identity were left. I did my field work in the city of Kunming since I learned that a small Hakka community is involved in the Yunnan Hakka Research Center. The current secretary could tell me the research part of the center is more or less non-existent. The reason for why this institution named itself this way, is because it was more appropriate to set up a research center than a fellowship, which they plan to start, but due to political reasons did not.⁸⁵

The center itself does not use money to research. What they mainly do is to provide information to and introduce fellow Hakka people for meeting and gathering, and of course they also do attend Hakka meetings all around Asia. In the meeting room I could find mahjong-tables and karaoke equipments. I was told every Saturday a number of Hakka people will come to socialize with each other. Most of the active members of this institution were formerly students from Guangdong who came to Yunnan during the late 50s, beginning of 60s to pursue study. According to the people I spoke to, around 5000 young people came to Yunnan from Guangdong during that period. Around 80 % of these were most likely Hakka.⁸⁶ A majority of them remained in the area after graduation. I happened to arrive Kunming at the same time as a reunion of the Guangdong students took place. I got to speak to a number of these people while I was there. It appears to me the Hakka people I met during the few days of activities, were almost without exceptions very proud of their heritage. Most of

⁸³ This information was told me by several researchers at Yunnan Minorities University in Kunming, and also from members of Yunnan Research Centre.

⁸⁴ Ye Zhizhang (2007), 'Yun Nan Yong Sheng De Ke Jia Ren' (云南永生的客家人)

⁸⁵ According to people in the centre, the political climate in Yunnan during the mid-90s was not suitable for anyone to establish a fellowship, especially for sub-groups and minorities.

⁸⁶ These estimates were given to me by the Research Centre. According to them no one has ever written any clear numbers of Hakka students coming to Yunnan.

them recounted how diligent, honest and friendly Hakka people are and always have been. They proudly present Hakka as a group with its origin from what is now a central part of China.

Younger Hakka people in Yunnan usually do not participate in the activities shared by the Hakka community. The people I spoke to see this trend as natural. They do not think the Hakka community in Yunnan is big enough to avoid declining. The younger people are mostly born or grown up in Yunnan, many of them do not even speak Hakka, and it is not believed that they have too much contact with each other.

4.2 Meeting the informants

In the beginning I only met Hakka people of a rather high age. During the first days in Kunming, I believe the youngest Hakka person I spoke to were slightly under 60 years old. It was however nice to study and hear what views they have on Hakka identity. The first informant I found was a retired educated man. In fact, nearly all of the Hakka I met in Yunnan were relatively high educated since most of them came to Yunnan as students from Guangdong. I asked him about his own view on the, for me ambiguous, Hakka identity. He is obvious a proud Hakka, during the interview he frequently praised the Hakka mentality and diligence. More than once did he recount for the supposedly northern origin Hakka people have. When asked about his relation to his own identity and the duality of being both Han and Hakka, he could tell that he is a proud Hakka, but at the same time also a proud Han. He also did find my question somehow strange and explains that he could not see any dilemma in being both Han and Hakka. On the opposite, one of the reason why he is so proud of being a Hakka is because Hakka is believed to be a group of people originated from what is now the northern part of China, and thereby considered by many Hakkas as more "Chinese" than other groupings. My informant could not give me any concrete answer when asked about what the definition of Hakka is. In his opinion if ones parents are Hakka, then one automatically would become a Hakka. When one is a Hakka, one is also

more "Han Chinese" than other Chinese. He strongly emphasizes that Hakka is not a minority, but a sub-group of Han:

*"There have been some people who think we are an ethnic minority (shao shu min zu), just like the other ones you can find in Yunnan. But we just laugh when we hear about it. Hakka is sub-group (min xi) of Han, therefore we are Han Chinese"*⁸⁷

I also did meet one 19 years old female student, third generation Hakka, who actually spoke Hakka (I was told this is quite uncommon among young Hakka people in Yunnan). But the reason for her speaking Hakka is understandable. Her grandmother on her mother side is a very enthusiastic Hakka lady. She demanded her two daughters to speak Hakka with their children from early age. She claims to have refused to answer her grandchildren if they spoke to her in mandarin or local Kunming dialect. That is why whenever her grandchildren pay her a visit, according to her, all conversations will basically be spoken in Hakka. I was invited to have a dinner at their place one afternoon, and got to talk with both the grandmother and her granddaughter. The grandmother came to Yunnan in the late 50s to study. After graduation she worked in Yunnan until she retired a few years ago. She married a fellow Hakka, which mean both of her daughters, even if they were born in Yunnan, could speak the Hakka dialect. She demanded her daughters to teach their children Hakka dialect as well. The 19 year old student told me that she could speak Hakka but do speak the language just when she is seeing her grandma. She explains that she speaks local dialect at home (both her parents are born in Kunming and could speak local dialect) and mandarin at school, which means she hardly ever got to use Hakka. When asking them about how they perceive themselves as, clearly there was a great difference between the two of them. Her grandma grew up in Meizhou in Guangdong, a place where far most of the inhabitants are Hakka. She spent many years in organizing activities for the Hakka community in Kunming and seems to me as a

⁸⁷ Quotation from Mr. Li, my first informant in Kunming

"dedicated" Hakka, something that is proved by her demands that her grandchildren must preserve the ability to speak proper Hakka. Her grand-daughter on the other hand seems to care less about Hakka. I asked her whether she felt herself as a Hakka or a Kunming local. In front of her grandmother she claims that she is both, but when her grandma left the apartment (for buying ingredients for dinner), she reveals that she never really thought about that she is a Hakka or anything different from other local people. The only times she do something related to Hakka culture, is speaking Hakka with grandmother, and that is the only times she does that. When asked about how she perceived herself, she said she would present herself to other people that she is from Kunming, and never would have considered about her Hakka heritage. Because Hakka for her is just something she has common with her grandma and nothing else. She also claims that in her school people with ethnic minorities' background usually eat with each other while dining, separated from the Han Chinese. She always sits with the Han students, because she never considers herself not being one.

Upon asking them if they see Hakka as an ethnic minority (shao shu min zu), both of them answered negatively. They do not see any difficulty being both Han and Hakka. Actually the grandma says it is good if other people think of them as different, because she believes that Hakkas are different, since they are guests, and they are more diligent and honest than other people. She claims she had only heard good comments about Hakka from elsewhere, telling her how amazed they are over the bond Hakka people have to each other. The answers grandma and her grand-daughter gave surprised me a bit and does not fully match with the theories I had on Hakka people before I came.

