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Chinese Migration to Portugal: Trends and Perspectives

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Abstract

The number of Chinese migrants settling in Portugal has been growing since the 1980s, and more rapidly since the turn of the century. However, studies focusing on these immigrants are still scarce and do not consider their diversity, including their different origins — essentially Macao, Mozambique, and China itself. The aim of this paper is to update the existing literature on Chinese migration to Portugal, particularly by looking at the immigrants' diversity as a group (Macanese, Chinese Mozambicans, economic migrants, students, and business migrants). Additionally, data from the 2011 Census is analyzed for Chinese economic migrants in terms of the light it can shed on some dimensions related not only to their migratory paths, family contexts and labor market but particularly to their professional and economic strategies.

* This article forms part of the post-doctoral project "*Integração social de descendentes de imigrantes chineses em Portugal*" (Social integration of descendants of Chinese immigrants in Portugal), which is funded by Fundação para a Ciência e Tecnologia (Foundation for Science and Technology, Ref. SFRH/BPD/92237/2013). The author would like to thank Professor Fernando Luís Machado for his critical review of an earlier version of the text.

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Keywords

Chinese immigration – family – labor market – 2011 Census – Portugal

葡萄牙中国移民的趋势和前景

摘要

上个世纪八十年代以来，葡萄牙的华人人口不断增长，新千年初期尤其迅速。然而，学术界有关华人社会的研究仍然缺乏，并且未顾及华人社会的多元性。其实，生活在葡萄牙的华人源自澳门、莫桑比克和中国大陆。本文主要通过探视华人社会作为一个族裔群体所体现的多元性，更新有关旅葡华人的现有文献。通过分析2011年人口普查的有关数据，本文将对葡萄牙华人的移民途径、家庭背景和劳动市场，尤其是就业策略和经济策略，作出探讨。

关键词

中国移民 – 家庭 – 劳动市场 – 2001年人口普查 – 葡萄牙

Introduction: Chinese Migration to Portugal

Although Chinese emigration goes back to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and has always been closely linked to the development of international trade, it is primarily since the 1980s that the People's Republic of China has loosened the restrictions on its citizens' geographic mobility, thereby giving rise to a new era of Chinese migratory flows across the globe. These new movements have been driven by the opening up of Chinese society to the world, a progressive increase in standards of living, and a greater circulation of information between China and the different host countries as a result of the globalization of the Chinese diaspora's transnational networks. In this sense, although the phenomenon of immigration by Chinese citizens on a worldwide scale has existed for a long time, current Chinese migrations are characterized by the way in which these experiences and flows are shaped and conditioned by capitalism and by China's economic, political and symbolic importance in the world context (Thunø 2007).

Europe has increasingly been seen as an attractive geopolitical area in recent decades. This is particularly true of the Schengen Area, which is perceived as a source of administrative and economic opportunities for Chinese citizens (Guerassimoff-Pina 2006; Guerassimoff 2003; Thunø 2007). Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the numbers of Chinese migrants have grown quickly in “new immigration countries” like Italy (Ceccagno 2003) and Spain (Nieto 2003), and their flows to other traditional Chinese immigration countries like France have intensified (Guerassimoff 2003). The underlying reasons for the rise in Chinese migration are related to specific pull factors in Southern Europe. In the mid-1990s and 2000s, a willingness to take in unauthorized, unskilled migrants to work in the informal economy and the existence of niche opportunities for self-employment greatly stimulated this increase in the number of Chinese citizens in Southern Europe (Ceccagno 2003; Laczko 2003; Nieto 2003). Alongside this, these countries offered several amnesties and legalization programs, which attracted many illegal Chinese migrants during that period.

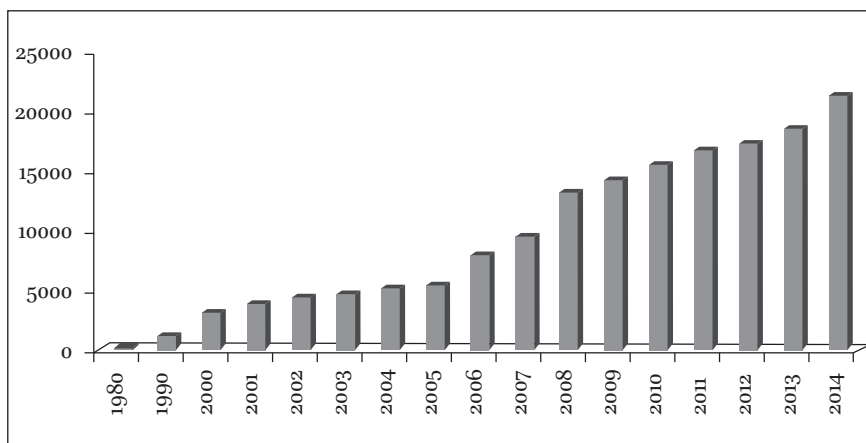
While Chinese immigration to Portugal has followed the same pattern as the Chinese migratory flows to the rest of Southern Europe (Laczko 2003; Rodrigues 2008),¹ it can nonetheless be considered a unique case. In Portugal it is possible to distinguish two different flows related to historical, political and economic specificities: an early one derived from the historical momentum between Portugal and its former colonies (Mozambique and Macao), which stimulated the migration of some Chinese Mozambicans and Macanese between 1975 and the 1990s; and a recent one immersed in a Southern European context, which emerged after the 2000s. The latter has entailed the immigration of many Chinese economic migrants (Zhejiang migration), and more recently the mobility of Chinese students and business migrants. In the first decade of the century, the passage of new laws allowing immigrants to legalize their situation led to an intensification of migratory flows to Portugal from Asia in general. Between 1999 and 2001, there was a significant increase in illegal migration (mostly from Eastern European countries), and in 2001 an amnesty permitted the legalization of undocumented immigrants already

