

HAKKA DESTINY

CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE

By

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Introduction

The last World Hakka Conference was held here in Toronto in December 2000, that is, exactly four years ago. It was a great meeting that brought together Hakkas from all over the world to reflect on the situation of the Hakkas and to be updated on the state of research in Hakkaology. Apart from being intellectually stimulating, it was a highly emotional event that enabled Hakkas from different parts of the World, to meet, reminisce and share their experiences. They were contemplating a past they did not want to forget.

As we meet today, we wish to know what the future has in store for us and, more importantly, whether we can pre-plan it. Recent events, however, give us greater hopes for the future of the Hakka Language (which I prefer to call Hakkinese) and culture. The Hakka as a distinct group has now been acknowledged on both sides of the Strait. Beijing celebrates our Hakka artists and Taipei promotes our language as never before.

All these new initiatives on Mainland China and the Island Taiwan matter a lot to us, overseas Hakkas, who are thousands of kilometres away. Are our distant Elder Brothers aware of this? Do they care about us? What do we mean to them? Do they consider us as distant Brothers, but brothers still? We would need to hear their replies to these questions. True, they too, may perhaps be asking questions about us: Are the overseas Hakkas Chinese? What do they have in common with us? Can they consider us brothers and sisters? What can we do for them? What can they do for us?

But first we have to ask ourselves: What does it mean to be a Hakka today? In what direction should we be going? Do we, Hakkas of the Diaspora, have a future? What do we want? What is our destiny?

Part I

Who is a Hakka? The Markers of Hakka Identity

Hakkas are known to exist everywhere on earth and practically on all the continents. For the purpose of this paper I have divided them into two broad categories:

- First, the **Hakkas of the Centre**, including the Mainland and the Island (Taiwan), who are citizens of these countries and hold their passports. They are Chinese.
- And second, the **Hakkas of the Diaspora** who live in Western Countries (Europe and US), on the islands of the Atlantic, the Pacific or the Indian Oceans or in South East Asia (Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia). They carry passports of their countries of residence. These are not Chinese by nationality and to avoid confusion, should be more aptly called *Huaren* or *Huayi*.

These distinctions become indispensable for a proper understanding of the situation of the Hakkas overseas. In addition, they explain the added cultural dimension to their Hanness through their exposure over generations to other existing cultures and religions that have instilled in them a deep understanding and balanced view of the international scene.

Until recently, the Hakkas have been marginalised, denied their Hanness but they have never given up their claim to be pure Han stock, **Thong-gnin, (Tang-ren)** as they call themselves, related to the Tang, and the real heirs to the true Chinese culture they claim to have preserved intact. Let us agree for the sake of convenience, that a Hakka is one that thinks he is one or has been so labelled by others.

How different are the Hakka people y from mainstream Chinese? They do do many things as the other Chinese, but still they are perceived as different. The strong components in Hakka identity are language, religion, solidarity within the Hakka community and pride associated with it, a critical population mass, and a critical land mass, without which they would have been swallowed up and forgotten. The Hakkas have both visible ways and intangible traits and many of the qualities and foibles of the other Huaren, but still they are different. The explanation for the difference may perhaps lie in the combination and proportion of the same primary colours or ingredients that make the end-product unique.

A. Visible Characteristics

The Hakkas arriving in Southern China brought with them their traditions from the North. They retained their own language, culture, rites and customs. Isolated by the high mountains that insulated them from contacts with local inhabitants, they stuck to their own ways, keeping their customs and traditions unaltered and unique. But these customs and traditions were altered after they left the Mainland and came in

touch with foreign peoples. Many of the visible markers that make up the Hakka identity have, however, been retained:

i. The Name, Genealogy and Clan Book

The first marker of a person's identity is the name. In the case of the Hakka, the name gives him a place on the family tree, a role in the family history, connects him with the past. He does not exist in isolation but in a family, that bonds him to the clan, to his forefathers, to his Ancestors.

The Hakkas are adamantly attached to the traditional three letter name that gives the individual his place in the world, the first one, his *Xiang* (*xing* in Putonghua) pointing to his Chinese identity and links him vertically on the family tree to his Ancestors, the second, being the generation name that places him on the horizontal level and connects him with all the other members of the same generation, and then the third name which is the name of the individual, comes last as the individual is less important than the group. Changing the order not only brings the individual to the forefront as is the case in Western society, but also the way he relates to his family, his environment and the world.

Hakka families have inherited from their forefathers the list of generation names that in certain cases will carry the clan over the next 500 years. The Hakkas are indeed more deeply attached to the series of generation names than any other Han people. This connection with their origin is what gives them collective confidence, internal peace of mind and equilibrium in a more and more unstable society where men seem to have lost all bearings, but where they have in fact lost their roots.

ii. Language

Language is part of a person's identity. For the Hakkas, their language has a most important role. Without their language the Hakka people do not exist. And without the Hakka people to speak it, Hakkinese would not exist. Hakkinese gives them their group identity they would not have otherwise, as they do not own a province or an autonomous region.

Originating in the North, meandering in the Central plains and flowing down to the South, the Hakka migrants and wanderers never owned a province or any autonomous region. As a result, their language Hakkinese is not confined to any one province but is spoken in many parts of the Mainland alongside other dialects. Forced by war and hunger out of the homes, the Hakka migrated to every corner of the world bringing with them their language which is now spoken in all parts of the world, in Asia, in Europe, in America, in the islands of the Pacific, the Indian Ocean, and the Atlantic. It has spread over the whole world, and like the British Empire once. Today we can say that the sun never sets on Hakkinese. .

There are hundreds of reasons why Hakkinese should not be allowed to die a slow death. First and foremost, Hakkinese, along with Mandarin, Wu, Xiang, Kan, Min, and Yue, is one of seven major languages of China. It is spoken by no less than 60

million people, that is, the population of Italy (59M) Great Britain (60), or France (61). Moreover, it ranks 26th on the list of 6000 languages still spoken in the world today, behind Thai or Turkish , 62M and 66 M, respectively.

It obviously does not make sense to ask the sixty million speakers of any language to cast their language aside or to ask the Hakka people to give up speaking their mother tongue. Indeed that was the intention in the fifties when, in the wake of the establishment of the People's Republic, the major concern of the CCP was to strengthen national unity through the adoption of Putonghua, the standard Mandarin Chinese (which is close to Hakkanese) as the national language. It was feared, then that the maintenance of regional or local ethnic languages would undermine or disrupt national unity. Efforts were therefore made to substitute Putonghua for Hakkanese in the local schools. There was an unwarranted perception that Hakkanese was going to be a threat to Putonghua or Mandarin. On the contrary, we should not forget that it was Hakka President **Lee Kwan Yu** who promoted Mandarin in Singapore in 1979, whereas in Mauritius, Putonghua came to be taught in Government schools after independence, thanks to another Hakka Islander, **Chu Moi Lin** a.k.a. Jean Ah-Chuen, the then leader of the Chinese community and first Chinese Minister of independent Mauritius.

Today, the context is different: national unity on the mainland has been achieved. Local or regional languages like Hakkanese or Cantonese are rather perceived as assets, or indispensable components of the rich and variegated Chinese culture, worthy of preservation and nurture.

Hakkanese is the current language in which we Hakka people speak to our Ancestors. It is the link that has been keeping together our forefathers after they were forced out of their homelands and went to slave and sweat in mines, railroad construction, sugar cane plantations overseas. It gave them the inner strength and the will to survive.

Today, it is still the link that takes the Huaren of the Diaspora back across time and space to the memory of our forefathers. It pulls the hundreds of thousands of Hakka back to the land of their forefathers in search of their roots.

It is our link today with all the descendants of the Ancestors that remained on the Mainland, preserving the traditions, the ancestors' cult and tablets, the records of the clan's genealogy tree. It is the link that can bind the descendants, the Hakkas scattered all over the world, together.

It is the language they live by, communicate through, work with and dream by. It confers upon them an identity, existence, in short, life. These markers ensure inner balance and permit the inner growth of the individual, which in turn facilitate contacts and interaction with other people.

But the question has been put as to the relevance and significance of Hakkanese in the modern world, and in China to begin with. An inescapable fact is that

Hakkanese has been in decline, especially among the *Huayi*, the younger generations of Chinese descendants overseas. We have been asking ourselves whether we have to stay put and allow our language to die and disappear. The answer is that whether we want it or not the language will survive.

Some linguists have been affirming that Hakka was the language of the Tang (618-905) dynasties and the poetry of the period can recover their rhyming patterns only when read in hakka. If only that were the case, and indeed it is¹, Hakkanese is therefore an important part of the world's heritage and as such, like all treasures that have come down to us, deserves to be protected, nurtured and handed over to the future generations. Thus, Hakkanese has an exceptional destiny. We certainly have a duty to revive and promote Hakkanese. The question is how?

iii. Ancestral worship and Filial Piety

Confucius who taught us ancestor worship and filial piety has been telling his contemporaries that he was passing down to them the values and wisdom that were the very foundations of Chinese culture. One thing that we rarely are aware of is that Confucius who lived two and a half millennia ago is actually only midway between the beginnings of Chinese Civilisation and us living in the XXIst Century. The original Chinese are as far away from Confucius as Confucius is from our modern world, but, five millennia later, their principles and moral values can still help to make our present world a better place.

As those values remain unsurpassed we owe and pay respect to Confucius through a rite. The beauty of this rite is that it has nothing to do with the sacrifice of innocent animals or offer of innocent blood to appease a bloodthirsty God, as in Semite culture. This rite coupled with Ancestor worship plays a considerable part in the construction of the Chinese identity. For us Hakkas, the ceremony takes place each year in Hakkanese that binds the younger and the older generations in the same fervour. That is why all the original Hakka homes that we find in Guangdong or Fujian have an Ancestral Hall facing the entrance gate, and this is where the family congregates to pay respect to Heaven and Earth and to our Ancestors in whose honour we burn incense.

