Back to Taiwan: Adaptation and Self-Identity of Young Taiwanese Return Migrants from Australia[†]

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Abstract

This study investigates adaptations and self-identities of young return migrants from Australia to Taiwan, employing a semi-structured questionnaire to interview 22 young Taiwanese migrants who emigrated at young ages with their parents to Australia and have returned. It was found that these young returnees came back mainly to look for better career opportunities. However, the chance of reunions with their families in Taiwan, the search for potential spouses, and their affection towards Taiwan were also important factors leading to their reverse migration. The young returnees' different experiences in the two societies of Taiwan and Australia mean that they had to adapt to various aspects of their environments with deliberate effort. Meanwhile, they have developed a dual identity that encompasses Taiwanese and Australian cultures, through which they strive to make the best use of their backgrounds in the global community. Not only do the young return migrants fulfill the hopes of their parents of middle-class background, but should arouse more attention from the Australian and Taiwan governments in incorporating them as important human resources in their respective societies.

Keywords: Taiwanese young return migrants, adaptation, dual identity, transnational experience, Australia

I. Introduction

Taiwanese emigration has reached a considerable level in the last two decades, with major destinations including the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore. Among the various reasons accounting for the increase in out-migration, emergence of the new middle-class in Taiwan's population since the early 1980s, tense cross-strait relations with China, and Taiwan's relaxation of travel restrictions in 1989 are foremost. The introduction of entrepreneurial and skill migration programs of receiving countries to attract well-educated and affluent migrants from East Asia also play an important role. Contemporary Chinese migrants, originating from the rapidly industrializing countries of Asia, differ from migrants in the early part of the century in their reasons for migration, adaptations and impacts at the destinations. They enter the host countries mainly for life-style, overseas education for their children, and political security, as in the case of immigrants from Hong Kong and Taiwan. The mobility patterns of the households have created trans-national families and individuals, which pose alternatives to conventional paradigms and theories on migration.

The youthful structure of the Taiwan-born has been noted by Australian demographers (Hugo and Maher 1995; Walmsley et al. 1998), who for the first time included the Taiwan-born as a separate national group because of its significant increase since the mid-1980s. The largest concentration of population falls in the age groups of 15-24 and 25-34, respectively, amounting to half of the Taiwan-born in 2001 (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001). They include the young first generation of Taiwan-born who immigrated with their parents, or young unaccompanied
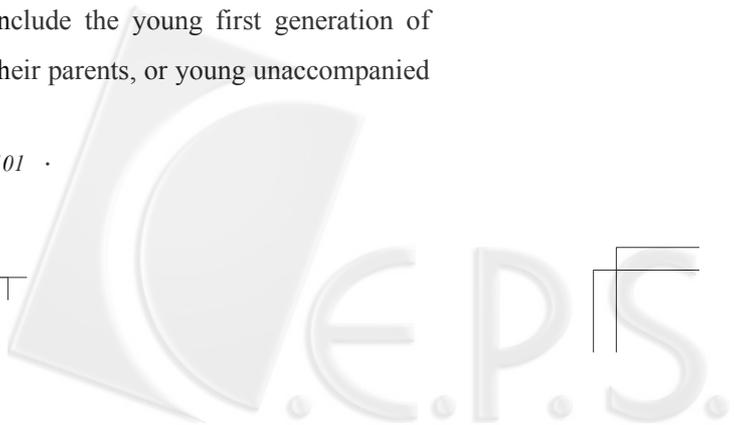
sojourners who stayed in Australia on their own. In spite of their significant proportions in the population, existing literature on Taiwanese immigrants in Australia has largely overlooked the younger generation, who are either Taiwan-born or Australian-born.

It is not clear how many Taiwanese immigrants from Australia have returned to Taiwan, or have gone elsewhere; but statistics show that permanent departures of Taiwanese immigrants are on the rise (DIMIA 2004). Moreover, a recent survey (Chiang and Hsu 2003)[1] indicates that the Taiwan-born in the age groups of 15-24 and 25-44 are more keen than other age groups to return to Taiwan. The main reason for them to return is to establish their careers, especially after having completing their tertiary education.

In this study, the authors look at a small group of young Taiwanese returnees who emigrated at young ages with their parents but have returned as grown-ups. We look into their adaptation through social and economic relations in Australia, their motivations to return to Taiwan, and their self-identities in both Australia and Taiwan as they moved between the two societies.

II. Review of Literature

(1) Background of Taiwan-born Migrants in Australia

As noted earlier (Chiang and Kuo 2000), there is an undercount of

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1   In this study, a survey of 319 Taiwanese households was carried out in 2003 (Chiang and Hsu 2003) mainly to assess their needs for services provided by the Overseas Compatriots Affairs Commission in Australia. The survey also covers their reasons for migration, living conditions, adaptations and intentions to return to Taiwan.

Taiwanese in the Australian Census, as some Taiwanese immigrants were actually China-born before they came to Taiwan with the nationalist government in 1949.[2] Among the problems faced by Taiwanese immigrants, it was found that the language barrier tops the list. Despite being fairly well educated and affluent, Taiwan-born business and skilled migrants have high rates of unemployment. Research indicates that lack of proficiency in English is the main factor that prevents them from finding suitable employment (Chiang and Kuo 2000; Chiang 2004).

Racial discrimination is a possible factor that explains the relatively poor labor force participation by recent Taiwanese migrants (Ip, Wu and Inglis 1998; Chiang and Kuo 2000; Wu 2003; Chiang 2004). One of the major difficulties many Taiwanese immigrants face is the non-recognition of their former qualifications. Ethnographic analysis shows that having been successful businessmen who have capital and expertise in manufacturing, export and international marketing, they find it hard to take up work that is not commensurate with their educational and economic background. It is therefore unlikely that they engage themselves as wage/salary earners in the host country (Chiang 2004). Similarly, Taiwanese in New Zealand also experience status dislocation. Ip (2004) found that the Taiwanese, lacking in 'social and cultural capital' compared with the Hong Kong, Malaysian and Singaporean Chinese, are hampered by their comparative weakness in English (especially oral skills), and their