1 Although there are not many studies on Chinese immigration to Portugal, some Master's and PhD projects in anthropology and history have looked at the topic: Matias (2010), Nunes (2008), Rodrigues (2012). With regard to Portuguese sociology of migration projects, Machado and Azevedo (2009) argue that investigation linked to Chinese immigrants only represented 3 percent of all research projects on ethnic minorities between 2000 and 2008.

living in Portugal.² This context contributed to a rise in the number of Chinese citizens to heights that had previously been unusual.³

Graph 1 shows the variation in the number of Chinese immigrants to Portugal between 1980 and 2014. As we can see, a negligible figure in 1980 (just 244) has now risen to 21,402 registered Chinese in 2014 — a variation of around 8,671 per cent. The largest increase occurred from 2000 onwards, with constant growth since then. Until 2009 this rise in the number of Chinese immigrants in Portugal was accompanied by an increase in the number of people of other nationalities (Brazilians, Cape Verdeans, Ukrainians, Romanians, and Russians). In 1980 there were 50,755 recorded immigrants in Portugal; in 2009 this had risen to about 451,742 individuals. However, since then the economic/financial crisis has led to a steep fall in this figure, to around 390,114 in 2014. This means that while until 2009 the growth in the number of Chinese migrants paralleled the general increase in immigrants, what we have witnessed since then is a “counter-cyclical” trend, inasmuch as Portugal has become less attractive as a host country for the other immigrant populations (particularly Brazilians and Eastern Europeans).

The analysis of this trend in Chinese immigration can also be complemented by looking at the year of entry into the country. According to data from the latest

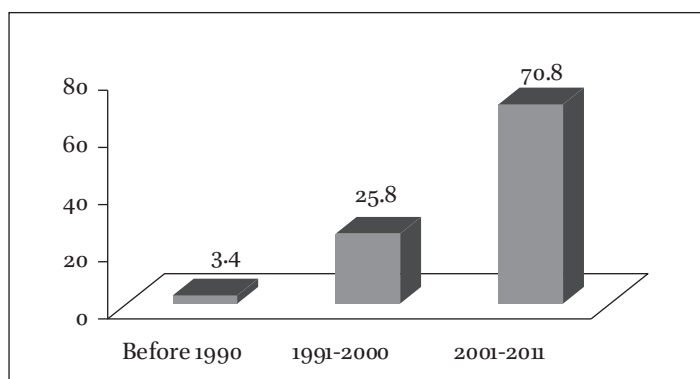


GRAPH 1 *Variation in Chinese immigrants in Portugal (1980–2014).*

SOURCE: PORTUGUESE IMMIGRATION AND BORDERS SERVICE (SEF);
PORDATA.

² Law no. 4/2001 of January 10, 2001.

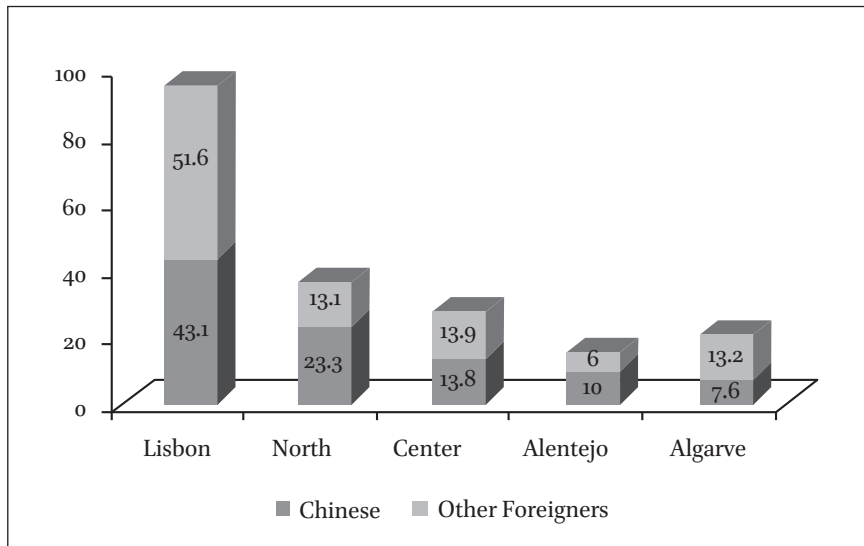
³ The general rules on immigration are set out in Law no. 23/2007 of July 4, 2007, which transposed a number of EU recommendations.



GRAPH 2 *Year of entry of Chinese immigrants to Portugal (%)*.
SOURCE: STATISTICS PORTUGAL (INE), 2011 GENERAL POPULATION CENSUS.

national Census (2011), 3.4 percent of all Chinese citizens residing in Portugal entered before 1990, 25.8 percent between 1991 and 2000, and 70.8 percent since 2002 (Graph 2). This means that although Chinese immigration has been taking place for several decades, the largest flow and ensuing settlement of Chinese citizens in Portugal occurred since the first decade of the present century. In this respect, and as we will see below, it is important to analyze whether the profile of these Chinese citizens has been homogeneous throughout this period, or whether on the contrary we are in the presence of not one but various groups.