The respect we pay to our Ancestors is the same we have for our living parents that we respect and honour as the representatives of the Ancestors that are no longer visible in our midst. As we think of the past and thrust ourselves into the future, we see ourselves honoured as Ancestors, which is why our deeds and actions in our present life should be honourable and a source of pride and admiration for our descendants. Indeed, without ancestral worship, it would be difficult to keep Chinese society together. Ancestor worship actually brings our Ancestors in our midst and reminds us of the highest moral principles and values. It acts as our conscience to guide us in our choices and behaviour in our everyday life. It does not rely on the carrot-and-stick conditioning, promising neither Heaven nor Hell. It

¹ Professor S L Lee proved the point at the Toronto Hakka Conference Dec 2004, when he read a Tang poem in Mandarin, Cantonese and Hakkanese

acts more like a traffic code that helps prevent, moral or social accidents. Together with filial piety, it forms the guiding principles for the collective social life that teaches tolerance or better still, accommodation with all sorts of sects, religious beliefs or superstitions.

Founding Ancestors and forebears are still revered in Hakka families at *Chee Chiang* twice a year, in March and in September. There is a morning ceremony in honour of the Departed, with offerings of food and wine, at home or at the Temple, followed by a ten-course banquet that gathers together all the members of the Xiang, men and women, sons and daughters together.

iv. Religion

In indigenous Hakka culture there is no such thing as a single transcendental deity whose orders or offers of Heaven or Hell to mankind are entrusted to selected individuals who are his spokesmen and agents. With no such transcendental will to communicate or impose on the rest of the world, Hakkas have produced no fanatics.

Hakkas all over the world like the Cantonese with whom they often share the same temple, worship the same deity **Kwantee** who embodies all the virtues and qualities that a Gentleman is expected to have. Hakkas practise a form of Shamanism and animism which fortunately have survived to this day. Indeed the Hakkas worship or rather relate with the deeper or higher forces of Life that include Heaven, Earth, and war, Yin (the female principle), Yang (the male principle), the Moon, the Sun and the Four Seasons. Not long ago, 11 delegations from China and overseas with some 200 members congregated beside the Ting River in Changing County to participate in the tenth World Hakka Worship **Ceremony of Mother River**.

The Hakkas show toleration for all sorts of beliefs. They practise a form of Buddhism and worship **Kwan Yin**, the goddess of compassion and forgiveness, **Wuti**, the God of War, **Wenti**, the patron of literature and **Tienheu**, the Queen of Heaven. The Hakka leaders of the Taiping rebellion were also the first to adopt the Christian faith.

The funeral rites of the Hakkas are unique. When someone dies, they place his body in a coffin and bury him. Three to five years later, the Hakkas dig up the coffin to clean the remains of the dead and store them in pottery jars that are buried in selected spots. In the course of their migration, wherever they went, the men in the family would carry the ancestors' remains and bury them wherever they settled. The end of migration ended this practice. Today, the dead in China are all incinerated.

v. Hakka Architecture

The Hakka Earth buildings, as they are called because of their height and their strong, outer shell, were built by the Hakkas as they moved from the Central plains to the Southern provinces like Guangdong and Fujian where they settled and faced a hostile environment. They imagined a new type of architecture made up of earth and dry wood, that could be square-shaped or circular mushroom-like structures.

These were immense enclosures allowing up to a hundred families or more to live together and ensure collective defence and security. Apart from providing a protection from bandits and marauders, these structures favoured communal life, ensured togetherness and solidarity of the dwellers and made them more united and clannish.

There are about 30,000 earth buildings, dating mostly from the Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1644-1911) dynasties, in the Fujian Province, southern and eastern China. Many are still occupied but modern life and work in distant places have caused many to move into modern buildings. As this Hakka architecture is unique in the world, no wonder that the State Bureau of Cultural Relics of China has applied to UNESCO for the Earth buildings to be placed on the World Cultural Heritage List.

vi. Food

The Hakkas are regarded first and foremost as great eaters of chicken and pork, which is why the logo for the Toronto Conference is made up of the two Chinese characters Hak and Ka (Ge and Jia in Putonghua) each with a roof rounded into a wok cover, one with a chicken underneath and the other a pig.

Hakka food has its origins in the north but as it accompanied the itinerant Hakkas down to the south it became transformed by its environment that enriched it with its huge variety of vegetables, fruits and meat as well as sea foods. A typical Hakka dish is the *Moye choyye niouk*, slices of pork cooked with a type of dry vegetable, which we now know from Professor Liu originated in Xian where it is still popular today. There are lots of other dishes like *niuk piang*, steamed minced pork with *ham choy*, salted vegetable, *gniong teo kon*, and so on. *Niong teo kon* is also known as a Hakka version of the northern *jiaozi* dumplings with meat and vegetable stuffing eaten at the New Year. Arriving in the south where flour was not readily available to make *jiaozi* the Hakkas produced a new plate: stuffed tofu or bean curd. The Hakkas also developed a taste for salt, unlike the Cantonese that prefer sugar, in which they preserved meat or dried vegetables which they had to keep in store and ready to take with them anytime.

More famous no doubt is the *poon choy*, known today as the *Big Bowl*. It dates back to the end of the Sung dynasty when Emperor Bing and his family who had been forced by the invading Mongols to flee the capital of Anhui arrived in Yuen Long. The Hakkas honoured by their presence felt they had to present something very special to their imperial guests and so created the Big Bowl in which they poured plenty of meat and vegetables.

B. Inner Traits

Migrating from North to the Central Plains and thence to the South and overseas, and at the same time travelling down the centuries to the present, the Hakkas certainly had to develop or acquire new characteristics that enabled them to survive. But whatever adjustments they made, there are values that they never gave up, for example: values regarding hard work, and respect for the given word.

They had to be able to give up certain practices that were irrelevant to their new environment, adopt new ways, respond to challenges, and forge new habits to carry them through. This meant they had to be adaptable, courageous, imaginative and quick to seize opportunities. These are certainly traits that are to be found in many individuals but let us see how they were exemplified by the Hakkas

i. Laborious and Unbending

Since the days of the Tai-ping revolt against the Manchu rulers, the Hakkas have been pursuing their idealistic goal of setting up a just Government and have been paying the price of defiance. They never really improved their lot. Fertile lands had been kept out of their reach, resulting in an endless struggle against the environment: the males had to leave the country and live in self-imposed exile to sweat and earn and save and send to those that stayed behind whatever meagre amounts they could, but without which those behind would starve. The women with large feet waged a constant battle with the arid lands. No doubt exile and arduous farming forged the character of both the males and the females. This helped to build their sense of group identity, solidarity and responsibility which in turn strengthened what others call their clannishness.

On the Mainland, the Hakkas nowadays have merged with their new environment. They enjoy security and a new lifestyle. The immense circular earthen homes are still there but as many work far away from the home-town, the families of the same clans no longer congregate in the same area and many have moved to blocs of flats. All this does not facilitate the practice of digging up the dead parent's bones for transportation and reburial in new environments. As they boarded the boats leaving behind their circular homes and burial sites the Hakkas had to let go of some cultural practices that would be cumbersome in their new, strange and sometimes hostile environments. They took on board new habits like eating foreign foods or speaking the local vernacular that their children were fast at picking up. Most of them started in humble positions behind the counter of their groceries or humble retail shop. Thanks to their sacrifices and investment in the education of their siblings, the next generation soon rose up the social ladder to become professionals, doctors, lawyers, judges, professors, scientists or top civil servants.

The Hakkas scattered all over the continents and in between are perhaps the only group to have mastered the greatest number of the world's languages. They surely are the most apt at speaking the largest number of languages including the main international languages like English, French and Spanish. Mastering a language means possessing the tools to penetrate the mindset of the speakers of the language, and so Hakkas and *Huaren* should be the best agents to bring about understanding among the different peoples of the world. So as a group they may have integrated the psychology, the culture of people from all parts of the world. That is why they are at home anywhere. Their home henceforth is where they are settled. They live in Hakkasphere, but they carry Hakkaland in their hearts.

ii. Unprejudiced

Hakkas are most unprejudiced as an ethnic group. Throughout their history they never practised any form of discrimination, whether of colour or religion against anybody. They never considered the female inferior and would not hesitate, when the opportunity arises, to promote women to the highest military or Government positions, as the Tai-ping Administration did in the 1850's. To this day Hakkas show the same attitude towards male and female never known in Hakka families to be superior or inferior, or even equal, but certainly different. It never occurred in Hakka families as far as I know to ask whether a girl should be educated or not. Never has any Hakka family considered it a waste of time or money to invest in the education of a daughter. The only obstacle would be lack of financial means. Women professionals, teachers, doctors or lawyers or judges are plenty in our midst in Mauritius

The Hakkas were the first to accept the Christian religion in China during the middle of the XIX the century. While this acceptance does not necessarily mean it was an enlightened choice of a better religion, it certainly indicated an openness of the mind to entertain, accept or reject different forms of beliefs. The same principles applied regarding other races. Once the Hakkas were settled in a country overseas, they never bothered about the colour of the women they took for their companions or wives. This may be interpreted as an unconscious reaction to the racism which they suffered at the hands of the other Hans that accused them of not being pure stock but admixtures of Xiongnus, Mongols and Manchus. They marry into all races and take their wives where they happen to be.