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2   For simplicity sake, the term 'Taiwanese', as used in this paper, refers to all the inhabitants of Taiwan of Chinese ancestry. These actually consist of three distinct groups, defined in part by the island's peculiar political history: the Mainlanders (Chinese, and their descendants, who migrated to Taiwan between 1945-1949, about 10 percent of the population); the Hoklo (Chinese, and their descendants, who migrated from Fujian province in the period before 1945, about 75 percent); and the Hakka (Chinese, and their descendants, who migrated from Guangdong province in the period before 1945, about 12 percent). The latter two are known collectively as the 'native Taiwanese', and have contributed the bulk of the migrants who have gone abroad in the post-1950 era.
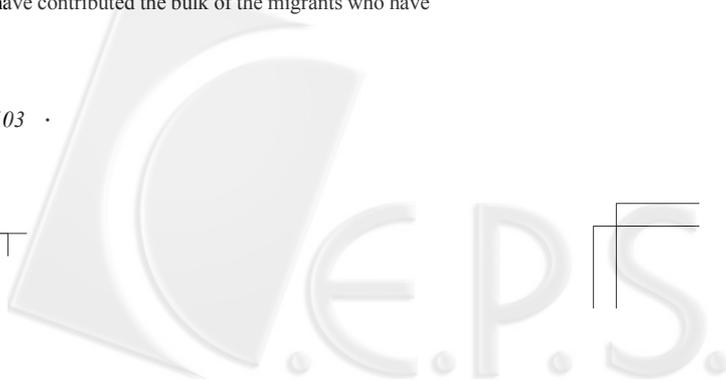
unfamiliarity with British social and cultural systems. Likewise, their ignorance of employment relations practices and council by-laws, and an unfamiliar business environment, are major hurdles to their establishing businesses in New Zealand.

As the first generation of the Taiwanese has arrived recently, it is difficult for them to start profitable businesses or adapt well right away. Many pursue post-graduate degrees or attended Technological and Further Education (TAFE) courses, which are offered in Australia to provide professional training and certification for people to obtain work later on. Some engage in various types of self-employment, apart from the small numbers who have succeeded in trade investments and created employment. Subsequently, the male head of household who is the major bread-earner, flies back to make a living in Taiwan in order to support his family in Australia, similar to the outcome of out-migration from Hong Kong to North America and Australasia (Pe-Pua et al. 1996; Tam 2003; Ho 2002; Waters 2002; Ley and Waters 2004)

The forms of social adaptation include the establishment of friendship and social networks which provide sources of information and social support for new arrivals. Of particular interest are the proliferation of various Taiwanese social organizations which are home-based in Taiwan.[3] The ease of communication within their own sub-ethnic community, the availability of news and information about Taiwan through cable TV, and church services offered in their own ethnic languages, have made their lives more comfortable, but may also have slowed down their acculturation process in the host society.


3　Such as the *Tzu-chi* Buddhist Compassion Relief Association, Australian Taiwanese Friendship Association, Friends of Australasian Youth Association, Taiwan Chamber of Commerce, Women's Association, and Hakka Association.

As the Taiwanese experienced difficult social and economic incorporation into Australian society, trans-national practice was a strategy used by many families, thus leading Ip et al. (1998) to suggest that the term 'diaspora' is better suited than the term 'migrant' to describe the Taiwanese in Australia. There are no statistics on trans-national families, nor reverse migration to Taiwan from Australasia, although large numbers who left Australia have been recorded. The literature review in the ensuing section provides the analytical frame of this research.

(2) Theoretical Background on Return Migration

An earlier study by Hsiao et al. (1994) noted that return migration is due to global economic recession, and the continuing rapid economic growth of East Asia which offers many job opportunities that have attracted high-tech personnel to return to the sending countries. Also, some entrepreneurs who encountered a 'glass ceiling' that hindered their upward mobility in American companies felt discouraged and opted to come back to establish their businesses in Asia, while some young returnees who identify themselves with Chinese culture return to their home country. Economic factors, especially better opportunities for employment and business, and social support networks, were strong motivating factors for all potential Taiwanese returnees, though many anticipated returning or returning intermittently to maintain the business in Taiwan. (Guo and Rozario 2003: 38). A recent study of Hong Kong immigrants in Vancouver by Ley and Kobayashi (2005: 123) found 'retirement' the *raison d' etre* for 'ending up in Canada' and enjoying the benefits that retired people get after making money in Hong Kong.

Return migrants most likely would experience reverse culture shock, followed by readjustment. Cerase (1974) posited that the type of return and

the post-return impact of Italian migrants depend largely on the stage in the process of acculturation that the migrants had reached in America at the moment of return. In the case of Irish return migrants, Gmelch (1986) tried to predict the extent of readjustment of returnees and found that the variable most strongly related to adjustment was satisfaction with social life, especially in developing friendship. A moderate relationship was found between readjustment and both housing and job satisfaction, while an inverse relationship was hypothesized between the length of time spent abroad and adjustment. A large majority felt they had been so changed by the overseas experience that they now had more in common with citizens of the host country than with their own countrymen. Likewise, they believed that they were 'broader in their outlook' than those who had never left Ireland, after exposing themselves to many different ethnic groups and life-styles. Some even felt that the attitudes and world view of local people had been the single most difficult aspect of their return. Local people were described as 'narrow-minded' and 'backward', as inflexible and inward-looking.

Most early research in migration assumed that migrants would sever their homeland ties and attachments as they began to settle and integrate themselves into their newly adopted countries. In the last decade, however, scholars began to acknowledge that international migration could no longer be seen as a one-way process. Some, for example, observed that spatial shifts in production processes had created new opportunities for economic migration particularly for highly skilled migrants associated with activities of trans-national corporations (Li and Findlay 1996). Others also saw that migrants were increasingly likely to maintain, rather than sever, their contacts across the border, particularly with their place of origin, forming 'trans-national social fields' (Smith and Guarnizo 1998). Such trans-national
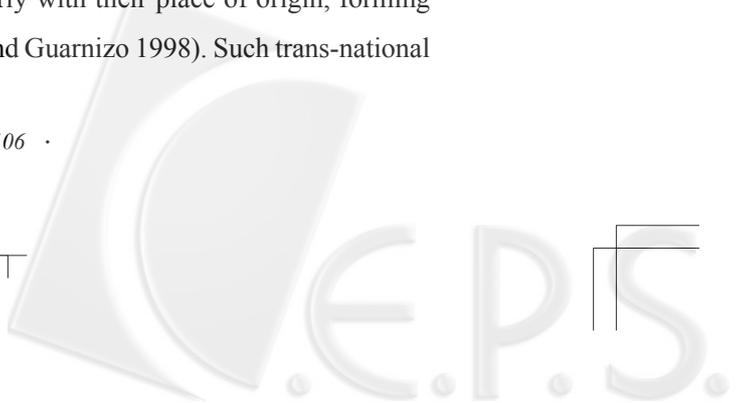
practices prompted further an increasing number of researchers to investigate a set of activities grouped loosely together under the rubric of 'trans-nationalism' (Levitt and Waters 2002). Vertovec (1999) argued that it was through remittances and business transactions as well as other daily activities that migrants were frequently shuttling between two or more societies.