Albeit mainly concentrated in the major urban centers, Chinese citizens are scattered right across Portugal (Graph 3). According to the 2011 Census, the primary geographic center of settlement was Lisbon (43.1 percent), but there were also significant numbers in the North (23.3 percent), the center (13.8 percent), Alentejo (10 percent), and Algarve (7.6 percent), with a residual presence in the Madeira and Azores Autonomous Regions (Delgado and Paulino 2014). As we can see from Graph 3, this geographic dispersal of the Chinese population generally matches the pattern for the rest of the immigrant population in Portugal, notwithstanding that there are some regions where the proportion of Chinese is higher (the North) or lower (Lisbon and the Algarve) than that of other immigrants. In Lisbon there is a substantial residential and commercial concentration in the Martim Moniz/Avenida Almirante Reis neighborhood (Mapril 2001; Rodrigues 2008), which is characterized by a large variety of retail spaces owned by Chinese citizens (restaurants, shops, supermarkets), who take advantage of its centrality to live there as well and thus do not have to waste time and money on home/work travel.



GRAPH 3 *Distribution of Chinese and other foreign populations by region (%)*.
SOURCE: INE, 2011 GENERAL POPULATION CENSUS.

We will now describe the heterogeneity of the Chinese migrants settled in Portugal, whose migration was mapped in two different historical and political contexts, before focusing on the characterization of economic (unskilled) Chinese migrants, inasmuch as this is the group for whose numbers we have the most data. Taking the 2011 Census as our basis, we begin by looking at the sociodemographic indicators and family context; we then go on to examine their transnational networks, entrepreneurial activities and kinship links; and we conclude by offering some suggestions for further studies on Chinese migration in Portugal and Southern Europe.

The Diversity of the Chinese Migrants in Portugal

Chinese migrants include various groups with different geographic, socioeconomic and cultural origins, and this diversity has increased, primarily in the last couple of decades. A combination of the Portuguese colonial context and other historical processes that have marked the migratory movements of Asian persons has contributed to the heterogeneity of the Chinese in Portugal. As in other European countries like Italy (Ceccagno 2003), France (Guerassimoff-Pina 2006), and Spain (Sáiz López 2005), the predominant group is composed of unskilled individuals whose immigration is essentially based on economic

reasons. However, and unlike other European countries, there are also some specific groups whose origins are anchored in the Portuguese political and historical past: ethnic Chinese born in Macao (Macanese), and Chinese who joined the wave of Portuguese returnees who came back from Mozambique after decolonization (Chinese Mozambicans). In addition, more recent groups like Chinese tertiary students (Matias 2010) and Chinese business immigrants attracted by the increase in Chinese economic investment in Portugal have also been settling in the last few years.

The singularity and coexistence of diverse Chinese groups in Portugal, which differ from one another not only in terms of when they immigrated but also in their geographic origins and the socioeconomic, cultural and symbolic resources they acquired before and after immigration, make it legitimate to recognize Portugal's singularity as a receiving country for Chinese immigrants, compared to other Southern European states.

The oldest flows of Chinese citizens included individuals who were originally from Macao or Mozambique. The presence of the Macanese has made itself felt for decades, thanks to the political and cultural relationship established with Portugal's former territory, and more recently to the return of some citizens to Portugal as a result of the transfer of sovereignty over Macao to China in 1999. The Macanese represent a group that is socially "invisible" and well integrated into Portuguese society, with a number of members who are naturalized Portuguese citizens or married to one (Matias 2010). One symbol of this group's identity is its hybrid nature, which results from the fact that it simultaneously values and identifies with both Portuguese and Chinese culture. As Costa notes, "this type of identity, with reference to a territory of origin — Macao — sovereignty over which now belongs to China" (2004: 150-1), reinforces these individuals' positioning at the junction between two worlds, two cultures and two languages, and gives their multiculturalism a strategic peculiarity, which in most cases is seen as an asset by Portuguese society.⁴

The Chinese immigrants from Mozambique made Portugal their home after decolonization, essentially for political and economic reasons. The Chinese presence in Mozambique was consolidated over the course of the twentieth century, and grew out of both the trading relations between the two countries and the high birth rate and bad living conditions in China (Soares 1998). The geographic settlement of the Chinese living in Mozambique was extremely dispersed, and this contributed to an easier integration and acculturation with the autochthonous population, namely in the shape of learning to speak Portuguese, achieving insertion into non-ethnic branches of activity and types of work, adopting the local culture and the Catholic religion, and in some cases

4 On the process of the construction of a Macanese identity, see Costa (2004).

marrying exogamously. As such, Chinese migrants with Mozambican origins are well integrated into Portuguese society (something that distinguishes them from the other Chinese groups, which are generally more closed and cohesive) (Matias 2010; Soares 1998).

The Chinese immigration from Macao and Mozambique forms part of a broader migratory context that involves a rationale of historical and linguistic closeness between Portugal and its former colonies and administrative territories. In fact, like the Indians who also came from Mozambique (Ávila and Alves 1993), or the Luso-Guineans who settled in Portugal after the independence of Guinea-Bissau (Machado 1998), the social position the Chinese Mozambicans and the Macanese already occupied within their societies of origin gave them a social and symbolic status in the receiving country that was privileged in relation to that of other groups of Chinese immigrants. Both groups were recruited from layers of the urban, educated class in those countries, and enjoyed the advantages of a well consolidated network of inter-knowledge and social relations in Portuguese society.

While the Chinese Mozambicans and the Macanese immigrated above all in the 1980s and 1990s, the more recent flows of Chinese immigrants intensified in the first decade of the twenty-first century, and are already displaying similarities with flows into other European countries (Guerassimoff-Pina 2006; Sáiz López 2005). The most numerous group is made up of unskilled, relatively uneducated economic immigrants from Zhejiang on the east coast of China. These individuals have immigrated at a steady rate, supported by family networks and peer groups that are already established in Portugal and serve as a catalyst for transnational immigration. This immigrant profile is the most socially visible, inasmuch as it largely devotes itself to the small textile and restaurant trades (Oliveira 2004; Matias 2010).

