GATEWAYS AND GATEKEEPERS

GATEWAYS AND GATEKEEPERS: WALKING THROUGH EVERYDAY INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Abstract

This research project is based on the increasing importance states like Canada and Singapore give to their gateway initiatives, marketing cities like Singapore and Vancouver, as bridges between the East – mainly understood as the People's Republic of China – and the West. I am interested in the everyday life changes developing in Singapore and Vancouver as a result of these gateway initiatives in the business and education sectors, notably when it comes to catering to international students and young professionals.

In trying to understand how gateways between East and West are experienced in everyday life, I argue that these initiatives take meaning through the everyday actions of individuals and community associations embodying these gateways. More specifically, I am interested in the actions of what I call gatekeepers: Chinese community associations well established in Singapore and Vancouver that have to adapt, influence and appropriate these gateway initiatives.

It is my contention that both gateway projects in Singapore and Vancouver, Canada are based on neo-liberal assumptions with respect to profiting economically from a specific international context in which the economic rise of China is marketed to the West. The stories of community associations and individuals are giving to these projects specific nuances and goals that reflect both broader trends in the international political economy, such as the use of international education to migrate to Western countries, and smaller perspectives, such as transnational survival strategies of families.

In this dissertation, I examine more thoroughly the structural limitations neo-liberal assumptions of these gateway projects create on: who is seen as a desirable migrant for/at the gateway, how community associations ought to adapt to stay relevant within these gateways and how exclusions are created along identity lines and privilege assumed within a neo-liberal framework.

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Introduction:
Everyday International Relations at the gateways

Cities like Singapore and Vancouver have been positioned by their state authorities as hybrid places from which one can adapt, learn, and bridge East and West. These locations are marketed by their state as gateways between East and West, especially within the context of the economic 'rise' of China. In everyday life, Eastern and Western influences intertwine to shape the conduct of local and transnational affairs. At the gateway, people contribute to and construct the various divisions between East and West through the practices of everyday life. These divisions are very helpful not only to make sense of the world but to structure the conduct of our daily activities by choosing or not choosing to participate in various activities such as ethnic-based business networks and religious associations. A focus on cities marketed as gateways by their state authorities will help us to put into perspective the construction of East and West in everyday life. Moreover, such perspective will complement traditional understandings of International Relations (IR) which tends to look more closely to China or Western societies to make sense of the world. An everyday IR perspective will show how various social processes we encounter daily influence the ways in which we see and practice divides between East and West. Throughout this dissertation, I will critically assess the notion of 'gateway'. Using Singapore and Vancouver as key examples, I will examine how everyday life in these cities has evolved in relation to state initiatives marketing them as gateways.

Beyond China's Olympics

The case of the 2008 Summer Olympic Games is a key moment through which 'gateway' can be considered. Beyond the traditional incorporation of sporting events to IR, everyday discussions and actions about the Olympics in gateway locations can be seen as struggles about the representations we attribute to the East and the West. China's 2008 Summer Olympic Games have indeed mobilized international attention for many reasons. Caught between an opportunity to show how great China is and the various events expressing discontent towards its policies, the government of China's shot at a successful Olympic Games had much more to do with China's perspective and dealings with global issues such as human rights and its relations to countries like Myanmar, Sudan and Zimbabwe than the sporting events themselves.[1]

Notwithstanding the validity of these claims, everyday discussions and actions about the Olympics became sites to negotiate power relations between East and West. On the one hand, understandings of China from a Westernized perspective depicted it as a place of "widespread corruption, an inefficient banking system, over-dependence on exports and fixed investment for growth, pollution, widening income disparities, and growing inflationary

pressures"[2] as well as human rights violations, media censorship, anti-religious policies, non-recognized domestic HIV/AIDS pandemic, and product recall. On the other hand, Eastern critiques erupted and targeted the Western intolerance to difference. For example, Western media bias for a democratization of Chinese society was criticized and associated with the imperialistic doctrine of Olympism as "peace, freedom, democracy, independence and fair play".[3] As heard during a pro-Olympics Chinese students protest at Yale University on 27 April 2008: "Olympics! Not olympolitics!", "Yes to human rights, No to media distortion".[4]

Cities like Singapore and Vancouver – self-proclaimed gateways between East and West – have shown some of the particular forms these everyday tensions trying to negotiate these representations of both the East and the West may take. A strong local commitment to defend the position of the Chinese government in the months leading to the Olympics developed in both contexts in particular ways, notably because of their local community's specific linkages to China and their recent integration to the Olympic movement. In many ways over the years, both Singapore and Canada, via Vancouver, have underlined their communities' privileged linkages to China to better their position in the international political economy, particularly in light of the economic 'rise' of China. They both have been positioned and marketed as gateways between the East – understood mainly as China – and the West. Moreover, Singapore is hosting the first Youth Olympics in 2010 and Vancouver is preparing the Winter Games of 2010. Their respective state and local Chinese community leaders have expressed great pride to being part of the Olympics process so close to China's 2008 Summer Games, as a way to share their own experience and part of history as Chinese in the world.[5] Both cities and their respective states have significant particular history and linkages to both China and the Olympics. These linkages have influenced local reactions regarding the many controversies leading to the 2008 Summer Olympics, in favour of the Chinese government's position.

For example, gateway life in Vancouver has shown physical presence and support against Western imperialism from a location *within* the West. Liberal community leader Zheng Zongli, leading the Chinese Benevolent Association, rallied with about 5,000 Chinese Canadians to denounce anti-Chinese remarks, especially those of CNN's Jack Cafferty: "Beijing Olympics is a long-cherished dream for all the people of Chinese origin, we are here today to express our resolute support for it, and our resolute objection to the Tibetan separatists."[6] Individuals like Sherry, a Canadian permanent resident of Chinese origin living in Vancouver, remarked about the Western media bias against China: "The issue is not treated fairly. The whole thing, it's not fair. They [Western media] should know better. People should not judge the way we are".[7]

Moreover, gateway life in Singapore has revealed a more official role of gateways as mediators, warning Western societies of the upheaval in

China. In reaction to the Olympic torch relay protests around the world, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, for example, underlined not only Singapore's position in favour of the Chinese government's policies and against the ways in which the events were depicted by the Western media, he implicitly emphasized the role of cities like Singapore as *translators* between the East and the West:

> Vivid TV images of demonstrators waving banners, scuffling with police, and making concerted assaults to snuff out the flame are beamed live around the world, achieving an asymmetrical prominence, and so influencing public opinion against China and the Games (...) The outrage in China, especially among the young, can be read on the flooded Internet bulletin boards, all carrying virulent anti-foreign sentiments (...) Were they in the English language, young Americans and Europeans would realise that these displays of contempt for China and things Chinese will have consequences in their lifetime, well beyond the Olympic Games.[8]

Gateways, as the locations of everyday olympolitics in this case, reveal new perspectives on how to conceive of international affairs. They represent lived experiences, representations and shared understandings giving meanings to what we commonly call the East or the West.

Everyday life and the *international*

If the *international* is often depicted as a realm of states, international organizations and multinational corporations,[10] it is important to stress the ways in which gateway cities like Singapore and Vancouver become *international* sites of investigation where various cultures, national belongings and worldviews engage one another in everyday life. Beyond the accessibility to food and entertainment of various countries and cultures, such cities have become theatres where worldviews on various global social issues are expressed and debated, since they usually find representation support and co-presence in the population living there.[11] Olympic fever is only one example to illustrate how gateway locations express daily struggles over the representation of the *international* through various reports and mobilizations intertwining sport, global issues and ethical concerns. These everyday negotiations representing what makes the *international* are inherently re-defining how one traditionally conceives of both *political* and *international* activity.

One of Hannah Arendt's strongest critiques of the work of political theorists is especially applicable to IR theorists, because it speaks of their preference to theorize the political outside its social context.[12] Arendt questions the definition of the political as the realm of the rulers. The realm of

politics ends up being limited to a public and officially recognized sphere to deal with common issues and goals outside the social context in which these issues are raised and people are living. In Arendt's view, this common understanding of what is political silences other forms of political actions more closely anchored in daily life and not limited to recognized agents of the state.[13]

This fixed understanding of what is political fails to account for the unexpected, which is the essence of politics for Arendt. She denotes that a better understanding of politics must be anchored in the uniqueness and unpredictability of human action.[14] Human action ought to be celebrated since it represents the lived struggles giving collective meaning to the world, which, for Arendt, is the foundation of politics.[15] Politics encompasses all discussions and actions human beings have on common issues and goals, away from any separation of politics – as the realm of the rulers – and the social context.

Arendt's critique can be associated with Michel de Certeau's everyday life perspective in order to further question IR theorists' tendency to isolate the *international* from social life as well.[16] Certeau has argued that politics is best understood by looking at the various ways in which we all participate or refuse to participate in social life. As such, the everyday life is a realm of both social codes and people's negotiations with these social codes. For example, it includes social conventions based on the neo-liberal frameworks on which state authorities based their initiatives, as well as the various political projects families and community groups develop to react to the lack of public social support.

Everyday life has no pre-determined limitations to political borders, since people's paths in adapting to social life involve a profound re-configuration and re-identification to space. Everyday life is not a common IR perspective, because it tends to deconstruct how we understand international affairs and see the discipline of IR. As Matt Davies indicates, an everyday life perspective requires to look at people in their everyday lives and to focus on how events and processes considered *international* are affecting and affected by their actions.[17] In this view, the *international* is re-located in how people cope and grapple with various social conventions and practices deemed of international importance.

More specifically, an everyday life perspective questions the cohesion of a discipline like IR. As the object of study of the *international* has often been bounded to the realm of states and of inter-state matters,[18] an everyday life perspective re-situates the *international* in the relations between individuals and various bodies structuring their lives, from state authorities to systemic economic forces.[19] The *field* of IR loses its coherence, away from well-defined inter-state processes, and directly linked to local, national and transnational messiness of social practices people are struggling with in their everyday

lives.[20] IR remains, as reproduced in beliefs and social practices of people constructing it, but it is re-located as everyday practice as well.

Neither *speaking down* nor *speaking for* people in their everyday lives, this approach takes into serious consideration (read relevant) people's experiences, activities and representations of the *international*, as the basis to better layer our understanding of what are considered international processes.[21] It speaks of the *international* as the social code and practice people are negotiating with in various forms, including the gateway metaphor developed to speak of and market locations between East and West.

Neo-liberal gateway designs[22]

Common understandings of international affairs are often expressed through spatial metaphors such as regional blocs, fortresses, bridges and gateways. These spatial metaphors are widely utilized because they appeal to our common sense. It makes sense to understand and explain world affairs by using expressions and examples that are deeply anchored in our everyday life, in our everyday social imaginaries. Even if we cannot really make sense of what transnational relations look like, we can better understand their use, purpose and function by comparing them, for example, to bridges between states.

The uses and abuses of these spatial metaphors have, however, some limitations, since they tend to restrict our capacity to understand the complexity of international affairs.[23] Whereas spatial metaphors tend to reinforce the centrality and the importance of states and actors constructed as relevant to state authorities, such as international organizations and multinational corporations, they also limit our capacity to engage with the diversity and plurality of lived experiences on which these metaphors are based. If state authorities can define, regulate and institutionalize the ways in which one should bridge to other countries, these official mechanisms usually silence and exclude specific practices serving as bridges between countries as well, even if not officially recognized. Scholars such as Michael J. Shapiro have tried to deconstruct some of the spatial metaphors associated with state authorities' views, notably by engaging with the various transnational everyday practices of people. In order to better understand the complexities and intricacies of international affairs, Shapiro not only suggests that the voices of other actors such as families that develop transnational strategies of survival are acknowledged, but to take into consideration the various histories and strategies their actions and stories express.[24] Away from the state authorities' explanations of their state's economic development and its use of foreign labour, the stories of these transnationalized families may shed a more complete picture of international affairs.

More specifically, the spatial metaphor of the gateway, as a neo-liberal state construction, gives the image of a point of passage like a bridge or an access door in the international political economy. It becomes a way to shape

our understanding of a world divided between East/China and the West. In this view, the gateway is constructed as the link, the unifying factor.[25] The binary opposition created between East/China and the West is produced and reproduced by state authorities profiting from the gateway, artificially homogenizing all of the East with a strong emphasis on one image of China and all of the West as one entity as well.[26] State authorities in Singapore and Canada, via Vancouver, have depicted their respective cities as gateways – unifying components between the East/China and the West – to advance a neo-liberal agenda to further develop these locations as connecting nodes in the international political economy. These neo-liberal projects are understood as political rationalities disarticulating the political community to make the individual a self-governed entrepreneur and render substantive political issues technical and private ones.[27] In this view, gateways are constructed as *unique* competitive advantages linking two civilizations, and their markets.

Historically, the use of the spatial metaphor of the gateway between East/China and the West has taken increasing importance over the last 20 years for various states like Singapore and Canada where their respective authorities seek to benefit from the economic opportunities of a 'rising' China. On the one hand, Singaporean authorities have pro-actively shaped their understanding of what Chinese ethnicity ought to be within its borders over the last 40 years but the most recent uses of the spatial metaphor allowed the city-state to re-claim its Chinese heritage as an economic and connection advantage on which privileged relationships to China and Southeast Asia may be built for Western business.[28] In 2001, then Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong (and soon to be Prime Minister) stated: "We must [...] quickly build on our knowledge of China and develop greater expertise on the country [...] This would enable us to leverage on our global links to become the gateways between China and the rest of the world [and] a gateway for China into the region."[29] Lee conceived of Singapore as gateway to better the country's global position and economic development in the international political economy.

On the other hand, provincial and federal authorities in Canada just recently realized and acknowledged Vancouver's long Chinese history and its privileged linkages to China. They attempted to make up for lost time by institutionalizing its gateway to the Mainland. As Vancouver is the closest North American geographical metropolis between North America and Asia, all levels of government concerned with Vancouver in Canada have tried to construct a gateway based on this competitive advantage and expand its meaning to provide other economic opportunities. As British Columbia Premier Gordon Campbell writes to all his province's graduate students living in Asia in May 2008 in an attempt to use them as ambassadors to spread the word about Canada's Pacific Gateway: "We believe that fostering B.C.'s cultural and economic connections with China provides us with myriad opportunities to increase our presence in Asia." As its Economic

Development Minister adds: "Our B.C. Alumni are an important source of knowledge about Asian markets and they help us understand how we can create strong relationships and business connections in Asia."[30] Vancouver's gateway is promoted to increase connections between East and West and to economically profit from this position in the international political economy.

Neo-liberal gateway projects in both Singapore and Vancouver are disconnected from many other substantive political rationalities linking East/China to the West. State constructions of gateway projects have to be understood in relation to already established gateway-like social relations and emerging practices in everyday life. Everyday integration of migrants from China through the activities of clan associations, faith-based groups, chambers of commerce, school and alumni clubs are usually forgotten if one focuses only on the state's construction of a gateway project. Their voices, stories and strategies are as important in the international political economy as state discourses and practices of a gateway. These everyday actions make state gateway initiatives alive and meaningful. The gateway is a lived space. It is composed of everyday experiences, which encompass various alternative representations of what this space means and a plurality of activities expressing how it works.[31] These lived experiences and alternative representations of the gateway can be better grasped through the actions of gatekeepers. Gatekeepers are understood as Chinese community associations living through the various changes of perspective that governments in Singapore and Canada have developed towards China over the last few years and China's economic 'rise'. Their actions at the gateway are significant because they support, contest, shape and are shaped by the state authorities' gateway projects in everyday life. These actions and the ones of the people living at the gateway are significant to the extent that they appropriate state gateway initiatives and *make* them specific realities.

From this perspective, how can one critically assess the international importance of gateway between East/China and the West? *As performative projects, state constructions of gateways in Singapore and Vancouver take plural and limited meanings through the everyday practices of state authorities, gatekeepers and individuals enacting these gateways.* The everyday actions of gatekeepers are especially revealing sites of ambivalent international relations, in support and in contestation to the state authorities' gateway projects at the local, national, regional, transnational and international/global scales.

By focusing on the everyday actions of Chinese community associations living through the transformations of cities like Singapore and Vancouver as gateways between East/China and the West, it is my contention that some international processes and dynamics shaping and being shaped through both Singapore and Vancouver's gateways may be revealed as intricate parts of these locations where East/China meets West. In order to evaluate and analyze these recent gateway projects, it is especially important to focus on the ways in which cities like Singapore and Vancouver are coping

with increased and intensified relations with the PRC. In everyday life, it is especially with the positioning of local Chinese community associations in Singapore and Vancouver – gatekeepers – that one can put in perspective the state narratives and constructions of gateways to focus on their lived meanings. I will mainly focus on specific implementations of the gateway, when it comes to attracting and keeping international students and young professionals, the ways in which local Chinese community associations have participated in ambivalence to their state's gateway project and how targeted individuals have negotiated their being between East/China and the West in gateway everyday life.

Chapter outline

The first three chapters constitute the theoretical framework in which this research is situated. The first chapter critically assess the obvious use of the notion of diaspora to explore overseas Chinese activities and transnational relations. Although various attempts in Social Sciences and Humanities have been made to utilize the notion of diaspora to understand and explain everyday struggles surrounding identity politics in sites situated between East/China and the West, I contend that it is of limited use to deepen our understanding of everyday IR. In my view, the use of the notion and conceptual tool of diaspora is not so much an aid in reflecting lived experiences since it has been co-opted by specific privileged groups living in these locations, like businesspeople and intellectuals, to give legitimacy to their particular worldviews and claims. I rather explore the concept of gateway as a tool to locate sites and practices where East/China meets West, taking into account their messiness, complexity and the power relations at play.

In the second chapter, I argue that a spatial metaphor like the gateway is better understood as an everyday performative practice. In light of recent work published on everyday international political economy and by focusing on the idea of international mobility as symbolic capital,[32] I focus on the everyday social codes by which a gateway can be conceived and lived. As a performative state project, I am interested in understanding how a gateway is framed and limited in meaning and in practice through an everyday life perspective.

In the third chapter, I present my methodology which, based on the archetype of the city-dweller, has been to follow the metaphor of the gateway from Singapore to Vancouver.[33] In light Michel de Certeau's work on everyday trajectories, strategies and tactics people use to adapt to systemic and structural life conditions, I hopefully shed new light on the ways in which everyday IR can be investigated, particularly in the case of gateway everyday life.[34] I also focus on Edward Said's contrapuntal method to advocate for a more holistic understanding of gateway projects through the everyday stories and experiences of gatekeepers and individuals living at the gateway.[35] More

generally, such contrapuntal method would benefit to traditional approaches to IR.

Chapters four to seven focus on Singapore and Vancouver in order to follow the state construction of the gateway between East/China and the West, when it comes to attracting more international students and young professionals. Beyond state projects, I also look at the everyday alternative representations of the gateway through the activities of gatekeepers, which support and contest these state projects, and are in dynamic relations with each other's representations.

In the eight chapter, I explore the marketing strategies of both states' constructions of their gateway project. Contrasting Singapore to the Vancouver case, I attempt to illustrate the importance of neo-liberalism in shaping their understanding of the desirable and the undesirable migrant. I also stress the ambivalent relation of gatekeepers to these neo-liberal projects and the states' constructions of the un/desirable migrant.

In the following chapter, I look more in-depth at the ambivalence of the gatekeepers to their state's gateway project. By focusing on the alternative images of the gateway they propose, I am stressing the ways in which this ambivalence illustrates important struggles between negotiating with everyday neo-liberal social codes and contributing to important substantive international social processes, such as ethnic-based business networks and transnational religious networks. I try to use the trajectories gatekeepers are creating through these everyday negotiations to translate the everyday meanings gateway projects – and international relations – may take.

In the last chapter, I re-locate everyday gateway politics at the level of the individuals living at the gateway to better grasp the various social codes state authorities and especially gatekeepers have developed. I am particularly interested in the exclusions gateway social codes are based on, with a particular focus on neo-liberal mobility as a specific social code with direct impacts on individuals, gatekeepers and state authorities.

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Chapter 1:
Who's ab/using the Chinese diaspora?

In order to examine the locations where East/China meets West, the notion of Chinese diaspora may seem as a good starting point for an International Relations (IR) investigation. This notion does constitute a focal point of interest in the Social Sciences and Humanities to speak of overseas Chinese activity and mobility. However, the common use of the notion of diaspora in this context is of limited help for an investigation in everyday IR. Away from lived experiences, its use reproduces the illusion of a coherent social space in which eclectic activities take place. The notion of Chinese diaspora and its common use are part of people's everyday life. They should be considered as such and it may be more helpful to better understand the positionality of its main users rather than to reproduce it blindly, especially when these users are situated at gateways between East/China and the West. Instead of the notion of Chinese diaspora, we will discuss the use of the notion of the gateway, as a place that can be investigated – a location between East/China and the West – and is depicting the ambivalence, complexity and the power relations at play in everyday life.

Evidence of the internationalization of production as well as the development of transnational processes now considered part of globalization have brought the attention of many scholars, since the 1960s, to find new ways to investigate a growing number of deterritorialized social processes and phenomena.[1] Territoriality, defined as a geographical understanding of social and power relations, does imply a correlation between territory and socio-political power that historically has been increasingly put into question by scholars examining the contemporary phase of Western globalization.[2] Following Jan Aart Scholte's plea to find ways around our methodological bias towards territorialism, for example, many scholars have chosen to focus on specific social relations rather than specific physical locations to better grasp their intricacies and nature across political and territorial borders.[3]

The notion of diaspora has been increasingly of popular use within the Social Sciences and Humanities at large since the 1990s, as a privileged mode of investigation into deterritorialized social processes; incorporating all forms of dispersion from refugees and asylum-seekers to migrants and transmigrants.[4] Popularized by Cultural and Literary studies, the notion of diaspora finds success in better reflecting people's everyday lives, because it theorizes agency away from the state apparatus. It gives importance to significant social relations between family members and friends living across political borders and developing parallel and intertwined modes of social and economic support.[5]

Most of the literature on diasporas stresses their relational and contextual requirements to local and national contexts to really be understood. I argue the same goes with their use. For example, a notion like

the Chinese diaspora and its popularization since the 1970s cannot be taken in a social vacuum. Of Chinese origin or not, specific social groups – including scholars – seem to appropriate the notion of diaspora to push their own agenda rather than to better reflect lived experiences. Since the Chinese authorities officially recognized its diaspora in 1978 to encourage foreign direct investments to China, the use of the notion of Chinese diaspora is part of the power relations at play and must be understood as such.[6] Its use tends to give coherence to important social processes in order to bring legitimacy in various ways to the claims of its users. *In light of the works of Ien Ang and Rey Chow, one must underline that the common use of this notion does not consider the ambivalence and complexity of lived experiences, as most of the literature on diaspora claims.*[7] *One should rather consider its use a part of the everyday life of specific social groups – mainly businesspeople and intellectuals – in order to problematize its utility.* Put differently, we should focus on who uses the notion of diaspora in their everyday lives to better understand its utility for them, rather than taking for granted their expression of the diasporic reality. After a discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of the notion of diaspora, I will present a short literature review problematizing the use of the notion of Chinese diaspora by intellectuals and businesspeople. I will then engage with the more limited literature emerging from the Social Sciences and Humanities on gateways to reflect how the notion of diaspora can be better understood as part of the everyday life of elite groups living in these locations. A focus on gateways will also allow us to circumvent one limitation of the notion of Chinese diaspora by making possible the acknowledgement of other migrant and mobile lived experiences that can exist in ambivalent and unaware relations to any diasporic claims.

It is important to note that for the purposes of this dissertation the critical assessment of the notion of diaspora is limited to the Chinese diaspora. Moreover, historically considered a trade diaspora, the Chinese diaspora is taken here as being portraying elite social and migrant groupings. This is not to say that scholarly work on diasporas has not addressed the life situations of non-elite groups associated with the Chinese diaspora.[8] By looking at who utilizes the notion of Chinese diaspora the most in everyday life, our focus will be on elite social and migrant groups, such as businesspeople and intellectuals.

Promises and discontents

The notion of diaspora is historically linked to the Jewish dispersion and can find its origins in the Old Testament / Hebrew Bible. It possesses also its first etymological roots in Greek.[9] From the classical examples of political persecution of the Jewish and the Armenian diasporas to the examples of economic expansion of the Greek and the Chinese diasporas, this notion was re-vamped in the late 1960s to apply to South-North migrations motivated by economic survival.[10] As noted by Khachig Tölölian in the early 1990s, the

notion of diaspora encompassed then most forms of population dispersion, since it has become "the exemplary communit[y] of the transnational moment".[11] In this section, I would like to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the notion of diaspora to depict and reflect everyday life. Whereas the notion of diaspora is helpful in breaking with state-centric understandings of everyday life, it is of limited help when one considers who profits from its use.

In its groundbreaking article entitled "Diasporas", the anthropologist James Clifford established the benefits of this notion for Social Sciences. As they "break the binary relation of minority communities with majority societies", "contemporary diasporic practices cannot be reduced to epiphenomena of the nation-state or of global capitalism. While defined and constrained by these structures, they also exceed and criticize them".[12] In his view, the notion of diaspora is helpful in problematizing international migrations and the ways in which states fail to understand the lives of migrant populations and fail to completely integrate them. In keeping significant social relations and heritage alive in host societies and around the world, a diaspora reflects specific migratory practices as distinct social processes that cannot solely be explained by neither war nor the international redistribution of resources. Specific transnational migratory circuits and communities exist because it is a way of life, representing a different mode of social organization based on a "culture of displacement".[13]

Clifford's exercise was not, in contrast to Robin Cohen's most famous model for example, to clearly define the ideal-type of a diaspora.[14] Rather, he tried to account for the malleability of belongings identified within diasporic populations and its consequences on everyday life. He finds that: "[d]iasporist discourses reflect the sense of being part of an ongoing transnational network that includes the homeland, not as something simply left behind, but as a place of attachment in a contrapuntal modernity."[15] In other words, the notion of diaspora seems helpful to Clifford not to identify diasporic populations *per se* but to reflect lived experiences in which one person may develop various forms of belonging besides and in relation to his or her nation-state. In light of Stuart Hall's work, one sees the benefit of the notion of diaspora as the diasporic experience "is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by hybridity".[16] Someone can find strength to adapting his or her ethnic identity, depending on the situation and his or her positioning. Stronger, more positive and less static than the language of ethnic divisions, the notion of diaspora admits its relational nature to specific historical and contextual circumstances and allows people in their everyday lives to be accounted for through their multiple, malleable and ever-changing senses of belonging.[17]

Moreover, there is a positive unintended consequence of the popularization of the notion of diaspora since the late 1960s, away from the classical examples. As noted by Dominique Schnapper, the notion of diaspora

has made it beyond academic circles to give legitimacy to claims of specific migrant groups. The self-identification to a diaspora gives reputable status and seriousness to claims made in public spheres, which explains its exponential growth over the last 40 years. Speaking of the Palestinian diaspora, Schnapper indicates: "in choosing to identify as 'diaspora', Palestinians gives themselves as much legitimacy as the Jewish population has, in claiming and building their sovereign state."[18] Whereas a migrant may find it hard to claim better social conditions in a host society, the members of a diasporic community have a better chance to be heard, because they become the representatives of a global cultural group, a collective memory and a mythic history, that has lived before the nation-state and survived its integration efforts.

Schnapper is correct to mention that specific social groups within a diasporic community are most apt to have diasporic practices and most aware of their lives as being *in diaspora*. The author hints at intellectuals and traders – taken as businesspeople – because they have professions in which the reproduction of transnational linkages based on specific identity markers such as ethnicity are more profitable and of more common use. They possess the cultural, educational and social knowledges to profit and realize their diasporic status, whereas undocumented migrant workers and lower economic classes within the diasporic community may neither have the capacity nor the awareness of being the member of a diasporic community. In this view, the social institutions of traders and intellectuals can be seen as the main mobilizing and organizing forces behind diasporic claims. Both the Armenian Church in France and the United States of America as well as the overseas Chinese business networks in Southeast Asia and in North America have become what Schnapper calls the distinct *cultures* of these diasporas, because they are focal points of organization for diasporic practices. By becoming these mobilizing sites that are naming, reproducing and profiting from the notion of diaspora, these specific social groups and their social institutions promote and defend diasporic communities but also determine what is considered diasporic and how diasporic practices should work.[19]

Although Schnapper does not push the argument further, this author's analysis enables us to see the tip of the iceberg when it comes to discontent with the notion of diaspora. From an everyday perspective, most people do not utilize the notion of diaspora, with the exception of the people who do seem to be seated on the top of power hierarchies. Through its encompassing and aseptic nature, the notion of diaspora usually hides the power relations at play either within a diasporic community or in relation to it (i.e. depictions of diasporas within the academic world). As even James Clifford noted that the gendered dimension of migration gets lost with the notion of diaspora, there is an implicit communitarian illusion that masks and denies the existence of these power relations.[20] One could add to gender all other identity markers by which one's positionality is determined. Although the communitarian illusion asks us to think of a diaspora as a peaceful gathering of a community along a

common history and some ethno-cultural markers, being a member of a diasporic community cannot replace confrontations faced in everyday life based on economic, racial, sexual, religious, geographical, and bodily hierarchies at play. As Rey Chow indicates, the notion of diaspora must be deconstructed by other identity markers such as class and gender in order for us to better understand who is speaking on behalf of the diaspora.[21]

The common use of diaspora by the main users of the notion – businesspeople and intellectuals – also assumes a willingness to use this notion to get more legitimacy to their claims and activities. As Rogers Brubaker argues, it is better to conceptualize the notion of diaspora as a stance or a claim, rather than a cohesive image or entity. In this view, the use of the notion is necessarily linked to make an argument or a position stronger, by associating it to a large membership.[22] Whereas the communitarian illusion gives this legitimacy by masking the power relations and divisions within a diasporic community, the illusion of temporal fixity does the same. Since the main users of the notion can trace back their diasporic heritage over centuries, they can inscribe their actions, thoughts and claims in a collective memory and a historical coherence that supersedes in time and space the political entities to which they are claiming recognition.[23]

In this reconstruction of the history and of the geography of their diaspora, it is hard to say what the main users of the notion can rightfully appropriate as their own diasporic experience. Since the diasporic mode of social organization has been conceptualized in reaction to sedentary models, there is no way of distinguishing a diasporic mode of social organization from another mobile or migrant mode of social organization. As such, diasporic claims become the best category *by default*. Away from everyday life, there maybe a wide range of mobility and migrant practices that the main users of the notion of Chinese diaspora are mis-appropriating to strengthen their position and claims. As they can appropriate the everyday experiences of refugees, migrant workers and so forth, these main users can instrumentalize the notion of diaspora without being questioned on the validity of these claims, even by their peers, members of the same diasporic community.[24]

My intent in problematizing the use of the notion of diaspora is not to reproduce a critique or an agenda asking for a more precise definition of the notion.[25] Rather, I question who uses the notion of diaspora and recognizes uncritically its emancipatory value. I prefer to put this use in perspective and to re-inscribe it in everyday life. Whereas the notion of diaspora and its popularization since the late 1960s is helpful in breaking from the nation-state to better understand international mobility and its consequences on people's everyday lives, the ways in which specific social groups appropriate the notion requires of us to be very cautious of not romanticizing it and conceptually stretching its application.