In Mauritius, for example, marriages with Creole women were not infrequent. Governor Gordon who defeated the Hakkas in China and subsequently served in Trinidad and then Mauritius made the following observation :

"The Indians are generally very averse to any permanent connection with a Creole. The Chinese, who are thorough citizens of the world, have no such prejudices of race... they intermarried with Creole women in that colony (Trinidad) ... Here, the connections of Creole women with Chinese are more numerous than with Indians".²

This disposition has not changed. Like other *Huaren* that moved abroad, the Hakkas overseas never had any problem with the reality of *métissage*, mixed blood, mixed marriages, mixed languages and mixed cultures. As a result they produced a new generation, I should perhaps rather say, a new variety of Hakkas.

iii. Hakkas are innovative

Hakkas are insightful and quick to seize opportunities. In 1993, as soon as the internet became available, a *Huaren* understood its importance and the role it could play in bringing Hakkas worldwide in a common search of their roots, sharing information on Hakka culture and affirmation of Hakka identity. Professor **Siu-Leung Lee** was the first to put together the first Hakka website in 1994.

² Gordon: op sit letter of 27.7.1871, p. 174.

He upgraded it and launched it two years later as **Asiawind**. It was the first and only Hakka website in the world for a while but his initiative inspired others and led to the creation of hundreds of new Hakka websites.

The first **Asiawind** Hakka Forum started on September 2, 1996, and was later replaced by a new forum format on Jan 12, 2001. Hundreds of participants from all continents have written to the forums, and thousands have visited and read the forum. Apart from being a meeting place for Hakkas from all over the world to come to know each other, **Asiawind's** is the inevitable source of information for scholars and students alike, Hakka and non Hakka, who want to know more about the Hakka people that are now the subject of research and attention.

The Forum created the need for the participants to come together and meet face to face. This need was fulfilled in 2000 by the *Toronto Hakka Conference* that gathered some 300 participants from different parts of the World. It was the first International Hakka Conference held in North America.

The Conference in turn produced wonderful spin-offs: the two books produced by **Yoon-Ngan Chung**, first "*The History of Chinese Surnames*" and second, "*The Origin of the Hakka Chinese*." A third one is in the offing.

As we meet again today, I trust that the present Conference will also inspire other Hakkas to come up with other publications on the Hakkas.

iv. Creative Artists

Hakkas have been known world-wide for their *sancos*, mountain songs, dirges that tell the lives of our people. What is little known is their ability to create different types of music that may not be in the Hakka tradition. Hakka artists now utilise their talent to celebrate their own Hakka culture. Two great pieces of art have recently testified to the creative ability of contemporary Hakka artists: First, the *Echo from the Earth Building*, a symphonic work composed by **Liu Yuan**, and conducted by **Zheng Xiaoying**, and second, *Picture of Hakka Customs*", a painting by Hakka artist **Shen Zaizhao**. It was put on display in Liangcheng County, a place densely populated with Hakka people. The picture covers the ancient, modern and contemporary history of Hakkas, giving a full view of scenic spots, customs and traditional art by the Hakka people. The 108-meter by 69-centimeter high painting depicts a total of 2,811 figures. Considered an art treasure of contemporary China, it won a prize from the *China Federation of Literary and Art Circles*.

There are more and more Hakka artists appearing on Chinese Television, namely CCTV4 and CCTV9, with mention of their Hakka appurtenance which shows that the Government recognise this small minority whose works of art command attention and respect first in China, then from the world community at large..

v. Indomitable Courage

Hakkas are courageous. They always rise to the occasion. They will take up the challenge. It shall suffice to read the records, to mention the setting up of a Hakka Republic founded by **Hakka Lo Fan-po** in Pontianak Borneo, that the Hakkas fought to protect, then the great Tai-ping Rebellion, the fight against the Japanese, the creation of the Red Army, the leadership of the Long march that led to the setting up of the Chinese Soviets, the foundation of the People's Republic of China. Outside China, valiant Hakka leaders helped to create Kuala Lumpur, modern Singapore, etc. The incredible thing is that all these leaders do not come from just one region and what connects them is the feeling that they belong to an exceptional group that has a language unconnected to any geographical location or province of its own. Their indomitable spirit can no doubt be traced back to their history of hardships that forged their character and why not, as suggested by some researchers³ to the fighting disposition of the Xiongnus.

vi The New Hakkas

True, it's the combination of those external cultural markers sustained by an inner conviction of being true Han that gives the Hakka group of people their unmistakable mindset and personality. But there is something more, an acquired dimension, and an added value that they earned as they left the Mainland and went overseas. They absorbed the first onset of the clashes of civilisations and paid the price of misunderstanding, frustration, mental pain and anguish that they carried down several generations. This experience in turn developed their inner mettle and extended their understanding of the ways of the world.

They had to learn unheard-of languages, accommodate new religions, eat ethnic foods, experience different ways of life, marry foreign women and gradually develop into different types of Hakkas. They can empathise with people of different origins and traditions, and penetrate different mindsets. They are multi lingual and multicultural. In short they have become different. They are no longer identical with the Hakkas, brothers or cousins still living on the Mainland. They have changed, but they are Hakkas still, *Huaren* before Hakka. They are the new breed of Hakkas.

³ Clyde Kiang is the best known propounder of this school of thought

Part II

Where are the Hakkas? The Centre and the Diaspora

Hakkas are found both on the Mainland and the island that I call the **Centre**, and overseas where they constitute the **Diaspora**.

How many are there today? No one has the exact figure. One paper in Fujian, the **China Daily**, during the Hakka Congress held in Longyuan in 2000, claimed a population of 100 million in the world, including Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan. That is the highest figure ever put forward. However, according to Professor **Siu-Leung Lee** of **Asiawind**, about 7 % of 1.2 billion Chinese have stated their Hakka origin, and that would bring the number to some 84 million.

Others put the figure closer to 60 million, saying that 90 per cent of them live in the People's Republic of China and Taiwan, The Hakka people are mostly to be found in the South-eastern part of China in mountainous region straddling Guangdong, Guangxi and Fujian. According to a 1982 census, there were some 3.6 percent Hakka people in a population of some 977,000,000 that is 35 million speakers of Hakkinese, figures rounded as follows: 6.9 million in Guangdong, 5.1million in Jiangxi, 3.6 million in Guangxi, 2.2 million in Fujian, and the rest in other areas. With the same percentage with a population close on 1.3 billion Chinese, there would be some 54 million Hakkas today.

The remaining 10 per cent, that is, 6 million constitute the Chinese Diaspora and live in some 80 countries overseas.

A. The Chinese Nationals

i. Hakkas on the Mainland

Until recently, little was known about the part played by the Hakkas in the events that led to the establishment of the People's Republic of China. The veil that fell on the Hakkas after the defeat of **Fûng-Siù-Tshiên**, the leader of the then Tai-ping, has kept other Hakkas from public view. No mention has ever be made of the Hakka origin of **Sun Yat Sen** and others that overthrew the Qing dynasty , of **Zhu De**, **Chen Yi**, founders of the Red Army , of many of them that occupied senior posts in the Army or the party and subsequently in the Government of the PRC set up in 1949. Just to name a few: **Li Yuan**, the first female general in the Chinese Army, **Wang Chen Wu**, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Chinese Armed forces, **Zhang Tin Fa**, Commander in Chief of the Air Force & of political leaders, etc... **Hu Yao Bang**, Secretary General of the Chinese Communist party, **Liu Fuzhi**, Chief of the National Bureau of Investigation, Yang **Tai Fang**, chairman of the Overseas Chinese Association in China.)

The founders of the new China remained silent about their Hakka Origins, a sacrifice they made to ensure unflinching unity of the whole country behind the new regime. All ethnic or linguistic differences, viewed as conducive to disunity or break-up of the Chinese nation, had to be ignored or suppressed. A new sacrifice

was imposed on the Hakkas that were now to give up their language. All schools were to stop the teaching of the local vernaculars and switch over to Putonghua. Hakka was treated as an embarrassing dialect that had to disappear.

Everything changed with the return of Paramount Leader **Deng Xiaoping** in July 1977. Four years earlier in February 1973, he had been saved by another Hakka, Marshal **Yeh Jian Ying** who flew him from exile in Xinjian County to safety in the Guangdong Military Region. Then came the triumvirate for a short while though, with three Hakkas at the head of China: **Deng Xiaoping, Yeh Ching Ying** and Mao's handpicked successor, **Hua Go Feng**. The latter was repudiated, so was the Red Book. Soon, as reported by Professor **Mary Erbaugh**, "*Deng rehabilitated many Hakka leaders and by 1984, Hakkas made up half the Standing Committee of the Politburo, 11 of the 105 top leaders, and many of the lower ranks*".

When the Paramount Leader retired in 1987 as party Secretary General, the famous book on the Hakka: *Kejia Ren* by **ChenYun-Dong** went into its sixth edition. At the same time on Taipei appeared the *Taiwan de Kejia Ren*. The existence of the Hakkas could no longer be contained. It had now been unleashed. The New Hakka (Xin Ge Kejiaren) as sung by the Taiwanese Hakka poet, **Zhong Zhao Zheng**, should not be stuck in the past but should now recreate the Hakka spirit.⁴

The teaching of Hakkinese resumed alongside Putonghua. Centres were set up for the teaching of Hakkinese in Meixian. In 1988 a *Hakka Research Society* was formed at Shenzhen University, to focus on cultural, economic and population profile. For the first time in 1991 the word hakka made the headlines of the *People's Daily*, the prestigious organ of the Chinese Government and Communist Party and, even if the purpose was to seek funding from overseas Hakkas for the building in Beijing of a *Museum of Overseas Chinese History* featuring Hakka History. The Museum was founded some seven years later in Meixian.