Later that week I met a female between 30-40 years old, born in Guangdong to a Hakka father, but moved to Yunnan in early age and has spent her last 25 years in Yunnan. She confirms the lack of socializing between Hakka people in her generation. She herself has occasionally joined her father to some of the Hakka gathering, but claims to have no contact with any Hakka people around her age. She also never

reveals her Hakka identity to other people, both Han-Chinese and minorities, the reason for that is, according to her, that she never felt any reason doing so. If someone asks her where she is from or who she is, she naturally would reply that she is from Guangdong, a "Guangdongese" living in Kunming, simply because that feels natural. The only times she would reveal her Hakka background are those when she meets a fellow Hakka or when she is asked directly. She believes most of the people she interacts with do not know anything about Hakka, and thereby it would be unnatural to talk about Hakka with them.

She also revealed that in her home she never spoke Hakka with her son and husband. The only person she spoke Hakka with is basically just her father. She considers herself as much a "Guangdongese" as a Hakka. Since she does not consider Hakka as an ethnic minority, she claims she never really thought about her Hakka identity except when it is particularly mentioned. Neither does she feel any ambiguity being both Hakka and Han. She considers herself as Han Chinese. She believes people in her parents' age are more dedicated to Hakka culture and identity than herself.

Ye Zhizhang⁸⁸ explains that there is not much Hakka culture or identity left in Yunnan. Some of the first generation Hakkas speaks Hakka with their spouses and fellow Hakkas, but they seldom spoke Hakka with their children and grandchildren. There are several reasons for this. One is some of the Hakkas settled in Yunnan married non-Hakkas, and thereby it would be rather difficult to maintain the language within home. Furthermore, second generation Hakkas usually find local spouses, so the chances for third generation to speak Hakka are rather small. Endogamy is naturally less common in Kunming than in Meizhou, where one can find Hakka everywhere. Especially for the upcoming generation this tradition seemed less important.

In my survey, which only involved 26 participants, 17 of these do not have Hakka

⁸⁸ Ye Zhizhang is a retired biologist in Kunming of Hakka heritage. He has written a couple of articles about Hakka people in Yunnan area.

spouse. 14 of which are retired Hakka over the age of 60. Notable is that every each one of them have been in Yunnan for more than 20 years, which may indicate that many of them found their spouse in the province. However, during the 50s and 70s there were relatively many Hakka students in the district, which means it should be possible to find a Hakka spouse as well if they find endogamy important enough. I was told by several Hakka elders in Yunnan who confirms that quite a few of the Yunnan Hakkas who came here in the 50s and 60s found local spouse instead of one of their own, and they believe this may have cost the loss of Hakka dialect among the younger generations in Yunnan. In the same survey only one person between the age of 20 and 40 participated. She was born in Kunming, is a university graduate and speak very little Hakka. Her relation to Hakka culture basically is limited to Hakka cuisine made at home, and sometimes she may join her parents to gatherings with other Hakka elders. Her attitude towards her own identity seems similar to the other younger Hakka people I met in Yunnan. She does not find it natural to present herself as Hakka, but she does not mind to do so when asked. However to her she would prefer to say she is from Guangdong as everyone else know what Guangdong is and where it is located. Hakka is a much more unfamiliar term for Chinese outside of the areas where most of the Hakka are settled.⁸⁹ The answers the elder generation gave me were not much different. The majority of them find it more natural to tell non-Hakkas that they are from Guangdong since, as some of them put it, they are indeed from Guangdong. Usually only when they meet fellow Hakka people or the topic of Hakka somehow was brought up, they would find it natural to emphasize their ethnicity. The main difference between the elders and the younger Hakka seems to be that the latter are more easygoing when someone is questioning their heritage. When asked about what they would respond if non-Hakkas questioning their Han-heritage, several of the elders would give long explanations in which they emphasize they are Han Chinese, some even claims they are of royal blood.⁹⁰ The group of people

⁸⁹ I spent 4 years in Shanghai, and most of my Chinese friends have very limited knowledge about Hakka. Some of them could not tell if it is a dialect or a group of people

⁹⁰ This originates probably from the claims of Taiping Rebellion's leader Hong Xiu Chuan's of himself being descends from a Song Dynasty Emperor. More on this in Nicole Constable (1989) p. 25

between 40 and 60 years old (which only consist of 4 people) would also emphasize they are Han people, but had apparently no intentions to elaborate it much more. The same goes for the younger Hakkas I met in the province. One major reason may be the fact that the majority of this group was born or at least grew up in Yunnan, speaks the local dialect.⁹¹ As a result the young people may have a stronger solidarity to the local people than fellow Hakkas. They do not consider themselves as much different from the people they interact with everyday, and the loyalty to Hakka may as well be less strong.

4.3 Reflections

It is important to keep in mind that the estimates I got from my surveys may be both too few and too narrow to represent Hakka people in Yunnan as a whole. I only spoke to around 30 people, and only 26 of them participated in the survey. Of these only 5 were not retired.

Another limitation is that my field work in Yunnan was, due to lack of budget and time, only conducted in Kunming and no other places in the province.⁹² One of my main reason choosing Yunnan as the province to do research on Hakka people was the belief that they are the ones whom interact with other minorities the most, and by this reason do emphasize their “Han” background in a clearer way. The limitation is based on the fact that Kunming, unlike many other places in Yunnan, does not habit so many minorities.⁹³ The majority of my informants, including the ones that participated in the survey, do not interact with minorities frequently - which means the main premise of the theory that I had does not apply to the majority of my sources.

⁹¹ Kunming dialect belongs to the Mandarin group of dialect in China, and is similar to the dialects in Sichuan and Guizhou

⁹² An additional reason for me not getting to other places but Kunming was that I received info from the Hakka communities in Yunnan and scholars in Yunnan Minorities Universities, all claiming there are no places in the province known to them that Hakka people are gathered.

⁹³ According to estimates from National Population Census 2010, only 13.84 % of Kunming’s population consists of national minorities. Link: http://yn.yunnan.cn/km/html/2011-05/26/content_1632518.htm

Even with these limitations, I have reason to believe my findings in Kunming do represent a trend of Hakka people in the city, and probably also in the whole province since I was told there were no bigger Hakka communities in Yunnan. The trend tells us that the younger generation of Hakka people in Yunnan do not engage themselves in Hakka-related activities frequently. This is confirmed by everyone I spoke to. There is also reason to believe that Hakka people in Yunnan do not concern much about whether they are Han or Hakka. The older ones will claim they are both, while the youngsters usually do not consider themselves anything but Han. The older generation is more concerned about their Hakka heritage, while the younger ones seem rather indifferent to it. Based on these indications, it does seem that my theory and assumption on Hakka in Yunnan do not apply to reality in much degree. First of all, one major premise was missing; Hakka people in Yunnan do not interact with other ethnic minorities nearly as much as I thought they do. My theory suggests that they would be more conscious about their Han heritage because this part of their ethnicity is “surrounded” by many other non-Han people. But reality says that the premise was not accurate, and thereby they do not have the reason to emphasize themselves being “Han” as much as they may.