As defined by Basch and her collaborators (1994: 6), 'trans-nationalism' is the process by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social, economic, and political relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement... many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders. Foner (2002) found that those who moved back and forth between the United States and their parents' country of origin might feel that they did not completely belong to either place. Levitt (2002) contended that some of the highly educated respondents saw their trans-national connections as a 'Plan B' that could be put into action to circumvent blocked mobility or as a way to diversify risk and produce additional income. Recent interviews conducted with Hong Kong middle-class returnees from Canada show that trans-national practice consists of strategic switching between an 'economic pole in Hong Kong and quality-of-life pole in Canada' (Ley and Kobayashi 2005).

(3) Young Asian Migrants' Adjustment in the Host Country

Of late, children of immigrants are subjects of study in different contexts (Portes and Zhou 1993; Portes and Rumbaut 2001, 2005; Smith 2002; Feliciano and Rumbaut 2005; Tsang et al. 2003; Waters 2005). Existing literature on Taiwanese immigrants has largely overlooked the younger generation, partly because of their passive migrant status, and
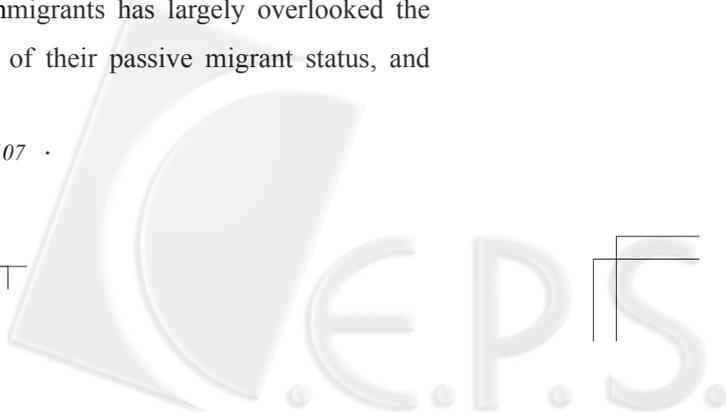
recent arrival. Studies on Hong Kong youth may shed some light. Pe-Pua, et al. (1996) used the term 'parachute kids' for children living with one parent or with both parents back in Hong Kong. Wong (1997) noted that migration is a means of providing for the children's future among recent Hong Kong immigrants. It is evident that teenagers with little English on arrival have great difficulties with their studies in school, as well as with establishing peer relationships, particularly in schools where Chinese enrolments are low. Apart from the stress arising from attempts to fulfill high educational expectations, parents often uphold the Chinese traditional value of filial piety[4], and expect their children to accept their advice on various aspects of life, including management of time, leisure activities, retaining the Chinese culture through speaking Chinese at home, dating and preparation for future career, etc. The generation gap widened between the parents and children and they experienced feelings of bitter confusion in relation to conflicting expectations of parents and peers. An early study of Taiwanese immigrants in Brisbane by Lee (1992) noted that some parents encourage children to speak English at home so that their English would improve. It was found that some children tend to follow their parents' values in how they perceive Australians, and therefore showed low level of assimilation, and will not shed their Taiwanese identity. These studies show that very rarely is the younger generation studied as individuals without any consideration of generational relationship to their parents.

In a different context, Kuo and Roysircar (2004) studied unaccompanied sojourners attending secondary schools in a large Canadian

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4   In the traditional Chinese family, there is no upper limit in parent's authority over their children leading to sacrifice of personal comfort, health, achievement, marriage, and even one's life. Stories of filial piety are learned early in life. Filial behavior takes precedence over other behaviors (Hsu 1972: 215).

city. A significant number of these students reported feeling ill-prepared and poorly-oriented upon their arrival in Canada, as well as suffering from a lack of information about their host country and their purpose for sojourning. Hsu (2002) took a close look at children of split-households in Vancouver, Canada where she found that the children have learned to negotiate within 'astronaut' families by situating themselves somewhere between being Taiwanese and being Canadian, and yet, being both. Tsang et al. (2003) who studied Hong Kong adolescent satellite kids with absent parents noted their confusion about their identities. Processes of identity are fluid and may change over time and across social situations (Tsang et al. 2003: 377)

III. Research Methodology and Framework

In this study, we use in-depth, qualitative research methods to 'listen' to the emplaced 'voices' of young returnees who recently came back from Australia. The focus is on self-assessment of their social and economic integration and identity both in Taiwan and Australia, hoping to provide some valuable insights into the process of migration, problems of adaptation, and questions of identity. To gain access to the experiences and insights of our subjects, the formality of structured questionnaires was largely rejected in favor of less informal approaches, generating predominantly qualitative data for analysis (Robinson 1998).