Recently, following a general trend in the ties between China and Europe (especially Germany, the United Kingdom, and France), the consolidation of institutional relations between Portuguese and Chinese universities has led to a substantial increase in tertiary students from China and Macao in Portugal. The number of Chinese students enrolling in Portuguese higher education for the first time rose by 251.7 percent between 2005/6 and 2010/11 (Oliveira et al. 2014). Although these students' presence in Portugal is temporary, some authors (Biao 2003; Tremblay 2002; Van Mol 2008) argue that this type of immigration can be seen as a precursor to flows of highly qualified immigrants who use knowledge and skills acquired during their studies to then achieve insertion into the host country's labor market and society.

The increasing number of Chinese students in Europe can be mapped on the basis of China's educational investment and political reforms. After 1978, Deng Xiaoping's policies promoted student mobility into Western countries (USA and Europe) with the goal of ensuring China's own economic and intellectual

development (Biao 2003; Zhang 2003).⁵ As a means of preventing a brain-drain of highly skilled citizens, from the early 1990s China started to encourage not only its students' mobility but also the return of qualified professionals living abroad, so that they could take up leading positions at both public and private entities.

There is a currently increasing demand for opportunities for overseas study, which is being further stimulated by Western educational agencies that have set up office in China to attract students. The desire of European universities to increase their income from foreign student fees has led them to exploit a new market in China. These agencies provide information about a whole range of academic institutions in different countries, assist students with admission applications, and provide support with their passports and visas (Biao 2003). At the same time, the difficult entrance exams for Chinese universities also motivate the search for international educational opportunities. This institutional context is increasingly driving families, particularly from prosperous coastal areas, to invest in an international education which enables their children to acquire symbolic and cultural capital that will then take them on to prestigious and successful occupations.

Another group of Chinese citizens who have become more visible in recent years are business migrants (Wong 2003; Tseng 2000). Business migration normally entails a linking of economic and immigration policies, with immigration related to capital because the criterion for migration is the appropriation and transfer of capital from one country to another. It is a sort of "economic citizenship" in which immigrants acquire citizenship or residence permits in exchange for a transference of money to the country of residence. In contrast to the immigrant ethnic entrepreneurship that exists in many receiving countries, formally doing business is a mandatory condition for this particular immigration process. Business migrants are not a homogeneous group and can include investors, small or medium entrepreneurs, or self-employed individuals. The reasons behind business migration are linked to the search for better economic and professional conditions and the opportunity for free movement within the Schengen Area (in the case of the EU), but also to a desire for better social and educational conditions for children and a better environment. In sum, according to some authors, business migration can be linked to both quality-of-life and economic rationales (Wong 2003; Tseng 2000).

More recently, and after the financial and economic crisis of 2011 that affected several Southern European countries, some governments promoted business migration programs as a way of attracting foreign investment (Quintela 2014).

5 However, while China is stimulating skilled migration and return, on the other hand the government is individualizing the management of emigration and paying little attention to the "export" of unskilled workers (Biao 2003).

Portugal was no exception, and since 2012 has offered a Residence Permit for Investment Activities (ARI), commonly known as the “Golden Visa”.⁶ Golden Visas allow investors from other countries to apply for a residence permit in order to start an investment activity involving: 1) capital transferred from abroad; 2) the creation of jobs in Portugal; or 3) the purchase of Portuguese real estate. Like any other foreign citizen who is legally resident in Portugal, subject to certain conditions Golden Visa holders can apply for family reunification, a permanent residence permit, and, after five years, Portuguese nationality.⁷

Far more Chinese citizens have taken advantage of this initiative designed to attract foreign investors than any other nationality. In Portugal, Chinese business migrants are mainly individuals who invest in strategic sectors of the economy (real estate, energy, banking, tourism) and take advantage of legal and fiscal benefits offered by Portuguese policies (Quintela 2014). Immigration and Borders Service (SEF) data show that 2,420 ARIS were issued between October 8, 2012 and June 30, 2015,⁸ 1,947 of which were applied for by Chinese citizens. Of the visas, 2,289 were justified by the purchase of real estate, 128 by the transfer of capital, and just 3 by the creation of at least 10 jobs. The acquisition of real estate property in order to acquire residence permits that allow movement not just in Portugal but throughout the Schengen Area testifies to the fact that business migration is a way of legitimizing not only “economic citizenship” but particularly “mobility citizenship”.

As we have already noted, Chinese immigrants who have settled in Portugal arrived in two different waves of migration and have their origins in diverse groups. The first wave of migration brought the Macanese and the Chinese Mozambicans, whose level of social integration into Portuguese society is wider than that of other groups.⁹ These two groups contribute to the distinctiveness of Chinese citizens living in Portugal, compared to those in other Southern European countries. More recently, and running in parallel with rising flows of Chinese immigration throughout the EU, groups like economic migrants (Zhejiang migration), students and business migrants have started to become numerically more visible.

6 The Portuguese Golden Visa is regulated by Laws nos. 29/2012 of August 9, 2012, and 63/2015 of June 30, 2015.

7 For more detailed information, consult the website: http://www.sef.pt/portal/v10/PT/asp/apoioCliente/detalheApoio.aspx?fromIndex=0&id_Linha=6269 (accessed on 23/07/2015).