But is the nature of their identity fluid? Do it changes due to circumstances? We do have one significant example of this fluidness in the 19 year old woman I met who acts as local Kunming student day in and day out except when meeting her grandmother. Then she suddenly changed to speaking Hakka and listen to her grandmother telling old tales about Hakka people. This is nothing controversial or exclusive Hakka. It is very normal that people change their identity from one situation to another.⁹⁴ Here we prove that this apply to Hakka people in Yunnan as well. By comparing Hakka people in Yunnan with their fellow Hakkas in Meizhou and Hong Kong, we may see more differences, and thereby have a clearer picture of the nature of Hakka people’s fluidness.

⁹⁴ Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2002), p. 59-65 discussed changes of identities in detail

Chapter 5. Hakka people in Meizhou

As in Kunming I did conduct a short survey in order to get a wide picture of the situation for the Hakka people living in Meizhou. Around 50 people participated in this survey, I intended to find a representative amount of people in different ages with various background, but also in this attempt I encountered some problems which in many ways were quite opposite from the ones I had in Kunming. Relatively few Hakka people live in Yunnan, and most of who I got in touch with were people of a certain age. Very few Hakka under 50 years old were active in the Hakka community, and it was a challenge to get info and do surveys from a group of people of broad and various age and background.

In Meizhou I encountered the opposite problem. I was residing in the Hakka Research Institute within Jiaying University, naturally the majority of the Hakka people I encountered were students or professors. This reflects also in my interviews and surveys. I made attempts to ask other groups of people to participate in the survey, but was refused by many. I was told that many older people in Meizhou were in various degrees illiterate, and some less educated people were too embarrassed to show their handwritings to other people. After trying to hand out the surveys at public squares, malls and restaurants, people participating in the survey were still few. Another problem I had was to make my questions understandable for people without academic background. Too many words and phrases, such as “ethnicity” and “ethnic group”, are not known or ever reflected about for the majority of the Hakka people I could find outside the campus.

5.1 Young Hakkas and their relation to Hakka identity

Students and younger people though were far more willing to do the surveys and answer questions. And the results are quite interesting because we can see some clear differences between young people in Meizhou compared to their counterpart in Yunnan and also in Hong Kong. Among the participants there were 15 unmarried male students between 20 and 40 years old.⁹⁵ Every single one of them spoke Hakka and considered Hakka culture to be an integral part of their life. Most of them thinks Hakka culture appears everywhere in their daily life. When asked about whether they would reveal their Hakka identity to non-Hakkas or not their replies were for the mostly that they have no problems doing it, but usually only when asked or in situations which it would be natural to do so. Some of them may think Hakka is a rather unknown term for many outsiders, and do not feel for elaborating too much about their origin.

These answers seems to fit in with the replies I got from the students I had informal interviews with at the same university. It appears to me that most of the young people in Meizhou have never been really thinking about or deliberately tried to hide or show their ethnicity; to them Hakka is just a label of trivial things they deal with every single day. We should remember this group of people is from and living in a place where Hakka are totally dominated. In other words, Hakka, in every sense of the word, is their world. Some of the students I talked to could reveal that they had never interacted with any non-Hakkas before joining the Jiaying University. And in the university, the Hakka students are in clear majority, so it is not them who get questions regarding their origin, but the non-Hakka students who needs to answer where they are from.

⁹⁵ Just to note that most of these students naturally are in the beginning of the 20s

There were slightly differences between the 15 male students who answered the questionnaires when asked how they would present themselves in front of non-Hakkas. 8 of them claims they will say they are Hakka, 4 of them would either say they are Hakka or Han, 3 will refer themselves as a citizen from their home province⁹⁶, either Guangdong or Fujian as one the participant origins from.

If we look at the female students in the same age group, most of the same tendencies could be found there as well. 20 women in this group participated in the survey. Their answers on the questions were pretty much the same to the males. Everyone speaks Hakka, and nearly no one were particular reluctant to reveal their Hakka identity to outsiders. The main reason why some of them may be reluctant to do so, was told to me to be uncertainty regarding whether the outsider know of Hakka. It may therefore be more natural just telling which province they are from. As for the question about how they present themselves, 11 of the 20 asked said Hakka, 7 would name the province they are from while two may switch between Han or Hakka. These numbers indicate that it is still natural for more than half of the female students to present themselves as Hakka to outsiders. However, not everyone participated in the survey had been up to situations that requires them to present their origins, so the answers very possibly are hypothetical.

Even if certain reservations should be held to the results due to the fact that some of the questions may be open for various interpretations, and the numbers of participants may be too small to depict any thing that may represent a trend, still the answers seems to fit the impact I have on this group of people when interacting with them during the week I was staying in the campus. Compare to their Yunnan and also Hong Kong counterparts, they are rather, if not exactly proud, at least find being a Hakka as something completely natural and they do feel solidarity with other Hakka people. I was told the Hakka students seldom socialize with people from Chaozhou and

⁹⁶ It is important to specify that “home town” or “home province” in a Chinese setting may refer to the place one was born, grew up, but it may as well refer to the place one’s father origins from

Shantou (*Chaoshan ren*), and vice a versa, a few of them explain to me that there have always been some disputes between the Hakka and Chaoshan students within the university campus. Some of them do have a few Chaoshan friends, but mostly they would socialize with fellow Hakka and other groupings, including their old enemy, the Cantonese.

When asked about what they define Hakka as, most of them agree that Hakka is mainly a symbol of identity. It is a symbol because Hakka as language and culture do dominate their lives in many ways. Some of the students I met have been travelling to other parts of China, mainly the nearby cities Guangzhou and Shenzhen, some of them also outside of the province, been to cities like Beijing, Shanghai, Xi'an, Chongqing etc. Unlike the results I received from the survey, none of these students ever address themselves as Hakka when they meet people from other parts of the country. They usually call themselves Guangdongese,⁹⁷ because it feels natural to do so for people who probably don't even know what Hakka is. The students claim they speak Hakka everyday, not just to their family but also to classmates, friends and others at their age. They do not feel themselves to be special, because, as they say, they do not have much to compare with, since most of the people around them are Hakkas.