Interested uses

The Chinese diaspora has usually been depicted as an economic diaspora based on an imperial history of trade.[26] The success of overseas Chinese business networks in the 1980s in shaping the development of East Asia reinforced this economic bias in theorizing the strength of the Chinese diaspora. How can one make sense of the overseas Chinese mobilization against the American embargo on the People's Republic of China (PRC) following the Tiananmen incident in 1989 without speaking of its incredible economic power?[27] The notion of Chinese diaspora is not just a creation of Western intellectuals re-inventing their fear of the *Orient* through the 'rise' of China but the Chinese diaspora is also a used in an purposeful fashion by specific social groups to conceive of a social space explaining the existence and growth of an eclectic ensemble of social relations (and especially of economic importance).[28] Of Chinese origin or not, intellectuals and businesspeople require a cohesive Chinese diaspora to make legitimate their claims and actions, despite how far from lived experiences this notion may be.

Intellectuals theorizing the Chinese diaspora

One of the first ways intellectuals tried and gave international coherence to overseas Chinese transnational activities was to make them correlate with the interests of specific nation-states, such as the People's Republic of China (PRC). Considered as one of the West's last impenetrable circles, the Chinese diaspora was seen by Western intellectuals in the 1990s as an extension of China and what it represents. In *Lords of the Rim*, the investigative journalist and historian Sterling Seagrave conceived of overseas Chinese activities as part of a *master-plan-made-in-China* to invade advanced industrialized countries. In his view, the individual actions of overseas Chinese only take their full meaning when we consider that they are coordinated by a Communist China. Accordingly, overseas Chinese are part of a diaspora that works around the world for the PRC, notably supplying and supporting economically its development.[29] In the 1990s, Seagrave's work reflected a more general Western desire to break the last final frontier: to explain and understand China, and especially its relation to its overseas Chinese communities around the world. Trying to engage seriously with Seagrave's argument, there are overseas Chinese transnational networks and forums in which the PRC tries to push its own agenda. With the rise of the world conventions of Chinese clan associations since the 1980s,[30] some Chinese community leaders who participated in these conventions organized by the Chinese authorities have confirmed the strong political agenda of the organizers, such as a pro-repatriation agenda towards Taiwan. As noted by these community leaders, however, they have their own opinions and their own critical views on the Chinese authorities' policies and their use of these world conventions for such purpose.[31]

Some scholars have preferred to give cohesion to overseas Chinese activities by emphasizing their independence from states. Thus, historian Adam McKeown observes the development of an autonomous economic sphere belonging to overseas Chinese and detached from the will of states. Although primarily organized and lived through transnational economic networks, the Chinese diaspora is highly political for McKeown. He notes that the overseas Chinese economic power is often utilized and mobilized through these networks to fulfill specific diasporic projects.[32] As an historian interested in the evolution of global migration systems, McKeown focuses his work on similarities across time-space in the everyday life of Chinese communities, which explains his de-territorialized perspective on the Chinese diaspora. Moreover, by looking at various independent overseas Chinese mobilizations against or without states' approval in case of disaster relief, political embargos and economic crises, McKeown sees an evolution in the de-territorialization of overseas Chinese networks from the state logic and their increasing impacts on everyday life. More concretely, one may think of the urban development of Yaletown in Vancouver, Canada to better understand McKeown's point. Built in the 1990s, Yaletown is a neighbourhood in Vancouver that developed because of the investments and business networks of the Hong Kongese businessman Li Ka-Shing. This urban development project created controversy. Li's business practices included the buy of a local credit company to finance most of the construction and sold the first condominiums of this project in Hong Kong before opening them up for sale in North America.[33] However, there are specific contextual reasons linking the higher social classes of Hong Kong to Vancouver, which gives strong physical anchors to this deterritorialized action. It would not necessarily have been possible to conduct the same kind of project in a different social context, such as Singapore where the Hong Kongese presence is smaller and the government's regulations are less flexible.

The meaning given to the Chinese diaspora by McKeown has also been extended to other spheres of social activity. The economic and business dimension of the overseas networks has been seen as a structure or skeleton on which various social, cultural, religious and political activities are organized and carried. For some scholars, the distinctive organization of transnational support within overseas Chinese communities is represented as an alternative form of globalization or Chinese commonwealth. In contrast to the neo-liberal model, the Chinese diaspora involves different sources and channels of redistribution to the community, because it is based on a something distinctively Chinese: the *guanxi*. Starting with the organization provided by distinct economic business networks based on Confucian, loyal family and kinship-based ethics, the Chinese diaspora will mobilize for reasons other than economic factors. For example, Chinese networks can be used during disaster relief campaigns, charity work and so forth.[34] This culturally distinct way of organizing and enabling business is seen as a distinct

capitalist practice that applies to other dimensions of social life, since it is first and foremost a Chinese Confucian way of life. Upheld mostly by economists and urban geographers in the late 1990s and early 2000s, this argument is based on the overseas Chinese connections one may find mostly in Southeast Asia and North America. In the name of the *guanxi*, many Chinese clan associations in Southeast Asia have developed business delegations, student exchanges, transnational relief and reconstruction funds, all utilizing classical understandings of Chinese social life, based on extended families, the same dialect or province of origin. Focusing on traditional forms of networks, however, such perspective disregards many Westernized ethnic Chinese who are not involved in these networks as well as any other hybridized forms of belonging away from how the *guanxi*, as distinctive cluster of Chinese values, is usually depicted.

Acknowledging all these transnational networks, power relations and hierarchies, the foremost expert on the Chinese diaspora, the historian Wang Gungwu, has always been, ironically, very sceptical of its existence, and especially of its China-centrism. Wang Gungwu's work constantly underlines the significance of local conditions of existence to differentiate Chinese communities around the world. A host society's own political culture, intercultural relations and history will impact directly the evolution and sense of belonging of each overseas Chinese community. As noted by many others, the values and cultural practices of various members of the Chinese diaspora are at odds with the values and cultural practices of many on the Mainland.[35] Wang's work can be associated with a pluri-disciplinary body of Social Sciences and Humanities literature emerging from Southeast Asia which problematizes the notion of Chinese diaspora because of the power relations at play between the Mainland and Southeast Asian overseas Chinese.[36] Away from any desire to return home, "ethnic Chinese" in Singapore tend to be reluctant to identify their existence as part of a diaspora. In this context, the notion of Chinese diaspora is constantly opposed as being too China-centric. Wang and many scholars focusing on ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia do rightfully suggest that the diasporic dimension of one's life is not one's complete life and by focusing on the interactions between one's diasporic practices and more local practices, then the idea of a Chinese diaspora gets even more diluted.[37]

Similarly, for postcolonial feminists, the notion of the Chinese diaspora is a construction intrinsically linked to Chinese intellectuals. Because it creates a political space in which the cultural Chinese identity is maintained but with little to no danger of repercussions from the Chinese authorities, the notion of diaspora creates a legitimate Chinese stand on which political critiques can be formulated and disseminated:

> Instead of reinstating the legitimacy of traditional knowledge as a counter-political force, Chinese intellectuals need to turn

> elsewhere to form a new locus of contestation. For instance, why not sinology as the logical site of resistance for Chinese intellectuals in diaspora?[38]

In addition to their indirect participation to Chinese politics, Rey Chow speaks of the "lures of diaspora". The use of the notion of diaspora serves as a "masked hegemony" for Chinese intellectuals to speak about China and Chinese culture, while living in Western societies. This notion allows them to appropriate the role of the expert about China and Chinese culture from *within* Western societies. In doing so, they legitimize their status in Western societies.[39]

In the case of social scientists, many have referred to the notion of the Chinese diaspora in terms that support their research interests: economists focus on the business transnational networks and journalists and historians on the political dimension of these networks. Whereas Southeast Asian Chinese scholars were able to stress the myth of the Chinese diaspora to show the relationality between ethnic Chinese and host societies to distinguish themselves from the Mainland, postcolonial feminists have shown that the construction of the Chinese diaspora may be used by Chinese intellectuals to remain part of the political sphere of China while carving out for themselves a minority role and exclusionary space in their host societies. It is through a better understanding of their focus and the context in which the research is performed that their choice of the Chinese diaspora as starting point for their investigation makes sense. As such, even the scholarly use of the notion of the Chinese diaspora cannot be separated from their everyday lives.

Businesspeople living in diaspora

Schnapper's traders – or businesspeople – are also linked to the notion of Chinese diaspora. On the one hand, many expectations are carried out by state officials that Chinese migrants are first and foremost successful entrepreneurs and businesspeople.[40] By targeting Chinese migrants, state officials are looking to tap into Chinese business networks, usually understood as the Chinese diaspora. On the other hand, elite Chinese migrants have used the notion of the Chinese diaspora, putting themselves in the leading position of *the* community for various calculated reasons.

The existence of one Chinese diaspora has been disputed rigorously by businesspeople. By tapping into specific transnational networks based on different dialects or province of origin, for example, multiple Chinese diasporas have been identified. They are usually connected to their respective exclusionary business and economic spaces.[41] Even if one could consider the use of these specific notions of diasporas as particular claims of ownership over different transnational networks, it is more interesting to note the expectations linked, in state officials' minds, about the social background of Chinese migrants. Sin Yih Teo argues that Canadian policymakers and

immigration officials have indeed developed an immigration evaluation scheme in which skilled migrants from Asia, and more specifically of Chinese origin, are viewed as being potentially successful entrepreneurs. In looking for Chinese migrants, Canadian officials have targeted more specifically "foreign investors and business partners".[42]

In a similar fashion, Aihwa Ong found Chinese elite migrants, mostly businesspeople and professionals in North America, to appropriate the notion of the Chinese diaspora. The use of the notion, in this case, helps this group to create social institutions allowing them to help, protect and mentor overseas Chinese around the world. Having incorporated the diasporic dimension of their existence through the internet mostly, these young professionals are reproducing a virtual global nation along the Chinese ethnicity or – as it was called on their website – Chinese race.[43] This virtual nation is mainly composed of high class professionals who have the time, the resources and the energy to shape what the Chinese diaspora is and ought to be, as well as struggling themselves with the meaning of their Chineseness.[44] Many web-based associations have been created and maintained in the matter, including *Wenxue City* and *Unknown Space*.[45] The *World Huaren Federation* (WHF) has played this role more openly, as all "people of Chinese origin by birth, descent and heritage inside and outside China" find a virtual forum to discuss issues, organize and support activities for their members, as well as develop relationships with non-Huaren people and organizations.[46] Reproducing this idea of the Chinese diaspora/race, the Federation is mostly run by professionals living in Australia and Silicon Valley, California. As noted by Ong about the web-based Federation:

> [T]his construction of the global Chinese public identifies race as the unifying feature. Tan (founder of the website) maintains the the WHF is not intended to encourage Chinese chauvinism but to eradicate the intimidation which some governments are subjecting Chinese and other ethnic minorities to [...] Global Huaren seeks to act as a kind of disembedded and placeless political watchdog on behalf of the Chinese race.[47]

Accordingly, the WHF uses the notion of Chinese diaspora among other unifying images to rally all ethnic Chinese along racial lines. However, such a self-prescribed role and purpose has found many critics within the community. Besides the WHF's Western interpretation of human rights violations, the main complaint came from Chinese community leaders in East Asia, who did not appreciate being associated with the website's claims and would prefer to stress their national belonging to states like Malaysia and Indonesia first.[48] Since they are the most aware users of diasporic practices through their work and social relations across borders as well as through the Western obsession with diasporas over the last 40 years, these young

Westernized Chinese professionals do not only try to give meaning to their existence. They are creating new social institutions following their particular understanding of the Chinese diaspora, away from lived experiences.

Finally, it is important to note that businesspeople are not only finding legitimacy in their own use of the notion of diaspora. They also find these claims through other business communities depicted as representatives of their own ethnic-based diaspora. For example, in the Singaporean context, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI) has presented itself often as a leading force of overseas Chinese business networks in Singapore and around the world.[49] The SCCCI also finds this form of legitimacy in advertising its partnerships with other business communities, other diasporas. This is visible in the SCCCI's advertisement of an event it sponsored in 2008 to celebrate Singapore's linkages to the Indian business communities:

> Incredible India @ 60 in Singapore will host business conferences and cultural events on India and will play a tangible role in branding India and spreading the flavour of India to the Singapore business community, the political leadership, the Indian Diaspora and the various communities and international audiences in Singapore.[50]

Indirectly, the SCCCI is positioning itself as a representative of the Chinese diaspora. It presents the organization on an equal plane with the Indian diaspora and its leaders. Even if speaking of the Chinese diaspora in Singapore is difficult due to China-centric implications noted by Wang, the SCCCI finds a way of uniting the voice of the Chinese in Singapore, and around the world (due to the world-based membership of the SCCCI). By addressing an imagined Indian diaspora as equals, it creates an implicit leadership position for itself within an imagined Chinese diaspora.

Multiple Chinese experiences at the gateway

As Chow indicates, notions such as the Chinese diaspora tend to "eliminate the presence of human persons" in our analysis of overseas Chinese activities.[51] In choosing to reflect more closely the lived experiences related to these activities, we may find more fruitful to focus on specific locations where overseas Chinese activities are organized and in which, the claim to Chinese diasporic activities exists in the presence of other mobility and migrant experiences of ethnic Chinese populations. Although the notion of the gateway, as a physical location between East/China and the West, is helpful to re-conceptualize the activities usually associated with the Chinese diaspora, it remains limited to a small body of work in the Social Sciences and Humanities.

Most work about gateways in the Social Sciences and Humanities relate to geographical investigations into the technical dimension of cities, serving as connection nodes in international production and distribution systems. Geographers such as A. F. Burghardt (1971), James Bird (1982) and Peter J. Taylor (2006) have consistently made the argument since the 1970s that gateway cities are connection nodes linking a specific society to international markets.[52] Burghart argues that "[g]ateway cities develop in positions which possess the potentiality of controlling the flows of good and people" across set production and distribution sectors.[53] More recent works, such as the one of Taylor and the edited book by Åke E. Andersson develop an in-depth analysis of gateways cities and regions as connection points to globalization processes. In this view, the logistical importance of physical locations serving as communication, transportation and distribution nodes is stressed to better our understanding of economic, technical, political and financial world integration.[54]

These analyses of the infrastructure and technical integration of gateways to the international political economy tends to favour a focus on the activities of elite migrant groups, such as businesspeople. More specifically, scholars such as Kathy Pain and William Morrison have noted the importance of developing, beyond the infrastructures and investments to sustain economic growth from Eastern/Chinese markets, the competitive advantage dimension of a gateway. This advantage is markedly based on the cultural sensitivities of local business and political actors.[55] Moreover, in this view, the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada has stressed the importance of private sector actors such as chambers of commerce and multinational corporations in serving as cultural competitive advantages for a gateway to remain significantly utilized.[56] Through local Chinese businesspeople, a gateway to China may find important contacts and tap into significant networks.

Nonetheless, gateways do not develop only based on the experiences of Chinese businesspeople, since many other mobility and migrant experiences may be found at these locations. In this view, the gateway is mostly conceptualized through the everyday city life it encompasses for various migrant groups, away from the elite groups of scholars and businesspeople. For example, Alan Lew and Bob McKercher have researched the use and purpose of the Chinese gateway location of Hong Kong. Besides being a transportation node, Hong Kong attracted many tourists looking for the perfect middle ground between familiarity and strange discoveries.[57] These travelers are not elite and do not possess their privileges, notably when coming from Mainland China, but they do encompass a middle-class population who can take the leisure to travel and have the financial resources to use air transportation.

Similarly, many geographers and urban planners have utilized the site of the gateway-city to stress the inequalities and specific life conditions of

various migrant groupings. Vancouver Centre of Excellence's Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis have, for example, encountered many social groupings in which the migrant and mobile experience is far from the one of the elite migrant groups. David Ley and his colleagues have noted through an analysis of housing costs and affordability in gateway-cities like Vancouver the gap in lived experiences between the members of the elite Chinese migrants, whose participation in the housing market contributed to inflationary tendencies, against the experience of at least half of the migrant households to Vancouver struggling to afford housing.[58] These important differences in living the Chinese migrant experience find other expressions through, for example, the important returned migration patterns in which case migrants decide to return to their society of origin, usually for economic opportunity and survival. Whereas living as Chinese migrants at the gateway may involve social costs such as stigmatization, racism, and lack of competency recognition, the gateway migrant experience may be short lived and more appropriately qualified as transnational and temporary sojourn.[59]

Away from the unifying tendencies of the notion of the Chinese diaspora, the investigation of a specific physical location where multiple migrant and mobile experience co-exist may reflect more closely the messiness of everyday life. Since the Chinese diaspora, understood as the elite migrant groups, is still taken under consideration in such an approach, the focus on a gateway will help to show the various power relations at play between social groups of the same ethnic origin.

Conclusion

Although the notion of diaspora may, at first glance, look like a useful concept to depict the complexity of mobility and migrant experiences, it seems of limited help. The notion of gateway, as a location where mobility and migrant experiences occur, is less developed in the literature but will allow us to encounter these experiences away from the strict framework and purposes associated with the use of the notion of Chinese diaspora. However, it is interesting to look at the notion of Chinese diaspora and its common use as an act in the everyday life. Whereas the one utilizing the notion may be privileged enough – like businesspeople and intellectuals – to be aware and engaged in diasporic practices, its use usually encompasses the lived experiences of social groups that are not necessarily aware or engaged in these social relations. As a representation of space, the notion of Chinese diaspora is helpful to better understand specific social groups within the overseas Chinese communities but nothing more. An investigation of the ambivalence and complexity of ethnic Chinese lived experiences caught in these power relations may be located in the locations where they occur, such as the gateways between East/China and the West.

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Chapter 2:
Everyday gateway politics

Gateways, as established by states authorities in specific locations like Singapore and Vancouver, are performative social practices. A critical assessment of these gateways will enable us to better understand their role and purpose in international affairs and in the international political economy. Besides the perspective of state authorities, we are interested in the meanings these gateways between East/China and the West are taking in everyday life. It will be argued that states' gateways cannot be separated from the people living at the gateway – represented sometimes by gatekeepers. Gateways take the form of specific practices, such as the social conventions permitting and restricting mobility between East/China and the West. In light of the *practice turn* in International Relations (IR) and International Political Economy (IPE), I will focus on gatekeepers' actions at the gateway as fruitful sites to investigate the parameters of these gateway initiatives, the creation of specific social codes which give them meaning, and the ways they may shed new night on international dynamics between East/China and the West.

From a state perspective, the construction of gateway projects between East/China and the Western world is based on many motivations. It requires particularly strong linkages to the Chinese world, serving as a strong social base on which such gateway projects can be constructed. With the economic 'rise' of China, it is understandable that policy makers of many countries are trying to maximize the potential profits their local Chinese history and heritage may bring. Gateway projects usually regroup an ensemble of strategies, policies and mechanisms to reinforce the linkages between China – marketed more broadly as the East – and Western societies, through migration patterns, international redistribution of resources and substantive transnational social relations.

In this research, the focus is on the social and the human dimensions of gateway. As stated previously, this research will not focus on the technical, logistical and infrastructural components of gateways like Singapore and Vancouver. I will rather focus on the more complex implications, in everyday life, of marketing these cities as gateways between East/China and the West. My aim is to critically assess the establishment of gateways through state policies and mechanisms by looking at how these changes affect everyday power relations at these locations, local and transnational community dynamics, as well as local and international social imaginaries.

In everyday life, gateways are experienced in specific manners, as unique social codes, notably when it comes to constructing East/China and the West, as well as mobility across them. In light of Guy Debord's work, the creation of a gateway is based on the construction of two blocs – they may be nations, regions, cultures, races or civilizations – that a specific physical location connects.[1] It gives the impression that to enter and understand the

other civilization, one can go through the gateway and live there for a while to acclimate, make contacts and better engage with this other. Even if one may find everyday forms of gateways in the Chinatowns of the world, on university campuses and everywhere East/China and Western societies meet on a daily basis, the construction of a gateway is based on the idea that something qualitatively distinctive can be learned in this specific location, making the engagement with the other civilization somehow more authentic and recognized.

More specifically, gateway social codes in locations like Singapore and Vancouver are influenced by specific interplay of power relations. Everyday gateway politics reveals in both locations the everyday activities and social relations on which the construction of a gateway is conceived. These activities and relations are manifestations of the power hierarchies defining and constructing the two civilizations meeting at this location. For example, one cannot fully understand the specific gateways of Singapore and Vancouver without acknowledging these particular social codes as expression of everyday gateway politics. On the one hand, the current developments and struggles of the Singaporean authorities' gateway project cannot be understood thoroughly without the importance of historical linkages to the Southern provinces of Mainland China. On the other hand, Vancouver's gateway is intrinsically linked to power relations developing and linking Canada's gateway to Hong Kong, especially since the 1990s.[2]

In this chapter, *I will argue that gateways take meanings in everyday life through the actions of individuals and community associations like the gatekeepers. Gateways are experienced through specific social codes, particularly when it comes to enabling mobility across civilizations.* Put differently, gateway projects are enacted upon and made real through the everyday activities of the individuals and social groupings negotiating with specific social codes, especially in terms of international mobility. After discussing the importance of everyday life as a privileged site to locate international affairs, I will focus on the performative component of gateway initiatives as social practices with direct impact on everyday life. More specifically, I will present how gateways are experienced as everyday social codes, constructed through the idea of enabling mobility across civilizations. I will finally discuss the significance of gatekeepers' actions in reproducing and contesting these social codes in everyday life.

Framing everyday life[3]

Everyday life perspectives refer to a large body of literature since the Western Enlightenment. It often represents a need to bring social theory back to what it supposedly tries to understand and explain: people in their everyday lives. Emerging bodies of literature in IR and IPE have more recently taken on, once again, the task of decoding theories and seeing what the actions of people in their everyday lives may bring to our understanding of what is considered the *international.* In this section, I would like to discuss

how everyday life is a fruitful site that complements traditional understandings of IR and IPE. As such, I would like to contribute to the practice turn in IR and to everyday IPE (EIPE), as qualified by John M. Hobson and Leonard Seabrooke.[4]

The practice turn in IR and IPE finds its roots in works like the ones of Susan Strange and Cynthia Enloe, where there is a *real* attempt – to paraphrase Strange – to depict how IPE and international politics are experienced.[5] For example, Enloe's *Bananas, Beaches and Bases* reveals the importance of everyday women's activities and positions in supporting what is considered *international politics*. For Enloe, the focus on everyday life enables scholars to stop thinking only about the effects and the consequences of international economic structures on women – usually depicted as victims – and to aim at understanding why and how women participate or not in these structures and, in general, in international politics.[6] Enloe prefers to focus on everyday actions of women to better understand IPE and IR and not the other way around.

More recently, the work of Marianne Franklin (2004) has contributed to the turn to practice in IR by showing the relevance of such an approach in complementing traditional understandings of IR.[7] Franklin re-situates this turn to practice within the work of Michel de Certeau.[8] In her view, Certeau's perspective on everyday life – as site of investigation for international politics – allows us to open research to non-elite activities, to put into question what is seen as *normal* international action and to critically assess metaphors and representations people utilize in their everyday lives to imagine and understand international politics.[9] Franklin's work reifies Certeau's understanding that everyday life is defined as the ensemble of operating ways in which individuals and groups are asked to contribute to society. Both authors focus on the hegemonic and dominant operating ways imposed by social institutions such as states, and the *ad hoc* adaptations and resisting trajectories of individuals and associations trying to profit from dominant social codes following their own projects.[10] The interplay of both of these trajectories that makes everyday life a necessary and fruitful site of investigation for re-situating what is considered as international politics.[11]

These claims echo an emerging body in IPE, which sees itself as complementary to mainstream regulatory IPE (RIPE). Whereas RIPE focuses on the relations between international economic structures, state authorities and recognized international bodies, EIPE looks at the actions of people in their everyday lives to understand their interplay with international economic and political structures.[12] In *Everyday Politics of the World Economy*, Hobson, Seabrooke and their contributors stress the importance of everyday actions in understanding IR and IPE.[13] Everyday actions have often been disregarded as relevant and prevalent sites where the *international* is lived, experienced and shaped.[14] In a complementary fashion to RIPE, Hobson and Seabrooke argue

for a contrapuntal understanding of the world economy in which EIPE is the counterpoint to mainstream interpretations:

> The purpose of EIPE is to provide us with new information about how the world economy works in addition to the structures and the dominant actors discussed by RIPE. EIPE can, therefore, supplement rather than simply supplant RIPE. [...] In combining RIPE and EIPE we have purposefully presented the relevant topics according to a 'point-counterpoint' logic.[15]

In asking questions such as 'who acts?', one is better equipped to expand the horizons and take down the blindfolds of scholars who are asking 'who governs?' and 'who benefits?'[16]

Following Craig Murphy and Roger Tooze's plea for a heterodox IPE in the 1990s, Hobson and Seabrooke encourage us to think of uncommon sites where IPE is lived and experienced, without romanticizing or victimizing people in their everyday lives.[17] Hobson and Seabrooke understand everyday actions as:

> [A]cts by those who are subordinate within a broader power relationship, but whether through negotiation, resistance or non-resistance, either incrementally or suddenly, shape, constitute and transform the political and the economic environment around and beyond them.[18]

Accordingly, this approach focuses on the relationships that can be seen between the activities of people in their everyday lives and the broader economic and political structures. It shows forms of constraints to everyday actions in conjunction to ways of influencing these broader structures. EIPE has the advantage of looking at agency as reflexive moments towards one's participation in dominant economic and political structures at play, and therefore, it can serve as a starting point to demystify the power relations by which these structures are reproduced.[19]

However, everyday life perspectives in IR and IPE remain marginal and controversial because researchers walk a very fine line between fetishizing lived experiences and reproducing strong personal biases and commitments. On the one hand, as Franklin indicates, the main critique to everyday life investigations in IR and IPE refer to the 'cacophony of everyday life' argument. An everyday life perspective may be helpful to gather nuances and subjugated stories about IR and IPE but, in essence, it tends to fetishize lived experiences. By understanding everydayness as the true location when the messiness and complexity of lived experiences are manifesting in all their multiple and diverse meanings, the researcher is unable to organize and

discriminate what serves as relevant and significant information from the rest.[20]

On the other hand, researchers may reduce their investigation of everyday life to a very narrow understanding of its purpose and contribution. For example, one can put into question the research agenda put forth by Hobson and Seabrooke. The authors define EIPE's realm of investigation based on narrow understandings of political agency, paticularly through their notion of axiorationality. Axiorationality is defined as a behaviour "where an actor uses reason to reflect upon conventions and norms, as well as the interests they inform, and they choose to act in ways which are in accordance with broader intersubjective understandings of what is socially legitimate."[21] Scholars like Luce Irigaray have criticized everyday life perspectives for their focus on reflexivity, rationality and conscious emancipation. As Irigaray indicates, everyday life is messier and more distorted, including actions and trajectories that are self-destructive or considered purely irrational.[22]

There is indeed a dialectical positioning required for everyday life investigations. Such tension is inherent to Certeau's conception of everyday life, composed of tactics and strategies:

> [T]he difference between, on the one hand, the tentative moves, pragmatic ruses, and successive tactics that mark the stages of practical investigation and, on the other hand, the strategic representations offered to the public as the product of these operations.[23]

In Certeau's view, strategies are more easily identifiable than tactics. They are conscious positionings within the economic and political structures in place, like government officials developing gateway initiatives. Tactics, however, are less predictable, less conscious and much more creative, since they usually are reactions and adaptations to dominant social codes. Researchers seem, therefore, caught between narrowing their investigation to conscious and organized strategies only, or glorifying the messiness and complexity of everyday life, while forgetting their own research purpose.

Although a complete understanding of everyday life is an unachievable and unwanted end, an everyday life perspective has, nonetheless, the potential to supplement traditional understandings of IR and IPE by adding on layers of activities and projects people develop in their everyday lives.[24] Specific trajectories can be garnered, notably when it comes to recent strategies of states positioning themselves within international political and economic structures. Moreover, other strategies of collective bodies such as universities and chambers of commerce can be identified to layer our understanding of social life. Particular tactics of individuals and families adapting to the changing local and international political and economic contexts may be recorded as well, to deepen our understanding of this interplay between

individuals, collective bodies and overall structuring systems. More concretely, an everyday life perspective may be helpful to critically assess gateway initiatives.[25] This approach becomes useful to understand how the activities and representations of people in their everyday lives are shaped by and are influencing the state construction of the gateway.

Performative gateways

The metaphor of the gateway is a powerful image from which one can envision moving through the *international* as well as being monitored and disciplined by various agents when such mobility is possible. The representation of gateways as focal points, like doors in walls, may be taken as strategically impacting everyday life. In this section, I would like to explore the performative dimension of the gateway metaphor, as a social practice being marketed, framed and impacting everyday life. After a brief discussion on performativity, I will explore how a gateway can be conceptualized as performative practice with direct impact on everyday life.