The time was now ripe for a rapprochement between the Hakka brothers on the two sides of the Strait. This was another Hakka initiative, the *World Hakka Congress-WHC* made a historic move in December 1994. The WHC that started in Hong Kong almost a quarter of a century ago and subsequently met almost a dozen times in Taiwan and other countries of South East Asia, moved for the first time to the mainland at Meixian in Guangdong. At the same time, a US Professor, **Richard Bohr** wrote of the Chinese Revolution as a Hakka enterprise. At the same time the internet that had started spreading like wildfire brought Hakkas from all over the world into a global network, sharing information on the history, language and culture of the Hakkas. **Hakkaology** was now a new word coined to cover a new area of Sinology. At *Shanghai Huadong Normal University*, the *Institute of Chinese Historical Studies*, a major *Hakkaology Centre* was set up. It publishes a Journal: "**Hakkaology**", a most authoritative journal that carries plenty of monographs on Hakkas.

⁴ *The Hakka Ethnic Movement in Taiwan* by Howard J Martin, in *Guest People*, edited by Nicole Constable, University of Washington Press, 1996

The century was drawing to an end, but before then events of tremendous impact were to take place on the world stage, namely the return of Hong Kong and Macao to China. The *Huaren* all over the world are indeed proud to see the end of centuries of humiliation by the western powers. For China and the Chinese living there, it was unity regained. Before the return of Hong Kong in 1997 and Macao in 2000, the Hakkas living amidst a powerful Cantonese community had been downplaying or even hiding their Hakka identity and had adopted the Cantonese language and songs. But now that they had regained a tangible link with the motherland, they now had the same status as all the other linguistic groups including the Cantonese. They are Chinese. Back in the fold, the Hongkongese and the Macaonese were one with China. They are China. Their new status, however, in the eyes of the Overseas *Huaren* only serves to underline the different status of the *Huaren* or the Hakkas that live outside the Mainland. It reminds them that they are not Chinese citizens and so do not have a common destiny. They are not Chinese. They do not have the same destiny.

Unity, confidence and prestige having been recovered along with the two islands, the Government of the PRC was emboldened to be more enterprising with regard to the Hakka community. Hakkas were recognised and honoured. So in November 2000, (just a month before our own *First World Hakka Conference* here in Toronto) the *World Hakka Congress* was to take place on the Mainland, this time in Longyan, in the Fujian Province. This Conference was a turning point for it gathered some 2000 participants from 34 countries. The theme *Unity and Development* was designed to promote economic cooperation and cultural exchange among Hakkas both in and outside China and push forward China's peaceful reunification. At the Conference, the *Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra* premiered *Echo from the Earth Building*, a 37-minute symphonic work composed by **Liu Yuan**, a Hakka and conducted under the baton of **Zheng Xiaoying**, a 73 year old Hakka conductor who by the way received the highest decoration from the French Government. The piece recalls the beauty and history of the Hakka earth buildings built by the Hakka people after their migration from Northern to Southern China beginning in the early 4th century. It also features the Hakka people's history and lives.

One year later, the symphonic poem won the *Golden Bell Award* awarded by the *Chinese Musicians' Association*. It was then performed in three cities in Japan to mark the 30th anniversary of the normalization of Sino-Japanese ties. Then, in November 2002, the troupe was specially invited to Beijing to perform in honour of the delegates to the *16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China*. This is no doubt a significant move by the Chinese Government that had decided to acknowledge the existence and culture of the Hakkas. Two years later, the first *Hakka Folk Festival* was held for the first time in Beijing/Meixian.

Hakkas overseas are delighted to see the leaders of Hakka Communities honoured. In the worship ceremony, *Tingzhou Hakka Friendship Union* conferred the Tablet of "*Hakka Glory*" to Mr. **Wu Defang**, President of the Malaysian Federation of Hakka Associations, and the Tablet of "*Hakka Model*" to Mr. **Yao Senliang**,

Chairman of the Board of Directors of *Nan Yuan Yong Fang Group*. These distinctions were necessary and timely. Indeed, there is need to identify and honour meritorious personalities for the consolidation of our collective identity and for the promotion of these models to inspire the younger generations. It's a good thing that at the closing ceremony of our Conference tomorrow, some outstanding Hakkas will be honoured.

ii. On the Island - Taiwan

To-day, according to Government figure, there would be some four million people of Hakka descent. On the eve of the Second World War, there were some 830,361 Hakkas that formed 14.14 per cent of the population. At the end of the war KMT troops poured in from China bringing with them some 300,000 Hakkas.

Hakkas never received any special attention until 1971 when the Republic of China lost their seat at the United Nations to the People's Republic of China. Taipei changed its policy toward the Hakkas they now needed and organised them to support the KMT regime. The *Second World Hakka Congress* (after the first one in September 1971 in Hong Kong), took place in October 1973 in Taipei, followed by a third one again in Taipei. The objective as expressed by the Honorary Chairman, President **Yu Chun-Hsien**, was to invite the participants to resist Communist China. Then between 1978 and 1992, some ten Congresses took place in cities with pro Taipei groups, namely San Francisco, Tokyo, Bangkok, then back to Taipei in October 1984, followed by Mauritius, San Francisco again, Malaysia and Kaoshiung.

Now that PRC fully acknowledged the existence of Hakkas, it became possible in 1994, for the Hakkas to move the next **12th World Hakka Conference** (as it was now called) to the Mainland in Meizhou. Acceptance by the authorities on either side of the Strait to hold the Conference was indeed a breakthrough. Hakkas had the opportunity to show to the world that they were nobody's fixed deposits. They could not be taken for granted. They had no political agenda. So the next Conferences were subsequently held in Singapore 1996, Taipei, 1998, Kuala Lumpur in 1999, and back on the Mainland, at Long Yan in the Fujian Province in November 2000, this time with the open and full support of Beijing.

In recent years, there have been deliberate efforts to court Hakka favour. In 2000 Taiwan Presidential candidate promised to revitalise and preserve Hakka Culture. Then in 2001, the Council of Hakka Affairs at the Executive Yuan set up the International for Hakka Studies at the National Chiao Tung University (NCTU). Last year, in 2003, a College of Hakka Studies, the world's first research institute was opened at the National Central University. Then in November the Council for Hakka Affairs - CHA (Chairwoman **Yeh Chu-lan**) hosted the World Hakka Culture Conference. Attended by some 350 prominent Hakka figures, the Conference aimed at creating a central position for Taiwan in world wide efforts to preserve Hakka linguistic, ethnic and cultural traditions, which have been gradually disappearing through assimilation in fourteen countries.

At the opening, the Chairwoman Mrs Yeh drew attention to the dwindling use of Hakkanese. She said *“Every year, the Hakka community loses individuals who are able to speak the Hakka dialect. Less than 20 percent of today's young Hakkas speak their mother tongue, while over 60 percent have failed to pick up the language from their parents.”*

Early last year, a College of Hakka Studies opened at NCTU (**National Chiao Tung University**) to teach Human Sciences and Mass Communications. The NCTU Chancellor: **Chang Chun-yeu** said the College will be aided by International Centre for Hakka Studies (ICHS). ICHS is to preserve information related to Hakka Culture and to conduct research, projects to that end, the ultimate goal being *“to strengthen Hakka heritage in our society.”*

Today apart from the teaching of Hakkanese in Hakka area schools and the setting up of Hakka Societies in the universities, there are a series of activities by Hakkas themselves that show determination to keep the language and culture alive. There are now private Hakka radio stations, Hakka pop singers, Hakka magazines for housewives and children that combine to keep the language alive. In addition, the Government has responded positively to Hakka calls for announcements in Hakka in public transport.

B. Chinese, Huaren and Hakkas of the Diaspora

The bulk of the Chinese that live overseas today are mostly the descendants of those that left their country in the middle of the 19th century, as a result of the Tai-ping wars, in search of safety and work. After the lifting of interdiction on travel overseas for the Chinese in 1893, the Qing government was determined not to let go of its nationals, by formulating in 1909 the principle of *sui sanguinis* which turned every Chinese born of a Chinese father or a Chinese mother no matter where they lived whether in the Empire or Overseas into a Chinese subject.

This principle came finally to be repudiated by the new Government in Beijing in 1954. Overnight, millions of Chinese nationals living abroad became stateless and were no longer entitled to any protection from the Chinese Government. They were driven into a nightmare of insecurity and fear. Their lives and property were put at risk in their countries of settlement irrespective of the number of generations born in the country. Henceforth, their fate depended on the type of political system in force in the country, the type of people that governed the country. Chinese entrepreneurs and businessmen were the most exposed and in order to ensure their own survival had to kowtow to those in strategic positions of power, politicians as well as civil servants, the military and the police. The sudden loss of nationality was indeed a terrible blow for many Chinese living overseas left with no choice but to adopt the local nationality of residence where this option was available. Otherwise they remained stateless.

Now the *coup de grace* came with the adoption of the new Chinese Nationality Law in 1980. Article 9 provides that any Chinese citizen that acquires a foreign nationality automatically loses his Chinese nationality. Those that already had a

foreign passport did not worry. But those that were born in China and had never applied for or obtained the nationality of the country of residence were denied Chinese citizenship and left stateless.

As a result, a Chinese is a Chinese citizen and Overseas Chinese can only mean Chinese citizens living overseas. To avoid confusion, ethnic Chinese born or living overseas are called ***Huaren*** and their descendants are ***Huayi***.

