HIGHLY SKILLED NEW CHINESE MIGRANTS IN THE UK AND THE GLOBALISATION OF CHINA SINCE 1990

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Abbreviation

ACE-UK Association of Chinese Engineers in the UK
CACS-UK Chinese Automation and Computing Society in the UK
CBTBA China-Britain Technology and Trade Association
CCPCC National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference
CEA-UK Chinese Economic Association in the UK
CHISA China Scholars Abroad
CLA-UK Chinese Law Association in the UK
CLSS-UK Chinese Life Sciences Society in the UK
CMA-UK Chinese Materials Association-UK
COD-CPC Central Organization Department of the Chinese Communist Party
CPC Communist Party of China
CPPCC National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
CSC China Scholarship Council
CSCE Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange
CSCT Chinese Society of Chemical Science and Technology
CSSA-CAM Vision for Chinese students and scholars in Cambridge University
CSSA-MAN Vision for Chinese in the University of Manchester
CSSA-UK Chinese Students and Scholars Association in the UK
CTAS-UK Chinese Textile and Apparel Society in the UK
EEA European Economic Area
FCPS-UK Federation of Chinese Professional Societies in the UK
HESA Higher Education Statistics Agency
HSMP Highly Skilled Migration Programme
HSNCMs Highly skilled new Chinese migrants
MoE Ministry of Education
NNSF National Natural Science Foundation
OCAO Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council
OCP Overseas Chinese Professional associations
OCPs Overseas Chinese professionals
OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PRC People’s Republic of China
ROCSA Returned and Overseas Chinese Scholars Association of All-China Youth Federation
SEFEA Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs, P.R. China
MOST Ministry of Science and Technology
UK CARE UK Chinese Association of Resources and Environment
UKBA UK Border Agency
WRSA Western Returned Scholars Association in China
XCA Xinhua Chinese Association
Z-Park Zhongguancun Science Park
Abstract

This PhD dissertation is concerned with highly skilled new Chinese migrants (HSNCMs) in the UK and their transnational (or trans-boundary) careers and business practice between China and Britain. The research subjects are those HSNCMs who have established careers and business connections between China and the UK since 1990. This research pays special attention to relationships between the transnational practice of HSNCMs, brain circulation (or their knowledge exchange with China) and China’s globalisation.

Three main topics are discussed in this dissertation: First, it examines the states’ engagement which has a direct impact on transnational mobility of HSNCMs in the UK. Second, it analyzes transnational network building of OCP associations (professional associations of HSNCMs) linking between HSNCMs and China. Third, it discusses individual transnational career and business activities and identity construction of HSNCMs in order to understand China’s brain circulation in the UK context. The main theoretical object of this paper is to combine brain circulation studies with the theoretical framework of transnational migration studies.

The findings of this research show that states’ policy engagement (especially China’s initiatives) is very powerful. Through transnational network building of OCP associations, HSNCMs integrate their personal development into the national projects of Mainland China. For individual HSNCMs, their transnational practice is diverse in terms of their different social backgrounds. For most HSNCMs with trans-boundary careers and business practice, their transnational identities are combined with Chinese consciousness. They have set up strategies to develop their careers and business between the sending country and receiving country. The multiple interactions between HSNCMs and China, therefore, have produced a significant impact on the brain circulation of HSNCMs and the globalisation of China.
Declaration

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background and significance

Overseas Chinese in the past century have marked an important new chapter in the history of globalisation. After 1978 when China launched its economic opening and reforms, a group of overseas Chinese called ‘new Chinese migrants’ became a sector of international migrants in the contemporary world. It is estimated that over 6 million new Chinese migrants lived outside Mainland China by 2009 (China News Service, 2009). Due to the globalisation of the labour market, a large number of new Chinese migrants with higher education background had the opportunity to study and work abroad. Many have been well prepared for, and fit into, the employment needs of the globalizing economy. Generally, they are known as highly skilled new Chinese migrants (HSNCMs) or overseas Chinese professionals (OCPs), and most of them in Western countries are students-turned-migrants ((Zhang, 2003; Xiang, 2005). These students-turned-migrants are also called ‘overseas Chinese students and scholars’ by the Chinese government.

At the current stage, transnational careers and business practice of HSNCMs is a trend in the context of globalisation. A certain number of HSNCMs with different occupational backgrounds initiate their careers and business practice that links the sending country and the receiving country. Some of them may live in the host country but run their business in China. Some may work in the host country but participate in the national programmes in China-based institutions. Some make regular transnational trips between China and the host country for academic exchange, business development or science and technology cooperation between the two countries. A number of professional associations of HSNCMs (OCP associations) have been established to promote

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1 In the new globalisation era, the recruitment of skilled foreign workers has become important to many industrialized countries (OECD, 2001). International marketing factors such as, the international spatial division of labour, the role of transnational companies and recruitment agencies including both employers and the state, motivate highly skilled migrants to move around the world in search of the highest paid and/or most rewarding employment.

2 In this paper, ‘transnational careers and business practice’, refers to those formal trans-boundary activities connecting the sending country and the receiving country by HSNCMs. During this transnational practice, HSNCMs maintain a variety of careers or business ties to sending countries whilst at the same time keep frequent connections with the countries where they have settled.
transnational connections between HSNCMs, sending country and receiving country. As some research has revealed, HSNCMs with transnational experience are the most advantageous group though this group of transnational Chinese only accounts for a small part of all overseas Chinese (Xiang, 2011).

Meanwhile, HSNCMs and their diverse active transnational practice have attracted a lot of attention in the sending country. It is reported that China has become the chief source country of highly skilled migrants after over 30 years’ ‘chuguore’ (going abroad fever) (Niu, ed., 2011). The annual growth rate was 3 per cent in the 1980s and 29.7 per cent in the 1990s (Ibid.). China will still be one of the main source countries exporting highly skilled labour in the long term, though many HSNCMs have begun to return to China because of China's fast socio-economic development. In the global context of human capital competition, many state-initiated programmes have been launched to attract these overseas professionals to return and work in China. A series of preference policies are issued to attract them to serve the country or return to serve the country. In the Chinese government agenda, HSNCMs are viewed as indispensable contributors to the national strategy of invigorating the country through science, technology and education and the strategy of reinvigorating China through human resource development.

In terms of transnational engagement between HSNCMs and China, multiple transnational careers and business connections have formed between HSNCMs and their compatriots at home. Currently, transnational relations between HSNCMs and the sending country have been discussed in the theoretical framework of brain circulation3 by some scholars (Zweig and Chen 1995; Chen and Liu 2003; Xiang, 2005; DeVoretz and Zweig, 2008; Chen, 2008). These scholars found that HSNCMs would bring back their knowledge and enhanced human capital and put it to work for their country of origin. They suggested that the two-way flow of HSNCMs was reversing the brain drain and

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3 Brain circulation paradigm views the existence of highly trained nationals as human resources abroad. The term 'brain circulation' takes a fundamentally different stance to traditional perspectives on the brain drain in that it sees the brain drain not as a loss, but a potential gain to the sending country (Brown, 2000). Brain circulation theory (Saxenian, 2005; Zweig and Chung, 2004) argues that individuals who left their home countries for a better life abroad are reversing the brain drain. The theory finds that those highly skilled migrants bring back their knowledge and put it to work for their country of origin. More information on brain circulation paradigm can be viewed in next chapter.
transforming it into ‘brain circulation’. Related issues such as initiatives and transnational networks between HSNCMs and China have also been scrutinized.

However, current studies of China’s brain circulation cannot fully explain the multiple phenomena in transnational highly skilled mobility. There is little link between the transnational theoretical framework and brain circulation studies. Few studies of ‘brain circulation’ have had a broad theoretical direction to direct more in-depth research. Current brain circulation studies address some specific issues concerning the circulation of highly skilled migration, but many of them are restricted to concrete issues and lack theoretical thinking. Few brain circulation studies of HSNCMs are supported by a persuasive theoretical framework of migration studies. The lack of a persuasive theoretical framework may limit further development of this research area.

Besides this theoretical dilemma, some issues in empirical studies also need to be addressed. Current brain circulation studies of HSNCMs have been based on limited experience of highly skilled migration in the United States, Canada and Australia (Zweig and Chen 1995; Chen, 2008). Little systematic research into the practice of HSNCMs has been done in the European context. More issues need to be explored of the transnational practice of HSNCMs and brain circulation in specific socio-political context. For example, could the new cases of highly skilled new Chinese migration be understood in the existing brain circulation paradigm? Could the paradigm be amended by adding a European perspective? How about the diversity of China’s brain circulation in a different socio-political context? How could we understand the relationship between the transnational practice of HSNCMs, China’s brain circulation and the globalisation strategy of China? Answering these questions will have repercussions for research. There is urgent need to study brain circulation in a broader geopolitical context and, rather than general transnational migration studies, more studies are required to enrich the understanding of transnational highly skilled migration and brain circulation.

1.2 Research questions

To enrich the study of highly skilled Chinese migration, this research-paper attempts to examine transnational careers and business mobility of HSNCMs in
Britain and their relations with China’s globalisation since 1990\(^4\). The research subjects are those HSNCMs who have transnational careers and business mobility between China and the host country\(^5\). Specifically, this paper addresses three main issues based on the new framework. First, it examines the state initiatives which have a direct impact on transnational mobility of HSNCMs in the UK. It traces not only the UK policies on highly skilled immigration but also the policies and government-initiated incentive schemes from China. It attempts to define the transnational policy impact on brain circulation with regard to China. Second, this paper analyzes the transnational social networks which develop the relations between HSNCMs and China. This part of the research is concerned, in particular, with OCP associations in the UK and their impact on transnational network building and China’s brain circulation. I also discuss the impact of the association activities on China’s globalisation and national development. Third, this paper scrutinizes individual transnational careers and business activities and the identity politics of HSNCMs. The strategy of HSNCMs towards China’s initiatives is also analysed.

To understand the transnational careers and business mobility of HSNCMs, we attempt to place the studies on ‘brain circulation’ within the general framework of transnational migration studies. In contrast to existing brain circulation studies, this account introduces the perspectives of transnational social fields (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004) and transnational social spaces (Faist, 2000; 2004; Pries, 2001) to support the theoretical framework. This paper argues that brain circulation emerges and develops in transnational social spaces/transnational social fields. It suggests a migrant-centred perspective and multi-cited field studies for transnational highly skilled migration studies. The general issues of this research are in correspondence with the main topics of brain circulation theory. It is an empirical study scanning the current brain circulation study in transnational social spaces. It follows a transnational research pattern and sees the transnational careers and business mobility of HSNCMs as a two-way process, which connects the sending country and the receiving country. The research has attempted, for the first time, to integrate

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\(^4\) The reason for choosing the period after 1990 is discussed in the methodology chapter.

\(^5\) Some informal transnational mobility such as family remittance and personal home visiting is not discussed in this research. This research differentiates economic capital for business investment from family remittance which is only for private family support.
highly skilled migrants in the host country and overseas returnees in the sending country into one unified research framework. Theoretically, the study of transnational careers and business practice of HSNCMs in a certain socio-political context has special significance for the knowledge of transnational migration and global highly skilled migration.

1.3 Organisation of this research

As to the organization of this paper, the next chapter traces the literature on transnational migration studies and current brain circulation studies. It attempts to sketch a theoretical framework for transnational highly skilled new Chinese migration. First, it compares different research patterns observed in overseas Chinese studies and introduces a transnational pattern that inspired the topic of this research. Second, it traces transnational migration theory, followed by theoretical consideration of ‘transnational social spaces’ and ‘transnational social fields’. Third, it analyzes the current ‘brain circulation’ studies of the highly skilled. The main topics of ‘brain circulation’ such as state initiatives and transnational networks building are discussed in the section. Finally, this chapter introduces a theoretical framework that combines brain circulation and transnational migration studies.

Chapter 3 discusses the methodology of this research. Firstly, it outlines the design and fieldwork methods of this research. The snowballing process is introduced to create a sample drawn from four different occupation categories of HSNCMs. Intensive interview and direct observation as main methods of fieldwork are discussed in this section. Secondly, this chapter introduces other data-collection methods such as documentation and demographic statistics. Thirdly, this chapter asks for methodological diversion to a migrant-centred perspective and multi-sited fieldwork.

From chapter 4, we begin to record our field study of the HSNCMs in the UK. This chapter analyzes the formation and profiles of British HSNCMs. First, it outlines the demography and the formation of overseas Chinese and HSNCMs in the UK. Second, this chapter introduces the definition of HSNCMs and outlines the features of HSNCMs in the UK. The transnational characteristics of HSNCMs in the UK are presented in this section. Third, we discuss
transnational community of HSNCMs in the UK. The associations of HSNCMs and the internet impact on HSNCMs community are analyzed in this section.

Chapter 5 examines one of the transnational state initiatives in the case of HSNCMs in the UK. First, this chapter focuses on the transnational engagement of the PRC government and its efforts to attract HSNCMs to serve the country or to return to serve the country. This section analyzes the policy transformation and the state-initiated schemes that aim to attract more members of the overseas elite for China’s national development. Second, this chapter analyses the evolution and effect of the UK immigration policy upon highly skilled migrants. Third, this chapter examines the impact of transnational policy engagement both from China and the UK upon transnational careers and business mobility and brain circulation of HSNCMs.

Chapter 6 is a case study of the OCP associations of the HSNCMs in the UK and their transnational network building with China. First, this chapter discusses features and dynamics of the transnational network building of OCP associations. Second, this chapter analyzes the mechanism of this transnational network building. In this section, we introduce the concept of ‘reciprocal pragmatism’ and explore the driving forces behind network building. Finally, this chapter discusses the role of transnational network building in the brain circulation of HSNCMs. The impact of the network building on the globalization of China is discussed in this part as well.

Chapter 7, which is based on multi-site interviews in the UK and China, moves away from collective practices of OCP associations to the life and career experiences of individual HSNCMs. First, this chapter discusses the transnational experience by comparing two groups of HSNCMs. Second, it focuses on identity issues of HSNCM by examining relationship between transnational identities and Chinese consciousness. Third, it introduces the “bi-focality” (Vertovec, 2004) strategies of individual HSNCMs and their identity construction. The impact of these transnational strategies on the brain circulation of individual HSNCMs is scrutinized in this section.

Chapter 8, which is the conclusion, sums up main findings presented in this paper by emphasizing the relationship between the transnational practice of HSNCMs, brain circulation and China’s globalisation. The findings indicate that states’ policy engagement especially China’s initiatives are very powerful. OCP
associations and overseas agencies of the Chinese government are two driving forces that accelerate transnational network building between HSNCMs and China. Through this transnational network building, HSNCMs integrate their personal development into the national projects. For individual HSNCMs, their transnational practice is diverse in terms of their different social backgrounds. Their transnational identities are combined with Chinese consciousness among HSNCMs. For transnational HSNCMs, ‘bifocality’ strategies are important for survival in life carried on between the sending country and the receiving country. The multiple interactions between HSNCMs and China have direct impact on brain circulation of HSNCMs and the globalisation of China.
Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Migration of highly skilled individuals with transnational careers and business mobility between the sending country and the host country has led to a new topic of ‘brain circulation’. ‘Brain circulation’ means that professionals staying in a host country may continue to contribute to the country of origin (Xiang, 2005). Their transnational mobility has broken the conventional interpretation in international migration studies that viewed highly skilled migration as a one-way process. Study of transnational careers and business mobility of HSNCMs and construction of a theoretical connection with recent brain circulation theory is of particular interest in the current era of globalisation.

This chapter combines the trajectory of transnational migration theory and brain circulation theory to sketch a theoretical framework for transnational highly skilled new Chinese migration. To begin with, this chapter examines the different research patterns observed in overseas Chinese studies and especially introduces the transnational pattern which inspired the topic of this research. Second, this chapter traces the transnational migration theory, followed by theoretical consideration of ‘transnational social spaces’ and ‘transnational social fields’. Existing transnational HSNCMs studies are examined at the same time. Third, recent theory on ‘brain circulation’ of the highly skilled is analyzed. This part discusses the main topics of ‘brain circulation’ such as state initiatives, transnational relations between highly skilled migration and the sending country, transnational networks to promote brain circulation. Finally, this chapter attempts to introduce a theoretical negotiation between brain circulation and transnational migration studies.

2.2 Background: Emergence of HSNCMs

Overseas Chinese from Mainland China have had a long history and the concept of overseas Chinese is in itself a historical construct (Liu, 2005b). In the opinion of Liu, later migration can be divided into three main phases (2005b). In the first period (the 1850s—1950), large numbers of Chinese, mainly from
Guangdong and Fujian in South China, left for Southeast Asia. In the second period (1950—80), Chinese people began to emigrate for different reasons and in different ways. An increasing number of Chinese living overseas were born locally and the inflow of migrants virtually ceased after the founding of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. In the third and most recent period (1980—the present), new migrants originating in the PRC began to make up a greater proportion of overall Chinese emigration.

Overseas Chinese in those three historical phases had different characteristics. The migrants of the first phase stayed loyal to their native place and wished to return home. They were sojourners and did not intentionally stay overseas permanently. In the second phase, overseas Chinese lost connection with China due to the changed political environment in China. The Huaqiao (Chinese citizens residing overseas) gradually became Huaren (ethnic Chinese citizens of foreign countries), who owed their political allegiance to their countries of residence. They accepted a new pattern of permanent settlement abroad while privately preserving a Chinese lifestyle and Chinese cultural values (Liu, 2005b).

The third phase took place after China’s economic opening and reforms in 1978 since when the country has broadened and deepened its exchanges and relations with other countries. After the reforms, the attitude of the PRC toward overseas Chinese changed dramatically. Rather than being regarded with suspicion, they were seen as people with strong patriotic enthusiasm who could support PRC development in the long run (Nyíri, 1998; 1999; 2001).

In the existing official PRC literature on overseas Chinese affairs, people who have left China since 1978, when China began its economic reforms, are now usually referred to as xin yimin (new Chinese migrants) (Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council, 1996), a term that obscures the traditional official dichotomy of huaqiao and huaren. Chinese new migrants are further divided into two categories: those with ‘portable skills’ (students-turned-migrants and professionals) and menial labourers (the majority of chain migrants and a large number of illegal immigrants) (Liu, 2005b). The former are known as highly skilled new Chinese migrants (HSNCMs) or overseas Chinese professionals (OCPs) (Zhang, 2003; Xiang, 2005).
According to the OECD report (Salt, 1997) on international migration, skilled or highly skilled workers are usually defined as having university degrees or extensive experience in a given field. It includes highly skilled specialists, independent executives and senior managers, specialized technicians or trades people, investors, physicians, business people, keyworkers and sub-contract workers (Salt, 1997, p.21). Individuals in this category often seek to maximize return on their investment in education and training by moving in search of the highest paid and/or most rewarding employment.

Highly skilled Chinese migration is a ramification of current international highly skilled migration which is typically involved in the movement of professionals. The phenomenon is not new but numbers and trends are changing rapidly. The temporary movement of skilled labour “reflects the reality of today’s global marketplace” (Lowell and Findlay, 2001, p.54). It has been acknowledged that highly skilled migrants represent an increasingly large component of global migration streams (Khoo et al., 2007). Internationalization of professions has been an increasingly global activity for professional associations (Phillips and Stahl, 2000). It has been estimated that there were 1.5 million professionals who moved from developing countries to industrial countries alone by 2000 (Stalker, 2000).

The flow of highly skilled Chinese migration to Western society is a burgeoning phenomenon. Compared with historical overseas Chinese who chose Southeast Asian as their destination (Liu, 2009), contemporary HSNCMs mainly emigrate to Western developed Countries such as the United States, Canada, Western Europe, and Australia. Following earlier migration flows mainly to the United States, Japan, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, the migration of highly skilled Chinese to Europe has become a notable new trend (Zhang, 2003). China has become one of the main source countries for highly skilled migration in the new globalisation era (Zweig, 2004).

Most highly skilled Chinese migrants in western countries are student-turned migrants (Zhang, 2003; Hong, 2005; Xiang, 2005). According to annual statistics of overseas students from China, the period from 1978 to the present was divided into four stages (Zhang, 2003). In the first stage (1978—1984), the publicly supported system of foreign study was launched. In the second stage (1985—1988), the number of government-sponsored students increased steadily.
Growing numbers of self-supporting students were also going abroad. The third stage (1989—1992) was a sensitive period, “Twelve-word Approach” launched in 1992 was a transition point. This approach refers to “support study overseas, encourage returns, guarantee freedom of movement” (zhichi huiguo, guli huiguo, laiqu ziyou). The fourth stage (1993 to present) is the boom period of studying abroad. The practice of studying abroad has become normal and is regulated by law. The number of overseas students has grown especially fast since 2000.

According to the statistics from Ministry of Education (MoE) as shown in Graph 2.1, in the year 2001, 146,000 Chinese left to study overseas, which represented an increase of 71.8 per cent from the previous year. In the year 2011, the number of overseas Chinese students increased to 339,700. To summarize, by 2011, an accumulated number of 1,426,700 students went overseas for study, and about 818,400 of them returned to China on a long-term basis, therefore creating a pool of HSNCMs of 608,300 (including students who may return later). Most of the overseas students are self-financing (MoE, 2012). This phenomenon is predominant in the UK because of the UK’s tradition of international education.

Besides encouraging Chinese to study abroad, China implements more flexible policies towards international labour export (guojia laowu shuchu) which means that workers leave China to find work in a foreign country (Zhang, 2003). Among this group are also highly skilled Chinese professionals, including scientists, engineers, doctors and teachers. The destinations for Chinese highly skilled migrants are more or less the same as those for students. This professional’s migration is another main channel for HSNCMs (Liu, 2005b).

Meanwhile, with China's growing economic strength and influence on the world, many HSNCMs have begun to return to China. These overseas returnees are called as “Hai Gui” (literally returning “sea turtles”). With China being the second largest economy in the world, this trend is expected to rise even more in the future (Xiang, 2007). Some HSNCMs may find that they can have more rapid upward mobility, receive greater financial rewards and increase their

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6 Hai Gui is a Chinese abbreviation that sums up Chinese people who have returned to mainland China after having studied abroad for several years. The pronunciation also suggests the Chinese phrase for sea turtles that were born on the shore, grew up at sea, but eventually returned to the shore again to lay their eggs. (Surely this is an important part of the metaphor.)
social status if they return home (Zweig, 2004). Those individuals, who increase their knowledge overseas and establish global networks, particularly if they have developed skills which are in great demand by the home government, may also find more fulfilling lives and a greater sense of job satisfaction (Wang, 2008). By the end of 2011, 818,400 had returned to work in China (MoE, 2012).

Graph 2.1 Statistics of overseas students and returnees by year (1996-2011)

Thousands

Source: Based on Ministry of Education data.

In this new globalisation era, more HSNCMs gain trans-border opportunities for their career development through a so called “dumbbell model” (Xiang, 2003) or “seagull model” (Wang, 2008). They have professional and/or business affiliations in both China and Overseas and move back and forth regularly (Xiang, 2003). This transnational path is reinforced by technologies that facilitate rapid displacement across long distances and instant communication. Many HSNCMs now travel and communicate over large distances far more easily and more often than in the past. They can now have
the best of both worlds in that they can live in different countries at the same time and choose the best career opportunity between sending countries and receiving countries (Xiang, 2007). Their transnational career activities have been strongly encouraged and supported by the Chinese government through a series of incentive schemes (Zweig, 2006; Xiang, 2007). This group of HSNCMs is the objects of this research group. Their trans-boundary career activities are new phenomena in the context of China’s globalisation and deserve more research attention. Theoretical study of this transnational highly skilled migration is now on the agenda.

2.3 Theoretical trajectory

2.3.1 Research paradigm issues: from nation-centred perspectives to transnational perspectives

There is clear distinction between different patterns of the overseas Chinese movements. Traditional overseas Chinese studies mainly followed two patterns. The first pattern focused on the life of overseas Chinese in host countries. This pattern was employed to study the initiation of overseas Chinese migration and its social, cultural, economic or political consequences on the destination (Skinner, 1959; Christiansen, 2003). The second was interested in the home visiting or remittance activities of overseas Chinese. This pattern was especially popular in “Qiaoxiang” (hometown) studies. Some scholars from Mainland China followed this pattern to study the remittance activities, local investment activities of overseas Chinese and the migration network through kinship and friendship (Wang, 2001; Wang, 2002; Xiao and Zhang, 2004).

Though these two patterns had contrary research approaches to overseas Chinese mobility, both of them followed a nation-centred perspective (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003) and studied overseas Chinese within the boundary of nation-states. They focused on a one-way movement of overseas Chinese migration. They viewed overseas Chinese either as settlers who stayed in host countries permanently or as sojourners who stayed in host countries temporarily and wished to return to their motherland. These two traditional patterns functioned in a specific historical context. However, like many international migration studies, traditional overseas Chinese studies cannot overcome territorial limitation (Ibid.) which confines the study of social processes to the
political and geographic boundaries of a particular nation-state. It is a blind spot: taking for granted nationally bounded societies as the natural unit of analysis, which leaves no room for the transnational and global processes that connect national territories (Glick Schiller et al., 1992).

Though not all overseas Chinese migrants have transnational experience, a new pattern of mobility of Chinese new migrants called the ‘transnational pattern’ becomes a research trend in the new globalisation context. This pattern originated directly from transnational migration studies (Glick Schiller et al., 1992; Portes, 1997; Portes et al., 1999; Pries, 2001; Vertovec, 1999). In the perspective of transnational migration theorists, transnational migrants may speak several languages, have multiple identities and live in several societies at the same time. Their activities connect different physical, social, economic and political spaces which transcend the boundaries of the nation-state. Compared with previous research on overseas Chinese, recently many scholars (Liu, 2003; Zhang, 2003; Zweig, Chen and Rosen, 2004; Pieke, 2004; Gao, 2006; Yang, 2006) are changing their research interest to transnational characteristics of new Chinese migrants. These scholars have attempted to build a theoretical dialogue with global transnational migration studies. They reject the traditional perspectives that consider overseas Chinese as individuals who either stay permanently in the host country, or stay temporarily and then return.

In the view of the transnational pattern, the definition of ‘transnational Chinese’ (Liu, 2003) was conceptualized as the individual or group who connected the country of origin and the country of settlement. They possessed the multiple relations and diverse backgrounds in the transnational process. Normally, these transnational Chinese were bilingual or multilingual, possessed social network and business in more than two countries, transcended nation borders during the transnational activity, had multi-cultural identity, and influenced the global market in the process of their economic activity (Ibid). At the same time the concepts of ‘transnational Chinese’ were combined with Chinese globalisation by some scholars (Pieke, 2004). This theoretical effort attempted to analyze the political meanings of transnational Chinese in the context of China’s globalisation. It discussed how diverse factors such as the Chinese government, Chinese local governments, receiving countries, the elites
of Chinese migrants, overseas Chinese associations and all kinds of intermediate agents influenced the process of China’s globalisation.

The most useful paradigm for transnational research is to transcend a narrow focus on the nation, and examine the internal dynamics of the Chinese migrants’ community and their culture as a global phenomenon (Liu, 2004; Wu, 2004). It rejects a western-centred and nation-based research paradigm. Different from the traditional perspectives, the transnational pattern elevates positive connotations of diasporas such as super mobility, flexible identities, transnational professional activities, transnational flows of capital, and so on. The pattern of the transnational movements accounts for some portion of the overall history of overseas Chinese.

Transnational patterns regard those overseas Chinese migrants whose actives connect the country of origin and the country of settlement as a sector of global transnational migrants. To fully understand this transnational paradigm diversion, the next section traces a trajectory of transnational migration theory.

2.3.2 Transnational migration theory and the study of transnational social fields

Transnational theories of migration studies emerged in the speedy globalisation era when previous migration theories no longer provided an adequate description of new transnational migrants (Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc, 1992). In their pioneer works on transnational migration studies, Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc (1992) defined “transmigrants” as those international migrants who become firmly rooted in new country but maintain multiple links with their homeland. Transmigrants developed and maintained multiple relations across borders and they had varying and multiple identities generated from their simultaneous positioning in several social locations (Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc, eds., 1992, p.1-2). They use their social relationships and identities to accommodate to the difficult circumstances and the dominant ideologies they encounter in their transnational fields (Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc, 1999). As trans-border citizens, some transmigrants participate formally in the daily life and political practices of two or more nation-states, claiming rights and responsibilities relating to more than one government (Glick Schiller and Fouron, 2001). The globalisation of capitalism, the technological revolution in the means of transportation and
communication, global political transformations and the expansion of social networks facilitated the reproduction of transnational migration (Portes, 1997; Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt, 1999; Portes, 2003).

Transnational migration theory integrated the study of international migration into a theoretical perspective of transnationalism. Transnationalism is a widely used concept and carries diverse meanings. Some scholars (Portes, Guarnizo, and Landolt, 1999, p.219) delimit transnationalism to “occupations and activities that require regular and sustained social contacts over time across national borders for their implementation.” Vertovec (1999, p.447) characterized transnationalism as “multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the borders of nation-states.” Transnationalism also refers to a recent shift in migration patterns since the 1980s. It is grounded in the daily lives, activities, and social relationships of migrants (Glick Schiller, Basch, Blanc-Szanton, 1992). As Rey (2005) stated, transnational practices and their consequent configurations of power are shaping the world of the twenty-first century.

As a new ramification of international migration theories, transnational migration theory started a theoretical dialogue with existing migration theories. To some extent this challenged the traditional perspectives of international migration process. Firstly, transnational migration theory encompassed more dynamic, flexible perspectives. It recommended a migrants-centred perspective instead of the traditional nation-centred perspective. Although transnational dynamics do not matter to all immigrants all the time, there is an emerging consensus among scholars that migration can no longer be studied solely from a host-country perspective (Glick Schiller and Fouron, 2001). Transnational theory recognized that many contemporary migrants and their predecessors maintained a variety of ties to sending countries while at the same time they were incorporated into the countries where they settled (Basch and Blanc, 1992; Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt, 1999; Glick Schiller and Fouron, 2001; Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007). More recent scholarship understood transnational migration as within fluid social spaces that were constantly reconstructed through migrants’ simultaneous embeddedness in more than one society (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007).
Secondly, transnational migration theory challenges the established premises (Ravenstein, 1889) regarding migration patterns as a straightforward and unidirectional movement in which immigrants were ‘pushed’ out of their homeland and “pulled” into the host country. Levitt and Jaworsky (2007, p.130) pointed out that migration had never been a one-way process of assimilation into a melting pot or ‘a multicultural salad bowl’. Transnational theory rejected the notion of migration as a process characterized by social dislocation, adjustment and, ultimately, assimilation by the host country. In the view of transnational migration researchers, migrants are simultaneously embedded in the multiple sites and layers of the transnational social fields in which they live. In the view of transnational migration scholars, immigrants were not simply uprooted from one set of social relationships and absorbed into another, only capable of maintaining involvement in one community defined by the nation-state. Instead, migrants constructed complex transnational and multicultural identities through their multiple links and orientations towards both the sending and the receiving country (Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc, 1992; Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007).

Thirdly, transnational migration theory reviewed contemporary patterns of international migration which tended to be from the periphery (poor nations) to the core (rich nations). World systems theory saw migration as a natural consequence of economic globalisation and market penetration across national boundaries due to global economic imbalance (Wallerstein, 1974). It argued that international migration was a by-product of global capitalism (Sassen, 1988). Glick Schiller et al. (1992) argued that little had been done by world systems theorists to explain the continuing significance of nation-states including sending countries within large global processes. World systems theorists tended to ignore the legal, military, and ideological basis for the continuing existence of nations (Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc, 1992). In perspectives of transnational theory, immigrants created transnational dense networks across political borders in their quest for economic advancement and social recognition (Vertovec, 1999). Through these networks, increasing numbers of people were able to lead dual lives. Participants were often bilingual, moved easily between different cultures, frequently maintained homes in two countries and pursued economic, political and cultural interests that require their presence in both
(Vertovec, 1999; Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007). Different from world systems theory, transnational theory showed that socialization and social reproduction of international migration often occurred across borders, in response to at least two social and cultural contexts.

Though transnational migration cannot account for all international migration, it is an indispensable complement to the existing international migration theories. Besides challenging some limitations of traditional migration studies, it also appreciated the contribution of classical migration theories such as neoclassical theory (Sjaastad, 1962; Todaro, 1969), new economics of labour migration (Stark and Bloom, 1985), dual labour market theory (or segmented labour market theory) (Piore, 1979), and world system theory (Sassen, 1988). However, compared with some specific migration theories such as dual labour market theory which has clear and specific framework or theoretical system, transnational theory is more like theoretical inspiration which offers a new perspective to study international migration. One of the main issues to enrich its theoretical system is how to embrace the mobility of transnational migrants into broad social structures.

The theoretical requirements led to some new study areas of transnational migration. The study on ‘transnational social fields’ and ‘transnational social spaces’ is one of the theoretical models which attempt to integrate transnational migration studies into an extensive social theoretical context. The term ‘transnational social fields’ is developed from research by Bourdieu (1980; 1992). Bourdieu defines social field as a set of multiple interlocking networks of social relationship. Either individuals or institutions might occupy the networks that made up the field and link social positions. However, Bourdieu did not directly discuss the implications of social fields that were not coterminous with state boundaries. The social relations and networks that cross national borders require a new research project. The new concept of ‘transnational social fields’ and ‘transnational social spaces’ was then introduced by some scholars in the transnational migration context.

In Sociology, the term ‘community’ was used normally to refer to locally bounded social relationships (Pries, 2001). In contrast to much of social science theory which equates society with the boundaries of a particular nation-state, the concept of ‘transnational social fields’ or ‘transnational social spaces’ is no
longer automatically equated with or confined by the boundaries of a single nation-state (Faist, 2000; Pries, 2001; Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004). Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) conceptualized a domain of cross-border social relations and networks they referred to as ‘transnational social field’. They defined social field as a set of multiple interlocking networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices, and resources were unequally exchanged, organized, and transformed (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004, p.1009). In their view, national boundaries were not necessarily contiguous with the boundaries of social fields, and transnational social fields connected actors through direct and indirect relations across borders. Faist (2000) developed the concepts of ‘transnational social spaces’ as sustained ties of persons, networks and organizations across the borders of multiple nations-states, ranging from informal relationships to highly institutionalized forms (Faist, 2000, p.1). He suggested that spatial scales and the historical particularity of places produced different kinds of transnational social fields with different clusters of transnational activities. In the view of Pries (2001), ‘transnational social space’ was a dense, stable, pluri-local and institutionalized framework composed of material artifacts, the social practices of everyday life, as well as systems of symbolic representation that were structured by and structured human life.

The definitions of ‘transnational social fields’ and ‘transnational social spaces’ adopted the same trans-boundary approach to study the social life that distinguished between the existence of transnational social networks and the consciousness of being embedded in them. Though the scholars listed here had some subtly different emphases in their definitions, they were especially concerned with the interweaving relations between structures and migrants’ activities. For example, Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004) employed transnational perspective to distinguish between ways of being and ways of belongings.

‘Ways of being refers to the actual social relations and practices that individuals engage in rather than to the identities associated with their actions…Individual can be embedded in a social field but not identify with any label or cultural politics associated with that field. They have the potential to act or identify at a particular time because they live within the social field, but not all choose to do so… In contrast, ways of belongings refers to practices that signal or enact an identity which demonstrates a conscious connection to a particular group. These actions are not symbolic but concrete, visible actions that mark belonging such as wearing a Christian cross or Jewish star, flying a flag, or choosing a particular cuisine.
Ways of belonging combine action and an awareness of the kind of identity that action signifies’ (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004, p. 1010).

In the research of Levitt and Glick Schiller, individuals within transnational social fields combined ways of being and ways of belongings differently in specific contexts. They gave an example that one person might have many social contacts with people in their country of origin but not identify at all as belonging to their homeland. Instead, persons changed and swung one way or the other depending on the context, thus moving people’s expectation away from either full assimilation or transnational connection but into some combination of both (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004).

Faist (1999) also found out that the people, organizations, and networks constituted and were constituted by these fields and were embedded in them in different ways. In his analysis, different cultural practices, such as the ability to develop kinship ties or membership of transnational associations, produced different patterns of transnational involvement (Faist, 1999). Reasoning along similar lines with Faist, Pries (2001) discussed the transnational space in three different dimensions. In the view of Pries, observable social practices were structured by and restructured artefacts and systems of symbols; artefacts were sedimented results of social practices and incarnations of symbols systems but, at the same time, restricted social practices; system of symbols could not exist without artifacts or without social practices (2002, p. 22). Goldring (1996) had similar research findings that transnational social spaces emerged and were constituted as pluri-local and transnational social entities by and through the fact that they structured their own cosmos of social orientation positioning, struggle, and integration.

It is easy to suppose that transnational social spaces or social fields form a triadic connection that links transmigrants, the localities to which they migrate, and their locality of origin. The relations among transnational migrants, host society and their country of origin in transnational social spaces are dynamic, mutable, and dialectical. These transnational arenas are multi-layered and multi-sited, including not only the home countries and host countries but also other sites around the world (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004). Though nation-states are still extremely important, social life is not confined by nation-state boundaries (Pries, 2001). Transnational social space can be understood as
“pluri-local frames of reference which structure everyday practices, social positions, biographical employment projects, and human identities, and simultaneously exist above and beyond the social contexts of national societies” (Pries 2001, p.18).

In general, transnational migration theories and studies of transnational social spaces or social fields provide new analytical lens that can bring to light the myriad social process of current highly skilled migration that cross boundaries. It is helpful to reconceptualise the interweaving relations between pluri-local structures and the transnational practices of skilled migrants. Conceptualizing society as intersecting transnational social fields or transnational social spaces provides powerful tools for this research to map transnational brain circulation of highly skilled migration. However, more empirical studies are required for further study on formation and profiles of transnational migration in different social contexts. Comparative studies of incentives and models of transnational social spaces by immigrants from different countries are also urgently required. To study HSNCMs with a transnational perspective makes a theoretical contribution to complement transnational social theories. The following section makes some theoretical dialogue with some current studies on transnational HSNCMs.

2.3.3 Some studies of transnational HSNCMs

Recently more scholars in highly skilled new Chinese migration studies have followed the transnational pattern and integrated their study into the transnational theoretical framework. They made findings which help to explain the formation, mobility incentives, identity construction and survival strategy of transnational HSNCMs.