In *How to Do Things with Words*, J.L. Austin develops the idea of the *performative* to account for specific kinds of phrases that imply an action: "The name is derived, of course, from 'perform', the usual verb with the noun 'action': it indicates that the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action – it is not normally thought of as just saying something".[26] In other words, specific sentences and expressions may have an immediate performative dimension that surpasses the discursive world to imply direct actions, such as the expressions 'I bet' and 'I declare war'. By saying them, we are performing an action.

Many scholars have built on Austin's work to analyze the possibilities and limitations of looking at the performative dimension of common sensical expressions and public discourses. In *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*, Judith Butler shows, for example, that the use of hate speech by children – among others – can be seen as a performative, because it destroys the possibility of intersubjective understandings and becomes in itself a violent act.[27] In her view, "hate speech is understood not only to communicate an offensive idea or set of ideas but also to enact the very message it communicates: the very communication is at once a form of conduct".[28]

Accordingly, Butler defines performatives as social rituals and common sensical practices impacting how we think, we act and see the world:

> The performative is not a singular act used by an already established subject, but one of the powerful and insidious ways in which subjects are called into social being from diffuse and powerful interpellations. In this sense the social performative is a crucial part not only of subject formation, but of the ongoing political contestation and reformulation of the subject as well. The performative is not only a ritual practice: it is one of the

> influential rituals by which subjects are formed and reformulated.[29]

Performatives, like hate speech, become intrinsic parts of everyday life, as social codes orienting how people see themselves and the world. Following Jacques Derrida, Butler indicates that the power of performatives exists in their capacity to de-contextualize. Like hate speech, they can make their ways into new situations and conditions of everyday life, since they are intrinsically linked to subject formation.[30]

Nonetheless, performatives are not natural and immutable realities: they are inherently cultural, fluid and representational. They do not possess fixed meanings and must be reproduced in a constant fashion to appear fixed and stable in time-space. They can be re-appropriated and re-contextualized in everyday life, which engages various social groupings in competing representations or different strategies to give meaning to this state practice. The use of a performative and its popularity always bring the possibility of it being strategically adapted and distorted to the extent it signifies the contrary of the initial intent. In her example of hate speech, Butler refers to the various racist expressions having being re-appropriated under movements like Black Power to speak of Afro-American pride and dignity.[31] A moment like the 1968 Summer Olympic Games has allowed such re-appropriation and its impacts more clearly, through Americans Tommie Smith and John Carlos' Black Power salutes on the podium.

As David Campbell and Cynthia Weber indicate, Butler's work is helpful in IR in getting scholars to understand that specific discursive elements – like the gateway – spill over as social codes into everyday life, making the assumptions and worldviews on which they are based, as well as their un/expected and explicit effects, *real* life conditions.[32] It is possible to conceptualize the increasing discourses of gateways between East/China and the West as performatives. Public discourses usually use the notion of gateway as part of a governmental marketing strategy towards a profitable future based on specific forms of conduct: 'becoming the gateway', 'acting as a gateway'. Based on specific assumptions of what these phrases mean, state authorities are institutionalizing gateway initiatives, policies and mechanisms that become social codes in everyday life, guiding how people act, see the world and see themselves. There are many ways of coding gateways in everyday life: privileging increasing numbers of targeted migrants and investments, positioning a specific location as *the* preferred destination for businesspeople to expand their activities to new markets, and institutionalizing languages and ethno-cultural holidays corresponding to the civilizations the gateway is supposedly linking.

Gateway social codes

Gateways, as performative practices, can be comprehended more concretely through the specific social codes that develop and influence people in their everyday lives at the gateway. For example, even before deciding to become an international student or a migrant worker at the gateway, people understand and conceive of the specific location of the gateway in precise ways. They choose the gateway to become their everyday life in order to develop an international advantage and experience of being immersed in a bi-cultural social context.[33] For people living and not living at the gateway, there are unique social codes by which one can understand and is encouraged to understand gateway locations like Singapore and Vancouver. In these locations, ideas of international mobility and crossing civilizational lines constitute main components of making gateways unique locations. In this section, I would like to offer some thoughts on gateway social codes that develop through the idea of enabling mobility across civilizations. After presenting Pierre Bourdieu's work on non-economic forms of capital, I will explore the functioning of gateway social codes in everyday life, particularly in terms of developing, performing, marketing and framing mobility across civilizations as their pillar.

Bourdieu's forms of capital (other than economic) are speaking to differences in choices and preferences that are not solely based on rationalities and advantages coming from an economic and interest-based state of mind. Complementing a traditional understanding of economic capital (i.e. money) as part of any capitalist economic system, Bourdieu's work on various kinds of capital problematizes the liberal understanding of competitive advantage and interest. By conceptualizing value in a broader fashion, Bourdieu is able to expand our understanding of people in their everyday lives beyond the usual interest-based theories and cost-benefit analyses. As Aihwa Ong and Donald Nonini state,

> there is a variety of capitals – economic, cultural, symbolic, educational, social, and linguistic. For Bourdieu, such capitals are different, mutually convertible kinds of culturally defined resources that can be converted into personal power, thereby supporting one's life chances or social trajectory.[34]

There is a situatedness to the use of a wide variety of capitals to make sense of the different choices people take in similar situations. In contrast to Hobson and Seabrooke's axiorationality, Bourdieu's various kinds of capital are meant to apply to less rational and emancipatory behaviours as well, offering some structural lines along which people in their everyday lives may take decisions.

For example, Bourdieu's famous notion of cultural capital was introduced in 1977 to understand how cultural differences may give different

meanings and importance to similar things in two social contexts or more.[35] Bourdieu and Jean-Claude Passeron have defined cultural capital as a form of knowledge giving a sensitivity and socializing someone to specific cultural social codes:

> [T]he cultural goods transmitted by the different family PAs [pedagogical actions], whose value qua cultural capital varies with the distance between the cultural arbitrary imposed by the dominant PA and the cultural arbitrary inculcated by the family PA within the different groups or classes.[36]

For example, taste and aversion to culturally defined lifestyles and items of consumption are considered part of cultural capital and do possess concrete economic consequences.[37] Cultural capital explains more than how people of different cultures, classes and social groupings will choose specific types of food over others. In this instance, it problematizes the ways in which these preferences are passed on and evolve from generation to generation, through the power relations and everyday socialization processes at play, such as a family nucleus to children. Cultural capital refers to the processes of socialization, pedagogy and education that inform someone's own perspective on how to do things beyond rationalist models of explanation.[38]

More specifically, this notion of cultural capital is insightful to codify at the gateway, the use of culture as a way to divide in an everyday fashion, places and processes associated with the East/China and those associated with the West.[39] State authorities and people in their everyday lives experiencing the gateway are essentializing cultures and civilizations to fit the purpose and make sense of the gateway, with specific places known as Eastern/Chinese or Western. Eastern/Chinese communities develop residential areas, school practices, shopping malls and media in parallel to the development of the same practices by Western communities. Whereas fusion is marketed and wanted, it is fusion of two specific and co-present civilizations. Cultural capital, as specific cultural practices and events, gives to gateway everyday life some structural lines along which one can better understand what this specific location is supposed to be linking.

Nonetheless, it seems that gateways' most prominent capital is of a field that Bourdieu has not developed explicitly. Although the author confirms the existence of a plurality of these capitals through the existence of various fields of activity (i.e. the economic field, the educational field and the linguistic field), his understanding of a social space as a social formation or *habitus* tends to restrict the possibility of speaking about a field relating to mobility.[40] By defining a *habitus* as an ensemble of social relations and social codes giving and reproducing specific patterns of social life, production and consumption, Bourdieu's work approaches an Euclidean understanding of space. While addressing the transnationalization of economic, production and

consumption networks, Bourdieu's *habitus* and overall framework tend to reproduce the pitfalls of the literature on transnational social formations by attributing an original physical location to specific power relations.[41]

Gateways are by nature built on ambivalence towards a Euclidean understanding of space, making for the mobility field to be a central development of gateways. On the one hand, gateways are developing a reinforcement of Euclidean space through their efforts of profiting locally from gateway networks. On the other hand, the gateway narratives are based on destroying the image of Euclidean spaces by being a place for people and corporations to access many social formations and their specific social codes simultaneously.

Mobility capital helps us to understand how mobility is produced and marketed in everyday life at the gateway. As with cultural capital, mobility capital can be understood as a form of knowledge based on additional value given to *overseas* experiences and trans-border/civilizational activities. Mobility capital seems to give someone with *overseas experiences* a qualitative competence that means more than experiences of similar value in a local context. Despite the *international* presence in everyday global cities, mobility capital speaks of the fetish of crossing borders and of *international experiences*. It seems to mean more to have studied or worked a few months/years in another country for various funding agencies and potential employers, than to have completed similar studies and work in a local setting. As such, mobility capital does not speak of the real value that *overseas experiences* give to someone, but rather a very situated and represented worth, which state authorities, marketing their gateway projects, are especially exploiting with this construction of trans-civilizational divides.

Gatekeepings

Bourdieu suggests the presence of a plurality of collective bodies, such as community associations, which shape everyday life through their use of different forms of capital and through their support of specific social codes.[42] These associations are crucial since they inhabit, give meaning and reproduce these capitals in locations like gateways. In thinking of the metaphor of the gateway, these bodies take the form of the guards standing at the threshold to monitor and discipline the use of the gateway. Based on who and what can come in and out, these gatekeepers are the ones in practice granting and denying access through the gateway. In this section, I would like to look at the relations between gateway and gatekeeper to understand the production and reproduction of gateway social codes in everyday life. After a brief conceptualization of gatekeepers, I would like to address their significant contributions in shaping gateway social codes.

Gatekeepers cannot be defined as the state authorities managing a gateway project, since these state authorities are not technically living at the gateway.[43] Even if one may be tempted to consider state authorities as

gatekeepers, markedly through the work of immigration officers and policy-makers enabling and restricting mobility at the gateway, their actions are quite detached from the everyday gateway life. Gatekeepers' actions are crucial to the extent that they support or contest in everyday life state authorities' more detached and strategic designs of their gateway projects.

Henri Lefebvre (1984) identifies three levels of representations of space, in which the gatekeeper negotiates its everyday actions with the construction of a gateway project. Whereas the gateway is part of a *lived space* for the gatekeeper, its perception of the location as a gateway (i.e. *perceived space*) is constantly changing and evolving in relation to, for example, the increasing numbers of migrants, new industries, new common languages and new religious practices gateway policies are bringing. Moreover, the gatekeeper has to negotiate with the state construction of the gateway (i.e. *conceived space*) and the ways in which this gateway is represented in the public sphere.[44] Put differently, whereas the gateway is represented as a space in-between two civilizations, gatekeepers are the ones staying put and making the gateway their place of living. Gatekeepers do experience and shape gateway projects because they live there. They are confronted by everyday distinctions between the social practices reproducing the gateway projects and the ones excluded from that space. Their perceptions and understandings of the gateway are clearly linked to who they are, how they see – if aware of – this idea of the gateway being beneficial for them, and how they are embedded in the power relations at play.[45]

It is hard to find in the Social Sciences, any references to communitarian bodies and individuals enabling and restricting access to the gateway (and the other civilization) while remaining in a fixed but yet *international location*, such as a gateway between East/China and the West. Alain Tarrius examines the role of unofficial notaries (*notaires informels*), who regulate in the everyday life the use of unofficial transnational networks for migrants.[46] Although Tarrius' work focuses on individuals serving as the gatekeepers of these networks, notably in underground economies, the author does identify communitarian bodies responsible to strategically allow, facilitate or restrict mobility and access to specific networks based on its own regulations.

In a similar fashion, gatekeepers are responsible for allowing or denying access to the gateway to specific social groupings. Whereas they are mostly influential collective and community associations with a long history and strong position at the gateway, they are responsible of various social codes and eclectic socialization processes which reproduce the gateway as an everyday place to live between East/China and West. Through charity work, business networking sessions, overseas trade delegations, local and overseas scholarship programmes, and collaboration with governments on various integration activities and courses for newcomers, the gatekeepers are utilizing

from their local and transnational everyday activities to take advantage of marketing trans-civilizational mobility and to reproduce the myth of its value.

With the construction of the gateway by state authorities, the gatekeeper becomes gatekeeper by participating in gateway social codes: acknowledging, engaging and appropriating the gateway narrative in its own way. As such, the gatekeeper makes its own everyday life strategies and trajectories through the gateway initiatives. In Lefebvre's terms, the gatekeepers' actions and lived experiences bring them to alternative images of the gateway that can compete and complement the state gateway projects and other gatekeepers' representations. In trying to reconcile more closely the understanding of the gateway with how it is lived and perceived, gatekeepers' actions are revealing important power relations at play at the gateway among themselves and with state authorities.[47] Through gatekeepers' contributions to gateway social codes and the fetishization of mobility across civilizations, one can develop more in-depth understanding of the everyday experiences at the gateway, as well as the community engagement with state projects like gateway initiatives.

Gatekeepers are inherently linked to giving meanings and everyday existence of the gateway. On the one hand, the lived experiences of the gatekeepers are fertile in maintaining gateway social codes fetishizing international mobility. In relation to a state gateway project, a gatekeeper possesses everyday activities to serve as bridges between the two civilizations. They do participate in re-creating this schism and divides between civilizations, since they represent their activities and their role as the *mediator* between the two sides and an *enabler* of trans-civilizational mobility. On the other hand, the perceived space of gatekeepers reveals the orientation of the gateway. As situated social actors, gatekeepers do have, from lived experiences, a specific understanding of what East/China and the West are. In relation to state policies strategically emphasizing, for example, that China is Mandarin-speaking and the West is English-speaking, gatekeepers have their own transnational networks, histories and positionings within power relations. These positionings influence how gatekeepers see and construct the East/China and the West.

Conclusion

The performative dimension of gateways brings us away from governments' actions to focus on the everyday consequences and interplay between individuals, community associations like gatekeepers and other institutions involved with gateway projects. As a social practice, gateways between East/China and the West take real and plural meanings in the gateway everyday life, particularly through the actions and representations of gatekeepers. These gatekeepers' appropriations of the gateway influence not only their own views but become intrinsic part of the interplay of power relations at the gateway, markedly through their instrumentalization and

understanding of the mobility field of activity developing between East/China and West. Everyday life, as a theoretical approach, is helpful to give a voice and relevance to actors like gatekeepers in understanding the role and the nature of gateways in international affairs and the international political economy. Even if understanding the totality of everyday life is unachievable, various trajectories of individuals and collective bodies may complement our understanding of state focused investigations into gateway projects. The various trajectories in place, their evolutions and linkages to others as well as to state conceptions of the gateway are more than helpful to better understand gateway politics. Through everyday gateway politics, one may critically assess the direction and significance of gateway projects constructed between East/China and the West, notably through the actions of gatekeepers that reflect various social processes and international dynamics setting foot locally and internationally at the gateway.

Endnotes

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[3] Some elements of this section have already been published. See Jean Michel Montsion. "Re-locating Politics at the Gateway: Everyday Life in Singapore's Global Schoolhouse." Accepted for publication in *Pacific Affairs*. Forthcoming.

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Chapter 3:
Everyday research/er at the gateway

The lived experiences of the researcher can serve as the starting point to better understand the specific challenges in conducting research in International Relations (IR) from an everyday perspective. Everyday research is best understood as a gathering of the stories and trajectories of individuals and associations. To complement quantitative approaches to investigate international dynamics, the researcher can be presented as a city-dweller and a playwright, putting in conversation the various experiences, nuances and voices gathered while observing social life.

The anthropologist George Marcus' main contribution to understanding research in the Social Sciences was to argue for the importance of multi-sited ethnography, which is understood "around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer establishes some form of literal, physical presence, with an explicit, posited logic of association or connection among sites".[1] In this view, a notion like the gateway becomes useful when it connects and resonates in lived experiences, and it can help us figure out the intricacies of the social processes at play.

Although I do not consider my work part of IR's ethnographic turn[2], Marcus' view on multi-sited research fits very well with what many IR scholars have been asking. The author rightfully shows that the mapping of multi-sited social relations has increasing relevance in making sense of the world. Marcus opposes the subordination of multi-sited research to territorialized studies:

> [T]his kind of ethnography maps a new object of study in which previous situating narratives like that of resistance and accommodation become qualified by expanding what is ethnographically "in the picture" of research both as it evolves in the field and as it is eventually written up.[3]

He gives an independent voice to this *new object of study* which is by essence ontologically different than any territorially based research.

More concretely, Marcus indicates various techniques for conducting a multi-sited research, one of which is to *follow the metaphor.* This technique requires focusing on specific signs or discourse components guiding, designing and shaping everyday life: "This mode of constructing multi-sited research is thus especially potent for suturing locations of cultural production that had not been obviously connected and, consequently for creating empirically argued new envisionings of social landscapes".[4] Following the metaphor enables the researcher to put into conversation various sites of everyday actions that are referring to the same idea, such as being part of a

gateway between East/China and West. As multi-sited research cannot pretend to provide controlled and traditional comparisons, following the metaphor will allow the researcher to explore unique sites around the world where specific power relations are intertwined with the use of this metaphor in the everyday life.

For example, gateways between East/China and the West intertwine with everyday life when state authorities and parts of a society are strategically coding what is Eastern/Chinese through the construction of such a metaphor. Examining these social codes and the ways in which they are utilized may reveal new insights not only for the particular cities and states studied (i.e. Singapore and Vancouver, Canada), but for research done on transnational overseas Chinese activities. With the economic 'rise' of China, the metaphor of the gateway has increasingly been used and institutionalized in both of these locations.

In this chapter, *it will be argued that everyday life is a significant site of investigation for IR, by supplementing substantively other approaches to IR and by acknowledging as productive the researcher's subjective 'field experiences'.* To complement quantitative approaches, this qualitative approach aims at reflecting more closely lived experiences of people in their everyday lives, notably by re-defining the role of the IR researcher as a city-dweller and a playwright and building on Edward Said's contrapuntal methodology.

Everyday life as methodology[5]

As conceptual and methodological commitment, Certeau's perspective on everyday life can help problematize the gateway initiatives of states like Singapore and Canada. Methodologically, one can focus on gateway everyday life as a location where strategies seeking "to create places in conformity with abstract models" are confronted with tactics that "do not obey to the law of the place, as they are not defined or identified by it".[6] When states market strategically specific cities as gateways through various policies and mechanisms, one can find various reactions of people using, adapting and contesting these strategies to follow different purposes. A everyday life methodology is necessarily a qualitative approach looking at the stories of individuals and collective bodies experiencing gateway initiatives to better grasp the various trajectories developing in everyday life and linking to international dynamics, may they contribute or not to states' objectives.

As stated in a previous chapter, Certeau's understanding of politics refers to the various ways and the trajectories by which we all participate or refuse to participate in social life. An everyday life perspective puts into conversation these social codes and trajectories, particularly strategies and tactics. On the one hand, strategies are well-defined positionings within these social codes, assuming "a place that can be circumscribed as *proper* and thus serve as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it.[7] Strategies are clear attempts to appropriate and change the matrix of social

codes for specific purposes. On the other hand, tactics are "unspoken, intuitive practices of interpersonal relations... [that represent] a logic of momentary occupation without ownership".[8] Put differently, tactics are *ad hoc* situations in which social codes are utilized, shaped and instrumentalized to gain specific opportunities but which do not have a long-term transformative impact upon these social codes.[9] Emphasizing less the oppositional aspect Certeau imagines between strategies and tactics, this methodological approach can be taken as a gathering of all these trajectories and an analysis of their mutual interplays and combinations.

In this view, Certeau's work on everyday life as methodology sheds new light on many state projects, like gateway initiatives, by focusing on how they are lived and appropriated by various individuals. In light of Doreen Massey's work, the spatial metaphor of the gateway can be developed by state authorities as an ideological attempt to fix the meaning at the gateway and profit from a 'new' image in the international. Alternative understandings of gateway initiatives would stem from taking into account the multiple trajectories in place, building on state strategies.[10] By incorporating to our understanding of the gateway the tactics and strategies of people consuming and utilizing these gateway initiatives to their advantage and following their own motivations, the image of the gateway from an everyday life perspective becomes open-ended and plural.

Such an investigation in the everyday life meanings given to *international topics* like gateway initiatives must be understood as a complement to other types of IR research. For example, quantitative and macro-level approaches to topics such as Singapore and Vancouver's gateway initiatives and the rise of international education demands across the Asia Pacific are helpful in understanding both the general social trends and the significance of these tendencies in a broader context. They give us a broad understanding of these trends without giving too much importance to cases that are considered contingent or exceptional situations.[11] They can notably tell us more about the current developments in the international education sector with respect to the provenance of students and their future destinations, the importance in the overall enrolment of Singapore's universities and polytechnics and the internationalization strategies used by universities.[12]

Nonetheless, these quantitative and macro-level approaches are somewhat disconnected from everyday life, where people living in locations like Singapore give meanings to these gateway initiatives through their own trajectories and intents. Certeau puts into question the ability of these approaches to grasp the trajectories and operating ways making the substance of everyday life. Speaking more precisely of statistical investigations, he states that they are "satisfied with classifying, calculating, and putting into tables the 'lexical' units which compose them but to which they cannot be reduced".[13] In this view, the focus on numbers and general trends tend to de-humanize

these social realities, particularly by taking the histories and intents out of the picture.

More attention given to the stories of people living in Singapore and Vancouver since participants to gateway initiatives may reveal some of this substance and motivations behind the tactics, strategies and trajectories evolving at the gateways. Although not representative of gateway everyday life, these stories may portray its messiness and its human dimension. For example, in *Universities and Globalization: To Market, To Market*, Ravinder K. Sidhu puts in relation the stories of Singaporeans with a study of the policies and mechanisms used by Singaporean authorities as part of an internationalization strategy in the education sector. These stories allow Sidhu to problematize Singapore's international exposure strategy encouraging Singaporeans to study abroad, by showing how people have taken advantage of this opportunity in plural ways and, sometimes, against the intent of the platform.[14]

Qualitative approaches based on the gathering of stories find, however, necessary limitations in the researcher's own experience in engaging with people living at the gateway. This experience will bring a very specific portrait of both Singapore and Vancouver's everyday life that may clash with the lived experiences of people not interviewed, because it would be virtually impossible to gather all stories. This current research was conducted in both Singapore and Vancouver for respectively 13 and 14 weeks, during which participants were chosen based on their involvement in community associations delivering some form of services to international students, such as scholarships or logistical support, and young professionals, like integration services and networking agents. From these associations, individuals either using their services or in contact with them were interviewed. Despite thorough archival work, 51 in-depth interviews in Singapore and 59 in Vancouver as well as 16 participant observations in Singapore and 14 in Vancouver, this research finds strong biases, markedly by over-representing specific social groups such as people who are actually involved with formal associations. More systemic biases can be found in the targets of interviews. For example, the interview of international students finds limitations in an overwhelming proportion of students enrolled at the National University of Singapore and Nanyang Technological University, to the detriment of recording more of the experiences of international students registered in secondary schools, polytechnics and Singapore Management University.

Nevertheless, an everyday perspective focused on transmitting stories of people living in Singapore and Vancouver may help to supplement our understanding of the processes supporting the implementation of various gateway initiatives. As a complement to quantitative approaches focusing on trends, such qualitative approach may connect, add and shed new light on these processes by showing the plural ways in which a gateway initiative is lived, experienced and appropriated. Moreover, a focus on stories may help

problematize the spatial fixity of the gateway metaphor. In light of Massey's work, a qualitative approach gives us a sense of where Singapore's gateway initiatives may be part of tactics, strategies and trajectories that start and end well beyond the city-state's boundaries and the scope of any quantitative work presenting international education trends by states.[15]

The researcher and the *international*

From an everyday perspective, the act of research in IR faces specific problems, one of which is to experience and legitimize the experiences of the *international*. Where is it? Is it in the official conferences of international organizations, the Board meetings of multinational corporations or in border spaces like airports? It seems these are all good answers but there are so many more. As Anna Agathangelou and Lily Ling indicate, IR scholars have problems relating to first-hand experiences, because they usually use the empirical findings of other disciplines and sub-fields of Political Science, like Public Policy, Area Studies and Comparative Politics – what the authors call the "servants of the House of IR".[16] We are more disciplined to think and theorize about the world than to get outside the House to see what really is going on. And if we do experience *field research*, what happens during that time that makes our argument stronger and more believable?

The researcher as city-dweller

Walter Benjamin's archetype of the city-dweller is helpful, since it may apply to the researcher in his everyday life. The flâneur is an intellectual walking and observing the masses, the crowd.[17] Like a researcher, the flâneur goes to specific places for a specific duration and talk to people, observe various interactions, reactions of people to specific events and social situations and do archival work. Similar to the flâneur, we, as researchers, walk through our case study for a period of time and work/hope that the *right* people will share their insights with us:

> The street becomes a dwelling for the *flâneur*; he is as much at home among the façades of the houses as a citizen in his four walls. To him the shiny, enamelled signs of businesses are at least as good a wall ornament as an oil painting is to a bourgeois in his salon. The walls are the desk against which he presses his notebooks; news-stands are his libraries and the terraces of cafés are the balconies from which he looks down on his household after his work is done.[18]

As a researcher, that's what we do. We observe others who live by our side: how they interact, what they say to us, how they see the world.

The researcher's experiences are shaped by his or her own purpose of walking through the crowd as well as influencing his or her own positionality.

Besides disciplinary pretensions, the flâneur is not a *deus ex machina*, since what is observed and experienced is temporarily, spatially and emotionally limited/determined: "The flâneur derives pleasure from his location within the crowd, but simultaneously regards the crowd with a critical stance, as nothing other than a brutal, ignoble mass."[19] We walk through our case study with our own lens on the world and the arrogance that we have a higher purpose, despite all limitations linked to using one lens only. We do analyze human interactions and conversations as violently: disregarding some statements and actions while privileging others.

The archetype of the flâneur is helpful to understand the boundaries in which research is conducted. On the one hand, it speaks of the researcher's positionality and the ways in which s/he determines – to some extent – what is deemed important for research *a priori*. This critical stance gives the researcher a constant and necessary distance to the object of study, even if s/he can be influenced and forced to change specific *a priori* assumptions.[20] On the other hand, it speaks of the social status and positions the researcher takes to conduct field research. Besides the obvious privilege of taking time to observe and investigate social realities,[21] the researcher has a unique social status giving him or her the freedom to participate in various social circles and cut across the hierarchies in place to gather information. The flâneur's archetype allows to capture the unpredictability of *field research*, depending on cutting across local power relations, social structures and conventions; depending of the good faith of the people, the help of contacts, and specific international and local events; and depending on sheer luck.

More specifically, an understanding of the researcher as a city-dweller helps to grasp the limitations linked to conducting research as a situated being *within* the object of study. In the case of gateways between the East/China and the West, racial expectations and language asymmetries are two examples. On the one hand, there are social expectations of how to relate to people of other races/civilizations following our own background.[22] It would be counter-productive to deny the importance that racial/racist discourses and practices had historically in shaping our societies and still influencing our interactions.[23] In the case of researching at the gateway with a look associated with a Westerner, there are specific expectations on behaviour and un/knowledge, which dictate the ways of interaction between the researcher and the participants. Many of my participants and friends in Singapore told me personally that Chinese Singaporeans do not expect for Caucasians to speak Chinese, to eat Chinese or to know about Chinese culture. Perceived as rich people who speak English, are Christians and very rational in their ways of looking at the world, the Caucasians, as the prime Other, in Singapore are usually *de passage* for work or study. Caucasians are seen as more advanced/modern but totally clueless about inter-cultural sensitivities, as if they are expected to see their own culture (i.e. McDonald's, Starbucks and so forth) and way of life as the only possible path for everybody.

On the other hand, conducting research in a location where people speak many languages provides specific challenges, since each language hints at a distinct and unique world of meanings, social conventions, shared collective memory components, and specific expressions.[24] At the gateway, distinct worlds of meaning – hinted at through distinct languages – create specific sites and practices dividing the gateway along these linguistic lines, which becomes a challenge to researchers perceived as racial and linguistically-limited beings. Languages become obstacles when people do not speak a common language or are not willing to do so. Moreover, language differences are used as excuses for ethnocentrism and disengagement with other racial beings. The construction of race and language social games is especially interesting at the gateway. These social codes play an important everyday life role in shaping how the world is perceived, notably by maintaining divisions between East/China and West. Even if their investigation reveals interesting nuances of everyday gateway politics, these codes are *real* challenges for researchers trying to understand the practices and experiences from *within* their case study.

The researcher as playwright

It is the transmission of common and different lived experiences, in this case a gathering of lived experiences, that becomes the role of the researcher, no matter what limitations to conducting *field research* they were. The researcher's main task is to give meaning to his or her (limited) observations, as a playwright who organizes various voices and events to get his or her point across to an audience. Paul Ricœur made this interesting correlation between the researcher's role and the playwright's: "It is not only the presentation of the world which is playful, but also the position of the author who puts himself on the stage and hence gives himself in representation".[25] Ricœur refers to the *plot* to refer to the arbitrary position and the constant struggle the researcher is faced with when it comes to structuring the information gathered through specific observations, and thus representing him or herself through them.[26] This *plot* becomes the main contribution of the researcher as the playwright, since it corresponds to his or her organization of the information gathered, the ways in which s/he appropriates and gave meanings to social processes observed.[27]

The researcher, as playwright, refers to what the Bakhtin Circle called the creative moment. The researcher brings together various voices, positions and perspectives through his or her own lens in order to shed new light on social processes at play. The researcher's *situatedness* is both a strength and a weakness. It speaks of a unique perspective able to find specific tensions within the everyday social codes.[28] It also speaks of the limited success the researcher has in taking on and representing various narratives and perspectives.[29] By bringing in various perspectives and putting them into conversation, the researcher has a responsibility to try and transmit

perspectives fundamentally different than his or her own, in order to find his or her original contribution.[30]

The use of this archetype to understand the researcher's role is not as original as one imagines. It can be associated with a small but growing body of literature based on Edward Said's methodology of point counterpoint. The technique of point counterpoint, or contrapuntality, comes from Western musical theory to acknowledge the use of many voices, embodied by different instruments and voices, in portraying and conveying various emotions and messages. In order to be closer to the message to be delivered, many layers of meanings can be added to the melodic line, to supplement and harmonize the meaning of the leading message. Following distinct rhythms and keys, the counterpoint position speaks of the resonance and impact of the leading voice on other perspectives and messages, represented, for example, by other instruments and the voice of other operatic characters.