In addition to this however, I did meet a Hakka student from Guangzhou who claims to have been asked in his hometown about his origin. As a Guangzhou-born Hakka the questions did give him certain reflections on his own identity, because by living in Guangzhou he faced people with different background than his and his every day. It would have been interesting to do a field work in Guangzhou on a later occasion to find out how they deal with dual identity when surrounded by Cantonese.

⁹⁷ The reason for them addressing themselves as from Guangdong and not Meizhou, is because Meizhou is rather unknown in other parts in China

5.2 Being Han Chinese and Hakka

One of the students could tell he had heard somewhere that there was just coincidence that Hakka did not come to the list as one of the 56 ethnic groups in China, and he jokingly said he would not mind being a national minority, with all the benefits it can get. Even if he and the others claim they never ever feel they are not Han, still, their nature of being Hakka is still significant. Worship of ancestors are compulsory on the days of festivals, and everyone of them claims their parents have asked them to find Hakka spouse rather than some of "the others". When I asked them, why the parents have such a demand, they say they believe the parents want someone they can talk to and relate to, the parents (some of them would probably live with their sons/daughters-in-laws) do not want to have to teach someone about the rules and customs that are significant Hakka's. It would therefore be much convenient for them that their children marry to some of their own kind. To my surprise, the students do not express any disdain towards this attitude. Instead they seemed to be supportive, and nearly everyone of the married Hakka I interviewed or participated in the survey have Hakka spouse. Some of the unmarried ones, including a few young students, both male and female, claims they also intend to marry a Hakka because it would be most the convenient thing to do.

None of the students seem to consider themselves not being a Han Chinese. There is nothing in the survey that does not support this conclusion. That does not necessarily mean they consider themselves as less Hakka, in fact a few of the participants did explicitly write in the surveys that they feel great honor to be a Hakka, and they hope other Hakka people share the same feeling for their origin and identity as well.

5.3 Reflections

Before I went to Meizhou I expected the Hakka people in the area as the group with less reflections and conflicts on their ethnicity since they are living with fellow Hakka,

and had nearly no other groups to compare with. After spending time in Meizhou I consider my assumption in many ways proves to be accurate. With the exceptions of students in Jiaying University, who are among the few interacting with other groupings frequently, the Hakka people I met in Meizhou do not pay much reflection on their ethnicity. This despite the traditions we usually associate with Hakka, such as Hakka language, cuisine, ancestors worship, festivals, are kept much more intact than the other Hakkas I visited during my field work. The Hakka people in Meizhou do speak Hakka both within home and elsewhere, they do eat Hakka food on daily bases, and they do keep family records. Many of them live in Circle Dragon Houses, and, as I have been told, they do consider ancestors worship and major festivals as extremely important. These are all trademarks that we associate with Hakka people. Neither in Yunnan nor in Hong Kong are these to be found in such a degree as in Meizhou. However, when it comes to consciousness to their own ethnicity, I do not believe Meizhou people in general have much of compare to the other groups. The keyword here is, as I see it, isolation. The Hakka people in Meizhou do not interact with non-Hakkas on a daily basis. In fact, one old Hakka lady I visited in a village in the outskirts of Meizhou claimed she has not left the village in 30 years, and that was about the last time she met someone who does not speak her language before she met me. Naturally she never reflected herself being a part of a distinctive ethnic group. Not being able to speak mandarin and being isolated from the outside world⁹⁸ without any interaction with other groupings but Hakka seems to me as some of the main reasons why Hakka people in Meizhou do not reflect on their ethnicity.

⁹⁸ There are many villages outside the city center of Meizhou which do not provide any public transport or even roads broad enough for bigger vehicles. Usually, the only vehicles being used in these areas are motorbikes. This makes transportations from and to these villages very inconvenient.

Chapter 6: Hong Kong

The next stop for me is Hong Kong. After spending time with Hakkas in "the province of minorities" and Hakkas in the thick Hakka-land, I wanted to see how the Hakka people in urban Hong Kong, where the main population is Han-people, perceive themselves and think about their identity. Hong Kong is divided into three main parts. One is the Hong Kong Island where the city administration and the financial center reside. The Kowloon Peninsula is connected with the mainland and is the largest part of Hong Kong. New Territories is also connected to Mainland, and most Hakka people are settled in this area. They are spread over among 300 villages.⁹⁹

I already gave a brief presentation in the history of Hong Kong earlier in the text. The main population in Hong Kong originates from four major migrations.¹⁰⁰ Hakka people have migrated to Hong Kong for centuries, the latest major migration happened in the aftermath of World War Two. The first major migration of Hakka people to Hong Kong is believed to be due to the massive resettlement of Hong Kong during the early period of Qing when the emperor wanted to expand the southern borders to avoid the Ming controlled Taiwan from taking the land in the south. Most of the Hakka population in New Territories today is believed to be descendants from these people.¹⁰¹ They are mainly from the northeast area of Guangdong, but some of them may come from Fujian and Jiangxi province. The numbers of Hakka who came to the area were tremendous, which resulted in upsetting of over 400 Hakka villages, most of which are located in New Territories. The background for long-going conflicts between the Hakkas, and the Bendi people who already were living in the area, was thereby established.

⁹⁹ In Lau Yee Cheung *Hakkas in Hong Kong* (香港客家) (2007) p. 57, Lau Chen Fa claims the Hong Kong government announced in 1991 that there were 341 Hakka villages in the New Territories area in Hong Kong

¹⁰⁰ Lau Yee Chang, (2007) p 2-3

¹⁰¹ See Lau Yee Cheung (2007) p49 for a more detail description of where the Hakka people comes from.

I started my research by asking a Hakka student about what he considers is the current state of the Hakka population in Hong Kong, when it comes to cultural preservation and self-perception. His view is that the Hakka culture in Hong Kong is in decline and he did not believe in my hypothesis that the Hakka people in Hong Kong will find themselves different and distinctive when being surrounded by Han-people. He believes most of the Hong Kong Hakka is much assimilated to the local culture.

In an attempt to find out if my assumptions were right or not, I have chosen to visit two villages that should represent some of the major differences within Hakka villages. The two villages I have chosen to visit are Shun Him Tong, and originally Wong Yu Tan, but later changed to Tai Mei Duk. I have chosen these villages because they supposedly represent two of the edges of Hakka communities in Hong Kong. Shung Him Tong is mainly a village of Hakka people surrounded by a church, where approximately 80 per cent of the people in the village join the church meetings every Sunday.¹⁰² Wong Yu Tan is given to me as a typical Hakka village in Hong Kong, where the people living there are mainly elders; the majority of the younger people originally from the village live now outside in the city or abroad.