As to the motivation and incentive of transnational activities by HSNCMs, global market opportunity and policy promotion were two main factors discussed by many scholars. Some scholars confirmed the role of economic and market forces for attracting the transnational mobility of overseas Chinese students and scholars (Zweig, Chen, Rosen, 2004; Wang, 2008). Those overseas students and scholars brought back skills and technology to China because it could earn them large profits in the domestic economy (Wang, 2008). Most overseas Chinese returnees came home because they saw excellent opportunities in China’s rich domestic market, rather than returning for patriotic reasons.
Zweig, Chen, Rosen, 2004). In addition, China’s initiatives towards overseas students and scholars created more transnational opportunities for HSNCMs. Xiang (2007) found that more current PRC policy had attempted to maintain the support of recently emigrated Chinese, who consisted largely of Chinese seeking graduate education in the West. The PRC government wanted to catch up with the West and overseas students and scholars were expected to return with new information, technology and management skills that would help China modernize. Many overseas Chinese were now investing in mainland China providing financial resources, social and cultural networks, contacts and opportunities (Xiang, 2007). China was set to reap even bigger rewards from its policy of letting the best go overseas, both because of the increased number of returnees and because many who were not currently returning were still contributing to China’s economic modernization (Zweig, Chen, Rosen, 2004).

Those above two factors of transnational motivation of HSNCMs were discussed often in global transnational migration studies as well. However, most transnational migration studies followed a receiving country’s perspective instead of a sending country’s perspective (Xiang, 2003). For example, The OECD report (Tremblay, 2001) on transnational mobility of the highly skilled argued that the rising power of technology in the economic sphere encouraged many students in developing countries to go abroad for their global education. Host countries might take the opportunity to allow some of the foreign students access to the labour market. Salt (2006; 2009) emphasized the control function of UK immigration policy which directly affected the number of international highly skilled migrants to British. The highly skilled migrant scheme and work permit system as two previous policy channels for highly skilled migration were scrutinized in Salt’s research (2006). The research launched by McLaughlan and Salt (2002) found that the state’s effort to attract highly skilled migrants, the increased internationalization of higher education and stable domestic labour market were main factors in the UK attracting overseas talent. Meanwhile, Khoo et al. (2007) studied the highly skilled migrants in Australia, and they found that a new development in Australia’s migration policy as well as the importance of labour demand in the destination country stimulated skilled temporary migration. Goss and Lindquist (1995) stated that both private capital and the state were engaged in active recruitment to fill labour needs. In their
research, state and regional policies or agreements served as ‘lubricators’ (1995, p.337) to speed up desired industry-motivated movement.

Transnationalism as a mode of immigrant labour market incorporation provided immigrants an alternative avenue to employment and social mobility in the receiving society (Yang, 2006). Yang found that Chinese transmigrates with a higher initial social standing and a dense network were more likely to have upward social mobility than those without such advantages (2006). Transnational mode of incorporation often offered Chinese transnational migrants business, career opportunities, and rewards which were not available in other modes of incorporation. This mode also explained the reason why many transnational migrants were highly educated and highly skilled with extended social networks or notable networking skills. Meanwhile, Zweig et al. (2004) found that the transnational capital of overseas students and scholars paved the way for important careers and helped them contribute to China’s modernization and China’s growing wealth and power. They launched a study of overseas and returnee scholars to China to discuss the “transnational human capital” (2004, p.741) in the globalisation context. In their research, individuals who possessed new ideas, technologies and information that abetted globalisation became imbued with “transnational human capital”. Those individual migrants were able to transfer goods, services or technology across the regulated borders.

‘Individuals who increase their knowledge overseas and establish global networks, particularly once these individual migrants have developed skills which are in great demand within their home society or are especially valued by the home government, may find that they can have more rapid upward mobility, receive greater financial rewards and increase their social status in the home country, if they return home. They may also find more fulfilling lives and a greater sense of job satisfaction’ (Zweig, Chen and Rosen, 2004, p.737).

In the research area of identity politics of HSNCMs, some scholars found that hybridised forms of cultural identification became the norm for migrants whose homes were no longer tied to one place (Teo, 2011). Teo explored the politics of identity and belonging through the flow of skilled migration between Canada and Mainland China (2011). His research suggested that not only the act of return, but its very discourse, has influenced the ways in which the politics of identity and belonging are evolving among PRC immigrants in Canada. Focusing on return migration, he drew out the tensions between integration and
transnationalism, flexibility and rootedness, and citizenship and nationalism. His research examined how the cultural politics of identity played out amongst PRC immigrants in Canada in light of reverse migration (Teo, 2011). In study of Chinese students and scholars in the Netherlands, Li (1999) discussed their identity by exploring “two worlds” where new educated migrants were living. One is the world of origin of these new educated migrants, a physically distant but psychologically familiar world. The other is the world of their everyday life, which remains psychologically distant despite its physical presence. The transnational identity of HSNCMs is the combination of their global consciousness and Chinese native essentiality (Wu, 2004).

According to some other research, the identity of HSNCMs was not the unchanging essence that they could rely on. In certain historical eras, some overseas students obtained the right to stay in the country through a process that was called ‘strategic identity formation’ (Gao, 2006). Gao (2006) analyzed the transnational activities of Mainland Chinese Migrants in Australia since the early 1990s. Most of these migrants came as students and then stayed in Australia especially after the Tiananmen incident in 1989. Applying for a stay in Australia, they claimed to have had distressful experiences in China, which also had to be supported by evidence to prove that they were bona fide refugees as defined in the UN’s definition of a refugee. However, after settling down in the host society, most of these new migrants changed their attitude toward China and their perceptions of the host country. Through “dual-track demarginalization” (Gao, 2006, p.209) efforts, the PRC migrants started to take a more pragmatic and nationalistic view of China. Their support for the pro-democracy movement declined, followed by a renewed optimism about China’s future and Chinese nationalism.

Besides strategic identity construction, some HSNCMs and their families had an integration strategy to transform their capital into new forms which would be acceptable in a host society. Zhu (2008) built an inter-disciplinary frame of reference around the idea of ‘capital transformation’ to analyze the social and professional integration of highly educated Chinese immigrants in Canada. In the view of Zhu, it was hard for immigrants to integrate into the host society by employing their previous human capital, cultural capital and social capital originated from the sending country. This was due to the difference of
social structure and social value system between sending and receiving countries. In her study, individual immigrants and their families resorted to ‘capital transformation’ to overcome significant obstacles and found a way to match their knowledge and skills with the opportunities of the Canadian employment market. Immigrants needed to reproduce their material capital and symbolic capital in a new economic society for successfully integration.

The international migration of skilled Chinese manpower indicated that human capital was looking for the best opportunity of investment worldwide and to realize maximum benefit at minimum risk. The spatial distribution of highly skilled Chinese migrants would become more balanced and played a positive role in the promotion of mutually beneficial exchanges between China and other countries (Zhang, 2003, p.90-91).

Current analyses of representations of highly skilled new Chinese new migrants are fascinating and insightful. As a group of transnational new migrants in the world, highly skilled Chinese migration to some extent reflects the current tendency of the transnational migration flow. It contributes to the understanding of contemporary transnational highly skilled migration in the sending countries.

However, recent studies cannot replace ‘thick description’ of how these transnational HSNCMs are actually drawn upon, negotiated, and reinterpreted in practice. HSNCM studies require a more systematic and specific framework to explore their new features in the new globalisation context. The following section scrutinizes one popular specific theory for highly skilled migration studies, which is known as the theory of brain circulation7. In the next section, relevant studies of transnational professional activities of HSNCMs are analyzed within the framework of brain circulation.

2.3.4 Brain Circulation theory and its relations with HSNCM studies

As Iredale (2001) explained the current state of theory in relation to highly skilled migration is far from adequate. Salt and Findlay (1989) argued that a theoretical framework for skilled migration needed to incorporate a mixture of macro and micro elements, including the new international spatial division of

7 In this account brain circulation theory covers all relevant theories to facilitate a systematic analysis on transnational circulation of highly skilled migration. Those theories include the diaspora option, reverse brain drain and brain circulation.
labour, the nature of careers, the role of inter-company labour markets and the lubrication provided by recruitment and relocation agencies. The theoretical development requirement has far-reaching meanings especially in the new globalisation era when many highly skilled migrants strengthen their trans-boundary career connections after they settle down in the host country. Current relevant theories are far from sufficient for further exploration on this new transnational phenomenon. Some scholars (Meyer, et al., 1997; Brown, 2000; Saxenian, 2005; Xiang, 2007) have realized these theoretical challenges. They have rethought the traditional ‘brain drain’ paradigm and developed new theories to analyze transnational career development activities among those highly skilled migrants.

In the area of international migration studies, the term ‘brain drain’ refers to the departure of educated or professional people from one developing country to a developed country for better pay or living conditions (Zweig and Chen 1995, Chen and Liu 2003, Jin et al. 2004). ‘Brain drain’ was often associated with de-skilling of emigrants in their country of destination, while their country of emigration experienced the draining of skilled individuals (Ibid). In China’s case, Zweig (1995, 2004) and some other scholars (Chen and Liu 2003, Jin et al. 2004) found devastating loss of talent from China to developed countries. As to reasons that educated people were pushed out of their homelands and pulled into industrialized countries, Glaser (1978) analyzed that those reasons included political instability, salary differentials, inferior research facilities and family complications including children’s education.

By tracing the established premises regarding migration patterns (Ravenstein, 1889), it is not difficult to find out that the brain drain theory was based on an assumption that highly skilled migration was a straightforward and unidirectional movement. Following this assumption, sending countries generated conservative policy to discourage the outflow of highly skilled migration (Xiang, 2007). The policy resorted to ‘brain drain approach’ (Meyer, et al., 1997) which considered the negative effects of migration—a loss of skills for the country of origin—and reactions to these. It generated a conservative policy option.

However, the ‘brain drain’ perspective has faced some challenges in transnational migration studies. The emergence of transnational migration
patterns overturned its theoretical assumption straightaway. The old pattern of one-way flow of technology and capital from the core to the periphery was being replaced by a far more complex and decentralized two-way flow of skill, capital, and technology between differently specialized regional economics (Saxenian, 2005). For example, Meyer, et al. (1997) employed the term ‘diaspora option’ to discuss the phenomenon that many developing countries tried to turn human capital lost through the brain drain into a positive force for development. Different from brain drain approach, the diaspora approach was concerned with the positive aspects and viewed the existence of highly trained nationals as human resources abroad. This term took a fundamentally different stance to traditional perspectives on the brain drain in that it saw the brain drain not as a loss, but a potential gain to the sending country (Brown, 2000). The brain circulation theory established by Saxenian (2005) analyzed the two-way flow of transnational technical communities instead of the one-way flow portrayed in the brain drain theory. He argued that individuals who left their home countries for a better life abroad were reversing the brain drain and transforming it into ‘brain circulation’ (2005). Zweig and Chung (2008, p.4) observed that the goal of developing countries was originally to trigger a ‘reverse brain drain.’ They found that those Chinese returnee scholars would bring back their knowledge and enhanced human capital and put it to work for their country of origin.

These studies have different theoretical dimensions to discuss brain circulation issues. Some scholars focused on policy options from the sending country to trace the transnational network between highly skilled emigrants and their country of origin. Policy thinking on skilled migration had shifted its focus from discouraging emigration in the 1970s to encouraging returns in the 1980s, and to facilitating brain circulation since the 1990s (Xiang, 2007). For example, the ‘diaspora option’ was contextualised by putting it in historical perspective along with the other policies designed to tackle the issue of professionals’ migration (Meyer, et al. 1997). Meyer, et al. pointed out that the ‘diaspora option’ differed from the return option in the sense that it did not aim at the physical repatriation of the nationals living and working abroad. Its purpose was the remote mobilisation of the diaspora’s resources and their association to the country of origin’s programmes. This option developed the practice of using
highly qualified human resources abroad without having to think in terms of permanent and costly reinstallation. As Brown (2000) reasoned, the aim of the diaspora option was to encourage highly skilled expatriates to contribute their experience to the development of their country of origin, without necessarily returning home. In the view of Meyer, et al., “diaspora option” strategy was attractive to any country that could not afford to offer the salaries and other incentives needed to attract their highly skilled expatriates back home (1997). It was a real and workable proposition to transform the negative effects of emigration into actual benefits. According to the diaspora option, highly skilled emigrants might stay overseas but worked for their mother nation in some way. It provided the opportunity for some sending countries to maintain contact with and utilize the knowledge of their valuable transnational emigrants.

Compared with the diaspora option, brain circulation theory found out that the key actions in the transnational mobility of highly skilled labourers were neither policymakers nor multinational corporations in isolation, but rather communities of technically skilled immigrants (2005). Brain circulation theory was based on the study of Saxenian (2005) by focusing on the creation of venture capital industries with close links to Silicon Valley. It was based on the experience of highly skilled labourers who travel frequently between Silicon Valley and Hsinchu (in Taiwan), leading to industrial upgrading in both locations. They return home to establish business relationships or to start new companies while maintaining their social and professional ties to the United States. Saxenian’s research showed that many Taiwanese and Indian firms in Silicon Valley actively promote global networks that link California and the home country of the immigrant professionals. These scientists and engineers from developing countries contribute to their home economies while maintaining professional and economic ties in more technologically advanced economies. Some become transnational as they work, and even maintain residences and citizenship in more than one nation. The limits of traditional core-periphery understanding of the relation between developed and developing economies were challenged in an era of global labour mobility and ‘brain circulation’ (Saxenian, 2005).

In current studies on China’s brain circulation and highly skilled emigrants from China, many scholars are concerned with the initiatives of the PRC
government, the relations between HSNCMs and China, and the institutionalized means to maintain the transnational networks between China and HSNCMs. As to China’s initiatives, some scholars have analyzed the policies and incentive schemes for overseas students and scholars in different social contexts. For example, Zweig and Chung (2008) underlined the importance of policy promotion by the Chinese government to accelerate a ‘reverse brain drain.’ As they explained, promoting the diaspora option was a key innovation of the Chinese government in its recent S&T and human resource policies. As they describe, the government formulated a policy breakthrough in 2001 with its “wei guo fuwu”\(^8\) (serving the nation) strategy. In their research, this Chinese version of the diaspora option, to be outlined in greater detail later, could lessen the brain drain by turning a potential loss into a significant gain. In terms of relevant data analysis, Zweig and Chung (2008, p.2) found that the annual increase in the number of Chinese returnees in the late 1990s was 13 per cent, and between 2001 and 2002 it rose by 45 per cent. In 2006 approximately 35,000 students returned to China, though the return rate hovered around 25 per cent. They concluded that through scholarly, business and educational exchanges, educational Chinese migrants who preferred to stay in the host country were finding ways to participate in economic and scientific development at home. Many who did not return can contribute to the economic development of their country of origin as well (Zweig and Chung, 2008).

There is no doubt that China’s initiatives have made progress in promoting transnational interaction between China and HSNCMs. However, how far those government-initiated programmes can go is still a question. The insightful research on this question is from Xiang (2007). Xiang’s research was based on a comparison between China and India in the Information Technology (IT) industry. He found that the migratory process of Indian IT professionals was built into the dynamics of the global high-tech industry. On the contrary, many programmes in China were dissociated from industry despite heavy investment by the government. In the Chinese case, return flow had mainly been

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\(^8\) The Chinese government formally proposed the term ‘serve the country (from abroad)’ (weiguo fuwu) to replace the old slogan of ‘return and serve the country’ (huiguo fuwu) in 2001, a change which suggests that physical return itself is no longer indispensable. The government has advocated the so-called ‘dumb bell model’, which means that a professional has affiliations in both China and overseas and moves back and forth between the two (Xiang, 2007).
encouraged by the government and was not strongly embedded in the global economy or domestic industry (Xiang, 2007). As a result, IT professionals’ migration from India with minimum government intervention might have more sustainable developmental effects than aggressive government programmes in China aimed at promoting return and transnational relations. However, Xiang stated that this did not mean that the Chinese experiences were a failure. Instead, government-initiated programmes were essential for developing strategic research in the long term. In short, Xiang recommended that a proper mix of government policy and market mechanism seemed a key to achieving sustainable brain circulation.

‘In sum, China perhaps needs to learn from India how to link its return programmes more closely to industrial dynamics, and India can take note of China’s various innovative government measures in order to enhance its capacity in basic research which does not yield immediate commercial returns. It is significant to note that the Chinese government increasingly attaches importance to temporary return’ (Xiang, 2007, p.129).

Besides the issue on China’s initiative on brain circulation, scrutinizing relations between China and HSNCMs becomes another main issue for brain circulation studies. Xiang found that there were multiple paradoxes in relations between the Chinese state and overseas Chinese professionals (OCPs) (2011). On the one hand, the Chinese state made overseas students and scholars into a new social category and policy target; the state developed an unprecedented number of policies and programmes to aggressively forge new relations with OCPs. On the other hand, many programmes were carried out through carefully performed political rituals, and these political rituals served as the most efficient vehicle to obtain material rewards. In Xiang’s study, OCPs as agents of globalisation were eager to tap into economic opportunities in China. Many OCPs working in academic institutions developed ties with China precisely for the purpose of turning their research results into commercial projects. They knew only too well that a ‘proper’ relation with the state was essential (Xiang, 2011, p.835). Xiang defined those government-initiated programmes as “ritual economy”, and he believed that the ritual economy was part of the new configuration of economic and political relations in China since the late 1990s. However, given the magnitude of financial and political investments in these initiatives, the economic outcomes have not been satisfactory (Xiang, 2011).
‘The combination of the ritual and the economic effectively mainstreams certain social groups and ideologies, and marginalises others. Those who are less valuable in the global market tend to be politically marginalised, and those who do not conform to the political order may be economically ousted... Friction does exist but, by and large, they are incorporated into the system. The earlier anticipation that OCPs would act as powerful agents outside the establishment to transform China looks ever more doubtful’ (Xiang, 2011, p.835).

In terms of brain circulation theories, the relations between HSNCMs and sending countries were constructed and maintained through transnational networks (Meyer, et al., 1997; Zweig and Chung, 2008; Liu, 2009; Xiang, 2011). Brain circulation was done through formal, institutionally organised networking (Meyer, et al., 1997). In China’s case, some scholars found that overseas associations especially the professional associations of HSNCMs (or OCP associations) had become a key vehicle for transnational network building between HSNCMs and China (Xiang, 2005; Liu, 2009). In their studies, Chinese government and semi-government agencies had acknowledged the importance of OCP association and actively exploited it in building transnational networks. Xiang’s research found that OCP associations often served as an incubator where OCPs developed their intention to build close ties with China (2005). For many OCP associations, organizing delegations to China had become a main, or even the most important, activity (Xiang, 2005; Zweig and Chung, 2008). At the same time, inviting officials from Chinese embassies or even directly from China also became a standard part of large meetings of OCPs (Xiang, 2005). The practice of OCP associations did not have only direct influence on their members: for some HSNCMs who left China after the mid-1990s, though they did not participate in associations as actively as the older migrants, communication with fellow OCPs remained an important source of information (Xiang, 2005). In conclusion, HSNCM associations became institutionalized driving forces to strengthen the transnational linkage between China and HSNCMs. They resulted from the self-consciousness of those HSNCMs who actively responded the China’s initiatives. The transnational practices of these associations to some extend facilitate China’s brain circulation. Especially in China’s political context, their practical performance on promotion brain circulation is deserved further studies.
In general, brain circulation is more like an ideal model of transnational mobility of highly skill migrants. Effective brain circulation is a triple success which may be beneficial to sending countries, receiving countries, and highly skilled migrants themselves. However, brain circulation is not a self-sufficient strategy (Meyer, et al., 1997). For example, its success and effectiveness depend largely on some supporting systems including the internal dynamics of the native scientific community. Brain circulation requires more flexible implementation through some kind of instrument. Some studies have recommended that highly skilled migrants find relevant professional and specialised groups with which they can constructively and concretely interact (Gaillard, Krishna and Waast, 1997). Brain circulation can not rely on temporary and individual connections. The truly continual and collective commitments occurred only in the beginning of the 1990s when brain circulation became an autonomous and complete strategy, organised as part of national planning policy in the sending country (Meyer et al., 1997).

Meanwhile, as Saxenian acknowledged, her research did not suggest that all developing economies were positioned to reap the benefits of brain circulation and peripheral entrepreneurship (2005). Saxenian (2005) found that brain circulation opportunity was only benefiting countries that had invested heavily in higher education and were sufficiently politically and economically stable for immigrants to consider returning home. She stated that the long-term impact of returning entrepreneurs and their communities might well be more far-reaching in Israel and Taiwan than in the complex political economies of China and India. Her research concluded that the transfer of institutional and policy know-how was arguably as important as the later transfer of skill and technical knowledge by tracing the transfer of the Silicon Valley model of venture capital to Taiwan (2005).

In China’s case, a large and increasing number of Chinese returnees continue to have a positive impact on China’s globalisation and national development (Zweig and Chung, 2008). However, many scholars realize that too much penetration of state power and state owned capital could also lead to some negative outcomes of brain circulation (Chen, 2008; Xiang, 2011). According to Chen’s research on Beijing Zhongguancun Science Park (Z-Park), brain circulation could only apply to a limited number of experienced Chinese
returnees who had the political skills to tap into institutionalized assets (2008). This means that only experienced returnees who can navigate transnational networks and build institutional connections have a sizable impact on technological development in China. The “brain circulation” may have its limits in China’s political context. Some other researches addressed important policy dilemmas faced by the United States, Canada, China and other countries in maximizing the full value of highly skilled migrants (DeVoretz and Zweig, 2008). More and more policymakers and scholars sought immigration policies that reduce the social and economic costs of the migration of the highly talented (DeVoretz and Zweig, 2008). Xiang believed that policy coherence and coordination at national and international levels, as well as capacity building to support enforcement, were essential to maximizing gains and minimizing drains for sending countries (Xiang, 2006, p. 147).

All above findings on brain circulation should be able to guide future studies of circular highly skilled migration. However, as further analysis shows, brain circulation still has a potential to develop its frameworks. Our research suggests that a theoretical dialogue with current brain circulation studies is good for understanding transnational highly skilled new Chinese migration. Some topics especially require more empirical research. These topics are state initiatives, the triple relationship between highly skilled migrants, sending country and host country and the development of transnational networks through institutionalized associations.

2.4 Theoretical negotiation and research position: brain circulation in transnational social fields

As this chapter iterates, many important phenomena observed in transnational highly skilled mobility can not be fully explained by the existing theoretical framework. For example, there is little link between the transnational theoretical framework and brain circulation studies. On the one hand, transnational migration theory provides an insightful perspective for studying international migration, but few scholars have utilized transnational theoretical

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Chen (2008) found that the knowledge assets (e.g., venture capital and research) in ZGC are mostly institutionalized and remain in the hands of the Chinese state, which is unlike the Silicon Valley and Hsinchu cases studied by Saxenian (2005). According to Saxenian’s “brain circulation” model, transnational technology communities were the crucial agents fostering technology transfer between the Silicon Valley and the Hsinchu region in Taiwan.
framework to guide research on brain circulation. On the other hand, current brain circulation studies address some specific issues on the circulation of highly skilled migration, but many of them are restricted to concrete issues and lack theoretical thinking. Few brain circulation studies have had a broad theoretical direction to achieve more in-depth research.

Besides the theoretical dilemma, some gaps in empirical studies also need to be addressed. Current brain circulation studies have often been based on limited experience of highly skilled migration in the United States, Canada and Australia. Only a few studies focused on HSNCMs in Europe. Little systematic research into highly skilled migration has been done in the UK. More questions on highly skilled migration and brain circulation need to be answered. For example, could the UK experience of highly skilled new Chinese migration be understood in the existing brain circulation paradigm? Could the paradigm be amended by adding a European perspective? If so, how can it be developed? Is China’s brain circulation successful in certain socio-political context? Would it be possible to promote an effective brain circulation in different transnational patterns of highly skilled migration? More studies are required to analyze the profiles and dynamics of transnational networks for brain circulation in different socio-political context. Different formats of brain circulation, as well as the process of transnational careers and business mobility of highly skilled migrants need to be examined. So far, minimal research has been done in this regard.

Answering these questions will have repercussions for research. Existing literature lacks multi-cited fieldwork and migrant-centered perspective, and can not explain some specific topics such as state initiatives, the multiple relations (between highly skilled migrants, the sending country and the receiving country). There will also need to be investigation of transnational network building for brain circulation. The specific topics on brain circulation mentioned above can only be fully understood with theoretical support from transnational migration studies. Meanwhile, rather than general transnational migration studies, more specific studies on transnational highly skilled migration and brain circulation are required for the development of transnational migration theory. There is urgent need to study brain circulation in a broader geopolitical context.

To fill the research gaps, our research conducts a case study on HSNCMs in the UK. This study provides evidence that a better result could be achieved
through a new theoretical effort. Different from existing brain circulation studies, this research introduces the perspectives of transnational social fields and transnational social spaces to support the theoretical framework of this research. The framework assumes that it is in transnational social fields/transnational social spaces that brain circulation emerges and develops. As Laurence stated, transnational social field appeared as a type of global space in which social, cultural, economic and political relations for a large group of migrants from a common place of origin were constituted and located (2003). Transnational social field is a set of trans-border multiple interlocking networks of social relationships through which ideas, practices, and resources were unequally exchanged, organized, and transformed (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004). Some studies on highly skilled migration have already found that those interlocking transnational networks of social relationship promoted brain circulation between highly skilled migrants and their country of origin (Meyer et al. 1997; Xiang, 2005). Meanwhile, this research follows the conception of transnational social space which was defined as pluri-local and institutionalized frameworks (Pries, 2001). The study on transnational social spaces discussed the interweaving relations between transnational practice and social structures that the transnational practice was embedded (Faist, 2000; Pries, 2001). In this research, the social practices of everyday life that distinguished between the existence of transnational social networks and the consciousness of being embedded in them are examined in the brain circulation context.

In general, this research is a case study on transnational careers and business mobility of the HSNCMs in the UK and their relations with China’s globalisation since 1990. This research has a clear direction that its research objects are those HSNCMs who have transnational careers and business mobility between China and the host country. Some of this mobility may connect the other countries as well. It means that this research excludes not only those international Chinese migrants without transnational experience, but also the other transnational Chinese migrants without trans-boundary career and
This research outlines a new theoretical framework to better understand the transnational careers and business mobility of HSNCMs. To sum up, this research attempts to put brain circulation studies into the general framework of transnational migration studies in general and transnational social spaces/transnational social fields in particular. It suggests migrant-centred perspective and multi-cited studies for transnational highly skilled migration studies. Three topics are discussed in this framework which are state initiatives, transnational networks building through institutionalized activities and transnational practice and identity construction of individual HSNCMs. Not only does the framework examine the social practices and transnational social networks of highly skilled migrants, but it also analyzes their identity and consciousness being embedded in their transnational mobility. In our research, all three topics are explored in the context of China’s globalisation.

Specifically, three main issues based on the new framework are discussed in this research. First, this research examines the state initiatives which have a straightforward impact on transnational mobility of HSNCMs in the UK. This part analyzes bilinear policy factors between China and the UK. It traces not only the UK policies on highly skilled immigration but also the policies and government-initiated incentive schemes from China. It attempts to define the transnational policy factors which may produce and maintain brain circulation for China. Second, this research systematically analyzes the transnational social networks which develop the relations between HSNCMs and China. This part of the research launches a case study on OCP associations in the UK and their impact on the transnational network building and China’s brain circulation. The impact of the association activities on China’s globalisation and national development also referred in this part. Third, individual transnational career and business activities and identity politics of HSNCMs are discussed to understand China’s brain circulation in the UK context. The multiple relations between HSNCMs, the sending country and the receiving country are analyzed to

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10 This research differentiates economic capital for business investment from family remittance which is only for private family support.
explore the essence of transnational career and business practice of HSNCMs. The strategy of HSNCMs towards China’s initiatives is analyzed as well.

Theoretically, this research attempts, for the first time, to integrate the highly skilled migrant in the host country and overseas returnees in the sending country into one research framework. It follows transnational research pattern and see the transnational careers and business mobility of HSNCMs as a two-way process which connects the sending country and the receiving country. This research’s general issues are in correspondence with the main topics of brain circulation theory. It is an empirical study to scan the current brain circulation study in transnational social spaces. To some extent, it enriches the transnational migration theory by connecting it to a specific area of transnational highly skilled migration and brain circulation.

2.5 Conclusion

The study of transnational careers and business mobility of HSNCMs requires a new theoretical framework in the new globalisation era. With this theoretical direction, this chapter scrutinizes the transnational migration theory and brain circulation in a theoretical continuum where transnational highly skilled subjects are studied. It introduces a transnational pattern for studying HSNCMs and recommends a theoretical negotiation with brain circulation in transnational social spaces.

This chapter mainly discusses three theoretical issues that connect the topic of this research. The first issue is the state initiatives and policy impact on the transnational careers and business mobility in existing brain circulation research (Meyer, et al., 1997). According to much research on the brain circulation of HSNCMs (Xiang, 2011; Zweig and Chung, 2008), this issue is especially important in the Chinese context. The second issue is the transnational network building between highly skilled migrants and the sending country. Some transnational migration studies and brain circulation theory emphasized the important role of institutionalized associations for this transnational networks development (Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc, 1992; Faist, 2000; Pries, 2001; Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004; Xiang, 2005). The third is transnational practice and identity construction of different groups of HSNCMs. On this issue, different formats of individual transnational practice and multiple identity
politics are discussed in certain socio-cultural contexts. All three general issues discussed in transnational perspective were main topics of brain circulation as well.

The theoretical framework discussed in this chapter moves towards articulating a more coherent set of predictive arguments for the study of HSNCMs. This framework refers to the causes and consequences of migration, the codification of transnational practice by different types of individual and institutional actors, and a consideration of the relationship between transnational practice and immigrant incorporation in the host society. However, all these theoretical efforts require methodological changes designed through a transnational lens. In the next chapter, some methodological issues with regard to this research are introduced.
Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, a new theoretical framework for studying highly skilled migration was introduced. The framework attempted to study brain circulation in transnational social spaces and transnational social fields. It was based on a transnational paradigm on international migration studies and brain circulation theories. These theoretical analyses were launched in the historical context of highly skilled new Chinese migration. The HSNCMs with transnational career or business development were then introduced as main subjects for this research. However, the study of HSNCMs in the UK through a transnational lens demands some methodological shifts.

To begin with, this chapter outlines the design and methodology of this research. Intensive interview was the main fieldwork method in this research. Four trans-boundary field sites in China and the UK were chosen. The snowballing process was introduced to create a sample which was based on four different occupation categories of HSNCMs. Other data collection methods such as direct observation, documentation and demographic statistics were combined to turn the research issues into historical depth. To form an empirical basis, this research has employed a multi-method approach in order to bring adequate depth, subtlety and accuracy to the data. The limitations of these research methods are then discussed. Finally, for fuller understanding of the transnational career or business mobility of HSNCMs, this chapter asks for methodological diversion to migrants-centred perspective and multi-sited fieldwork.

3.2 The fieldwork

3.2.1 Generating a sample

This research focuses on the transnational career or business mobility of HSNCMs between China and the UK. In line with this topic, the target group was defined as transnational highly skilled new Chinese migrants (HSNCMS)
who have migrated to the UK since 1990. In this research, HSNCMs included two groups. The first group included those HSNCMs who were studying or working in the UK. They were Chinese citizens or formerly Chinese citizens. The second group consisted of those overseas returnees who returned to China from the UK temporary or permanently. All of them had a higher education background and had study or work experience in the UK. This research covered those HSNCMs who had a transnational career or business development between the sending country and the receiving country. A few of them had formal transnational experience in more than two countries.

Transnational HSNCMs in this research were mainly divided into four categories in line with their diverse occupational background. They included academic staff, professionals (especially those with science and engineering background), management staff, and self-employed or Entrepreneurs. This research generated a sample of HSNCMs based on these four categories. Among all interviewees, nine were from the academic area, thirteen had a professional background, thirteen were management staff in companies, one was self-employed, and one had established his own company. This sample distribution was based on two data resources: the occupational data of Chinese in the UK in the 2001 Census\(^\text{11}\) (England and Wales) and the occupational data of work permits and first permits for immigrants from China in 2002\(^\text{12}\).

There were two reasons for choosing 1990 as the starting point for this research. Firstly, though the central government of China had dispatched Chinese students and scholars since 1978 when China began economic reforms, only a few government-sponsored students and scholars had opportunities to study abroad. A milestone in Chinese overseas students’ affairs was the year 1992, when Deng Xiaoping\(^\text{13}\) made a speech during his “Southern Tour” in January. He encouraged the dispatch of more Chinese students and scholars to study abroad. His emphasis on economic modernization increased the value of overseas scholars to the state. According to relevant statistics of overseas

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\(^{11}\) See chapter 3 for more details of the statistic data.

\(^{12}\) See chapter 3 for more details of the data distribution.

\(^{13}\) He was the highest leader of P.R.China from 1978 to 1989. During the tour, he stated that overseas students and scholars “can all come back, and after they return things will be well arranged. This policy cannot be changed”.
students and scholars from the Ministry of Education (MoE)\textsuperscript{14}, not only did the number of government-sponsored overseas students increase but a number of self-financing overseas students also emerged and played an important role in the new era (Cheng, 2002). Especially after 2000, the total number of overseas students and scholars increased rapidly due to the fast economic development of China. Secondly, the UK relevant data\textsuperscript{15} on Chinese immigrants showed that HSNCMs became a visible large group after 1990 and increased especially fast from 2000. This population trend of HSNCMs will be analyzed carefully in the following two chapters but most available demography statistics on HSNCMs in the UK are after 1990.

Our research was based on transnational multi-sited fieldwork in China and the UK. In the fieldwork in the UK, twelve interviewees were from Greater Manchester and eight were from Greater London. The reasons for choosing Manchester and London as the places for the fieldwork were straightforward. They are the two residential areas with the largest overseas Chinese population in the UK. Manchester is the researcher’s study place where friends and colleagues are concentrated. Starting from Manchester thus seemed both productive and economical. London has the largest Chinese population in the UK. It is a global financial and economic centre. It offers the most job opportunities to those highly skilled workers with diverse background to maintain its global impact. In the fieldwork in China, nine interviewees were from Beijing and seven were from Shanghai. Beijing is the capital of China. It is in the north of China and is the country’s political, cultural and economic centre. Shanghai is one of the largest cities in China. It is in southeast of China, and is the country’s financial and economic centre. Beijing and Shanghai are major location choices for overseas returnees, followed by Shenzhen and Guangzhou. Their diverse global opportunities and economic opportunities are the principal factors attracting overseas returnees.

A group of thirty-six interviewees for this research was formed from these places. All interviewees in four different occupational categories were found

\textsuperscript{14} Ministry of education of China publishes data on overseas students and overseas returnees every year. These data can be easily found from its website, published documents and the yearbooks of education.

\textsuperscript{15} These data include 1991 Census in the UK, 2001 Census in the UK, statistics on work permits and highly skilled immigration in the UK. All data are from Office for National statistics and Home office, UK. More data detail can be found in chapter 4.
through a snowballing process. This snowballing process followed two channels. One began with the researcher’s contacts in Manchester. A number of initial participants were contacted through these personal contacts. These initial interviewees in turn were asked to introduce other potential subjects through their personal network. The other channel resorted to the internet. Some information on successful HSNCMs could be searched online. Contact information for some academic staff could be found on their institutional websites. Meanwhile, most Chinese professional associations have their own websites. Those HSNCMs with leadership of professional associations were mainly contacted through their association website. Other members of the professional association were then introduced by the leadership. In this way, one contact led to another, thereby enlarging the sample.

In general, this snowballing method “provides an immediate platform upon which rapport with a potential participant can be established” (O’Connor, 2004, p.173). It facilitates the process of the interviews and avoids aimless and time-consuming search. However, this method may limit the diversity of the sample. In order to minimise this drawback, we diversified the channels to build the sample, following the occupation distribution of HSNCMs in the UK. In addition to occupation distribution, other factors were also introduced to create

<table>
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<th>40-44</th>
<th>45-49</th>
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<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Occupation Education</th>
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<th>Academic staff</th>
<th>Professionals</th>
<th>Self-employees or entrepreneurs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 3.1 Age and Gender of the interviewees

Table 3.2 Occupation and education background of the interviewees
a more convincing sample. These factors included age, gender, time of migration, type of migration, and so on.\textsuperscript{16}

\textbf{3.2.2 The interviews and direct observation}

Among all in-depth interviews of this research, twenty interviewees were in the UK and sixteen as overseas returnees (back from the UK) were in China. The fieldwork in the UK started from August 2007 to May 2008. While in China, most interviews ran from July 2008 to August 2008. Two additional cases were interviewed in May 2011 to enrich this research project. All the interviews were conducted in a friendly stress-free environment, including one telephone interview with the UK informants. Most interviewees readily gave consent to recording. Each interview lasted between one and two hours.

The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured way, guided by a prepared interview guideline that listed all relevant issues, such as personal background, transnational professional activities, association activities, personal perceptions of transnational life and future plans for personal career development. Interviewees were given a fair degree of freedom within each topic. They were allowed to develop the subjects in which they were particularly interested. Abundant information was obtained on these crucial topics. The final interview structure of this research was the outcome of collaboration with some initial interviewees. Their feedback during interviewing was helpful for the design of fieldwork.

Besides the sample for this research, an additional three interviews were conducted in 2008 to extend the understanding of transnational interactions between HSNCMs and China. These three interviewees included the deputy chief editor from the magazine “\textit{China Scholars Abroad}”\textsuperscript{17}, the Deputy Director of CPC (Communist Party of China) committee office in Zhangjiang Innopark\textsuperscript{18}, and the chief secretary of the Education Section of the Chinese embassy in the UK.

As many scholars have argued convincingly, interviewing is not merely the neutral exchange of questions and answers. In view of Fontana and Frey, two

\textsuperscript{16} More information of the interviewees is shown in Appendix 3.1-3.4.

\textsuperscript{17} This magazine was set up by ministry of education in the context of growing population of overseas Chinese students and scholars. It is the magazine especially for Chinese overseas students and scholars. The first issue of this magazine was in Beijing, 1987. It is the magazine especially for Chinese overseas students and scholars.

\textsuperscript{18} Zhangjiang Innopark is one of the famous industrial park in Shanghai.
(or more) people are involved in this process, and their exchanges lead to the creation of a collaborative effort called the interview (2005). Postmodernists argue that collaboration no longer refers only to the conduct of multidisciplinary teams of professional researchers; it often means the equal participation of researchers and their subjects (Emerson, 1981; Kuhlmann, 1992; Wolf, 1996, p.26 cited in Angrosino, 2005, p.732).

No longer can it be taken for granted that ethnographers operate at a distance from their human subjects. Indeed, the very term ‘subject’, with its implicit colonialist connotations, is no longer appropriate. Rather, there is said to be a dialogue between researchers and those whose cultures/societies are to be described. “Dialogue” in this sense does not literally mean a conversation between two parties; in practice, it often consists of multiple, even contradictory, voices (Fontana and Frey, 2005, p.696).