In Said's view, contrapuntality is a useful method to acknowledge and translate various perspectives and positions, while acknowledging the power relations at play between them.

> [As] the counterpoint of western classical music, various themes play off one another, with only a provisional privilege given to any particular one; yet in the resulting polyphony there is concert and order, an organized interplay that derives from the themes, not from a rigorous melodic or formal principle of outside work.[31]

As Said develops, contrapuntality can be employed outside of musical theory to understand various social realities as a gathering of specific voices and ambivalent experiences. By understanding how voices are organized among each other and helping define one another, one may give interpretations more flexibility, nuances and room for subtleties.

Contrapuntality finds deep anchors, as a methodological commitment, in Bakhtinian dialogism, which stresses the centrality of relationality between actors in understanding any social process. [32] Contrapuntality helps us look at the voices and their relationships to one another, their co-existence, co-substantiality, and transgredience:

> [D]ialogism holds that the social world is constructed through an interweaving of mutually-responsive discourses between several agents, and that it is possible to apprehend it through a hermeneutical locus which enables us to discern the meaning, the context (historical and structural) and the relations existing between different agents and their particular contexts.[33]

By stressing the centrality of relationality, contrapuntality requires the researcher, like a playwright, to put in conversation various facets, voices and ambivalent experiences in order to better understand a specific social process.

In an effort to thicken the plot of international affairs by adding the subtleties of lived experiences through situated everyday actions and stories, IR scholars like Agathangelou and Ling have followed in Said's footsteps to argue for the development of new methodologies in which mainstream understandings of international affairs are complemented by the alternative stories of the marginalized.[34] For example, Ling developed "a condition and agenda" for "postcolonial feminists in and on International Relations" based on Said's contrapuntal method. In this agenda, the author highlights the importance of questioning the meanings of home/exile in relation to space, time, knowledge/power and desire. She stresses Said's struggle in putting into relation a strong sense of home with the ambivalent feelings of the exiled, as a productive example to further research in IR.[35] Usually excluded of IR theory, the plurality of voices derived from the diversity of changing experiences and struggles the exiled face on an everyday basis can complement our understandings of the *international*, mostly based on a strong sense of home, the national and the territorialized.

Such understanding of contrapuntality anchors the work of the playwright of IR. By putting into conversation various ambivalent experiences and stories gathered around the social process observed, the playwright questions, as developed by Sankaran Krishna, mainstream IR's tendency for theory-building and abstraction.[36] In doing so, the playwright does not only problematize IR pillars, such as sovereignty, s/he makes "visible the erasures and silences around concepts such as culture and identity, nation and memory, and intellectual responsibility, as well as highlighting the uncertainties and dispossessions that IR has rendered possible."[37] The playwright of IR will indeed, by putting various voices and ambivalent experiences in conversation, build contrapuntally against any concepts and practices depicted as self-sufficient, abstractions and away from lived experiences.

It is important to stress that a contrapuntal method of investigation is not synonymous with advocating for either a liberal or a relativist understanding of IR but rather represents a more situated set of universals based on inclusivity and embedded in power relations.[38] Pluralizing the voices in IR means to gather these marginalized voices, their stories and the researcher's ambivalent encounters to add to our understanding of international affairs.

Conclusion

Conducting research in IR does not seem more than walking through specific locations and documenting practices seen and constructed as *international.* In the case of gateways between East/China and the West, like

Singapore and Vancouver, their *international* dimension is linked to their everyday life bridging/constructing practices between the civilizations. However, conducting such *field research* brings specific methodological problems which IR has rarely admitted. Since the research is concretely conducted like Benjamin's image of a flâneur, the researcher is necessarily caught in social codes that these gateways are reproducing in everyday life. There are specific problems such as the strong social codes reinforcing racial stereotypes and language asymmetries dividing the gateway everyday life. These obstacles must be taken, nonetheless, as productive sites of investigation to better understand gateway politics, because they require of us to put in conversation stereotypes and language asymmetries from both sides of the supposed schism. In a contrapuntal fashion, the researcher, as a flâneur and playwright, can creatively engage with IR research by offering bridging elements of understanding at/of these locations and dynamics, as inscribed in specific power relations and the researcher's situated experiences.

Endnotes

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[3] Marcus. Multi-Sited Ethnography: 101-2.

[4] Marcus. Multi-Sited Ethnography: 108-9.

[5] Some elements of this section have already been published. See Jean Michel Montsion. "Re-locating Politics at the Gateway: Everyday Life in Singapore's Global Schoolhouse." Accepted for publication in *Pacific Affairs*. Forthcoming.

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[25] Ricœur. Hermeneutics: 187.

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Chapter 4:
Reproducing Singapore's gateway

As stated by a young 20 year-old professional of Chinese origin, Singapore is the "Oriental Venice, *the* bridge between East and West [my emphasis]."[1] Such distinctiveness is based on Singapore's bicultural heritage, partly Chinese, partly Western. Despite Singapore's official multiracialism, this biculturalism has been utilized to give Singapore a competitive edge on the international stage based on Western modernity and technology and East/China's markets, cultures and potential. For example, the Singaporean government always played on its British heritage to encourage Western business to use Singapore as their regional *pied-à-terre*,[2] whether during the Cold War or even today. The economic 'rise' of China and its political opening to the Western world have also been re-appropriated by the Singaporean authorities, playing off their Chinese heritage to increase and deepen relations to China, and to position Singapore as a door to Chinese markets.

More concretely, the metaphor of the gateway in the Singaporean context emerged in the wake of the economic 'rise' of China and the Asian financial crisis.[3] In order to build a complementary economy to China's and to remain competitive amongst other Southeast Asian countries in their relations to the People's Republic of China (PRC), Singaporean authorities have emphasized the narrative of the gateway. As such, they spoke of Singapore as a gateway for Western companies looking to do business in East/China, as well as Singapore as a gateway for Chinese companies looking to do business in Southeast Asia and Western societies.

As Singapore constructs its gateway between East/China and the West, various policies and institutionalized programs express a very specific definition, purpose and use for the gateway. In this chapter, I would like to explore the parameters of this gateway project between East/China and the West to understand the limitations of its practice. *It is my contention that the narrative of the gateway is based on a business-oriented framework emphasizing Singapore's competitive advantage. In this framework, the gateway narrative reduces cultural differences to business possibilities, and discourages mobility through the gateway.* This government-driven conception of the gateway frames our understanding of Singapore as the perfect location bridging East/China and the West to do business by offering a local pool of industries and talent. After looking at the emergence and conceptual baggage of the narrative, I will try to illustrate how it translates and possesses limitations in education and in initiatives for small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Locating Singapore's gateway

The Singaporean authorities' use of the gateway metaphor seems to have started at the end of the 1990s. It was and is still utilized to depict

Singapore as an economic gateway (read opportunity) for Western business to reach Chinese markets and for Chinese companies to reach international markets. In this section, I would like to illustrate the ways in which the gateway narrative is built on a government-driven vision of Singapore's *competitive advantage*. This idea of a competitive advantage encourages Singaporean authorities to characterize cultural differences as business opportunities. The authorities' gateway narrative attempts to ground business, talent and industry in Singapore as the perfect (business) environment bridging East/China and the West. By looking at the construction of the narrative first, I will then be able to understand the Singaporean authorities' vision of Singapore between East/China and the West, and the limitations of framing the gateway as competitive advantage.

The Singaporean authorities' narrative of the gateway is based on the economic gains to be made by business networks in the context of a knowledge-based economy. In contrast to Singapore's massive industrial development under Lee Kuan Yew, the new focus of the government is based on high added-value industries complementing and supporting other countries' industrial development, particularly in the sectors of chemicals, professional services and education.[4] As the Acting Minister for Education indicated in 2003 about Singapore's new economic priorities:

> Singapore's infrastructure, services and business environment have positioned it as a *preferred gateway* to the region for international companies, and a gateway to the world for regional companies [...] Singapore's key economic strategy going forward is to plug into, and promote, the networks that will shape a new era of Asia prosperity – networks of trade, enterprise, talent and ideas. We will be a key hub in the increasingly dense network of human interaction that is emerging between China, India, Japan and Korea, and Southeast Asia – the interaction of entrepreneurs, financiers, professionals, tourists and students [my emphasis].[5]

In the Singaporean context, the shift to a knowledge-based economy means to abandon industrialization based on low value-added manufacturing exports to emerging markets like China's and to focus on complementary and more specialized/technology-oriented manufacturing industries such as engineering, health sciences and environmental services.[6]

Accordingly, there is a strong correlation to be made between the Singaporean authorities' construction of its gateway and the economic 'rise' of China. As stated by Lee Hsien Loong in 2001, when he was Deputy Prime Minister, Singapore has to "focus on how we cope with, and benefit from, the emergence of the Chinese economy". In his view, China's 'rise' is beneficial to Singapore:

> A more prosperous China will mean a bigger market, more investment opportunities and a bigger trading partner [...] As China exports more, it will also import more, because China cannot run a balance of payments surplus indefinitely.[7]

Singapore's *rapprochement* to the Chinese markets is constant and profitable since the emergence of the gateway narrative. Whereas China was the sixth most important trading partner to Singapore in 1999, it attained the fourth position in 2005, translating into bilateral trade worth $67 billion.[8]

Singapore's *competitive advantage* is framed by its multiracial roots, markedly its Chinese and Western heritage. Understood as the local business environment that Singapore can offer that other countries and cities cannot, this competitive advantage is deeply anchored in the various cultures coexisting in everyday Singapore:

> Our future, and our relevance to the rest of the world, lies in being a multicultural society, a *meeting place and bridge* between the East and West. For us to sustain and strengthen this position, we need to be culturally resilient and open. It means keeping our mother tongue languages and cultures alive, because this is what gives each new generation a sense of connectedness and resilience [my emphasis].[9]

Singapore's economic edge is framed in cultural terms, notably to speak of the possibilities to serve as the link between China's economic 'rise' and the West. Fostering the Chinese heritage is seen as a way to remain close to the PRC and to link Chinese companies and emerging markets to the West.

As the gateway narrative rose from this view on competitive advantage, the Singaporean authorities' intent is to attract business but to stop them at the gateway, since they would find everything they need in Singapore to link to other markets. The Singaporean authorities particularly target Chinese companies wanting to connect to international markets.[10] In 2006, the Deputy Prime Minister for Home Affairs stated that:

> Singapore can be a *gateway of choice* for many Chinese companies who are now looking to internationalise. These companies can capitalise on our pro-business environment and our excellent business infrastructure, with over 7,000 multinational corporations [...] To date, over 1,600 Chinese companies have established a presence in Singapore, while more than 90 Chinese companies have listed on the Singapore Exchange [my emphasis].[11]

Playing on the safe environment Singapore had become for many Chinese companies already doing business from Singapore, the official position is that Singapore can help Chinese companies to open to the world, particularly by offering local access to the international markets and Western business networks. As the Minister for Education tells the business community of the Chinese province of Liaoning:

> There is substantial opportunity for Liaoning companies to raise funds in Singapore's established capital and financial markets. They can also use Singapore as a base for marketing their products in Southeast Asia and beyond. They can also engage in networking with the very large number of international businesses in Singapore, from US, Japan, Europe, as well as India and other Asian countries. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage the Liaoning Government to set up a Liaoning Centre in Singapore.[12]

By coming to Singapore first, these companies can have access to Western business networks, while being in a familiar business environment with the common use of Mandarin, for example.[13]

The same government-driven strategy can also be seen for Western companies, to which Singaporean authorities are selling their city-state as the best place not only to enter Chinese markets but rather the emerging Asian markets more generally. Comparing Singapore to Chicago as respective gateways to Asia and to the Mid-West based on their reputations as transportation nodes, financial and education hubs as well as multi-cultural and technologically driven societies, the Singapore Minister of Education launched a *Contact Singapore* office in Chicago in 2007 with the aim of attracting Western businesses and talent:

> There are now 80,000 highly-skilled foreigners working in Singapore. Most of them are working with the 5,000 multi-national corporations like Microsoft, Maxtor and CNBC, many of whom have established their regional headquarters in Singapore. With the Singapore economy expected to grow by 9% this year and the focus on promoting high-technology entrepreneurship, there will be many opportunities for international corporations, investors and individuals to make their marks and reap rewards.[14]

By playing on the similarities between a Western business environment and Singapore's and adding the opportunity to meet contacts for doing business in the emerging Asian markets, Singapore's strategy is more ambiguous, speaking of Asia in general, rather than of China directly. Despite

these differences in destination, the gateway narrative is overwhelmingly defined as an economic opportunity to be developed within/from Singapore.

However, the gateway narrative in this context seems limited to the parameters created by ideas of business opportunity and competitive advantage. It appears difficult to utilize this narrative in other fields of activity such as arts and culture, without reproducing its business-oriented assumptions. In the 2000 Renaissance City Report on Singapore's position and priorities in terms of arts, such position was reinforced:

> By positioning Singapore into a global arts hub that welcomes international and regional collaborations, and by promoting Singapore as an *ideal base for international arts businesses* interested in touring arts events to Asia, we can reinforce the concept of Singapore as the Gateway to Asia, not only in the area of culture, but in all other fields as well [my emphasis].[15]

The Renaissance City Reports try to depict Singapore – as a gateway – as the perfect location bridging East/China and the West in terms of arts and culture. Singapore's multiracial background has supposedly the perfect competitive advantage for people to reach other arts communities across cultures. This competitive advantage seems important, notably for 'international arts businesses'. In this view, the gateway narrative brings to the field of arts and culture, a business-oriented approach, where Singapore can take advantage of its Chinese heritage among others to enter Chinese markets or profit from its proximity to them. In the fields of film production and book publication, Singapore's gateway to/for China is marketed with the same business-oriented twist, with a constant focus on Singapore as the perfect location to reach markets and network with people of other cultures.[16]

Nonetheless, the competitive advantage by which Singapore as gateway is framed offers specific parameters to the Singaporean authorities' ways to understand their role on the international stage and the ways in which they can improve their gateway. In this business-oriented view, Singapore is in competition with other locations having a similar competitive advantage, serving as bridges between East/China and the West. This competition seems to have translated into a fear of being too different from the PRC's public culture to really remain competitive as a gateway between East/China and the West. In contrast to Hong Kong and Taiwan, for example, some in the Singaporean government think that Singapore is too Westernized to be an effective gateway. Such fears are dealt within the competitive advantage framework as well, which require learning about and adapting to the Chinese context as a corporation would.

> We must [...] quickly build on our knowledge of China and develop greater expertise on the country [...] This would enable

> us to leverage on our global links to become one of the gateways between China and the rest of the world [...] But we have to strengthen our understanding of China because they have different systems and different business cultures.[17]

Singapore's strategy to fight competition and remain a competitive gateway is based on developing a better competitive advantage. This means gaining more knowledge about China, which contrasts with previous claims of shared cultural backgrounds.

In the competitive advantage framework, the key tenets of the Singaporean authorities' gateway become to provide a better local environment where knowledge about China – understood as emerging market – can be fostered and marketed to the West.[18] By investing and promoting local knowledge about China, markedly through curriculum reforms and strong investments in biculturalism, the Singaporean authorities' strategy to remain a competitive gateway is based on developing a gateway elite:

> Singapore is well positioned to be the gateway and play an important role in East-West partnership. It is therefore important for our younger generation to adopt a global outlook so that they will be able to tap the many new opportunities emerging in the world. Our education system must also be geared up to prepare our students well for these challenges.[19]

The context of education and the ways in which future generations of Singapore must become this gateway elite have given special emphasis. As stated by the Minister of State for Education in 2004:

> We want to help every Chinese Singaporean to leave school with a natural and self-motivated interest in the Chinese language. He must be willing to use the language after he leaves school, and keen to stay in touch with the culture. He must be able to brush up or advance his command of the language for cultural enrichment or when he feels it necessary, for example if he has to work in China.[20]

The gateway elite is part of Singapore's newly framed competitive advantage. Whereas Hong Kong and Taiwan may be considered more Chinese than Singapore, the Singaporean authorities seemed to have framed their gateway competitive advantage in terms of being truly bicultural: partly Chinese, partly Western. In this case, the gateway elite must work to better its understanding and knowledge about China.

In the Singaporean context, the gateway narrative emerged as a government-driven concept at the end of the 1990s to take advantage of

China's economic rise by becoming the perfect location to bridge Western and Chinese business networks. This gateway narrative was framed through ideas of competitive advantage. The parameters of its uses seem to be limited to this business mentality, in which cultural differences are business opportunities and where gateway means a grounding exercise for business not to go through Singapore but to stay and do business at the gateway.

Enacting the gateway

The Oriental Venice's clear use of the gateway as an economic opportunity linking East/China and the West is seen as a strategic position, in which Singapore is at the centre. In this section, I would like to stress the limitations of the government-driven construction of the gateway based overwhelmingly on competitive advantage. This competitive advantage threatens, in the education sector, the education of local Chinese Singaporeans through China-centric skill and language qualifications of what being Chinese means. In the case of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), the competitive advantage framework overpowers the gateway narrative to become a grounding exercise, which impedes mobility *through* the gateway.

Singapore's global schoolhouse[21]

Singapore's gateway strategy is quite apparent in the education sector, where it aims to both support the development of a local gateway elite, as well as target Chinese international students as potential customers and future foreign talent for Singapore's labour force. Singapore's global schoolhouse, as adaptation of the gateway to the education sector, reveals deep anchors in the competitive advantage framework, and threatens the education of local Chinese Singaporeans. Singapore's schoolhouse, as industry and recruitment strategy of foreign talent, reduces Chinese culture to measured Chinese language skills and requires local Chinese Singaporeans to be better and more Chinese (read China-centric) to compete with Chinese international students. Such an approach is particularly detrimental to the transmission of a local Chinese culture to future generations in Singapore.

The pragmatic institutionalization of Mandarin as Singapore's official Chinese language serves as the basis for marketing gateway initiatives based on Chinese education.[22] The original functional division of labour between the use of English and mother tongues in postwar Singapore, including in education, was re-defined with the 1978 Goh Report and the New Education System (NES). The overwhelming success of English as Singapore's working language had become a source of concern by the ruling elite, because it was viewed as moving Singaporeans away from their own cultural heritage.[23] In a 1978 speech published in *The Straits Times*, then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew regarded Chinese education as a way to transmit communitarian values of social unity and sacrifice to the greater good and steer away from Western individualism and other vices infesting Singaporean society.[24]

Moreover, in the context of China's economic and political 'rise' at the end of the 1970s, Mandarin was considered more than the repository of cultural values and traditions like other mother tongues. It became of pragmatic utilitarian value, similarly to English.[25] Accordingly, the Goh Report suggested the creation of Special Assistance Plan (SAP) schools: a Westernized setting in which a future local Chinese elite could be nurtured by learning both English and Mandarin as first languages.[26] The creation of the SAP schools coincides also with the *Speak Mandarin Campaign*: a governmental strategy to re-ethnicize Chinese Singaporeans away from English. The Campaign's main objective was to promote one Chinese language as condition for Singapore's efficient bilingualism, notably by targeting the use of Mandarin at home and by helping students prepare for their language qualification examinations.[27]

Although the gateway dimension of Singapore's educational policies can be traced back to the end of the 1970s, this formal positioning came about in the 1990s with the increasing international attention to Chinese markets and the use of Mandarin as an international language of trade and business. As Peter Teo points out, from 1998, Singaporean authorities emphasized through education and the Speak Mandarin Campaign, the use of Mandarin as a high language "with a call for Chinese Singaporeans not only to be bilingual but bicultural: people who are not only fluent in English and Chinese, but who also understand the culture and worldview of the Chinese today".[28] Further away from Singaporean Chinese contemporary everyday lives, Singapore's education policies are more specifically designed to profit from the city-state's Chinese roots by encouraging students from China to come study and work in Singapore.

Singapore's Global Schoolhouse (2003), a programme built on and refining the World Class University (1998), is first and foremost an economically driven initiative marketed on Singapore's safe and secure environment. As pointed out by Sidhu, it is composed of three strategies: (1) to attract some of the world's most reputable universities as an extension of the 1998 legislation, (2) to align local universities in an entrepreneurial and business mindset, and (3) to recruit and attract increasing numbers of international students.[29] With this platform, the government adopted a series of measures privileging the expansion and extension of its education system, under the management of economic agencies. Whereas the government is aiming for 150,000 international students by 2015, the Economic Development Board (EDB) is selling vacant state property to interested private education institutions with a particular focus on business schools.[30] Additionally, through the accreditation council of the enterprise development agency (SPRING), the Board is fast-tracking student visas for institutions meeting their criteria. These criteria include the Case Trust scheme by which institutions have to ensure the wellbeing of the international students to the

satisfaction of the government, including direct help in developing social skills of students and strong links to these students' guardians.[31]

Sidhu argued that Singapore's Global Schoolhouse is part of the city-state's policy of internationalisation to remain competitive on the international stage. In the current context, this platform allows state authorities to build closer linkages to increasing demand coming from countries like China: "Given that education is the largest consumer expenditure in China after housing, Singaporean companies have moved rapidly to participate in education ventures in partnership with the Chinese state and with Chinese private corporations".[32] Following the lead of Australian, British and American universities to brand Singapore as a high quality and multicultural destination for higher learning, Singaporean state authorities and universities are targeting more than Euro-American elites, because they attempt to cater to increasing demands in Asia for higher education, particularly from China and India.[33]

Singapore's Global Schoolhouse is an interesting business project to the extent that it allows the city-state not only to capitalize on the increasing demand in the sector of education but to recruit foreign talent, notably from China. Singapore's global schoolhouse program plays on Singapore's multiracial heritage, and more specifically its bi-racial background as part Chinese, part Western. It also builds on its safe and clean reputation to attract students from the Mainland, and try to keep them as foreign talent to fuel local specialized industrial development.[34] The Deputy Prime Minister stated in 2002:

> [A] strong university sector should feature broad international representation, with the presence of top international universities in Singapore. This will anchor our internationalisation efforts, and build stronger networks for R&D. Our people will benefit from having the global orientation characteristic of a highly competent and capable workforce.[35]

To sustain its economic development, Singapore encourages the immigration of highly skilled workers to complement its workforce. In the case of its education programme, the optimisation of foreign talent can be understood through the implementation of bonded scholarships and bursaries going between 19,000 and 88,000 Singaporean dollars a year, by which the vast majority of international students get their education subsidized, but must then work in Singapore or for a Singapore-registered company for three to six years after they graduate.[36] Saw Swee-Hock, former head statistician for the Singapore government, reports that close to 60% of these bonded international students make the transition to permanent residency after

graduation, which indicates the efficiency of the scholarship programmes in attracting and keeping foreign talent in Singapore, at least in the short term.[37]

More specifically, China's students seem to be privileged in the recruitment process of international students and targeted not only for their skills, but to help maintain Singapore's domestic racial ratio.[38] Although the statistics on the country of origin for international students to Singapore are difficult to obtain, the Chinese foreign-born population in Singapore increased officially by 36.7% between 1990 and 2000, where China occupies the second place for the country of origin and increasing steadily.[39] Moreover, various mechanisms are adapted to encourage the migration of international students from China to Singapore. For example, the recruitment strategies of various schools are based on targeted search, through academic competitions held in specific countries like China and specific cities like Hangzhou (Zhejiang province), which possess a famous university. Among the interviews completed for this study with representatives of some of Singapore's private schools and universities, China remains a privileged site to conduct competitions and interviews.[40]

The increasing numbers of international students from China have nonetheless reinforced local sentiments of inadequacy by making local academic competition for the best sports in Singapore's best schools. Since the government is trying to capitalize on these numbers of Chinese students, many social tensions are arising from the government's move to biculturalism, markedly because of the lack of a strong local tradition of teaching what being Chinese in Singapore means.[41] Many important issues have come out of the complaints of local Singaporeans regarding the difficulties to compete with students from China to get into the best schools and programmes in Singapore. One immediately notices the increasing local sentiments of inferiority in speaking Mandarin, especially in relation to the increasing numbers of Mainland Chinese.[42] Whereas state authorities attribute Mandarin to local Chinese populations as their mother tongue, local students do not feel their Mandarin background enables them to relate as equals to Mainland Chinese students. Moreover, there is an overall realization that the way in which Singapore framed its Chinese heritage through the Speak Mandarin Campaign, for example, is insufficient for local students to obtain the best spots in Singapore's schools as much as it is for Singaporean society to relate culturally to the newcomers from China.[43]

The state authorities' new emphasis on biculturalism in local education is part of the official response to these social tensions. As stated by the Minister for Education in 2004:

> The new Bicultural Studies Programme (Chinese), which will take in its first students next year, is one way of doing this. The Review Committee is also studying how to re-gear the Chinese language curriculum and teaching methods to help those from

> English-speaking homes to take an interest in language, and even develop a passion for it, even if not every student is able to reach a high level of competence. What we have to avoid as we go forward is a one size approach to language learning, which only results in most Singaporeans having an average competence in both English and the mother tongue, and speaking mainly Singlish.[44]

Instead of placing admission quotas, for example, in favour of local students, the government decided to make them more competitive and more Chinese by designing a more China-centric curriculum for both primary and secondary school students. By investing in students with more skills considered to be Chinese, it is believed that they will be better equipped to compete with students from China in school-related examinations and activities. Moreover, these skills are perceived to help Singapore's next elite to better engage with China's markets and populations.

For primary school education, a new bicultural curriculum was created and piloted in 2005 to teach students to better engage with and learn about China's culture. This new curriculum does not only involve a school trip to China or Taiwan, it includes advanced courses in Chinese history, culture and calligraphy. Whereas Singapore history and literature are not taught, various Chinese experts are brought into the classroom to teach specific courses, since regular instructors are not considered competent enough. In secondary school, the Bicultural Studies Program is a four-year program focusing on "China's history, culture and contemporary developments" where students develop strong linkages to schools in China and take electives in Chinese history and philosophy, with the possibility of getting an immersion scholarship in China up to six months.[45] The aim of these new curricula corresponds with the government's objective to foster and build a truly bicultural elite, half Chinese and half Western.[46]

By fostering more China-centric school curricula and increasing competition among local and international students, the government is not only presenting its response to expanding feelings of inadequacy towards increasing numbers of students from China. It is actually reinforcing specific social codes where proficiency in both languages and cultures associated with China and the West become the basis of its main gateway representation. In a middleman position between China and the West, Singapore is not conceived to be the recipient of these languages and cultures.

Singapore as pied-à-terre in the East

The opportunity provided by the economic 'rise' of China brought Singaporean authorities to develop specific sectors in which it can serve as a gateway. Positioning itself as a service provider, Singapore's gateway focused for the last five years on SMEs.[47] In this section, I would like to explore some

of Singapore's programs to help SMEs by expressing deep commitments to construct government-driven initiatives based on a local competitive advantage the city-state offers. In this case, the gateway narrative takes the shape of a grounding exercise, stopping mobility at the gateway by offering all the best technology, knowledge and talent for SMEs.

Singapore's EDB has strong priorities to market Singapore as the preferred gateway for business. This gateway is not a place by which corporations go *through* to access other markets but it is seen as a physical place from where business in the region can be facilitated. By bringing together the technology, knowledge, and resources Western corporations would enjoy in order to conduct business between East/China and the West in a safe environment, this gateway's competitive advantage requires business to stay at the gateway. As stated by the newly nominated EDB Managing Director Beh Swan Gin in 2008:

> [W]e have started to expand the Singapore value proposition from being a great host for investments and an excellent location for world-class manufacturing, R&D and RHQ [regional headquarters] operations, to that of being a partner and co-creator in the development of new businesses, solutions, products and services. The idea is to harness the government's resources, science and technology assets in the universities and research institutes, as well as the SME base.[48]

The government's intervention in creating business-friendly conditions becomes Singapore's competitive advantage, notably with the country is being ranked as the fourth most influential commercial centres around the world by the MasterCard Centres of Commerce 2008 Index. This ranking means that Singapore surpasses Hong Kong and is just behind Tokyo as the second most preferred spot in Asia.[49] By focusing on being the best service provider to businesses in terms of infrastructure, local specialized knowledge and talent, public and private partnerships as well as opportunities to trade missions in various countries, the EDB is placing the city-state's gateway in a grounding exercise through the offering of the perfect local business environment, particularly for companies looking to expand their activities beyond the East-West divide.