Using the snowball sampling technique, 22 young return migrants were interviewed in 2003 by the second author. The questions asked are summarized in the conceptual framework (Figure 1) that includes decisions to leave Taiwan, adaptation at the destination, adjustment problems upon return to Taiwan, self-identify, and future plans. On the left hand side of the
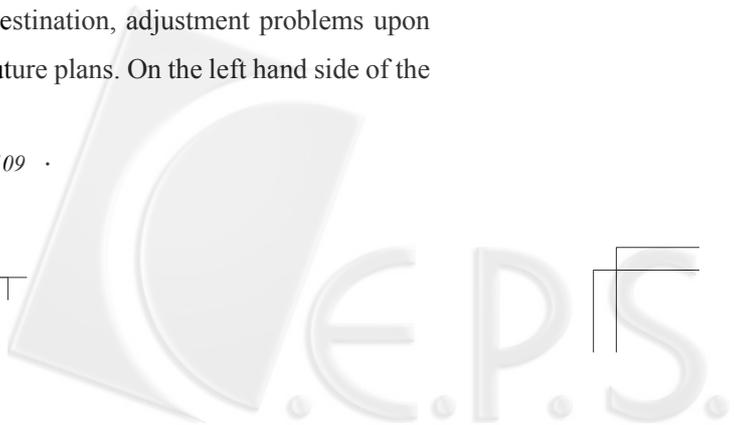
diagram, the socio-political issues that motivated the family to leave Taiwan are probed into. Those who have assessed the situation and have decided to stay are the non-movers who remain in the sending community. On the right of the diagram, encounters with cultural shock and problems of adaptation are met with in Australia. While completing their education, the young migrants either stay in Australia to work, or return to Taiwan to do so, after a process of assessment. Various reasons are considered in making this decision to return. Most likely, they enter a new process of adaptation in Taiwan, which affects their self-identity and their long-term career planning.
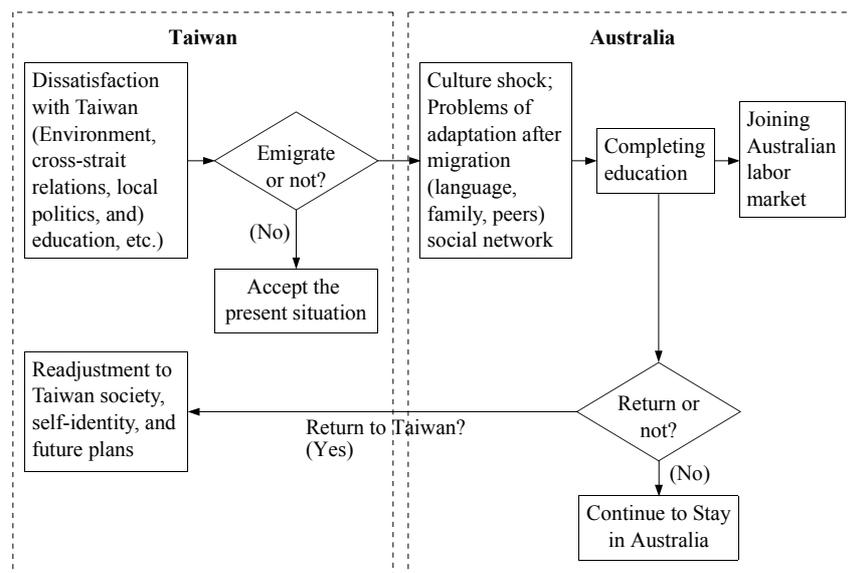

Figure 1. Stages in the Migration Process of Young Taiwanese Returnees

IV. Profile of Young Returnees

Among the 22 interviewees, there were 13 females and 9 males,

ranging from 24 to 36 years of age (Table 1). Most of them (17) were single, while ranging from 8 to 24 years old at the time of migration. Most of the males migrated between 13 to 15 years of age, before they reached the age when they could not leave before fulfillment of military service. On the other hand, a wider age range was found among females at the time of migration. While moving with their parents between 1986 and 1992, 18 lived in Australia from 5 to 12 years, while 4 lived there for more than 13 years. Six have returned for less than one year, 8 for 2-5 years, and 8 for 6-8 years. Only 5 people immigrated to Australia when they were in primary school, while the largest number (13) immigrated when they were in junior and senior high school. Among the 8 people who completed Bachelor degrees and 14 who completed Master's, they were mostly trained in Commerce and Information Science. Only half lived with both of their parents after migrating to Australia. Among the other half, 5 lived in 'astronaut' families, 2 with brothers and sisters, and 4 were unaccompanied sojourners. Out of the 22 interviewees, 6 have returned with the whole family. Their occupations, though diverse, are mainly in Computer Science, Finance, and International Trade.

V. Reasons for Returning to Taiwan

As indicated earlier, even with extensive work experience, substantial entrepreneurial skills, and financial capital brought from Taiwan, the Taiwanese migrants did lack the social and cultural capital needed to attain early economic integration. However, we found that none of the young returnees stated any difficulties in finding work like their parents. As summarized in Table 1, their reasons for returning were quite complex. The chief considerations were better career opportunities in Taiwan, reunions

Table 1. Details of Respondents Residing in Taiwan

No.	Name	Sex	Age	Age of migration	Years of residence in Australia	Highest degree earned	Industry/occupation
1	B-1	M	27	13	11	M.A. (Information science)	Computer/engineer
2	B-2	M	35	22	5	B.A. (International trade)	Computer related industry/manager
3	B-3	M	36	24	10	M.S. (Accounting)	Accounting firm/manager of international tax
4	B-4	M	29	15	8	M.A. (Finance)	Computer design/ business manager
5	B-5	M	28	14	9	B.A. (Mass media)	Electronics/information manager
6	B-6	F	24	10	13	M.A. (Digital products design)	Electronics/product design engineer
7	B-7	F	31	18	7	M.A. (Commerce)	Asset Management/ finance manager
8	B-8	F	28	10	12	M.A. (Economics and finance)	Children's English school/manager
9	B-9	F	29	15	8	B.A. (Architect)	Government contracted firm/urban development planner
10	B-10	M	25	9	12	B.A. (Law)	Accounting firm/lawyer
11	B-11	F	31	17	14	M.A. (Bio-technology and tourism management)	Australian Project/ researcher
12	B-12	F	25	9	15	B.A. (Commerce and sales)	Trading company/ assistant to manager
13	S-1	M	27	18	6	M.A. (International)	Family enterprise/ consultant on export
14	S-2	F	30	24	5	M.A. (Mass media and accounting)	Housewife
15	S-3	F	26	14	11	B.A. (Anthropology)	Media/producer
16	S-4	F	26	12	12	M.A. (International relations)	Computer programming/ business engineer
17	S-5	F	25	8	8	M.A. (Economics and finance)	Sales/public relations
18	S-6	F	32	15	13	M.A. (International trade)	Electronics/auditor in finance
19	M-1	F	31	18	7	M.A. (Business administration)	Entrepreneur/manager
20	M-2	M	31	15	8	B.A. (Commerce); M.A. (Statistics)	Foundation/program officer
21	M-3	F	31	17	6	B.A. (Commerce)	Investment/researcher
22	M-4	M	31	15	8	B.A. (Commerce)	Product development/ manager

Notes: The codes B, M, S stand for Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney respectively. Pseudonyms are used for names of respondents in the text.

with their families, participation in family businesses, searching for potential spouses and affection towards Taiwan.