8 In parallel, the same period saw the issue of 3,704 Residence Permits to reunited family members. For more information, see: http://www.sef.pt/documentos/56/Mapa_ARI_PT_jun2015.pdf (accessed on 23/07/2015).

9 Social integration refers to the processes and behaviors pursued in order to achieve peaceful social relations between immigrants and the host society.

Despite the heterogeneity of these Chinese immigrants, analysis of the sociodemographic, economic, and occupational data from the 2011 Census shows that economic migrants are the largest Chinese subgroup. Given their number in Portugal, the remainder of the paper will therefore be devoted to characterizing and understanding this subgroup.

Profile of the Economic Chinese Migrants

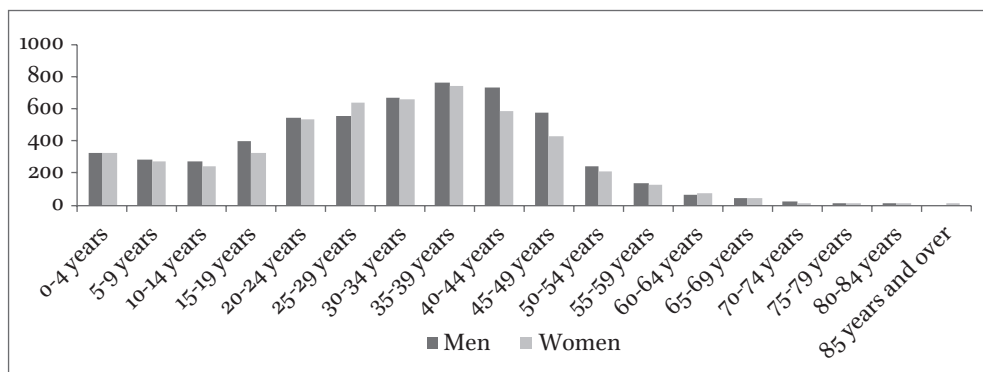
Sociodemographic Indicators and Family Context

Sociodemographic indicators from the 2011 Census reveal that resident Chinese migrants present quite a balanced gender structure, with around 52 percent men and 48 percent women. However, this balance has only recently been achieved, given that in the 1980s Chinese immigrants were predominantly men looking for new commercial or work opportunities. As the years passed and the migratory flows to Portugal and the rest of Europe intensified, there was a progressive rise in female immigration whose roots either lay in family reunification processes or represented individualized migratory projects in search of better living conditions.¹⁰

The average age of Chinese citizens here is 31.1 years, which is somewhat younger than the average for both the Portuguese themselves (42.1) and other foreigners (34.2). The age structures of male and female Chinese immigrants are quite similar (Graph 4). The most common ages among men fall between 30 and 44, while the most frequent concentrations of women range from 25 to 44, which means we are essentially in the presence of individuals of working age. As we can see from Graph 4, there is an under-representation of older persons, which is explained by the fact that Chinese settlement in Portuguese society is relatively recent.

We can also see that these are migrants with a low level of education, in that 45.5 percent have not completed the third basic education cycle (year 9), 31.5 percent have only completed this level, 19.6 percent have completed secondary education, and a mere 3.5 percent have finished higher education. These data contrast with the somewhat higher levels for other nationalities, for which the figures are 28.3 percent, 24.6 percent, 32.7 percent, and 14.4 percent respectively. They clearly show that a considerable proportion of immigrants of Chinese origin possess a low level of qualifications, thus suggesting that in Portugal they may be looking for work opportunities which have already been filled in other European contexts.

10 For a more in-depth analysis of the migratory paths taken by Chinese women in Portugal, see Rodrigues (2008).



GRAPH 4 *Age breakdown of Chinese immigrants in Portugal.*

SOURCE: STATISTICS PORTUGAL (INE), 2011 GENERAL POPULATION CENSUS.

The Census data also allow us to observe that notwithstanding a significant percentage of single persons (38.3 percent), the majority of these individuals are married (59.3 percent), while there is only a small number of divorcees (1.4 percent)¹¹ and widow(er)s (0.93 percent). Comparative data for the remaining foreign population show that the majority are single (52.9 percent), followed by married individuals (39.4 percent), divorcees (5.5 percent), and widow(er)s (2.3 percent). In the case of the Chinese population, this tendency towards conjugality is also reflected in a formalization of unions by marriage (civil or religious), inasmuch as only 7.9 percent were cohabiting, in clear contrast to immigrants as a whole (24.7 percent). Both these age data and those on conjugality suggest the existence of Chinese households essentially made up of young couples (Delgado and Paulino 2014). Research to date indicates that this group of immigrants lives in an endogamous social and family environment which stimulates the continued use of a common language (Mandarin) (Góis et al. 2005).

Since the 1949 Revolution, the concept of family among Chinese has been guided by a discourse that is conveyed by the state and argues for equal roles in both the domestic (reproductive tasks) and labor (productive tasks) domains. However, in practice, this sexual division of labor is not always realized, with women working a double day in and outside the home (Rodrigues 2008). Be

11 The 1949 Communist Revolution brought a series of social and political reforms to China, including the 1950 Marriage Law. Although the latter made divorce possible, this social situation is still rare today, and marriage continues to be seen as a lifelong union. However, in migratory contexts (both within China and abroad), couples often live apart for long periods, so some of these marriages may conceal situations of “unofficial divorce” (Rodrigues 2008).

that as it may, in a migratory context this supposed equality between spouses is compromised to the extent that the creation of enterprises or private businesses normally requires more financial management by men (commercial relations with suppliers, factories, businessmen, etc.), with women relegated to an auxiliary role in the undertaking (customer relations/service) and to controlling domestic tasks. In this sense, although it often relies on every member of the family (spouses, relatives), the productive work done in family businesses is based on a sexual division of labor. From the moment at which a family firm begins to consolidate itself, there arises a need to recruit more staff (often Chinese), and this strategy makes it possible to reproduce the labor immigration format that is specific to this national group.