Besides the interview method, some data in this research were gathered through direct observation. Rather than actively engaging members of a setting in conversations or interviews, the observer strove to be unobtrusive and detached from the setting (Angrosino, 2005). As an overseas student in the UK, the researcher had opportunities to observe some personal interactions between HSNCMs without their knowledge. Some leaders of Chinese professional associations not only agreed to an interview request, but also invited the researcher to participate in their community parties and other activities. In that circumstance, only one or two leaders recognized the position of the researcher. In view of other members, the research was an invited participant. However, the position of the researcher allowed covert information collection. To reduce the disadvantage of direct observation, the researcher avoided interruption of the usual and typical activities of the ‘subjects’.

### 3.3 Documentation and demographic statistics

Documentation was one data collection channel to complement the data collected from field work. To fully understand the state-initiated incentive schemes and policy influence on the transnational option of HSNCMs, we collected a series of governmental documents from China and the UK.

In the UK, the British government set up relevant policies to manage highly skilled mobility to the UK. These policies included a work-permit system and a highly-skilled migrant programme, which have been integrated into a new point-based immigration system. This research collected and analyzed the
evolution of UK immigration policy toward highly-skilled immigration. Most of
the policies were released on the website of the Home Office and the UK
Border Agency.

In China, a series of policies have been publicized to attract more overseas
students and scholars to “return to serve the country” or “serve the country”.
The Chinese government has initiated many incentive schemes to established
stable formal relations with so called “high-level overseas talents” or
“outstanding overseas talents”. Laws and regulations relating to overseas
students and scholars collated in a historical perspective were published by
Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council (OCAO). Most of the
policies can be downloaded directly from the website of OCAO or the Ministry
of Education (MoE). Some policies and relevant data were collected from the
resource centre of “Qiaolian” (All-China federation of returned overseas)
during fieldwork in Beijing.

Besides some governmental document collection, we also collected some
internal materials of OCP associations and other associations of HSNCMs. This
documentation is essential to extend the understanding of institutionalized
activities of HSNCMs. It includes some historical documents or constitutions of
these associations. Most of this documentation can be found from the website of
these associations. Some events which relate to the transnational activities of
those OCP associations were also collected for this research.

Demographic statistics on HSNCMs in the UK was another data collection
channel to enrich the field work of this research. In the UK, most relevant data
came from the Office for National Statistics, the Home Office and the UK
Border Agency, the 1991 census and the 2001 census. Some demographic
statistics were collected from the website of MoE and Chinese Embassy in the
UK. These statistics are indispensable to description of the formation and
profile of HSNCMs in the UK.

3.4 Further methodological introspection
3.4.1 Migrant-centred perspective: reflection on methodological
nationalism

The domain frame for contemporary international migration studies is what
Wimmer and Glick Schiller called “methodological nationalism” (2003).
“Methodological nationalism” is the naturalization of the nation-state by the social sciences, and it is a nation-centred perspective which assumes that countries are the natural units for comparative studies (Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003). In the opinion of Wimmer and Glick Schiller, there are three variants of methodological nationalism. Firstly, it ignores or disregards the fundamental importance of nationalism for modern societies; secondly, it is often combined with naturalization taking for granted that the boundaries of the nation-state delimit and define the unit of analysis; thirdly, it has a territorial limitation which confines the study of social processes to the political and geographic boundaries of a particular nation-state (2003).

Taking for granted nationally bounded societies as the natural unit of analysis is a “blind spot” which leaves no room for transnational and global processes that connect national territories. Historically, the concepts of the modern state and of a national population have developed within trans-boundary rather than territorially limited national spaces. More and more scholars (Portes, Guarnizo and Landolt, 1999; Glick Schiller and Fouron, 2001; Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 2003; Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007) have urged scholars to move beyond methodological nationalism, or the assumption that the nation-state is the natural, logical category for organizing social life.

The contemporary period of globalisation has transformed migration studies with the emergence of a transnational paradigm (Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc, 1992; Liu, 2005; Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007). Networks of migrants and transnational cultural connections that lead to other forms of identification than national constructions are only now beginning to be examined within migration studies. Much transnational migration work continues to cling stubbornly to nationally defined categories which obscure transnational and translocal processes. Some scholars have described the space between nation-states as analytic “borderlands” (Sassen, 1996), where the overlap and interaction of the local and the global creates a frontier zone. The study of “transnational social fields” and “transnational social spaces” emerged

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19 In the eyes of most scholars of nationalism, the nation is a people who share common origins and history as indicated by their shared culture, language and identity; in contrast, the state is conceived as a sovereign system of government within a particular territory. (Wimmer and Schiller, 2003)
in a new international migration arena (Faist, 2000; Pries, 2001; Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004).

A migrant-centred perspective was suggested by this research, which was based on reflection on methodological nationalism. Rather different from the perspective which focuses within national boundary, the migrant-centred perspective transcends the narrow focus on a nation and the top-down interpretation. It analyzes the transnational migrants in the de-territorialized transnational social field and examined the dynamics of the transnational practice as a global phenomenon. A community-based and immigrant-centred approach (Liu, 2004) emerged as a valuable approach for understanding transnational highly skilled migration. This approach reflected the positive negotiation of highly skilled migrants towards multiple powers in transnational social spaces. In other words, the perspective of the migrants challenged the unidirectional nation-centred perspective, focusing on the perception and strategy of the transnational migrants in the context of speedy globalisation. In migrants-centred perspective, nation-state building process impinged upon diasporic population in its various locations. Moreover, migrant’s practice and identity was never confined within the boundary of a nation-state but formatted in the transnational social spaces.

3.4.2 Multi-sited Fieldwork

In the view of some scholars (Fitzgerald, 2006; Marcus, 1995; Mazzucato, 2007), the transnational social field was not only a geographic space but rather a conceptual place whose boundaries were continuously constructed and reconstructed by flexible transnational migrants. They resort to multi-sited ethnographies that move beyond simply studying immigrants in the context of receiving countries. They urge conduct of empirical research at all sites of the transnational social fields. Multi-sited fieldwork (Fitzgerald, 2004) was such a field-approach emphasizing the dynamic process of the transnational migrants in the trans-boundary space. Multi-sited fieldwork also offered practical advantages for gaining access to social networks with nodes in different sites (Fitzgerald, 2006).

A multi-sited strategy allows research to show how a group of members mobilize to exploit transnational networks as channels for patron-client exchanges. The collaborative dimension of multi-sited fieldwork combined the
advantages of insiders’ intimate acquaintance with the social milieu and easier access with the advantages of outsiders’ fresh perspectives and autonomy (Merton, 1972).

Generally speaking, there are two implications in the multi-sited methods: one is the correlative interaction between the different sites of the sending country; the other reveals the migrants’ inherent relations between the sending country and receiving country. Fitzgerald (2006) concluded by suggesting a method for multi-sited work by removing national boundaries and historicizing the field. Multi-sited field work asks for stripping off the national boundaries which restrict the construction of the field, and integrating both sending and receiving country sites. It also requires historicizing the field through local archival work, oral histories, and so on. The migrant-centred perspective is embedded in the frame of multi-cited fieldwork naturally.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the methodology issues that informed this research. The final sample of the fieldwork was selected based on four different occupational categories of HSNCMs. The data were collected by in-depth interviews and direct observation. Interview and observation allowed the researcher to document how HSNCMs simultaneously maintained and shed cultural repertoires and identities, interacted within a location and across its boundaries, and acted in ways that were in concert with or contradicted their values over time. Snowballing as a widely used method was employed to recruit the interviewees during field work. This snowballing process followed two channels to extend the diversity of the sample, including personal contacts and internet resources.

We have followed the guidelines of migrant-centred methodological perspective and multi-sited fieldwork frame. The migrants-centred perspective overcame the limitation of nation-centred perspective, and analyzed transnational migration in transnational social spaces. Following this methodology, this research not only explores the practices and practical concerns of HSNCMs, but also analyzes their perspectives and cognitive categories. Meanwhile, the perspective of multi-sited fieldwork proved that different localities could be selected precisely because they were linked by
migrant networks, while still shaping migrants’ experiences. This fieldwork has adopted a two-site strategy, not only concerned with the multiple relations among the British Chinese communities, but also tracing transnational practice between China and the UK.

However, interviewing is the outcome of collaboration between researchers and interviewees (Fontana and Frey, 2005). It is not merely the neutral exchange of questions and answers. The “facts” and “data” from fieldwork are not objective entities, but exist in terms of the social meanings attributed by social actors (including the field researcher) in interaction with others (Angrosino, 2005).

To complement a more neutral understanding of the research topic, some other data were directly collected from documentation and demographic statistics. Some statistics data are analyzed in the next chapter to explore the formation and profiles of HSNCMs in the UK.
Chapter 4 Formation and Profiles of HSNCMs in the UK

4.1 Introduction

Chapter two and Chapter three have described the theoretical framework and methodology for our research. In the literature review chapter, our research traced the transnational migration theories and current brain circulation studies. It outlined a framework to study the transnational careers and business mobility of HSNCMs in transnational social spaces. This framework facilitated the theoretical dialogue with brain circulation. In the methodology chapter, our research rejected the ‘methodological nationalism’ which was a nation-centred perspective. Instead, it adopted a migrant-centred perspective and multi-sited fieldwork to develop an understanding of the transnational practice of HSNCMs in the UK.

From this chapter, we shall record our field study of the HSNCMs in the UK. For understanding the transnational careers and business mobility of these HSNCMs, we need to establish have some basic knowledge and general background information. However, little existing literature has discussed this basic knowledge and the picture of HSNCMs in the UK is unclear. So far, we have little knowledge of the history, formation or features of HSNCMs in the UK. The transnational communities and social spaces from which they launch mobility beyond national borders require more exploration. To fill these gaps, some questions need to be answered. For example: who are the HSNCMs and transnational HSNCMs? What are their characteristics in comparison with other overseas Chinese in the UK? What is the transnational setting which makes their transnational practice a possibility? We cannot fully understand the HSNCMs in the UK and their transnational practice unless all these fundamental issues are discussed.

Our research attempts a new analysis of these general issues based on data from demographical statistics and on our field study. Firstly, this chapter outlines the demography and the formation of overseas Chinese and HSNCMs in the UK. This section analyzes the size and formation of HSNCMs in a historical context and discusses the macro socio-economic environment of
highly skilled Chinese migration to the UK. Secondly, this chapter introduces the definition of HSNCMs and outlines the features of HSNCMs in the UK. The transnational characteristics of HSNCMs in the UK are presented in this section. Finally, we shall discuss the transnational community of HSNCMs in the UK. The associations of HSNCMs and the internet impact on HSNCMs community are analyzed in this section.

4.2 Demography and formation

HSNCMs in the UK as a group have not been scrutinized by scholars. In this research context, much fundamental work needs to be done before systematic analysis of the transnational careers and business mobility of HSNCMs in the UK. Up to now, we have had little knowledge of the history and size of HSNCMs in the UK. The analysis of their features and transnational characteristics are far from adequate. The socio-cultural environment that makes their transnational mobility a possibility is still unknown. We cannot understand HSNCMs in the UK without this general knowledge. To fill the gaps, this chapter begins with demographic statistics of the formation of HSNCMs in the UK. The macro-context which forms the highly skilled Chinese migration is discussed in this section.

First, it is necessary to provide a short history of overseas Chinese in the UK since the Second World War. The largest wave of Chinese immigration took place during the 1950s and 1960s and consisted predominantly of male agricultural labourers from Hong Kong, particularly from the rural villages of the New Territories (Parker, 1998). Chinese migration to Britain continued to be dominated by these groups until the 1980s, when rising living standards and urbanization in Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia gradually reduced the volume of migration from the New Territories (Ibid.). At the same time in the 1980s, the number of students and skilled emigrants from the People's Republic of China began to rise. These Chinese students became the first source of HSNCMs in the UK.
Table 4.1 Chinese in the UK by place of birth in 1991 and 2001 Census

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of Birth</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>Increasing</th>
<th>Increasing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>156,938</td>
<td>243,258</td>
<td>86,320</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>44,635</td>
<td>69,880</td>
<td>25,245</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainland China</td>
<td>18,507</td>
<td>46,750</td>
<td>28,243</td>
<td>153%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian Area</td>
<td>87,456</td>
<td>116,888</td>
<td>29,432</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other area of the world</td>
<td>6,340</td>
<td>9,740</td>
<td>3,400</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The above table does not include the Chinese population of Northern Ireland. “Other Asian area” includes Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, etc.
Source: Office for National Statistics and General Register for Scotland.

Since the early 1990s, the UK has also witnessed a rising inflow of economic migrants from areas in China without any previous migratory link to the UK (Pieke, Nyíri, Thunø and Ceccagno, 2004). According to the Census in the UK, only a small group of new immigrants came from mainland China between 1981 and 1991. While the number rose rapidly between 1991 and 2001 (Table 4.1), from 18,507 to 46,750. The Chinese population from Mainland China increased by 28,243 in 2001, representing an increase of 153 percent from the year 1991. Though ethnic Chinese only account for a small minority in the UK, the Chinese community is the fastest growing ethnic group in the UK, with 9.9 percent annual growth between 2001 and 2007, and more than 90 percent of this growth was due to net migration (Office for National Statistics, 2009).

Generally, there are two groups of Chinese emigrants in the UK. The first group of Chinese emigrants includes Chinese students and skilled professionals with higher education background. The second group includes low skilled and unskilled emigrants. Many Chinese unskilled migrants enter the country illegally and work in the ‘black’ economy, as the Morecambe Bay tragedy of February 2004 showed. Many claim asylum in-country, avoiding deportation after exhausting their appeals. Originally, Fujianese migrants were dominant, 20

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20 People who identified themselves as Chinese accounted for just 0.4 per cent of the total British population and 5.3 per cent of whole minority group population in the 2001 census. It was estimated that only 0.8 per cent population of England in 2007 were from Chinese ethnic group (Office for National Statistics, 2009).

21 For historical and cultural reasons, a sizeable proportion originate from Fujian province in southeast China. Most illegal migrants work in the black economy or are employed as illegal cheap labour, usually in agriculture and catering (Pieke et al., 2004). This activity became publicised nationwide in tragic consequences in the form of the 2004 Morecambe Bay cockling disaster, though most migrants have remained invisible.
but more recently increasing numbers of migrants from the Northeast of China have arrived in the UK as well (Pieke, Nyiri, Thunø and Ceccagno, 2004).

Distinct from the low skilled and unskilled Chinese emigrants, overseas Chinese students and professionals are the main HSNCM in the UK. The statistics from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) (Table 4.2) showed a rapid increase in Chinese students from the academic year 1994/1995 to 2010/2011. Normally there are three choices for Chinese overseas students after graduation. Some students choose to return to work in China after graduation. Some others choose other foreign countries such as the United States for further education or career development. The others join the UK labour force after graduation and become HSNCMs in the UK. All of these groups are considered transnational human capital by the Chinese government (Zweig, Chen and Rosen, 2004). Meanwhile, more Chinese professionals choose the UK as their destination. The proportion of highly skilled professionals from China has increased rapidly especially since the late 1990s. China has become a new source country of highly skilled migrants in the UK. According to the 2001 census in England and Wales (see Table 4.3), the number of highly skilled Chinese workers with UK citizenship rose to 46,349, nearly 50 per cent of the total Chinese population in the UK. This figure matches the expectation of the immigration system for non-EU immigration.

Table 4.2 The numbers of first year students domiciled from P. R. China in selected academic years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic year</th>
<th>Postgraduate</th>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010/2011</td>
<td>24,490</td>
<td>17,315</td>
<td>41,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004/2005</td>
<td>16,300</td>
<td>11,150</td>
<td>27,450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999/2000</td>
<td>2,525</td>
<td>1,550</td>
<td>4,070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994/1995</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>810</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In general, there are some global socio-economic factors that boost the rise of HSNCMs in the UK. Firstly, economic development and political reform in China encourage more students to study abroad. Due to China’s reformation and opening since 1978, policy on Chinese studying abroad changed. More Chinese
students were encouraged to go abroad to pursue advanced knowledge in science and technology. Meanwhile, China has become wealthier since the 1990s, Chinese parents increasingly send their children to study in the UK. The number of Chinese students studying at British colleges and universities reached 3,580 from 1998 to 1999, 6,094 in 1999 - 2000 and 10,322 in 2000 - 2001 (Zhang, 2003). After China joined WTO at the end of 2001 and integrated in the global market, China’s economic development was faster. As a consequence, the number of Chinese students after 2000 has been increasing more steeply than ever before. It is reported that China became the chief source country of overseas students studying in the UK, 50,755 Chinese students from Mainland China in 2005 (BBC China, 2008). By February 2012, over 90,000 students from Mainland China were studying in the UK, which accounted for one fifth of all overseas students in the UK. Over 70,000 of them were studying at British colleges and universities, representing an increase of 60 per cent from the year 2009 (Zhang, 2012).

Table 4.3 Occupations of Chinese\(^{22}\) in the UK in 2001 Census
(England and Wales)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupations</th>
<th>UK Total</th>
<th></th>
<th>Chinese in UK</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>23,627,754</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>96,642</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers and administrators</td>
<td>3,570,069</td>
<td>15.11</td>
<td>16,432</td>
<td>17.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional occupations</td>
<td>2,639,365</td>
<td>11.17</td>
<td>17,494</td>
<td>18.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professional and technical occupations</td>
<td>3,256,877</td>
<td>13.78</td>
<td>12,423</td>
<td>12.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical and secretarial occupations</td>
<td>3,148,893</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>9,205</td>
<td>9.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft and related occupations</td>
<td>2,751,249</td>
<td>11.64</td>
<td>16,806</td>
<td>17.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and protective service occupations</td>
<td>1,633,592</td>
<td>6.91</td>
<td>2,428</td>
<td>2.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales occupations</td>
<td>1,812,500</td>
<td>7.67</td>
<td>8,357</td>
<td>8.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant and machine operatives</td>
<td>2,010,090</td>
<td>8.51</td>
<td>2,410</td>
<td>2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other occupations</td>
<td>2,805,119</td>
<td>11.87</td>
<td>11,087</td>
<td>11.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office for National Statistics

\(^{22}\) The number of Chinese in the UK in the 2001 census includes all persons of Chinese ethnicity from Mainland China, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, Vietnam etc.
Secondly, the globalisation of the highly skilled labour market provides more opportunities for Chinese students and professionals to study and work in the UK. In the globalisation context, the recruitment of skilled foreign workers becomes increasingly important to many industrialized countries (OECD, 2001). Both private capital and the state are engaged in active recruitment to fill labour needs. Some scholars (Salt, 1997; Goss and Lindquist, 1995) emphasized the international labour marketing factors in motivating skilled migration, including international spatial division of labour, the role of transnational companies, and recruitment agencies including employers and the state. Better opportunity of highly skilled jobs in the UK is an important factor that attracts HSNCMs to work in the UK. HSNCMs often see overseas experience as a ticket to achieve either more economic returns in the receiving country, or a higher position in the sending country after they return to China (Zweig, Chen and Rosen, 2004; Wang, 2008).

In the UK, the relatively flexible policy on highly skilled migrants is another macro factor that attracting HSNCMs to work in the UK. Like many industrialized countries, The UK government has temporary migration programmes that facilitate the entry of skilled foreign workers to meet an increasing demand for skilled labour in a variety of managerial, professional, and vocational occupations (OECD, 2001). Under the new immigration system, the low skilled work permit has gradually shut the door to applicants from non-EU countries. The Tier 1 visa for highly skilled workers and Tier 2 visa for sponsored skilled workers are two legal routes for immigration from non-EU countries. Under this policy, the categories of Chinese immigrants in the UK have changed gradually over time. According to the new immigration system, HSNCMs with Tier 1 and Tier 2 visas can apply for permanent residence or British nationality.

As one of the main migration routes to the UK for Mainland Chinese, the work permit system (equal to Tier 2 sponsored skilled workers in the new policy system) has attracted a number of highly skilled Chinese migrants to work in the UK. Graph 4.2 below shows how the number of work permits issued for Chinese people rose over the period 1995–2008. The number increased sharply, by over four times, from 1064 in 1999 to 4948 in 2006. Among all the work permit visas issued for non-EU migrants, the proportion for Chinese was only
2.1 per cent in 1995, which increased to 5 per cent in 2008. The population of highly skilled Chinese immigrants has grown conspicuously, especially since 1990 (Graph 4.1). Taking 2002 as an example, around 3449 work permits were issued for Chinese migrants and more than 52 per cent of these were for managerial, professional, associate professional and technical occupations (Table 4.7).

Graph 4.1 Work permits and first permissions issued to immigrants from China 1995–2008

Source: Overseas Labour Service; Work Permits (UK)

Notes: Provisional data for the first nine months of 2008 before the global economic crisis at the end of 2008.

Due to the increasing number of work permit visas and highly skilled worker visas, as well as student visas for Chinese people, the PRC ranked ninth country of origin of migrants granted settlement in 2007; 3440 mainland Chinese were granted the right to settle, accounting for 3 per cent of all such grants (Office for National Statistics, 2008). The following tables (see Tables 4.4-4.7) show the stable and increasing trend of Chinese people in the UK from 2006 to 2008. In contrast with Table 4.4, the figures in Table 4.5 and Table 4.7 include those overseas Chinese who have already become Britain citizens.
Comparing Table 4.4 with Table 4.6, the significant difference in numbers between these two tables imply that there is quite a large number of Chinese students in the UK.

Table 4.4 Chinese citizens living in the UK, 2006–2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 4.5 People born in China and living in the UK, 2006–2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 4.6 Chinese citizens living and working in the UK, 2006–2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.7 People born in China living and working in the UK 2006–2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistic

In general, the phenomenon of HSNCMs in the UK is relatively new by comparison with the highly skilled migration from other countries. Chinese migrants in the UK were a silent and hidden community in history, and Chinese restaurants were practically the sole evidence of their presence (Li, 1998). However, the increasing number of HSNCMs has gradually changed this status. As the above data shows, the population of HSNCMs in the UK was increasing rapidly by the end of 2008. HSNCMs in the UK often seek to maximize return on their investment in education and training by moving in search of the highest paid and/or most rewarding employment.

As our research analyzes, the size of the HSNCMs is affected by global socio-economic factors. The globalisation of capitalism, the technological revolution in the means of transportation and communication, global political transformations, and the expansion of social networks all facilitates the reproduction of highly skilled migration. Current economic recession in the UK has some negative impact on the capacity of the British labour market. The new immigration policy has set up stricter criteria for those who want to apply for entry as skilled workers in the UK. However, by no means will the British government shut the door on those HSNCMs with the knowledge and technology highly in demand.

4.3 Feature of HSNCMs

4.3.1 Who are they: definition of HSNCMs

As our research shows, the growth of HSNCMs in the UK is rather fast. Studying overseas remains the dominant source of HSNCMs, along with the migration of professionals who have completed education. In general, HSNCMs refers to those overseas Chinese students and professionals who left China after
the reform (starting in 1978). In order to reach a comprehensive understanding of HSNCMs, our research first traces the global policy and academic discourses on highly skilled migrants, transnational migrants, OCPs (overseas Chinese professionals), then generalizes the definition of HSNCMs for our research. Embracing overseas returnees into the definition of HSNCMs is one of the challenges in our research that enriches the knowledge of transnational migration studies.

In policy discourse, highly skilled migrants are classified into different categories based on their professional background. In the UK immigration policy system, highly skilled migrants include highly skilled workers, investors, entrepreneurs, post-study worker who are graduates of British universities, and some sponsored skilled workers with qualified education level or skill level. In China’s political discourse, HSNCMs are normally defined as overseas students and scholars, or overseas Chinese talents. According to the “Guidance on the definition of high-level overseas students and scholars in the work of attracting them to serve the country” (guanyu zai liuxue rencai yinjin gongzuo zhong jieding haiwai gaocengci liuxue rencai de zhidao yi jian)\(^{23}\), so called high-level overseas talents are classified into eight levels\(^{24}\). Scientist, scholars, experts and professionals in diverse professional backgrounds are composed of different level of overseas Chinese elites. Generally speaking, China has emphasized three categories of overseas talents who are highly in demand for China’s national development. The first category includes those who are able to promote

\(^{23}\) It is issued together by Ministry of Personnel (MoP), Ministry of Education (MoE), Ministry of Science and Technology (MoS), and Ministry of Finance (MoF), March 2005.

\(^{24}\) The first level includes scientists with a high reputation in international academia. They are the leaders or founders in a certain research area, or have made significant contributions to the development of a certain area. The second level includes the scholars or experts who have served as associate professors, associate researchers or above in famous foreign universities and scientific research institutes. The third level includes those who have held senior management positions in top 500 enterprises or professionals who have held senior positions in famous multinational companies, financial organizations, well-known law firms, accounting or audit firms. They have expertise in one area and know well international rules and have profound management experience. The fourth level includes those experts and scholars having held middle or senior management positions in foreign government organizations, inter-governmental organizations, and famous NGOs (non-governmental organizations). The fifth level includes those who have made significant contribution in important areas. Their work is recompensed and widely recognized by experts in their fields. The sixth level includes those who have led large-scale international scientific research projects, or those with a wealth of experience in scientific research and engineering technologies. The seventh level includes those who have significant technological inventions, and have patents of their independent intellectual property rights. Finally the eighth level includes those who have other specialties.
science and technology progress, ameliorate social development and enhance China's innovative capacity. The second category includes those who are able to enhance China's connection with the world and extend China's exchanges in the areas of international politics, economy, society and culture. The third category includes a large group of high-level management professionals in finance, law and trade.

In the academic area, skilled or highly skilled migrants are usually defined as those migrants with tertiary degrees and extensive professional experience in a given field (Salt, 1997). According to an OECD report on highly skilled workers, this group includes highly skilled specialists, independent executives and senior managers, specialized technicians or trades people, investors, business people, and so on (Salt, 1997, p.21). Highly skilled migrants are from a broad range of educational and occupational backgrounds. They could be IT specialists, researchers, business executives and managers, intra-company transferees, and university students who are a potential reserve of highly qualified labour (Auriol and Sexton, 2001).

Current Chinese scholars define new Chinese migrants with high-level skills as those with ‘portable skills’, and most of them are students-turned-migrants and professionals (Liu, 2005b). Xiang defined overseas Chinese professionals (OCPs) as ethnic Chinese residing outside China on a long-term basis, with tertiary degrees, working in specialized areas, using their specialist knowledge (2005, p.6).

‘They can be academics at advanced research and education institutes, and may also work for private technology companies and other agencies such as government and NGOs. Self-employed professionals, such as high-technology entrepreneurs, lawyers, and other freelance consultants, also fall into this category’ (Xiang, 2005, p.6).

Based on the existing academic and official definition, HSNCMs in our research are those overseas Chinese new migrants (including the citizens and previous citizens of Mainland China) with study or work experience abroad. They have tertiary degrees and most of them work as academic professionals, Managers and administrators, senior technologists, entrepreneurs, investors and other professionals. They seek to benefit from different nation-state regimes by selecting different sites for investments, work, and family relocation. HSNCMs in our research are mainly divided into four categories in line with occupational
background. The first category includes academic professionals who work in universities or other research institutes. The second includes those professionals from business or industrial areas. They have diverse professional backgrounds: most of them are engineers, lawyers, accountants, auditors, senior technologists or financial analysts. The third includes senior administrators and managers. The fourth includes self-employed, investors and Entrepreneurs.

In our research, overseas Chinese returnees are counted in the group of HSNCMs due to their transnational experience. Return migration is seen as a sub-process of international migration and has long been subject to various interpretations of international migration (Cassarino, 2004). In addition, as a transition category and potential transnational labour in global labour market, overseas Chinese students are considered to be para-highly-skilled new Chinese migrants in our research.

Our research mainly focuses on the HSNCMs with transnational practices who are defined as transnational HSNCMs. In current literature, transnational Chinese are conceptualized as individuals or groups who connect the country of origin and the country of settlement (Liu, 2003). They possess multiple relations and diverse backgrounds in the transnational process. In terms of some definitions of “transmigrants” (Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc, 1992; Vertovec, 1999), transnational HSNCMs in our research refer to those highly skilled migrants who become firmly rooted in the host country but maintain multiple links with China. They employ their global knowledge and technology to develop and maintain multiple relations that span national borders. Their occupations and activities require regular and sustained social contacts across national borders for their careers and business development. They may have varying and multiple identities generated by simultaneous positioning in several social locations. They transform knowledge, ideas, practices and resources through a set of multiple interlocking networks of social relationships which Faist (2000) defines as transnational social spaces. Their transnational social practices sustain ties of persons, networks and organizations across the borders.

25 Conventionally, overseas Chinese students who are currently pursuing their study overseas are not considered as full-fledged highly skilled migrants. However, after their graduation, they either belong to the group of overseas returnees or overseas highly skilled migrants. For this reason, our research views this group as para-highly-skilled new Chinese migrants.
of multiple nation-states, ranging from individual to highly institutionalized forms.

Transnational HSNCMs may utilize their social relationships and identities to accommodate to the complicated circumstances they encounter in their transnational fields. Individual HSNCMs may seek to maximize return on investment in their education and training by moving around the world in search of the highest paid and/or most rewarding employment. Flexible citizenship (Ong, 1999) which refers to their transnational strategies and effects becomes one of their main characteristics in the process of transnational practices. Some features and characteristics of HSNCMs are unique, which make them distinct from other international migrants and overseas Chinese.

4.3.2 Feature and profiles of HSNCMs in the UK

HSNCMs have unique features in comparison with other groups of international migrants. Current research on the OCAO (State Council Overseas Chinese Affairs Office) database of OCPs (overseas Chinese professionals) shows the specific characteristics of HSNCMs (Xiang, 2005) as follows. For example, the majority are young and male with a PhD. Unlike in other major source countries of migrant professional, such as India, the Philippines and Ghana, studying overseas remains the dominant source of OCPs. Most reside in North America but the geographical distribution of OCPs is expected to become more diverse. The majority have a PhD and work in science and engineering. Most work in the middle rank in academic or industrial institutes. Over half of OCPs have stable academic or commercial connections with China-based institutes. Besides, a large number of the OCPs are willing to return to work in China on a long- or short-term basis.

Compare with HSNCMs in North America, HSNCMs in the UK have additional specific features. Firstly, like HSNCMs in other countries, most of the HSNCMs in the UK are student-turned-migrants. Due to the UK’s globalisation strategy on international education, Chinese students find it easier to come to the UK for their postgraduate studies than to the United States. Many

26 In our research, twelve interviewees are student-turned-migrants, five are professional migrants, two are dependents of HSNCMs and one is overseas official dispatched by the Chinese government. In terms of visa category of these interviewees, twelve are visa holders of Tier 4 students, two are visa holders of Tier 1 highly skilled workers, one is a visa holder of Tier 2 skilled workers and one is a visiting scholar.
are self-financing and pursue one year master’s degree programmes (HESA, 2012). A large number of them study finance, economics and law besides science and engineering. This is different from most Chinese students who go to the United States for a doctoral degree in science and engineering with institutional scholarships (Xiang, 2005). According to the data on HSNCMs in the UK, around 46 per cent cumulative total of overseas Chinese students returned to China from 1978 to 2001 (Zhang, 2003). This rate is much higher than that in the United States.

Secondly, in contrast to Chinese old migrants and Chain migrants (Li, 2002), HSNCMs in the UK have a record of high career achievement and the highest income among demographic groups in the UK (see the 2001 census). Many are managers and administrators and a large number of them are professionals in different business and industrial background (see Table 4.8 and Graph 4.2). Some of them do research in academic areas. However, in contrast with the HSNCMs in the United States who establish vibrant global venture capital, only a few HSNCMs in the UK are self-employed, investors or entrepreneurs.27

Compared with the old migrants or chain migrants in the UK, HSNCMs have more diverse career backgrounds and their career trajectory permeates mainstream society. In the first half of the 20th century, most Chinese were involved in the laundry business, while the old migrants who arrived after the Second World War worked primarily in the catering industry (Parker, 1998). As these businesses grew, entrepreneurs exploited kinship ties to bring family members into Britain. Chain migration then emerged in this historical context. Most Chinese old migrants were involved in the same sector of industry which was isolated from the mainstream society. This gradually reinforced the role of Chinatown as ethnic enclaves. In contrast, HSNCMs never confine their career development to such ethnic enclaves. Instead, they pursue personal career development from academic area to business domain in the host society and obtain a relevant high achievement recognized by local society.

27 This difference is confirmed by the interview with Ms Jiang, the director of Z-Park (Zhongguancun Science Park) London Liaison Office. Z-Park is the first national science park establish in 1988. It is committed to create China’s most competitive and prosperous economic region where innovation will be its driving force.
Overall, as a demographic group, the British Chinese tend to be well-educated and earn higher incomes when compared to other demographic groups in the UK. As the 2001 census shows (Table 4.3), 17 per cent of British Chinese are managers and administrators, 18.1 per cent are professionals, and 17.39 per cent are associate professional and technical occupations. As table 4.8 shows, up to 53.8 per cent of new Chinese migrants who obtained the work permit visa in 2002 were pursuing highly skilled or skilled jobs.

Table 4.8 Work permits and first permissions by occupation for immigrants from China to the UK in 2002.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupations</th>
<th>Numbers of permits</th>
<th>Proportions of occupations (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers and administrators</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional occupations, of which:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineers and technologists</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health professionals</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching professionals</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and financial professionals</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate professional and technical occupations, of which:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer analysts/programmers</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health associate professionals</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and financial associate professionals</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literary, artistic and sports professionals</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical and secretarial occupations</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft and related occupations</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal and protective service occupations, of which:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catering occupations</td>
<td>1,379</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales occupations</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant and machine operatives</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other occupations</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Occupations</td>
<td>3,449</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office for National Statistics
Thirdly, HSNCMs in the UK tend to come from an increasing number of regions of origin in China. Traditional places of origin from which old migrants or chain migrants originate are mainly located in Fujian, Guangdong, or Zhejiang province. These places are known as ‘Qiaoxiang’ (hometown of overseas Chinese). Traditional research paradigm on trans-boundary mobility of overseas Chinese normally focused on the ties between overseas Chinese and ‘Qiaoxiang’ (Liu, 1999). Contrary to the ‘Qiaoxiang’ model, the original places of HSNCMs are on a national scale and many are from relatively developed regions such as Shanghai, Beijing, Guangdong, Jiangsu or Zhejiang Our research shows this diversity in the origin of the interviewees (Table 4.9). Some

Table 4.9 Places of origin of the interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of origin</th>
<th>Shanghai</th>
<th>Zhejiang</th>
<th>Shangdong</th>
<th>Jiangsu</th>
<th>Guangdong</th>
<th>Sichuan</th>
<th>Beijing</th>
<th>Fujian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of Origin</td>
<td>Heilongjiang</td>
<td>Hubei</td>
<td>Xinjiang</td>
<td>Henan</td>
<td>Guangxi</td>
<td>Liaoning</td>
<td>Shanxi</td>
<td>Hebei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thirdly, HSNCMs in the UK tend to come from an increasing number of regions of origin in China. Traditional places of origin from which old migrants or chain migrants originate are mainly located in Fujian, Guangdong, or Zhejiang province. These places are known as ‘Qiaoxiang’ (hometown of overseas Chinese). Traditional research paradigm on trans-boundary mobility of overseas Chinese normally focused on the ties between overseas Chinese and ‘Qiaoxiang’ (Liu, 1999). Contrary to the ‘Qiaoxiang’ model, the original places of HSNCMs are on a national scale and many are from relatively developed regions such as Shanghai, Beijing, Guangdong, Jiangsu or Zhejiang Our research shows this diversity in the origin of the interviewees (Table 4.9). Some

28 Occupation detail of the interviewees can be checked in Appendix 3.2 and Appendix 3.4.
HSNCMs were studying or working in popular cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, where they had more opportunities for international migration. HSNCMs who are willing to return the country will not consider their hometown as the first choice. Instead, developed regions become their top choices as they will find better career opportunities.

Fourthly, HSNCMs in the UK have more transnational ability due to their ‘portable skills’ in a global context. Traditional overseas Chinese have limited ability to find employment in a generally alien English-speaking environment, and they had no other choice but to start a small ethnic business. Like most transnational Chinese, HSNCMs in the UK are bilingual or multilingual, possess social network and business in more than two countries and influence the global market in the process of their professional activity (Liu, 2005b). Their foreign qualification is considered as ensuring not only acquisition of technical skills but also of other language competence (Zweig, Chen and Rosen, 2004). They are competitive in global labour market and have more opportunities to integrate into the host society.

Last but not least, in line with China’s globalisation and socio-economic development, more HSNCMs in the UK gain transnational career opportunity between China and the UK. Meanwhile, many overseas returnees from the UK still keep their transnational links through their previous networks in the UK. As below cases show, they have advantages for developing business networks between China and the UK because of their overseas experience. This transnational mobility is so called ‘dumbell model’ (Xiang, 2005) or ‘seagull model’ (Wang, 2008). Our research shows the diversity of the careers and business mobility of HSNCMs in the UK. Some interviewees build a long-term business or academic relationship with domestic colleague through their personal network. Some set up or join in OCP associations to launch collective activities with support from the Chinese government or China-based institutes. Some others take an overseas job assignment to China with their Chinese cultural advantage. Like HSNCMs in other countries (Zhang, 2003; Xiang, 2005), many of them are willing to return to China on a long- or short-term basis once the time seems right.

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More detail on their transnational mobility will be introduced in next few chapters.
‘I am waiting for a better opportunity, both in the UK and China. For now, I am staying in the UK in order to gain as much work experience as possible. Maybe I will not stay in the UK for my whole life. Maybe in the future I will go back to China. However, I will never give up the possibility of a transnational life’.30

‘After working in institutes of higher education in the UK, I had the chance to go back to China on an academic exchange. Besides which, I am one of the main founders of some Chinese professional associations in the UK, such as FCPS and the Chinese Textile and Apparel Society. As the leader of these associations, I need to go to China for international cooperation and consultancy services. It is my pleasure to build up all these close connections with the domestic society and my local Chinese friends’.31

4.4 Transnational community of HSNCMs

Transnational communities are new social spaces based on transnational networks connecting the home country and the country of residence. As Kastoriano states, the conception of transnational community refers to communities made of different group of people and individuals who are based in varying national societies. These transactional entities act on the basis of shared or common interests and goals which may be in linguistics, religious or territorial terms. The transnational communities use such networks to strengthen their solidarities which are beyond the borders of a nation (Kastoriano, 2000, pp353). Transnational communities have flourished in the globalised era, creating a diaspora and sojourners that are unlike earlier waves of migrants (Knight, 2002). In the new globalisation context, the apparent compression of geographic space by faster means of transport and communication facilitates the formation of long-term stable transnational communities.