(1) Employment related reasons

The three main factors influencing one's choice of occupation are educational background, bilingual ability, and prospects of promotion. Apparently, those who majored in commerce and computer science were more likely to return to Taiwan to find work, simply because job offers in such areas are readily found back home. On the other hand, those who majored in medicine, agriculture, arts and law chose to look for work in Australia because the professional practices between Australia and Taiwan are different.

Their decision to come back to Taiwan was related to their ability to master two languages, and their major fields of study. They fill in the void of bilingual humanpower greatly needed by Taiwan at this time as international trade now flourishes. Being familiar with Western culture through their ability to master the English language is a big plus factor, as one of our respondents, Mr. Yen (B-5), analyzed the advantages of working in Taiwan compared to Australia:

"Australia lags behind in commerce, and heavy industries are non-existing because the country is inclined to protect her natural environment. Since I have a degree in Information Science, it is much harder for me to find work in Australia, while I can easily find work in an electronic company in Taiwan, or work in an internet company... I would do much better here because I can speak *Minnan*, Mandarin, Cantonese, and English, whereas I would only use English in my work if I stay back in Australia,

and my English would not be as good as the local-born Australians."

Likewise, Ms. Peng (B-9) who returned from Brisbane, said that she was at a disadvantage regarding English when she looked for work in Australia.

The lack of employment opportunities and relative difficulty of being promoted in Australia was a factor often mentioned by our respondents. In the first part of the 1990's, Australia's unemployment rate was at 8 to 10 percent. The small population is a disadvantage of Australia's growth in employment and commercial activities, compared to Taiwan's. [5]

Ms. Han (B-7) commented on the common phenomenon of unemployment in Australia from her impressions:

"Taiwan's unemployment rate is 5 to 6 per cent at the most; while it is much higher in Australia.... have accompanied a friend who went to the unemployment service center to apply for benefits... we saw a long, long line there."

Along the same line of thinking, Mr. Chang (B-1) said that he received close to thirty responses to his C.V. posted on the internet in Taiwan, some of whom asked him to go to work immediately. Whereas, if he did the same in Australia, he might just get a handful of letters asking him for interviews.

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5   Australia is the fourth least densely settled country (2.3 persons per sq. km.) in the world. Moreover, it has a highly concentrated pattern of settlement with 83 per cent of the population living within 50 km of the coast and 62.7 per cent living in cities with 100,000 or more residents (Hugo 1999: i). On the other hand, Taiwan is one of the most densely populated states, with 627 persons per sq. km., next only to Bangladesh in its population density. The population is 78% urban, and over 80 % lives in 20 % of its total area.

Even though Taiwan's economy is not booming like in the late 1980s, and the employment rate is not as good as before, the overall unemployment rate is still lower than Australia's (4.44% in Taiwan compared to 5.1% in Australia in 2004.)[6]

Lacking in cultural capital is a drawback for the younger generation, like their parents, even though they speak English better. This notion is supported by Ms Wan (M-1):

"Although we don't have major difficulties in adapting to Australia, we are aware of the differences in culture. Because of our different backgrounds, sometimes it is hard to understand Australian jokes, and to be one of them. Likewise, they won't be able to understand the jokes or slang we Asians use, and the distance grows between us..."

In the same context, chances for promotion are bleak and the 'glass ceiling' effect is obvious. Mr. Tung (B-3), who worked in an accounting office for five years, told his story:

"Basically my colleagues and I got along well... they have always been helpful. However, the 'glass ceiling', or invisible handicap is there when it comes to promotion. I know why--it would be much easier for my boss to hire a white man if the customers are white. Likewise, if the customers are Chinese, a Chinese employee

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6   Sources of data: Directorate-General of Budget, Accounting and Statistics (DGBAS), Executive Yuan, R.O.C.: http://www.dgbas.gov.tw/ and Australian Bureau of Statistics: http://www.abs.gov.au/. This illustrates the general picture of unemployment in both counties. Unfortunately, unemployment rate is not broken down by age.

would be more helpful... I would not call this discrimination from the point of view of the company."

As stated by Ms Cheng (S-6) who returned from Sydney after working for six years in Australia in different accounting offices:

"No matter how well you speak, you can never compete with the white people nor the Australian-born Chinese. No matter how hard you work, you would only be promoted to a certain position. It always worries me that I would be the next one to be fired..."

(2) Reunion with one's family in Taiwan

In our sample, there are different living arrangements among their families, such as female-headed families, families of siblings living together while both parents live in Taiwan to earn a living, or the young sojourner living by him or herself until he/she becomes 16 years old.

"Going back to Taiwan to join one's family" is the commonly given reason for returning. Often, the young migrant did not even try to look for work, as they knew from the very start that they were going to 'take over' their family businesses in Taiwan, or in East Asia. There seemed to be gender differences among the immigrants as to the extent of demand by their parents (especially the father) in making decisions regarding marriage or career. The traditional family values toward women in Taiwan are reflected by what Ms. Han (B-7) said:

"My father said that I should hurry back to Taiwan to get married. He thinks that it is difficult for me to find a husband in Australia.

He thinks that I take life too easy, and I should come back quickly
to work in a big corporation..."

Ms. Tsui (B-12), who immigrated at grade 2, finds herself well-
assimilated in Australia, where she finds that one's personal choice is more
valued. However, she came back at the command of her father, as she stated:

"If I have a choice, I would stay back in Australia. I came back
not because of work, but due to obedience to my parents. I feel
like an Australian since I lived in Australia for so long, and I have
no problem in finding work there. My dad wants me to come back
early, even though I might be able to find better work in
Australia... I have an Australian boyfriend, but my parents cannot
accept him."

(3) Looking for a spouse

Finding a spouse is the third factor for migrants to return. Many young
migrants feel that the chances of marrying Taiwanese would be higher when
they live in Taiwan. The young Taiwanese return migrant hopes to marry
someone who has similar background or experiences, such as having lived
abroad, immigrated, or traveled. We frequently hear quite similar views
regarding marrying, such as:

"I think I am less likely to marry a non-Chinese because the
culture and language are different. I need to learn more Chinese.
Chinese is my mother tongue, and I believe it would be useful in
future."