At the beginning of the migratory path, one commonly sees more economic sacrifices and professional commitment on the part of the family, the goal of which is to quickly accumulate the capital needed to start a personal business. According to Rodrigues (2008), passage from the situation of “employee” to that of “boss” occurs upon marriage. It is a fact that the formation of a Chinese family in a migratory context often coincides with the creation of a family enterprise, which means that marriage can be seen as not only a civil contract but also a business one. Given that the family firm is a key structural concept among Chinese, the business space is seen as a semi-private environment in which the family spends most of its time, including taking its meals and its opportunities for rest and leisure (Rodrigues 2008: 170).

This family participation in private businesses is what Wong (1989) and Teixeira (1999) call “business familism.” According to Wong (1989), this practice suggests that the traditional Chinese family is founded on a concrete economic ethic which promotes autonomy and the creation of private property. As such, Chinese entrepreneurialism is based on “business familism,” which can be defined as a paternalist managerial style, on the use of nepotistic practices in the business (hiring and promotion based on family membership), and on the fact that ownership of the enterprise remains in the family’s hands.

As such, and as suggested by Sáiz López (2005: 159), a Chinese family is seen as a unit of both production and consumption, to the extent that it makes profitable use of the human and economic resources at its disposal in order to achieve labor autonomy within the host society by creating the family businesses which, in the great majority of cases, underlie the success of Chinese immigration on an international scale.

Transnational Networks, Entrepreneurship and Kinship

Studies on Chinese immigrants in Portugal have to date essentially focused on their economic and professional activities (Fonseca and Malheiros 2004; Góis et al. 2005; Costa 2002; Mapril 2001; Neves and Rocha-Trindade 2008;

Oliveira 2004, 2005; Teixeira 1999, 1998). The results indicate that the activities linked to ethnic trade fit within a transnational dynamic characterized by the existence of frequent economic relations between Zhejiang Province and the Chinese immigrants (Góis et al. 2005). At the same time, Chinese immigrants tend to take advantage of the freedom of movement provided by the Schengen Area, using Portugal as a base from which to establish commercial relations with Chinese citizens living in other European Union states. The fact is that many Chinese economic migrants residing in Portugal say they have previously immigrated to other European countries, which confirms the practice of “circular migration” found in other European countries (Laczko 2003). This shows that in some cases Portugal is not a primary immigration destination but rather a territory that possesses strategic interest in terms of gaining access to other European markets in which Chinese are more established (Góis et al. 2005; Matias 2010; Neves and Rocha-Trindade 2008).

One of the consequences of the closely knit transnational networks maintained by Chinese migrants is that the latter are not socially, economically or financially dependent on the civil society of the host country (Costa 2002; Oliveira 2004, 2005; Matias 2010). Portugal is no exception in this regard. The migratory paths to Europe and Portugal taken by the Chinese community are mainly based on family or informal networks that structure migratory strategies for moving from China to the host countries (Guerassimoff-Pina 2006; Thunø 2007). The establishment of these transnational networks is a key immigration strategy, and they are subsequently maintained by an “interpolarity of contacts” — i.e., emotional ties developed by members of the same national group who have settled in different geographic contexts (Ma Mung 2000:145). Sustained by relatives or friends, these networks facilitate the migration of new immigrants between different European countries whenever new work or economic opportunities arise.

While, as we said earlier, we consider the group of individuals with origins in Zhejiang Province to be representative of a less qualified form of labor immigration, in the majority of cases their migratory practices follow a traditional pattern that is also found in other European countries: first the man emigrates, and only once he is legally living in Portugal is he followed by his wife and children (see Sáiz López 2005).¹² The labor market insertion of Chinese immigrants is facilitated by both the work opportunities offered by compatriots (Góis et al. 2005; Costa 2002; Mapril 2001; Neves and Rocha-Trindade 2008; Teixeira 1999, 1998), and a family structure which, as we have already mentioned, is characterized by “business familism” (Teixeira 1999; Wong 1989). The

12 Although this is the most common migratory pattern, we have been seeing an increase in individualized female immigration.

resources mobilized in order to achieve economic and legal integration are primarily ethnic and family ones (Oliveira 2004, 2005).¹³

The Census data confirm this tendency towards an active participation in the Portuguese labor market by Chinese migrants (Table 1). The records we obtained indicate that Chinese immigrants live essentially from their labor (63.6 percent), to an extent that substantially exceeds that for the rest of the foreign population (49.7 percent). Compared to other immigrants (11.3 percent), there are practically no unemployed Chinese (1 percent). The percentage of Chinese individuals below the age of fifteen (16 percent) does not differ much from that for other immigrants (12.6 percent), nor are there substantial differences in terms of individuals who are studying (5.4 percent of Chinese and 7.3 percent of other immigrants) or are in a domestic situation (4.9 percent vs 3.9 percent).