6.1 Shung Him Tong

I went to the Shung Him Tong village first, and the village's landmark, the Hakka church, was probably the very first building that met while I was driving towards the village. The people in the church could tell me that many things have changed there during the past decade. The numbers of the church's visitors who do not live in the village anymore are increasing. Some of them may have their origin in the village; others are Christians from outside, with no direct connection to Shung Him Tong. Transportation has been increased to a level that most villages, including Shung Him Tong, are by no means isolated from the city centre, meaning many people with whatever ties they have to the church, easily can access to and be a part of it. At the

¹⁰² This number was given to me by the volunteers in the church

same time many of the old inhabitants have been moving to other places in HK or abroad, and renting away flats and houses to people from other places, many of them non-Hakkas, some of them even foreigners. Today more and more of the inhabitants in Shun Him Tong's village have no ties or connection to the village or the church. Around 3/5 are still Hakkas¹⁰³, but the numbers are in heavy decline.

According to one local I spoke to, who grew up in the village, the people here, except of the new settlers from outside, all speak Hakka. I met this information with skeptics because none of the youngsters I myself spoke to could speak Hakka properly. I was told that in the school, teachers never teach the children Hakka, but some times elder teachers may use Hakka to teach class. Nonetheless, this is also in decline. The first person I interviewed in Shun Him Tong was a local, Deng, whose whole family came to this village and established a home back in the end of Qing dynasty. He explained the local history and told me about the discriminations the local people did towards the Hakka when he was young, that they sometimes were not allowed to go back and forth from the village. He could also reveal that, unlike in Meizhou, the Hakkas here never ask their children to marry a fellow Hakka. They understand the time is changing, and in most of the cases they would not have any problem or involvements in terms of what spouse their children choose. Deng is an educated former teacher, and he used to teach abroad before coming back to his village to settle down. He claims that he never had heard anything about any one claiming Hakka as a national minority, when questioning what Hakka is for him, he just says it is a series of rituals, customs and of course, language. It is not exactly like that either, because as a Christian, they cannot practice much of the traditional rituals that people would associate with the Hakkas. Some times they do have alternative solutions when it comes to carry out traditional rituals. I arrived to the Shung Him Tong village just before the Chong Yang festival. It is a traditional festival for Chinese to visit the graveyards in the mountains and burn incense for the deceased. Festivals like these are traditionally very important for Hakkas; however because of their Christian belief

¹⁰³ This number is given to me by several of the villages seniors.

people in Shung Him Tong cannot follow this old tradition. What the church did was to use this opportunity to arrange a social mountain trip in which all of the church members could sign up for. By doing so they could carry on with their traditions, while dealing with it in their own terms.

It is important to be aware of the special relationship between Christianity and Hakka identity in Hong Kong. The missionaries came to Hong Kong in the aftermath of the Opium War, when Hong Kong became a British Colony, and started to learn Hakka in order to convert the Hakka people.¹⁰⁴ This has effectively strengthened the awareness of identity among the Hakkas, and the connection between Christianity and Hakka identity became tighter.

After my rather unsuccessful trip to Wong Yu Tan village at Tai Bo, in which I was ignored by the few inhabitants left in the "under construction" village, I left for a trip to some of the nearby villages, hoping that I would have more luck. Initially I went outside a village nearby, Ting Kok Village, also at Tai Bo, where several old women were speaking Hakka. Some of them also spoke Cantonese. I was told this village originally was not a Hakka village, and it is still not considered as one, however many people speak Hakka, including the Cantonese people. The reason is because the village has in the last 100 years been "importing" Hakka wives from villages nearby, and therefore the culture and language in this village has been mixed up. I met a Cantonese lady who spoke Hakka to her Hakka mother-in-law because she could not speak Cantonese. Although not being a Hakka herself, this Cantonese woman has developed the ability to understand and speak Hakka, based on several years of interaction with Hakka in her family and among other people in the village community. She claims she is far from the only person with similar experience and ability. In fact many Cantonese women and men in her age can speak both languages because there are Hakka people in many families.

¹⁰⁴ Lau Yee Cheung (2007) p. 3

6.2 Tai Mei Duk

I carried on with my search for a more distinctive Hakka village and succeeded when I found Tai Mei Duk. Tai Mei Duk is located in New Territories. I went to the local village house at Tai Mei Duk and arranged a talk with some of the people there. The village has been there for around 300 years, and some of the inhabitants have been there for generations. I noticed some significant differences between this village and the one I saw in Meizhou. There are almost only new houses left in this village. Most of the old buildings were torn down because supposedly no one wants to live in them anymore. Later I got into conversation with some men in their 40s-50s. They all claim that they speak Hakka fluently. According to one man who has been in Tai Mei Duk all his life, most of the people in the village over 25 years old can speak Hakka, but they do not necessarily speak it all the time. When I arrived to the village, I noticed some people sitting in the corner were speaking both speaking Cantonese and Hakka simultaneously. It seems to me, which later was confirmed by some of the people I talked to, that they often mix Hakka and Cantonese together when having conversations, sometimes even within a sentence. Over the years they have developed this habit to speak both dialects over each other. Despite being able to speak both Hakka and Cantonese, the people I spoke to claim they consider themselves as 100 % Hakka, even if they also consider themselves as Hongkongese. They do not see any conflict in being both Hongkongese and Hakka. However I was told that even if most of the people over the age of 25 are able to speak Hakka, the younger ones of these people choose rather not speak this dialect, and they usually would not speak Hakka at home. To the Hakka people here in Tai Mei Duk, ancestors worship are of big importance, during the period I went to visit the village, Chung Yeung festival¹⁰⁵ coincidentally happened in the same time. Most of the inhabitants of the village had just come back from burning incenses in the mountains when I met them. And they plan for a boat trip together also for worshipping ancestors. Not unlike the Hakka people at the Shung Him Tong village, they also choose to mix traditions with social gathering