(4) Affection toward Taiwan

Affection towards Taiwan is the fourth reason for returning. Some of the young immigrants express the need to come back to Taiwan to search for their 'roots'. As expressed by Ms. Li (B-6):

"Being in Taiwan gives me a sense of belonging... I missed Taiwan the first year I arrived in Australia (at the age of 10). I always think that Taiwan is my home. I return to Taiwan every Christmas, to keep up with what is going on here and experience a sense of fulfillment. Memory of my childhood stays back in Taiwan. Right from the beginning, I said that I will come back after graduation; I just cannot find my sense of belonging in Australia."

For those who immigrated at older ages to pursue postgraduate degrees, they returned to Taiwan as soon as they fulfilled their goals. In sum, the decision to come back to Taiwan goes through a complex process, involving careful consideration, although getting a job comes foremost in their minds.

VI. Adaptation of Young Taiwanese in Australia

(1) Language and Schooling

We found that the first problem encountered by the young immigrant is language, which affects their school work and relation to peers. The age

of migration affects their ease of adaptation, as it is much easier to pick up a new language when young. When the teenager immigrates later in junior and high school, they face both problems of language for communication and for schooling. As the grades for the last two years of high school are important to acquire overall position qualifications in order to enter good universities, parents sometimes hire private tutors to coach their children. This is no different from what they would have practiced in Taiwan.

On the other hand, parents want their children to retain their bilingual ability with as much Chinese as they can. Apart from going to weekend Mandarin classes, they are often sent back to Taiwan to learn Mandarin in the winter and summer vacations.

(2) Peer Relationship

The second problem arises from peer networks. Faced with an unfamiliar environment and a different language, it is easy to be misunderstood and get into conflict with classmates. This is especially true at the junior high school level. There are cases of fighting with white Australians, and experiences of being discriminated against. Later on, the situation becomes better with improved communication. Taiwanese students at the senior high level face a situation of a different kind. They put their energy in school work and do not care whether their schoolmates are friendly or not. They tend to mix only with other Taiwanese immigrant students. Those at university entry levels have the least interaction with their classmates due to the larger amount of school work.

Usually, upon their first arrival, they tend to mix with other Chinese either from Hong Kong or the Mainland. Those who live in neighborhoods where there are fewer Chinese tend to have friends from other nationalities. A few young migrants with introverted personalities have unhappy

experiences of encounters with local Australians.

We were informed that similar cultural backgrounds draw the young migrants together into small groups which are based on length of time spent in Australia. Mr. Hung, (B-10), who went to Australia at the age of 9, explained differences among his friends who were Australian-born Chinese (ABC) or grew up in Australia like himself:

"The main difference is language. Even though you are Chinese, you need to speak to each other in English when you are abroad. I find it hard to communicate with someone who speaks poor English. Also, 'birds of a feather flock together.' I don't mix well with those who came to Australia at an older age."

Likewise, Mr. Lo (M-2) who immigrated when he was in junior high school mixed with either people from Hong Kong or Taiwan. As a result, such migrants' values and identities are affected by those with whom they mix as friends.

"We share similar thoughts and become good friends easily. Strangely, we find it easier to mix with those who migrated when they are in junior or senior high school. We don't get along with the ABC's who tend to mix with their own kinds, and not with the white Australians (*lao wai*, or foreigners) The ABC's are different from both Australians and the adolescent immigrants."

Overtime, their social circles expanded, and they got acquainted with other racial groups. Mr. Yen (B-5), who engaged himself in sports, had many Caucasian friends and acquaintances from South Asia. Ms. Peng

(B-9) thinks that she can avoid the gossip in Taiwanese circles by having friends from other nationalities. As a whole, their social circles therefore expanded to include other ethnic groups as their English reached higher proficiency levels. Thus their circle of friends expanded from their Taiwanese core to include other Chinese, Asians, and other immigrants.

(3) Relationship with Parents

As part of their adaptation and identity-building process, we probe into the issue of the generation gap, which they were keen to discuss with us. As most young immigrants grew up in trans-national families with one parent present, usually the mother, the effect of closer parental relationship can be discerned.

Inevitably, when the young children got exposure to the Australian culture, they developed different views which were in conflict with their parents. As in the case of Hong Kong students (Wong 1997), they started to wonder why their parents were different from the Australian parents, who would not require children to come back home early in the evening, nor expect them to take up certain subjects as majors. The major generation gap stems from differences in values and the parents' insistence on traditional behavior and authority over their children. For instance, our respondent, Mr. Yen (B-5), had a major conflict with his father:

"He still follows the Taiwanese way of telling me what to study. To him, Australian culture is like a new experiment... He thinks he can tell me what to do... but I knew what I wanted since I was in junior high."

Ms. Han (B-7) also recalled the effort she made to be independent from

her parents under the influence of her peers:

"My classmates asked me why I was still living with my parents when I was already 18, and they persuaded me to move out. When I told my parents that I wanted to move out, my dad thought I was crazy. Moreover, I quarreled with my parents over the issue of taking up part-time work. My parents said that I should only care about studying well, and there is no point in earning any money... The Australian kids were independent when they were very young, but the Chinese live with their parents even though they have grown up."

Conflicts with their parents occurred when they reached adolescence, but when they got older and more mature, they tended to disagree less.

In the above discussion, we focused on language, peer and parental relationships. Coming from a busy part of Asia, other things which are hard to adjust to include: 'Australia's slow pace of life', 'tasteless food', 'vast space', 'quiet and unfamiliar environment', 'not being able to get anywhere without a car', 'shops close too early, and no night life', 'cannot buy what one wants,' and 'not being used to the 'take-life-easy attitude of Australians.'

Overtime, they gradually adjusted to Australian culture and life-style. But they chose to return to Taiwan because of better jobs and development. As they are bilingual and more cosmopolitan than their parents in Australia and their cohorts in Taiwan, they can easily be recruited to the Taiwan job market. Their return trip to Taiwan typically occurred for economic reasons at the early stage of their careers. Since they had lived in Australia from five to fifteen years before returning to Taiwan, it would mean that they returned to a changed environment, particularly when Taiwan went through

significant cultural, political and economic changes. A return to one's home also means new challenges to face.

VII. Adaptation of Young Returnees in Taiwan

Adaptation to the workplace is the first challenge faced by the returning young migrant, apart from other social and cultural aspects. We wanted to know their perception of differences in their work culture and how their education in Australia influenced their values, and how their adaptation in Taiwan influenced their career goals.