Multinational corporations like the Kuraray Group, a Japanese chemical company, are choosing to operate in Singapore both because of local advantages, and regional opportunities. Singapore's environment is more than an ideal pit stop for a company operating in chemicals, one of Singapore's designated privileged industries constituting 34% of Singapore's manufacturing output in 2007. The EDB offers incredible local specialized knowledge with more than 22,000 specialist scientists and engineers working in 18 research institutes and two universities. Moreover, it offers a unique

"integration of petroleum, petrochemicals and downstream specialty chemical sectors" and

> [c]ompanies are able to obtain feedstocks, sell their products and leverage on third party providers for utilities and logistics, all in one location via pipeline-to-pipeline connections. Such integration enables companies to save on costs for building their own infrastructure, and allows them to focus on their core business of manufacturing.[50]

Such localized infrastructure will indeed allow Kuraray to focus on manufacturing and to look into internationalizing its activities in the region *from* Singapore, markedly with preferable corporate tax regulations and Singapore's free trade agreements with the US, the PRC, India and ASEAN countries. As stated by the EDB: "Singapore is well-positioned to bring Asia's businesses to the world; regional companies use Singapore as an effective base to internationalise their business".[51]

More specifically in the case of SMEs, the intent is to attract business with the possibility of doing business in new markets, but to convince them to stay in Singapore in order to conduct such business. In 2002, the EDB converted the Productivity and Standards Board into the Standards, Productivity and Innovation for Growth (SPRING) to better cater to SMEs. Branded as 'Singapore's government agency for enterprise development', SPRING "works closely with various public and private sector partners to help SMEs identify and source for new leads, enhance their capabilities to seize new opportunities as well as overcome challenges to trade".[52] As such, SPRING possesses strong partnerships with local companies; government agencies, like the Export Technical Assistance Centre launched in 2008; and industrial associations, which partnerships constitute its strength in learning the needs of SMEs and creating opportunities as gateway.[53]

One of the key features in SPRING's strategy to support SMEs is to get them access from Singapore to new markets through numerous trade missions, exhibition shows and networking forums it supports. From Singapore and with the help of the government, SMEs considered 'local' can internationalize their activities, notably towards Chinese markets. For example, in March 2008, SPRING launched the SPRING-CapitaLand Retail Overseas Mission to China (OMC). In collaboration with CapitaLand, one of the leading retail real estate companies in the PRC, SPRING is facilitating a four-day trade mission to Shenzhen, Shanghai and Beijing for more than 20 retail SME executives to,

> facilitate local retailers' understanding of the China retail market in the selected cities, encourage them to grow their business and expand overseas, as well as guide them to seek

> available government assistance schemes to aid them in their business expansion.[54]

A trade mission like the OMC is supported by other Singapore government agencies, particularly the *International Enterprise Singapore*, which confirmed the support of its nine offices in Chinese cities to any Singaporean SME retailer interested in entering the Chinese markets after their visit.

SPRING's strategy as business gateway for SMEs echoes the EDB's vision to work *from* Singapore, and not go through Singapore. The advantage to stay in Singapore is built on the best of the West's business-oriented services. In opening the International Furniture Centre in 2007, the SPRING strategy for helping local furniture industry SME speaks mostly of utilizing local innovative design talents and internationalization. The International Furniture Centre is aimed to be the perfect service provider in the industry, asking SMEs to "leverage on Singapore's advantages to transform your operations into high value-added business activities, with emphasis on international marketing, corporate finance, design studies and high-value manufacture".[55]

Interestingly, Singapore's gateway narrative is a grounding exercise. By offering locally the infrastructure, talent, networks and partnerships for Chinese and Western companies, Singaporean authorities are looking to attract business with the gateway narrative but to stop them in Singapore, in order for them to establish an office *from which* they can internationalize their activities in regional and international markets.

Conclusion

Singapore's gateway metaphor emerged in a very specific moment, just after the Asian financial crisis and in parallel to China's economic 'rise' in the 1990s. With the obvious cultural similarities to China, Singapore's opportunity to profit from such 'rise' translated into great economic opportunities, notably as a complement to China's economy in sectors such as specialized high-technology and high valued-added manufacturing industries as well as educational and professional services. In this context, the Singaporean authorities' gateway narrative is overwhelmingly based on their perception of the city-state's competitive advantage between East/China and the West. In this framework, the gateway narrative develops limitations in terms of reducing cultural differences to business opportunities and in making the gateway a grounding exercise. In the education sector, the global schoolhouse makes international students a profitable industry and potential foreign talent to fuel its pool of skilled workers. However, it glorifies competition to the point of reducing Chinese culture to skill measurement and Mandarin proficiency, as well as sacrificing national goals of education and transmission of local culture. In the case of SMEs, the metaphor of the gateway is adapted to Singapore's competitive advantage which requires

government agencies to cater to businesses wanting to access new markets across the East-West divide without them leaving Singapore.

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Chapter 5:
Visions and actions of Singapore gatekeepers

Despite Singapore's practice of the gateway based on a government-driven strategy of competitive advantage, everyday actions of Chinese community associations in Singapore may be understood as adaptations, complements and contestations of this vision. In ambivalent relation to the government reducing cultural differences to business opportunities, these gatekeepers shed new light on how the gateway works in everyday life besides being an economic asset. These alternative representations of the gateway will complement, add to and criticize the Singaporean authorities' practice of the gateway to deepen our understanding of its signification and positioning in international affairs. I will not focus on the trajectories of individuals using gateway policies. I will also limit my investigation to community associations having local presence and relating to the Eastern/Chinese component of Singapore's practice of the gateway.

As gatekeepers, the Chinese community associations in Singapore have developed ambivalent relations towards both Chinese and Singaporean authorities. Historically, both governments have reduced the importance of these Chinese Singaporean community associations either based on the secondary status of individuals as *overseas Chinese* for the Chinese government or on the multiracial official stand of the Singaporean state. For example, Chinese clan associations in the Singaporean context were faced with strong discriminatory policies from the government in the 1960s and the 1970s. In a social context of predominant Chinese populations, the ethnic-based activities of clan associations were seen as detrimental to the overall national social cohesion, particularly in light of the racial tensions of the 1960s in Southeast Asia. Policies and programs such as the *Speak Mandarin Campaign*, the massive relocation of clan associations to the Geyland district and the creation of grassroots community centres in residential buildings taking on the social functions of clan associations, demonstrate how the ruling elites of Singapore tried to cut off the influence and power of these community associations.[1]

Nonetheless, Chinese Singaporean community associations have re-shaped their reputation in the eyes of both the Chinese and Singaporean governments in recent years, most notably with their role in mobilizing much needed foreign direct investments for the Chinese government and offering privileged linkages to the emerging Chinese markets for the Singaporean authorities. In the case of Singapore's Chinese clan associations, some have even transformed their organizations into corporations, taking advantage of their transnational networks in the context of a rising China to renew themselves and their relevance in contemporary Singaporean society.

Gatekeepers like clan associations engage in everyday activities representing the distinct nature and evolutions of Chinese Singaporeans, their

identification to Southern China, Southeast Asia and the West. Despite the state practice of the gateway based on a competitive advantage framework, these gatekeepers' everyday actions reflect alternative understandings of China, the West and Singapore as gateway. *It is my contention that all these community associations, their worldviews and their everyday actions represent competing and complementing visions and struggles at the gateway. Besides the static and narrow definition of Chinese culture that Singaporean authorities reproduce through their business mentality surrounding gateway initiatives, these gatekeepers offer different images through alternative experiences of living and experiencing being Chinese at the gateway.* Their activities and representations of the gateway show active struggles with the state practice of the gateway and among themselves of what it means to live at the gateway and to embody the gateway. By presenting the gateway perspectives of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCCI) and the Kowloon Club, I will problematize respectively the images of the 'matchmaker' and of 'Chinese difference' to better understand the everyday gateway actions and representations in both the business elite and migrant professional circles. I will then turn to the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan and the Overseas Chinese Students Union to engage with competing representations of the gateway depicting it to be constituted respectively of particular 'Chinese bridges' and of 'China's bubbles'. They each problematize the Singaporean authorities' view on Chinese culture through the lens of competitive advantage as well as problematizing each other, reflecting significant parts of the international dynamics constituting Singapore's gateway.

Local Chinese business elite: The matchmaker

The construction and evolution of the state practice of the Singaporean gateway has been done in collaboration with various bodies, markedly the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI). The SCCCI is known to regroup the local Chinese elite, with strong ties to the government and various influential corporations in Singapore, as well as historical linkages to Southern China. In contrast to the multiracial standing of the government, the SCCCI's stand presents Singapore as the Chinese matchmaker *par excellence*. It is the perfect middleman for business opportunities between East/China and the West, notably because of its bilingual roots. By looking at the everyday actions and most recent initiatives in terms of education and business of the SCCCI, one can better understand the importance of the Chinese ethnicity in doing business at/from the gateway. On the one hand, the SCCCI agrees with the government's vision of gateway as competitive advantage based on the mastering of linguistic skills – Mandarin and English. On the other hand, the image of the matchmaker privileged by the SCCCI shows global pretensions beyond Singapore and shows how the SCCCI utilizes the gateway narrative as its own competitive advantage within and outside of Singapore.

Formed in 1906, the SCCCI was created to represent the interests of an emerging local Chinese elite in Singapore as a united voice of local Chinese populations in the face of the British Empire. Since then, it has evolved through the interests and politics of Chinese merchants to become a privileged global place for trade based on ethnic-based networks of Chinese ethnicity.[2] It always kept its pretense of serving more than economic interests and speaking for all Chinese Singaporeans. As the 53rd Council of the SCCCI stated in 2001, their vision is to be "the choice Chamber for the business community, providing members with an influential global Chinese network for business, culture and education."[3] With its historical role, the SCCCI combines business interests with the preservation of a local Chinese Singaporean culture. Accordingly, its understanding of Chinese culture is close to that of the vision of Singaporean authorities. It is framed from a business perspective. Deeply involved in organizing global Chinese-based business networks, the SCCCI's understanding of such culture agrees with the government's homogenized image, mostly based on proficiency in Mandarin language skills as well as knowing how to do business in Chinese markets and through Chinese-speaking networks.

Positioning itself as the "matchmaker"[4] between East/China and the West, the SCCCI has developed strong relations with Singaporean authorities. It agrees with the government's view on the necessity to make business networks from China and the West meet in Singapore. For example, the SCCCI has been involved in specific management, administration, marketing and accounting courses since mid-1970s. These courses are aimed particularly at China's civil servants. They help not only to introduce these civil servants to Singapore's Western culture, but also to develop strong trust relationships with official personnel within the Chinese government. Through these weekly and monthly courses with an average of a 1,000 new graduates every year, the SCCCI also facilitated meetings between these Chinese civil servants and (Chinese) Singaporean business elite to speak notably of future foreign direct investments.[5]

Moreover, with increased demand from China and the West, the SCCCI has expanded its activities in the early 1990s to create the Singapore Chinese Chamber Institute of Business. The SCCCI collaborated with the government on this project to offer more courses aimed at developing skills deemed useful. The institute has four pillars: (1) the Department of Business Studies offering Bosses' Classes and a Diploma in Business Administration; (2) the Language and Culture Centre focusing on Mandarin classes such as the SCCCI in-company training; (3) the Training Promotion Centre which prepares more than 30 workshops a year as well as numerous diploma and certificate courses; and (4) the recent creation of the China Study Business Groups in 2006 which develops partnerships with local bodies such as the Tourism Culture Academy as well as starting projects abroad such as in the Chinese province of Liaoning.[6] As such, the compatible interests between the

government and the SCCCI is based on the competitive advantage of being positioned at the centre of cultural differences. By reducing these cultural differences to, for example, speaking either English or Mandarin, the SCCCI positions itself as the middleman which can make accessing new markets easy.

However, through such initiatives, the SCCCI's competitive advantage is limited to Singapore's gateway. The privileged image of the matchmaker is based on the importance of global Chinese-speaking networks in conducting business beyond China's economic 'rise' and Singapore's gateway. Singapore's newly developed gateway narrative serves as a profitable marketing strategy that fits the SCCCI's overall realm of activities since its inception. The SCCCI's international pretensions emerged well before the state discourse of the gateway during the 1990s and the economic 'rise' of China. For example, the SCCCI made itself the champion of local small and medium enterprises (SMEs) from the mid-1980s onwards, markedly because of its capacity to help them grow through its global Chinese business networks.[7]

It seems that the government's practice of the gateway is at least partly influenced by the SCCCIs views and strategies, particularly in reducing cultural differences in business to cultural *lingua franca*. As an example of the state's focus on SMEs, the SCCCI launched the Enterprise Development Centre (EDC) in 2006 in collaboration with SPRING Singapore. At the launch, the SCCCI President stated:

> While our services will be made available to all local enterprises, we shall devote special attention to the needs of SMEs, the heartlanders of the business community in Singapore. Our Chamber's bilingual and bicultural capabilities will also be an asset in reaching out to the large based on Chinese-speaking SMEs.[8]

Focusing on local networking through its annual trade association congress and luncheon gatherings with trade association representatives, the EDC also offers consultancy, advisory and expertise to SMEs based on its participation in Chinese-based networks.[9] It also gives SMEs access to the SCCCI's World Chinese Business Network reaching more than 134,000 ethnic Chinese enterprises.[10] The SCCCI focuses on local Singaporean SMEs, even if some of the companies supported are not of local origin, with an interest in providing them access to global Chinese-speaking networks. The SCCCI's focus on SMEs and the Singaporean authorities' recent gateway initiatives catering to them have to be put in relation, since it seems the government can count on – or has adapted to – the SCCCI's support of SMEs, and even will conceive of its strategies when it comes to market cultural differences as competitive advantage.

In light of these pretensions, the SCCCI's understanding of Chinese culture buys into the government's understanding of what it means being a gateway to China. The SCCCIs self-representation as the guardian of Chinese culture in Singapore over the years was delegated in 1986 to the Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Associations (SFCCA).[11] Mostly funded by the SCCCI, the SFCCA collaborates with the Chamber on many Chinese events, such as the annual downtown festival called River Hongbao during Chinese New Year and the Chinese Language & Culture Fund. The latter, which was created in 2004 and officially came into operation in 2007, attempts to "raise the Chinese language standard among younger Singaporeans and to support Chinese associations, enterprises and educational institutions actively involved in the promotion of Chinese culture".[12] By funding the training of Mandarin skills with a budget of more than $16 million, the SCCCI is both catering to younger local Chinese generations and local enterprises looking into training their personnel to work in the Chinese markets.[13] As such, the SCCCI activities support the government's image of what Chinese means in Singapore, which is the use of Mandarin for business opportunities.

The image of the matchmaker is compatible, therefore, with Singapore's gateway, since it focuses on Chinese culture – understood as language – as part of Singapore's competitive advantage framework. The organizations competing with the SCCCI are not the Singaporean authorities but other business groups created by Mainland newcomers to Singapore and capitalizing on their own Chinese-speaking networks anchored in China, such as the Chinese Enterprise Association (CEA).[14] The CEA's exclusive networks more closely threaten the SCCCI pretensions to being the preferred community for Chinese-speaking business within and outside Singapore.

Chinese professionals and the struggle for distinctiveness

New migrant associations have made their way into local Singaporean social life since the early 1990s. They are local community associations outside the traditional clan system for Chinese migrants to Singapore.[15] The four registered associations, which are the Kowloon Club, the Tian Fu Club, the Huayuan Association, and the most recent Tian Jin Club, have privileged links to the Chinese Embassy to Singapore, as well as their own business networks linking them to Mainland China.

The first one was the Kowloon Club created in 1990 to cater to young professionals and families from Hong Kong. By looking at the Kowloon Club's activities in light of other associations of Chinese newcomers to Singapore, it offers an alternative image of the Chinese gateway based on an idea of 'Chinese difference'. As with other newly formed migrant associations such as the Singa Sino Friendship Association, the Kowloon Club's distinctive Chinese culture is constantly threatened by the pressure of fitting the Singaporean authorities' image of Chinese culture as Mandarin-speaking and China-centric.

The Singaporean authorities created the Kowloon Club to stimulate the arrival of professionals from Hong Kong, seen as a model migrant population. People from Hong Kong have been migrating constantly to Singapore since the 1950s due notably to similar cultural backgrounds and Singapore's needs for skilled labour. The government wanted to facilitate their integration through the Kowloon Club as well as to use the Kowloon Club to increase immigration from Hong Kong by having it conduct various recruitment seminars in Hong Kong in the early 1990s. Currently, it represents about 2,000 families, the Kowloon Club may be small but it possesses an organization and leadership that all other new migrant associations so far are lacking.[16]

The Kowloon Club works mostly as a social organization with its own publication, offering sports tournaments, volunteering possibilities, and various skill development courses to its membership. Through specific activities like their annual gala, the Kowloon Club also offers networking possibilities for business purposes, as well as a wide range of scholarships and charity work, expanding beyond its membership to specific Chinese and non-Chinese vulnerable groups, may they be orphans or migrant workers living in Singapore.[17]

The Kowloon Club has extensive everyday ties to Singaporean society, particularly with associations representing the traditional Chinese networking groups such as the SCCCI and the SFCCA as well as other new migrant associations.[18] It is seen as a model of a modern community association. On this reputation, it serves as a consultant to the government for integration issues for newcomers. It is also highly involved with other forms of associations catering to the Chinese newcomers, like the Overseas Chinese Students Union.

At some point during its 15 years of its existence, however, the purpose of the association became totally reversed. From facilitating social integration into Singaporean society, its main goal now is to preserve the distinctiveness of the Hong Kongese heritage and culture of its membership, notably for the children of its members. Stressing and showing the Kowloon Club's distinct heritage – or Chinese difference – seems to have become a priority, since its members are seen as Mainlanders rather than Hong Kongese in Singaporean everyday life. The Kowloon Club's participation to the national Chingay parade in 2008 illustrates this point. The membership presented a float representing a mountain of roasted pork buns (*char siu bao*), a specific cultural Hong Kongese symbol, to celebrate its heritage in contemporary Singapore.[19] As a local Chinese social club, it is of particular importance to its membership to find new ways to distinguish itself from the others and to find ways to pass on its specific heritage to its younger generations.

The Kowloon Club's position is at odds with most new migrant associations in preserving its Chinese difference. There is currently a trend to

homogenize Chineseness in everyday Singapore, which makes it easy to connect and construct economic advantage. Since the Kowloon Club remains mostly a social organization with a strong 'different-Chinese' heritage – markedly with the use of Cantonese as its common language – most new associations have evolved towards the competitive advantage one Chineseness gives them – based on speaking Mandarin.

The Singa Sino Friendship Association of Singapore is a good example of this struggle between experiencing Chinese difference and promoting a more profitable, homogenized Chinese culture. Created in 1990, the first intent of the association was to 'share and act upon a common passion for China' through the action of giving back.[20] Such association regroups both Chinese and non-Chinese members with an interesting in giving back. They use their financial means and knowledge of both Chinese and Singaporean societies, particularly to help resolve specific Chinese-Singaporean tensions. Funding renovations of schools in China, helping sick Chinese international students and migrant workers in Singapore, this association had an interesting understanding on what constituted its field of activity, until a change of leadership two years ago. Depending strongly on the strategic direction given by the executive members, such association found a new leadership favouring business-oriented networking. This new mentality emphasized recruitment of new members through Mainlanders living in Singapore for a short period of time, rather than focusing on local Chinese and non-Chinese populations looking for long term involvement. Whereas the first years of the association were based on a grounding exercise in Chinese Singapore, it is now building strong linkages with the China Business Association, regrouping mostly people doing imports and exports to Chinese markets. As such, it left the localized connections the association built in Singapore to focus on doing business in China. This evolution is compatible with the government's visions of the gateway, and contrary to the strong 'difference' in what being Chinese means.

Both the Kowloon Club and the Friendship Association reflect the tension created by a gateway narrative instrumentalizing Chinese culture/language as marketable competitive advantage. In this view, the Kowloon Club seems closer to some clan associations in stressing the difference in what being Chinese in Singapore means and how it is experienced. Their view is notably criticizing the Singaporean authorities whose willingness to homogenize the Chinese culture is obscuring the 'Chinese difference'. For example, an active member of the Kowloon Club stated feelings of uneasiness with some of Singaporean Ministers' speeches speaking of China as the *motherland.* The increasing use of this expression in Mandarin speeches of the government, familiar in the People's Republic of China (PRC), comes from shadow speechwriters originally from the Mainland, without any realization within government of the dissonance of this expression.[21] With increasing Chinese newcomers from the Mainland,

such idiosyncrasies will become more common and will create everyday pressures on associations like the Friendship Association to fit the model of a more inclusive, dissipated, China-centric, Mandarin-speaking and profitable understanding of Chinese culture.

Chinese clan associations as bridges

As many scholars announced since the 1980s the death of Chinese clan associations in contemporary Singapore,[22] it is interesting to notice their self-renewal through supporting Singapore's global schoolhouse and catering to young professionals to better engage Singapore as economic gateway between East/China and the West. The clan associations' image of the gateway as particular bridges is pluralizing our understanding of Singapore's gateway based on competitive advantage, because they bring with them histories and cultural elements excluded from the state practice. By focusing mostly on the activities of the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, dialect-based clan associations are both supporting the government's gateway through their activities in the education sector and for young professionals, and contesting it through their preservation of specific (linguistic and cultural) bridges.

The Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan is undoubtedly a strong player in local Singaporean society and has deep anchors in the local Chinese business elite. As such, its perspective on the gateway as competitive advantage is often compatible with the government's vision. Registered as a corporation, this clan association finds its power in the property it owns, markedly the management of five schools. In its own words, the Hokkien Huay Kuan looks to complement the "holes" in the governmental strategies, notably when it comes to education.[23] It lead, for example, the curriculum reform in primary schools towards biculturalism in collaboration with the Singapore Ministry of Education since 2004, testing it in its own schools first. As stated by one of the principals administering this programme on behalf of the Hokkien Huay Kuan, the intent is "to nurture a generation of bicultural elite, starting with youth."[24] Accordingly, it has taken a strong role in helping the government to develop its gateway's competitive advantage, particularly in education.

Supporting the state gateway initiative of the global schoolhouse, clan associations are more specifically reproducing the government's competitive nature in understanding and measuring Chinese culture. Paradoxically, the main focus of the Hokkien Huay Kuan, a dialect-based clan association, is to support the teaching of Mandarin as Singapore's official Chinese language. As such, it directly reinstates the government's understanding and role of the Chinese culture in Singapore through arts and culture scholarships as well as through funding of campus-based Chinese associations, such as the Nanyang Technological University Chinese Society. The same can be said of other local Chinese clan associations with means. For example, the Ngee Ann Kongsi and its sister association the Teochew Poit Ip Huay Kuan have since the 1980s put many resources into supporting this emerging global

schoolhouse. These Teochew associations have built the Ngee Ann Polytechnics to complement its primary and secondary schools. Now, they are leading the construction of Singapore's fourth university. Investing more than 75% of its profits in these schools and more than half of a million in student scholarships, it has directly given the Ngee Ann Polytechnics 17 million dollars in 2007 alone. Moreover, the Kongsi recently developed a partnership with the Australia's University of Adelaide to offer a MBA programme from its offices to expand its support of Singapore's global schoolhouse and world class university programmes.[25]

However, each clan association has its own vision of Singapore's Chinese culture is. Whereas the SCCCI and the SFCCA promote a Chineseness closer to the government's homogenized and Mandarin-speaking understanding, clan associations are trying to break free from this model to teach and renew interest in their particular versions of 'Chineseness' through their own networks and transmitting of their histories. For example, the Ngee Ann Kongsi and the Teochew Poit Ip Huay Kuan have started to give Teochew classes and are promoting Teochew art through their museum's vision and priorities. Similarly, the Char Yong (Dabu) Association utilized Singapore's global schoolhouse to revive its Chinese roots through the creation of international scholarships for Chinese students of Dabu coming to Singapore. They have also invested in the creation of a museum and archives to preserve and transmit the Hakka knowledge and historical way of life in Singapore to younger generations.[26]

The same can be said for the Hokkien Huay Kuan, despite its participation in the government's bicultural turn. Over the last few years, the Hokkien Huay Kuan has multiplied its Hokkien based activities, notably with the recent completed renovations of the Thian Hock Keng Temple. In 2008, it hosted the first mass wedding ceremony since the 1950s to reconnect with one of the clan association's traditional social function. Moreover, it hosted a Hokkien festival in 2006, the same year two other dialect-based Chinese clan associations hosted their own dialect-based festivals in Singapore. When asked about the timing of such activities, an executive of the Hokkien Huay Kuan admits that there is a very recent opening in Singaporean society towards dialect-based Chinese culture. Even if such activities would not have been possible ten years ago, they are now and the Huay Kuan adopts a pragmatic look and perspective; pushing for its distinct culture when and where it can.

Such interest comes particularly from the young professionals, who have come to form close to 90% of the Huay Kuan's new membership.[27] These young professionals are mostly in their 30s and are usually new parents with financial means. Completing numerous business trips in Asia and particularly to the PRC, these young professionals have turned to their clan association to re/discover their particular Chinese heritage. The creation of a youth group in 2007 allowed them to have access to privileged social and

business networking, but also to organize cultural workshops, speaking directly of their Hokkien heritage. Admitting their Westernized background and working mostly for European companies, these young professionals learn about their culture and how to preserve it. As some of them stated in speaking of the Hokkien heritage and knowledge in Singapore: "we don't want to be the generation that lost it".[28]

Besides identity reasons, clan associations have also been instrumental in maintaining and increasing Singapore's business relations to China. Even if this explains their contributions to the government's business-oriented gateway, these relations are also based on very specific networks in Southeast Asia and Southern China, reviving a plurality of different Chinesenesses. As told by many, the government's focus on Mandarin may be useful for doing business in big Chinese cities, but a lot of emerging markets and networks are based on dialects, which becomes the strength, contribution and representation of the gateway from these clan associations' activities. As different and plural bridges to China, markedly with their trade missions and international conventions, each clan association has a necessary ambivalent relation to a state construction of the gateway in which a specific homogenized Chinese image is recognized and institutionalized.

China's bubbles at the gateway

In a context where Singapore promotes itself as a global schoolhouse and a pool of foreign talent, the importance of the Overseas Chinese Students Union and related campus-based associations has to be stressed as an interesting site to understand the gateway, or rather the creation of China's bubbles at the gateway. Whereas the new migrant associations have been the focus of most tensions implicating Mainlanders, campus-based associations for Chinese newcomers are of increasing importance. A discussion of these associations will enable us to put in perspective Singapore's gateway and see how it is instrumentalized by emerging gatekeepers. The government's understanding of Chinese culture is also criticized by the actions of China's nationals, threatening the competitive advantage strategy of the Singaporean authorities in becoming a gateway.

The Overseas Chinese Students Union in Singapore regroups all Chinese international students from the PRC, who become automatic members of the Union upon admission to a Singaporean university. Such an admission process gave the Union approximately 35,000 members in 2008, excluding for the moment graduate students and faculty from China. Formed in 2003 from the Chinese associations of the National University of Singapore and the Nanyang Technological University under the recommendation of the Chinese Embassy, the Union has a mission to "take care of Chinese students".[29] Its focus is on the wellbeing of these students and their future, rather than Singapore.

The Overseas Chinese Students Union possesses a particular agenda and strong messages linked to its funding and positioning coming from the Chinese Embassy. Since 2007, it has been an official member of the China's Overseas Scholars and Students Chinese Association. As a Chinese government initiative, this association makes sure to capitalize on international students and scholars encouraging them to remember their Chinese roots and *obligations* to the PRC. As such, the message of the Union is for international students from China to recognize their obligation to their home country and come back quickly after their undergraduate studies to either work or complete their graduate studies in China.[30]

The association sponsors many activities on campus, including sporting events and writing competitions. They also organize, in collaboration with university and government officials, seminars to introduce Chinese students to various multinational corporations, with which they can fulfill the requirements of their bonded scholarships to the Singaporean government.[31] As such, it has strong linkages to associations like the Kowloon Club and other new migrant associations, notably for co-organizing activities and business-oriented networking. The lack of linkages to the SFCCA and the SCCCI reflects this idea of Singapore being instrumentalized to China's needs in terms of educating China's future skilled workers.

The Union's position echoes that of the alumni clubs of Chinese universities in Singapore. Also funded in part by the Chinese Embassy, these clubs target graduate students and professionals with a similar message about their obligation to help China. The Zhejiang University alumni club is a good example, since it is one of the most organized of its kind in Singapore. Dreamt up in 1999 and officially launched in 2000 particularly with the support of the Kowloon Club and the Singa Sino Friendship Association, its intent was to become the preferred channel to help Chinese newcomers to adapt to life in Singapore. It is 'a family away from home'.[32] With 1,000 members at large, this web-based association organizes various events for Chinese festivities. It also organizes more formal events such as seminars to promote connections to China and the return of students. It has also been known to facilitate collaborative research projects between Nanyang Technological University and Zhejiang University.

Similarly to the Union, the Zhejiang University alumni club has extensive relations with associations catering to Mainlanders in Singapore and little to none with clan associations. Besides helping students, it sees itself as representative of China's nationals in Singapore. It serves, for example, to Singapore-based corporations, which want to do business in China to connect with the *right* parties in Zhejiang province. It also shares its expertise to Singaporean authorities to better understand the situation, concerns and challenges for newcomers from the Mainland.[33] These campus-based associations catering to Mainlanders are more than social university clubs. They are evolving with a specific agenda to transmit China's message to its

nationals living in Singapore and to better China's economic development by supporting and expanding various business networks. Their everyday actions betray the emergence of China's gatekeepers in local Singaporean life and to better represent the Chinese government's understanding of its development through Singapore's gateway. As such, they represent China's bubbles at the gateway to counter-balance Singapore's messages and intents.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it seems that the Singaporean authorities' business-oriented understanding of their gateway between East/China and the West finds layering through the everyday actions and representations of local gatekeepers. Whereas the government sees the gateway as a competitive advantage based on reducing the Chinese culture to Mandarin-speaking networks and markets, the gatekeepers give a plurality of meanings and alternative political rationalities to the government's gateway initiatives that show the various ways in which they are experienced. The SCCCI and Chinese clan associations may support the recent government's economic spin of the gateway, notably by supporting the development of Mandarin skills to do business in China, but they also have their own agendas following the particular transnational bridges their networks represent. Moreover, the new migrant associations such as the Kowloon Club may struggle in keeping their Chinese difference and determining how it should be utilized in local Singapore, but their actions and histories are particularizing and criticizing the assumptions on which the Singaporean authorities' gateway narrative is built. Similarly, the emergence of China's bubbles on Singapore's university campuses may translate an important nuance: even if the Singaporean authorities think their conception of Chineseness is close to China's, the fact remains that China's nationals see important cultural differences between Singapore and China; privileging the latter.