The *Huaren*, *Huayi* or Hakkas disseminated overseas on different continents or islands live under a variety of political systems that determine their present circumstances as well as their future. These systems can favour or block their integration, adjustment or progress. Generally, the Western type of democracies facilitate their advancement by conferring upon them if they have been naturalised or granted the nationality of the country the same rights as the local citizens, e.g. the right to vote or stand as candidates in general elections, access to higher education, employment in Government service, home ownership. However, countries with a state religion or racist options tend to be intolerant and oppressive, do not admit them as their citizens and if they do will treat them as second class citizens putting limitations on their freedom of movement or settlement, denying them basic human rights or violating them outright, or committing against them what is has recently been recognised and declared crimes against humanity.

There are about 30m overseas Chinese in total. Nobody knows the exact size of the Hakka Diaspora and no official census is known to have been done where they are known to exist. What is generally available at present are the figures put forward by **Chen Yong Lian** in Hong Kong in 1980, a quarter of a century ago. In most countries where figures are available on the Chinese, there is no distinction made between the Hakkas and the other ethnic Chinese or *Huaren* speaking different Chinese dialects. I have relied on numerous sources⁵ to put together figures that appear closest to the actual situation, somewhere fewer than 6 million, as follows:

1. In Europe and the Americas, **430,000 Hakkas**
2. On the Islands of the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans, plus Southern Africa, **200, 000 Hakkas,**
3. In South Asia and South East Asia, **5,000,000 Hakkas.**

i. Europe and America

a. The Situation

This group of Western countries with democratic institutions after the Westminster or comparable models may be considered as a safe haven for the Overseas *Huaren*, even if from time to time racism shows its ugly face. UK's first Chinese immigrants were 19th century sailors who settled in Liverpool and London's Limehouse district - next door to the gleaming skyscrapers of today's Canary Wharf.

⁵ These include **Ethnologue** or the **Joshua Project** websites.

Colonial powers used Chinese as labourers in SE Asia and the Americas. The US started importing them from 18xx to work on the railway construction. In the past, racial discrimination did not shock human conscience but the 1882 **Chinese Exclusion Act** of the US is indeed a thing of the past although Chinese immigration ceased to be illegal as far back as 1943. However, all the laws prohibiting Chinese and Japanese immigrants from owning land or even from finding work were only repealed in the 1950's, at the dawn of the modern civil rights movements. Chinese from Taiwan went to the US whereas the Cantonese from Hong Kong tended to emigrate to Canada or Australia. Students from China were granted permanent residency status under the Chinese Student Protection Act of 1992. A Hong Kong Hakka refugee girl managed to become Governor-General of Canada.

The US has the largest number of Chinese-speaking nationals with some 3 million *Huaren* and in Europe, UK has a quarter of a million (250,000) *Huaren*, most of them living not only in London but also in Manchester, Swansea and Liverpool. Based on indications available from different associations, the number of Hakkas may be close on 150,000 in the US, 80,000 in UK and 100,000 in Canada. They have no need to hide their *Huaren* or Hakka identity.

Today they pose no threat either as Communists or terrorists as they have no mission from heaven to convert the world to any religion or ideology. They are no fanatics, upset no one and fully integrate in any environment. Once the *Huaren* have been admitted as bona fide immigrants in any of these countries and are accepted as citizens, they have the same rights as any of its citizens. They will not be discriminated against on the basis of their ethnicity or culture. They have absolute freedom to pursue their own careers. Today some 50,000 of Britain's Chinese - 20% of the total - now have jobs in law, medicine and other professions. Nobody will interfere with their way of life, force them to change their names or their religion. They have a right to keep their Chinese ness or Hannesses, nurture it, set up minority cultural groups, take their Children to Chinatowns where other Chinese provide Sunday mother tongue teaching and transmit their values and identity to the next generations. Each one is free to go his own way and nobody bothers whether you are Cantonese, Hokkien or Hakka and all these references seem irrelevant in a country that does not look back.

The *Huaren* that hold passports from their new home countries in Western Europe or in the States are given protection when they travel overseas. Their present is safe and their future is one with their new countries.

b. The Challenge they face

Living in liberal or *laissez-faire* western societies can pose a threat that can be more devastating to Hakka culture and Hakkinese than any law interdicting them. As the children go to Western schools and receive a Western education, dialogue between the generations switches away from the mother's tongue. As they go their separate ways, they gradually lose touch with the parents and their background.. They lose contact with their roots and the fabric of Hakka culture is torn apart. In these countries no hostile agents will want to try to stop anybody from promoting the

study of Hakkanese and Hakka culture. You are your own enemy. Indeed, an affluent environment, with a high standard of living, rich cultural activities, material successes and scientific achievements, constitute powerful attractions and provide a way of life that is seldom conducive to the survival of a minority culture. Those that have fully integrated Western culture feel little need for the Chinese language. Occasionally some members of the younger generations watching CCTV would suddenly realise that the two-digit growth rate of China may have opportunities for them. They would then want to master the language. The *Huayi*, whether Hakka or not, would then prefer to learn Putonghua because there are no facilities for the study of Hakkanese.

ii. The Islanders

a. The Situation

An estimated two hundred thousand Hakkas live on the islands of the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Indian Ocean. They constitute small minorities in those countries and for the past centuries have been cut off from the mainland which means that they have had to fend for themselves and have had to show great inner strength and resilience to survive and keep their traditions.

One of the best accounts of Hakka arrival and integration into an island community has been very aptly recorded by **James Michener** in his masterpiece *Hawaii*. It's the story of a Hakka family that spans several generations and starts with the departure from their *barren farm*. Actually you simply may have to change the names of the characters and you have the same story of the arrival of any group of Hakkas from the barren farm, their encounter with a different culture, their struggles, and adaptation to the new environment, assimilation, transformation. It is the same story of success of the Hakka communities in all the island states and can serve as an illustration of the Hakka spirit, always enterprising, adventurous, undaunted, resilient, combative, and indomitable.

Most Chinese tradesmen or workers that went overseas or landed in distant islands had left a wife behind in the hope of coming back once they had made a fortune, which is why they never lost touch with the family and clan, corresponded with them and followed very closely the events back home. They welcomed Chinese consuls and contributed generously for the war against the Japanese. They made considerable sacrifices to be able to send some money to their parents back in China and as years passed in their exile on the island, they learnt of the demise of their parents, helpless and unable to help. The consuls recommended the study of Mandarin and all the textbooks used in Chinese schools contained alongside each Chinese character, the *po ph'o mo fo* alphabets. The events in China had already split the Chinese community into pro Beijing or Pro Taipei, between **Mao** and **Tchiang**, and between **the Mainland** and **the Island**.

In 1949 when the People's Republic of China was established most immigrants ceased to dream of a return home. Mao had upset all their plans and destroyed their dreams of a return in old age and a trouble-free retirement. To show their

attachment to the land of their fathers, many overseas Chinese families sent a child to China as a contribution towards the building of the Great Wall of new China. Those boys left behind on the islands were now sent to local western schools and became multilingual and multicultural; the daughters continued in the Chinese schools to learn the language and preserve the traditions.

Most island states that emerged in the 1960's are former colonies that have inherited the Westminster or other Western European style of Government. As a result, *Huaren* and Hakkas have never been exposed as a group to any threat either to their lives or their property. Here the problems of the *Huaren* and the Hakkas have been a loss of traditional habits and religious beliefs. In the past the younger person that meets an elderly used to greet or acknowledge him (or *ham* in Hakkinese), by calling him by his rank and position on the family tree, e.g. Third Uncle. Now everybody has a first or Christian name which becomes the levelling agent placing everybody, young and old, children and parents on the same footing with no regard for the traditional hierarchy and protocol. The individual come before the clan which is the exact opposite of Chinese way of life. In a new environment where the *Huaren* form a tiny minority, with flimsy ties to traditions or no knowledge of Chinese philosophy, they get converted and their ignorance make them look down on their own religion considered as a superstition to be discarded. In the process the *Huaren* lose their Chinese ness and belong nowhere which is why Mainland Chinese call them "*Bananas*", yellow outside and mulatto inside, that is with nothing Chinese left in their soul.

Islands in most countries of the world are places where the White man brought slaves from Africa and indentured labour from India and China to toil on their sugar plantations. Though slavery was abolished almost two centuries ago, the structure of most societies has remained basically the same: a racist bourgeoisie made up of a handful of families that possess all the lands and retain tight control on practically all sectors of the economy, including agriculture, manufacture, import-export, insurance companies, accountant firms, satellite TV, maritime and air transport and services, and most important, the commercial banks to which non-whites have little access.

As a result, access to certain sectors of activities in the small island economies have remained closed to *Huaren* that form the smallest ethnic minority community. The rare trespassers that entered the forbidden areas have had to carry on an uphill fight against a ruthless establishment bent on destroying their financial base. So long as the *Huaren* do not challenge the economic order and steer clear of big business, and stayed in their retail shops or groceries, they were left alone and in peace to practise their own culture, language and religion. In short, there is no level playing field for *Huaren* and Hakkas. There is a silent, invisible and impassable barrier of economic apartheid put in place by those that control the big business. They have a policy they ruthlessly implement aiming to keep non-White intruders away from their areas of operation. \

b. A Major Role for the Mainland and the Island

The Islanders of the Diaspora more than the other *Huaren* need the help of their Elder brothers in China to preserve their Chinese ness without which they become irrelevant and would no longer have anything to contribute towards their multicultural environment. A group of the *Huaren* community leaders that met in 1998, identified a series of measures to be adopted to save Chinese culture in Mauritius. First and foremost they identified the need for the study of a Chinese language as a line of contact with China. Martial arts would need to be strongly encouraged as they are so important in the propagation of Chinese culture and offer employment opportunities to young Chinese that perform for both the Mauritian public and foreign tourists. They also saw the need to open up opportunities for non academics, for example, to get masons and stone cutters to learn stone-work and carving and sculpture. In short, these activities or programmes would require an enhanced role of Chinese associations in Mauritius

One way to combat economic apartheid on the islands, for instance in the South West Indian ocean region, would be the implantation of international banks from South East Asia or China. These financial institutions are not expected to provide any preferential treatment to the *Huaren* and the Hakkas who only expect them to be equitable, impartial and to provide them with the level playing field they so badly need to survive.

iii. Asia and South East Asia

a. The Situation

South East Asia has the largest concentration of overseas Chinese. Indonesia and Thailand have the biggest numbers estimated at 7 and 9M each. Singapore has the highest concentration – 3M, or 75% of its population.