¹⁰⁵ See footnote 45 in this text for information regarding Chong Yang Festival

and fun. I had an in-depth interview with a 36 years old male, who provided me some more detailed info about how Hakka people in his generation interact with each other and other people. He reveals that he speaks mainly Cantonese with people within the same age, even if they all are Hakkas and fluent in Hakka dialect. But they usually speak Hakka to the people in their parent's generation. And he claims that most of the people in his age in this village do participate in most of the traditional activities with the elders. He consider Hakka as a tradition and a language rather than an ethnic group, nevertheless, whenever he speaks to other Hongkongese he recalls to have been presenting himself as a Hakka, but at the same time, he would never think of calling himself anything else but Hongkongese to a foreigner or mainlander. He sees no conflict being a Hakka and a Hongkongese at the same time, but admits, as abovementioned that this identity sometimes do fluid a bit. As in Shung Him Tong, there are never any demands from the parents to their children of finding a Hakka life time partner. He, however, claims that he considers himself as a hardcore Hakka who wants to preserve Hakka tradition, but feel that the situation in Hong Kong now is quite hopeless, as the life situation in the city changes in a way that does not help the work of preservation. When he was a child, his parents went to the city centre for work, leaving his grandparents taking care of him while they are away. His grandparents spoke just Hakka, making him fluent in the dialect. Today, people in his age are often already living in the city centre with their children, and speak Cantonese at home, and for those still living in the village they usually can afford a maid to take care of their children instead of letting the grandparents doing the job. Tai Mei Duk are also facing some of the same problem as Shun Him Tong, people are renting out their houses to non-Hakka while they are abroad, making the village more mixed with people from all places. Add with almost no interest for keeping the tradition for the youngest ones, and willingness to learn the language, he does not think Hakka culture in the village can last much longer.

6.3 Hakka in Hong Kong and their views on Han identity

The status of today is the usage of Hakka dialect in the classroom is close to non-existent. According to Lau Yee Chang, this has not always been the case¹⁰⁶. Some of my others sources could tell that some older Hakka teachers may still teach in Hakka in some school, mainly because they are more fluent in Hakka than in Cantonese.

The possible conflict being “Han” or not being Han seems to be much less applicable for the Hakkas from Hong Kong. The term “Han-Chinese” is seldom used in Hong Kong, and as a result the Hakka people here would never find this to be problem. Even if the Han people has been a phrase for many centuries to describe the descendants of the Han dynasty, the “Han” term, as a name for an ethnic nationality was introduced to China in modern times, mainly during the shift of empire to nation state¹⁰⁷ The term was introduced as a name to represent the majority of people in China, the nationalists allegedly also used the term as a way to mobilize people from the north to the south into one national group, and stand in opposition against the Manchurians and other foreign threats. After the communists took over the power of China, they set up the 56 ethnic groups, which included the Han nationality. However, the people of Hong Kong does not use the term often, they would rather use “Hongkongese”.¹⁰⁸ One main reason may be the fact that Hong Kong was not a part of China when the Han term was introduced. As a part of the Treaty of Nanking from the aftermath of second Opium War, Hong Kong was formally ceded to the United Kingdom¹⁰⁹, and has been a British colony for over a century before it got transferred to the PRC in 1997. As a result of this, Hong Kong was not a part of Republic of China while “Han people” got introduced and became a household term in the country.

¹⁰⁶ At least two schools in northern New Territories have been using Hakka dialect in the classrooms Lau Yee Cheung, p2

¹⁰⁷ Dru C. Gladney (1998) p 18-19

¹⁰⁸ Eric Ma (2007) discusses the identity dilemma of Hong Kong people when choosing between Chinese or Hongkongese

¹⁰⁹ For further readings regarding the takeover of Hong Kong, please read for instance John M. Carrol, *A Concise History of Hong Kong*, (2007) Introduction

As a Cantonese speaker myself, I do not recall this phrase being spoken by anyone in Hong Kong

Instead, the Hong Kong people may refer themselves simply as Hongkongese, or even Tang people, as descendants from the Tang dynasty. Traditionally most of the southern groups in China did refer themselves as such before the Han term came along.¹¹⁰ Overseas Chinese nowadays may also refer themselves as “Tang ren” or “Tang People, and most Chinatowns both in the west and southeast Asia are called “Tang Ren Jie” or “Tang Person Street”. However within Hong Kong, the term “Hongkongese” or “Xiang Gang Ren” is by far the most commonly used term referring to the local citizens. Even the phrase “Zhongguoren” or Chinese are not often used. As a response to this, the Chinese government has been launching ideological campaigns in order to impose patriotic feeling and nationality to the Hong Kong people¹¹¹

6.4 Reflections

I came to Hong Kong with the belief that the Hakka people in Hong Kong would be the group within the ones I visited that was most conscious about their Hakka identity. The basis of this theory is that when Hakka people in Hong Kong are surrounded by a majority of non-Hakkas, or Cantonese, that they even have a long history of conflicts with, their Hakka identity should be strong. But the reality seems to be slightly different from what I expected. In contrast with the Hakka people in Meizhou, I believe one of the main reasons why the Hakka people in Hong Kong, especially the younger ones, do not care much for their Hakka heritage, is the lack of isolation. They are simply too assimilated to the local culture. Hong Kong is a well developed metropolitan with a public transportation system that works very well. There are frequently buses, trains, metro lines and boats to every single corner in Hong Kong,

¹¹⁰ Dru C. Gladney (1998) p 22

¹¹¹ Please read Eric Ma, ‘Grassroots Nationalism’ (2007) In addition, I myself saw the National Anthem of PRC being broadcast frequently in Hong Kong television when I was doing field work there between 25 Oct and 30 Oct 2009.

leaving no one isolated from the city centre. I remember well how convenient there was to get by when I visited the Hakka villages in the outskirts of Hong Kong. It was never a problem coming back to downtown after a visit, and in fact many of the inhabitants in the Hakka villages do work in downtown and spent as much time there as they do at home. The younger people are massively exposed to local pop culture both at home and at school. Some of the Hakka students I talked to could tell me they had no intention to learn how to speak Hakka, because they consider the dialect not sounding good (nan ting) and is in their sense not “in” (bu chaoliu). I spoke to 7 people between 16 and 22. Every one of them is either university or high school students. None of them could speak Hakka fluently, a few of them could say a few words. Both Shung Him Tang and Tai Mei Duk are experiencing heavy emigration from the original people. When I was walking around in Tai Po trying to find Hakka villages I noticed endless rows of leasing signs, indicates the tendencies all of the people is keep telling me may be true; many people are leaving the villages and renting their houses out to whoever that may be interest. Indeed, I did see a number of foreigners walking out of the houses while I was doing my field work in Tai Mei Duk. All in all my impression after spending time in these two villages suggest that the people’s dedication and awareness to their ethnicity is no longer significant. The church in Shung Him Tong was formerly a Hakka church¹¹². Now both non-Hakkas and people with no former connection to Shung Him Tong are coming to the church frequently. Many Hakka people are leaving the village, and people from outside are moving in. Young people do not speak nor understand Hakka language. The same goes for Tai Mei Duk. Outsiders are moving in, while Hakka people are moving out. The usage of Hakka language is decreasing. Exogamy is no longer a demand within the group. Cantonese culture has seemingly taken over most of the traditional values the Hakka people ones had.