The transnational communities of HSNCMs build a communication platform for HSNCMs to promote their transnational careers and business practice. They are transnational social spaces where HSNCMs are able to develop networks of exchange and communication that connect the ancestral home with the new place of settlement. They are fostering the participation of the HSNCMs in the life of the two national spaces. Without these transnational communities, it is impossible to circulate ideas, practices, identities and other elements which make up socio-economic capital.

30 Cited from the interview with Mr Zhou, Manchester, 19/08/2007.
31 Cited from the interview with Dr Chen, Gang, Manchester, 04/19/2007.
The transnational communities of HSNCMs have unique features in comparison with traditional overseas Chinese community. The Internet and global networks change radically social interaction for HSNCMs. Overseas Chinese associations, Chinese schools and Chinese newspapers have long been considered as three greatest pillars for an overseas Chinese community (Liu, 1998). For many HSNCMs, these three pillars still function but the rise of computer networks has changed the medium of communication and so changed its nature. Online community for HSNCMs facilitates associational activities and transnational connection with China. HSNCMs can easily read up-to-date news from China and exchange information with domestic colleagues through the internet. This virtual transnational practice takes ‘time-space compression’ to another level.

4.4.1 Associations of HSNCMs in the UK

A variety of associations of HSNCMs form an important support for the community of HSNCMs. They differ from traditional overseas Chinese associations which were based on ties of blood (xueyuan) or ties of place (diyuan), in that most associations of HSNCMs in the UK are based on modern social relations such as industrial, alumni or professional networks. In line with different social contexts, our research divides the UK HSNCMs associations into four categories: the first is federations launched and guided by MoE or the Education Section in the UK; the second is professional associations (OCP associations) based on shared knowledge and specialization; the third category includes some friendship associations and ‘Tongxianghui’ (associations based on shared provenance or members’ residence in China) which have a relatively loose structure and constitution. The fourth is alumni associations. The formation of these various grassroots organizations is the most outwardly visible form of self-differentiation (Kearney, 1991) for transnational HSNCMs. According to our analysis, most influential associations of HSNCMs in the UK have natural transnational relationship with China and Chinese institutes.

Generally, the federations of HSNCMs include the Federation of Chinese Professional Societies in the United Kingdom (FCPS-UK), Chinese Students and Scholars Association in the United Kingdom (CSSA-UK), and Western Returned Scholars Association in China (WRSA). They have a large number of branches or subsidiary associations around the country. Ten nationwide OCP
associations have already joined the FCPS-UK, including China-Britain Technology and Trade Association and the Chinese Economic Association. ‘Sichuan Tongxianghui’ and ‘Hubei Tongxianghui’ are two active associations of fellow provincials in the UK. Alumni associations based in one British university automatically become branches of CSSA-UK, such as CSSA-CAM Vision for Chinese students and scholars in Cambridge University and CSSA-MAN vision for Chinese in the University of Manchester. In China, some outstanding overseas returnees have established China branches for the alumni associations of their British universities, such as Oxford university alumni in China and Cambridge university alumni in China. WRSA-UK is the UK branch of Western Returned Scholars Association, and its members returned from different places in Britain.

Compared with general overseas Chinese associations, associations of HSNCMs are characterized by their individual features. For example, they are highly institutionalized associations with complete constitutions. Their members have global highly educational qualifications with relatively high career reputations in the host society. They have frequent interaction with Chinese authorities and their collective professional activities are often supported by the Chinese government or Chinese institutes. Transnational connection with China through their professional activities is one of the most prominent features of the HSNCMs associations.

Take FCPS-UK as an example, it was established in 2002 with support from the Education Section, Chinese embassy in the UK. It is the first interdisciplinary professional group for HSNCMs in the UK. The federation has a straightforward aim to support HSNCMs to serve the country from the beginning. It has created diverse China-UK joint projects that are sponsored by ‘Chuihui plan’.\(^{32}\) In addition, the FCPS has established its own website to update events and news for members of the federation. The website also includes some updated information on the projects of serving the country and Chinese recruitment information especially for HSNCMs. Though most of these professional associations have much weaker financial ground than traditional

\(^{32}\) The plan was launched by MoE in 1996. It is dedicated to involving doctors with overseas experience in short term projects.
overseas Chinese associations, they rely on the state power of China and play an important role on the China’s ‘going out’ strategy (Liu, 2009).

Table 4.10 A list of registered OCP associations in the UK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Name</th>
<th>Established Year</th>
<th>Size of Members</th>
<th>Mission</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Chinese Economic Association (UK) (CEAUK)</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>To advance the knowledge of the general public about economic development in China, and promote and publish research on the Chinese economy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Life Sciences Society in the UK (CLSS-UK)</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Over 5,000</td>
<td>To build a link for life and bio-medical scientists between UK and China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Materials Association-UK (CMA-UK)</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>To promote academic and technical exchanges and collaboration and establish links among the members, between members and relevant Chinese organisations, and between Chinese and British organisations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Textile and Apparel Society (UK) (CTAS-UK)</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Around 200</td>
<td>Promoting academic exchange and scientific research in textile and apparel areas among member, and seek opportunities for its members to serve China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chinese Society of Chemical Science and Technology in the UK (CSCST)</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>To promote academic communications among members and strengthen academic exchange between UK and China.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Chinese Automation and Computing Society in UK (CACSUUK)</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Around 200</td>
<td>To promote technical exchanges among the members, and collaborations with relevant Chinese and British organizations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33 This table shows the most popular OCP associations in the UK. Most of these OCP associations have joined in FCPS-UK except Chinese Association of Financial Executives.

34 The size of members in some OCP associations is temporarily unavailable due to our lack of connection with these associations. However, these associations also have stable size of members and, for example, CEAUK is claimed to be one of the largest OCP associations in the UK.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Association of Chinese Engineers in UK (ACE)</th>
<th>1997</th>
<th>Over 800</th>
<th>To promote the exchange of technologies, enhance collaborations between ACE and its customers in China, and seek opportunities for its members to serve China.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UK Chinese Association of Resources and Environment (UKCARE)</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>To further strengthen environmental links between UK and China and provide a long-term collaboration with Chinese universities and research institutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Law Association in UK (CLA)</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Over 300</td>
<td>To improve internal communication among members, supporting legal system construction in China and promote knowledge exchange in law area between China and the UK,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The China-Britain Technology and Trader Association (CBTTA)</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Around 600</td>
<td>To improve mutual communication and cooperation between China and Britain in areas of industry, education, culture, business, trade etc. It provides a best platform to those who wish to start their business either in China or in Britain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Association of Financial Executives (CAFE)</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Less than 200</td>
<td>To further promote exchange and collaboration with financial colleagues in China and the UK, and support financial reform and development in China.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another case is the Xinhua Chinese Association (XCA) which is one of the friendship associations for HSNCMs in Greater Manchester. Compared with professional associations, the XCA has a relatively loose structure. It was established in 2004 by a group of Chinese professionals with the intention of providing a platform for social interaction among local HSNCMs and their families. Most association members have a strong personal requirement to seek Chinese cultural and collective identity in a social group where the members share the same social background. When they get together, they have their own lifestyle and special entertainment which are similar to those of their compatriots at home. Unlike professional societies, the XCA does not have any formal professional interaction with China. It rarely has collective activities to
keep contact with the PRC government. However, it has a natural tie to connect with the Chinese Education Section in Great Manchester. For example, all four founders of the XCA were previous leaders in the CSSA which is sponsored by the Education Section in the UK. Leaders in the association keep close personal relations with officials in the Education Section and the Chinese Consulate in Greater Manchester. Many members are state-funded students or scholars and share a similar cultural identity.

Besides the associations established in the UK, some associations of overseas returnees in China also engage in transnational interaction between HSNCMs, China and the receiving country. The WRSA-China is the most powerful association of overseas returnees in China. It is a Chinese government-affiliated entity and the president of the WRSA-China is the NPC Standing Committee vice chairman. The association consists of over 40,000 Chinese scholars and researchers who have studied abroad. One of the main aims of the WRSA-China is to promote international exchange and cooperation between China and other countries. It often organizes international conferences to invite Chinese elites overseas to discuss issues of national development. For example, WRSA’s Policy and Advisory Committee is active in the policy study and research area and has made a number of recommendations to the Chinese government. The committee sometimes organizes delegations on overseas visits to discuss possible areas of collaboration. In 2008, the committee collaborated with the School of Contemporary Chinese Studies in the University of Nottingham to launch an international conference on contemporary Chinese studies. The conference topic was “Post-Olympic China: globalisation and sustainable development after three decades of reform”. This international cooperation promoted transnational interaction between HSNCMs in the UK and overseas returnees and also reinforced China’s ‘going out’ strategy which is part of China’s globalisation.

These cases show that HSNCMs associations in the UK act as grass-root agents to connect China and the host society. Some scholars have found that HSNCM associations, especially OCP associations, are a key vehicle and a driving force for transnational network building between HSNCMs and China (Xiang, 2005; Wang, 2008; Zweig, 2004). Although the exact number of these associations is unknown, it is clear that they have experienced major
development over the last 20 years in both number and geographical distribution (Xiang, 2005). Wang found (2008) that nearly 80% of successful returnees had been involved, at different times, in at least one association. Besides previous overseas studies and work experience, participating in a social network and association becomes another key success factor for those so called ‘seagulls’ (Wang, 2008)\(^3\).

### 4.4.2 Online HSNCMs community

Transnational social spaces of HSNCMs in the UK are flourishing on the internet. These spaces are based inside and outside China and they are linked to global networks. The dominant language of these online transnational social spaces is Chinese. They are globally accessible to HSNCMs forming links across national boundaries. Some research defines these virtual transnational communicative spaces as transnational Chinese cultural spheres (Yang, 2003, p.471). Our research views these online spheres as virtual transnational social spaces where HSNCMs can exchange information and knowledge without physical involvement in transnational practice.

In general, there are four types of Chinese online community in the UK, including portal sites, newsgroups and online magazines, online forums or bulletin-board systems and specific websites for overseas Chinese associations and Chinese schools. Portal websites enable real-time communication between global HSNCMs. The popular portal websites include 6 Park, link Chinese UK and Wenxue City. Some portals are established by HSNCMs in the UK and others are created by HSNCMs in other countries. These portal websites are shared by overseas Chinese worldwide. Most have their own online forum for HSNCMs to exchange information and discuss current issues. These usually concern their study and work in the sending country and their social life in transnational social spaces.

Online newsgroups and magazines are bridges for HSNCMs to communicate with China and Chinese people in the world. UK-Chinese Times and BBC China are two popular online news websites in the UK. The former was founded by a successful highly skilled Chinese who runs a tourism business between China and the UK. It is composed of different sections including UK

\(^3\)Our research will discuss more issues on the relations between transnational networks and China’s brain circulation through some case studies on OCP associations later in Chapter 6.
news, Chinatown news, China news and opinions on China in the foreign media. BBC China is a specific Chinese website created by the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation). It is concerned with news and events in the Chinese world including Mainland China and the overseas Chinese community. It also creates an opportunity for overseas Chinese to update global news. In addition, there are two popular online magazines especially for HSNCMs: one is China scholars in Britain established by CSSA-UK; the other is China Scholars Abroad (CHISA) established in China. These two magazines are sponsored by MoE education section in the UK. They are important media for information on relevant privilege policies designed to attract HSNCMs to serve their country.

Virtual transnational social spaces have facilitated world-wide mobilization of China’s globalisation (Yang, 2003).

Meanwhile, many social groups of HSNCMs have their own websites to promote their visibility in Chinese world. These social groups include some Chinese schools such as *Huaxia* Chinese School in Manchester and the London Mandarin School. These Mandarin schools were founded by some HSNCMs who are enthusiastic in teaching Chinese and promoting Chinese culture in the sending country. Many HSNCMs believe that learning Chinese has a special meaning for their descendants in the historical context of the rise of China. The websites of these Chinese schools facilitate communication between the schools and students or their parents. Some Chinese schools have close relations with China’s institutes and the computer networks facilitate this social interaction. For example, *Huaxia* Chinese School has close connection with the Confucius Institute\(^{36}\) in the University of Manchester and the London Mandarin School is recognized as a worldwide exemplar by OCAO. Besides Chinese schools, most OCP associations have set up their own websites to speed up their interaction with China. This will be further discussed in the chapter on the case study of HSNCMs associations.

Online transnational social spaces have changed the way the HSNCMs conduct themselves by ignoring national boundaries and making their activities transparent to the entire world. HSNCMs place themselves in the real and the

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36 Confucius Institutes are non-profit public institutions aligned with the Government of the People's Republic of China that aim to promote Chinese language and culture, support local Chinese teaching internationally, and facilitate cultural exchanges.
virtual Chinese world which is a way for them to gain more resonance beyond national boundaries. One of the convincing examples of this kind of resonance was a demonstration launched by HSNCMs in the sending country. As Yang (2003) described, the internet-based transnational Chinese cultural sphere has served as a communication network for several protest events at global level. In 2008, for example, HSNCMs in the UK launched a campaign to protest against the BBC’s coverage of the Beijing 2008 Olympic torch relay and the Tibetan independence movement. Some overseas students and scholars in the UK launched an online protest as a response to their compatriots’ protest in the Unites States, Australia and China. Their online protest then combined with offline demonstrations against western media reports on Chinese issues. The demonstration began to escalate to nationwide when the Tibet independence movement was over reported by BBC reports. This kind of demonstration may not shake the world and it did not change the view of the BBC on China but it achieved more than this for the HSNCMs in the UK. Their movement transcended national borders with the support of virtual social spaces, which developed their transnational links with other Chinese.

To sum up, transnational virtual social spaces have served as a communication platform for transnational connection between local HSNCM communities and the world. They are concerned with issues from different physical social spaces. They trace events and news in the receiving country and the local Chinese community and build connection between Mainland China and overseas Chinese communities around the world. Through these virtual spaces, HSNCMs develop online transnational social networks to share their vocabulary of meanings, expressive symbols and emotional repertoire.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has done some fundamental research for studying the transnational careers and business mobility of HSNCMs in the UK. In an attempt to supply a lack of literature on HSNCMs in the UK, it offers a general picture of HSNCMs in the UK for the first time, including their history, size, formation, features and transnational communities. Besides, it defines the concept of our research objects, and attempts to embrace overseas Chinese returnees in the conceptual frame of HSNCMs and transnational HSNCMs. As
this chapter shows, the transnational features of HSNCMs in the UK are prominent. Compared with unskilled and low skilled migrants, HSNCMs have more diverse transnational opportunities between China and the host country by employing their global knowledge and ‘portable skills’. The transnational community of HSNCMs and virtual social spaces channel individual concerns into the public arena and facilitate the daily practice of HSNCMs in the UK beyond national borders. Through these transnational social spaces, HSNCMs in the UK exchange information and knowledge with China and Chinese people in other countries. Meanwhile, China also employs these transnational social spaces to build connections with its overseas citizens or former citizens.

Discussion of these fundamental issues is indispensable for our research. The discussion of the formation and feature of HSNCMs in the UK facilitates our comparative study with the HSNCMs in other countries. It introduces the socio-historical contexts enabling the HSNCMs in the UK to develop transnational mobility. HSNCMs in the UK have unique social conditions that maintain their transnational connection with China. Their transnational communities including their associations and online social spaces, as communication platforms, make the transnational practice of HSNCMs possible. These communities and social spaces are preconditions for the continuous transnational mobility of HSNCMs between China and the receiving country. Without studying these preconditions, we cannot effectively compare the transnational mobility and brain circulation of HSNCMs in the UK with other countries.

As our research indicates, state initiatives, together with immigration policy in the sending country, have a direct impact on the transnational capacity of HSNCMs and their brain circulation activities. In the next chapter, we scrutinize the issues of state initiatives and transnational policy engagement which may affect the brain circulation of HSNCMs and discuss the response from HSNCMs towards these initiatives and changing policies.
Chapter 5 Transnational Policy Engagement: China’s Initiatives and UK Immigration Policy

5.1 Introduction

Chapter four sorted out the fundamental issues which reviewed the socio-historical contexts enabling the HSNCMs in the UK to develop transnational mobility. It outlined the formation and feature of HSNCMs in the UK, and discussed the transnational characteristics of their real and virtual communities. In chapter four, we can see the policy influence from the sending country and the receiving country by tracking demographic changes in the HSNCMs in the UK. However, to examine brain circulation of HSNCMs in the UK, more relevant issues on state initiatives and policy engagement need to be examined within our theoretical framework.

The transnational policy environment for HSNCMs includes the immigration policy from the receiving country and China’s initiatives concerning HSNCMs. The UK, like Australia, Canada, Germany and the USA, has a long standing immigration policy with its own rationale and experience of managing migration. Sustained economic growth prior to 2008 and historically low unemployment rates generated demand for migrant workers in the UK. The work permit system and the highly skilled migration programme were the two main routes for highly skilled migration before the introduction of a more flexible points-based immigration system.

Meanwhile, China integrates the affairs of HSNCMs into the cause of China’s national development in the new globalisation era. In the context of global human capital competition and cooperation, the PRC government promotes overseas policies and regulations to attract overseas talents to ‘serve the country’ (weiguo fuwu) or ‘return to serve the country’ (huiguo fuwu). In official discourse, HSNCMs play an important role in the national strategies of “invigorating China through science and education” and “reinvigorating China through human resource development”. To promote the national development strategy in transnational social spaces, the PRC government has established a
series of overseas policy-changes related to HSNCMs. HSNCMs become a notable transnational power for the global development of China.

Current migration policy research focuses on unidirectional policy efforts either from the sending country or the receiving country. Most conventional policy studies of highly skilled migration are from the receiving country’s perspective. The immigration policy on highly skilled migrants becomes the main research topic in this research area (Haddad and Balz, 2006; Salt, 2009). Some studies of China’s brain circulation challenge this research preference and examine the policy of talent attraction from the sending country (Xiang, 2003, 2005; Zweig, 2006). They examine the function of China’s initiatives to promote brain circulation or reverse brain drain of HSNCMs. Few pay attention to the transnational policy engagement both from the sending country and the receiving country.

However, the transnational policy engagement issue requires bidirectional analysis examining state initiatives from the sending country and the receiving country at the same time. A feasible immigration policy promises stable size of HSNCMs in the receiving country and their free transnational movement. Positive Chinese initiatives encourage HSNCMs to maintain and develop their career in China (Zweig, 2006) but, since the transnational careers and business mobility of HSNCMs take place in transnational social spaces, unilateral state efforts cannot achieve effectiveness for this mobility. Therefore, we should employ a bifocal lens to explore the transnational policy environment for the brain circulation of HSNCMs,

In this chapter, we examine one of the main issues in our theoretical framework, which means the transnational state initiatives in the case of HSNCMs in the UK. First, this chapter focuses on the transnational outreach of the PRC government and its efforts to attract HSNCMs to serve the country or to return to serve the country. This section analyzes the policy transformation first and then the state-initiated schemes which aim to attract more overseas elite groups for Chinese national development. The re-configuration of China’s initiative in establishing allegiances of HSNCMs is explored in this section. The development of Chinese governmental structure towards HSNCMs is also examined. Second, this chapter analyses the evolution and effect of the UK immigration policy for highly skilled migrants. The work permit system and the
Highly Skilled Migration Programme are scrutinised through statistical data. Third, this chapter examines the transnational policy engagement both from China and the UK which affects the transnational careers and business mobility or brain circulation of HSNCMs. The interactions between the will of the governments and the demands of HSNCMs are scrutinised. The efficiency of this transnational policy engagement is explored by analyzing the response of the HSNCMs in the UK. Finally, our research summarizes the transnational policy environment and its effect on the brain circulation of HSNCMs.

5.2 China’s initiatives towards HSNCMs

5.2.1 Positive transformation of overseas Chinese affairs towards HSNCMs

Traditional overseas Chinese affairs (Qiaowu) tend to be concerned with the older generation of overseas Chinese, although there has been a recent shift in its focus. CPC (Communist Party of China) policies on Chinese overseas have been adjusted to recent transnational trends among various types of Chinese migrants (short-term contract labourers, overseas traders and investors, overseas students and scholars or migrant professionals). Those various types of Chinese migrants did not qualify as “overseas Chinese” and thus fell outside the scope of traditional overseas Chinese affairs (Xiang 2003).

Instead of focusing on the settled Chinese overseas (huaqiao) migrants, new overseas Chinese affairs suggest a re-conceptualization of policies in the new era. By extending their political work to the new Chinese migrants, the Chinese authorities could address more potential Chinese investors and resourceful persons living overseas than in the past. HSNCMs, mainly referring to overseas students and scholars in Chinese official discourse, become new policy objects in the context of new overseas affairs.

There were few positive transnational relations between HSNCMs and China before the political transformation of the overseas affairs on HSNCMs. Students abroad were sometimes still criticized as traitors in the 1980s (Xiang, 2003; 2007). Government-sponsored students only had two choices: either they chose to stay abroad but were forced to cut off any formal interaction with China, or they had to return to China on time. Those government-sponsored students overstaying overseas were considered betrayers. This phenomenon did
not change completely until the early 1990s when China realized the positive aspects of highly skilled emigration. As our research has illustrated, the milestone in overseas students’ affairs was passed in 1992, when Deng Xiaoping made a speech during his “Southern Tour” in January. Later, the Third Plenum of the 14th Party Congress in 1993 issued the “Twelve-word Approach”\(^{37}\) which is a transit point in overseas students’ affairs. As a result, the Chinese government shifted its stance from preventing and punishing students overstaying overseas to encouraging their return regardless of whether they had violated earlier regulations (Xiang, 2007). Since then, Chinese students and scholars have been guaranteed freedom of movement beyond national borders.

In the early 2000s, the Chinese government changed the return option policy strategy into a diaspora option strategy. It realized that HSNCMs might stay overseas but work for China in some way. As Meyer, et al. (1997) pointed out, the diaspora option differs from the return option in the sense that it does not aim at the physical repatriation of the highly skilled emigrants. In this policy circumstance, ‘serve the country’ (wei guo fuwu) became the standard slogan for overseas students, replacing ‘return to serve’ (huiguo fuwu) (Cheng, 1999). HSNCMs gain more career and business opportunities by developing their transnational relations with China.

For China, the transformation of the overseas affairs is important for remote mobilisation of HSNCMs. In Chinese official discourse, HSNCMs having studied abroad are not only an invaluable asset but also an important component of the human resources of the country. To attract more overseas students and scholars to serve China, the PRC government has made a series of declaration to heighten the national strategic position of HSNCMs. For example, Zeng Qinghong, the vice-president of PRC, made a speech to the conference on outstanding returnees in September 2003, stating that “human resource is the primacy national resource, while returned overseas students and scholars are an important part of our national human resource… we need to put the work of studying abroad and returning to serve the country in an important strategic

\(^{37}\) The approach was introduced in the ‘Decision on some questions of establishing a socialist market economy’. As our literature review chapter states, this approach refers to “support study overseas, encourage returns, guarantee freedom of movement”.

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position.” 38 The HSNCMs issues are inherently related to China’s overall development strategy, and “Overseas Chinese talents play an indispensable part in the building of a well-off and harmonious society.” 39 Meanwhile, HSNCMs are considered to be a backbone of forces to expand China’s influence and develop relations with the countries of residence (Shanghai New Migrants Research Project Team, 1997).

Free transnational movement is one of the main outcomes of the transformation, which has far-reaching significance in re-building positive relations between China and HSNCMs. The transformation is essential for China to maintain contact with and utilize the knowledge of their valuable transnational talents. For historical and cultural reasons in most Asian countries especially East Asian countries, government plays a leading role in promoting the interaction between the state and society (Liu, 2005b). In this historical and political context, China’s initiatives are indispensable for development of the transnational relationship between HSNCMs and China. Without political transformation, transnational networks between China and HSNCMs are impossible, let alone brain circulation. This transnational relationship is, to some extent, a government-led relationship beyond national borders (Xiang, 2007). By following the diaspora option strategy, the Chinese government is developing the practice of employing HSNCMs without having to think in terms of permanent and costly reinstallation.

In the next section, we aim to scrutinize the transnational outreach of China by tracing China’s structural reforms and its policy evolution for the affairs of HSNCMs.

5.2.2 Structural reforms for the affairs of HSNCMs and the policy evolution

In China, the transformation of overseas affairs relating to HSNCMs includes not only the policy evolution but also the structural reforms of government organs. As Xiang (2005) states, the policy intentions of liaising with new migrants and OCPs are accompanied by a proliferation of new

38 It is quoted from the lecture of Deputy Minster Cungen Chen on the launch conference of development fund for overseas Chinese talents. Available at: http://www.wrsacc.net/News/ArticleShow.asp?ArticleID=695, [access at 10/06/2009].
39 Ibid.
government organs in China. For example, MoE has set up new organizations to take charge of the service and management of the domestic management of studying abroad. In 1987, to strengthen the connection with HSNCMs, MoE issued the ‘Chinese Scholars Abroad’ magazine which has become an important emotional tie between overseas talents and China. In March, 1989, MoE established the Service Centre for Study Abroad including a series of domestic and overseas branches, which indicated the formation of a multi-functional service system for overseas students and overseas returnees (Xiang, 2005). To promote the overseas affairs of HSNCMs, MoE set up the China Scholarship Council (CSC) in 1996. This started as an organization for state-sponsored overseas students but later built close connection with self-financing students.

Besides new organizations for studying abroad, the Chinese central government and some local governments have launched the experimental construction of overseas students’ enterprise parks. It is reported that, up to 2003, the enterprises of new Chinese overseas and overseas Chinese totalled more than 5000 in the over 70 returned overseas student industry parks⁴⁰. Zhongguancun Science Park (Z-Park) was officially established as the first national science park in 1998. It is an experimental zone within China’s overall reforms by which the State started to implement its strategy of “Rejuvenating the Country by Science, Education and Talents”. With a global perspective, Z-Park built at least five overseas offices to offer some transnational liaison service for those HSNCMs who wanted to return to work in China. London Liaison is one of the five overseas offices of Z-Park and it is the only office in Europe. Introducing overseas students’ preference policy in Beijing and Z-Park is one of the main affairs of these liaisons.

Besides “inviting in” strategy towards HSNCMs through a series of preference policies, China is also directly launching a set of overseas agencies to promote “going out” strategy to attract more HSNCMs to work in China. Since 1981, the PRC government has employed diverse methods for strengthening the connection with overseas students and scholars. Besides annual delegations to North America, Europe, Japan and other regions, the

⁴⁰ See the speech of the deputy director of Overseas Chinese Affairs Office, Zhao Yang, in the conference of overseas study affairs in 2003, launched by MoE, 26 February, 2004. Available at: http://www.jsj.edu.cn/dongtai/016.html [access at 2 March 2007]
Chinese government encourages relevant ministries, local government and domestic employers to go abroad to attract more HSNCMs to return to work in China. Overseas official agencies at different levels are the main channels to support such “going out” activities. The overseas liaison office Z-Park is one such channel. The most influential agencies for the affairs of HSNCMs are Chinese education sections which are affiliated to the Chinese Embassy or Consulates in the host country. They are the diplomatic agencies of the MoE and are encouraged by the Chinese government to strengthen the connection with overseas students. One of their daily activities is to set up and maintain a data bank of those talents who are willing to work in China. They maintain a close relationship with many professional associations of HSNCMs, which facilitates transnational network-building between China and HSNCMs. According to the data from MoE, There were 55 Education Sections in 38 Chinese embassies and consulates recorded up to 2003.

Compared to other sending countries for example South Africa (Kaplan, 1997) and Colombia (Meyer, et al., 1997), China’s initiatives cover a wide range due to its state power and growing capacity. Attracting overseas Chinese talents to work in China or return to work in China is part of the strategy of ‘revitalizing China through science and education’ and the strategy of ‘invigorating China through human resource’. The Chinese government reiterates the strategic position of HSNCMs in the process of building an innovation-oriented country. For example, to integrate all diverse overseas affairs towards HSNCMs and promote a process of institutionalization, the Chinese government set up “the Inter-ministerial Meeting System for the Issue of Overseas Students and Scholars Returning to Serve the Country” (liuxue renyuan huiguo fuwu gongzuo buji lianxi huiyi) in 2003.\(^4\) The main aims of the inter-ministry meeting are to follow policy guidance from CPC and State Council and study new issues relating to returning to work in China. From the inception in 2003, the meeting system has issued a series of policies relevant to overseas students, and some of these policies are shown in table 5.1.

Over twenty years’ development, the Chinese government has formed an institutionalized management system for the affairs of HSNCMs. This system facilitates the keeping of a databank of HSNCMs and the construction of a network connecting HSNCMs with domestic employers. With the support of official agencies such as the Education Section, China Scholars Abroad and the Chinese Scholarship Council, China has established a global formal network to connect HSNCMs. This transnational network has been boosted by the fast development of the internet. Nearly all government departments related to HSNCMs have set up websites under their general portals. China Scholar Abroad magazine is an example which has been shown in a previous chapter. The electronic version of this magazine opened in 1995 and enhances the influence of the magazine among overseas students and scholars.

Along with the structural reform relating to the affairs of HSNCMs, the Chinese government has issued numerous policies to encourage HSNCMs to return to work in China. According to the Department of International Cooperation and Communication of the Ministry of Education, 180 relevant policies were issued between 1986 and 2002 (Xiang, 2005). More strategic policies were issued after that, such as the ‘11th five-year plan for returned overseas students to work in China’ and the ‘Views on setting up a ‘green channel’ to encourage high-level overseas talent to come back to serve the country’. Though the Chinese government does not recognize dual citizenship for historical reasons, it issues special expert visas for the elites of HSNCMs and facilitates their multiple entries. This increases migrants’ willingness to return to the country of origin after a period working abroad. The series of pragmatic policies facilitates HSNCMs’ return to serve the country. Besides the national identity construction among HSNCMs, pragmatic policies become another factor in attracting overseas talents to serve the country. As some research states, regarding migration as a positive phenomenon is the bottom line of many recent political initiatives (Bieckmann and Muskens, 2007).
Table 5.1 Policy development on the issues of HSNCMs
(Some selective regulations/policies)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Regulation / policy and release date</th>
<th>Key points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Temporary regulations on the work towards overseas students and scholars(^{42}), 13/12/1986</td>
<td>The first regulation to introduce actions relating to overseas students and scholars, reducing restrictions on self-supported students studying overseas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Notification on related questions towards overseas students and scholars(^{43}), 14/08/1992</td>
<td>Indicates that the PRC government began to liberalize policy towards HSNCMs. It affirms the patriotism of overseas students and their willing to make a contribution to national development. The strategic position of HSNCMs for promoting national development is emphasized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Opinions on encouraging high-level overseas talents to return to serve the country(^{44}), 08/07/2000</td>
<td>States that overseas students and scholars are an important part of Chinese human resources. Defining high-level overseas talents is one of the important issues in this regulation(^{45}).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Opinions on encouraging overseas students and scholars to serve the country in various ways (^{46}), 14/05/2001</td>
<td>The regulation promotes more flexible ways for HSNCMs to serve the country without returning to China permanently. They may serve the country through academic exchanges, joint researches, talents training, and so on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Guidance on the definition of the high-level overseas talents in attracting them to work in China(^{47}), 22/03/2005</td>
<td>The regulation reiterates that it is pivotal for China to attract highly skilled overseas Chinese to serve the country. High-level overseas talents are further classified into three categories and eight levels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{42}\) guanyu chuguo liuxue renyuan de ruogan zanxing guiding. 
\(^{43}\) Guanyu zaiwai liuxue renyuan youguan wenti de tongzhi. 
\(^{44}\) guanyu guli haiwai gaocengci rencai huiguo gongzuowei de yijian. 
\(^{45}\) According to the regulation, high-level overseas talents refer to those who studied overseas, and have achieved remarkable success abroad. They include senior management talents, senior professional technologist, the leaders of academic and technology, as well as those who possess industrial patents, inventions or proprietary technology. 
\(^{46}\) guanyu guli haiwai liuxue renyuan yi duozhong xingshi weiguo fuwu de ruogan yijian. 
\(^{47}\) guanyu zai liuxue rencai yinjin gongzuowei zhong jieding haiwai gaocengci liuxue rencai de zhidaoyijian.
The policy development as shown in table 5.1 demonstrates how the state has endeavoured to mobilize HSNCMs beyond national boundaries, not only through its discourse on patriotism and modernity, but also through its economic value to HSNCMs. As Nyiri states, the mix of instrumentalism and national affiliation reveals a post-nationalist ethos from China (2001). Within a discourse mode of modernity and patriotism, the Chinese government solicits support from HSNCMs living in post-industrial countries. Like other states, China is likely to create new political discourses and policies beyond the reference of the sovereignty of the nation-state. This policy effort shapes new ways within the context of shared national culture of reclaiming belonging and incorporation of Chinese living beyond the borders of China (Nyiri, 2001).

In general, the policy development (as shown in table 5.1) shows that China has changed the previous ‘brain drain’ approach to a ‘brain gain’ approach, focusing on the positive aspects: the existence of highly trained national human resources abroad to use them as opportunities. According to the research of Meyer et al. (1997), this brain gain approach includes both the return option and the diaspora option. The former encourages highly skilled emigrants to leave the host country and return to work in the country of origin. The latter realizes that highly skilled emigrants may stay in the host country but still make a contribution to their country of origin through their transnational practice. China followed the return option at the beginning and then introduced the

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48 liuxue renyuan huiguo gongzuoshiyiwujihua.
49 guanyu jianli haiwai gaocengci rencai huiguo gongzuo lvse tongdao de yijian.
diaspora option to attract more HSNCMs to work in China on a short term basis. The ‘Opinions on encouraging overseas students and scholars to serve the country in various ways’ issued in 2001 shows the change of policy option in China. A series of preferential policies are then issued for HSNCMs to facilitate their flexible transnational movement. In the long run, to take the initiative in the global competition for human resource, China is attempting to create more opportunities for HSNCMs to return to work in China in the long term.

5.2.3 Incentive schemes

Besides these Policy efforts on overseas affairs towards overseas students and scholars, from the 1990s the Chinese government and relevant institutes has launched a series of incentive schemes to attract HSNCMs to serve the country. These diverse and attractive schemes introduced by different Chinese institutes indicate that China increasingly targets top talent from overseas. For example, from its inception in 1990 to 2003, the ‘Fund for Returnees to Launch S&T Researches’ provided financial support to 10,926 returnees in 24 batches. In the same period, the ‘Chunhui Program’ which targets those highly skilled returnees with doctorates and outstanding achievements in their professional areas, had funded more than 8000 individuals and 90 groups of scholars and researchers to serve the country on short-term visits. Founded in 1998, the Yangtze River (Changjiang) Scholarship Programme provides financial support for young and middle-aged leading scholars who have studied abroad and are invited by Chinese higher education institutions as ‘Special Professors’ or ‘Lecture Professors’. It is an award to acknowledge special contributions made by Chinese scholars in various specialized areas. Generally, these schemes focus on academic and research areas, and promote the short-term return of HSNCMs.

Since the end of 2000s, global political economy changes and China’s socio-economic development have enhanced China’s ability to attract global top talents. To take initiative in the competition of global human resource, the Central Organisation Department of the Chinese Communist Party (COD-

50 The data in this paragraph are collected from the website of Ministry of Education, China. Available at: http://202.205.177.9/english/international_2.htm [access at 13, March, 2008].
CPC)\textsuperscript{51}, one of the key agencies of the Central Committee of the CPC, launched
the ‘one-thousand-talents scheme’ in December 2008. The scheme has a
symbolic meaning because it is the first time that a major government agency of
human resource has been involved in the work of attracting HSNCMs. China's
human resource functions have traditionally been divided among three
agencies\textsuperscript{52} at the government level (Yang, Zhang and Zhang, 2004), and the
Organisation Department is the first agency which extends from the central
level down to the county level. The involvement of the Department represents
China's latest effort in a global hunt for top talent.

The ‘one-thousand-talents scheme’ was announced in the context of global
financial crisis which is serving as a push factor to the advantage of China. The
scheme promises top salaries and attractive funding, and aims to recruit 2000
professionals including respected academics, senior professionals and
entrepreneurs, in the next five to 10 years. It aims to boost China's innovation
capability, and encourages elite groups\textsuperscript{53} to return to China or to participate
actively from overseas in China’s economic development. Meanwhile, local
governments follow the scheme and actively attract HSNCMs at different
professional levels. In terms of the newly released data\textsuperscript{54} from the website of the
‘one-thousand-talents scheme’, 1,510 overseas elites from different host

\textsuperscript{51} The Organization Department is one of the most important organs of the CPC. It is a secretive
but highly trusted agency, and forms the institutional heart of the party system. Because the
People's Republic of China (PRC) is a one-party state, the Organization Department has an
enormous amount of control over personnel within the PRC. The Department plays a central
role in allocating qualified individuals to leadership positions at various levels of Party and
government agencies, as well as managerial positions in medium-to large-sized state owned
enterprises (SOEs). The Department is indispensable to the CPC's power and the key to its hold
over personnel throughout every level of government and industry.

\textsuperscript{52} Besides the first agency, the second is the Ministry of Personnel in the central government
and Bureau of Personnel at the provincial, municipal and county levels. The third agency is the
Ministry of Labour and Social Security in the central government and Bureau of Labour and
Social Security in sub-national governments. In 2008, the Ministry of Personnel and Ministry of
Labour and Social Security were merged and renamed the Ministry of Human Resources and
Social Security. The new ministry is responsible for national labour policies, standards and
regulations and managing the national social security system (Yang, Zhang and Zhang, 2004).

\textsuperscript{53} Compared with previous schemes set up in 1990s, the new scheme focuses on three groups of
top-class candidates: the first group includes those who have academic titles equivalent to
professor in internationally well-known universities and institutions; the second group includes
those who work as senior management staff within well-known international companies or
banking institutions; the third group are those who have developed technologies and patents and
established their own business abroad.

\textsuperscript{54} All data are collected from the website of ‘one-thousand talents scheme’, 13 September 2011.
Available at:
http://www.1000plan.org/qjrh/article/17395
[access at 10 October, 2011].
countries have successfully joined in the scheme. 22 of them are from the National Academy of Sciences in their host country.