Unlike Western democracies, South East Asian countries can be most unsafe if not the most dangerous region for *Huaren* and Hakkas. Some have a long history of pogroms and atrocities dating back to Dutch occupation some three centuries ago. And yet these were their first places where the Chinese traders sojourned or settled, established business firms, mixed with the locals, started new families that have been expanding over several generations.

Despite this pedigree, the third and fourth generations of Chinese born there do not have equal rights with the other citizens. Concepts like the *ius sanguinis* in Europe never entered the minds of the native law-makers that seem convinced they have the rights of life and death over the other ethnic groups.

Indifference to Human Rights for the Individual

The South East Asians that achieved nationhood in the middle of the XXth century in the wake of the Second World War never went through the same experience of European struggle against papal or royal autocracy which culminated in the Declaration of Human Rights in 1789. Human Rights born in the West remained an alien concept that have never been fully understood or integrated in the institutions or political life of the region. Even countries that inherited the Westminster model

of Government have reverted to tribal or clannish behaviour in response to an unconscious and age-old reflex towards non-indigenous peoples. They cannot understand Human Rights for the individual. Absorbed in their family and religious traditions that gave them security and protection, they never felt the need to challenge the authorities.

The only enemy they had were the western colonial powers that had to be booted out and this common cause brought all the rival groups and clans together at least for a time. No sooner was this achieved than the new nation reverted to its tradition with the known values and life style of a patriarchal society. They have not hesitated to have discriminatory or racist provisions written into their Constitution. Some of them have legalised discrimination based on religion and race. No wonder that Human Rights in this region continue to be violated. Crimes against humanity go unpunished.

Before and after Bandung 1955

Problems for *Huaren* and Hakkas actually started with the victory of the Red Army and the establishment of the People's Republic of China. The success of China with a powerful Soviet ally next door scared the Western military strategists who put forward the domino theory and decided that China had to be contained. South East Asia was perceived as the next area to fall under communism so the **Communist Party of Malaya** whose leader **Chin Peng**, happened to be an ethnic Chinese,(some say a Hakka) who has to be eliminated at all costs. The call for armed resistance to British rule even if it was a national movement was perceived as a collective threat to which the British responded by declaring the Malayan Emergency. The local Chinese population got caught up in the ideological power struggles. Ethnic Chinese were an embarrassment to China that did not want to be perceived or accused of nurturing or supporting as a fifth column, nor did she want to be dragged into any other conflict outside her own territory, especially after having been pushed into the Korean War and having had to fight it alone.

The former Manchu *sui sanguinis* nationality policy was repudiated in 1954. As a result overseas Chinese lost their Chinese nationality and fell outside Beijing's protective arm. China had no links with the overseas Chinese and better, no responsibility towards them. Her presence the following year at **Bandung** was a breakthrough for her diplomacy and meant the end of China's isolation. China had the allies she needed. **Zhou Enlai** made a triumphant entry alongside **Nehru**, **Soekarno**, **Nkrumah** who did not want to be dragged into the Cold War and wanted to remain Non-Aligned. They agreed on a series of guiding principles, the most important being non-interference in each other's internal affairs. Bandung, indeed confirmed the loss of Chinese nationality of Overseas Chinese, which meant that the Chinese were no longer Chinese, but *Huaren* that owed primary loyalty to their country of settlement. Since then the *Huaren* of South East Asia were left at the mercy, whims and caprices of whatever regimes were in place there. There had been pogroms in previous centuries, but some countries felt they obtained their licence to kill at Bandung in 1955.

Crimes against Humanity in Indonesia

The US too got the message and as it was engaged in escalating its military intervention in Vietnam and in saturation bombing, it decided to “stabilize” Indonesia. So the CIA orchestrated the October 1-2, 1965 coup that brought Suharto to power and kept him there for the next thirty years. Suharto immediately started his reign of terror and atrocity by founding the *Orde Baru* (New Order) responsible for mass killings, the torture and murder of millions of opponents. The *Huaren* could not have found themselves at a worse place at the worse moment.

The Indonesian Chinese, including more than 2 million Hakkas were humiliated, persecuted, hurt in their feeling and dignity as human beings. Their Human Rights were violated. Suharto restricted the Indonesian Chinese to urban sectors or forced them to relocate. He falsely accused them of conspiring with Communists in a failed alleged coup, presenting them as Muslim enemies to be hated by the Muslim local population. He banned the teaching of the Chinese language from school, the public use of Chinese characters in restaurants signage and business places, outlawed Chinese names and forced Indonesian Chinese to adopt Indonesian names. This systematic violation of the rights of the Chinese and Huaren lasted throughout the three decades of Suharto’s reign. When he fell from power, the Chinese were made once more to bear the brunt of repressed rage and vengeance the Indonesian populace. Chinese homes were looted, burnt down, the women raped and the men murdered.

Strangely enough, no criminal has yet been brought to justice.

Apartheid in Malaysia

The Malaysian Government, without the murderous zeal of Indonesia, did not hesitate to create two classes of citizens. The Prime Minister came up with what he called an affirmative action programme called the Bumiputra policy to discriminate in favour of the Malays. Who is a Malay? The Constitution defines a Malay as being

“One who professes the religion of Islam, habitually speaks the Malay language, conforms to Malay custom.”

According to this definition, Indian Malaysians or Chinese Malaysians, who have been several generations there and have been born there, are not considered sons of the soil. They fall in a Category that can legally be discriminated against. The Bumiputra policy is designed to discriminate on the basis of race and religion. This Bumiputra policy has nothing to do with social engineering designed to improve the circumstances of the poorer sections of the population. It has to be called by its name: blatant racism meant to give all sorts of privileges to Muslims and to deny them to non-Muslim citizens that are Malaysians of Indian or Chinese origin.

Here is a small list:

- a minimum 30 % equity in all companies;
- houses are sold to Muslims with a discount of 10%;
- mutual funds became available for purchase to Muslims only;
- only Muslims owned companies that can submit tenders for Government projects;

- Only Muslims are allowed to engage in specific businesses, e.g. import of vehicles;
- Quotas were set to enable poorly qualified Muslims to gain access to higher education and jobs in government and state projects.

If that is not racism, what is?

This division of the population into two categories of citizens has its source in article 153 of the Malayan Federal Constitution, which is repugnant to anybody's sense of justice in the world. It is strange that nobody ventured to bring the plight of the ethnic Chinese to the Commonwealth Heads of State meeting or to the UN. Human Rights NGO's have been very silent on these issues. The former Prime Minister of Malaysia stated on numerous occasions that Asian values had nothing to do with Western values. Would he mean that respect for the Human Rights of the Non-Muslims in Muslim countries does not constitute an Asian value? As a result the non-Muslims, the Chinese in particular, are not only denied protection by the country of their birth, but have come to experience pogroms and ethnic cleansing. To date the future of the *Huaren* in racist and fanatical countries remains uncertain.

The world has been used to seeing the white man practising discrimination and racism. With the Bumiputra policy, Malaysia has set two records:

- This is the first country run by a non-White to institutionalise racism against the non-white man,
- This is also the first time that religion namely Islam has been utilised to institutionalise racism and apartheid.

When all the propaganda machine and specious justification will have been washed away by time and history, the promoters of the Bumiputra policy or *Orde Baru* will be remembered as racists alongside the likes of Verwoerd.

b. No to Apartheid and Crimes against Humanity

The last group consists of countries that have been oppressing their own citizens of Chinese origin. As a matter of fact, the countries where the *Huaren* and the Hakkas have suffered most humiliation with loss of property, dignity and lives happen to be Muslim countries with a Muslim population, namely, Indonesia and Malaysia. In those countries the people committed not only violations of Human Rights but crimes against humanity. Their discriminatory actions and policies are based on both religion and race. Some even believe they have a right to oppress the Chinese because they are not Malays and worse, because they are not Muslims.

The great scandal here is that Indonesia and Malaysia got away with their inhuman policies, the first with the inhuman *Orde Baru* and the second with the discriminatory *Bumiputra/Malay/Muslim* policy. Nobody seemed to know and nobody seemed to care. Only crimes committed against Jews and the Whites draw world attention and condemnation.

The Indonesian Government should now know that the world's conscience cannot condone or ignore the *Orde Baru*. They must declare it contrary to Human Rights and reject it as a crime against humanity.

The Malaysian Government should know that the world's conscience cannot condone or ignore the Bumiputra/Malay/Muslim Policy. They must declare it contrary to Human Rights and reject it as another version of apartheid.

No religion condones racism, violation of human rights and crimes against humanity. We would need to approach Muslim academics, clerics and lawyers from those countries and elsewhere to enlighten us and the world on the stand of Islam on *Orde Baru* and *Bumiputra* apartheid.

Part III

A programme of Action

The many challenges to the Hakka Diaspora and the *Huaren* Diaspora, as well as the possible responses can be summed up under two broad headings:

A. Hakka Revival

Or How to Promote Hakkanese, the Hakka culture and values, which may be of interest only to the Hakka group;

B. *Huaren* Rights are Human Rights

Or How to enlist the support of the International Community (Chinese, Non-Chinese and Non-*Huaren*) in the affirmation and protection of the Human Rights of *Huaren* and Hakkas living in racist environments.