Endnotes

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Chapter 6:
Conceiving of Vancouver as gateway

The metaphor of the gateway has been utilized by the governments of British Columbia and Canada to redefine the place of Vancouver on the international stage, particularly to privilege its connections to the East/China. Canada's gateway to the Asia Pacific is, however, based on market-driven assumptions and a vague formal understanding of what destinations this gateway is connecting to. This explains why these initiatives are not socially embedded *at* the gateway. By appropriating the narrative of the gateway from port authorities, both the federal and provincial governments have developed a hands-off approach to gateway developments in the education and business sector, as well as a vague understanding of the direction and scope of their gateway initiatives.

Officially named *Canada's gateway to the Asia Pacific* by the federal government in 2006, Vancouver has a history of government initiatives constructing this gateway since 1987.[1] The gateway concept usually refers to Vancouver's physical capacities and infrastructures to serve as a privileged and competitive node in the supply and distribution chain between East Asian and North American markets. Whereas this gateway to Asia Pacific includes more than China, the vast majority of governmental publications seems to put the emphasis on the relevance and importance of Vancouver's development as a gateway in direct relation to China's economic 'rise'.

Vancouver as a gateway to the Asia Pacific seems at first glance to refer to governmental initiatives disconnected from everyday life in Vancouver. When researchers speak of Vancouver's *soft* gateway – or social and human dimension of the gateway – they refer to this less spoken dimension of everyday Vancouver: "By taking advantage of Canada's strategic geographic location, as well as other natural advantages such as human and cultural linkages, Canada can develop its role as a gateway between North America and Asia for business, trade and investment, and even cultural exchange".[2]

Nonetheless, this dimension of the gateway is quite under-explored in governmental initiatives. In this section, *it will be argued that Vancouver's discourses and practices as a gateway are framed by market-driven assumptions[3] and vague understandings of what the Eastern/Chinese component of the gateway refers. This approach comes from the concerns of Vancouver port authorities framed within international neo-liberal port competition, which explains the hands-off approach developed by government officials.* Put differently, the narrative was appropriated by the federal and provincial governments with the specific baggage and expectations of the port authorities about what is its proper use in the Canadian/Vancouver context. This approach has framed the parameters of the application of the idea of the gateway in providing less direct guidance to initiatives than providing an environment conducive to individual initiatives.

After looking at the origins of the gateway which lie in the lobbying efforts of port authorities, I will evaluate how it took shape beyond physical and infrastructural initiatives, in most recent governmental projects to include international education, alumni networks, city twinning projects as well as trade missions linked to the 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

Lobbying for the gateway

In the Canadian context, the gateway is a borrowed concept, mostly developed since the end of the 1980s to compare Vancouver's limitations in terms of physical infrastructure to other East Asian and North American ports. This concept does not come from either the government or the private sector. It comes from seaport (and airport) authorities trying to convince governments in Canada of the urgency of investing in Vancouver's infrastructure and rethinking its regulations in the spirit of international competition among ports and especially in response to the increasing demands of emerging Eastern economies. Appropriated by governments from this context, the gateway concept is based on market-driven assumptions about the world and an ambiguous understanding of its counterparts in East/China.

In the context of Vancouver, the gateway narrative is very narrow and technical since it speaks of Vancouver's role in the system of transportation and infrastructure in the supply chain mostly linking products made in the East to North American markets. It necessarily involves, under the federal government's concept of *corridor* associated with the gateway, the system of roads, rails and airports facilitating the arrival and exiting of goods in Vancouver by cargo containers:

> In responding to this need and the significant opportunities arising from rapid expansion of Asia-Pacific trade, the British Columbia provincial government is working with the western provincial governments, the federal government and key transportation stakeholders through an Industry Advisory Group, to make Canada's Pacific Gateway the most efficient and competitive multi-modal transportation system on the North American west coast.[4]

Vancouver is indeed at the centre of the port authorities' and the governments' strategies to maximize their profits from the 'rise' of Eastern economies. The aim is to integrate it into the international business and production networks radiating out of East/China.[5]

The main intent behind Canada's gateway to Asia Pacific as a narrative was indeed to get the federal government to stop looking South for economic opportunities and start looking East, especially with the economic 'rise' of China. Since the port authorities' focus was on the development of

Vancouver's infrastructure through the 1990s, there was an inherent ambiguity in identifying their counterparts in East/China. In all governmental publications about the relevance of the gateway in the Canadian context the increasing economic importance of China is invariably cited as the first reason:

> Unprecedented growth in Chinese export volumes and increasing demands for coal and iron ore imports, have made China an important growth engine for the world economy. At present, China is Canada's second largest trading partner and British Columbia's largest offshore trading partner, accounting for 60% of growth in world trade. By 2020, China is forecast to be the world's second largest economy and a key driver of Asia-Pacific trade expansion.[6]

However, Canada's interest in the East is not limited to China. The logic is that increasing demand for a North American gateway to manage incoming cargos from the East – in general – destined to North America, requires better infrastructure and investments to ensure that Vancouver can cope with this demand. The East/China became the target and the reason utilized by port authorities in the 1990s to get government investments so as to develop and improve this gateway, based on speculations about the expected long-term growth of these emerging markets, such as China.

In this view, the gateway narrative allows senior port officials to compare Vancouver's infrastructure to other international ports. Vancouver port authorities transmitted this concern to the Senior Advisory Group for the Canadian government on the gateway initiative in 2007:

> While not linked specifically to port governance, we note that in other countries the cities in which ports reside are encouraged to set aside lands for future developments. Indeed in some countries, the cities create more land for port use. Fundamental to our recommendations is the enhanced use of existing infrastructure before the construction of the new.[7]

Whereas ports like Hong Kong and Singapore have better, more equipped and constantly upgraded port infrastructure to cope with China's (and the East's) increasing demand, Vancouver's gateway is easily characterized, as being difficult to get investments for, make change and complete new infrastructure projects.

Moreover, the upgrades and competition coming from the ports of Los Angeles and Manzanillo, Mexico are stressed by Vancouver port authorities to show that despite its geographical advantage as the closest metropolis between Eastern/Chinese markets and North America from the latter's side,

Vancouver is threatened with losing its edge if the appropriate investments do not make/keep it competitive enough in terms of capacity and customer-friendly regulations:

> Canada has some advantages. Among them are location and available services [...] But these factors in themselves do not constitute a vision. Ocean carriers and users of containers measure any port or container path in terms of cost, efficiency and reliability. We compete with other West Coast ports, the Panama Canal/North American East Coast ports and sometimes the Suez Canal.[8]

The port authorities' vision of the gateway is, therefore, a technical one, which focuses on the supply chain linking the East/China to North America. It is also a vision which sees Canada competing with other ports, which themselves receive for the most part more direction, investments and attention from public and private actors than Vancouver does.

To put this in perspective, both the federal government's *Asia Pacific Gateway and Corridor Initiative* and the government of British Columbia (BC)'s *Pacific Gateway Strategy* are based on recommendations, lobbying and action plans developed mostly by the Vancouver seaport authorities (and to some extent in recent years the airport authorities).[9] With their unique status under the *Canada Marine Act*, port authorities are both self-sufficient entities (read privately run) and subjected to public accountability. In contrast to most international ports that have lead the way, Canadian ports have limited access to resources and funding without the approval of the Canadian authorities. As the report of the Senior Advisory Group indicates:

> The ability to finance port development is a critical element in the strategy to develop the Pacific gateway. Since we believe that the ports must take the lead in expanding our West Coast facilities, there must be appropriate ability to finance this development.[10]

Accordingly, port authorities have utilized the gateway narrative to convince Canadian authorities to manage and view the needs of Vancouver ports in terms of investments and infrastructures.[11]

In this context, both federal and BC gateway initiatives are closely linked to the port authorities' understanding of Vancouver's future development as the "preferred gateway for Asia-Pacific trade and as the most competitive port system on the west coast of the Americas".[12] As a senior port authority official indicates, the lobbying effect on government officials has produced a strong market-driven understanding of Vancouver as a gateway, without a strong effort to define the purpose and future of this gateway. On

the one hand, federal authorities have developed a 'cash cow' mentality, where Vancouver's development is seen as a way of bringing in more revenue, without necessarily giving the gateway a specific long-term vision and commitment, and without reflecting on what 'Asia Pacific' means.[13] On the other hand, the provincial government has reproduced vague and contradictory visions to the space constituting the gateway: sometimes referring to only Vancouver, to the Greater Vancouver region, or to include most of BC's transportation system, including Prince Rupert port developments. As the focus is once again to profit from a specific economic conjecture, the metaphor of the gateway is applied loosely to fit pragmatic uses.

With the port authorities' desire to be more competitive on the international stage and with the government's 'cash cow' mentality, this concept of the gateway is based on strong market-driven assumptions. Since gateways are *exceptional* spaces in the neo-liberal international political economy,[14] it becomes required to create specific *exceptional* regulations to remain competitive. As the *Gateway Council* notes:

> [T]he extent to which new services can be developed is generally subject to governmental policies and regulation, which in Canada are less conducive to growth and improvement than in the US. Policies that foster new connections, encourage service improvements and investments in new Gateway facilities and equipment are needed for Gateway airports, seaports and carriers.[15]

Notably, in this market-driven gateway approach, it is asked that security measures are reviewed to facilitate the transfer of passengers and cargos, that taxes applying to cargos be simplified and reduced, that environmental reviews be simplified and quicker, and that Canada de-regularizes its policies towards Asian airline transporters' right to operate in Canada.[16]

Canadian political regulations have more specifically been targeted to re-define Vancouver as an *exceptional* gateway space. Depicted in the East/China as responsible for Vancouver's reputation as an unreliable gateway, the political regulations of the gateway in this context require to be modernized, notably when it comes to ports' labour regulations. Many labour strikes have hit the gateway and its corridor, markedly in 1999 and during the 2004-2007 period. These strikes paralyzed gateway operations to the extent that counterparts in East/China, where ports have more control over the labour force and the conduct of everyday operations, have complained. In this context, many senior officials at the Vancouver port authorities would like more flexibility when dealing with labour regulations at the gateway: "nobody wants a labour dispute or the closing down of the gateway [...] they

want us to muddle our way through it".[17] Accordingly, the *Special Advisory Group* recommends, for example:

> that the Government of Canada take the lead in the institution of a different labour regime on Canadian docks, supported by new legislation if required [...] We did not make it one of our recommendations to consider all the labour associated with the Pacific Gateway as 'essential'. But policy makers may have to consider such a step in the future as the shippers and sending ports in Asia consider the entire labour situation in Canada related to the ports as unreliable.[18]

In this context, de-regulation seems to be privileged without offering an alternative political vision addressing the long-term sustainability of Vancouver beyond its economic requirements to remain an internationally competitive gateway.

Moreover, the role of Vancouver community actors who could potentially offer direction, leadership and vision to the gateway has been reduced to a minimum. As *stakeholders*, community support in terms of investments in port capacities and infrastructure is simply seen by port authorities as part of their public relations strategy to ensure community buy-in:

> This [public relations] campaign will build community support for freight transportation system investments to the benefit of the regional economy, as well as help manage stakeholder expectations. It will also foster a greater appreciation of what is required to continue developing the system.[19]

In a similar way to port authorities, the government's understanding of community support for gateway initiatives is disconnected from any positive and proactive role in the gateway's development. As a port authority official indicated, municipalities, local associations such as condominium owners and aboriginal groups have often requested modifications and major changes in developments linked to expanding and making gateway infrastructure projects more efficient.[20] Their involvement is considered to be a preventive action rather than a request for proactive involvement and leadership:

> Growing urban development pressures and environmental impact concerns, for example, present unique obstacles to protecting scarce industrial lands required for expansion of strategic transportation corridors. Ongoing engagement and communication with municipalities, local associations, First Nations and interest groups will be essential.[21]

Anchored in deep market-driven assumptions, the gateway possesses here strong limitations when it comes to finding a long-term vision for itself and a leadership to guide it. Although "they [federal government] did a good job at profiling the need and the importance of the gateway"[22] since 2006, there has been no private or public actors besides the port authorities taking on the role of providing direction to the gateway. As a senior port authority official has stated: "we're the face of the gateway – you could say – internationally",[23] since the policy recommendations are aimed at political de-regulation and a fear of international competition with no concern to anchor gateway initiatives in the social matrix of Vancouver where local leaders could take on this role.

Translating this gateway into a state practice

The BC provincial government led the way in expanding the meanings attributed to Canada's gateway.[24] With a particular focus on developing Vancouver's *soft* gateway, the BC government has appropriated the narrative mostly in relation to two sectors: education and business. More specifically, I will look at (1) international education and (2) alumni networks as markets and competitive advantages for Vancouver's gateway, as well as (3) city twinning projects and (4) the 2010 Winter Olympic Games as business opportunities at the gateway. This expansion of the gateway concept by state authorities is still characterized by a lack of a long-term vision. In all four cases, the importance and relevance of the gateway practice driven by the BC government's hands-off mentality, is about getting *our* share of world markets by providing an environment – with minimal political intervention – for prosperous economic relations to be developed.

Students and alumni

The marketing of Vancouver as an educational gateway is a recent phenomenon, created by the thriving business opportunities in this sector. As the BC Ministry of Economic Development indicated in 2007:

> BC has the largest English-as-a-second language market in Canada with approximately 100 organizations operating in Vancouver. British Columbia post-secondary institutions are leaders in international education [...] International education is also an important part of BCs kindergarten to grade 12 public school system with approximately 6,500 international students enrolled in BC schools.[25]

In this context, international education with a focus on marketing to Asian/Chinese students becomes a potentially lucrative business for the BC government, with an increasing numbers each year of international students and organizations catering to them. As a BC official document on Canada's

gateway among others indicates: "many non-commercial activities do, in fact, generate significant economic return to communities. Visits by foreign students to BC educational institutions are a case in point".[26] Such logic becomes the parameters for understanding international education as part of Vancouver's gateway initiatives.

The University of British Columbia (UBC) is one institution that has supported and helped to build, in collaboration with BC government officials, Vancouver's gateway in the education sector. In this context, the Asian focus stated in principles is clearly a pragmatic focus on China. UBC aims at strengthening its presence in Asia through various memoranda of understanding and exchange programmes, as well as building an international reputation as a way of increasing student enrolment from China. As UBC's strategic plan entitled *Trek 2010* announces, one of the key mechanisms would be to "[e]stablish a UBC Asia-Pacific Regional Office".[27] Although such an office remains to be built, there are strong linkages developing among government and university officials that help to realize the spirit of this priority with its clear focus on China. In May 2008, UBC officials have joined the BC Premier Gordon Campbell in delegation to China to organize and sign agreements of reciprocity relative to research, faculty and student exchange programmes with Chinese universities.[28]

UBC has attempted to become a symbol of the gateway to Asia Pacific in the education sector. In all academic programmes and research projects associated with UBC's internationalization strategy in 2008, Asia counts for 52 academic programmes and 92 research projects, North America has 54 academic programmes and 51 research projects and the rest of the world – including South America, Oceania, Middle East, Africa and Europe – is represented by 38 academic programmes and 66 research projects.[29] Through this internationalization process, UBC contributes actively to constructing Vancouver as a gateway to Asia Pacific/China. As the President of UBC stated in 2007: "In Trek 2010, the university established targets for international students. These targets should be understood primarily as attempts to 'internally internationalize' the university, thereby enriching the experience of all students, especially those who have stayed at home to study and have not themselves had the opportunity to travel."[30]

Nonetheless, UBC's understanding of the Asia Pacific is translated through enrolment practices by privileging Chinese and American students. In this context, UBC's enrolment practices are shaping migration patterns and helping to create Canada's gateway in specific ways. In 2008, approximately 20% of the UBC student population came from China, which is equal to the student population from the United States.[31] More specifically, students from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan constitute the primary source of international students for UBC (main campus) during the last four years, with the more than 1,300 students, hence surpassing the number of students from the United States. Such a rise in the number of students from Greater China is quite

dramatic. In 2000, less than 200 international students from Mainland China were enrolled at UBC, a number that has reached 1095 in 2007.[32]

UBC's marketing and enrolment practices fit well the market-driven assumptions behind the gateway strategy. Besides the revenues gained from expanding its activities to Eastern/Chinese markets, the university plays a key role in supporting the development of skilled labour at the gateway. As the Greater Vancouver Gateway Council notes:

> Rapid gateway growth is occurring at a time of high economic activity in Western Canada. The situation in the Gateway is compounded by the high cost of housing and an aging workforce. Ways and means must be found to ensure the availability of adequate numbers of skilled employees to meet Gateway needs over the coming decades.[33]

A priority for governmental strategies is skilled labour which can be found in graduating cohorts. International students may get incentives from governments, for example, to stay longer in Vancouver, and to work towards fast-tracking their immigration application processes.[34] Even before the new 2008 fast-tracking immigration policy towards international students was introduced, UBC had been involved in sector-based fast-tracking immigration policies by facilitating the matching of local employers with international students, especially in the fields of engineering and business.[35] Through its *Transition Out Program*, UBC helps, for example, international students get a post-graduate work permits in order to work professionally in Vancouver after their studies.[36] With the new 2008 immigration policy amendments via Bill C-50 applying notably to international students graduating in a Canadian university, a year spent working in Vancouver can be banked towards the faster attainment of their Canadian permanent residency.[37]

Similarly, the BC government's 2007 initiative of BC's Ambassadors Alumni Network can be associated with the gateway strategy, since it is directed towards former students in BC post-secondary educational institutions and future young professionals. In this case, however, the BC government targets returned students to East/China and markets Vancouver to them. This initiative shows the provincial government's acknowledgement of the numerous social networks expanding outwards from Vancouver to various locations in East/China, and the overall importance of these networks in developing a competitive edge for Vancouver. As BC Premier, Gordon Campbell, wrote to the BC Alumni in Asia/China: "Our goal is to strengthen BC's ties to former residents, students and individuals who may be interested in British Columbia – as a place to invest, a place to build a career and raise a family, and as an exciting place to visit".[38] In other words, the government is trying to profit from these social networks to maintain Vancouver as a privileged site for Eastern/Chinese populations, utilizing former students as

ambassadors in the region. Such a perspective shows the ambiguity of the BC government's target of the *alumni in Asia*, as well as of the lack of political vision to this initiative. Whereas it is not clear if the alumni in Asia include, for example, Caucasians living in China, the market-driven assumptions on which the initiative is built reflects a government looking only for direct revenues and skilled labour with no other precise political project in mind.

Business by trade delegations

The gateway narrative also made its way into the BC government's old strategies to open up to markets to the East/China such as the twinning of BC municipalities with Asian cities. Until the end of the 1990s, the twinning initiatives were geared towards Japanese cities. Indeed, most of the 33 twinning projects active between BC municipalities and Japanese cities were completed in the late 1980s and the 1990s. When the Japanese economy's growth started to falter and the Chinese economy boomed, the strategy shifted. The new interest of the BC government in pushing for more twinning projects is now geared towards Chinese cities. There are 12 twinning projects between BC municipalities and Chinese cities as of 2007 out of a total of 60 cities involved in international twinning exercises.[39]

The BC Twinning toolkit is quite explicit in utilizing the model of trade delegations, which include people having either official status in Canada or ties to targeted Eastern/Chinese cities, to serve as ambassadors to develop economic arrangements; cultural exchanges; and medium-term reciprocity projects, markedly through students exchange programmes.[40] As a government official of the BC Asia Pacific Strategic Partnerships and Programs Branch of the Ministry of Economic Development indicates, the *soft* gateway involves a "galaxy of players" which cannot all be considered in one strategy. Rather, the BC government rather chose the perspective that it is better "to do everything in partnership" to develop the *soft* gateway. A strategy like the twinning projects represents such an approach, which focuses on the networks and the economic plans of any interested community actors.[41]

Even though such initiative may seem to be too broad to apply to Vancouver as a gateway, the strategies of the twinning toolkit offered to BC municipalities interested in such projects are explicitly reinforcing BC's Gateway Action Plan. The focus is on such priorities as building a global identity around Canada's Pacific Gateway, strengthening BC's Asia Pacific trade and investment relationships, and developing a world-class supply chain and gateway infrastructure.[42]

Vancouver's satellite cities are encouraged to deepen their community-level relations to Eastern/Chinese cities in order to reinforce and support Vancouver's development as Canada's gateway to the Asia Pacific:

> Export trade from BC has traditionally taken the form of resource commodities and more recently high-value goods and services. While this trade will remain important, there are opportunities for trade across a more diverse range of industries and activities, many of which can be sourced from smaller communities [...] Twinning arrangements will help to highlight new international travel and tourism opportunities, such as eco-tourism, cultural tourism (e.g., First Nations) and adventure tourism.[43]

By pushing for more twinning projects with East/China as part of its gateway strategy, the BC government is still reproducing a hands-off approach. Based on a strong market-driven policy framework, it does not offer long-term vision and direction. Although the angle is community-based, it gives municipalities the choice of participating or not, stressing that the overall advantage of such participation is mostly economic and derives directly from the competitive advantage of being close to Canada's gateway to the Asia Pacific:

> [T]he growth of vibrant Asian communities within BC and increasing exchange with Asian countries have established an Asia Pacific Gateway Culture in certain parts of the province. What is needed now are efforts to strengthen this culture where it exists, and also to extend it to other communities and regions across BC. Well-established and appropriately resourced twinning arrangements can expand local knowledge and awareness of international markets, societies and cultures.[44]

Framing Vancouver's gateway for the private sector also takes the shape of Olympism, in the context of both the 2008 Beijing Olympics and the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. During the 2008 Beijing Olympics, the BC government opened its British Columbia Canada Pavilion near Tiananmen Square, under the auspices of the BC Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Secretariat. With a clear and explicit interest in the East as China, this BC Secretariat is part of the BC Ministry of Economic Development and works in collaboration with the BC Ministry of Finance, since it is:

> committed to making the most of its time in the spotlight to promote British Columbia as the place to live, work, visit and invest. British Columbia is home to a modern, diverse economy, and the BC Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Secretariat is showcasing to the world the enterprise and innovation at work throughout BC.[45]

Composed of close to 30 trade delegations including mostly industrial associations such as Technology BC and Film BC, the BC pavilion is supposed to serve as a catalyst to market BC and its industries during this period of the Olympic fever from 2008 to 2010.[46]

The British Columbia Canada Pavilion is understood by the BC government to be an initiative directly related to the Asia Pacific Gateway strategy:

> The British Columbia Canada Pavilion in Beijing is just one part of the Province's plan to promote British Columbia to the Asia Pacific region and to build on its long and rich relationship with China and other Asia Pacific trading partners.[47]

However, it seems that the government of BC and its private sector actors have not developed the vision necessary to build a successful marketing strategy matching Vancouver's Olympics to the gateway narrative. A senior BC government official involved in the planning and marketing of Vancouver's Olympics indicates that the overall gateway vision is currently limited to the interest of local companies in increasing their exports and expanding their activities in new markets.[48] In order to market Vancouver through the Olympics, he wonders about Vancouver's distinct history and nature: "What is the story we want to tell?", a question which he does not find any answers from the public and private actors involved so far. Although the gateway to Asia Pacific could explicitly be a marketing strategy here, Vancouver's image for the 2010 Winter Olympic Games is not. It uses traditional Canadian aboriginal references to explain Vancouver's history and focuses on the high technological advancements of Vancouver to show its most recent progress.

Such a lack of vision for the gateway is not only telling of the market-driven baggage of the narrative, it also seems consistent with the disconnect between the state vision and the awareness of private actors as well as community associations of their roles as part of Canada's gateway. Stuck with the government's hands-off approach, governmental initiatives cannot address this disconnect, because the *right* environment for *laissez-faire* prosperity is provided.

Conclusion

Whereas the concept of Canada's gateway to Asia Pacific is deeply anchored in the port authorities' vision, the translation of the narrative to other governmental initiatives has brought with it a hands-off approach to providing precise direction to gateway initiatives. Influenced by strong market-driven assumptions, gateway initiatives are providing a conducive environment for individual and business connections with little to no political direction, notably when it comes to defining which markets and social groups

from the East/China are more particularly targeted. Since port authorities used the concept of the gateway to ask for more money and autonomy to create an infrastructural gateway able to compete with other international ports, the same vision seems to have made its way into governmental initiatives in the sectors of education and business. Where the BC government has developed these initiatives to make use of the gateway narrative to its advantage, it seems that its vision is limited to its market-driven assumptions inherited from the port authorities' approach. In education, the emphasis is put on the industry of international education and the possibility of utilizing students and young professionals to further Vancouver's economic development, particularly in terms of providing skilled labour to gateway industries. In business circles, the gateway narrative translates into more opportunities for trade delegations without offering more direction or an original political vision about what the gateway should look like. As such, it is important to stress the lack of community engagement in the formulation of the gateway strategies of both the Canadian and the BC governments. Such a disconnect between the gateway strategies and the people living at the gateway, with the potential of leading them, may result in ineffective, unproductive and unsustainable policies.

Endnotes

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Chapter 7:
Alternative images and Vancouver's gatekeepers

In the context of Vancouver, specific community associations have started to appropriate similar notions and logics to the Canadian state authorities' gateway to the Asia Pacific. These community actions and alternative representations speak of their own initiatives and role at the gateway. Gatekeepers in Vancouver may be better understood as what Aihwa Ong and Donald Nonini call *bridge-builders*. The notion of the bridge-builder in North American Chinese communities is archetypical for these authors, since it refers to community associations reflecting this lived ambivalence between East/China and West. I am interested in exploring how such ambivalence is experienced in various, sometimes contradictory, ways.[1] It is important to note, once again, that I will not focus on the trajectories of individuals using gateway policies. I will also limit my investigation to community associations having local presence and relating to the Eastern/Chinese component of Vancouver's gateway.

In this chapter, I would like to give meanings to Vancouver as a gateway through the everyday actions of these gatekeepers, their evolutions, challenges and visions, over the last 20 years. *It is my contention that through the everyday actions of these community associations and the various everyday struggles they represent, one may better understand Vancouver's gateway through the linkages, influences and developments between their practice and the state practice of the gateway.* In a contrapuntal fashion, I will turn to the work, evolutions and activities of four local Chinese community associations in the business and education sectors to understand their lived relations to Vancouver. I will particularly stress how they are positioned towards Canada's market-driven gateway and its ambiguous focus towards the East/China.

On the business dimension of the gateway, I will focus on the Hong Kong-Canada Business Association (HKCBA), which can be associated with the more dominant gatekeeper's vision based on elite and business circles' perspectives. This view sees Vancouver as a 'Smart Link' to Hong Kong, the *real* economic gateway to China. By looking also at the Association of Chinese Canadian Professionals of Vancouver (ACCP), I will convey the concerns and social realities of this new skilled labour force that has come to inhabit the gateway – the young Canadian professionals of Chinese origin – and the ways in which Vancouver is not perceived as a gateway to them. In education, the activities of the Pui Ying Christian Services Society will enable us to look at mechanisms like religious affiliation that seek to preserve a 'Chinese cultural bubble' at the gateway. Finally, looking at the activities of the Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA) of University of British Columbia (UBC) will allow us to see the increasing importance of Chinese authenticity, the development of a 'Chinese heart' in Vancouver.

Business elite: Hong Kong as *the* gateway

The Hong Kong-Canada Business Association (HKCBA) functions as a business association linking Canada to East/China via Hong Kong. Its importance in Vancouver derives directly from an historical configuration in which Hong Kong and Vancouver have developed strong transnational business relations. The arrival in Vancouver of wealthy Hong Kongese in the 1990s changed the face of the local Chinese community. They came with a lot of financial resources and business networks, developed as *astronaut families* with the father constantly flying back and forth between Vancouver and Hong Kong.[2] The everyday activities and priorities of the HKCBA, especially in the context of the economic 'rise' of China, can be associated with these elite groups since they show the emphasis put on Hong Kong as *the* gateway, and on Vancouver as a solid link to Hong Kong. In this context, the economic 'rise' of China – and not the East – since the early 2000s is a golden business opportunity for Vancouver-based and Canadian companies to ride on the wave of success generated by Hong Kong's gateway.

Parallel to the gateway lobbying of Vancouver port authorities in the 1990s, Vancouver saw itself at the same time becoming the privileged immigration city for Hong Kong-based populations fearing the annexation to China in 1997. To complement the strong Hong Kong ties and professionals settling in Vancouver since the 1960s, these Chinese newcomers were quite wealthy and feared loosing their possessions as a consequence of the annexation. A local Chinese news director speaks of people like herself who are Hong Kongese and came to Vancouver in the early 1990s: "We were the first gateways".[3] In this view, the Hong Kongese experience of Canada's gateway is quite strong in Vancouver, because it possesses strong historical and economic foundations linking Vancouver to Hong Kong.