These incentive schemes indicate that a two-directional mode of transnational professional practice of HSNCMs is developing. This model is called the ‘dumbbell model’ in Chinese official discourse. It is a strategic option for China to utilize transnational networks of overseas Chinese talent. It indicates that many HSNCMs with outstanding achievement may have professional or business affiliations in both China and overseas and move back and forth regularly. HSNCMs, who increase their knowledge overseas and establish global networks, particularly if they have developed skills which are in great demand within China, may find that they have more rapid upward mobility if they return home. Their global knowledge and professional skills are especially valued by the Chinese central government or local governments. They may receive greater financial rewards and increase their social status, advantages which might be harder to achieve in the host society. The series of incentive schemes send a strong signal that the Chinese government values these talented people and is making a positive effort to attract them to serve the country.

5.3 Highly skilled immigrants policy in the UK

5.3.1 Immigration policy evolution after War World Two

Compared with China’s preferential policies and incentive schemes which are parts of national human resource strategy, the UK has a more systematic immigration system to control highly skilled migration to the UK. This highly skilled immigration policy is part of the general UK immigrant policy. To understand the highly skilled immigration policy, it is useful to trace the evolution of UK immigration policy from the last few decades.

Following the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act in the UK, restrictions were placed on immigration from current and former British colonies and these were tightened by successive governments. The Immigration act included a voucher system and significant Chinese migration to Britain did still continue by relatives of already settled Chinese and by those qualified for skilled jobs until the end of the 1970s. Today, a significant proportion of British Chinese are second or third generation descendants of these post-World War II immigrants.
Since the 1970s Britain has gone from being a country of net emigration to one of net immigration, with an increase in immigration to 100,000 per year (Hatton, 2005). New Commonwealth immigration, mostly from the West Indies, India and Pakistan, was the main source of migrant labour in the post-war era. The post-war policy response to immigration followed a duality of approach – restriction of admissions has been combined with a multicultural approach to those who are allowed to settle in the UK.

In the years of the Conservative Party government (1979–1997), policy continued in much the same vein as before, with a stronger emphasis on limitation. Immigration policy was skewed towards aims relevant to security, asylum and illegal working and, less cogently, towards aims relevant to the macro-economic benefits of migration. This limitation undermined the government’s agenda in the areas of equality, inclusion and international development.

UK immigration policy changed radically under the Labour government that came to power in 1997. The government declared its intention to promote relatively relaxed immigration policies. The sharp rise in the number of work permits issued in the late 1990s was indicative of a significant relaxation. The net inflows of non-British nationals exceeded 100,000 people per year (Office for National Statistics, 2005). The changes in immigration policy under the Labour government had an important impact on the transformation of the UK’s immigration structure.

Since 1997, there has been major legislation on immigration every two years. However, most of the immigration policies of the Labour government, especially before 2001, focused on expediting the asylum process, and in particular, blocking illegal immigration and bogus refugees. Britain has renewed the state-controlled recruitment of non-EU foreign workers since 2000. In May 2000, the UK government announced that it planned to simplify the procedures for admitting foreign professionals in order to reduce labour shortages in some areas. Built on the concept of ‘managed migration’, the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act of 2002 rested on the idea of migration as a positive economic asset that contributes to macroeconomic health. This was a

55 The Labour government gave way to the Conservative/LibDem coalition in May 2010.
radical change of direction. Under the 2002 Act, the government introduced a further expansion of immigration routes, including new programmes to attract highly skilled immigrants based on a points system. Following H-1B visas in the USA, in 2002 the UK government set up a pilot project, the Highly Skilled Migration Programme (HSMP) to attract foreign talent. HSMP permit holders have no labour market restrictions, and they are able to take up employment or self-employment or to engage in business.

In the UK, a migration policy with the stated aims of managing flow is relatively new and evolution of the policy has been extremely fast moving. Following the 2002 Act, the Asylum and Immigration Act 2004 and the current Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Bill continued in the same vein, with an increasingly tough stance on asylum and emphasis on control, while upholding the value of economic migration. Like most European countries, the UK is focusing on fostering the temporary residence of both skilled workers and students. The sharp increase in net immigration of foreign citizens in recent years has occurred across the board, and this appears to be due to a more permissive UK immigration policy.

In 2005, the Home Office formulated a five-year strategy on asylum and immigration, and ‘Controlling Our Borders: Making Migration Work for Britain’ was announced by Charles Clarke, the Home Secretary. This new policy proposal revealed that only those who would benefit the country could come to the UK to work or study. One of the main agendas of this five-year plan was to set up a new Australian-style points system for migrant workers from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland. Under the new system, migrants would need to pass a points-based assessment before they were given permission to enter or remain in the UK. It is a strong and flexible market-oriented system in which points will be adjusted to respond to changes in the labour market.

The points-based system was the biggest shake-up of the immigration system for over 45 years. In the points-based policy system, the various strands of student and economic migrants are brought together in a single framework. The system replaced over 80 existing routes to work and study in the UK with
five broad types (tiers) of visa for work- and study-related migration. It allows British businesses to recruit workers with the skills they need from abroad while at the same time providing reassurance to the British public that only those migrants that are needed will be able to come to the UK. Benefiting the nation’s economy but preserving jobs for the British became the key principle of the UK government’s immigration policy.

The points-based system was a comprehensive reform of the UK’s immigration and asylum system, putting in place a fair but practical system of controls. In March 2008, the system was reformed further by the Home Office to make migration work more effectively for Britain, but retaining the points-based, five-tier immigration system (see appendix 5.1, 5.2). At present, Tier 1 visas replace the HSMP, which was introduced under the initial points-based system in 2002. Tier 2, which replaces the work permit system, covers skilled workers, defined as those who have a relevant qualification and education background. People within this category are required to have a job offer before coming to the UK, and the sponsoring employers have to demonstrate that they cannot fill the vacancy from the UK and EU. This latter requirement will be waived for occupations where there is a shortage of labour supply domestically. Only Tier 1 and Tier 2 migrants (highly skilled or skilled) will be allowed to settle in the UK.

Even prior to the latest reform, from November 2006, the HSMP scheme was significantly changed to raise the bar for highly skilled immigrants. One of the most controversial aspects of the revised scheme introduced in 2006 was that, to qualify under the scheme, the minimum relevant educational qualification was the equivalent of a UK Bachelor’s degree, and this was irrespective of the applicant’s earnings. The scheme no longer takes account of work experience, apart from awarding points for having previously worked in

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56 The points-based system consists of five tiers. These are:
Tier 1 - highly skilled workers, for example, scientists and entrepreneurs;
Tier 2 - skilled workers with a job offer, for example, teachers and nurses;
Tier 3 - low skilled workers filling specific temporary labour shortages, for example, construction workers for a particular project;
Tier 4 - students;
Tier 5 - youth mobility and temporary workers, for example, musicians coming to play in a concert.
Tiers 1, 2 and 5 are open to migrant workers from outside the EU, while tier 3 is currently suspended. This means that the UK government has closed the door to low skilled workers from outside the EU.
the UK. On 29 June 2008, several former immigration categories for highly skilled migrants closed. In this new programme, young highly skilled migrants with a higher educational background have become the new favourites in the UK labour market.

The points-based system functions even in difficult times. To ‘ensure migration matches the country’s needs in hard times’ \(^\text{57}\), on 22 February 2009 the UK Border Agency (UKBA) announced dramatic changes to the regime under which migrants can come to the UK to work. The change to this Tier 1 (General) category was made in line with the Home Office’s announcement of new measures to ‘raise the bar’ for foreign workers wishing to enter the UK. The intention behind it is to make the UK less dependent on migration in future.

The changing attitudes towards highly skilled migration in different economic circumstances indicate that the UK immigration system is strongly market oriented and demand driven. Sustained economic growth prior to 2008 and historically low unemployment rates generated demand for migrant workers in the UK. Making contributions to the host society is the precondition for highly skilled migrants to be allowed to stay in the UK.

5.3.2 The development of highly skilled immigration policy and its effects

Before the announcement of new points-base system in 2008, the ‘high skill’ route of migration to the UK was mainly based on a rapidly changing and hugely expanded work permit system and the highly skilled workers programme.

The work permit system is the main mechanism for managing labour immigration to the UK. Non-UK nationals who come from outside the European Economic Area and Switzerland require a work permit to work in the UK before the introduction of HSMP. The work permit system is based on the context of the Immigration Act 1971 \(^\text{58}\), with major revisions in 2000 and 2002. It is the longest-running and most important of the UK’s labour migration schemes. The work permit is usually issued on a temporary basis but is often renewable and includes the option of applying for settlement. Under the work permit system migrants may obtain indefinite leave to remain and eventually


\(^{58}\) The Immigration Act 1971 first introduced the work permit system.
qualify for UK citizenship. Spouses and children of primary immigrants can also acquire the right to settle and work in Britain.

In response to growing concerns about skill shortages, there has been a refocusing of the work permits criteria to facilitate the easier inward migration of skilled workers. The UK government has made efforts to relax the criteria which employers need to address when seeking a work permit, and speed up the processing of applications. Even during the 2008 economic recession the government never closed applications for work permits in relation to shortage occupations.

In order to reduce the complication of the previous immigration policy, the work permit system has been included in Tier 2 of the new points-based immigration policy since November 2008. Tier 2 is the skilled worker category (see Appendix 5.2), and it is the route available to skilled workers who have an offer of employment. Like the work permit scheme, Tier 2 involves skilled workers, and requires the sponsorship of an employer. Applicants are awarded points based on their skill ability, expected earnings, sponsorship, English language skills, and available maintenance. Once given permission to stay as a skilled worker, an applicant will be able to live and work in the UK for a maximum period of three years plus one month. He or she may apply for settlement after five years’ working in the UK.

The sharp rise in the number of work permits issued in the late 1990s is indicative of the significant relaxation of migration policy adopted by the Labour government from 1997 until the economic recession began in late 2008. In 1998, 20,000 persons entered the UK as dependants of work-permit holders and another 50,000 under the family reunification scheme. As Graph 5.1 shows, this number has increased sharply since 1999, and the number of work permits issued has risen, from 32,704 in 1995 to over 124,000 in 2007. Relevant figures (see Table 5.2) from the Home Office indicate that the number of such applications from 2000 to 2007 increased from 92,000 to 124,000.

59 Most of the statistics in this research are from the UK Office of National Statistics in the Home Office.
Table 5.2 Passengers given leave to enter the United Kingdom by work permit, 2000–2007
thousands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work permit holders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(incl. dependants)</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of which:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permit holders</td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>85.6</td>
<td>81.4</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>91.5</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>86.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependants</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>37.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Graph 5.1 Work permit applications approved by type, 1995–2007[^1]

Table 5.2 and Graph 5.1 show how the number of work permits issued rose over the period 1995–2007. Correspondingly, the settlement of work permit holders increased sharply, and the 2003 settlement figure for work-related migration was 22,390 (National Statistics, 2003). These data exclude those who came to work but were granted the right to settle in the UK under a different

[^1]: Cited from the report of John Salt, the UK SOPEMI correspondent to the OECD, titled ‘International Migration and the United Kingdom’ (2009).
category. The number of persons granted settlement in the UK, excluding EEA and Swiss nationals, rose by 10 per cent in the first quarter of 2009 (44,870). Compared with the same period in 2008, the number granted settlement in relation to employment rose 11 per cent to 17,550 (National Statistics & Home Office, 2009).

The increasing skill selectivity of immigration policies has changed the structure of the immigrant population. For example, long-term work permits have traditionally been granted mainly to professional and managerial workers to fill gaps in the domestic labour market. In 2005, around 130,000 work permits were issued and more than 88.7 per cent of these were for managerial, professional, associate professional and technical occupations (see Table 5.3). The proportion of highly skilled work permit visas was 86.8 per cent in 1993 and 88.7 per cent in 2005. Since the low-skilled work permit has shut the door to applicants from non-EU countries, only highly skilled migrants have the possibility to enter the UK’s borders under the new points-based system.

Besides an effective work permit system, the HSMP was another channel for global highly skilled people to come to work in the UK. According to the available data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2001), the number of well known British scholars who left for the USA made up 26 per cent of all immigrant scholars in the USA (Zhang 2003). The UK is nevertheless also faced with the pressure exerted by the keen competition for talent with the United States. In this context of global competition, the British government launched the Highly Skilled Migration Programme as a pilot programme to pursue highly skilled talent internationally.

The HSMP scheme supported the UK government to attract a large number of highly skilled migrants from over 100 countries. Between January 2002 and June 2004 nearly 20,000 applications were submitted and 6,363 approved. In 2005 alone, 17,631 persons had been allowed to enter the UK under the HSMP. Australia, China, India, Nigeria and Pakistan were among the top ten countries for HSMP applications by nationality, and applicants from India and Pakistan accounted for half of all applications. The number of Indian highly-

61 Data sources: Overseas Labour Service; Work Permits (UK).
62 The figures are from the website of the Home Office.
63 The figure is from the Overseas Labour Service and Work Permits UK.
skilled migrants, the largest group in 2005, accounted for 38 per cent of the total. The number from the People’s Republic of China was 601 in 2005. According to the research by Salt and Millar (2006), 77 per cent of all approvals in 2005 were for people hoping to pursue their careers in four main occupational categories; medical (33 per cent), financial (19 per cent), business (14 per cent) and information technology (12 per cent).

### Table 5.3 Work Permits and First Permissions by occupational group, 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Work Permit and First time Permit</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers and Senior officials</td>
<td></td>
<td>13,508</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td>35,097</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professional and Technical Occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td>27,838</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative and Secretarial Occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td>92</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Trades Occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,535</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Service Occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,570</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and Customer Service Occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td>99</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process, Plant and Machine Operatives</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Occupations</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,403</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>86,191</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2006

Under the new points-based system operating since March 2008, the HSMP was replaced by the Tier 1 highly skilled worker scheme (see appendix

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64 Data sources: Work Permits Department, the Home office and the Office for National Statistics, UK, 2006.

65 The table is cited from the 2006 research of the Office for National Statistics.
The Tier 1 system aims to attract the largest proportion of new highly skilled migrants who want to work in the UK. In addition to highly skilled workers, entrepreneurs, investors, and post-study workers all fall into the Tier 1 category. Highly skilled workers from outside Europe have to meet stricter criteria on applicants under the Tier 1 category if they want to work in the UK. The first two ties of new immigration policy system provide a bridge to highly skilled or skilled work for the near future requirements of the UK economy.

Generally speaking, the UK highly skilled immigration system is strongly affected by economic circumstances, which indicates that it is a market-driven system. The trend of the highly skilled migration figures to some extent reflects the UK’s economic circumstances in certain period. The sharp increase in work permits issued from 1999 to 2007 showed a strong and vibrant UK economy, while the declining number during the recent recession has also revealed the opposite situation. However, even in the period of recession, the UK government still aims to retain the most able international graduates who have studied in the UK.

As a subject of policy promotion, the state sets up a highly skilled immigration policy with regard for both its pragmatic and symbolic functions. Participating in the global recruitment market for highly skilled workers has strategic meaning for Britain’s economic and social development. The demand-driven work permit system and flexible highly skilled migration programme indicate that migration can be manipulated to support the UK’s macroeconomic framework. Under the flexible system, the size of the UK immigrant population can be controlled by demand in different circumstances. On the other hand, the immigration issue historically plays a symbolic role for the state in order to shore up its legitimacy. One example of this symbolic function appears in the political parties’ competition for electoral support on the basis of pragmatic considerations.

In terms of the figures of highly skilled Chinese migration as shown in our research, many of HSNCMs in the UK benefit from the work permit system and HSMP. Young HSNCMs with professional skills that are much in demand

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66 The post-study worker category integrates the Science and Engineering Graduates Scheme (SEGs), International Graduates Scheme (IGS) and Fresh Talent: Working in Scotland Scheme (FT:WISS). Students studying in the UK can switch into this category.
become beneficiaries under the new policy system. Meanwhile, the foreign-born communities in the UK are vital bridgeheads to the great growth markets of the future, though the economic growth potential for the UK of diaspora communities has not yet been fully explored. To build further links with China’s growth markets, the UK government has encouraged Chinese entrepreneurs and trade-related businesses to come to the UK through Tier 1 of the points-based system. All those relevant efforts support the cultural and employment exchanges between the UK and China. As part of a new strategy to promote the UK-based financial sector overseas, the British government will engage with representatives of the Indian and Chinese communities in the UK to explore ways of enhancing trade in financial, legal and business services with the two countries.

5.4 Transnational policy engagement and brain circulation

The previous section traced the transnational policy environment between China and the UK. The highly skilled immigration policy in the UK allows a large number of HSNCMs with qualified professional skills to stay and work in the UK. The diaspora option could not be achieved without this stable size of HSNCMs in the receiving country while the Chinese relevant policies and incentive schemes create a positive circumstance for the HSNCMs who are willing to expand their transnational business in China or return to work in the China. In terms of the range of specific schemes and initiatives to attract the highly skilled, both China and the UK have moved faster and further than many other countries. By analyzing this transnational policy engagement from China and the UK, there is no doubt that the government initiatives from these two countries have created a flexible environment which enables free transnational movement of the HSNCMs in the UK.

During the intense global competition for human resource, these two countries compete with and cooperate with each other at the same time. HSNCMs with outstanding professional skills or knowledge become policy target of these two countries. On the one hand, the UK’s traditional advantages in education and economy have attracted a large number of Chinese to study there (as shown in the data of chapter four). Some of them chose to work in the
UK after graduation. By contrast, China’s increasingly competitive research and business environment also serve as effective pulling factors to attract overseas talent to the UK. On the other hand, China and the UK have built long term cooperation in education to promote their international socio-cultural exchange. With China’s fast economic development, these two countries have also launched a series of international business cooperations. The historically stable bilateral relations between China and the UK support the transnational circulation of capital, techniques and human resources.

Furthermore, this flexible transnational environment is a premise for the brain circulation of HSNCMs. The main condition for ensuring that circular migration really creates a triple win for the sending country, the receiving country and the highly skilled would be to allow free movement for the highly skilled (Bieckmann and Muskens, 2007). This would be in line with a transnational view of migration processes rather than an old and conservative concept of migration. Strict national immigration policies make circular migration almost impossible Migrants fear losing their right to return and highly restrictive policies and barriers to entry push them into settlement. In contrast, both the UK government and the Chinese government policies act as lubricants to ensure fast-track mechanisms and speedy circulation of HSNCMs. To examine the influence of this transnational policy engagement on the transnational practice of HSNCMs, in the next two sections, we discuss the role of the governments in promoting transnational practice of HSNCMs and then the response from HSNCMs to the changing transnational policy environment.

5.4.1 Governmental engagement and its functions

Recent immigration policy studies have focused on the functional imperatives of the state, which shape its response to societal interests and institutional structures (Boswell, 2007). The state is conceptualised as an actor in its own right (Ibid.) instead of as a broker (Freeman, 1995), as explained in the theory of neoclassical political economy. That means, the state is capable of defining and pursuing its own goals, rather than merely juggling interests among different social groups. Though there are unavoidable gaps between proclaimed policy objectives and outcomes, the aims of the government remain in the process of policy promotion.
A flexible transnational policy environment for highly skilled Chinese migration implies that both the UK government and the Chinese government have acknowledged the positive roles of HSNCMs in economic development. For example, the UK government has been aware of the risk presented by both loss of its own citizens to other countries and failure to offer a sufficiently attractive package of benefits to migrants from elsewhere. For the UK government, there is a strategic necessity to import highly skilled migrants given the fierce competition for human capital in the global arena. Promoting mildly skill-selective policies combined with increasing incentives for skilled immigrants becomes important to fill the demand of the UK recruitment market. The professional and managerial sector of the UK labour force would have been seriously depleted if there had been no immigration of non-British citizens over the last few decades. To promote the globalisation of recruitment of highly skilled workers, the UK discretely opens liberal policy routes for certain industries, and highly skilled immigrants can indirectly enhance the state’s legitimacy through its economic contribution.

In an increasingly globalised environment, states rely on highly skilled migrants from more countries of origin instead of self-sufficiency in domestic labour markets. ‘The operation of professions has become a transnational matter’ (Iredale, 2001, p.7). This trend accelerates the circulation of the highly skilled and to some extent, promotes the globalisation of the UK labour market. With the efforts of the UK government, the gross flows of employed migrants have been considerable over the last 25 years. The UK has become a substantial net importer of highly skilled workers, from a net loss of 120,000 between 1975 and 1984 to a net gain of 109,000 between 2000 and 2005 (Hatton, 2005). The figures are proof that the recruitment of highly skilled immigrant workers is indispensable to the UK labour market. With respect to professional and managerial workers, the UK has clearly been engaged in a brain exchange with the rest of the world.

Meanwhile, China launches initiatives to attract overseas talent with the help of its state power. Like many states with significant emigrant population, China reconceptualises the nature of the nation-state so that its population is no longer defined as residing solely within the national territory (Glick Schiller and Georges, 1998). Traditionally, the Chinese nation-state continues to play a very
important role in safeguarding China’s national culture (Knight, 2006). In
tрансnational social spaces, China’s state power transcends national boundaries,
building a unity of identity and a sense of commonality among overseas
Chinese through the tie of common ‘blood and origin’. HSNCMs, unlike the old
diaspora or other Chinese migrants, are bound to China not only by ties of blood
and culture but also by sharing the modernizing goal of the state. The strategic
position of HSNCMs for promoting national development has been reiterated in
the regulations for HSNCMs (as shown in table 5.1). In this way, China
legitimizes its transnational outreach to its overseas citizens or previous citizens.
This kind of government effort is clearly shown in the series of policies and
official declaration towards HSNCMs.

Compared with earlier policies and incentive schemes towards HSNCMs,
the new policies and schemes from China are supported by a number of factors
which did not exist before. Firstly, the fast economic development enables
China to offer a much more generous package than before, including globally
competitive salaries. China’s socio-political environment has improved
considerably over the years. Secondly, China’s ability to attract global talents is
helped by the large pool of talent formed over the years. Thirdly, the current
financial crisis in developed countries becomes a push factor that stimulates
HSNCMs to return to find jobs in China.

Moreover, recurring to its ‘state capitalism’ (Binns, 1975; Johnson, 1995;
Bremmer, 2010), China has much stronger power than many other sending
countries to remotely mobilize its overseas talent ‘State capitalism’ is a form of
capitalism in which the state acts as the dominant economic player and uses
markets primarily for political gain (Johnson, 1995). In Johnson’s research, state
capitalism has also come to refer to an economic system where the means of
production are owned privately but the state has considerable control over the
allocation of credit and investment (1995). State capitalism is usually
characterized by the dominance or existence of a significant number of state-
owned business enterprises (Binns, 1975). In the view of political scientist
Bremmer, China is one of the main examples of state capitalism in the 21st
century (2010). He describes China as the primary driver for the rise of state
capitalism as a challenge to the free market economies of the developed world,
particularly in the aftermath of the 1998 financial crisis. With the help of state
power, China has launched intensive institutional reforms to provide service on promoting the work of attracting HSNCMs. The large scale of policy reform towards HSNCMs also strongly reflects the state’s positive attitude towards its overseas talents. In the new globalisation era, China is no longer like a conventional developing country but a rising power that begins to recruit talented workers from the global market. HSNCMs become the main policy targets.

The case of the transnational governmental engagement from the UK and China is evidence that highly skilled circulation is a state-leading process. In the research into China’s knowledge exchange through diaspora networks, Xiang also confirms the role of China’s initiatives in brain circulation (2005). As Bieckmann and Muskens suggest, circular migration programmes require significant government involvement and interventions in the labour market (2007). China drew on domestic operation models of state-society relations in deploying transnational interaction with highly skilled migrants in order to stretch the close relationship beyond nation borders. In the process, the state mobilizes modern political rationalities and techniques to meet the challenge of managing the emerging population of HSNCMs. It launches the institutional and structural reforms to countervail the spiralling process of state involvement.

To sum up, the state’s initiatives between China and the UK play an indispensable role in promoting brain circulation of HSNCMs. According to official statistics, overseas students and scholars represent 50 percent of all academics of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, specialists in the Hundred Persons Plan under the leadership of the Chinese Academy of Natural Sciences, National Scientific Foundation for Outstanding Youth under the leadership of the National Committee of Natural Science Foundation, and others (Jiang, 2001). While the central government is taking advantage of the global financial crisis, local governments are no less active in recruiting global talents. Different from the central government which mainly pursues top scientists and engineers, local governments are keen to attract HSNCMs at different levels. Unlike the old generation of overseas Chinese, HSNCMs who were born and educated in China and maintain strong cultural, social and family ties with China are seen as valuable assets for national development by the Chinese
government. With the policy guidance from China, HSNCMs at different professional levels have opportunities to work in China in various ways.

The state’s transnational involvement promotes the transnational network building between HSNCMs, China and the host country. The positive policy environment is essential for HSNCMs to keep their social and professional networks, and stimulate a reverse flow of innovations and technological capacity. The state is thinking of HSNCMs as people who remain part of the Chinese economy and polity. It is making an effort to strengthen the ties with overseas highly skilled professionals and successful business people, improving the standing of the Chinese in their host society. The upsurge in the number of HSNCMs to developed countries produces new potentials for investment and knowledge resources. Many HSNCMs do return home with valuable experience and networks. The circulation of HSNCMs may provide optimal returns to both sending and receiving countries. It is also possible for the countries to benefit economically from its skilled migrants. The potential triple win for HSNCMs, the sending country and the receiving country is convincing policymakers to take the issue seriously and to implement policies and multilateral agreements that optimize the flow of HSNCMs.

### 5.4.2 Some issues for transnational engagement

Besides the positive influence of the states’ transnational engagement, there are some challenges to achieving a triple win for the UK government, the Chinese government and British transnational HSNCMs. For example, the UK government has to balance two apparently opposing demands – bringing in economic migrants to meet the UK’s needs versus protecting the interests of its citizens – for its legitimacy in public opinion. The needs of the state are always placed as the number one priority in the incentive schemes for highly skilled immigration. The will of the UK state behind the highly skilled immigration system has been demonstrated in propaganda, such as the slogan ‘Making migration work for Britain’. To reduce global redundancy, the government has raised the bar to limit migration from outside the EU countries. The new immigration policy sets up stricter criteria for selecting migrants to work in Britain. Highly skilled immigration is the obvious target for a restriction of this kind of reform of immigration policy.
Like other nation states, the UK government has traditionally derived much of its legitimacy from protecting the privileged rights of its own nationals. Governments and rival parties tend to mobilise popular support through demonstrating their willingness and ability to exclude outsiders from access to finite socioeconomic resources. It is obvious that the will of the UK state to some extent conforms to the interests of British citizens. The work permit system and the HSMP which are related to highly skilled migrants both suffer from public scepticism. Unlimited numbers of Tier 1 General visas cause British native people to feel threatened by the foreign workers in the labour market. The work permit system has been criticised for being driven entirely by demand from UK based employers who are responsible for making all work permit applications. The domestic media also ascribed the lack of availability of jobs in the UK for British workers to foreign workers who are being recruited instead. The market-driven policy system has come under increasing pressure in hard times.

Generally, the policy reform of the host country to make the migration system more stringent may directly restrict the employment and advancement of HSNCMs, especially when the government raises the bar for them. Due to the negative policy impact on their transnational social life, HSNCMs may finally fall into a dilemma and lose their motivation for future transnational mobility. As the objects of the highly skilled migration policy, HSNCMs are vulnerable to the changing policy environment. Their job opportunities are rather less than the native workers’ in the labour market. In addition, their rights of settlement in the UK are probably threatened by the changing migration policy. The government’s intervention strongly affects their ability to enter the global labour market. The stricter policy in hard times does have negative impact on the free movement of HSNCMs in the UK.

Besides, there are also some issues related to China’s transnational outreach towards HSNCMs. As Meyer, et al. suggest, if the majority of expatriates are expected to return, providing strong incentives to them may not be the major issue; on the contrary, it is indispensable to provide adequate conditions for their reinsertion in order to benefit optimally from the skills they have acquired abroad (1997). However, most recent regulations aimed at HSNCMs show lack of experienced operation and their aims are abstract. As Xiang analyzes, many
programmes in China are dissociated from industry despite heavy investment by the government (2007). Unlike IT professionals’ migration from India with minimum government intervention, the schemes are not strongly embedded in the global economy or domestic industry (Xiang, 2007).

As many scholars realize, too much penetration of state power could also lead to some negative outcomes of brain circulation (Chen, 2008; Xiang, 2011), though we cannot deny the powerful function of China’s state capitalism. As a result, besides economic concerns, there are also social political intentions behind the state’s initiatives. Some scholars call these governmental initiatives ‘a ritual economy of talent’, and demonstrate that the strategies and calculations behind the incentive schemes go far beyond the investment-return equilibrium and are instead shaped by social-political structure (Xiang, 2011).

My ethnographic data, however, reveal that the language of economism is communicated in a highly ritualistic manner and, conversely, political rituals serve as a crucial part of the conventions. The ritualised economic—and technological—determinist discourse appears apolitical, yet acquires strong mobilising and legitimating power, and is thus particularly effective in accommodating OCPs into the established political order. The concept ‘ritual economy’ denotes such deep intertwining between the economic, the ritualistic and the political (Xiang, 2011, p.321).

Compared with the market-driven immigration policy in the UK, China’s policy towards HSNCMs has much more political colour which relates to the state’s national development project. The trade-off between the market mechanism and socio-political needs has special meaning for brain circulation in the Chinese context.

5.4.3 Response from HSNCMs

The state’s initiative towards HSNCMs is not a self-fulfilling prophecy. Complete transnational state engagement cannot be achieved without the response from HSNCMs. The initiative interaction from highly skilled migrants with the sending state and receiving state never disappears in the transnational social space. The will of the state in policy promotion is under negotiation with the expectation of highly skilled migrants, which in turn not only affects the trend of policy promotion but also the transnational decision of the migrants. By tracing the life and work experience of British HSNCMs in different periods, we may find the direct impact of states’ initiatives on their transnational opportunity.
As the above figures show, the high degree of openness of the UK labour market to foreign employment has attracted many skilled people including HSNCMs to work in the UK. Benefiting from the work permit system and highly skilled migration schemes, those skilled migrants seeking global opportunities had finally chosen to settle in the UK. Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) became a matter of course for most highly skilled immigrants after they had worked continuously in the UK for four years. The package of benefits from the UK government became an incentive bonus for those skilled migrants to continue working in the UK. The relatively liberal immigration policy for highly skilled migrants helped to create cooperative and harmonious relations between the state, the highly skilled immigrants and employers in transnational labour recruitment.

The cost of living is relatively low here. My wife and children [came to] stay with me in the UK after I got a work permit visa. After four years of continuous employments, I finally get the permanent residence which supports my free movement between China and the UK. I don’t think I could get the green card in such a short period if I were in the USA.67

The relatively flexible immigration policy for highly skilled immigrants is one of the main factors that attract HSNCMs to work in the UK. Like Dr Xiong, many HSNCMs in the UK have benefited from the work permit system and the HSMP scheme. In our research, those HSNCMs who have successfully applied for ILR or British nationality do not need to worry about their visa status, and get more freedom for transnational movement.

However, the perception of the HSNCMs towards the immigration system turned from appreciation to disappointment when the UK government began to promote a more stringent policy system. The immigration minister, Phil Woolas, told The Times in 2008: ‘It's been too easy to get into this country in the past and it's going to get harder…The immigration policy suitable for a boom is totally unsuitable for a recession.’68 A policy of reducing the migrant population as a solution to problems in the worldwide recession is demonstrated in the new immigration policy. In the new system, the Home Office breaks the link between people coming to the UK to work and the grant of citizenship which

has increased the population. The British state finally resorts to a strategy of intentional incoherence (Somerville, 2006) to gain legitimacy during the promotion of the new immigration policy. Connecting the new, more stringent immigration system with the current economic crisis is the key approach of the UK government to promote its legalisation process. This strict policy reform leads to a strong negative response from the community of HSNCMs.

I can feel nothing but anger with their [Home Office] decision to change the ILR requirement to five years from the original four years. Without ILR, it is hard for us to obtain a competitive mortgage for housing. We need to pay extra tuition fees for the children as overseas students… It could be easier to get job opportunities and promotion after we settle down permanently. We may be flexibly sent to work abroad without visa limitations. 69

New skilled migrants are required to have the equivalent of at least a Master’s degree plus high earnings, with an annual salary over 20,000 pounds. This change is a disaster for those migrants with only a Bachelor degree, or those with an annual salary less than 20,000 pounds. Once they lose their job, they will also lose their legal right to stay in the UK. 70

I can feel that the UK Government begins to strengthen the policy towards people from outside the EEA. Compared with the previous job hunting experience, I find it is difficult for me to search for a job this year… If we lose our jobs, we only have 28 days left to find a new job. Otherwise, the Immigration and Border Agency will ask you to leave the country. The best I can do is working carefully and escaping from redundancy. Losing your job not only means losing your bread and butter, but also means losing your legitimacy to stay in the UK…. I am thinking about returning to China. 71

The experience of British HSNCMs in the difficult period demonstrates that careers and business opportunities for HSNCMs are strongly affected by the stringent policy reforms in the host country. In the new policy system, fewer job opportunities are available to HSNCMs except for some listed occupations with labour shortages. Due to the present incoherent rules, which do not take into consideration the current economic downturn, skilled migrants on Tier 1 and Tier 2 find it extremely difficult to get opportunities for further development. Compared with highly skilled migrant workers, the work permit holders are even more vulnerable. They will lose their right to stay in the UK if they cannot

69 Interview with Liang Mark in London, 13 April 2008.
70 Interview with Liang Mark in London, 13 April 2008.
71 Cited from an internet forum of Chinese overseas with the focus on new immigration policy in the UK:
[access at 11 June, 2009].
find a new job within one month. All these changes under the new strict policy system directly affect the flexibility of their transnational mobility, let alone the possibility of brain circulation.

Obviously, only in a flexible policy environment where the HSNCMs in the UK are free to come and go can they maintain their transnational practice. For most HSNCMs who have transnational careers and business experience, the aim is to respond to the states’ engagement and protect their interests both in the sending country and the receiving country. If the changing policy environment creates the risk of losing their job, they will rethink of their life plan in the host country. How to defend their interest in the host country, and capitalise on their transnational knowledge, becomes a challenge for them. For many talented young Chinese, gaining working experience overseas rather than gaining ILR or British nationality is the primary motivation for their transnational practice. They complain of the policy reform not only because of its new barriers to permanent residence, but also because of its effect on their transnational working opportunities.

Apparently the current financial crisis reduces the recruitment capacity of British labour market, which has negative influence on the HSCNMs in the UK. Returning to work in China becomes an alternative for them if they lose a job in the UK. Different from many developed countries, China is taking advantage of economic redundancy and has issued new incentive schemes such as the ‘one-thousand-talents scheme’ to attract more overseas talent. A changing global labour market shapes the transnational practice and brain circulation of HSNCMs in a different way.

It is obvious that those preferential policies and incentive schemes could not proceed smoothly without the interaction of overseas Chinese and overseas returnees. Different views held by overseas returnees play an important part in constructing and reconstructing transnational interaction initiated by the Chinese government. The policy promotion by the Chinese government also attracts attention among highly skilled Chinese migrants in the UK. Some of them have chosen to return to China for their career future. This group of overseas returnees have their own perception of institutional efforts by Chinese authorities and their preferential policy.
These schemes wouldn't have worked just a few years ago. China now needs more talents with overseas work experience in the globalisation era. In my opinion, policy promotion of the Chinese authorities together with opportunities to make a fortune in China is very important in winning back the emigrants’ loyalty. Incentive schemes are indispensable for our motivations.

As a leader of the Western Returned Scholars Association, I am often invited to join some symposia of overseas returnees launched by our central government. It is important that our government is willing to adopt our opinion on overseas affairs towards our overseas returnees. I am happy that I have chance to express my own stance. Incentive schemes are not only generally promote academic progress in China, but they could also help improve the overall pay levels among Chinese scientists.

Economic rewards including top-range salaries and funding are important for the attraction of overseas elites. Besides economic incentive, an institutionalized mechanism for long-term development of these schemes is also indispensable. With the support of government-affiliated institutions such as WRSA and ROCSA (Returned and Overseas Chinese Scholars Association of All-China Youth Federation), China is on the way to create a nourishing environment in which talent could flourish. The key to attracting really superior talent is to set up a mechanism for objective assessment of a candidate’s value.

Money is important for practical issues, but the determinant factor is whether we would be able to be as productive in China as we are in the UK. Talent schemes and science-infrastructure reform must go hand in hand. Compared with physical facility in domestic society, some social supporting facilities including the social mechanism and perception of human resource are rather weak. Negative perceptions of the Chinese academic environment could discourage us from returning to China. Even the best talent cannot play their part without the right environment. Without a long-term commitment to creating such an environment, any talent schemes would be futile.

Many overseas returnees who want to return to work in China in the long run are much appreciated for long-term strategic plans. Instead of attracting overseas elites to return to short-term work in China, successful incentive

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72 Cited from the interview with Hou, Qiang, 04/08/2008, in Beijing, China. He is an overseas returnee with study background from Cambridge University. Now he is executive manager in China National Offshore Oil Group in Beijing.

73 Cited from the interview with Xi Chen, 23/07/2008, in Beijing, China. He is an overseas returnee with study background from Oxford University. Now he is executive director in the Beijing branch of a famous transnational company. He is also the Secretary General of the Alumni of Oxford University in China.

74 Cited from interview with Wu, ping in Beijing, 08/07/2008. Dr Wu graduated from Cambridge University with a doctorate in Engineering. He is principle engineer of the digital library department in the National Library of China and a successful candidate of the ‘one-thousand-talents scheme’.
schemes could attract talented individuals to stay in China permanently. However, the evaluating procedure is not transparent enough. Even the candidate list has not yet been opened to public view. Generally speaking, the list of judgment-committee members should be publicly available. This would be a way to enforce the responsibility of the committee members for their judgment. The members are often asked to evaluate a candidate whose field of research is outside their expertise. So far we have not seen a rigorous selection mechanism in place. As it is, the package of the new talent scheme, especially the salaries, is likely to cause resentment in researchers already in China.

It is possible that some powerful officials would abuse the scheme to favour their friends, rather than selecting those with true academic merits. The scheme could also trigger a battle between institutions for top academics, advantaging those close to policymakers and worsening the imbalance between academic institutions (Jia, 2009).

I will suggest establishing two evaluation committees separately. One is to examine the ethical standards and general qualities of candidates; another is composed of academic experts in the same field as the candidates. Peer review is essential for us to get the right people. The selection process should focus on a candidate's potential as well as his or her past academic record. Some assistant or associate professors may have more potential than full professors. This should be dealt with on an individual basis.\footnote{Cited from interview with Wu, ping in Beijing, 08/07/2008.}

As Xiang pointed out in his article, there is both coherence and fragmentation in China's policies toward emigration (2007). The coherence is due to the fact that all the policies are inherently linked to China's overall national development strategy. The emigration management regime is sometimes fragmented because emigration is handled by different government departments and highly skilled emigration issues are very new to the Chinese government (Xiang, 2003).