Most of the respondents chose occupations which are related to their fields of study (Table 1). Apparently, English proficiency is an asset when looking for work in local businesses which may have English-speaking clients. They indicated to us that Australian education has broadened their horizons, enhanced their problem-solving abilities and given them greater ability to communicate and participate in discussions. Their world view embraces a multi-cultural dimension.

Due to their education in Australia, they are not accustomed to the work culture of Taiwan. They are aware of the extended working hours, need for over-time work, workaholic style, and the emphasis on rank differences among people. They cannot accept that 'the boss is always right', that *guanxi* (or connections) plays such a critical role, while a lack of openness in communication is also found. They are not used to working on weekends in Taiwan. Leaving behind the social networks they developed in Australia, they are missing a primary group or informal associations of various kinds like school alums or sports teammates. They are differentiated from their colleagues in Taiwan by speaking a different type of language
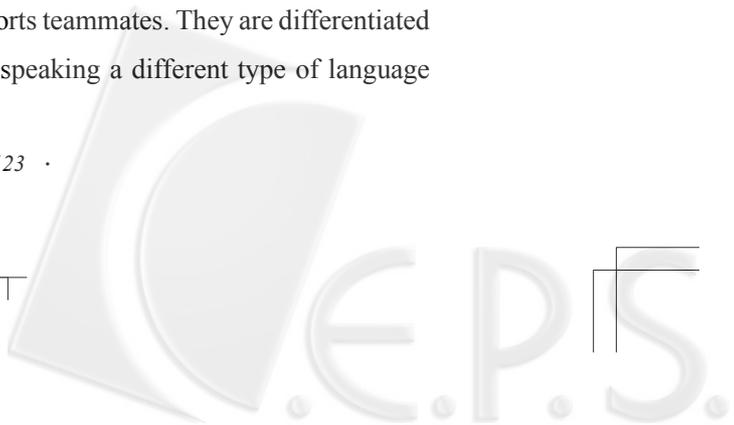
using both Chinese and English. If they don't speak Minnan with the locals, nor write or speak proper Mandarin Chinese, they face problems of communication with their colleagues.

Back to a different environment which was once their home, they find it hard to adapt to both the physical and social environments. Their major complaints are contained in the following statements by a number of respondents:

"The air is polluted."

"Too many cars. I am scared to cross the road, and even more so to drive."

"Living space is too small. Too many people."

"Pace of life in Taiwan is much faster than Australia's."

"No friends when I come back. It is hard to get along with people."

"No sense of belonging here."

"Taiwanese are crazy about politics."

"The media does a poor job about reporting international matters."

"I cannot keep up with the vogue terms here."

We also find that female returnees have different experiences than those of males. Miss Han (B-7), among others, is expected to live with her parents, unless she is married or works far away from home. She felt that she has lost her privacy, and found her home too crowded. She found that it is hard to live up to her parents' wishes:

"When I was in Australia, I could do whatever I liked, and go

wherever I wanted to. In Taiwan, I had to tell my parents where I go. Human relationships are closer in Taiwan than in Australia, where one can let go and be oneself more easily. I want to move out... but have to consider my parent's feelings. If I work in Taipei, I am expected to live at home!"

VIII. Self-Identity of Young Returnees

This section analyses how the young first generation migrants traverse the two cultures completely or otherwise, trying to get out of their 'marginal' situations in two different cultures. In our sample, the young returned Taiwanese migrants identify themselves as Taiwanese or Australians, or both. We try to further differentiate the three types by looking at their backgrounds. Those who said that they are Taiwanese amount to more than half of the 22 respondents. The ability to write and read Chinese to fulfill the expectation of their parents, and their familiarity with the Taiwanese culture characterize this group, under close supervision by their parents while growing up in Australia. Most of their friends are from Taiwan, and they went back to Taiwan every year for vacation or to visit their relatives. Also, they tend to have completed their high school education before immigrating to Australia and therefore had longer exposure to Taiwan culture before immigration.

Only one sample in the second group, Ms. Tsui (B-12), claims that she is an Australian, having lived there for 15 years starting with grade two when she migrated with her parents. When both of her parents left Australia when she was 14, her only brother joined her. She emphasized again and again that her Australian friends are like her family members. Among her

friends, most are second generation migrants from other national groups, followed by white Australians and Asians. She said:

"I don't feel comfortable among Taiwanese here... we talk about different things... Although I know that I look Taiwanese and my roots are here, but what I have learned as a child is Australian in essence--what I eat, drink, and the air I breathe... I even dream in the Australian language. When I was with Australians, I did not feel that I was Taiwanese anymore, because they treated me as one of them."

We also found quite a few who think that they are 'half Australian' and 'half Taiwanese'. Their social circles in Australia consist of both Taiwanese and other ethnic groups, while at home, they are expected to uphold the Chinese traditional values of filial piety, respect towards elders and priorities given to family relations.

Interestingly, their identity is also situational, and varied according to whether they are in Australia or Taiwan by the notion: "I am Australian when I live there; and Taiwanese when I live here... We have no pre-disposition of who we are, and race is not a problem" (B-8, S-4, S-6). In an earlier study by Hsiao et al. (1994), they found that the returnees from the United States think that they are Americans and Chinese at the same time.

Lastly, three of our respondents consider themselves as 'global citizens' or 'world citizens.' They accept the differences in culture and adopt new values almost right away, not limited to the territory in which they live, be it Taiwan, Australia, or another country. Their friends are from a wide selection that includes different racial groups.

To summarize, we find that the factors affecting the self-identity of

return migrants are: age of migration, family values, peer group identity, early experience of discrimination in Australia, and intensity of relations with Taiwan. It would appear that the Chinese culture that prevails in one's family or friendship group has significant impact on the younger generation. The ease of information transmission and communication with Taiwan through electronic devices forge close links between Australia and Taiwan after their migration.

Their trans-national experience grows out of the blending of two cultural values, and sometimes results in a paradox in their identities. Ms. Peng (B-9) expressed her 'confused' feelings in a forthright way:

"I have spoken with many friends who are of similar ages--their feelings are similar to mine--we are neither Australian nor Taiwanese, and we are perturbed by our social distance from either."