Hakka revival is the responsibility of the Hakka people who need to take all the initiatives, but they will require the support of the other *Huaren* of the Diaspora. *Huaren* Rights, however, is the collective responsibility of all mankind, including the *Huaren* and Chinese people whatever their dialects: Putonghua, Cantonese or Hakkanese and wherever they are located, on the Mainland or the Island.

A. Hakka Revival – The Achievements to Date

i. Coming out of the Limbo

The most important achievement so far has been for Hakkas to have come out of anonymity, to have moved onto the world stage and to have achieved recognition and identity as a group. We know there is a Hakkasphere with lots of networks that allow Hakkas all over the world to connect and chat. Communication and exchange of information within our sphere has brought us to value our culture as a unique aspect of Chinese culture.

The Hakkas started by helping themselves, by taking numerous initiatives. There are now ongoing discussions on websites, Congresses of Hakka, new schools and colleges established, universities as well as Research centres organising conferences on Hakkas and publishing Magazines, monographs and books on all aspects of the Hakka identity. **Asiawind**, a timely initiative that we all *Huaren* and Hakkas are extremely proud of is an indispensable pole in Hakkasphere.

The latest initiative announced by the *Haifeng Publishing House* of Fuzhou in Fujian is a **Collection of World Famous Hakkas** scheduled to be published in October 2005. This will hopefully constitute a Directory of Hakka Resource from all parts of the World.

ii. What Hakkas Need to do now

An action programme requires players to implement it. So, first and foremost we need to know the **exact number of Hakkas in the World**. The figures should be more readily available for the Mainland and Island, where they hold censuses. The problem rests with the countries of settlement abroad, the majority of which do not sort the population by language or ethnic groups. The figures have to be worked out by *Huaren* or Hakka Associations in those countries, preferably in collaboration with the census authorities that may be invited to include Hakkanese among the languages spoken or to have a Hakka slot in their census forms for the Hakkas to identify them.

B. The Promotion of the Hakkanese and Hakka culture

Overseas Hakkas have to wage an uphill fight.

We first have to overcome the prejudice that hakka is a mere sub standard or inferior dialect not worthy to be called a language, which is why *Huaren* or Hakkas wishing to be reconnected to Chinese culture prefer to go direct to Mandarin or Putonghua.

Next we have to solve a series of problems regarding the availability of Hakka teachers, the availability of teaching materials for Hakka, especially new materials for the new learners. In order to reverse the trend, we could do the following:

- Invite Universities in Europe and the Americas to promote Hakka studies and to set up **Hakka Institutes** or Research Centres;
- Introduce Hakka Language and Literature in the school curriculum, for students to be able to take Hakka as a subject at the end of their secondary schools. Once Hakka has been included in the school curricula of Western countries, say at Cambridge or London GCSE, Hakkas in those countries as well as those that find themselves in former British colonies, will be strongly encouraged to learn the language;
- Produce in the series a **Teach Yourself Hakkanese**. There exist hundreds of teaching methods for students of Mandarin or Putonghua, or even Cantonese, but not for Hakka.
- Call for the compilation of a **Hakkanese Dictionary** for English, French and Spanish speakers, with an agreed and universal Hakka pinyin system;
- Get language teaching schools like *Linguaphone*, *Berlitz*, *Hugo* or *Rosetta* to include Hakkanese along Mandarin and Cantonese among the languages they offer, with tapes and CDs easily available in schools, institutions, bookstores and in Chinatowns all over the world;
- To enrol Hakkanese teachers from Guangdong for the teaching of Hakka overseas;
- To obtain the full support of the Chinese Ministry for Overseas Chinese;
- To invite Municipalities to twin Hakka-speaking cities and towns with European and American cities and towns for the promotion of cultural and commercial exchanges, including promotion of the Hakka language and culture
- To have a list of personalities that will cooperate to preserve and promote Hakka language and culture.

i. A World Hakka Foundation

Our memory is one of hardship and unity in our struggles against hostile environments. We resist injustice and fight for equality. That is what keeps aflame the spirit of our forefathers, their passionate desire for justice, and the same enthusiasm for positive and generous deeds. Many of us know the elation and joy of setting our feet on the land of our ancestors. It would be wonderful if we were able to share this joy with our less fortunate Hakka fellows now nearing their old age longing to return home and once more taste the water of their source. We may need to give some thought to the setting up of a **World Hakka Foundation** for this and other generous initiatives.

ii. A World Hakka Organisation?

To carry out the programme, we need to be organised and have the necessary means and human resources to do the following:

- To be the voice on the international scene, say the UN and have an observer's seat at the UN and other International or Human Rights Organisation;
- To do the coordination at international level, receive and broadcast information on Hakkanese and Hakka Culture in the world;
- To gather complete data not only on prominent Chinese but also on all the International Organisations, Ungo's with the contacts to help us in our work;
- To be the contact point for the International Criminal Court and spearhead prosecution of the violators of Human Rights and committers of crimes against humanity;
- To collaborate with any World *Huaren* Organisation having the same aims and objectives.

At present there are several World Hakka Organisations that could be willing to take on the challenge. They may need to meet and come up with a project and a plan for implementation.

C. *Huaren* Rights are Human Rights

i. An international Cause

On this subject of Human Rights, *Huaren* have not been very vocal but rather shy. They did not want to be seen as fighting a selfish battle in their own narrow and selfish interests. What we should say now is that Hakka Rights are *Huaren* rights, are Human Rights and as such have to be defended by Governments, International Organisations like the United Nations, international NGOs, and national NGOs. Hakkas and *Huaren* should alert and involve all politicians in their constituencies and countries.

This is a battle one cannot lose. World conscience rejects racism, calls for good governance, the rule of law, and respect for Human Rights. We should look at the plight of *Huaren* brothers and sisters in South East Asian racist states not just as a

persecution of *Huaren* or Hakkas, but as a violation of Human Rights. So we have to start a world campaign against Racism and violation of Human Rights. The voice of *Huaren* and that of non-*Huaren* have to be heard as one voice.

I would like to highlight the battle presently being waged in **Australia** against fanaticism and racism that have appeared lately. Under the leadership of the United Party WA, with Eddie Hwang and others, our *Huaren* brothers they are doing a magnificent job and deserve our encouragement, support and congratulations. They already have the full support of personalities like Dr **Ka Shing Chua**, Chairman of the *Huaren* World Association. Hakkas from all over the world need to join forces with them.

ii. What *Huaren* Need to do Now

The Hakka today is like the Knight of the Middle Ages: In one hand, he holds a trowel since he is a builder, to cement the construction blocs together. In the other hand, he holds a sword to defend himself against any attacker and to preserve his life and values.

We are in construction and self-defence. We cannot build or defend ourselves alone. The fate of Hakkas overseas is one with the other *Huaren*. So we need the other Overseas *Huaren*, Cantonese, Fujianese, etc. We should pull together in order to protect each other's identity and specificities.

We also need to enlist the support of Non-*Huaren*. We need them. One of our extraordinary assets is that Hakkas are all over the world and have been able to make friends everywhere.

iii. A Network of Allies

It is a fight for **Human Rights through collective and concerted action**. It requires a network. We are fortunate that the defence of Human Rights appear on the priority list of NGO's all over the world. Any progress that is made on the Human Rights front can only benefit the promotion of *Huaren* and Hakka language and culture.

The groups or categories of people we would need to identify are public figures, politicians, MPs, Ministers, Academics, Human Rights Activists in local, national and international NGOs, Personalities in Government, International Organisations etc. etc.

We will be sending them all emails, information papers

A World Network of Contacts and Supporters should include:

- NGO's in our own countries around the World
- International NGOs, Human Rights Organisations (e.g. *Amnesty international*)
- MPs and Senators, Legislative Assemblies and Senates
- International Organisations
- The Chinese Government, in particular the Foreign Ministry and Overseas Chinese Ministry and the PRC Embassies in all the countries concerned

- Democratic Governments in the West and elsewhere
- Government Institutions – *European Union, African Union, Arab League, ASEAN, Commonwealth, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie*
- *The International Criminal Court, ICJ, UN UNESCO.*
- Newspapers in US, Europe, Asia and TV (CNN, CCTV, CAN, etc. etc.)
-

A complete list of all officers in positions of responsibility in the above bodies needs to be drawn up immediately with names, phone numbers and email addresses.

Huaren and Hakkas need also get in touch with

- **Muslim academics and clerics** known for their integrity to say whether the *Bumiputra policy* of the **Malaysian Government** or the genocide and crimes against humanity perpetrated under President **Suharto** have a basis or a justification in Islamic law.
- South Korean activists and assist them in putting pressure on the Japanese to apologize to the South Korean “comfort women” for providing sexual favours to the Japanese troops during the war. In turn the Koreans should put pressure on the Indonesian Government to apologise for the crimes against the Indonesian Chinese women in 1998.

D. How to Fight against Violations of Human Rights, Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity

The **Indonesian and Malaysian** Governments need be asked to be fair and just towards their non-Muslim nationals, and to protect them from discrimination and violence. They should take the culprits to court and not let them get away with impunity. The Government of Australia where racism has started showing its ugly head should also be invited to act likewise.