To sum up, the transnational practice of HSNCMs is easily affected by changing transnational policy between the sending country and the receiving country. Stringent policy reform will reduce their careers and business opportunity in transnational social spaces, while a flexible policy system will guarantee their free movement and support their career and business development. The current state engagement, especially China’s initiatives, provides a relatively positive environment for the brain circulation of HSNCMs.
However, some challenges in institutional practice cannot be ignored if China wants to achieve effective brain circulation.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has traced state initiatives relating to British HSNCMs through their transnational policies. As our research has indicated, state initiatives in some circumstances play a leading role in transnational practice and brain circulation of HSNCMs. A flexible policy environment, where HSNCMs would be able to combine entitlements from more than one country, is essential to achieve a triple win for the sending country, the receiving country and HSNCMs.

As the case of the British HSNCMs shows, the policy impact on the flow of highly skilled migration is clear and effective. The trend of highly skilled immigration in the last few decades indicates that highly skilled migration is directly controlled by immigration policy in the receiving country. Due to the incentive schemes offered for highly skilled migration, the proportion of HSNCMs in the UK increased sharply. They benefit from such incentive schemes and fulfil their transnational mobility. On the other hand, they also suffer from a stringent immigration policy and lose their right of free movement in transnational social spaces.

Meanwhile, initiatives from the sending state create small pockets of opportunity for highly skilled emigrants in their native societies while they live in the core economies. To build transnational connection with HSNCMs is an important part of China’s globalisation strategies. In pursuing the legitimization of the state’s transnational outreach, China not only pays attention to the role of ethnic nationalism and cultural identity, but also values reciprocal practice with HSNCMs. On the one hand, China re-appropriates the identity of HSNCMs to legitimize and reinforce their attachment to the motherland. On the other hand, government-initiated schemes are essential for developing strategic connection with HSNCMs in the long term. Through these incentive schemes, the Chinese government integrates the affairs of highly skilled new Chinese migrants into the cause of national construction. Furthermore, the Chinese authorities increasingly see highly skilled emigrants as a means to enhance China's integration in the world. The transnational
connection initiated by the Chinese government not only transcends the central government control in homeland, but also contributes to the globalisation of China through the ‘going out’ strategy.

Overall, the transnational policy environment for HSNCMs is the outcome of a trade-off between the sending country, the receiving country and HSNCMs. The state as the policy subject is not only a policy maker but also a collaborator to promote the globalisation of brain circulation. For better circulation of HSNCMs, there must be incentives for them to return home after they have gained enough overseas work experience, as well as clear rules and regulations in order to control the costs of providing services, launching schemes, etc. By scrutinizing the existing issues on the work on HSNCMs, our research suggests that it is important for the sending country to provide adequate conditions for the implementation of existing incentive schemes. With a view to the powerful state capitalism in China, a proper mix of government policy and market mechanism seems a key to achieving sustainable brain circulation (Xiang, 2011). China needs further institutional reform to create a feasible socio-political environment for the circulation of HSNCMs. As Xiang suggests, if policy frameworks and supportive strategies from sending countries can be achieved and implemented, perhaps in the future questions of migration drain will seem less and less salient (2006, p. 147).

However, transnational network building between the sending country and HSNCMs cannot rely only on initiatives from above. Grass-root initiatives from the community of HSNCMs are indispensable to achieve effective brain circulation. In the next chapter, we shall go on to explore transnational network building between the associations of HSNCMs and the Chinese government. The role of the professional associations of HSNCMs or OCP associations in promoting the circulation of the British HSNCMs will be examined through some case studies.
Chapter 6 Transnational Networks between the HSNCMs and China: A Case Study of British OCP Associations

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we indicated that state initiatives play an indispensable role in developing transnational relations between the sending country, the receiving country and HSNCMs. Positive transnational policies, especially the flexible policy system and incentive schemes from the sending country, promote the construction of transnational networks from above. With the help of these state initiatives, some HSNCMs develop their transnational careers and businesses to a new level.

Apart from the initiatives from above (the states), grassroots initiatives from below (the community of HSNCMs) form the other side of brain circulation. The interaction of the initiatives from above and from below is the core essence of the transnational network building between HSNCMs and the sending country. From this chapter, we follow migrant-centred perspectives to scrutinize the transnational initiatives from the British HSNCMs and their transnational networks with China. Some specific patterns of the transnational networks from below will be discussed in this chapter.

As some research reveals, brain circulation functions through diverse formal and informal networks in transnational social spaces (Meyer, et al., 1997; Brown, 2000; Saxenian, 2005; Xiang, 2007). Some scholars have recognized the role of the overseas associations of highly skilled migrants for transnational network building (Meyer, et al., 1997; Xiang, 2007). By following this research paradigm, this chapter launches a case study of the British OCP associations and their network connection with China. Since 1990, an increasing number of OCP associations in the UK have been established to develop transnational networks with China. Our field work reveals that nearly all of the OCP associations in the UK have regular interaction with domestic colleagues or institutions in China. They have close relations with overseas official agencies such as the Chinese
Education Section and Chinese embassy in the UK. The role of the overseas association is highlighted by both HSNCMs themselves and the Chinese government. In response to the national projects initiated by the Chinese government, some members employ these associations as institutional instruments to develop transnational networks with the Chinese government. Frequent interactions with Chinese societies compose part of daily life of these members (Xiang, 2005), even though there are obvious gaps between personal expectation and the outcome of these interactions.

However, we only have limited knowledge of this transnational network building by OCP associations. The growing transnationality of the associations has been largely unknown to the English-speaking world and has not yet received any systematic scholarly scrutiny. Correspondingly, there has been insufficient appreciation of the intimate and institutionalized links between the associations’ increasing and conspicuous transnational presence and the flourishing networks of brain circulation. Some central issues pertaining to this emergent modern transnationalism should be explored: why have the associations of HSNCMs in the UK dramatically increased their transnational connections with China? Why have they built transnational networks with the Chinese government? What are the major institutional features associated with this transnational network building? How do the initiatives from below interweave with the initiative from above in the process of the network building? What theoretical implications does this transnational movement have for studies of the transnational careers and business practice of HSNCMs? Discussion of this transnational network building requires investigation of the manifestations, dynamics, processes and consequences of the convergence of the transnational collective practice of HSNCMs.

To investigate the topic of transnational network building, this chapter explores the OCP associations of the HSNCMs in the UK and their transnational network building with China. Firstly, this chapter discusses the features and dynamics of the transnational network building of OCP associations. In this section, we launch a case study of the FCPS-UK and its affiliated OCP associations. To map out the features of the network building, we analyze the relationship between OCP associations and the Chinese government, as well as the highly institutionalized process of the associations. At the same
time, we explore the internal dynamics of the OCP associations which allow them to participate in transnational networks with China. Secondly, this chapter analyzes the operational mechanism of this transnational network building. In this section, we introduce an original term ‘reciprocal pragmatism’ and explore the driving forces behind the network building. The relations of formal and informal networks during the transnational network building will be scrutinized. Finally, this chapter assesses the role of the transnational network building in the brain circulation of HSNCMs. The impact of network building on the globalization of China is discussed in this part as well. By tracking the transnational connection with the sending country, the strength and impact of the cross-border ties of OCP associations is empirically assessed.

6.2 Features and dynamics of the transnational networks of OCP associations

Instead of selecting different categories of overseas association of HSNCMs for case studies, we focus on the Federation of Chinese Professional Society in the UK (FCPS-UK) and its affiliated British OCP associations. We have selected OCP associations because their transnational practice directly relates to our research topics. For example, they have direct connection with network building with the Chinese government through their professional activities. These associations have straightforward aims to promote the knowledge exchange and brain circulation between China and the UK. They have the closest relationship with the Chinese government due to their dedication to China’s brain circulation.

6.2.1 Close relationship with China and institutionalisation process

As a general picture of the associations of HSNCMs illustrated (in chapter four), transnational connection through formal or informal networks is common among these associations. Compared with other associations of HSNCMs, OCP associations go further in the aspect of network building with China. They are distinct from conventional civil societies overseas which are keen to penetrate local societies and active in fighting for equal rights. They have a strong transnational mission to promote knowledge exchange and business cooperation with China. Their transnational networks are composed of multiple interactions with the Chinese government and China-based institutions. For members of
Generally, transnational network building of OCP associations refers to a process that organises transnational knowledge exchange and business cooperation on a regular basis. In the case of British OCP associations, there are two coherent features of this transnational network building: continuous support from the Chinese government and institutionalisation of their transnational practice. As a spontaneous response to China’s diaspora strategy, most OCP associations welcome support from the Chinese government in setting up a regular transnational connection. Unlike the traditional practice of overseas associations which exercised influence through personal and informal links (Liu, 1998), the current wave of transnational network building is marked by a significant degree of institutionalisation.

The transnational characteristics and the features of transnational network building are prominent in many influential British OCP associations. To take the Association of Chinese Engineers in the UK (ACE) as an example, it is dedicated to promoting technical exchanges between the members and collaboration between Chinese and British industry. Founded in 1997, the ACE is one of the biggest British OCP associations with over 1000 members. Like most OCP associations in the UK, the internal aim of the ACE is to promote knowledge exchange and business collaboration between members; its external aim is to support a collaborative relationship between China and the UK and to seek opportunities for its members to serve China. The ACE is the first British OCP association awarded the certificate of ‘Overseas Organization for International Exchange of Personnel of SEFEA’ (State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs, P.R. China). It has received many Chinese training delegations, and organized some seminars in China by inviting some famous Chinese experts from the UK. Because of their global advanced technologies and knowledge which is in demand both in China and the UK, a number of members have built regular connection with China-based institutions. The leaders of the association are often invited to global meetings on overseas expert affairs which are launched by the Chinese government. Meanwhile, the leadership has regular interaction with China’s overseas agencies for its transnational network building. To build a close connection with the overseas
agencies of the Chinese government, the leader of the Education Section is also chairman of the Honorary Board of Directors. Some officials of the Chinese embassy in the UK act as part of the advisory group in the ACE.

To unite HSNCMs in the UK to serve China and improve the Sino-UK relationship, the Federation of Chinese Professional Societies in the UK (FCPS-UK) was established in 2002. The FCPS-UK is the outcome of direct coordination between the Education Section in the UK and ten British OCP associations. As the previous chapter stated, it is the first interdisciplinary professional group for British HSNCMs. Since its inception, the federation has a straightforward aim to support HSNCMs to serve the country. The federation follows three operational directions which may be summarized as ‘service’, ‘coordination’ and ‘guidance’ to manage the relationship with its affiliated OCP associations. With the general direction of Education Section, The FCPS aims to organize Chinese professionals in different disciplines and provide a platform for their communication and collaboration. In the agenda of the FCPS, the concept of ‘service’ is the principal direction to liaise with OCP associations. The first president is a specially appointed professor in the “Yangtze River (Changjiang) Scholarship Programme”.

FCPS is an informal organization. We set up FCPS because we think it is necessary to unite Chinese professional associations in the UK. FCPS is different from CSSA-UK (Chinese Students and Scholars Association, United Kingdom) whose membership is mainly overseas students with one year studentship in the UK. Chinese professional have different identity from those overseas students. They have stayed in the UK for a long time. Many of them have their professional achievements in the host society.

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76 The affiliated associations of the FCPS-UK include: the Association of Chinese Engineers in UK (ACE-UK), The Chinese Automation and Computing Society in UK (CACSUK), The China-Britain Technology and Trade Association (CBTTA), The Chinese Economic Association (UK) (CEA UK), Chinese Law Association in UK (CLA), Chinese Life Sciences Society in the UK (CLSS), Chinese Materials Association-UK (CMA-UK), The Chinese Society of Chemical Science and Technology in the UK (CSCST), Chinese Textile and Apparel Society (UK) (CTAS-UK), and UK Chinese Association of Resources and Environment (UK CARE).

77 The Yangtze River (Changjiang) Scholarship Programme", created by the Ministry of Education and the Li Ka Shing Foundation in 1998, is an award granted by the State Council of the Chinese government to acknowledge special contributions made by Chinese scholars in various specialized fields. It provides financial support to young and middle-aged leading scholars of certain disciplines who have studied abroad and are appointed by Chinese High Education Institutes as Special Professors or Lecture Professors.

78 Cited from telephone interview with Mr Ming Zhang, 28/04/2009. He is First Secretary in Chinese Education Section, London. He is responsible officer of the FCPS.
The FCPS is a platform for professional elites to communicate with each other. It provides opportunities for its members to take part in the project of serving China. For example, the Chinese Society of Chemical Science and Technology in the UK (CSCST) has built up a cooperative relationship with Guizhou University in China. With the help of “Chunhui” plan, members of the CSCST have returned to support China western educational development three times already. The FCPS has also built up close connection with Sichuan University for academic exchange. Besides directly returning to serve China, we also invite domestic professionals to come to the UK for academic exchange with the name of the FCPS.79

As an institute to liaise with the ten OCP associations, the FCPS has responsibility for promoting the project of serving the country to professional societies. As independent organization, affiliated OCP associations flexibly choose a way to serve the country. To better serve China in transnational areas, they are eligible to ask for the support of the FCPS and Education Section in the UK.

As highly institutionalized organization, the FCPS set up its own constitution and working committee (see table 6.1). It adjusts its framework to keep trace of the national transformation in China. In 2004, it set up the office of Western Development and Northeast Renaissance (xi bu kaifa he zhenxing dongbei bangongshi) in response of the national project of revitalizing Northeast area. As a significant composition of Chinese national strategies, the project of “Western Development” and “Old industry reconstruction in northeast of China” gained the response from the members of the FCPS. During its reorganization in 2006-2007, The FCPS set up Beijing Liaison Station to strengthen the connection with China. It has established a set of departments to promote the institutionalization of transnational connection between the federation membership and China.

Table 6.1 shows that the membership of the Executive Committee of the FCPS is composed of president, vice presidents, and head secretary. The committee plays a key part in the running of daily affairs of the FCPS. Presidents and head secretary are elected democratically from professional societies. Ten more Executive Committee members are from ten subordinate societies and most of them are leaders of OCP associations. The federation committee in 2008-2009 operated seven departments including research and development department, industry and application department, Beijing liaison

79 Ibid.
station, and the like. This working committee indicates the intersecting relations between the federation and its affiliated societies. It is an ideal operation model which is expected to accelerate the transnational connection between OCP associations and China.

Table 6.1 FCPS-UK Working Committee 2008-2009

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Frequent transnational contact with China does not mean the OCP associations keep their distance from mainstream society like most traditional overseas Chinese associations. On the contrary, the professional activities of individual members in the host society and their transnational connection with China are in a synchronic social process. The membership initiates interaction with local societies of the host country to promote transnational cooperation between China and the UK. The FCPS-UK Conference 2007 is a transnational cooperation project among the PRC government, host society, and local associations of HSNCNs. Supported by Education Section, University of Nottingham, China-UK Cambridge Venture Park, and Chinese Students and Scholars Association at Nottingham, the FCPS held a multi-disciplinary conference on “Sustainable Economic Growth in China through Multi-
Disciplinary Collaboration”. One of the goals of the conference was to explore the opportunities for research and education collaboration between China and the UK. This relevant transnational cooperation initiated by OCP associations has been embraced in the globalisation process of China.

In terms of OCP associations and the FCPS, British HSNCMs share a common source of transnational information and have a space where they can develop direct and consistent exchanges. These associations have a definite purpose of academic, technological and intellectual sharing and cooperation beyond national borders. The transnational network building has not been the result of a linear and top-down administrative decision. On the contrary, it is the implementation of an idea through a collective and iterative process, between a governmental agency and various expatriate actors (Xiang, 2005). With continuous support from the Chinese government, OCP associations integrate government-initiated incentive programmes into their transnational careers and business practice through their structural institutionalisation process.

6.2.2 Dynamics of the transnational networks

The transnational network building by OCP associations is an initiative process though there is a close relationship between the OCP associations and the Chinese government, As Meyer, et al. suggested, the autonomy of the groups does not depend on institutions of the country of origin or the host countries; they have their independent statutes, selection and functional rules, etc (1997). Generally, two sets of internal factors can be identified in explaining the dramatic rise of transnational network building by OCP associations: committed leadership with resourceful networks with Chinese authorities and collective consciousness of their membership. To understand the internal dynamics of the transnational network building, these two questions need to be answered: why have the leadership been willing to commit their time, network resources and energy to initiating and organizing the transnational network building? What persuaded some of the HSNCMs to participate in these associations? In this section, we scrutinize both personal interest and collective national identity/emotion to explore the dynamic issues. According to our fieldwork, it seems that there is a gap between the personal expectation and the outcome of transnational network interaction. However, even though some professional elites realize this gap, they still prefer to keep up their network
connection between China and the UK. The motivations and dynamics of the network building go beyond direct economic profit and need further scrutiny.

Firstly, the leadership of OCP associations views the involvement of the transnational network building as a way of building close relations with Chinese authorities. Current leadership of OCP associations is a typical example of a new type of leadership which emerged in the 1990s and which is characterised by the leaders’ increasingly close relations with Chinese officials (Nyiri, 2001; Xiang, 2005). Unlike traditional overseas associations, OCP associations do not have financially powerful leadership. However, the leadership had historical formal or informal connections with compatriots at home and China-based institutions even before the establishment of OCP associations. They have close links with Chinese officials overseas who support the OCP associations to get access to state resources. In contrast to the spontaneous societal forces of civil societies, the transnational practice of OCP associations has been led and represented by the involvement of Chinese authorities as our study cases show.

In line with their transnational social and economic mobility, the leaders are keen to seize new opportunities that accompany China’s global capitalism.

To set up a platform for those hoping to participate in the national projects of serving China, we decided to establish a professional association for better communication with other relevant parties either in China or the UK... We are all in the federation network in which the Chinese government may find the right persons for certain national projects.80

Due to the increasing number of new overseas Chinese, the Consulate General in Greater Manchester suggested we organize an association for better communication... They (Officials of Consulate General and Education Section in Greater Manchester) continuously support our work and we have a close personal relationship. I think most people maintain interaction with China for two main reasons. One reason is that they are attracted by favourable domestic policy; the other is that they want to make money from China. In my view, patriotism from the official discourse plays nothing but a symbolic role to endow the personal transnational activity with social reputation.81

Secondly, the leadership sees the transnational network building as a means to accumulate their symbolic capital rather than for direct economic

80 Cited from the interview with Dr Peng, Qian, 10/05/2008, London.
81 Cited from the interview with Dr Chen, Gang, 04/19 /2007, Manchester. He is a reader in the University of Manchester. He is the first chairman of the Chinese Textile and Apparel Society (CTAS-UK) and the Chinese Friendship Association in Greater Manchester (XCA).
profit. Symbolic capital is the power granted to those who have obtained sufficient recognition to be in a position to impose recognition (Bourdieu, 1997). It can be referred to as the resources available to an individual on the basis of honour, prestige or recognition, and functions as an authoritative embodiment of cultural value. Transnational professional activities give the leadership social satisfaction which is hard to gain in the host society because of the ‘glass ceiling’. Through their frequent and eminent professional practice in China, they build personal relations with China-based institutions that confer valued credentials. ‘Changjiang Scholarship’ is such an official credential which helps the leadership to achieve high academic and social reputation. As representatives of HSNCMs in the UK, Some elite members have taken part in the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). The leadership with higher social status and dense social networks are likely to catch opportunities and succeed in the building of transnational networks. Their social status attainment in China is an important social resource for personal development in transnational social spaces.

Thirdly, for rank-and-file members, their involvement is due to their collective consciousness, and their endorsement is also practical. They share common professional background and social status in the host society. The specific experience of displacement (study and work abroad) strengthens their national emotion and cultural identity. They display cultural affinity and emotional links with China while appreciating their life in the receiving country. For the members of OCP associations, the involvement of the network building is an opportunity for them, not only to extent their careers and business opportunities, but also to make a contribution to the mother land. The interview below with Mr Zhang indicates the socio-historical reasons for many HSNCMs to participate in the transnational network building of OCP associations.

Many professional elites in OCP associations studied overseas with support of the Chinese government. Though they should have returned to work in China as they promised, they delay their return for many personal reasons. Indeed there was a huge gap between the socio-economic development of our country and the western countries at that time. Income difference between China and the Western was distinct. Nobody could image how fast the development of China would be in the past decade. Although some government-sponsored students have never returned to work in China, they think they owe China a lot. That is what we called ‘Ganqing zhai’ (emotional debt). Now many overseas talents are willing to
return to work in China in the short term. China becomes a debt collector of those overseas talents. They feel they emotionally owe China a lot. From the Chinese perspective of reciprocal interaction, they have a moral obligation to render a service to China. They make such a decision not only for personal interests, but also for their emotional need. These overseas talents who have made a great achievement in the host society have strong patriotic emotion towards the motherland.82

Identity politics as transnational strategy have been involved in the transnational networking. Besides the reciprocal transnational corporation between HSNCMs and China, the transnational network building is also a socio-cultural progress. ‘We are Chinese. We want to do something for China’.83 Group consciousness of many HSNCMs is partly based on real or imagined commonalities. It is true that without a basic sense of shared meanings and a sense of predictability of results binding together the actors involved, it would be unthinkable for any person to try to establish any kind of relations across national territories (Guarnizo and Smith, 1998, p.13).

Fourthly, our research suggests that both the leader and rank-and-file members see the involvement of the associations’ transnational practice as a means for seeking or accumulating social capital. Social capital is “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (Bourdier, 1985, p.248). It means ‘features of social organizations, such as networks, norms, and trust that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit’ (Putnam, 1993: 35). Transnational social network building of OCP associations is a strategy of subsistence and mobility that is contingent upon socioeconomic resources. Social relationship embraced in the transnational networks of OCP associations allows individuals to claim access to resources possessed by their associates. Because of the transnational social activity between China and UK, members of OCP associations have opportunities to return to China regularly, which is a way for them to keep personal careers and business networks in China. It is a transnational strategy for them to keep reciprocal interactions. Some leaders with entrepreneur background also attempt to link their own business with their association activities and organization structure. For example, the vice director of the ACE

82 Cited from telephone interview with Mr Ming Zhang, 28/04/2009.
83 Cited from the interview with Dr. Hang Lu, 12/04/2008. Dr Lu is Chinese language tutor in London School of Economics and Political Science.
set up his business branch in Beijing when the ACE established its Beijing liaison station. The structure of these two organizations overlaps, which means he could use the resources such as transnational social networks of the ACE to develop his business in China. OCP associations often serve as an incubator where the members develop their intention for building close ties with China.

In terms of the transnational network building of OCP associations, HSNCMs could strengthen their social capital which is hard to achieve through individual effort. To take the China-Britain Technology and Trade Association as an example, most of its members used to develop their own business alone and have gained certain achievements in their professional area. Most of them have worked in the UK for a long time and some have the UK nationality. However, these Chinese overseas elites realize their social restrictions in the host society when they attempt higher achievement in their professional area. As replacement, they reconstruct their connection with the sending country and involve themselves in the national projects of serving the country. This diversion for personal development occurs spontaneously in the age of transnationalism. As the borders of the modern nation state dissolve under conditions of transnationalism, self-orientation (Ong, 1999) strategy towards China brings in symbolic capital and social reputation for those transnational participants. Although sometimes the outcomes of transnational network building are disappointing to many overseas elites, their symbolic capital and leadership obtained in professional associations can be finally transferred to personal economic or political capital.

6.3 Mechanism of the transnational network building

6.3.1. Driving forces and ‘reciprocal pragmatism’

To further discuss the mechanism of the transnational network building, an original term, ‘reciprocal pragmatism’, is introduced. The term refers to a negotiation process in which HSNCMs and transnational stakeholders may enter into a greater sharing profit in different transnational social spaces. It understands the transnational network building between HSNCMs and China beyond the cultural and emotional factors. ‘Reciprocal pragmatism’ suggests that besides the national and cultural resonance of HSNCMs, reciprocal practice is also important for the development of transnational networks. Individuals and
institutions are involved in this reciprocal process to obtain potential opportunities beyond national borders. Strong social networks based on reciprocity lead to the production of communal social capital – real and potential resources that are mutually beneficial (Durston 2000). As a practical process for transnational network connection, it not only increases the social and economic capital of HSNCMs, but also facilitates the legitimization of the globalisation strategy of China.

‘Reciprocal pragmatism’ between HSNCMs and China-based individuals or institutions functions under special social and institutional preconditions. Firstly, as a relational entity with China, HSNCMs lived in China before transnational movement and have natural ties with the motherland. Second, in the process of transnational network building, there are common interests and understanding between HSNCMs and the Chinese government. That means the personal careers and business development of HSNCMs can be integrated into the national development of China. Third, transnational ties are maintained through the institutionalized OCP associations. These three preconditions have been explained.

To achieve a positive outcome for reciprocal pragmatism, the driving forces behind the transnational network building need to be scrutinized. In the research on Colombia’s diaspora at the beginning of the 1990s, Meyer, et al. found that ‘the Colombian Caldas’ Network of Scientists and Engineers Abroad’ functioned through the local associations (network nodes) and through some joint projects between the diaspora and the home community (1997). As in Colombia’s case, there are two direct driving forces promoting the transnational network building of OCP associations. One is OCP associations themselves as a transnational force from below; the other is overseas agencies of the Chinese government, especially the Education Section and the Embassy of P.R. China in the UK, as a transnational power from above. As a premise for the reciprocal pragmatism process between HSNCMs and China, these two driving forces should combine together and function through the implementation of national projects of serving China. Transnational networks between HSNCMs and China are in process when the members of OCP associations integrate their personal careers and business into a broad collective practice of serving the country.
First, as the driving force from above, the overseas agencies of the Chinese government play an important role in promoting the transnational network building with OCP associations. Their technique of interaction with HSNCMs produces their own system of valuation and represents a unique Chinese style of tactics and strategies of domination. These political techniques called ‘Confucian statecraft’ (Lee, 2006, p.102) follow distinctly different logics and genealogical trajectories. They value moral-political criteria and state paternal concern. In this context, the art of government84 (Foucault, 1977) is the art of guanxi (which means social relationship or social connection). The art of guanxi exchange is composed of strategic power-relations and it lies in the skilful mobilization of moral and cultural imperatives such as obligation and reciprocity in pursuit of both diffuse social ends and calculated instrumental ends (Yang, 1989). In our research, the relation between overseas agencies of the Chinese government and OCP associations is not a simple superior-subordinate relation since it is developed beyond national boundaries. Through moral and cultural mobilization techniques, the overseas agencies have built friendly relations with HSNCMs. The life of HSNCMs reflects knowledge and power in the Chinese context.

I like the Chinese words “da jiaodao”, which means to communicate with people in a personalized and friendly style instead of a rigid bureaucratic style. I prefer a friendly way of handling daily affairs with overseas intellectuals. This is my personal style of work but also a result of the limits of our authority. Our sovereign rights only function within the national boundaries of China. Many overseas workers have obtained British nationality and we respect their personal choice. However, the nationality issue is not the priority of our work. We see all overseas talent as old friends and compatriots abroad, though there are multiple identities among them. To better serve their talents, we focus on the issues of common interest and maintain good friendship through informal or formal interaction. Besides, we have close connection with local government organizations such as the Guangzhou Convention of Overseas Scholars in Science and Technology. We have a series of online programs and interviews to introduce this annual convention to overseas talent through our website.

84 Governmentality or the ‘art of government’ is a concept first developed by Foucault (1977). Foucault defined governmentality in a wide sense, as an idea of ‘government’ that is not limited to state politics alone. It refers to “the ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy, and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security” (Burchell, Gordon and Miller, 1991, p.102).
There is an unwritten principle for editors of China Scholars Abroad. That is, each editor is asked to make friends with overseas students and scholars once he or she joins in our group. Overseas scholars are not only our interviewees, but also our friends. Now many overseas scholars who have made great achievements become our good friends. They would like to consider our invitation a priority no matter how busy they are. They will feel embarrassed if they refuse our invitation, because we have made efforts to take care of them since they were young.\(^{85}\)

After several decades’ development, China has formulated two strategies in linking with overseas Chinese affairs on HSNCMs: inviting in and going out. The former refers to the invitation to and sponsorship of overseas Chinese delegations; the latter refers to the dispatch of official delegations to places where the Chinese diaspora is concentrated (Liu, 1998). Transnational outreach towards HSNCMs is an important part of this globalisation strategy. For the overseas agencies, frequent participation in the group activities of HSNCMs is a routine which builds long-term relationships with OCP associations. Besides, they also invite some leaders of the associations to dinner parties and symposia explicitly to discuss the issues of serving China.

Secondly, OCP associations themselves act as a driving force from below to initiate grassroots transnational network building. OCP associations provide a platform for their members to share personal experience of serving China. The interactions within the associations reinforce the personal networks among these professional elites. Externally, the leaders of OCP associations sometimes invite overseas officials of the Chinese government to join in their group entertainment activities. Through informal and comfortable meetings, the association members develop their connection with Chinese authorities, which is good for their personal careers and business development in China. Besides the role of members’ personal networks, the leadership of OCP associations marked by a significant degree of ‘interlocking directorship’ (Liu, 1998) also facilitates the internal network building between OCP associations and external network construction with China. This interlocking directorship partly derives from the overlapping administrative structures among the diverse associations of HSNCMs. For example, Dr Chen is the first chairman of CTAS and the General Secretary of the FCPS-UK. He is also a founder of the XCA. Dr Peng is

\(^{85}\) Cited from the interview with Mr Xu, Lang, the associate editor-in-chief of China Scholars Abroad (CHISA), Beijing, 15/07/2008.
the chairman of CBTTA and a member of the Board of Directors in FCPS-UK. He was also a main leader of the ACE. In terms of this ‘interlocking directorship’, OCP associations build up close connection with each other and share information on personal careers and business opportunities in China. Like any other social networks, the transnational networks of OCP associations are not a natural given and must be constructed through investment strategies oriented to the institutionalization of group relations (Bourdier, 1985).

Overseas students are our main service group. We have not enough staff in the UK but mainly depend on two Chinese institutes, one is Chinese Education Section, and the other is Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA-UK) in the UK. Overseas students are a loose group and we need resort to their associations to build connection. We keep in contact with these two organizations and engage in their activities as frequent as possible. I usually contact the institutes through their internet website as well.86

The cooperation between the overseas agencies of the Chinese government and OCP associations results in the creation of an ideal mode of the transnational network building in China’s context. The operation system of the FCPS-UK and its affiliated OCP associations represent one of the forms of this model (Figure 6.1). Through this operation model, OCP associations may directly or indirectly connect with China or the host society in transnational social spaces. They play the role of a bridge to connect Mainland China and the host society. The executive committee which is composed of the leaders from different OCP associations is the core network node which facilitates the communication between OCP associations and the FCPS-UK. In this mode, Education Section in the UK as an official agency plays an important role in supporting the participation of HSNCMs into the project of serving China. This model of transnational network building strengthens the triple relationship between HSNCMs, China and the receiving country.

86 Cited from the interviewed with Ms Jiang Hui in London, 11/04/2008. She is the Director of Z-park London Liaison Office.
The FCPS-UK Conference 2007 is a typical example of the promotion of this model. The conference is a cooperative project involving the Chinese government, the host society and OCP associations. Supported by Education Section, University of Nottingham, China-UK Cambridge Venture Park, and Chinese Students and Scholars Association at Nottingham, the FCPS held a multi-disciplinary conference on “Sustainable Economic Growth in China through Multi-Disciplinary Collaboration”. One of the objectives of the conference was to explore the opportunities for research and education collaboration between China and the UK, which has positive impact on the globalisation process of China.

To sum up, OCP associations act as a key vehicle for transnational network building between China and HSNCMs. With the support of China’s overseas agencies, OCP associations have opportunities to achieve official resources for their transnational network building. As Nyiri states, transnational events between China and new Chinese migrants should not be seen as orchestrated by Chinese authorities; rather, they reflect the willingness of organizations to ‘seek guidance’ (2001). Through the network efforts of OCP associations, the members with advanced techniques and knowledge finally have the opportunity
to integrate their personal careers and business development into the national project of serving China.

6.3.2 The interweaving of formal and informal networks

As the above section describes, the cooperation of the driving force from below and from above accelerates the transnational network building between HSNCMs and China. In the process of the transnational network building, informal networks through personal connections interweave and overlap with formal networks through government-initiated programmes. In our research, state-initiated programmes work through the existing personal connections of HSNCMs. The members with resourceful informal relations with former colleagues at home have more opportunities for access to formal network resources.

In the UK, a number of the members of OCP associations keep their personal networks with former classmates and colleagues at home. Before they take part in national projects for serving China, some have already developed their careers and business in China through their personal connections. These personal connections create opportunities for these members to get access to government-initiated programmes. According to Xiang’s survey, 83% of the OCPs in his sample listed personal connections with former classmates and colleagues as the most important means of establishing connection with China institutes, compared to the 20% of OCPs choosing a formal government programme (2005). Our research also shows the importance of the informal connection in promoting government-initiated programmes. The cases of some active members, especially some successful leaders, show that informal channels even play a primary role in obtaining formal social resources in China. For example, Dr Jiang, senior lecturer in the University of Manchester, worked at Harbin Institute of Technology (HIT) in China before coming to England. With the recommendation of his former colleagues, he gives lectures in HIT during his annual sabbatical leave. To build cooperation between HIT and UoM, he and his former colleagues launched a transnational joint project in 2006 to study the civil engineering issues in the Beijing 2008 Olympics and London 2012 Olympics. His personal involvement in knowledge exchange and academic cooperation in China has been recognized and supported by sponsorship from the National Natural Science Foundation (NNSF) of China.
Network building becomes ‘formalized’ through government involvement (Xiang, 2005). As Xiang states, these informal channels are important because they can effectively enhance formal programmes (2005). Through the informal connections, formal networks find specific places to function in the transnational network.

At the same time, formal networks are the other part of the transnational networks which are important for the production of informal networks. For further connection with HSNCMs, the Chinese government has built up a multi-dimensional service network within the education system, including the Ministry of Education, Chinese Scholarship Council, Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE), transnational liaison offices of many China’s institutes, Education Section and Chinese Embassy in the host country. In terms of diverse overseas associations of HSNCMs, this network becomes a platform for communication between the Chinese government and HSNCMs. The members of OCP associations invited to this network have more opportunities to accumulate social capital and improve access to official resources. The participation of government-initiated programmes increases their opportunities of building personal connections with other professional elites overseas. These personal networks often play an important part in the business cooperation between HSNCMs.

Our liaison office now has made some efforts to build a channel for the overseas students and scholars to communicate with China. For example, since 2001, we have been organizing delegations of overseas Chinese students and scholars twice per year to visit Z-Park in Beijing. This is a good time for them to build personal networks with professional elites from other countries. It is also an opportunity to visit their former friends and colleagues at home.  

Above all, there are two parallel processes in the transnational network building: the close-knit informal networks among OCP associations and simultaneous formal networks initiated by the Chinese government. Informal connections serve as an important basis for formal networks, while formal programmes often strengthen informal networks. The state’s initiated programmes have an impact on the transnational practice of HSNCMs through their personal connections. Our research on the role of formal and informal

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networks is a response to Chen’s research (2008). He stated that brain circulation only applies to those HSNCMs with political skills to tap into institutionalized assets (2008). Our research argues that both formal and informal networks are important in the transnational network building. The interweaving of the formal and informal channels forms China’s brain circulation. For many members of OCP associations, achieving both formal and informal social resources is one of the main motivations to take part in the transnational network building.

6.4 The functions of the transnational network building

6.4.1 The transnational network building and brain circulation

In general, the transnational network building of OCP associations provides invaluable resources both for the Chinese government and HSNCMs. According to our research, there are extensive uses of such associations to facilitate business and career ties among the HSNCMs as well as between them and their compatriots at home. OCP associations act not only as a forum for establishing contacts with China and cultivating collaboration among the members, but also as an institutionalized mechanism for carrying out knowledge exchange and brain circulation.

The transnational network building of OCP associations is explicitly and intimately linked with the creation and expansion of growing brain circulation. As we have described, the transnational networks initiated by OCP associations play a role in supporting the sending state in capturing some benefits and know-how from emigrants overseas. These networks are often sponsored by institutional instruments. In our research, the FCPS-UK and its affiliated OCP associations have made a series of efforts to promote the brain circulation between China and the UK. For example, the FCPS launched a series of activities to serve the country in 2001 and 2002 with the support of the “Chunhui programme”. They organized diverse delegations of British HSNCMs to take part in technical consultation meetings in ‘high-tech’ industry parks in Beijing, Shanghai, and Suzhou. In 2004, The FCPS launched a comparative study of the old industry reconstruction between China and the UK, which was approved by the National Development and Reform Commission in China. Earlier in May, 2004, when Premier Wen visited London, the representatives of
the FCPS made a report on the revitalization of old industry in the northeast of China. This report compared China’s case with British experience of the same issue. Later in June 2004, a delegation of the FCPS visited the northeast of China and made their contribution to the revitalization of old industry there. In 2005, the FCPS organized a ‘Western Development’ delegation to visit Chongqing, Yunnan and Guangzhou. Those series of institutional transnational activities reinforce the frequent connection between HSNCMs and China, and promote knowledge exchange between China and the UK.

The professional activities of OCP associations in the host society are in a synchronic social process with their transnational interactions with China. Their professional practice with local society is another way to promote brain circulation and transnational network building with China. A series of bilateral cooperation in economic-cultural areas cannot work smoothly without the involvement of British HSNCMs. With transnational advantages such as portable skills and bilingual ability, the members of OCP associations increase the transnational cooperation between China and the UK. Their ability to integrate into the host society strengthens their opportunities to serve China. The transnational networks between China and the UK help the HSNCMs highlighting their visibility, extending their personal transnational network resources and expanding the personal development potential in transnational social spaces.

Compared with transnational brain circulation from other countries, China’s brain circulation has distinct characteristics. As grass-roots initiatives, transnational social networks of overseas professional associations also exist in other developing areas such as South African and Latin America, and even in some advanced countries like France, Germany, and Switzerland (OECD, 2001). To take India as an example, immigrant networks of overseas businessmen and entrepreneurs between India and the United States have been one important driver of knowledge development in India. The Indian government has contributed to the emergence of such private networks through legislation that fosters remittances and investment by Indians overseas (Ibid.). However, China has made much more efforts on the government’s transnational involvement towards HSNCMs. Besides government-initiated incentive schemes, a transnational service network has been established by the Chinese government.
to promote the brain circulation of HSNCMs. To maximize the function of the transnational networks, OCP associations strengthen their internal networks and their links with external institutions in China. The legitimate position provided by Chinese officials becomes one of the primary reasons behind the growth of those transnational social networks. The transnational networks of OCP associations not only bring in socio-economic profits for participants, but also produce an institutionalized channel integrating personal development into national projects for serving China. With the support of the Chinese government, members of those associations promote their personal development in transnational social fields and their individual development joins the national project of serving the country.