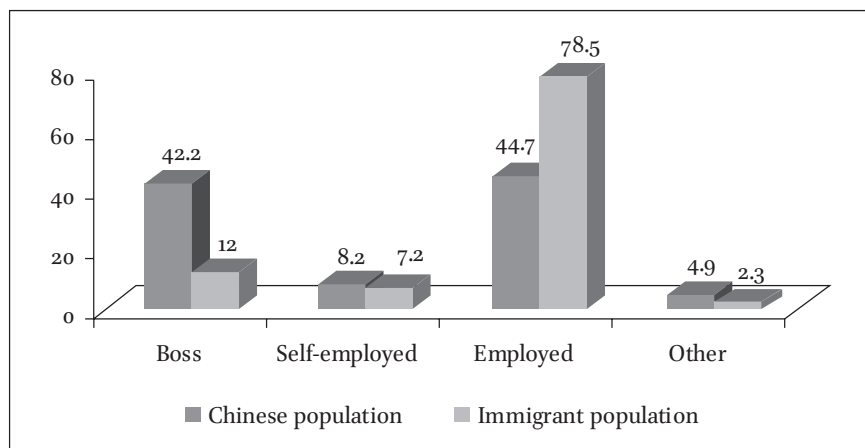
TABLE 1 *Work situation of Chinese and other foreign immigrants in Portugal (%)*

		Chinese	Other Foreigners
Work situation	Employed	63.6	49.7
	Unemployed	1.0	11.3
	Aged below 15 years	16.0	12.6
	Student	5.4	7.3
	Domestic	4.9	3.9
	Retired	1.6	6.0
	Other situation	7.3	8.8

SOURCE: STATISTICS PORTUGAL (INE), 2011 GENERAL POPULATION CENSUS.

As in the case of the settled Chinese in other Southern European contexts (Ceccagno 2003; Sáiz López 2005), another fundamental characteristic of this group of immigrants is the fact that they engage in more entrepreneurial activities on their own account than other national contingents, who mostly work for other people (Fonseca and Malheiros 2004; Oliveira 2004, 2005). Their level

13 Having said this, and despite the fact that the labor market insertion of the Chinese migrants is largely dependent on the “ethnic niche” effect that facilitates the upward social mobility of new immigrants, according to Sáiz López (2005) the Chinese population in Europe is currently growing faster than the existing capacity to absorb labor in various host countries.



GRAPH 5 *Situation within profession of Chinese and immigrant communities in Portugal (%)*.
SOURCE: STATISTICS PORTUGAL (INE), 2011 GENERAL POPULATION CENSUS.

of entrepreneurship is undoubtedly quite high. Graph 5 reveals precisely this reality: the proportion of bosses and self-employed persons is clearly higher among the Chinese (42.2 percent and 8.2 percent respectively) than among immigrants in general (12 percent and 7.2 percent).

Similarly, Table 2 shows that the main occupations recorded in the last population Census match earlier studies (Delgado and Paulino 2014), in that the majority of Chinese citizens devote themselves to selling in shops (42.54 percent), managing retail and wholesale trades (21.76 percent), and, to a lesser extent, preparing food (9.04 percent). As one might have expected, this means that the branches of economic activity involved are primarily the retail trade (69.04 percent) and restaurants and similar businesses (20.87 percent).

TABLE 2 *Professions and economic activity of Chinese immigrants in Portugal (%)*

Main profession	Shop salesperson	42.54
	Director/manager in retail/ wholesale trade	21.76
	Cook	9.04
Branch of economic activity	Retail trade	69.04
	Restaurants and similar	20.87
	Wholesale trade	2.59

SOURCE: STATISTICS PORTUGAL (INE), 2011 GENERAL POPULATION CENSUS.

In this respect Oliveira's study (2004) on the business strategies pursued by economic Chinese immigrants in Portugal¹⁴ shows that they essentially mobilize resources and opportunities based on ethnic criteria acquired through the solidarity and mutual assistance networks within this national group (ethnic strategies). Access to these resources is an advantage when it comes to undertaking and developing a business initiative, given that it makes it easier to recruit labor and acquire financial and economic capital in order to start a private enterprise. Two thirds of the Chinese entrepreneurs surveyed by Oliveira (2004) said they gained access to the financial capital needed to create their business via family members or friends. At one and the same time these loans, which are normally interest-free, make it possible to strengthen the group's solidarity and make it less dependent on the financial and structural conditions in the host society (i.e., bank loans).¹⁵ At the same time, these ethnic strategies underpinned by the group's own social networks and pursued by Chinese business people mean that when additional staff are needed, it is possible to hire co-ethnic workers (normally at lower cost and with more demanding working conditions), with whom it is possible to communicate in the same language and establish mutual bonds of trust and solidarity.

Within this context of entrepreneurial initiative, ethnic associations (economic, financial, religious, and cultural) play a fundamental role in supporting both business ventures and transactional relations with the country of origin, which are normally privileged (Costa 2002; Neves and Rocha-Trindade 2008). The majority of Chinese associations were founded precisely by first-generation economic immigrants whose leaders enjoy prestige, and they are primarily intended

14 The author makes an exhaustive comparison of the types of business strategy pursued by the Chinese, Indian, and Cape Verdean communities. For more details, see Oliveira (2004, 2005).

15 Immigrants' economic and labor autonomy can sometimes generate a lack of familiarity with and xenophobic reactions toward it on the part of the host society. A study by Matias (2005) on Portuguese society's social representations of the Chinese migrants showed that the Portuguese respondents displayed contradictory sentiments toward Chinese people, due partly to the social distance kept by the latter. Despite the existence of different opinions according to the interviewees' educational levels (i.e., more favorable opinions from respondents with more education, and less favorable ones from those with less education), the feelings about the Chinese expressed by the Portuguese focused on merely commercial aspects and were motivated by lack of knowledge, indifference and even suspicion about Chinese business activities. The fact is that the negative sentiments apparent in the interviewees' discourse were directed at issues such as a lack of quality of products sold in "Chinese shops" and the labor and social conditions under which those products were made in China. As Matias sums it up, in Portugal "the Chinese are only tolerated [...] for the commercial function they perform." (2005: 157).

to stimulate economic and trade links between Portugal and China. This is the case with the Association of Chinese Traders and Industrialists (ACIC), which serves as a chamber of commerce, seeking to promote economic projects involving Portuguese investors in China and Chinese investors in Portugal.