Ms. Cheng (S-6) expressed a common feeling toward her peers as follows:

"When we were in Australia, we felt like aliens. When we are back in Taiwan, we are regarded as different because we are from overseas."

According to Ms. Hung (B-10):

"We are in between the Australian and the Taiwanese. We can be friends of both; yet we cannot be real friends, since we do not know either of them well enough."
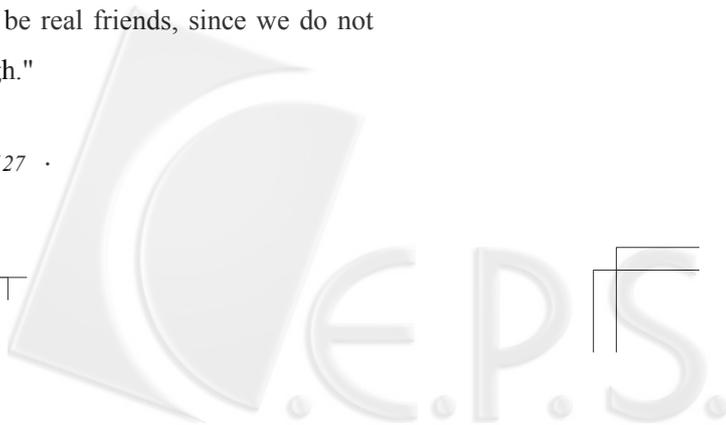
This simply means that the young returned migrants have the advantages of having a different exposure abroad, while they are also disadvantaged in being distanced from both. Where they will settle eventually depends on future opportunities, and many of them indicated a desire to return to Australia in future and even retiring there.

IX. Conclusions

In this paper, we study the transnational experience of young Taiwanese return migrants from Australia at one point of their life-times. With bi-local residence because of their immigrant status, they have tried to adapt in both sending and receiving societies, in their 'blended social field'[7] by living across two territories at one point of their lives

As education for children came foremost in the parents' decision to immigrate to Australia, the young Western-educated generations are the outcome of social reproduction of Taiwanese trans-national families, as in other countries of East Asia (Waters 2005). They not only come back to work, but follow suit on family business and largely support traditional values of their families in Taiwan. As this small sample suggests, they come back not because of poor adjustment, or have 'failed' in Australia, although some of the returnees encountered a 'glass ceiling' in their work, but because of better employment opportunities at the time of return. Similar findings are obtained by Ip (2006) regarding Chinese migrants who moved back from New Zealand to China. Compared to the returning overseas students to Taiwan in the early 1970s, these young returnees are more cosmopolitan

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7   This term was used by Ley and Kobayashi (2005) to describe Hong Kong returnees from Canada.
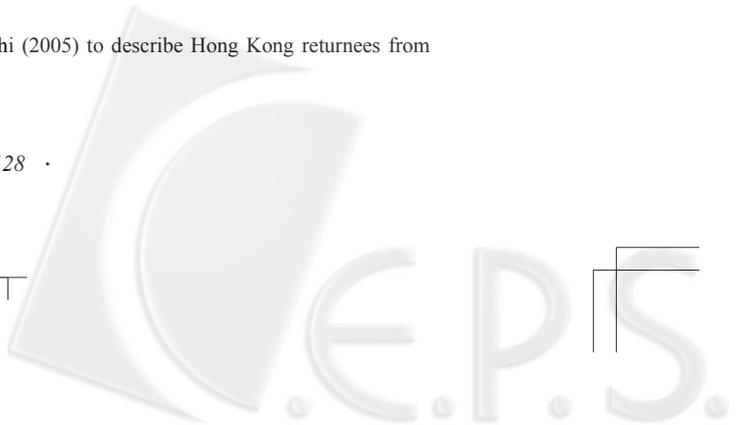
in outlook, equipped with bilingual ability, and have adopted global values while sojourning abroad. While they face many problems in Australia, including language and school, social relationships, and adjustment in the workplace, and relationship with their families, they also need to adapt to a variety of situations in their homeland, and face challenges of identity and life goals. Frequently, due to their constant need to adapt to both Taiwanese and Australian environments, they have developed a dual/situated identity that encompasses Taiwanese and Australian cultures through which they strive to make the best use of their backgrounds in the global community. Influenced by factors of age, family education, peer identity, experience of initial immigration and frequency of contacts with Taiwan, their identities are influenced by their experiences of living in Australia *vis-a-vis* living in Taiwan. Thus, their identity is layered through their experiences upon return to Taiwan. Even as returnees, they fit the description of trans-nationals by Portes (1997: 812) as being "often bilingual, move easily between different cultures, frequently maintain homes in two countries, and pursue economic, political and cultural interests that require their presence in both."

We are not stating claims that the sample of returnees are representative of young immigrants in the same age cohorts, but we hope that the preliminary findings will shed light on future studies of return migration, which is an increasing trend in Asia. Identity is a complex issue which need to be further explored among returnees and those who stayed behind.[8]

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澳洲回流台灣年輕移民之跨國經驗與身分認同

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中文摘要

　　近年來，台灣移民自澳洲回流的人數持續增加中，其主要原因是希望能回台就業或創業。本研究的目的即在探討這些當初隨父母移出的年輕移民，長大後回流台灣的原因，以及他們在澳洲和台灣社會之間的適應情形與自我認同。研究的進行採取質性研究方法，藉由滾雪球的抽樣方法，深度訪談 22 位在台北就業的年輕回流移民。本研究發現：年輕移民們自澳洲回流台灣主要是為了尋求更好的工作機會及發展，而並非因為不能適應澳洲或找不到工作。此外，回台與家人團聚、接掌家中事業、尋找結婚對象及對台灣的情感等因素，也影響他們回流台灣的意願。

　　年輕回流移民在台灣與澳洲社會不同文化的經驗下，必須面臨因環境轉換而產生的適應問題，諸如環境、語言、家庭關係、人際網絡、文化與生活方式等。他們的自我認同亦產生矛盾而傾向於雙邊認同。年輕回流移民們對未來事業的規畫，呈現一種跨國性的事業版圖，在全球化的趨勢下，尋求最有利的發展空間。這些優秀的回流移民，不只是應驗了台灣中產階級社會父母親的期待，更應受到台灣及澳洲政府對人才流動更多的關注。

關鍵字：回流台灣年輕移民、適應、雙邊認同、跨國經驗、澳洲

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