As these case studies show, transnational professional interactions of HSNCMs have stimulated a reverse flow of technological capacity and social economic resources between the sending and receiving countries. Like in India, Brazil, Taiwan and Mexico, the brain drain from China has become brain circulation which shows a significant rate of return migration bringing valuable skills and connections (Lowell and Gerova, 2004). However, the actual impact of the transnational network such as the initiatives of the FCPS needs to be further scrutinized. It seems that there is an obvious gap between the expectation of association members and the effective impact of the transnational interaction of the FCPS.

It is easy to understand the limited success of the FCPS. All of our members are too busy to spare enough time for the federation affairs. As each association operates rather independently, the committee has become an ‘empty shell’. As to the series of short-term return projects of serving the country, I often went back to China for such kinds of national projects of serving the country. It is unfair to say there is no contribution to this participation at all. Basically, these projects provide opportunities for us to travel back to China. We have frequent activities in China such as academic exchange and business cooperation with domestic compatriots. The national projects of serving the country certainly get a response from the members of our own professional society. However, not all of these international interactions have effective outcomes. 88

Generally, the members of OCP associations share an ambivalent feeling: on the one hand, a spontaneous motivation from the members to contribute to

88 Cited from the interview with Dr Peng, Qian in London, 10/05/2008. He is the President of the China-Britain Technology and Trade Association (CBTTA). He is a principle engineer in a transnational company.
the development of their country of origin and, on the other hand, an anxiety about the unanticipated outcome of these transnational efforts. These are the paradoxical tensions at work in the construction of the transnational networks. The network building creates the opportunities for personal development, but the actualization of this cooperation is far less satisfactory for some members. As Xiang worries, the regular transnational events such as the worldwide conventions initiated by the Chinese government may present a ‘ritual economy’ about OCPs (2011). In terms of his research, every year the MoE invests about US$40-53 million in OCP programmes and the MoP allocated nearly US$27 million in the first half of the 2000s for the same purpose. Most was spent on sponsoring OCPs’ ritualised and symbolic activities such as transnational visits. Some HSNCMs have realized the paradox. To run the events more economically and avoid such ritual events, some OCP associations such as ACE and CBTTA have made efforts to run liaison offices or association branches in China. Their efforts are for better communication and more effective cooperation with local institutions and local governments.

6.4.2 The impact on the globalization of China

“In the globalization era, the state per se has been a part of globalization and a major driving force behind the process. Governments are not the passive victims of internationalization but its primary architects” (Zheng, 2004, p.22). In the case of British OCP associations, the Chinese government plays a very important role in promoting the transnational network between China and HSNCMs in the UK. With the favourable political environment and the rise of China in the global arena, HSNCMs become a transnational asset for China’s national development. Globalization facilitates China’s contact with its transnational citizens and pre-citizens. With the support of official agencies, members of those associations finally integrate their individual career development in the national project to serve China. They are able to achieve upward social mobility by continuing to imagine themselves as part of their sending communities (Grim-Feinberg, 2007).

89 In Xiang’s research, there are three definitions of such a ‘ritual economy’: First, the events are rituals about economy in the sense that economic calculations are regarded as the most powerful, reasonable and realistic rationality. Second, there is an economy of rituals. Third and most importantly, the events present economy as a ritual (2011).
In turn, the transnational network building initiated by OCP associations also plays an important role in supporting the global strategies of China. The network building has special meaning for China’s symbolic and actual presence overseas, and it promotes China’s ‘grassroots globalization’ or ‘globalization from below’ (Appadurai, 2001, p.17). As a horizontal and relatively egalitarian structure, network serves as an independent variable that can effectively communicate with the state by institutional and informal means (Liu, 2005, p.17). Transnational networks between HSNCMs and China can take a role which neither the state nor associations could play alone in transnational social spaces. These networks are helpful in establishing a powerful partnership between societal forces and state actors. Through this network building, China’s globalisation strategy compels a response beyond national boundaries.

For China, these transnational social networks are important in pursuing its ‘going out’ strategy and in receiving continuing support from HSNCMs in the host society. As the Chinese government declares, HSNCMs and their OCP associations are the foundation of China’s overseas affairs. With the patriotic projects of ‘serving the country,’ the built-in functions of the transnational network for brain circulation can be easily adapted to promote the new agendas of globalisation of China. The Chinese government and semi-government agencies have acknowledged the importance of OCP association and are actively exploiting it in building transnational networks. Through the transnational network with HSNCMs, these overseas agencies of the Chinese government systematically carry out international missions and specific ideological justifications to sustain the new pattern of organized Chinese globalisation from below. For example, Education Section in the UK has built a talent bank including over 130 Professors in British universities. These professors have personal connection with China-based institutes including their former institutes at home. They introduce global advanced skills and technologies to China and train high quality talent for these institutes. All these activities increase China’s capacity for global competition.

The transnational practice of OCP associations usually results in the establishment of international co-ordination between the sending country and the receiving country. Though many members of OCP associations have satisfactory career development in the host country, they never cut off
transnational social links with China. As flexible professionals with transnational ability, HSNCMs are willing to support the multi-dimensional cooperation between the two countries. With the involvement of HSNCMs in the UK, China and the UK have built a series of cooperation in the areas of education, technology, economy and culture. OCP Associations also play an important part in promoting the transnational academic and technology exchange. The professional activities of OCP associations influence international grass-roots cooperation between China and the UK. Many OCP associations, whether consciously or unconsciously, are participating in China’s globalisation causes.

6.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have discussed the transnational network building initiated by OCP association. In the case study of British OCP associations, transnational network building is highly institutionalized and has received huge support from the sending government. The collective transnational professional practice of OCP associations has close relations with the state-initiated programmes. For the members of OCP associations, their motivation to become involved in network building is not only for direct economic profit, but also for resourceful social and symbolic capitals. Meanwhile, transnational network building is also an outcome of collective consciousness.

In terms of our research, there are two driving forces behind the mechanism of the transnational network building: OCP associations as the driving force from below and overseas agencies of the Chinese government from above. These two driving forces function together through the national projects of serving China. Through the reciprocal pragmatism process, HSNCMs integrate their transnational careers and business practice into the government-initiated programmes. During this process, formal networks interweave with informal networks, and this forms a main feature of transnational network building. This chapter suggests that, besides the national and cultural resonance in transnational social space, institutional promotion and reciprocal pragmatism is pivotal for transnational network building between the Chinese government and HSNCMs.
Three functions of OCP associations during the transnational network building can be identified: as a forum to establish contacts with China and cultivate collaboration among the members; as an institutionalized mechanism to carry out knowledge exchange and brain circulation; as a grassroots agency to accelerate the globalisation of China. There are extensive uses of such associations to facilitate business and career ties among the HSNCMs as well as between them and their compatriots in China. As Meyer et al. explained, if the diaspora option has achieved initial mobilization it is because it has been shaped through a collective process, which has assigned roles and interests to the numerous actors (1997, p.293). In general, the transnational networks increase the socio-economic benefits of HSNCMs and promote the legitimization of China’s globalisation strategy. The transnational network building of OCP associations is linked with the creation and expansion of growing brain circulation. To some extent, it is a process of China’s globalisation from below.

However, it should come as no surprise that some OCP associations exist more in name than in reality. To what extent these transnational groups become visible in action needs further discussing. It is hard to evaluate the effective outcomes of those transnational interactions between HSNCMs and the PRC government. Some potential impacts of this institutional practice will not show immediately.

In this chapter, we focus on the collective brain circulation of HSNCMs through the transnational network building of OCP associations. Beside this collective practice, a large number of individual HSNCMs launch their transnational careers and business practice from outside the association of HSNCMs. This personal practice cannot be ignored if we want to achieve full understanding of this group. In the next section, we will discuss the individual transnational practice of HSNCMs in the UK and their identities behind this personal practice.
Chapter 7 Transnational Practice and Identity of Individual HSNCMs

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we discussed transnational network building between HSNCMs and China. The features, dynamics, mechanisms and functions of the transnational network building of OCP associations have been scrutinized to understand knowledge exchange and collective brain circulation in HSNCMs. In terms of the highly institutionalized transnational activities of these OCP associations, personal careers and business development have been integrated into the national project of serving the country.

In this chapter, we move away from the collective practice of OCP associations to personal life and career experiences of individual transnational HSNCMs. Though highly institutionalized collective activities play an important part in promoting brain circulation, a large number of individual HSNCMs launch their transnational practice from outside the associations. This individual experience cannot be ignored in a study of the different aspects of brain circulation in China’s context. For these individuals, their transnational experience includes not only actual social relations and practices, but also the practices that signal or enact an identity. That means, their personal careers and business activities interweave ‘ways of being’ and ‘ways of belonging’ (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004). These activities form an integral part of the individual’s daily life. Their transnational strategies and the process of identity construction they undergo during the negotiation between multiple forces warrant discussion in this chapter.

Based on multi-site interviews in the UK and China, the transnational practice discussed in this chapter consists of continuous careers and business activities involving regular trans-border travel. These activities form a pattern and are predictable (Guarnizo, 1997; 2000). This chapter is divided into two sections to analyse the transnational practice and identity construction of British HSNCMs. First, it discusses the different transnational personal experience by
comparing two groups of HSNCMs. These two groups include newcomers who have stayed to work in the UK less than five years and senior HSNCMs who have achieved some career success in the host society. The second part focuses on the identity issues of HSNCM. The relationship between transnational identities and Chinese consciousness is discussed in this section. We shall also introduce the “bi-focality” strategies (Vertovec, 2004) that they use to promote their personal development and identity construction in transnational social spaces. The meaning of these transnational activities and brain circulation for individual transnational HSNCMs is scrutinized in this section.

7.2 ‘Having a foot in two camps’: Transnational practice between China and the UK

In Chinese, ‘Jiao ta liang zhi chuan’ or ‘to straddle two boats’ means to have ‘a foot in both camps’. In transnational social spaces, HSNCMs give this negative old saying a positive new meaning. For most HSNCMs, having a relationship with two societies is the way to pursue their goals in transnational social fields. They are looking for the best opportunities for personal development and to maximise benefits with minimum risks worldwide. Many of them, especially the newcomers, are physically based in a host country but emotionally attached to their home country. Some of them dream of returning to China with good prospects. The others expect to stay in their host country as long as possible to experience superior living conditions.

As our research reveals, historically overseas Chinese followed two patterns for settlement: one is called ‘luoyeguigen’\(^{90}\) (fallen leaves return to their roots), and the other is ‘luodishenggen’\(^{91}\) (falling to the ground and striking root) (Liu, 2005). However, these two images no longer fit many HSNCMs who belong ‘neither here nor there’ or ‘either here or there’. Their social practices in daily life transcend national boundaries, thus ‘one foot is here and the other always elsewhere, straddling both sides of the border’ (Chambers, 1994, p.17). They live in a new global arena where messages from the sending country are easier to receive. As ‘transmigrants’ (Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc,

\(^{90}\) It's a metaphor which indicates that overseas Chinese individuals are sojourners who want to return to their place of origin in their old age.

\(^{91}\) It refers to a pattern of permanent settlement abroad and renunciation of Chinese citizenship, while privately preserving a Chinese lifestyle and Chinese cultural value (Liu, 2005).
1992, p.1-2), they are firmly rooted in the host country but maintain multiple links with their country of origin. For those HSNCMs with transnational career and business mobility, trans-boundary practice becomes part of their daily life. They maintain a variety of ties to sending countries while at the same time they are incorporated into the countries where they have settled.

HSNCMs are a heterogeneous group with diverse action logics. They do not simply integrate into their new setting by a single, exclusive pathway. The pathways into the labour market, for instance, may differ according to linguistic ability, the extent of their social networks, cultural understanding, economic status, and so on. Their modes of incorporation with transnational forces also follow multiple pathways, depending on their life experience and social achievements in transnational social spaces. Different socio-cultural practices, such as the ability to maintain family ties or membership of transnational associations, produce different patterns of transnational involvement.

In terms of the extent and depth of transnational experience, we divide HSNCMs in the UK into two groups: one is the group of newcomers who have been staying and working in the host country for less than five years; the other is the group of senior HSNCMs who have made some achievements in their professional area and have been living and working in the host country for no less than five years. In the UK, a large number of HSNCMs will apply for permanent residence after five years’ continuous work in the UK. Generally, HSNCMs with permanent residence are more read to launch their transnational practice without worrying about visa issues. Our research is based on this classification to discuss the diverse transnational practice of HSNCMs.

7.2.1 Newcomers: The first phase of transnational migration

Although there are different social modes for HSNCMs, maintaining transnational connection between China and the UK is a common aim, even in the first phase of their migration. Obviously, there are diverse factors that encourage the newcomers to become involved in transnational social spaces, including benefits from studying abroad, interests through the expansion of overseas careers and business opportunities, quality of work and life and openness in communication (Li and Lo, 2009). In our research interviews (partly shown below), transnational life experience and career ambitions appear to be two key motivations for highly skilled newcomers. The same impetus is
found by Zhang (2003): for his subjects, career advancement (including expansion of knowledge) and personal development (including experiencing a different culture) are two key factors which cause talented Chinese to go abroad.

Due to the globalisation of higher education in the UK, studying overseas is one of the most common reasons given for entering the country. Individual HSNCMs may seek to maximize return on investment in their education and training by moving around the world in search of the highest paid and/or most rewarding employment. Most HSNCMs first came to the UK as overseas students or visiting scholars. Their previous work experience or educational background is not readily accepted by the host country. Even in the perceptions of Chinese people, a foreign degree is worth more than a domestic degree. A certificate of education from overseas can become a stepping stone towards helping them to stay and work in the host society. As young and ambitious, highly educated Chinese people are predominantly interested in Western countries where advanced knowledge and techniques are concentrated. These individuals expect to work in a specialist working environment, such as in the global financial market in London. They are expected to exert a higher level of work effort and higher level of socialization than they have done in the sending country. They are also expected to acquire additional skills and training in the receiving country.

From the perspective of highly skilled newcomers, overseas work experience is an advantage in terms of their personal career development, wherever they choose to stay in the future. In this transnational stage, they pay attention to the development of their career in the host society unless their working environment requires frequent transnational mobility. The availability of suitable employment and an environment which is conducive to settling down are important to push them to practise in transnational social spaces.

Case 1: Mr Dong Huang (30 years old), who worked in the China branch of a famous global energy company, is now a senior planning engineer in the UK branch through intra-company transfer.

I came to the UK with a work permit in November 2006. My wife came with me as my dependant. At the present stage, I am concerned with

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92 More detailed information could be obtained from the annual data of the Ministry of Education in China.
career opportunities rather than where I work. I will be assigned to a position in ‘Singapore Parallel Train Programme’ next year. I will stay in Singapore for my overseas assignment for the next two years. After that, I will find another global opportunity for my career development. Maybe I will go back to China. Maybe I will stay in Singapore. I will not reject the offer from my current British company if there are enough opportunities to improve my professional skills.\(^9\)

Like Mr Huang, many newcomers take overseas work experience into consideration in the search for better personal development. They seek to benefit from different nation-state regimes by selecting different sites for investments, work, and family relocation. Compared with the older Chinese migrants, the lives of these highly skilled newcomers are never limited to an ethnic enclave economy. Due to their relatively short overseas experience, newcomers have comparatively weak social networks which limit their transnational opportunities. However, some of them still get the chance to participate in transnational professional practices because of their bilingual background and previous life or work experience in transnational social spaces. The increasing bilateral cooperation between China and the UK provide more transnational job opportunities for these young global talents. They have more self-confidence during their transnational mobility due to their accredited portable skills and technologies.

Case 2: Mr Ben Deng (28 years old), who obtained a Master’s degree in the UK, and is working as a Business Development Executive at MIDAS-the Manchester Investment & Development Agency Service.

Before I left China to study in the UK, I worked in public relations in Ogilvy. This is a famous international marketing and public relations agency based in the USA. This work experience played an important part for me in getting my job in the UK.

Now I work for MIDAS. It is Manchester’s inward investment agency. We act on behalf of ten local authorities of Greater Manchester. We provide an extensive, free and confidential package of advice and assistance for location consultants and potential investors from all over the world. I got this job opportunity when this company needed staff to take charge of inward investments from China. My Chinese background and previous work experience in public relations helped me to take this opportunity. I am the only Chinese person in my company. My clients are Chinese people who wish to invest in the UK. This job offers me a lot of opportunities to travel between China and the UK. I am the one who arranges international business trips to China for my colleagues. Next year I will accompany our

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\(^9\) Cited from the telephone interview with Mr. Huang, Dong, 19/05/2008.
company’s delegates to Shanghai to attend “Boao Forum for Asia”.\(^{94}\)

In this first stage of transnational practice, accumulating economic and social capital is rather important for transnational highly skilled newcomers such as Mr Deng to develop their transnational networks. Their occupations and activities require regular and sustained social contacts across national borders. This career and business practice is an important channel for building trans-boundary networks which are valuable for their future personal development. They transform knowledge, ideas, practices and resources through a set of multiple interlocking networks of social relationships. They possess multiple relations and diverse backgrounds in their transnational process. Like most transnational HSNCMs, their transnational social practices sustain ties of persons and networks across the national borders, ranging from individual to highly institutionalized forms. Though some of them may have a weak conception of ‘nation’, they would never refuse transnational mobilisation between China and the UK for their future.

Case 3: Mr Tao Zhou (28 years old), who obtained a Master’s degree in the UK, and is now working in the field of construction maintenance in Manchester.

Since I have decided to stay and work in the UK, the first thing I need to do is to get used to the life in the UK. I usually go to the pub with colleagues after work. At the weekends, I spend time with my friends in the Chinese Church. Of course, it is much easier to communicate with my Chinese friends. We have the same language and cultural background. Most of my friends are from China.

Job opportunity and personal income are what I will take into consideration first if I decide to work in China. I will also pay attention to the social stability and development in China. I keep in contact with my friends in China to stay up to date on domestic information. I will not choose other countries due to the higher cost of living, unless there is a rather good opportunity there.\(^{95}\)

Like Mr. Zhou, most newcomers feel that there is a cultural difference and learn to become acclimatised to transnational social spaces. A strong sense of belonging in the UK is probably not so common among newcomers, but they feel comfortable in transferring their Chinese lifestyle to the West if necessary. Besides career-related activities in the host society, experiencing a new culture is another part of transnational experience for these newcomers. Overseas

\(^{94}\) Boao Forum For Asia (BFA) is the most prestigious forum for leaders in government, business and academia in Asia and other continents. Here they share their visions regarding the most pressing issues in this dynamic region and the world at large.

\(^{95}\) Cited from the interview with Mr Zhou in Manchester, 19/08/2007.
experience not only improves their professional knowledge and skills, but also strengthens their bilingual ability and their cross-cultural knowledge. These achievements are especially prominent and become their social resources after several years of endeavour in transnational social spaces.

In general, the extent and depth of transnational practice by newcomers is much weaker than senior Chinese professional elites. Their role in transnational social spaces is not as prominent as that of their senior compatriots in the host country. However, it is a totally new start for their careers and business development. Their involvement in transnational social spaces leads to a broader prospect beyond national boundaries. Their transnational practice can be understood as within fluid social spaces that are constantly reconstructed through migrants’ simultaneous embeddedness in more than one society (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004).

In this stage of transnational practice, there is a watershed that leads to different ramifications of highly skilled mobility among newcomers. For example, some become successful transnational HSNCMs and develop their careers or business into a new level. Some cannot adapt to the transnational environment and retreat entirely from transnational social spaces. This group chooses either to return to work in China or completely focus on the market within the host country. There are others who have successful transnational experience but decide to return to China for better career and business development. Most of this group maintains transnational connection with the host society. To compare transnational practices by different groups of HSNCMs, in the next section we focus on the group of senior transnational HSNCMs.

7.2.2 Senior transnational HSNCMs and their on-going transnational practice

As professionals and cultural interpreters with good English skills, senior HSNCMs become “globetrotters” (Mahrum, 2000). Like newcomers, these senior migrants endeavour to pursue maximum benefits for themselves and their families at minimal risk in transnational social fields. Senior HSNCMs with resourceful transnational networks benefit from their cross-border practice. Although many of them finally settle down in host countries, they never entirely stop their transnational practice of moving between their new home and their
country of origin. They are simultaneously embedded in the multiple sites and layers of the transnational social fields in which they live.

Generally, there are two large groups of transnational senior HSNCMs in the UK. The first large group refers to those who migrated to the UK before 2000. They were mainly government-sponsored students or visiting scholars. Most of this group have PhD degrees in science and engineering and work in academic institutions. A few are working as senior engineers in industry. A small number of this group become entrepreneurs or are self-employed after a certain period of overseas working experience. The second group includes the HSNCMs who came to the UK after 2000. They were mainly self-financing students able to travel in the changed economic and political environment in China. Many have Master’s degrees in different academic areas such as accounting and finance, law or engineering. A certain number of people in this group obtain bachelor’s degrees or PhDs. Compared with the first group who mainly work in academic science or engineering, more HSNCMs in the second group are pursuing their overseas working experience in business or industry.

Due to the historical particularity of migrant individuals and diverse occupation backgrounds, senior transnational HSNCMs are involved in different kinds of transnational social fields with different clusters of transnational activities. Senior HSNCMs in academic area observed in our research have launched their transnational connection through academic exchange programmes initiated by China-based institutions or government-initiated incentive schemes. Company transfer and bilateral cooperation in economic and technology areas are main factors that encourage transnational engagement among those HSNCMs who work in business and industry. For the self-employed and entrepreneurs, it is an advantage to employ their transnational resources to develop business networks and expand business opportunity across national borders.

It appears that senior HSNCMs with higher human capital and social resources are more likely to participate in transnational activities between China and the UK. This finding is similar to the study result of Bloemradd (2007) who finds that the migrants with higher human capital are more likely to embrace dual citizenship than the economically marginalised. HSNCMs. With a solid foothold, they have greater economic ability and more social capital with which
to build transnational connections. A satisfactory level of integration into the host society may eventually increase their chances of successful transnational engagement and mobility. Meanwhile, the better they integrate into the receiving society, the more they will achieve in the society. These achievements are normally among the main criteria for the sending country to identify the outstanding talent from overseas. Life experience and achievement become transnational social capital for those outstanding highly skilled migrants.

Case 4: Dr Gang Chen, senior lecturer at the University of Manchester. Dr Gang is male and approximately 45 years old. As active association leaders and senior academic staff in the UK, transnational engagement between China and the UK has become part of his daily life.

I came to the UK in the early 1990s as a government-funded visiting scholar. At the time, I had realised that the academic environment in China was far behind that of Western countries. A year later I got a PhD scholarship and I chose to stay in the UK. I never imagined that I would stay in the UK for such a long time when I got my first offer from the UK. We settled down in the UK after my wife came with me as a dependant.

I think you will also have heard about the ‘glass ceiling’ before. In the UK, it is nearly impossible to find a Vice-Chancellor of a university who is from an ethnic minority group. We cannot do anything to change this reality. Things are quite different when we are in China. Frankly, I think that most of us keep up our interaction with China for two main reasons. First, we are attracted by the favourable domestic policy environment for Chinese people overseas and returnees. Second, they want to make some money from China.96

From the perspective of many senior highly skilled migrants, transnational practice is an alternative way to promote personal development. After at least five years’ overseas work experience, most of these elite migrants have realised that their ambitions of self-actualisation could not be fulfilled while they lived comfortable and relaxed lives in the UK. As a Chinese citizen or a previous Chinese citizen, it is a natural outcome for highly skilled migrants to be involved in the movement between China and the UK. Some senior talents such as Dr Chen who have an extended transnational network are beneficiaries of such cross-border interaction. Their transferable professional skills, cross-cultural knowledge and credentials in two national contexts enable them to transfer their social status from one country to another (as shown in the following table).

96 Cited from an interview with Dr Chen, Gang, Manchester, 04/19/2007.
Table 6.1 Transnational comparison of personal achievements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Main achievements in the UK</th>
<th>Main achievements in China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Song, Yong</td>
<td>Pro-Vice-Chancellors of a British University; Royal Academy of Engineering, UK.</td>
<td>The Expert Consultative Committee for Research Integrity under the MOST, overseas committee of Chinese Academy of Sciences; Executive President of Xi’an Jiaotong Liverpool University in 2007; Professor and Assistant Principal of Tsinghua University in 2009 etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peng, Qian</td>
<td>Principle Engineer in a famous transnational oil &amp; gas company; President of CBTTA.</td>
<td>Visiting professor of Sichuang University; member of the CPPCC national committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wang, Fan</td>
<td>Professor of Electrical &amp; Electronic Engineering (EEE) at the University of Manchester.</td>
<td>Fellow of Chinese Academy of Science; ‘a hundred talent plan’ award from the Chinese Academy of Sciences; one of the 120 overseas academics invited to attend the 50th birthday of the PR China in Beijing in 1999.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xiong, Fan</td>
<td>Principal process engineer in a transnational company.</td>
<td>Technical Director for China branch in 2007 by company assignment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

97 The data in this table are derived mainly from research interviews. More comparison of the transnational occupation can be viewed in the appendix to this paper.
98 Professor Song and Professor Wang are not our direct interviewees but we received a lot of information about them during our interviews with other senior HSNCMs. Some of this information is available through online news.
99 Ministry of Science and Technology, China.
100 China-Britain Technology Trade Association.
101 Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference.
The table above shows the juxtaposed positions of five senior HSNCMs between China and the UK. The same cases are also available for our other research interviewees. These highly skilled elites have relatively well developed careers in the UK. Their career achievements in the host society have been approved by Mainland China and the Chinese government. Their achievements in one country are successfully transferred as economic and social capital to the other country. There is no doubt that transposition can become an effective instrument with which to break through the ‘glass ceiling’ in the host society. The social reputation these elites have gained in China, to some extent, compensates for their sense of loss in the UK. In other words, their transnational decisions spring from a deep sense of dissatisfaction with their situation overseas. The potential returns in transnational spaces have become a strong incentive, promoting transnational mobility of these overseas elites.

For example, Prof. Song is one of the most successful academics in the UK. His diverse interactions have promoted the formation of a personal transnational network. He came to the UK in 1991 with a Royal Society Visiting Fellowship. He was the first fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering in the UK with an overseas Chinese background, as well as the first Chinese person from overseas to be appointed as Pro-Vice-Chancellor in a British university. These significant achievements in the UK have become social resources which have allowed him to engage effectively in transnational activities. As an outstanding scholar from overseas in the UK, Dr Song was invited to China for annual academic consultation. He is a member of the Expert Consultative Committee for Research Integrity in the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) in China. As a transnational outstanding talent, he is familiar with the British higher education system and has management experience and qualifications. He has an outstanding academic reputation and has achieved significant in Electrical Engineering area. Due to his great achievements both in China and the UK, Dr
Song became the Executive President of Xi’an Jiaotong Liverpool University in 2007. Now he is a professor and Assistant Principal of Tsinghua University, which is the most prestigious university in China.

It is clear that achievements in both China and the UK are key factors in promotion for talented individuals from overseas. These achievements are not the end of their transnational movements. As Dr Song said, “After becoming the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, I had a better platform to promote cooperation in the fields of science and education between China and the UK...” Transnational juxtaposition not only gives these individuals an alternative way in which to fulfil their ambitions, but also provides a good opportunity for them to promote bilateral cooperation.

Meanwhile, economic advancement and social recognition increases business opportunity for those senior HSNCMs between China and the UK. The economic and social capital obtained from transnational networks enables them to build business connections beyond national borders. For example, ‘Omega Travel Group’ and ‘Suman Education International’ are two successful business groups established by British senior HSNCMs. Most customers of these two companies are from China. The former is a leading travel agency and tour operator for international travel between China and the UK. Their product range currently encompasses retail, business, wholesale and tour operation. It benefits from the growing number of overseas Chinese students and professionals who require frequent travel between China and the UK. The second was established in Manchester, 2004. It benefits from globalisation strategy in education of Jiangsu Province, China. The founder is a senior highly skilled Chinese migrant with successful transnational business experience. He built this new business network with the government at home during a business visit to Jiangsu. The word ‘suman’ is the abbreviation of Jiangsu and Manchester, which represents the transnational cooperation between these two places. Every year a large group of students and teachers from Jiangsu comes to Manchester for short-term training. It is obvious that transnational business networks are indispensable for the survival and development of the same business.

In addition to the direct economic profits and social returns, political

102 Cited from a media interview by Xinhua Net, 04/01/2007
participation in China has become a by-product for some active overseas elites. Such transnational political participation usually attracts those HSNCMs who have achieved success in their careers. Although political participation is not as common as economic engagement during transnational practice, it is hard to deny its existence. Generally, these senior elites participate in political activities in China through two pathways: one is the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CCPCC), the other is a professional consultation service based on their transnational professional association. Due to the fact that most of these elites have British citizenship, they automatically lose the right to vote in Chinese political systems, such as the National People's Congress. The CCPCC is the alternative way for them to express their political expectations. Each year, many highly skilled migrants with outstanding achievements are invited to attend the CCPCC by the Chinese government. The transnational perspective of these overseas elites plays an indispensable role in the global integration of China.

Compared with political participation in the CCPCC, professional consultation activities based on transnational professional groups are more common and popular among professionals from overseas. The consultation services run by these individuals primarily focus on three aspects. First, they provide micro-strategic advice regarding the economic development of China. This advice is based on their perspectives as overseas professionals. Second, they use their transnational network to promote exchanges between China and the UK. Third, they provide professional consultations for China in order to accelerate international trade and cooperation.

Case 5 Dr Qian Peng, principle engineer in a transnational oil and gas company and the chairman of CBTTA. Dr Peng is male and 46 years old.

We have lived in the UK for over 20 years and have enough overseas work experience here. Sometimes, I feel my way of thinking is closer to that of Western people when I communicate with Chinese officials and compatriots in China. Although many Chinese people are willing to do business with Western countries, their way of thinking cannot be accepted by Western people. We are surrounded by a dual culture and that is why we can communicate with local institutions easily and appropriately. If we want to build international links, we must respect their culture first.

I was invited to the Chinese Embassy to give suggestions when China wanted to purchase products and methods from the UK. The Chinese officials only had general ideas, and they needed our professional advice in
different areas in order to promote their global trading plan. For example, they needed our suggestions in order to decide on the product list, the cooperation area with the UK and the range of this trading cooperation. Nearly 20 Chinese people working overseas in different professional areas attended that meeting. We were asked to send a report to the embassy after the meeting. The Chinese government respected our participation and we became the typical example of serving the country.103

As a Chinese citizen or a previous citizen, some overseas professionals do not hesitate to show their aspirations in the continuing rhetoric of ‘national loyalty’ (Yeoh, et al., 2003) towards China. This political ambition towards the sending country is rather distinct from the indifferent attitude towards political engagement in the host society. The transnational political participation of HSNCMs indicates that the links between citizens and the transnational state are multiplying rather than disappearing. Having a transnational social life does not reduce the significance or the durability of national or state borders. Instead, transnational states ‘reconfigure themselves’ (Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007) as part of their initiative to continue their influence on shaping transnational practices. China is a typical example in this area. The transnational political claim of HSNCMs reconstructs their relations with China and creates a multidimensional sense of reciprocity in economic, cultural and political areas. This transnational political participation somewhat reduces their sense of loss of political discourse in their host society.

In general, transnational senior HSNCMs are 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 societies. They have practical knowledge of their transnational social life and invest this practical knowledge in their ordinary activities. Their transnational practice can be viewed as the return of the native (Wu, 2004) in the globalisation context. The return of the native refers to the movement of those migrants who promote the development of the sending country in political, economic, cultural or social areas through the global knowledge learned from the host country (Ibid.). This movement is parallel to the globalisation process of these transnational migrants. It is also an effort on the part of these migrants to combine global and local resources to build up transnational relations between the sending country and the receiving country. As a result, their diverse

103 Cited from the interview with Dr Qian Pengin London, 10/05/2008.
transnational practice between China and the UK promotes their careers and business development to a new stage.

7.3 Transnational identities of HSNCMs

7.3.1 ‘Strangers’ and ‘potential wanderers’ in transnational social spaces

From the perspective of many transnational HSNCMs, cross-boundary mobility is a process of de-marginalisation in transnational social fields. Their life experience is an opposite of being fixed at a given point in space within national boundaries. They are ‘strangers’ in transnational social spaces. According to the definition put forward by Simmel, the meaning of ‘stranger’ is “not the sense often touched upon in the past, as the wanderer who comes today and goes tomorrow, but rather as the person who comes today and stays to tomorrow” (Wolff, 1950: p.402-03). In other words, HSNCMs are ‘potential wanderers’ whose position as full-fledged members of a transnational area involves being both inside and outside this area. Their position as ‘transnational strangers’ and ‘potential wanderers’ in transnational social spaces is determined essentially by the fact that they do not belong to these spaces from the beginning.

Transnational migrants are fundamentally mobile people who are not organically connected members of the local community through established ties of kinship, locality, and so on. According to Schutz (1944), a stranger is a cultural translator. The process of his/her adaption into a new social group is also the process of his/her re-interpretation of a new culture mode. As an interpreter of this transnational culture mode, HSNCMs find it hard to form a natural attitude as natives. They are inseparable from their mother culture. On the one hand, HSNCMs never stop integrating into the host society; on the other hand, they retain their sense of being an overseas Chinese due to their unique transnational experience. They fall on different positions on a mobility continuum as strangers with the ability to move across the transnational space. Their marginalised features and their transnational ability allow them to move freely and smoothly in the era of globalisation.

When we were young, we did not realise that we were missing our previous life in China so much. I think that many overseas Chinese people who have been living outside China for a certain number of years have the
same feeling as me. I cannot stop asking myself whether I should go back [to China] or not. Am I going to live in the UK for my whole life?\footnote{Cited from the interview with Dr Hong Yu, 04/12/2008, London, UK.}

We need to learn to change our previous perceptions about our daily life. When I took my daughter to her classmate’s birthday party for the first time, I only brought a small box of plasticine with poor packaging. I did not know I should bring a card for the child whose birthday it was until I had attended several parties… I still feel embarrassed when thinking of such experiences.\footnote{Cited from the interview with Ling Wang, 10/07/2008, Reading, UK.}

Like many Chinese people overseas, our minds will probably change after several years and we settle down completely in the UK. Anyway, it is not easy to change our Chinese ways and philosophies though it is not a problem for me to transfer between one lifestyle and another.\footnote{Cited from the telephone interview with Mr. Huang, Dong, 19/05/2008.}

As the above interview data show, a special reciprocal tension produces the particular, formal relationship between HSNCMs, the sending country and the receiving country. The objectivity of HSNCMs is a particular structure composed of distance and nearness, indifference and involvement in transnational social spaces. The element of distance is no less general in regard to them than the element of nearness. For example, when going back to China as returners from overseas, HSNCMs are reminded of their different life experience by their domestic compatriots. While staying in the receiving country as a sojourner or a settler, intentionally or unintentionally their Chinese cultural identity differentiates them from those with the locally natural attitudes. As transnational strangers and potential wanderers, they are “by nature no ‘owners of soil’– soil not only in the physical, but also in the figurative sense of a life-substance which is fixed, if not in a point in space, at least in an ideal point of the social environment” (Wolff, 1950: p.402).

The historical and geographical perspective reveals that HSNCMs identify themselves not only on a spatial horizontal axis but also on a historical vertical axis. The historical memory of life in China still functions in their daily life. They are dispersed across many diverse regions of the world but retain “a myth of their uniqueness and an interest in their homeland” (Kearney, 1992, cited in Gonzalez and Dollar, 1992: p.31). As organic member of the transnational community, HSNCMs import the qualities of potential wanderers into both the sending and receiving communities. The elements of HSNCMs produce a pattern of coordination and consistent interaction with China and the receiving
Transnational experience is a process whereby immigrants construct and sustain numerous social relationships between the society from which they originate and that in which they have settled. Trans-migrants sustain these many relationships across borders, and their particular situation can be fully defined neither within their country of residence, nor within their home country. It can only be defined within the social sphere formed in between. In this perspective, citizens of a nation-state may live dispersed within the boundaries of various other states, but they still belong to it socially, politically, culturally and often economically. These relationships are positioned in a space that associates central states which are economically hegemonic and peripheral states which are dominated. Spiderweb networks link these transmigrants within a transnational social space. The identity of the different transnational individuals then requires reconsideration, since they are no longer territorialised, nor are they included in spaces clearly delineated by borders, or spaces that are culturally homogeneous. Identities are increasingly defined by reference to dominant powers, and in opposition towards them, and boundaries that are not strictly defined. The people, organizations, and networks constitute and are constituted by transnational social fields and embedded in them in different ways (Faist, 1999). Transnational social spaces or social fields form a triadic connection that links transmigrants, the sending country and the country of origin. This triadic connection is dynamic, mutable, and dialectical.

The feeling of alienation and the expectation of permanent residence in the host country typifies the paradox of transnational life for HSNCMs. It is a fact that a high percentage of these Chinese migrants are known for having university degrees or other professional qualifications. They will probably get their ideal job in the receiving country. However, their lives in the host society may well be different from what they imagined before leaving their home country. As some of our cases have shown, there are many institutional hurdles which thwart highly skilled migrants attempting to integrate into mainstream society. The subjects repeatedly came across a series of socio-cultural barriers that prevented most of them from moving onto a higher career level. For example, their previous work experience and qualifications in China were often not recognised by the local society. To break these barriers, some choose to
obtain a local degree first before job seeking; some have to do a job in lower level first and find new opportunities at the same time. Their circumstances were not entirely free, as their environments were controlled and shaped by nation-states and capital markets (Ong 1998: p.112).

Changing life priorities and transnational strategies becomes the key to start a new life for these people. In order to de-marginalise their situation in transnational social fields, trans-boundary interaction with their home country is common practice for some HSNCMs. The frequency and intensity of their transnational practices with their home country have been reinforced in response to the intensification of globalisation. They make efforts to become integrated into the host society on one hand and keep their natural link with their home country in order to break the ‘glass ceiling’ on the other. As the case studies have shown, this strategic change is not simply a result of pressure from the community or their respect for their cultural heritage. It is mainly driven by the need to break down boundaries against personal development in transnational spaces.