The HKCBA built on these elite and business connections. Its existence is part of what is called the *Hong Kong Family*, which represents the Hong Kong Trade Development Council, Invest Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Tourism Office, with strong partnerships with Cathay Pacific and HSBC. The *Hong Kong Family* works particularly closely with the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office. This office's current main priority is helping the development of local small and medium Canadian enterprises with the focus on building linkages to/through Hong Kong. A Hong Kong government official puts these efforts in perspective by underlining that 250,000 Canadians lived in Hong Kong in 2007 and more than 400,000 Chinese from Hong Kong lived in Vancouver, which is a strong basis on which economic, cultural and social linkages can be maintained on an everyday basis.[4]

In this context, the HKCBA Vancouver represents a market-driven approach to the gateway based on businesses linking Vancouver to Hong Kong. In contrast to other Canadian HKCBAs, the focus of the Vancouver office is new and inherently linked to the local Canadian business: "HKCBAs mission is to help its members conduct business between Canada and Hong

Kong and encourage Canadian companies to utilize Hong Kong as their business 'Smart Link' to China and the rest of the world."[5] In Vancouver, many of the 450 members of the association, although mostly of Chinese/Hong Kongese origin, are from Canadian companies and have business-oriented goals. They look to gain knowledge of the markets in the East/China and access networks and contacts. As a representative of the association has noted about their members, their interest in the HKCBA is, "using us to add value to their business to get into Chinese markets".[6]

For the last five years, the HKCBA's official role in Vancouver has been to serve as a 'Smart Link' to China via Hong Kong, to help advise members and refer them to local experts and consultants. Concretely, it helps to find and match business partners through local luncheons, local activities such as its annual spring dinner entitled "Hong Kong Connection", the annual Cathay golf tournament and international conventions. The most important event of the HKCBA is the annual Hong Kong Forum. This international convention brings 400 participants from around the world to Hong Kong with more than a third coming from Canada. During this forum, the HKCBA can help its members develop fast and successful business connections in China: "it's not about going through all the hoops and loops but meeting the right people [...] to use Hong Kong's well established infrastructure to get into China".[7]

The HKCBA's vision of Vancouver is clearly less than a gateway: the notion is thought to characterize Hong Kong. A former president of the HKCBA Vancouver sees the importance of Hong Kong as the main and best way for Western business to enter Chinese markets, particularly because of Hong Kong's legal system and official languages. In his view, Hong Kong, and by extension the HKCBA, have no real competition as the best gateway/springboard to enter Chinese markets. They represent a middle-ground: friendly to Westerners with great local Chinese contacts.[8]

In this context, Hong Kong is the gateway since it is the real place where East meets West – in which East means China. During one of the HKCBA luncheons, the president of the Chinese marketing firm WE, Ms. Viveca Chan, developed the idea that Hong Kong is the perfect East meets West environment and implied that Vancouver is understood solely as Western. In her view, the main differences between East and West are cultural. She established everyday cultural binary oppositions to explain these differences and to explain why Eastern/Chinese culture promotes security, stability and conformity, and the Western culture promotes conflict, accuracy and confrontation. In her view, the Eastern culture is clearly Chinese and Hong Kong possesses the best mix of East and West: "Hong Kong is a great landing pad I think, a great bridge between the East and the West".[9]

In the HKCBA's view, Vancouver is not seen as a gateway to Asia Pacific, but a 'Smart Link' to Hong Kong. As stated by a former HKCBA president, Vancouver has two advantages: its resources and its proximity to

Asian markets. For him, Vancouver is a great first step to enter Chinese markets, because many business networks link Vancouver directly to Hong Kong. Accordingly, he sees Vancouver's international fate on the shoulders of Hong Kong, since their common networks are "the lubricant to help business conduct" between Canada/North America and East/China.[10]

Young professionals: Not a real gateway!

When the governments' initiatives require more skilled labour to sustain the development of Canada's gateway, young professionals – especially Canadians of Chinese origin – are a direct targeted group. The Association of Chinese Canadian Professionals (ACCP) in Vancouver does address the concerns of some young professionals living and dealing with the specific social conditions at the gateway. In their case, it seems that Canada's gateway is not a real gateway. It does not possess the economic and political motivations to be more than a great place to live on the North American West coast. In this view, fundamental cultural differences in understanding economic opportunities make Vancouver a Western location, where Eastern/Chinese and Western business practices do not meet on equal terms.

The organization of the ACCP combines the traditional Chinese values of giving back (*feng xian*) and responsibility (*ze ren*) to the community with more flexible membership regulations, which enables it to be a bridge between various Chinese groups living in Vancouver: "The ACCP is a registered non-profit society with a mission to foster social responsibility and leadership of professionals to serve the community through advocacy, education and mentoring of youths."[11] Although its membership is not limited to Chinese professionals, the vast majority of members are indeed of Chinese origin. The ACCP was created in 1999 and is a cross-professional association where medical doctors and lawyers as well as people involved in the financial, human resources, and information technology domains, among others, come together to form a membership of about 150 active participants and a network of about 400 people.

As such, the ACCP is an East meets West organization, where professionals are integrated into Vancouver social life through volunteering. In its first years, the ACCP was mainly kept active through the participation and volunteering of senior practitioners, mostly newcomers that arrived in Vancouver between the 1960s and the 1980s and were/are highly involved in the local Chinese communities. Over the years and especially with the increasing involvement of young professionals, it became a more diverse mix of people. With current increases in newcomers from Mainland China, the ACCP serves also as a site where Chinese populations of various backgrounds and citizenships can bond through their shared commitment to giving back. This is different from most Chinese community associations, which are based on traditional divisions of dialects and provinces of origin.

The activities of the ACCP demonstrate a focus on local issues, from an ambiguous Eastern/Chinese perspective. The ACCP has developed, for example, an interest in helping to educate and mentor Eastern/Chinese youths in Vancouver. It offers various activities through which members can share their professional experiences with students as well as a twinning programme in which a senior practitioner shares his or her experience and gives advice in an informal setting to a group of young professionals on a monthly basis. More proactively, the ACCP has been involved in the organization of an annual careers day in collaboration with the United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society (SUCCESS) and, following the request of its members, in *ad hoc* aid relief mobilization during specific natural catastrophes, like the 2008 Sichuan earthquakes. To cater to its members' concerns as well as the concerns of Vancouver's Asian communities, in 2007 the ACCP sponsored a series of seminars in collaboration with SUCCESS looking at the *glass ceiling* effect for racial minorities in order to better understand and raise awareness about the limitations and difficulties racial minorities encounter in Vancouver and throughout Canada when trying to reach managerial positions in various sectors and professions.

In terms of representing Canada's gateway to the Asia Pacific, the ACCP buys into a market-driven understanding of Vancouver's international position, but does not see the gateway as completed or successful. A former president of the ACCP acknowledges that Vancouver is trying to become a gateway to Asia Pacific. However, he admits that little to no public or private organizations have successfully marketed Vancouver's gateway through the human capital it possesses. Vancouver can indeed be seen as an ideal environment for Asian companies to set up their North American regional offices. It possesses a large, qualified and well-educated population with deep roots in various locations in Asia, who at the same time are fundamentally Canadians and integrated to the Canadian society.

Vancouver is seen as a great place to visit, to live, and to study but this seems to be less the case when one wants to make money. As heard many times by this former president through the association's membership: "Canada is a great place to live, to get educated, but it breathes mediocrity."[12] The process of returned migration from Vancouver to Hong Kong since the end of the 1990s has been well documented under the notion of *astronaut family*,[13] since generally the men of a household return to make money in Hong Kong, while the family stays in Vancouver where living conditions are better. The ACCP has noted that, in recent years, this same process has occurred among Mainlander households as well. They arrived in Vancouver in the early 2000s and are now returning in China to make more money.

One has to stress the irony of the situation. Canada's gateway has been thought of for its economic potential and is based on a market-driven understanding of the world. However, Vancouver has succeeded in marketing

itself as a great place to live and study but not as a great place to do business. The former president of the ACCP identified a few factors to explain this failure.[14] In addition to its lack of political consistency among the New Democratic government and the Liberal government, Vancouver requires a serious re-shaping of its policy and regulations framework, notably to attract foreign direct investments with tax cuts and to encourage the development of businesses that are of interest to Asian Canadian communities.

The representation of Vancouver as a great North American city to live in rather than an economic gateway to Asia Pacific refers to cultural differences, markedly between the business mentalities of East/China and North America. In the ACCP's view, Vancouver does not acknowledge, recognize, and address the Eastern/Chinese way of doing business. It must look more to the East to diversify its business partners and it needs to do business at a quicker pace. There seems to be an Asian/Chinese climate and culture where an international economic opportunity is more attractive in East/China than in Canada. Such a mentality has to be fostered in the case of Vancouver, which does not want to be a local market but a gateway, where movement and international opportunities become key components of success.

In the ACCP's view, Vancouver is not Canada's gateway to Asia Pacific, because it is not competitive enough in the private sector and it does not bring the cultural mix a gateway should have, especially when it comes to business practices and mentalities. As such, the former president of the ACCP does not see how his association's members are involved in any gateway initiative of Canada's governments. In his view, the ACCP and its membership are concerned with the local issues of Vancouver as a great place to live on the West coast of North America.

Religion in Vancouver: Preserving a Chinese cultural bubble?

The Pui Ying Christian Services Society has been an intrinsic part of educational programs in Vancouver since 1992 but finds itself in recent years at the crossroads of redefining its role in a gateway context. This association's history, worldviews and recent challenges allow us to speak of the religious and cultural Eastern/Chinese lifestyles at the gateway, which opposes not only Caucasians to Chinese but notably Hong Kongese to Mainlanders. With the changes in migration patterns in the early 2000s, the Pui Ying Society and other religious organizations struggled with the meanings of being Eastern/Chinese/Hong Kongese at the gateway, in a context where religion and culture are not concerns of the state. Many Chinese Christian churches are providing social services excluded from the state construction of the gateway; thus becoming privileged community sites to preserve some sort of substantive Chinese cultural bubble.

With the changes in Vancouver's everyday life in the 1990s, the Pui Ying Christian Services Society has seen the sociological background of its

customers drastically changed in terms of linguistic abilities, wealth and home location. Run by Hong Kong-born populations, this association used to offer English courses for adults in the 1990s as well as Cantonese classes, seminars and tutorials, particularly to youth in preparation for university admission. Whereas 80% of its language classes were offered in Cantonese in 1992 and 20% in Mandarin, it is now totally reversed. Since youths learn Mandarin in elementary and high schools, most language courses at the Society are now taken for personal reasons like career advancement and to speak to grandparents in their language. Moreover, the seminars and tutorials are not as popular anymore since many clients opt for personal mentoring sessions due to the fact that most of the Chinese populations living and moving to Vancouver are wealthy and living far away from the Society's home base. In fact, the Society's physical location in Kitsilano is only composed of 2% ethnic Chinese, who are mostly wealthy young professionals with families. This explains why the institution is looking to relocate in the upcoming year, probably to an area like Richmond (a suburb of Vancouver) where most of their potential customers are located.

To remain alive, the Pui Ying Society has played on two elements under-explored at Canada's gateway: its ambiguous representation as Eastern/Chinese/Hong Kongese and its religious affiliations. On the one hand, this association has relied on being depicted as Eastern to diversify its activities and customer groups. Opening to other ethno-cultural groups, the Society has started to offer a list of Eastern language courses in Vancouver, including Korean and Japanese. Moreover, in 2007, it developed an Ambassador Program to Hong Kong. This is a student and work exchange program. Under this program, Canadian students, mostly of Chinese origin, work in Hong Kong, teach English in China and learn to acclimate to the Asian business environment. On the other hand, the Pui Ying Society has strong anchors in Vancouver and the East/China through its religious affiliations. In collaboration with the Richmond United Church among others, the Pui Ying Society offers summer camps for children from 6 to 12 years old, which are mostly of Chinese origin. It also has strong linkages to Christian schools in Hong Kong and Mainland China. Since 2005, the Pui Ying Society has utilized these connections to develop an English Immersion and Cultural Exploration Program. This up-to-three-week summer immersion program in Vancouver is offered to Hong Kong students wanting to improve their skills in English and to adjust to the North American lifestyle.

The Pui Ying's Society's faith-based Chinese networks complement the market-driven dimension of Vancouver' gateway by giving them social and cultural embeddedness in private. Even if it is not a church, this association echoes a broader process in Vancouver: the revitalization of many Chinese-based Christian churches through the new migration patterns from Mainland China. Whereas Caucasian Christian churches have problems finding new members in contemporary Vancouver, Chinese Christian

churches are finding new life. Over the last 15 years, the increasing membership from Mainlanders has sustained approximately 120 Chinese Christian churches in the Greater Vancouver, the numbers range from 70 members for the smallest churches to congregations with more than a thousand members.[15]

Chinese Christian churches are responding to specific needs of Chinese newcomers in Vancouver. For example, they are seeking to create a safe Chinese cultural bubble at the gateway. Whereas the intent to join a church is not necessarily based on faith, Chinese Christian churches offer social services to newcomers with the familiarity of "speaking the same language" or "being with their own people".[16] More concretely, the Bible Study groups are of particular importance not only to share and celebrate one's faith but to serve as a way of meeting friends, developing business contacts and opening doors to Chinese networks in Vancouver. Chinese Christian churches have become a mechanism to preserve something inherently Chinese at the gateway.[17]

Chinese Christian churches are especially important for international students from Mainland China. A member of one church indicated that Chinese Christian churches are a good means to fight off the solitude of studying abroad. By joining these faith-based groups, international students may socialize without participating to Western social practices deemed too different and uncomfortable. He spoke more specifically of how the media tends to offer crude portrayals of the news, how people speak openly about sexual relations and how all Western social activities are often presented as a good way of meeting people of the opposite sex.[18] Chinese Christian churches have become, in this view, a way of socializing, looking at the world, finding friends and other Chinese people, in ways that are not reproducing these Western social practices.

Similarly to the Pui Ying Society's challenges, these Chinese Christian churches have become, however, the everyday site of struggles over what it means to be Chinese at the gateway. Whereas religion is instrumentalized, the ambiguity of being Eastern/Chinese/Hong Kongese at the gateway is exacerbated in everyday situations. For example, cultural differences between the Hong Kongese managing most of the Vancouver Chinese Christian churches and the newcomers from the Mainland have become quite important.[19] Since Chinese Christian churches are taken as providers of social services to Chinese newcomers more than a place to celebrate one's faith, tensions have emerged of comments from Mainlanders such as "You have to love me. It is in your religion to help me". As indicated by someone involved in the management of a Chinese Christian church for Mainlanders: "They are pretty demanding, very difficult people".[20] For this manager, Mainlanders are culturally different than Hong Kongese, the group with which she associates. They are not only asking for services to be provided in Mandarin but are bringing with them important cultural practices to Chinese Christian churches. As noted by this manager, Mainlanders have apparently no cultural

concept or practice of boundaries, which she admits is a Western concept that most Hong Kongese already possess from their Westernized heritage.

Through their role in forming little Chinese bubbles to preserve specific networks and cultural traits, the everyday actions of the Pui Ying Society and Chinese Christian churches in Vancouver show us a new side of the gateway that surpasses any market-driven framework. Since there is no overarching cross-church mobilizing force and as there are many disagreements within associations and churches on the meaning of being Eastern/Chinese/Hong Kongese in Vancouver, these Chinese cultural bubbles have no unified pretension of being more than that, even on the religious side they self-admittedly are utilized to some extent for the services they provide.

International students and the Vancouver's Chinese heart

As with most Canadian and world universities, the University of British Columbia (UBC) possesses a Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA) mostly for Chinese students coming from the People's Republic of China (PRC). Keeping privileged linkages with the Chinese Embassy to Canada, the CSSA is an interesting case study. The CSSA is one of the emerging gatekeepers expressing the views of new migrant groups from the Mainland. These groups are perceived to be separate and self-isolating from the Vancouver Chinese populations and they usually organize based on exclusive language skills, mostly Mandarin. Through the work and increasing number of these associations established in the last couple of years in Vancouver, new claims of what it means to be Chinese are made in relation to local Chinese groups, that are depicted as culturally different and Westernized, notably because of their Hong Kong roots.

At UBC, the CSSA was formed in the early 1990s and has been independent from all Chinese governmental directives since the late 1990s. It possesses now between 1,000 and 1,500 members. Its membership exploded since it opened to undergraduate students in 2005. Its goal is "to serve the students living, starting here".[21] The CSSA wants to make life more convenient and easy for its membership while they are at UBC, including providing social activities during Chinese New Year and field trips in collaboration with the CSSA of Simon Fraser University. On *ad hoc* occasions, such as the 2008 Sichuan earthquakes, the CSSA will organize specific events like fundraising activities or a vigil to help mobilizing resources for disaster relief as well as to offer its members psychological and emotional support.[22]

The CSSA's activities are demonstrating self-organization, despite local resources within the Vancouver Chinese communities. For example, the association has organized for the last three years a language school for the children of its members on the UBC campus. With 40 participants aged from 5 to 12, the CSSA has coped with the demands of its members' families by providing teachers within its membership and classrooms on campus.

Similarly, the CSSA is working towards building networks with corporations in Vancouver, Hong Kong and Mainland China to find employment opportunities for its members approaching graduation. In order to do so, the main partner of the CSSA, which helps facilitate the process, is the Chinese Embassy to Canada.[23]

This desire to remain separate from other Vancouver Chinese communities can be associated with a strong desire to fight the ambiguity of being Chinese at the gateway. The CSSA's role is clear: it is to cater to Mainlanders. As such, it keeps its distance from other Chinese associations on campus and seems to have limited knowledge and interest in their activities. A former president of the CSSA classifies these associations quite clearly: since the Chinese Students Association is for Taiwanese students, the Dragon Seeds Connection for Hong Kongese, and the Varsity Chinese Club, for "Hong Kong? I think maybe Chinese Canadians?"[24] The main reason given for such disconnect is that the language and cultural differences, which exist amongst the students, are too important to ignore. The CSSA's success is based on the *natural* grouping of Mainlanders who, despite provincial and district differences, share the same culture. Such natural grouping is not possible with culturally different groups like Taiwanese, Hong Kongese and Chinese Canadians. An executive of the CSSA stated that: "We're the only club with members mainly based from Mainland. We're alone on this one."[25]

This lack of ambiguity towards identifying as Chinese may be linked to the membership *de passage* of the CSSA but it does bring to mind the proliferation of other Chinese/Mainland/Mandarin based associations in Vancouver, such as the well-organized Beijing Tong Xiang Kuay with 1,000 members, the Canada Wenzhou Friendship Society and trade associations like the Zhong Guo Shuang Kuay. These associations do reflect an everyday life not yet totally anchored in local Vancouver Chinese social life. They fulfil similar social functions than the ones of traditional clan associations, with pretensions of representing specific communities and their interests: "They want to be one of the leaders, to use China to improve themselves [members]".[26] With their own networks to the Mainland, they utilize Vancouver as an opening to the Western world, which involves only specific and timid relations to well-established Hong Kongese gatekeepers in Vancouver.

It seems plausible that these emerging gatekeepers do not find voices to relate to in Vancouver, notably with well-established associations not compromising on how they see the world. A Vancouver social city planner indicates that the local Chinese community associations have yet to adapt to new Chinese migration patterns, opening their membership and modifying their ways to include newcomers of different Chinese backgrounds: "If people don't accept you... it's more than language, it's the level of comfort".[27] Such attitude would explain for him, at least to some extent, the creation of these other groups.

Moreover, these new Mandarin based associations have become over the last four years more vocal in distancing their requests and concerns from the social domination of specific local Chinese associations. These dominant associations often claim to speak for the Chinese in Vancouver, since they hold the economic and political leverages of the Chinese communities in Vancouver.[28] Social services community associations like SUCCESS, which are managed by Hong Kongese but quite open in helping Mainlanders, have been accused of taking advantage of their position to impose a vision and goals upon the overall Chinese communities of Vancouver that are seen as too Hong Kongese.[29] In this view, emerging gatekeepers are advocating that their social concerns as Chinese are different than Hong Kongese and should be handled with as different.

More recently, these emerging gatekeepers have taken a stand as *real* voices from China – the *Chinese heart* – living at the gateway. After the 2008 snowstorms in the PRC during Chinese New Year, the 2008 Sichuan earthquakes and the controversies around the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics Games, local Chinese populations from the Mainland have mobilized: "It triggered a sense of belonging to the motherland, not in patriotic ways, but as cultural and national pride."[30] Despite the expected mobilization of SUCCESS and other well-established Chinese associations in the matter, emerging gatekeepers have taken an independent approach to ask for and mobilize financial resources.[31] In the view of some community leaders, this year's mobilization of Mainlanders in Vancouver has created a change of direction for future everyday life in Vancouver: "This year is remarkable because two events [earthquakes and Olympics] through which we see the balance changing".[32]

For example, in contrast to the Annual SUCCESS Fundraising Gala featuring Hong Kongese cultural performances and mobilizing the Hong Kongese networks in Vancouver, China Central Television, in collaboration with approximately 20 of these new Mandarin-speaking associations including the CSSA of UBC, held a cultural gala called: "Our Chinese Heart" in Vancouver in November 2008. Supported by associations such as the Canada Wenzhou Friendship Society and the Beijing Tong Xiang Kuay, this event constitutes for many local observers a sign of the growing strength and importance of these emerging gatekeepers in Vancouver: "Mainland associations have a momentum and more supporters, but economically, they still need to improve. They should find their growing point."[33]

In this context, associations of Mainlanders such as the CSSA, the Canada Wenzhou Friendship Society and the Beijing Tong Xiang Kuay are depicting an interesting perspective of the gateway. They see themselves as China's voices living at the gateway and are re-defining everyday life in Vancouver by creating new dynamics, notably with well-established Hong Kongese associations. With unique views separated from other Chinese populations, including Chinese Canadians, these associations are representing

an increasing community in Vancouver. This community is starting to express its difference from the Hong Kongese-based dominant associations claiming to speak for all the Chinese populations in Vancouver. With exclusive linguistic criteria, this 'Chinese heart' is also criticizing the ways in which the local Chinese populations are relating to one another and relating to other ethno-cultural groups at the gateway.

Conclusion

The stories and struggles of these community associations may not be as representative as one may hope, particularly with the glaring absence of representation of specific ethnic Chinese groups, such as the Taiwanese, whose immigration patterns and associations are quite specific to the late 1990s. Nonetheless, they do present intriguing everyday tensions and pluralize our understanding of the gateway, away from a unified image of the East/China/Hong Kong. Moreover, they present interesting sites to investigate emerging international realities, notably with the use of Chinese Christian churches, still illegal in Mainland China, as a place to preserve Chinese culture and lifestyle in North America. Such perspective is reinforced by new Mainlanders' associations that are asking for a redefinition of local Chinese power relations, claiming authenticity over what is Chinese in contrast to the Hong Kong historical configuration of Vancouver. This overwhelming Hong Kong bias in Vancouver is apparent in many circles, notably with the Hong Kong business mentality in which Vancouver is not a gateway but is rather a satellite city of Hong Kong. Such vision echoes to some extent what young Chinese Canadian professionals indicate by saying that Vancouver is a great place to live but not a serious Asia Pacific location to conduct business between East/China and the West.

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Chapter 8:
Neo-liberal mobility and the un/desirable

The gateway projects in Singapore and Vancouver are both selling mobility across the lines dividing East/China and the West. In both instances, the state authorities market mobility within a neo-liberal framework. In this chapter, the focus will be on how Singaporean and Canadian authorities build and construct their gateway projects based on similar assumptions and the target of the same migrant audience. Although the ambivalence of gatekeepers towards the states' narrow definition of the targeted migrants will be briefly discussed, it is in the following chapter that the alternative representations of gatekeepers will be critically assessed. Their appropriations and adaptations to the state gateway projects will allow us to show how they struggle to reconcile their everyday developments at the gateway within the states' neo-liberal initiatives. The final chapter will focus on the gateway social codes imposed on individuals and groups in order for us to problematize the power relations at play, determining which social practice is included as part of the gateway design and which one is excluded.

Starting with a critical assessment of the state gateway projects, one can easily notice that both the Singaporean and Canadian authorities utilize the metaphor of the gateway between East/China and the West to stimulate economic opportunities for Singapore and Vancouver. In both contexts, the marketing of the gateway plays on the distinctiveness and competitive advantage a location built across the dividing lines between East/China and the West can offer, taking into consideration China's economic 'rise' and its marketing in Western societies. Whereas Chinese international students by studying at the gateways can hope to find their springboard to graduate studies or work in Western societies, Western multinational corporations and young professionals can use these locations to access business opportunities across cultural lines, different transnational networks and contacts.

In contrast to the activities of gatekeepers, or community associations living at the gateway, state authorities seem less concerned with the social costs of their policies than with the potential (economic) gain. The strategies developed by the Singaporean and Canadian authorities are based on specific perceived objectives, when it comes to framing how they can profit from and maximize on their gateway projects. These perceived objectives are framed in neo-liberal terms in both contexts, following their unique perceived competitive advantage in the current international political economy. In this chapter, I would like to explore the repercussions of the marketing by Singaporean and Canadian authorities of their gateway based on different conceptions of mobility across civilizational lines. *It is my contention that despite these differences in conceiving of their gateway, both state authorities are marketing mobility to specific social groupings, mostly a privileged and potentially highly skilled/trained population. By framing their gateway initiatives to the specific audience*

of consumers of mobility, or elite migrants, Singaporean and Canadian authorities are giving a clear message on who is seen as the un/desirable migrant[i] at the gateway. The ambivalent actions of the gatekeepers in questioning the state-driven un/desirable distinction seem limited to the constraints of a neo-liberal/ized social context. After presenting the Singaporean and Canadian authorities' ways of constructing their gateway based on different conceptions of mobility, I will discuss the social groupings that are targeted by the gateway initiatives. I will then discuss the states' views on who is the un/desirable migrant, to better understand how gatekeepers are supporting and contesting this distinction through their everyday actions.

Marketing mobility

The uses and performances of the metaphor of the gateway by the Singaporean and Canadian authorities have been framed by neo-liberal assumptions about economic development. They are marketing the mobility dimension of their gateways as an economic advantage or a networking edge to live, study and work in either Singapore or Vancouver. While both gateways are framed in neo-liberal terms, it is my contention that mobility is marketed differently. Whereas the Singaporean authorities are constructing their gateway as a place *from* where one can access the East/China/West, Vancouver has been understood as a gateway *through* which one access the East/China/West.

In both Singapore and Vancouver, the state authorities are constructing and marketing gateways in neo-liberal terms of competition and private-driven wealth. They argue that gateways can help in transcending civilizational limitations to business and economic expansion. Focusing on business opportunities, for example, gateways are seen as strategies developed by state authorities to profit from embodying the meeting point between a 'rising' East/China and an economically developed West. In the case of Vancouver, the gateway narrative is based on market-driven assumptions of competition and of Vancouver's importance as a distribution node linking East/China to North American markets. More specifically, it is based on Vancouver's geographical advantage. Its proximity to Asia is framed as a competitive advantage to attract mobile business between East/China and West and as a buffer zone between two markets and two ways of doing business. In the case of Singapore, government-driven assumptions about competitive advantage are framing the marketing of the gateway as an efficient location to get all the best of Western knowledge, technology and ways of doing business, as well as the contacts and access to the emerging and potentially profitable economies of the East/China. In specific ways, both Singapore and Canadian authorities are trying to profit from their unique situation. Both state authorities are indeed developing, with the gateway metaphor, an image of connection node of the international political economy linking the East/China and the West. They are developing this

image of *enabler* of movement, mobility and distribution in terms of goods, services and people between the two civilizations.

In the two contexts, gateways are understood as linking two or more specific destinations, which are based on an artificial construction of East/China and the West that is reduced to economic realities. As Jacques Rancière indicates, spatial metaphors like the gateway help for example state authorities to shape "the mapping of there to a here" to justify and legitimize their position in the picture.[2] As such, Singaporean and Canadian authorities seem to reproduce artificial civilizational distinctions between East and West to become the profitable reconciling factor.[3] Civilizational differences do not seem to be taken as diametrically opposite ways of life or implying the superiority of the West over the East.[4] They are homogenized limitations to economic profit, based on language and cultural differences that gateways are helping mitigate and transcend.

In both Singapore and Canada, the gateway narrative is first and foremost framed in relation to China, even if the official destination is the East. The relevance of the gateway and its increasing use as discourse is inherently linked to the increasing importance China's economic 'rise' in Western public spheres since the end of the 1990s. China's economic situation has shaped the authorities' understanding of the Eastern dimension of their gateway, despite the other Asian heritages they possess. Such China-centric Eastern dimension can be notably seen through the importance of the SCCCI business linkages and the BC government policies as reflected in the construction of the British Columbia Canada Pavilion in Beijing for the 2008 Olympic Summer Games. Other important changes in migration patterns are also privileging *de facto* Chinese migrants at the gateways between East and West, such as international students from the Mainland.

In both contexts, an Eastern destination understood mostly as Chinese possesses profound constructed silences. South Asian communities have expressed, for example, their disappointment in the gateway initiatives in both cities, because they mostly cater to the East as China.[5] Moreover, the importance of China as destination has taken over from Japan in the last five years, particularly in Vancouver where most of the new twinning projects and the business targets through the Olympics shifted from Japan to China. Although Singaporean authorities' emphasize that their Southeast Asian roots come from a distanciation from other Chinese gateways like Hong Kong and a willingness to attract Chinese business looking into entering Southeast Asian markets, Singapore's main connections throughout Southeast Asia go through overseas Chinese networks.

In the case of the Western side of the equation of the gateway, both Singaporean and Canadian authorities are not as clear. Whereas Canada associates Vancouver to *its* side but utilizes any references to Western economies to mean mostly the United States (US), Singapore's focus on the US is also supplemented by other Western economies of English-speaking

and British heritage, such as Australia and the United Kingdom. Both Singaporean and Canadian authorities are clearly creating the meanings given to East/China and the West based on their perception of what the most profitable destination for them may be.

Accordingly, gateways have become marketing tools for the Singaporean and Canadian authorities. Living, working, doing business and studying at the gateway are marketed as ways to better an individual's chances to learn, travel, do business, study, engage and move to the *other* civilizational sphere, either the East/China or the West. By becoming places between or places linking civilizations, gateways are offering breakthroughs with respect to business opportunities, career advancement and socio-cultural openings to *new* worlds. By fetishizing political and civilizational borders, state authorities are selling the possibility of entering, accessing and moving to the *other* civilizational sphere via their gateway. For example, universities at the gateways are marketing their curricula and extra-curriculum activities as ways for students to adapt and more easily cross trans-civilizational borders, notably through language courses, exchange programs and the possibility of engaging daily with people of the *other* civilization. Young professionals are sold the gateway via the merging of two civilizational business circles and networks, realizing that they can learn and adapt to doing business the *other* way.