Corrective Measures to be taken by Responsible Governments:

- To officially repudiate from their Constitutions and from their internal, municipal and subsidiary laws all the discriminatory clauses and features based on race or religion as abhorrent to Human Rights and to the civilised world.
- To provide equal rights and protection to their non-Muslim citizens, as required by the UN and the International Agreements and Protocols they have entered into.
- To condemn abuses of Human Rights perpetrated by individuals, associations or Government Institutions, including the military and the civil bodies.
- To bring to trial the violators of Human Rights and the perpetrators of Crimes against humanity, and not to grant immunity for their own military.
- To provide compensation to families of victims of violence that lost their property or their lives.
- To sign the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.
- To take concrete steps to support the International Criminal Court, for instance by enacting necessary legislation to support the ICC prosecutor in his investigations, sharing evidence with him and providing protection of witnesses.
- To demand that they seek no impunity agreements for their own troops.

- To draw up a complete list with phone numbers and email addresses of the Ministries, Institutions, and Officers that can be contacted for assistance .
- To help identify the individuals that have deliberately formulated racist policies to harm the *Huaren* and the Hakkas.
- To assist in the establishment of a list of crimes that must be taken to the International Court of Justice and to the International Criminal Court and

i. International justice is key to ending Impunity.

In the months that followed the atrocities perpetrated against the Chinese Indonesians in Indonesia in May 1998, an International Criminal Court (ICC) was set up on 17 July 1998 under the Rome Statute of the ICC.

The **International Criminal Court** (articles 5-8) has jurisdiction with respect to the following crimes:

- **Crime of Genocide:** killing members of a group, national, ethnical, racial or religious, causing bodily or mental harm to members of the group, etc. etc.;
- **Crimes against Humanity:** murder, extermination, deportation or forcible transfer of population, torture, rape, forced pregnancy, persecution against any identifiable group or collectivity on political, racial, national, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender etc, the crime of apartheid.

Many of these crimes were committed by the Indonesian Government under Suharto and also at his fall against the Human beings of Chinese origin. To date the Indonesian murderers, looters, rapers and perpetrators of Crimes against Humanity have not yet been brought to justice.

Hakkas and *Huaren* Associations and Individuals in Western democracies, to begin with, and elsewhere in the World can act immediately.

They can do the following, right away:

- Download the **Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court – (ICC)**, (<http://www.icc-cpi.int/index.php>) in English, Chinese, or Spanish and give it the widest publicity in their own clubs, associations, families so that the maximum number of people may know that it is now possible to break the silence and challenge the culprits, to ask for justice and the outlawing of apartheid and discrimination in Malaysia and Indonesia;
- Get in touch with the ICC and ask to be provided with information on the work ICC does in different parts of the World and to give it the widest publicity in their own circles;
- Ask ICC what they have been doing regarding the 30 years of murderous activities by the Suharto Government and more specifically what they have concretely done regarding the Crimes against Humanity perpetrated in 1998 by the Indonesians;
- Find some means or ways of establishing official links through the Indonesian Embassies overseas with the Chinese Indonesians who to this very day are still scared to speak to outsiders about their predicament and need to be informed of the existence and work of ICC;

- Tell Chinese Indonesians or their relatives that have suffered injustices to write direct to the ICC prosecutor, **Luis Moreno-Ocampo** in The Hague inviting him to make enquiries Even if the ICC will only investigate crimes committed after 1 July 2002, there is need to give the widest publicity now to what has been happening for decades in Indonesia.

ii. Commemorations, Films and Documentaries

Through unrelenting propaganda, the Jews remind the world of their plight under Hitler. Never a year passes without a celebration or commemoration, a **new feature film or documentary** being made on the Holocaust. The *Huaren* should learn from them on how they can alert the whole world about their own plight in Malaysia or Indonesia. There are first class *Huaren* film makers like **Cheuk C Kwan** who did a fantastic series on Chinese restaurants in China towns of the Diaspora. They need be encouraged to start producing films and documentaries on the treatment meted out to the *Huaren* in countries that violate their rights.

Part IV

What China can do for *Huaren* Overseas - Persons of Chinese Origin Status

Since our first meeting in Toronto in 2000, four years ago, Beijing and Taipei have been showing a lot of goodwill towards the Hakkas. While Beijing acknowledged and celebrated Hakka artists, musicians, folklore, Taipei, on the other hand, has created new institutions for the teaching and promotion of Hakkanese and Hakka culture and now uses Hakkanese on TV and public transport.

For the Hakkas of the Centre these initiatives can be construed as an acknowledgement of their contribution towards the downfall of the Manchu dynasty and the establishment of the People's Republic. True, they took the brunt of the civil upheaval and the fight against Japanese aggression. Today, the recognition of the high price they paid can only cement the ties that bind them to the larger Chinese nation.

For the Hakkas of the Diaspora, however, there is no such recognition. Nobody seems to be aware of their share of sufferings. Nowhere are their sacrifices ever acknowledged, recorded or mentioned. Out of sight, out of mind, says the adage. They are the Forgotten Ones.

A. The Need to remember the Diaspora's share of Sacrifice

The involvement of the overseas Chinese in the war efforts of China that started more than a century ago with Sun Yat Sen's challenge of the Manchu Empire lasted more than one and a half centuries. From all parts of the Diaspora, *Huaren* never ceased sending gifts and cash to fight the Japanese and sustain the people. Even after the establishment of the PRC, they continued sending in money to assist their relatives that had no revenue or a pension in their old age, thereby helping to alleviate the ravages of poverty, or after Deng's new directives, to help start private businesses in China. So the importance of the Overseas Chinese contribution and investment in trade and industry cannot be overestimated. Indeed, the Overseas Chinese acted as a fifth column, certainly not a military one but a peaceful and effective one.

Who can deny the extraordinary role played by Chinatowns as the showcase of China in the Metropolis or Capitals on all the continents the world? Their presence long has been earning goodwill, respect and admiration that prepared the way for the arrival and welcome of mainland China on the world scene. The unassuming shops as well as the luxury Chinese restaurants in the remotest nooks or tiniest recesses, have over centuries been propagating Chinese cuisine, an essential aspect of Chinese culture. Today export of Chinese foodstuffs overseas runs into billions of dollars .

The Diaspora *Huaren* have been and continue to be the respected ambassadors of China overseas, earning by their exemplary behaviour the reputation of a respected, peaceful, non fanatical, trustworthy hardworking and law-abiding citizenry.

Chinese diplomats overseas highly value the presence of *Huaren* living foreign countries, a group that reads Chinese papers, watches *CCTV* or Chinese films and also understands the mindset of the local people. They piggyback on this presence that earns them goodwill, encourages the establishment of China Cultural Centres and also facilitates intercourse with the Government and people of the country of accreditation. In most countries where they exist, the local *Huaren* facilitate the spread and understanding of the Chinese policies, and act as the interface between Beijing and the local people. They called for the return of Hong Kong and Macao to China and enlisted the support of the local people to celebrate the events. Now, they constitute a world network that take stands on a number of Chinese issues, including the condemnation of Japanese atrocities in the Second World War and the Japanese move for a seat at the UN. As they have relatives on both sides of the Strait, they remain the indomitable supporters of the one China policy.

All this testifies to the deep attachment of the Overseas *Huaren* to the country of their roots. They want to be closer to China. They want their cultural or ethnic ties to be officially recognised. Something can and need be done to recognise the importance of the *Huaren* of the Diaspora bring closer together the Chinese of the Centre and.

B. Chinese Origin Status for Overseas *Huaren*

This can be done by **granting the Overseas *Huaren* the status of *People of Chinese Origin*.**

We want to be recognised officially as *People of Chinese origin*, allowed to come and go freely, as Chinese citizen that can now go overseas and return at will. This status of ***PCOs*** will enable us to send our children to China for study under the same conditions as the locals. We want to be able to feel that we have a home in China and stay as long as we want to.

We are simply asking the Chinese of the Centre to recognise the *Huaren* of the Diaspora as Chinese. This status will enable the ***PCOs*** first and foremost to feel that they are accepted as part of China. This status will provide us with mental and emotional comfort as well as security. It will make us feel that we are not abandoned to our own destiny without any protection or attention from the country of our Ancestors.

It will above all mean that China will not fail them as they never failed China.

This status will certainly be a favour done to the **Overseas *Huayi*** (broadly defined as the third generation ethnic Chinese overseas) but it would at the same time mean gratefulness to the millions that toiled and sweated overseas for the past one and a half century to help build the new China they always carried in their hearts. It will

also mean that China does not turn her back on them now that she has become strong and united. It will also mean giving hope to the millions that have been harmed by fanatical and racist regimes simply because life made them Chinese, *Huaren* and Hakkas.

In extending those rights to Overseas *Huaren* it goes without saying that the Chinese Authorities are certainly not expected to close their eyes on their own security and will reserve the right to exclude undesirable people, namely spies, saboteurs and other enemies that would only want to take advantage of the situation to work against the interests of China. The Chinese Government will have the final say in the granting of the People of Chinese Origin Status.

The request is to the authorities on both the Mainland and the Island. After all, we trust that before long the coming together of the brothers and sisters on both sides of the Strait be a reality. It will be a family reunion. *Huaren* and Hakkas all over the world want to be present in the extended family reunion of the Centre and the Diaspora.

Conclusion

Ladies and Gentlemen,
These past four years since our last Conference, the world has changed considerably, and I can add, in favour of the Hakkas. So let us dream. So we will live.

The Millions that not long ago took to the streets in the major cities of in the world to say no to Weapons of Massive Deception show that Mankind has a conscience. They all want peace. They want justice. Like us, they hate discrimination, apartheid, pogroms ... Like us, they believe that everybody under the sun has a right to a decent existence. Their support for our struggle for equal rights for *Huaren* and Hakkas, I believe, if we are organised, is just there for the asking.

This is why I have been led to formulate a series of objectives that we may try if we are in one mind, to pursue and achieve.

That will be keeping us busy for the next few years and will give us a good pretext to meet again and report some time in 2008, or maybe earlier, say in 2006.

Thank you for your attention.