7.3.2 Transnational identities and Chinese consciousness

As our research shows, HSNCMs do not perceive themselves as sojourners, settlers or return migrants. Their transnational identities are flexible and situational, depending on specific contexts and ongoing negotiations between interacting parties in the transnational social space. HSNCMs will adjust their identities in order to pursue the best possible life for themselves and their family. Their personal identity is beyond national boundaries, and transnational identity is a popular concept. In other words, a transnational identity is located on a continuum with floating and changeable features. The fluidity of inclusion and exclusion is a central element of transnational highly skilled migration. This is a natural outcome for most highly skilled migrants.

In the view of some scholars, immigrants were not simply uprooted from one set of social relationships and absorbed into another, only capable of maintaining involvement in one community defined by the nation-state (Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc, 1992; Levitt and Jaworsky, 2007). Instead, migrants constructed complex transnational and multicultural identities through their multiple links and orientations towards both the sending and the receiving country. They use their social relationships and identities both to accommodate
to the difficult circumstances and the dominant ideologies they encounter in their transnational fields (Glick Schiller, Basch and Szanton Blanc, 1999). Socio-economic mobility of HSNCMs can be achieved across national boundaries without total assimilation into the culture and institutions of the host society. They are embedded in networks stretching across multiple states, and migrants’ identities and cultural production reflect their multiple locations (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004).

The world, in my eyes, is a big city. I want to become a messenger and explore this ever-changing place and communicate with different people from different backgrounds. As to my future, I want to have my own company, either in China or in the UK. I do not think I will cut off any transnational social connections in the future.¹⁰⁷

Levitt and Glick Schiller (2004, p. 1010) distinguish between ‘ways of being’ and ‘ways of belonging’ as analytic lenses with which to clarify the organisation, meaning and implications of immigrant transnationalism. According to their perspective, ‘ways of being’ are the actual social relations and practices that individuals engage in, while ‘ways of belonging’ are those practices which signal or enact identity demonstrating a conscious connection to a particular group. That means, individual can be embedded in a social field but not identify with any label or cultural politics associated with that field. A transnational social space is not an autonomous entity. The consciousness and interpretations of its agents are essential components of the full reality of the transnational social world. As Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: p.9) illustrates, society is crucially composed of representation and the will of agents, although it has an objective structure.

I applied for British citizenship for no reason other than it would allow me to travel more flexibly to different countries. I need to apply for a visa for most other countries if I keep my Chinese nationality. I think most Chinese people who are overseas like to keep their dual citizenship if it is allowed by the Chinese government.¹⁰⁸

For some HSNCMs, applying for permanent residence follows the ‘ways of being’. This practice does not directly relate to personal identity but facilitates flexible mobility beyond national borders. In their eyes, a British passport is an instrument and does not directly relate to their identity. After a

¹⁰⁷ Cited from the interview with Mr. Deng, Ben in Manchester, 06/02/2008. Mr. Deng is now studying for a PhD in Marketing and Advertising at the University of Manchester and is a part-time DJ for BBC Radio Manchester.

¹⁰⁸ Cited from an interview with Dr Chen, Gang, Manchester, 04/19/2007.
certain number of years living and working abroad, most HSNCMs will apply for indefinite leave to remain or citizenship in their host countries. Others still retain their Chinese citizenship as migrant workers, but they never stop fighting for their personal welfare in transnational social fields.

Identity, for many HSNCMs, is a kind of strategy with which to evaluate their transnational practice. HSNCMs consider identity and dual loyalty as a transnational strategy for the construction of networks connecting transnational states and their personal development. Transnational identity construction is a way of reducing the uncertainty of the global social environment. Identity strategies are flexible strategies with which to obtain competitive advantages and to mobilise existing transnational networks when geographical expansion becomes attractive. The transnational arrangement has been an important part of highly skilled migrants’ lifestyles. Living in two countries helps them to understand differences in cultures and social lives. Identity construction helps them to move to wherever is necessary in order to maximise the benefits. Identity changes as time passes, and the personal identity of HSNCMs becomes mixed up or segmented. Identity construction creates symbolic capital which can be transferred to social or economic capital.

In the case of highly skilled migrants, their transnational identities are accompanied by their Chinese consciousness. They never deny their cultural affiliation with China, even after many years of living abroad. Their transnational activities are sometimes labelled ‘patriotism’ in public discourse in China. However, they have their own interpretation of their interaction with China. According to their perceptions, frequent connections with compatriots at home are not only the result of cultural and national reactions but also have a pragmatic function in their careers and business development. Patriotism, to some extent, plays a symbolic role in endowing individual transnational activity with large social and economic returns. These perceptions of personal identity are common, especially among some overseas elite groups who have close connections with mainland China.

Chinese consciousness may be traced back to the Chinese culture of ‘nation’. ‘Nation’ or ‘country’ in Chinese is a combination of two Chinese words: “Guo” and “Jia”. “Guo” means nation or country, and “Jia” means “family” or “home”. From the perspective of the Chinese, the destinies of individuals and families
are bound together with the future of the nation. Even HSNCMs retain the same consciousness regarding their motherland during their long period of experience overseas. “We represent our motherland when we are abroad”\(^{109}\), said one subject. The same declaration is popular among overseas students and scholars. “Long-distance nationalism is a set of ideas about belonging that link together people living in various geographic locations and motivate or justify their taking action in relation to an ancestral territory and its government” (Levitt and Glick Schiller, 2004, p.199).

HSNCMs engage in socio-cultural and socio-political activities, involving a sense of belonging, lifestyle, network and personal identity. Their “astronaut-orientated” (Ong, 1999) mode reveals that these transnational migrants take up residence in the host society but spend significant periods of time physically outside their host country. They reconfigure their Chinese identity with transnational character, being conditioned by global political and economic changes. Some events which transgress national boundaries may become the background and impetus for the transformation of the identities of highly skilled migrants. “Transnationalism makes the home country an identity pole, the country of residence a source of rights, and the new transnational space an area of political action associating both countries, and sometimes others as well” (Kastoriano, 2000: p.358).

7.4 ‘Bifocality’ strategy and its influence

Transnational migration studies have reminded us that nation-states and national societies are not the only units or contexts for migration. Vertovec (2004) goes further in suggesting how the ‘bi-focality’ of transnational migration affects other global processes, such as economic development. According to the basic theories of Vertovec (2004, p.971), ‘bifocality’ is an enhanced mode of transformation with dual orientations in a social-cultural domain. Such dual orientations underpin the lives of migrants both here and there. The transnational practices of migrants are involved in more deep-seated patterns of change or structural transformation. ‘Bifocality’ has a considerable influence on transnational lives and identities, making a contribution to the wider processes of globalisation.

\(^{109}\) Cited from the interview with Mr Tao Zhou in Manchester, 19/08/2007
The concept of ‘nation’ is weak in my mind. However, that does not mean that we do not want to make a contribution to China. Instead, we are doing different but irreplaceable things for China. We are happy to promote the exchange of techniques between the two countries through our special cross-border activities.\footnote{Cited from the interview with Dr Tian Jiang in Manchester, 25/05/2007.}

According to the perspective adopted for this research, ‘bifocality’ is a strategy-generating orientation which enables transnational agents to cope with their ever-changing situations. It is a system of lasting and transposable dispositions which, through the integration of past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions and actions. It makes the achievement of a diverse range of transnational tasks possible. However, ‘bifocality’ does not always work in the daily life of HSNCMs. It may be understood as virtual sedimentary situations lodged inside the body of transnational migrants. The bifocal mode of transformation has been adopted in a diverse range of situations, and depends on the individual’s changing needs and desires throughout their life experience. If necessary, ‘bifocality’ will be reactivated and re-constructed in different nation-state regimes in order to find a balance between the sending and receiving countries. Rather than as a spatial practice engineered by a borderless world, ‘bifocality’ is a result of negotiations between diverse transnational powers.

The ‘bifocal strategy’, is largely an instrumental transnational practice. For example, in the views of many HSNCMs, applying for citizenship in the host society is a compromise chosen to facilitate their transnational activities. Citizenship becomes a means for migrant elites to participate in the global labour market. It is no longer a testimony to a person’s loyalty to a nation-state. Meanwhile, patriotism does not disappear but survives as an instrument to promote capital accumulation and other ethnic-specific modes of social production and reproduction in diaspora (Nyiri 2001). Displays of patriotism in public narratives are symbolic instruments demonstrating loyalty in front of an official audience in China, and thereby, ultimately, of capital accumulation. As Snel et al. (2006) found out, transnational involvement in general does not impede immigrant integration but reinforces their bi-focal status. Through this ‘bifocal’ strategy, highly skilled migrants continuously translate their economic
and social position gained in one political setting into political, social and economic capital in another.

Obviously, ‘bifocal’ identity construction is a ‘dual-track demarginalization’ (Jia, 2006: p.209) strategy for highly skilled migrants. Highly skilled migrants switch between different cultural contexts and choose the way they prefer to identify themselves depending on the circumstances. ‘Bifocal’ identity construction maintains the identity of HSNCMs in both the sending and receiving countries. It offers the advantages of self-fulfilment, freedom and flexibility, and is a way of fighting discrimination and the ‘glass ceiling’ in the host society.

The ‘bifocality’ of highly skilled migrants accelerates brain circulation and promotes the mobility of the highly skilled in the era of globalisation. A large number of HSNCMs take part in socio-cultural transnational activities including periodic business trips, lecture tours, workshops and other socio-economic performances. Through transnational mobility, these highly skilled migrants attain personal satisfaction and move up another step in their career. Mobility allows them to expand their business opportunities and advance their personal careers in transnational social spaces.

The bifocal strategy has strengthened, rather than negated, the transnational networks between HSNCMs and the sending country. Due to the racial hierarchy in the host society, migrants may find that they have unequal opportunities in their social lives. The experience of being a stranger in transnational social fields causes migrants to resort to previous ties for practical and emotional resources. The feeling of being loyal to the motherland or patriotic does not disappear, but acts partly as an instrument to promote the accumulation of capital. The more transnational capital is obtained, the more opportunities there will be to employ the ‘bifocal’ strategy, and vice versa. With the best opportunity in transnational social spaces, the highly skilled have the resources to slip in and out of different cultural niches. As transnational agents, highly skilled migrants can develop self-reproducing energy in order to sustain the continuity of their movements.

In the transnational identity construction process, the ‘bifocal’ strategy has been successfully employed by many HSNCMs in order to counter their marginalised status. Many HSNCMs attempt to integrate into mainstream
society once they are allowed to stay. However, they will be pushed in another direction when their initial efforts fail to carry them into mainstream society. There appears to be a continuous zigzag pattern in the process of identity construction. For most HSNCMs, their renewed loyalty and patriotism towards China is a way to resolve predicaments or dilemmas in their host society. The presentation of patriotism in public narratives and ceremonies is a symbolic way of proving one’s personal loyalty to an official audience in China. This presentation of loyalty has facilitated the accumulation of capital for many HSNCMs. If their situation changes, they will once again turn their attention to building up their lives in the UK. The trade-off expressed in this identity construction strategy features both periodicity and continuity. HSNCMs, to some extent, consume and internalise the production of public narratives of identity.

For many highly skilled migrants, transnational mobility and ‘bifocality’ are essential to their socio-economic success across borders. Transnational practices with valuable social capital can foster the horizontal and vertical integration of these highly skilled people. Their transferable skills such as their bicultural and bilingual skills help them to circumvent structural disadvantages in the host society. As Porters (2007) discovered, transnational participants are not generally the most recent or the least integrated immigrants, but those who have more socio-economic resources to hand in their transnational social spaces.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the transnational practice, identity and ‘bococality’ strategy of individual HSNCMs in the UK. Our research showed the diversity of the transnational practice of individual HSNCMs. In general, senior HSNCMs with resourceful transnational networks and social capital have more opportunities to participate in transnational careers and business activities between China and the receiving country. The achievements in the host society are normally important criteria for the sending country when identifying outstanding talent from overseas.

Our research has allowed us to recognize multiple transnational identities among HSNCMs. Their transnational identities are rather flexible and can be adjusted in order to pursue the best possible life for themselves and their
families. Their transnational identities are often combined with Chinese consciousness. For many, the destinies of individual and family were bound together with the future of the motherland. They never renounce their cultural affiliation with China, and their transnational activities are sometimes labelled “patriotism” in public discourse in China.

We have examined the ‘Bifocality’ (Vertovec, 2004) strategy of HSNCMs. According to the perspective for our research, ‘bifocality’ is a strategy-generating orientation which enables transnational agents to cope with their ever-changing situations. ‘Bifocality’ is reactivated and re-constructed in different nation-state regimes to find a balance between the sending and receiving countries. This strategic is driven by need to break down boundaries against personal development in transnational spaces. As a result, ‘bifocality’ strategy, together with identity construction strategy, encourages the transnational network connection and brain circulation among HSNCMs between the sending country and the receiving country.

Generally, HSNCMs are not the group that either stays permanently in the host country, or lodges temporarily and then returns. Many of today’s migrants are part of broader transnational occupations. The transnational backgrounds of HSNCMs enable them to adopt multiple identities in transnational social spaces. With the transnational advantages such as portable skills and bilingual ability, HSNCMs increase transnational cooperation between China and the UK. This helps the HSNCMs by highlighting their visibility, extending their personal transnational network resources and expanding the personal development potential in transnational social spaces. Though many transnational HSNCMs find satisfactory career development in the host country, they never cut off transnational social links with China.

For China, HSNCMs act as a medium connecting the world. The transnational mobility of highly skilled migrants accelerates brain circulation and promotes the mobility of the highly skilled in the era of China’s globalisation. A large number of highly skilled migrants take part in socio-cultural transnational activities including periodic business trips, lecture tours, and other socio-economic performances. Through transnational mobility, these highly skilled migrants attain personal satisfaction and advance their careers.
The transnational mobility of the highly skilled allows them to expand their business opportunities and advance their personal careers.
Chapter 8 Conclusion

This research has explored the transnational careers and business practice of the British HSNCMs and their relations with China’s globalisation since 1990. The relationship between the transnational practice of HSNCMs, brain circulation and China’s globalisation was analyzed from the research findings. Building on existing brain circulation studies, this paper has introduced the perspectives of transnational social fields and transnational social spaces to support the theoretical framework for the research. Three main related topics were discussed: First, we examined the state initiatives that had direct impact on the transnational mobility of HSNCMs in the UK. Second, we attempted a systematic analysis of the transnational network building of OCP associations between HSNCMs and China. Third, individual transnational career and business activities and identity politics of HSNCMs were discussed with the object of understanding China’s brain circulation in the UK context.

To study these topics, multi-sited field work was conducted over two years in Manchester, London, Beijing, and Shanghai from the summer of 2007. Thirty-six transnational HSNCMs with different occupational backgrounds were interviewed. The sample was generated through a snowballing strategy whereby people interviewed were asked to introduce other potential informants. An additional three interviews were conducted with Chinese officials from different China-based institutions in 2008 to extend the understanding of transnational interactions between HSNCMs and China. Beside multi-cited field work, documentation and demographic statistics were another two sources for data collection.

In terms of our research, the UK experience of highly skilled new Chinese migration enriched the existing paradigm of brain circulation which was normally developed from the transnational experience in the United States, Canada and Australia (Zweig and Chen 1995; Saxenian, 2005; Chen, 2008). Some findings of the transnational careers and business practice of British HSNCMs were distinct by comparison with some studies on HSNCMs in other countries. Diverse forms of transnational interaction between British HSNCMs
and China extended our knowledge of transnational migration theories and brain circulation studies.

8.1 The key findings

The main empirical findings of our research were presented in Chapters 4-7. To begin with, chapter 4 covers some fundamental research into the transnational careers and business mobility of HSNCMs in the UK. It offers a general picture of HSNCMs in the UK for the first time, including their history, size, formation, features and transnational communities. The transnational features of HSNCMs in the UK were prominent. Compared with unskilled and low skilled migrants, British HSNCMs had more diverse transnational opportunities between China and the host country by employing their global knowledge and ‘portable skills’. The transnational communities of British HSNCMs included their different organizations and online social spaces which made the transnational practice of HSNCMs possible. In line with China’s globalization and socio-economic development, more HSNCMs in the UK gained transnational career opportunities between China and the UK. Meanwhile, many overseas returnees from the UK still kept their transnational links through their previous networks in the UK.

Chapter 5 argued that China’s initiatives, together with immigration policy in the sending country, had a direct impact on the transnational capacity of HSNCMs and their brain circulation activities. State initiatives were especially important in the political context of China. This finding supported the research by Xiang (2005; 2011) and Zweig and Chuang (2008). As this chapter analyzed, a flexible policy environment, where HSNCMs can combine entitlements from more than one country, is essential to achieve three-way success for the sending country, the receiving country and HSNCMs.

As the research into UK immigration policy showed, the policy impact on flows of highly skilled migration has been effective. Flexible immigration policy has facilitated the transnational practice of HSNCMs while conservative immigration system restricted their right of free movement in transnational social spaces. Meanwhile, initiatives from the sending state created opportunities for highly skilled emigrants in their sending countries while they lived in the host society. China followed the diaspora approach (Meyer, et al.,
1997) and viewed the existence of HSNCMs as human resources abroad. China’s diaspora option was distinct due to the powerful state capitalism (Binns, 1975; Johnson, 1995; Bremmer, 2010). Through the incentive schemes, the Chinese government integrated the affairs of HSNCMs into the cause of national construction. The transnational connection initiated by the Chinese government not only transcended central government control at home, but also contributed to the globalisation of China through the ‘going out’ strategy. By scrutinizing the existing issues relating to HSNCMs, our research suggested that it was necessary for the sending country to provide adequate conditions for the implementation of existing incentive schemes. As Xiang suggested, a proper mix of government policy and market mechanism seems a key to achieving sustainable brain circulation for China (2011). If policy frameworks and supportive strategies from sending countries can be achieved and implemented, perhaps in the future questions of migration drain would cause less concern (2006, p. 147).

Chapter 6 discussed the transnational network initiated by OCP associations. In this chapter, the transnational network building launched by the British OCP association was shown to be highly institutionalized with huge support from the Chinese government. For the members of OCP associations, their motivation to become involved in the network building was not only for directly economic profits, but also for resourceful social and symbolic capital. As Xiang states, the transnational networks between HSNCMs and the Chinese government are an outcome of synergy between formal and informal networks (2005). We argue that the interweaving of informal and formal networks is one of the main features of the transnational networks of British OCP associations.

In our argument, the original term ‘reciprocal pragmatism’ was defined to describe a negotiation process in which HSNCMs and transnational stakeholders may enter into a greater sharing profit in different transnational social spaces. Through the reciprocal pragmatism process, HSNCMs integrate their transnational careers and business practice into government-initiated programmes. This chapter suggested that, besides the national and cultural resonance in transnational social space, institutional promotion and reciprocal pragmatism was pivotal for the construction of transnational networks between the Chinese government and HSNCMs. Meanwhile, two driving forces behind
the mechanism of the transnational network were introduced: OCP associations as the driving force from below and overseas agencies of the Chinese government from above. These two driving forces functioned together through the national project of serving China. During this process, formal networks interweaved with informal networks, which formed a main feature of transnational networks.

Our research revealed that transnational network building between OCP associations and the Chinese government played an important part in promoting the brain circulation of HSNCMs and the globalisation of China. There were extensive uses of such associations to facilitate business and career ties among the HSNCMs as well as between them and their compatriots in China. We argue that the transnational network building of OCP associations was a process of globalisation from below.

Chapter 7 focused on the transnational practice and identity construction of individual HSNCMs. Our research showed the diversity of transnational practice of different groups of HSNCMs. In general, senior HSNCMs with resourceful transnational networks and social capital had more opportunities to participate in the transnational careers and business activities between China and the receiving country. Through transnational careers and business practice, HSNCMs attained personal satisfaction and moved up another rung in their careers. The transnational mobility of the highly skilled was a way for them to expand their business opportunities and advance their personal careers. A relatively solid foothold in the receiving country was an advantage for them in the struggle to attain more transnational social and economic capital. However, venture capital which played an important part in promoting the brain circulation in the United States (Saxenian, 2005) was rather weak in the UK experience. Instead, some British HSNCMs focused on business in cultural and educational areas to find more flexible transnational opportunities. A large number of British HSNCMs took part in socio-cultural transnational activities including periodical business trips, lecture tours, and other socio-economic performances.

Meanwhile, we observed diverse transnational identities among HSNCMs due to their different overseas experience. HSNCMs will adjust their identities in order to pursue the best possible life for themselves and their family. Their
transnational identities are often combined with the Chinese consciousness. HSNCMs often employ ‘bifocality’ (Vertovec, 2004) strategy for better transnational development. This strategy is an enhanced mode of transformation with dual orientation in a social-cultural domain. According to the perspective in our research, ‘bifocality’ is a strategy-generating orientation which enables transnational agents to cope with their ever-changing situations. ‘bifocality’ can be reactivated and re-constructed in different nation-state regimes in order to find a balance between the sending and receiving countries. This strategic change was not simply a result of pressure from the community or their respect for their cultural heritage. It was mainly driven by a motivation to break down boundaries against personal development in transnational spaces. As a result, ‘bifocality’ strategy, together with identity construction strategy, encouraged the brain circulation of HSNCMs between the sending country and the receiving country.

8.2 Brain circulation and the globalisation of China

In our research, the transnational careers and business practice of HSNCMs had straightforward impact both on brain circulation and China’s globalisation. There was an interwoven relationship between the transnational practice of HSNCMs, brain circulation and the globalisation of China. This interwoven relationship is the outcome of transnational interaction between the initiatives from China and the initiatives from HSNCMs. On the one hand, China’s transnational policy engagement not only facilitated the transnational practice and networking building of HSNCMs, but also promoted China’s globalisation strategy of ‘inviting in and going out’ (Liu, 1999). On the other hand, the transnational network building of OCP associations and the transnational practice of individual HSNCMs accelerated China’s brain circulation and made a large contribution to the development of China. The transnational networks between HSNCMs and the sending country played an important part for cultural communications, social connections and economic circles (Wang, 2006) between HSNCMs and their compatriots at home. These transnational networks acted as a forum to establish contacts with China and cultivate collaboration among HSNCMs and as an institutionalized mechanism to carry out knowledge exchange and brain circulation.
In general, the transnational interaction between the HSNCMs and China provides invaluable resources both for the Chinese government and HSNCMs. The transnational networks between HSNCMs and China are explicitly and intimately linked with the creation and expansion of growing brain circulation. These transnational networks supported the sending state to capture benefits and know-how from emigrants overseas. We have observed that the FCPS-UK and its affiliated OCP associations made a series of efforts to promote the brain circulation between China and the UK. The transnational practice of OCP associations usually results in the establishment of international co-ordination between the sending country and the receiving country. OCP associations in host society as a driving force from below promoted the brain circulation and transnational network building with China. A series of activities employing bilateral cooperation in economic-cultural areas would not have worked smoothly without the involvement of British HSNCMs. With the support of the Chinese government, some HSNCMs promoted their personal development in transnational social fields, and finally embraced their individual development into the national project of serve the country.

Meanwhile, like in India, Brazil, Taiwan and Mexico, a brain drain from China became brain circulation which showed a significant rate of return migration (Lowell and Gerova, 2004). Those overseas returnees with transnational connection brought valuable skills and transnational connections for China’s development. As our research has showed, the transnational practice of overseas returnees stimulated a reverse flow of technological capacity and social economic resources between the sending country and the receiving country. They introduced global advanced skills and technologies to China and increased China’s capacity for global competition.

As our research showed, transnational network building initiated by OCP associations played an important role in supporting globalisation strategies. The network building had special significance for China’s symbolic and actual presence overseas, and promotes China’s ‘grassroots globalization’ or ‘globalization from below’ (Appadurai, 2001: p.17). Through this network building, China’s globalisation strategy gets a response beyond national boundaries. Current globalization is a process in which different cultures compete with each other. At the beginning of China’s reform and opening up,
China was marginalized in the Western-centric global area but was then brought in line with international practice. Transnational mobility of new Chinese migrants was viewed as a representation of the globalization of China, and the attitude and policy of the Chinese government towards these Chinese migrants is considered to be a part of the globalization of China (Pieke, Nyiri, Thuno, Ceccagno, 2004).

Compared with brain circulation from other countries, China’s brain circulation has some distinct characteristics. Compared with the brain circulation in South African, Latin America, and even in some advanced countries like France, Germany, and Switzerland (OECD, 2001), China made more strenuous efforts to promote the transnational involvement of HSNCMs. Besides government-initiated incentive schemes, a transnational service network was established to promote the brain circulation of HSNCMs. China’s state power supported its outreach in transnational social spaces. “In the globalization era, the state *per se* has been a part of globalization and a major driving force behind the process. Governments are not the passive victims of internationalization but its primary architects” (Zheng, 2004: p.22). The Chinese government played an indispensable role in promoting the transnational network building between China and HSNCMs. Globalization facilitates contact with its transnational citizens and pre-citizens.

This paper argues that the transnational mobility of HSNCMs accelerates China’s brain circulation and promotes the mobility of the highly skilled in the era of globalisation. The relations between the transnational practice of HSNCMs, brain circulation and the globalisation of China are discussed in the theoretical framework that put brain circulation studies into the general framework of transnational migration studies in general and transnational social spaces in particular. Main topics related to brain circulation and transnational migration studies are explored in the Chinese context: state initiatives, transnational network building between highly skilled migrants and the sending country, and the transnational practice of individual highly skilled migrants and their identity. The experience of British HSNCMs has enriched transnational highly skilled migration studies and extends our knowledge of China’s brain circulation in socio-political context.
Some issues remain to be discussed in China’s brain circulation. For example, China’s state power could have a negative impact on the transnational practice of HSNCMs. The ‘ritual economy’ (Xiang, 2011) was one of the typical issues in the Chinese cultural-political context. Some OCP associations exist more in name than in reality. The potential of some government-initiated programmes do not show immediately. Though the formal and informal networks are important for obtaining economic, social and symbolic capital for HSNCMs, a large number of senior HSNCMs without resourceful social relations may lose opportunity in transnational social spaces. Some other issues such as gender and stratification also require further attention in future research.
### Appendix 3.1 Migration background of the interviewees in the UK (UK part)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case number</th>
<th>Interviewees</th>
<th>Interview date</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Original place in China</th>
<th>Time to the UK</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Education background</th>
<th>Migration category</th>
<th>Visa category or residential status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chen, Gang</td>
<td>19-Apr-2007</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>Shandong</td>
<td>Early 1990s</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>student-turn-migration</td>
<td>British citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chen, Fang</td>
<td>21-Apr-2008</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>Zhejiang</td>
<td>Early 1990s</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>dependant</td>
<td>British citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chen, Zhen</td>
<td>8-May-2007</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>Jiangsu</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>professional</td>
<td>Permanent residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Deng, Ben</td>
<td>6-Feb-2008</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>Guangdong</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>student-turn-migration</td>
<td>Tier 1 highly skilled workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Gao, Zhi</td>
<td>22-Aug-2007</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>Zhejiang</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>student-turn-migration</td>
<td>Tier 4 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Huang, Dong</td>
<td>19-May-2008</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>Fujian</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>professional</td>
<td>Tier 2 skilled workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Jia, Ning</td>
<td>26-Aug-2007</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>Shanghai</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>professional</td>
<td>Tier 2 skilled workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jiang, Hui</td>
<td>11-Apr-2008</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>Xinjiang</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>overseas official</td>
<td>Tier 2 skilled workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Jiang, Tian</td>
<td>25-May-2008</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>Heilongjiang</td>
<td>Early 1990s</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>student-turn-migration</td>
<td>British citizenship</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

111 This research uses false names for all interviewees in consideration of confidentiality.

112 The new point-based system has replaced the old immigration policy. This visa category entails some revision and it is based on the new immigration policy system. For example, ‘Tier 2 skilled workers’ replaces the work permit system in the previous policy system.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Year of Arrival</th>
<th>Degree</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Tier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Liang, Feng</td>
<td>9-May-2008</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>Fujian</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Master professional</td>
<td>Tier 2 skilled workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Liang, Mark</td>
<td>13-Apr-2008</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>Jiangsu</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>student-turn-migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Peng, Qian</td>
<td>10-May-2008</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>Sichuan</td>
<td>Early 1990s</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>student-turn-migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Sun, Ding</td>
<td>22-Arg-2007</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>Zhejiang</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>student-turn-migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Su, Hong</td>
<td>10-May-2008</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>Sichuan</td>
<td>Early 1990s</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Bachelor dependant</td>
<td>British citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Teng, xie</td>
<td>17-Jul-2007</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>Heilongjiang</td>
<td>Early 1990s</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>student-turn-migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Wang, Zheng</td>
<td>20-Arg-2007</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>Zhejiang</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Wei, Gan</td>
<td>4-Apr-2008</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>student-turn-migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Xiong, Fan</td>
<td>28-May-2008</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>Hubei</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Zhu, Hong</td>
<td>12-Apr-2008</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>Guangxi</td>
<td>Early 1990s</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>student-turn-migration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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# Appendix 3.2 Occupation comparison: before migration and after migration (UK part)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case number</th>
<th>Interviewees</th>
<th>Occupation after migration</th>
<th>Occupation before migration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chen, Gang</td>
<td>Reader in University of Manchester</td>
<td>Lecturer in Northwest Institute of Textiles Science and Technology, China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chen, Fang</td>
<td>Head of School Administration (Strategic Support) and Deputy Director in Confucius Institute, Manchester</td>
<td>Professional in a transnational company, Shanghai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Chen, Zhen</td>
<td>Senior Lecture in University of Manchester</td>
<td>Lecturer in Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Deng, Ben</td>
<td>Business Development Executive at MIDAS-Manchester Investment &amp; Development Agency Service, Manchester</td>
<td>Staff in public relations area, Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide, Guangdong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Gao, Zhi</td>
<td>Postgraduate student and part-time junior management staff in a Manchester hotel</td>
<td>Junior management staff in ShangriLa Hotel, Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Huang, Dong</td>
<td>Senior Planning Engineer in an international company, London</td>
<td>Planning engineer in an international company, Fujian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Jia, Ning</td>
<td>Lecture in University of Manchester</td>
<td>Finance investment department in an international venture investment company, Shanghai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position/Role</td>
<td>Current Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jiang, Hui</td>
<td>Director, Z-Park, London Liaison Office, London</td>
<td>Z-Park officer, Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Jiang, Tian</td>
<td>Senior Lecture in University of Manchester</td>
<td>Lecturer in Harbin U. of S. &amp; Tech., China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Liang, Feng</td>
<td>architect, Zaha-hadid Architects, London</td>
<td>Postgraduate in the Netherland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Liang, Mark</td>
<td>Supply Chain manager in an international oil and gas company, London</td>
<td>Department Manager in a transnational company, Jiangsu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Peng, Qian</td>
<td>Principle Engineer in an international company, London</td>
<td>Lecturer in Sichuang University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Su, Hong</td>
<td>Piping Engineer in an international company, London</td>
<td>Engineer in a state-owned enterprise, Sichuan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sun, Ding</td>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>Undergraduate student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Teng, Xie</td>
<td>Senior IT Officer at University of Manchester</td>
<td>Technician in a state-owned enterprise, China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Wang, Zheng</td>
<td>Lecturer in the University of Manchester</td>
<td>Research Assistant in National University of Singapore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Position/Role</td>
<td>Location/Additional Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Wei, Gan</td>
<td>Administrative executive in Shuman Education Ltd., Manchester</td>
<td>High school teacher in Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Xiong, Fan</td>
<td>Principle process Engineer in an international company, London</td>
<td>PhD student and Research Assistant in France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Zhou, Tao</td>
<td>Engineer in building service area, Manchester</td>
<td>Undergraduate student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Zhu, Hong</td>
<td>Director of Executive programmes - Confucius Institute for Business London</td>
<td>Lecturer in Guangxi University, China</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 3.3 Background of the interviewees in China (China part)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case number</th>
<th>Interviewees</th>
<th>Date of interview</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Original place in China</th>
<th>Residence period in the UK</th>
<th>Location in the UK</th>
<th>Education background</th>
<th>Visa category or Residential status</th>
<th>Location in China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chen, Feng</td>
<td>2-May-2011</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>Hubei</td>
<td>2008 till now</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Tier 2 skilled workers</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cheng, Tang</td>
<td>05-July-2008</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>Shanghai</td>
<td>2006-2008</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Tier 4 students</td>
<td>Shanghai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cui, Guang</td>
<td>9-July-2008</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>Shandong</td>
<td>2000-2001</td>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Tier 4 students</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Deng, Tian</td>
<td>29-July-2008</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>Zhejiang</td>
<td>2003-2006</td>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Tier 4 students</td>
<td>Shanghai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Han, Peng</td>
<td>10-July-2008</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>Shandong</td>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Tier 4 students</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Hou, Qiang</td>
<td>16-July-2008</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>Shanxi</td>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>Cambridge</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Tier 4 students</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Li, Na</td>
<td>13-July-2008</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>Shandong</td>
<td>2003-2007</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Tier 4 students</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Li, Ning</td>
<td>4-Aug-2008</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>Henan</td>
<td>2003-2007</td>
<td>Warwick</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Tier 4 students</td>
<td>Shanghai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Liu, Haijin</td>
<td>18-July-2008</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>Guangdong</td>
<td>1998-1999</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Tier 4 Students</td>
<td>Shanghai</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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113 This visa category makes some revisions. It is based on the new immigration policy system. For example, ‘Tier 1 highly skilled workers’ replaces ‘highly skilled migrant programme’ in the previous policy system.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Tier</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>City</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Qiu, Wen</td>
<td>2-Aug-2008</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>Shanghai</td>
<td>1997-1998</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Tier 4 students</td>
<td>Shanghai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Weng, Di</td>
<td>28-July-2008</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>Shanghai</td>
<td>2001-2005</td>
<td>Dundee</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>Tier 4 students</td>
<td>Shanghai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Wu, Ping</td>
<td>08-July-2008</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
<td>1993-2007</td>
<td>Manchester, Cambridge</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Tier 1 Highly skilled workers</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Xu, Pan</td>
<td>09-July-2008</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>Hebei</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>Tier 4 student</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Yang, Ming</td>
<td>28-May-2011</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>Jiangsu</td>
<td>2004 till now</td>
<td>Manchester</td>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>Tier 1 highly skilled workers</td>
<td>Beijing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix 3.4 Occupation comparison: before migration, after migration, and after back to China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case number</th>
<th>Interviewees</th>
<th>Occupation before migration</th>
<th>Occupation after migration</th>
<th>Occupation after back to China</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chen, Feng</td>
<td>Postgraduate student</td>
<td>Research fellow in Imperial College London</td>
<td>Overseas assignment, Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cheng, Tang</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>Master Student</td>
<td>Research analyst in Financial company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Cui, Guang</td>
<td>Professional in a Media company, Shandong</td>
<td>Master student</td>
<td>Vice-president in a Venture capital firm, Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Deng, Tian</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>Master Student</td>
<td>Logistics and supply chain management, focusing on overseas business development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Han, Peng</td>
<td>Postgraduate student</td>
<td>Master student</td>
<td>Market Intelligence Analyst at Volkswagen Group China, Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Hou, Qiang</td>
<td>Engineer in China National Offshore Oil Corporation, Beijing</td>
<td>Master student</td>
<td>General manager in property management branch, China National Offshore Oil Corporation, Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Li, Na</td>
<td>Middle manager in an international company, Beijing</td>
<td>PhD student</td>
<td>Lecturer in China University of Political Science and Law, Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Experience</td>
<td>Current Position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Li, Ning</td>
<td>English teacher</td>
<td>PhD student/Chinese language tutor in Warwick university</td>
<td>Lecturer in Beijing Normal University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Lin, Xi</td>
<td>Marketing development in Real estate area, Shandong</td>
<td>Marketing professional in a building service company.</td>
<td>Director in CB Richard Ellis (China), Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Liu, Haijin</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>Master student</td>
<td>Executive Director in a new energy tech company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Pan, Wei</td>
<td>Lecturer in Shanghai University</td>
<td>Visiting scholar</td>
<td>Professor in Shanghai University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Qiu, Wen</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>Master student</td>
<td>Office manager in an international high-tech company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Weng, Di</td>
<td>High school student</td>
<td>Graduate Student</td>
<td>Marketing manager in Financial Company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Wu, Ping</td>
<td>IT technician</td>
<td>IT engineer after Mphil study, Phd student between 2002-2007</td>
<td>Chief engineer in National Library of China, Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Xu, Pan</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>Master student</td>
<td>Auditor for Deloitte, Beijing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Yang, Ming</td>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>Engineer in an international oil and gas company, London</td>
<td>Overseas assignment, Beijing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 5.1: Highly skilled workers, investors, entrepreneurs or post-study workers (Tier 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of worker</th>
<th>Former category for applying to work in the United Kingdom</th>
<th>Category under the points-based system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly skilled workers</td>
<td>Highly Skilled Migrant Programme (HSMP)</td>
<td>Highly skilled worker (Tier 1 General)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-employed lawyers</td>
<td>Highly skilled worker (Tier 1 General)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Writers, composers and artists</td>
<td>Highly skilled worker (Tier 1 General)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investors</td>
<td>Investors</td>
<td>Tier 1 Investor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs</td>
<td>Business persons</td>
<td>Tier 1 Entrepreneur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-study workers</td>
<td>Innovators</td>
<td>Tier 1 Entrepreneur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(graduates of UK</td>
<td>Fresh Talent: Working in Scotland Scheme</td>
<td>Tier 1 Investor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>universities)</td>
<td>International Graduates Scheme</td>
<td>Tier 1 Post-study work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### Appendix 5.2: Sponsored skilled workers with a job offer (Tier 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of worker</th>
<th>Former category for applying to work in the UK</th>
<th>New category of the points-based system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Sponsored skilled worker | Most work permits including entertainers, but not:  
  - training and work experience schemes (see temporary workers below);  
  - General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS – see temporary workers below). | Skilled worker (Tier 2 General) |
| Overseas qualified nurses and midwives (with a job offer) | Skilled worker (Tier 2 General) |
| Representatives of overseas media organisations | Skilled worker (Tier 2 General) |
| Airline ground crew | Skilled worker (Tier 2 General) |
| Seafarers including those working on vessels on one-port voyages | Skilled worker (Tier 2 General) |
| Ministers of religion | Ministers of religion, missionaries, members of religious orders, religious workers in non-pastoral roles, visiting religious workers (if coming to the UK for more than two years) | Sponsored worker (Tier 2 Ministers of religion) – for pastoral role that includes preaching to a congregation |
| Sports people | Work permits: elite sports people or coaches at the highest level, but for some sportspeople for 12 months or less (see temporary workers below) | Sponsored worker (Tier 2 Sports people) |
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Li, M., 1999. ‘We need two worlds’: Chinese immigrant associations in a Western society, Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam.


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