The fact is that the Chinese play a fundamental role as a link between China and Portugal (Neves and Rocha-Trindade 2008). Likewise, they do not just establish and consolidate economic and commercial relations with their country of origin; they also develop the same kind of relations on a European scale, namely with other Chinese companies based in other countries (Spain, France, Italy, etc.), which primarily function as product suppliers. As part of their business activities in this country, these Chinese companies and microenterprises also form strategic relationships with Portuguese businesses which, unlike Chinese companies in the rest of the Schengen Area, serve above all as customers.

The results of a study by Neves and Rocha-Trindade (2008) suggest that Chinese migrants with entrepreneurial ventures are making a positive contribution to the Portuguese economy by creating jobs or labor for Portuguese workers, increasing the competition in certain sectors of the retail and restaurant trades, and investing in some declining Portuguese economic sectors which, following an injection of capital and managerial skills by Chinese citizens, are clearly becoming revitalized. In this regard, recent years have also witnessed a major increase in Chinese investment in Portugal in strategic sectors such as energy, banking and tourism, either through the purchase of stakes in Portuguese companies (e.g., EDP, REN, Fidelidade) or by implementing Chinese enterprises that see Portugal as a strategic market within the overall European framework (e.g., the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China, the Bank of China).

It is within this context that the privileged position which Chinese migrants occupy in Portugal thanks to the extent of their heterogeneity, entrepreneurialism, mobility and integrated vision of the European market is playing a central part in the establishment of economic and commercial relations between China and Portugal (Neves and Rocha-Trindade 2008: 184-5). These functions ought to be optimized and strengthened by Portuguese public and private entities, inasmuch as Chinese migrants are essentially enhancing and increasing the potential of the economic and financial flows (exports, investment) between the two countries.

Conclusion

As we have sought to show, the settlement of Chinese migrants in Portugal is not homogeneous. This diversity clearly illustrates the historical and cultural

ties that have long linked Portugal and China and are particularly evident among the Chinese immigrants from the first migratory wave — the Macanese and the Chinese Mozambicans — whose “invisibility” demonstrates the extent of the social integration they achieve thanks to their mastery of the Portuguese language and culture. The second wave of Chinese immigrants made up of distinct groups — economic workers (Zhejiang migration), students, and business migrants — has become more numerous, and their rise follows the Chinese migratory trends recorded in other Southern European countries. In this respect, we still need comparative research projects to explore the points of contact and distance between these subgroups, and to examine the personal, ethnic and structural strategies employed in their social integration in Portugal.

However, one thing that is already revealed by analyzing the 2011 Census data is the predominance of a social profile associated with economic Chinese immigrants living in Portugal. Much of this paper has been devoted to characterizing this group, particularly in terms of its sociodemographic and family context, kinship dynamics, transnational networks and entrepreneurial activities. The fact that its members mostly engage in endogamous practices — i.e., they base their network of personal, social and professional relations almost exclusively among themselves — has important consequences not only for their social and economic integration but also for the integration of their descendants.

Another fundamental question to consider when looking at these subgroups of Chinese is their future development in Portugal: will they continue to grow at the same pace? It seems evident that the subgroups identified in the first wave (Macanese and Chinese Mozambican) will soon tend to disappear, because the political and historical links between Portugal and their territories of origin (Macao and Mozambique) have changed. However, it may be possible to foresee something different for the Chinese migrants included in more recent flows. Numbers of Chinese students will continue to rise in both Portugal and the rest of Europe, as long as educational policy programs go on investing in attracting foreign students. An important issue to consider along these lines is whether these students will settle in Portugal and become part of a highly skilled group of migrants whose knowledge and social capital will help forge closer bonds between China and Portugal and China and Europe.

Driven by competitive business migration programs pursued by Southern European countries, business migrants can also be expected to go on increasing in number in the next few years. Future research faces a number of challenges when examining this (still largely unknown) phenomenon: How are business migrants attracted to Portugal? What are their recruitment channels (personal and family networks, real estate agencies, migration agencies, or

companies)? Do they become permanent settlers or do they transit to other parts of the Schengen Area? What are their motivations for acquiring a Golden Visa (economic, personal, lifestyle, children's education)? Do they integrate with Portuguese citizens or with other Chinese migrants?

Finally, it may well be that the rise in the number of economic migrants will slow down in the coming years, due to the Portuguese economy's limited capacity to absorb them as unskilled workers. This phenomenon might encourage the flow of new Chinese unskilled migrants to other European countries that offer work opportunities in larger numbers and are more able to match their strategies and objectives. However, as we have seen in this paper, some of these economic migrants display solid strategies for entrepreneurship and capital accumulation, which may continue to function as a transnational recruitment channel for other Chinese workers in the future.

In short, research on Chinese migrants in Portugal is still scant, and future studies should analyze each of these subgroups in more depth. As such, dimensions related to questions of citizenship and political participation, cultural identities and practices, ethnic representations, geographical settlement, family and intergenerational dynamics, the education of descendants, and gender issues among others, are fundamental to a maturing of the sociology of migrations in Portugal and Europe as a whole.

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