¹¹² According to people working in the church, the church never had any rules not allowing non-Hakkas visiting, but it used to only host villagers in Shung Him Tong, who were all Hakkas.

On the other hand, we must not forget that they still maintain some of the traditional costumes. Even if the church in Shung Him Tong now houses many non-Hakkas, the people there still tries to keep the church's tradition singing songs in Hakka intact. They still arrange bigger Hakka festivals, while trying to do it the Hakka-way without coming in conflict with their Christianity belief. Also in Tai Mei Duk are the festivals important, which lead to the conclusion that Hakka people in Hong Kong do in a small degree emphasizing their culture as a contrast to the local, Cantonese culture. On contrary, the Hakka people in Hong Kong in strong sense embrace the local culture, and treat it as their own. Still, the older Hakka people try to preserve some of their traditional festivals and customs.

Chapter 7. Conclusion

The main object of this paper is to show how the Hakka people in the three locations I conducted my field work at cope with their multiple identities. My assumption on beforehand was that the Hakka people in these three different areas would respond differently based on and according to their places of living and their surroundings. This assumption is based on the theory the more the ethnic group, in this case the Hakka people, interact with people from other ethnic groups, and the more they would be aware and conscious on their identity.¹¹³ In addition to this theory, another that suggests “*identity may change when society changes*”¹¹⁴ serve as the foundation for my research in the fields. The fact that the Hakka people are living with a dual identity, being both Han and Hakka, make this even more complicated. I assumed when they are surrounded by other Hakka people, like in Meizhou, their “Hakkaness” would be less conscious. In Hong Kong, where the majority of the people are non-Hakka Chinese, their “Hakkaness” would be strong. Hakka people in Yunnan are surrounded by people from other ethnic groups and minority. I expected their “Han’nes” to be much more illuminated than the Hakka people from the two other places. What I wanted to prove in my research is that Hakka identity is fluid, and its appearances are depending on circumstances. By comparing Hakka people in these three areas together, we should be able to see when and hopefully also why the fluidness occurs.

This task turned out to be much more challenging than I expected. It appears to me that most of the people I encountered seemingly never had the dilemma by being with a dual identity in mind. Most of them hardly ever contemplate about their identity. It may be hard enough for me, and for them, to express what defines Hakka culture identity and culture. A significant number of people I spoke to or interviewed do not even have the clue of terms of identity and ethnicity. This however does not

¹¹³ Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2001) p. 263

¹¹⁴ Thomas Hylland Eriksen (2002) p. 62

necessarily prove much; not being able to speak of identity does not mean they do not express it in a different way. The Yunnan Hakkas are small in numbers, and the dedication of the majority of the Hakka people to the community is also questionable, but the fact that there is a small community running in Kunming suggests a certain consciousness and awareness of Hakka identity in the province. The older people I spoke to in Yunnan were certainly not indifferent to their ethnical backgrounds, both my experiences in Yunnan and results of the surveys suggest that.

However, not much indicates the fact that Yunnan are surrounded by ethnic minorities have anything to do to how much the Hakka people there care for their identity. For one, I did not find one single Hakka person finding him or herself not being a Han. More importantly, none of the Hakka people I met had notable contact with other ethnic minorities in the province¹¹⁵, making it difficult to relate their Han'nes to the minorities they live close to. It was hard to find any relation here whatsoever. But does their identity fluid? The people within the Hakka community do not seem to use their Hakka identity actively in any way whenever they are interacting with non-Hakkas. Only when they meet fellow Hakkas their Hakka identity will come to display. On any other circumstances they act as Han-Chinese or "Guangdongese". Whether or not the people they interact with are ethnic minorities or fellow Han Chinese seems to be rather not important.

7.1 Comparison

Only when we compare Hakka people in all these places together we may detect the fluidness of their identity. Do the Hakka people settled in these three areas act differently in terms of self-reception, and if so, are these differences related to their circumstances, and thereby proven that Hakka identity is fluid?

¹¹⁵ Both the surveys and the interviews indicate that Hakka people in Kunming do not interact with minorities frequently. According to Kunming Municipal Bureau of Statistics, only 13, 84 % of Kunming's population are ethnic minorities: see footnote 91 for link

It is tempting to answer this question simply with a “yes”. As proven earlier in the text, identity does fluid, Hakka or not. Common sense indicates this as well. Emigration is a global phenomenon, which creates multiple identities. In this text we mentioned Han settlers in minority areas and Chinese in East Asian countries in addition to Hakka. I myself am a Norwegian citizen born and partly raised in Hong Kong, and there is no doubt that I do change my identity depending on my surroundings and who I will be interacting with on occasions. My findings, with its limitations anyhow, proves this apply to Hakka people as well. The Hakka people in these three places do have a different attitude towards their ethnic identity, not to mention a different understanding and knowledge of Hakka culture and identity. People over a certain age are less different compare to the youngsters. The older generation in all three places does all speak the language and have knowledge on customs and traditions in Hakka culture. The group in Yunnan, however, seems more dedicated and proud being Hakka compare to the ones I met in Meizhou where being Hakka is something the majority finds natural and hardly anything they need to reflect about. On the other hand, the Meizhou Hakkas do practice the customs and traditions associated to Hakka culture in much larger degree than the Yunnan Hakkas do. All of my informants in Meizhou do recognize the importance of exogamy within the ethnic group. Not as a way to maintain the Hakka lineage, but mainly for practical reasons. This is something that does not exist in any significant way in the Hakka communities in Yunnan and Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, however I did sense a certain degree of pride among the older generation Hakka people. As previously mentioned, a number of my informants repeatedly mentioned them being descends of royalties and high officials from Song dynasty, and therefore being a Hakka is something one should be proud of. When it comes to dedication to work for broaden Hakka community in the area, however, the Yunna Hakkas do seem more dedicated. The Hakka people in Meizhou are the only ones who consider exogamy as an important part of life. None of the informants that I spoke to in Hong Kong, being Shung Him Tong or Tai Mei Duk, which are different in many other ways, does suggest exogamy. When asked about this, the older Hakka people in Hong Kong could tell me that they for long have realized that finding

spouses to their children is not something they should be concerning about.

The younger Hakka people in these areas are different in more than one way. All of the youngsters in Meizhou do speak Hakka and willingly participate in many activities that we usually associate with Hakka culture¹¹⁶. They even agree when asked what they feel about the demands given by many parents that they should marry a fellow Hakka. In many sense, the youngsters in Meizhou has a very old-fashioned view on their Hakka heritage. This is very different from what we can tell from the young Hakka people in the other two areas. The topic of exogamy is not once brought up in Yunnan or Hong Kong while I was speaking to my informants. When asked, both groups expressed that they would never imagine their parents having such a demand. In fact, the difference between young Hakkas in Yunnan and Hong Kong is hard to detect. Only a limited numbers of these two groups speak Hakka dialect. Most of them are assimilated to the local culture, and their Hakkaness only comes to display when interacting with the upper generation. All in all, we can say that compare to older Hakka people, the younger people do not care as much about their identity and heritage. My impression, based on the few in-depth interviews I had with teenagers and early-twenties in Hong Kong, is that some of them even find Hakka language to be something they would rather stay away from¹¹⁷.

We can find clear differences between older and younger Hakkas in all three areas. However, gender does not seem to be major factor when comparing similarities and differences between these groups

7.2 What do the findings prove?

My findings prove in large degree that Hakka identity is fluid, and it changes when

¹¹⁶ While I was in Meizhou, preparations were being made for the upcoming Chong Yang festival. The youngsters I had contact with participated in this work, and all of them expressed happiness and excitement for the festival.

¹¹⁷ I found these tendencies both in Shung Him Tong and Tai Mei Duk, suggesting this phenomena may be widespread in Hong Kong.

circumstances change. This conclusion is based on the facts that Hakka people within Yunnan, Meizhou and Hong Kong have a different perception on their ethnicity and their identity. My findings also prove that these differences somehow have connection to their place of living. Their environment serves as a major factor when it comes to how they perceive themselves as, and what views they have on the Hakka traditions and customs that their parents and the generations before that brought with them. What my findings do not prove, is that it is problematic having multiple identities. One of the reasons why the identity of Hakka attracted me to do research on this subject matter, was them being a famous sub-group of Han but not recognized as a national minority by the Chinese government. My assumptions before leaving for the field trips suggest coping with multiple identities, especially between Hakka and Han, would be a dilemma for the people involved. I consider my findings in much degree prove me wrong. Seemingly, none of the individuals I have spoken to, or the ones participated in the surveys I made, have any problem themselves being both Hakka and Han. The prejudices and discrimination towards Hakka people up in the history may have served as a reason for why many of them wish to be recognized as full-worthy Han Chinese. Circumstances and surroundings may have effects to their ethnic consciousness, but I did not see the same effects apply to their perception on themselves being Han Chinese. Of course, Hakka people in Hong Kong are in special situation as previously mentioned¹¹⁸, but neither do they seem to have any problem being different from other Hongkongese. My findings show that the Hakka identity, as other identities, is fluid, but not in the way I expected based on the theories I had. The Yunnan Hakkas are not more Han than their fellow Hakkas in Meizhou. The Hong Kong Hakkas are not more Hakka than Hakkas in the other areas I made my field trips in. The fluidness in their identity seems to be based on in what degrees they are assimilated to the local culture, rather than because of the local people around them were Han Chinese or minorities. Being both Han Chinese and Hakka seems to be something they are having an unproblematic relation to, and do not affect to their sense of identity in any large degree.

¹¹⁸ See chapter 6 regarding this

Appendix I

Following are the questions I used both in my surveys and interviews. The order is arbitrary:

1. What language do you use within home?
2. What language do you use while interacting with friends?
3. Do you care for Hakka culture?
4. Do you consider yourself different from other Han-Chinese?
5. Do you present yourself as Hakka, Han-Chinese or other?
6. In your opinion, what is Hakka identity?
7. In your opinion, what is Hakka culture?
8. In what way do Hakka culture display in your daily life?
9. While interacting with other Han-Chinese, what will you present yourself as?
10. While interacting with national minorities, what will you present yourself as?

Names of individuals I had in-depth interviews with (in pseudonyms):

Yunnan:

Mr. Li, retired, male, between 60-70 years old (26.08.2009)

Ms. Chen, student, female, 19 years old (29.08.2009)

Mrs. Wu, retired, female, 70-80 years old (29.08.2009)

Mrs. Lin, at work, female, 30-40 years old (01.09.2009)

In addition to these, I submitted a survey, in which 26 persons participated, and had informal talks with several Hakka people in the Hakka community and scholars in Kunming. Among these, Ye Zhizhang, Zhao Jie, Wu Chengrong and Du Juan provided me important information.

Meizhou:

Tong, student, male, 19 years old (16.10.2009)
Qing, student, female, 18 years old (16.10.2009)
Chen, student, male, 18 years old (16.10.2009)
Qiu, student, female, 17 years old (16.10.2009)
Liu, student, male 18 years old (16.10.2009)
Ling, student, female 18 years old (16.10.2009)
Mr. Li, farmer, 60-70 years old (20.10.2009)
Mrs. Bai, at work, 30-40 years old (20.10.2009)
Mr. Yao, farmer, 50-60 years old (21.10.2009)
Mrs. Li, farmer, 70-80 years old (21.10.2009)

In addition to these I submitted a survey in which 57 persons participated, and had informal talks with many others including staff members of Hakka Research Institute in Jiaying University, such as Prof. Fang Xuejia who provided me much help.

Hong Kong:

Mr. Deng, retired, male, 60-70 years old (27.10.2009)
Mr. Luo, at work, male, 50-60 years old (27.10.2009)
Bing, student, female 22 years old (27.10.2009)
Fan, student, male, 20 years old (27.10.2009)
Wen, student, female, 18 years old (27.10.2009)
Ming, student, male, 17 years old (27.10.2009)
Ying, student, female, 17 years old (27.10.2009)
Lai, student, female, 17 years old (27.10.2009)
Bao, student, male, 16 years old (27.10.2009)
Bai, at work, male, 36 years old (29.10.2009)

In addition to these, I had informal talks with a couple of other people, including Hakka researchers such as Lau Yee Cheung who provided me much important information concerning Hakkas in Hong Kong.

Appendix II

Below is a map of China. The places in which field works were conducted are marked with stars.

Triangle: Meizhou

Square: Hong Kong

Circle: Kunming



Figure 1. Source: China Odyssey Tours

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