Nonetheless, Singapore and Vancouver as gateways have developed specific strategies and preferable uses of the mobility they offer. On the one hand, Singaporean authorities have been careful in creating initiatives in which Singapore, as city-state, remains central. By privileging assumptions about competitive advantage to frame their practice of the gateway, they have envisioned a local environment, where students, professionals and corporations can find and get the best of both destinations. Singaporean authorities have focused their attention on offering locally an access to international markets for goods, services and people across cultural lines. They offer the one-pit-stop version of the gateway where mobility is sold and gained locally. As a trans-civilizational service provider, Singapore's gateway is constructed on the idea that business and international student/foreign talent wanting to cross the civilizational lines do not have to leave the gateway. They can work, study and do business in the *other* civilizational sphere, *from* Singapore. As such, SPRING's initiatives and government-funded bonded scholarships to international students are aimed at keeping people and business in Singapore. From Singapore, they are encouraged to internationalize their activities, which means for business to organize distribution to Southeast Asia, China or North America, and for students/young professionals to plan their career and future plans through corporations and employers they meet locally, including the Singaporean government. Despite increasing marketing to Chinese corporations to enter international markets from Singapore, the gateway narrative seems to have an

institutionalized bias towards Western business seeking access to emerging economies in Southeast Asia and China. Through the global schoolhouse, moreover, the gateway is aimed at Chinese international students wanting to study in the West or work for Western-based corporations. In this practice of the gateway, Singapore becomes a fixed physical location *within which* mobility across civilizational lines is enabled.

On the other hand, Canada's gateway to the Asia Pacific is not framed with the original intent to keep people and business in Vancouver. Since it is a more recent government-run project than Singapore's, the gateway has not faced questions, concerns and problems of sustainability that Singapore already has, markedly through the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis. Vancouver has been marketed as a focal point and the most rapid connection between Asian and North American markets. Canada's Pacific gateway is framed by initiatives inciting the free displacement, movement and mobility of goods, services and people, especially of highly skilled workers. In this view, Vancouver serves as a door between East/China and West, with little to no attention to local developments and social anchors to gateway initiatives. They target basically *de passage* actions between East/China and the West with the mentality that Vancouver is a focal node in international distribution networks. Without Singapore's infrastructure, investments in gateway initiatives as well as private and public leadership, Canada's Pacific gateway has been marketed on the basic premise that it links and enables mobility between East/China and the West. It is seen, even by the federal government, as an *access door*[6] to the Asia Pacific/North America, focusing heavily on its physical and infrastructural dimensions to support the demand of Vancouver as access port between Asia and North America. Vancouver's *soft* gateway project remains vague and broad, marketing Vancouver in general terms as "a place to invest, a place to build a career and raise a family, and as an exciting place to visit"[7] for Eastern/Asian/Chinese international students, former students to a BC school, young professionals and businesspeople as well as corporations. Whereas Vancouver is sold to corporations as a first step to Hong Kong or other gateway-cities, individuals are attracted to this location for the other places they access using Vancouver as a transit point. With no real anchors in Vancouver's everyday life, Canada's Pacific gateway remains therefore a place *through* which mobility to the *other* civilization is enabled.

Whereas Singaporean authorities have framed the trans-civilizational mobility opportunities it offers *from* its gateway and Canadian authorities, *through* their gateway, both states have shaped their gateway project to profit from their position within the current context of the international political economy. Within a neo-liberal logic of competitive advantage, creating and sustaining separate civilizational spheres may seem profitable when gateways are marketed as the reconciling factor.

Framing the un/desirable

Despite these differences in framing the mobility *available* at their gateway, both the Singaporean and Canadian authorities are marketing their gateway concept to the same narrow audience. In light of Beverly Skeggs' work, one must remember that mobility as social process must be problematized in relation to other power relations at play and specifically to the ones exacerbated by economic neo-liberal structures.[8] By focusing on people and corporations that can be understood as consumers of mobility, or elite migrants, both states are implicitly framing who is considered un/desirable at the gateway in specific and narrow ways. In this section, it will be argued that state authorities in both Singapore and Vancouver are framing un/desirability in a similar fashion, guided by the neo-liberal assumptions of their gateway projects. Whereas the everyday actions of gatekeepers question the lines established between the desirable and the undesirable on an everyday basis, their view seems clouded by the same neo-liberal framework on which gateway initiatives have been based.

Common targets of un/desirability

Through their gateway initiatives, Singaporean and Canadian authorities are catering to specific social groupings that can help and support the development of both Singapore and Vancouver within their neo-liberal framework. In light of the works of Bonnie Honig and Aihwa Ong, it is my contention that through the gateway initiatives' targets, we can identify who are viewed as un/desirable migrants at the gateways.[9] Despite differences in marketing mobility, both state authorities target the same audience as the un/desirable because of the neo-liberal assumptions of their gateway projects.

In *Democracy and the Foreigner*, Bonnie Honig indicates how state discourses and myths of foundation are helpful to understand these states' ideals and parameters on which migrants are allowed and welcomed in a specific national context. In her view, neo-liberal driven state authorities look for foreign talent and people who can contribute to national economies and vilify the ones trying to actually make their life in the host society.[10] In this neo-liberal perspective on the migrant, Honig states how they become framed and evaluated as either *giving* to the national context, through their contribution to the national economy for example, or *taking* from the national context, particularly when demanding rights or special recognition.[11]

Similar to Honig's understanding of liberal democracies' use of the foreigner to contribute to their national economic development, the gateway narratives of both Singaporean and Canadian authorities have targeted specific social groupings. In a neo-liberal understanding of the international political economy, the desirable migrant can contribute to the development of Singapore and Vancouver as reputable gateways between East/China and the West, notably in terms of providers of knowledge, business and market-driven opportunities. Referring to what Aihwa Ong calls the *pied-à-terre* subject, these

state authorities are targeting the same ideal audience of a neo-liberal gateway: privileged and/or very bright international students, mostly Chinese or American, young professionals, successful or ambitious businesspeople, as well as corporations looking into entering new markets.[12] Through their initiatives to attract international students and encouraging them to stay or come back after graduation, Singaporean and Canadian authorities are, for example, trying to profit from the training of future highly skilled workers and educated businesspeople to fuel the use and reputation of their gateway. Moreover, by targeting directly young professionals and corporations, both state authorities are trying to focus their immigration policies on people who can bring in business, contacts and opportunities, as much as making their gateway *the place to be* for other young professionals and corporations.

State authorities have created specific legislations to offer and encourage these elite migrants to consider living, studying, working or doing business at their gateway. In the words of Aihwa Ong, state authorities are creating a "global hierarchy of mobility" based on procedures facilitating immigration for elite migrants and excluding the ones considered undesirable.[13] For example, the Singaporean authorities have developed a series of visa and bonded scholarship programs to facilitate admission of Chinese international students. Singapore's government-run initiatives through SPRING and the Economic Development Board (EDB) have also directly targeted businesses and cosmopolitan young professionals through offering the best services corporations need. Moreover, the British Columbia (BC) government provides similar, although of smaller scale, networking and business services for businesses interested in coming to Vancouver. As a complement to the *Canadian Business Immigration Program* and the works of BCs Business Immigration Office to facilitate giving visas to business and elite migrants,[14] Canada adopted, in July of 2008, amendments to Bill C-50, which facilitate fast-tracking procedures for international students graduating in a Canadian university with some experience and promises of a contract with a Canadian employer.

In light of their neo-liberal vision and ideal for their gateway, both the Singaporean and Canadian authorities have created an image of the desirable migrants based on their capacity to move to the gateway and to make use of the gateway to facilitate their own mobility. Building on Nikolas Rose's argument, Ong indicates:

> Mobile businessmen and professionals exemplify the kind of ideal neoliberal figures who 'maximize their quality of life through acts of choice, and their life meanings and value to the extent that it can be rationalized as an outcome of choices made or choices to me made'.[15]

With a minimum support from the state, the desirable migrants are consumers of mobility in the sense that they are privileged enough and have the resources to be able to move across civilizational lines and to make that choice. Since the move to the gateway and from the gateway requires financial support, most notably for paying international students fees, both state authorities are trying to facilitate re-location, even temporary location, for social groupings deemed to have financial resources, the potential of accumulating the financial resources or fostering the required talents/skills to support their economic advancement. Whereas the Singaporean authorities have developed a meritocratic system in which the brightest international students will receive scholarships to pay for their education in exchange for a commitment to work locally after graduation, the expensive international fees for students at a Canadian university have resulted in the migration of Chinese students of wealthy backgrounds and bright enough to get significant scholarships. There is an implicit neo-liberal understanding of the desirable migrant based on his or her independence and ability to contribute, financially or through his or her expertise, to the development of the state ideal of its gateway – as an "entrepreneur unto him- or herself".[16] The desirable migrant in both instances is considered to be the one that can help support the neo-liberal vision embodied by the state authorities' practices, either the market-driven vision in Vancouver or the government-driven understanding of Singaporean authorities, with little to no social and financial support from the government.

Whereas such clear understandings of who the desirable migrant is who can better the gateway's position with a minimum of state assistance with respect to the facilitation of local economic growth, local business contacts and opportunities as well as international reputation, its comes with many silences on the exclusions – the undesirable migrants at the gateway. Although not officially defined and labelled as undesirable migrants, specific social groupings are necessarily excluded from the government-run incentives and measures to facilitate re-location at the gateway. They include migrants considered *illegals* by state authorities, such as Chinese migrants arriving to Vancouver by the 'floating coffins', but also include people situated in Canada by legal means, such as the family reunification program.[17] Less educated, less skilled workers and family members of desirable migrants are not mentioned, given support or officially recognized through government discourses and practices enacting gateway projects. These *dependents* may be considered as potential consumers for the local economy but are not part of the gateway focus, since they are not consumers of mobility (despite their relationships to desirable migrants) and are considered *ethically* less desirable subjects by neo-liberal state authorities.[18]

These undesirable migrants are not only framed as economically dependent on the desirable migrant, they possess an inherent gendered bias reproduced by the neo-liberal ideals of the gateway.[19] In both Singapore and

Vancouver, the business community is mostly men with some experience and specific privileged systemic disciplinary processes create strong preferences for male over female students in specific fields.[20] In both contexts, specific social processes linked to this gendered gateway show how women and children are seen as undesirable and as creating *problems* to states' neo-liberal ideals of their gateway. In the case of Singapore, the global schoolhouse initiative was based on an aggressive recruitment strategy of Chinese international students, and especially of the brightest. Whereas the government fund the studies of the brightest students to then ensure they work in Singapore or for a Singaporean corporation for a few years after graduation, this social grouping of desirable migrants is often too young to leave China without supervision. Enabling the mothers of the students to immigrate to Singapore constitutes one of these contradictory measures, since these women, or *study mamas*, come to the country with little to no perceived skills, and are unable to speak English. Although the Southeast Asian media has blown the situation out of proportion, Singaporean authorities have been struggling to some extent, since 2004, with an increase in Chinese prostitution, coming notably from these *study mamas* trying to survive in Singapore with no government support.[21] A similar arbitrary understanding of the un/desirable migrants can be seen in the state practices of Canada's Pacific gateway, where the market-driven initiatives are encouraging markedly Chinese businessmen – from Hong Kong in the 1990s and from Taiwan and the Mainland since 1998 – to come and do business from Vancouver, and bring their families with them.

Considered a racist social context and a difficult place to conduct cross-border business for many of these Chinese businessmen, Vancouver became the residence of their families, while they go back and forth to China for work. Called *astronaut families*, this transnationalized family strategy is expanding from Hong Kongese to Mainladers in the recent years.[22] The result has been the emergence of specific social *problems* in Vancouver. Family members live in Vancouver because life conditions and life opportunities are considered to being relatively better. However, many social services agencies have noticed greater instances of children developing specific social integration problems due to a lack of parental supervision and absentee fathers.[23]

Gatekeepers' un/desirable ambivalence

If state authorities target specific migrant groupings based on neo-liberal assumptions about who is the un/desirable at the gateway, everyday life at the gateway embodies many questionings and representations of this un/desirable distinction. In this section, I want to explore the gatekeepers' activities in relation to the state authorities' understandings and practices of un/desirability. By supporting both desirable and undesirable migrants, gatekeepers seem ambivalent towards the un/desirable distinction. Gatekeepers' actions are problematizing this artificial distinction but they are

also contributing to its existence by resolving *in private* social issues arising for the people who are considered undesirable.

Many scholars have addressed the ways in which the neo-liberal state ideals, such as the un/desirable migrant, are directly contested in everyday life and are difficult to resolve publicly due to neo-liberal parameters of action. William Connolly's work on *illegal* immigrants in the US contrasts the state ideals of desirable migrants to the real life *enabler* of the US economy. The author illustrates how everyday life conditions and functioning may be at odds with state constructions of un/desirability. Similarly to Honig's work, Connolly argues that state's ideals about the desirable migrant come face to face in everyday life with *illegal* immigrants that in practice support the American economy, which effectively creates specific sites where the undesirable migrant is proven to be a *de facto* desirable.[24] Away from the original plans of state authorities, everyday life can become the site where the desirable *takes* rights.[25] From this perspective, Rancière notes that the migrant is not just an illegal body and an instrument to national economic development. The migrant becomes a *real* person who claims specific rights into the public sphere of the host society, contesting directly the states' artificial constructions of the un/desirable migrant.[26] Nonetheless, as Ong reminds us, neo-liberalism is a political rationality that does not politicize this distinction between the migrant as instrument and the migrant as a real person. It relays such debate to the private sphere, making it a technical distinction. By denying the status of public concern to the claims of the *illegal* or undesirable migrants, a neo-liberal framework of action considers these issues as "non-political and non-ideological problems that need technical solutions".[27] It is in this difficult articulation that gatekeepers' actions towards the ideal of the un/desirable of the state authorities of Singapore and Vancouver can be understood.

In Singaporean and Vancouverite everyday life, one must first recognize the numerous activities of gatekeepers that are supporting the state authorities' understanding of the division between desirable and undesirable. Since their importance as gatekeepers is inherently linked to the existence of gateway initiatives, they tend to cater to and incorporate the states' desirable migrants into their ranks. On the one hand, gatekeepers have found in this framing of the desirable migrant an audience to whom they can offer their services, and even receive state recognition for their actions. In the case of Singapore, the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI) and the Kowloon Club both cater to young professionals and the corporate world with the approval of state authorities. By becoming service providers to these elite migrants, gatekeepers are tapping into an increasingly important and wealthy market of consumers, and are supporting the Singaporean authorities' initiatives to try and keep them working and living in Singapore. Since the SCCCI offers business contacts and courses to better their stay in Singapore and to enter Mandarin-speaking markets, this

gatekeeper's everyday actions support an audience of privileged, educated, businesspeople and corporate world that Singaporean authorities are trying to attract.[28] The Kowloon Club's efforts to offer a safe haven to Hong Kongese in Singapore's mosaic can also be seen as a social support facilitating the integration of a government target: young professionals and businesspeople from Hong Kong.[29]

In Vancouver, the recent creation of the Association of Chinese Canadian Professionals (ACCP) and the Hong Kong Chinese Business Association (HKCBA) also demonstrate how gatekeepers are finding their relevance through marketing their services to what is considered the desirable migrant by the state authorities. In the case of the ACCP, their activities are aimed at young professionals of Chinese origin living in Vancouver and looking to give back to the community. Catering to young professionals with the financial means and the time to volunteer, the ACCP has recently begun to facilitate the social integration of the desirable migrants from China: Mainlanders who are young professionals recently arrived to do business in Vancouver. The ACCP gives them a community based on their professional and social class relation to Vancouver's social life, rather than on their particular Chinese ethnic and cultural background.[30] Vancouver's HKCBA can also be associated with riding the wave of the desirable migrant. In this case, the HKCBA is shaping its future through the lens of the Hong Kong connection for businesses in China, which targets only businesspeople, young professionals and international students, as interns and volunteers, interested in entering Chinese markets through the transnational capitalist business networks of Hong Kong.[31]

On the other hand, gatekeepers also found in the states' conceptions and practices of the desirable migrant, a model on which to re-build their image, their management and their perception of their place in the world. By choosing to work either as corporations or for corporations, by focusing on building/shaping the membership through the lens of the desirable migrant and by making future plans to fit the desirable migrant's understanding of the world, gatekeepers are adapting to the gateway by being associated with the desirable migrant. Besides the obvious example of the SCCCI in Singapore, the renewal of Chinese clan associations through their business model, their services provided to international students and young professionals in terms of scholarships, networking and social integration activities are giving them an image of being part of the desirable dimension of the equation and of being contemporary reflections of Singapore's gateway image. Moreover, through their participation in shaping the future local and international cohorts of young professionals through Singaporean schools, they contribute directly to constructing what is considered to be the desirable migrant. This was exemplified when the Hokkien Huay Kuan took the lead in re-shaping Singapore's understanding of biculturalism for the local Chinese elite school curricula. Since most of these Chinese clan associations are offering courses

and workshops for young professionals to expand their language skills as well as business contacts and networks, they buy into and utilize the desirable migrants to renew their overall social relevance.[32] In Vancouver, the Pui Ying Christian Services Society found a new life through its focus on programs desirable migrants would enjoy, because they became the audience with the most influence and resources in everyday Vancouver. More specifically, the language courses offered to young professionals of Eastern/Chinese origin as well as exchange programs for privileged students of Canada and Hong Kong have rescued the Society, which was in financial and existential crisis following its original focus on the less fortunate and less wealthy Chinese migrants from Hong Kong.[33]

Moreover, the everyday actions and representations of gatekeepers keep alive other states' narratives of un/desirability, notably when it comes to the overseas Chinese students associations. In both Singapore and Vancouver, the local students associations catering to the Chinese international students are becoming gatekeepers and promoting China's representation over the desirable migrant *to* the gateway. With their quick repatriation agenda, business and political contacts to the People's Republic, these students' unions are reviving China's objective of Chinese citizens studying at the gateway, which opposes to the Singaporean and Canadian authorities' strategies to try and keep these students as foreign talent working at the gateway after graduation. These students associations are expressing at the gateway the views and practices of the People's Republic, as well as its distinct understandings of desirable (returned) migrants and overseas Chinese, despite the gateway constructions of these notions.[34]

However, the everyday life existence of gatekeepers encouraged them to cater to the states' *undesirable* migrants as well, because they are generally the friends, family members and neighbours of the desirable migrants. Through their desirable memberships' concerns, gatekeepers' actions in support of all problematize in everyday life this artificial un/desirable distinction. In the case of the *study mamas* turning to prostitution in Singapore, the Kowloon Club was the first and one of the only community associations putting resources into helping the training and social integration of migrants considered undesirable.[35] The Singa Sino Friendship Association of Singapore has also supported the legal defence and representation of various Chinese migrant workers deemed *illegal* in both Singapore and China.[36] New migrant associations, Chinese clan associations and the Chinese Students Union have all supported periodically unprivileged international students and their families in Singapore, particularly when it comes to pay medical bills and get financial help.[37]

The same can be seen in everyday actions of gatekeepers at Canada's Pacific gateway, where Chinese Christian churches and Hong Kongese-managed associations like the United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society (SUCCESS) are giving social support and aid to less

privileged Chinese migrants arriving in Vancouver without the required and encouraged skills, language abilities and financial resources. SUCCESS has more specifically developed in recent years programs for the social re-integration of the children of astronaut families who have developed unique social problems linked to absentee fathers and transnationalized households.[38] Even the actions of the young ACCP through its help in career development programs and charitable work towards under-privileged youths in Vancouver are expanding the role of the association beyond catering to desirable migrants and, in turn, questioning this distinction of un/desirability at the gateway.

These actions may be considered forms of contestation of the specific exclusionary views of states as to who is the un/desirable migrant at the gateway. To some extent, gatekeepers' actions are re-shaping local life away from what the state-led gateway ideals were supposed to bring. The historical configurations on which Singapore and Vancouver, as gateways, have been based are getting re-defined by gatekeepers' everyday actions. Despite Singapore's international reputation of being a state that controls populations, the most recent cultural activities of the most influential dialect-based Chinese clan associations have been in contrast to the government's usual cultural agenda of constructing a marketable Chineseness as China-centric and Mandarin-speaking. By their workshops, language courses, museums and cultural festivals, they are bringing back the relevance and unique stories of their dialect in shaping Singaporean society. This promotes a trend to re-define desirability away from the Mandarin-speaking world and heritage.[39] In Vancouver, the trend of the decline of Christianity, as in most Western societies, finds an important exception through the sudden explosion of Chinese Christian churches with their expanding membership and recent anchors in Vancouver's everyday life. Reaching out to what has been considered the most conservative elements of Vancouver's society, Chinese Christianity is re-defining religious life as one of the prime and contemporary concerns of Vancouverites, away from the business-oriented and secular model on which the Vancouver's desirable migrant is based.[40]

Nonetheless, it is difficult to say if these private and *ad hoc* resolutions and aid initiatives designed to benefit the migrants considered undesirable are forms of contestation or support for the state authorities' framings of the un/desirable division. By following a more private and *ad hoc* route to resolution, gatekeepers are potentially hindering any public process which would require state authorities to take charge in supporting and recognizing who they consider *undesirable* migrants. By "fixing the holes" in governmental projects, initiatives and understandings of the gateway, as a representative of one of Singapore's Chinese clan associations told me,[41] gatekeepers are supporting the neo-liberal parameters of the gateway in which political leadership is not encouraged to solve these social issues and political initiatives are relayed to the private realm. One cannot condemn the

charitable work and concerns of gatekeepers with community members abandoned by state authorities, and by catering to them, they do ask us to question this line between desirable and undesirable migrants. However, one can wonder about the effectiveness of palliative measures in questioning the relevance, importance and need for delimited and exclusionary understandings of the un/desirable migrant.

Each gatekeeper's actions can be understood as supporting and contesting the states practices of the un/desirable migrants for their gateways, but their actions seem framed by Ong's understanding of neo-liberalism, because it helps state authorities to relay important concerns and consequences of the undesirable migrant away from the public eye, concerns and debates.[42] Where the Kowloon Club gives help to Chinese *study mamas* turning to prostitution, there is no need for public debate about the government position towards recruiting young Chinese students, and the social processes involved. Moreover, the media campaign of vilification of these study mamas can continue without the proper nuances and perspectives being fully complemented in the public sphere. The actions of the Kowloon Club have helped to technicalize the issue and to construct a manageable social issue from this situation that does not require public debates, outside of the public pejorative and prejudicial images about these women.[43] The same can be said in Vancouver with the outstanding support given by SUCCESS to the specific social issues and groupings related to Chinese migration patterns. Instead of requiring the government to re-think social policies and social integration issues, SUCCESS' independent activities, notably through its Foundation known for its ability to raise half a million dollars during its annual gala, remain a private and Chinese concern, not big enough to attract public attention.[44]

Where the Singaporean and Canadian state authorities construct an artificial distinction of un/desirable migrant based on neo-liberal principles and assumptions about who would contribute to the economic development of their gateway, they both reproduce specific and contrived understandings of the undesirable migrant, the most common being the female dependent, the child, the less educated and the less skilled worker. Gatekeepers' actions in favour of both desirable and undesirable migrants at the gateway pragmatically question the relevance and existence of such distinction in the everyday life. Nonetheless, the form in which this support is given may be captured within the neo-liberal framework developed at the gateways, to end up being band-aid solutions to systemic inequality.

Conclusion

Singaporean and Canadian state authorities' marketing strategies of their gateway projects aim at the consumers of mobility, the elite migrants. As producers of mobility, these state authorities are creating, maintaining and playing on an artificial civilizational distinction between the East/China and

the West. Their role and positioning in the current international political economy has brought Singaporean authorities to build a gateway *from* which mobility to the other civilizational sphere is possible, whereas Canadian authorities are marketing Vancouver as a gateway *through* which mobility to the other civilizational sphere is enabled. The neo-liberal assumptions on which both gateways are created bring both state authorities to cater and market their gateway to the same audience: privileged and bright international students and young professionals, as well as corporations. In this view, these 'self-governed entrepreneurs' can help, contribute and make their gateway more profitable and marketable. By doing so, however, state authorities are creating an artificial distinction between the desirable migrants and the undesirable migrants, who are mainly the family members, friends and neighbours of the desirables. In everyday life, gatekeepers' actions are putting into question this artificial distinction but their resolution and help to the un/desirable remains framed within the neo-liberal assumptions of the gateway initiatives. By remaining private and *ad hoc* resolutions and aid initiatives, gatekeepers indirectly support the state authorities' constructions of the un/desirable divide of migrants. In not asking for public recognition and acknowledgement of the obstacles encountered by the undesirable migrants, they are effectively helping to obscure these problems.

Endnotes

[1] The idea of un/desirability is purposefully chosen to include, beyond the questions over the 'legality' of specific migrant groups, reflections over the ethicality of specific migrant groups, from a state perspective and notably within a neo-liberal framework of thoughts and actions. As stated by many scholars from Gilles Deleuze to Aihwa Ong, that 'desire' forms a key driving force behind late developments of capitalism, rather than labour in itself. See Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983; Aihwa Ong. "*Please Stay*: Pied-a-Terre Subjects in the Megacity." in Engin F. Isin, Peter Nyers and Bryan S. Turner (eds). *Citizenship Between Past and Future.* New York: Routledge: 81-91, 2007.

[2] Jacques Rancière. "Discovering New Worlds: Politics of Travel and Metaphors of Space." in George Robertson et al (eds). *Travellers' Tales: Narratives of Home and Displacement.* London: Routledge: 28, 1994.

[3] Guy Debord. *Society of the Spectacle.* Detroit: Black & Red: §25-29, 1983.

[4] See Samuel Huntington. "The Clash of Civilizations." *Foreign Affairs*: 22-49, 1993; Edward W. Said. *Culture and Imperialism.* New York: Vintage Books, 1993.

[5] George [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an active member of three non-Chinese ethnic-based community associations. Notebook.

Singapore, 12 February 2008; Robert [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an expert of Canada's gateway to Asia-Pacific. Notebook. Vancouver, 23 April 2008.

[6] See the French translation to Canada's gateway (*porte d'entrée*) to get this meaning of gateway as access door. Transport Canada. *Canada's Asia-Pacific Gateway & Corridor: A Strategic Context for Competitive Advantage.* 2007. (http://www.tc.gc.ca/CanadasGateways/APGCI/document/APGC-PCAP_en.pdf). Last accessed on 17 February 2009.

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[8] Beverly Skeggs. *Class, Self, and Culture.* London: Routledge: 52, 2004.

[9] Bonnie Honig. *Democracy and the Foreigner.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001; Aihwa Ong. *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.

[10] Honig. Democracy: 8-14.

[11] Honig. Democracy: 99.

[12] Ong. Please Stay: 81-91.

[13] Aihwa Ong. "Splintering Cosmopolitanism: Asian Immigrants and Zones of Autonomy in the American West." In Thomas Blom Hansen and Finn Stepputat (eds). *Sovereign Bodies: Citizens. Migrants, and States in the Postcolonial World.* Princeton: Princeton University Press: 260, 2005.

[14] Ong. Splintering Cosmopolitanism: 261-2.

[15] Ong. Neoliberalism: 132.

[16] Jonathan Xavier Inda. *Targeting Immigrants: Government, Technology, and Ethics.* Malden: Blackwell Publishing: 15, 2006.

[17] Ong. Splintering Cosmopolitanism: 262.

[18] Inda. Targeting Immigrants: 23-30.

[19] Ong. Neoliberalism: 129-30.

[20] Beverly Skeggs. "Context and Background: Pierre Bourdieu's Analysis of Class, Gender and Sexuality." In Lisa Adkins and Beverly Skeggs (eds). *Feminism after Bourdieu.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing: 22, 2004.

[21] Tisa Ng. "Migrant Women as Wives and Workers in Singapore." In Beatriz P. Lorente, Nicola Piper and Shen Hsiu-hua (eds). *Asian Migrations: Sojourning, Displacement, Homecoming and Other.* Singapore: National University of Singapore Press: 99-110, 2005.

[22] Frida [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a Chinese Christian church manager. Notebook. Vancouver, 6 June 2008.

[23] Frida [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a Chinese Christian church manager. Notebook. Vancouver, 6 June 2008.

[24] William E. Connolly. *Neuropolitics: Thinking, Culture, Speed.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press: 150-7, 2002.

[25] Honig. Democracy: 100-1; Peter Nyers. "Abject Cosmopolitanism: The Politics of Protection in the Anti-Deportation Movement" *Third World Quarterly* 24:6: 1069-93, 2003.

[26] Jacques Rancière. *Dis-agreement: Politics and Philosophy*. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press: 24-30, 1999.

[27] Ong. Neoliberalism: 3.

[28] Gary [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an executive of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Notebook. Singapore, 22 January 2008.

[29] Matt [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an executive of the Kowloon Club. Notebook. Singapore, 20 February 2008.

[30] Mr. Chan. Personal interview with former president of the Association of Chinese Canadian Professionals (BC). Notebook. Vancouver, 11 June 2008.

[31] Joseph [fictitious name]. Personal interview with HKCBA Vancouver former president. Notebook. Vancouver, 11 June 2008.

[32] Petra [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an executive of the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan. Notebook. Singapore, 18 February 2008.

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Chapter 9:
Struggling with representations of the gateway

As discussed in the previous chapter, both Singaporean and Canadian (including federal and provincial governments) authorities have based their gateway initiatives on specific neo-liberal assumptions about how to profit the most from the perceived competitive advantage locations *situated* between East/China and the West that have developed. When it comes to marketing these gateway projects to specific populations, state authorities have privileged the social groups with means who buy into the neo-liberal idea of a pied-à-terre subject and a self-governed entrepreneur.[1] Yet, gatekeepers' actions in both Singapore and Vancouver have revealed a blatant ambivalence towards their state's neo-liberal gateway project. On the one hand, they have shown an increasing interest in catering to the targeted *desirable* migrant through their activities, programs and future developments. Gatekeepers support these gateway projects by offering to the desirable a community and activities through which they can feel they belong. On the other hand, their concerns with the *undesirable* migrant of the gateways have shown the artificial and arbitrary lines on which the un/desirable distinction is based, notably when the undesirable is the family member, the friend or the neighbour of the desirable living at the gateway.

In this chapter, the ambivalence of gatekeepers' actions towards their state's gateway between East/China and the West will be more systematically explored, as an important site to reveal different understandings, experiences and practices of this gateway. By focusing on the gatekeepers' competing and complementing representations of their state's project, it may be possible to better understand the role of gatekeepers not only in the power relations at play at the gateway. With no intentions of either romanticizing or victimizing the gatekeepers' contributions to international social processes between East/China and the West, *it will be argued that the gatekeepers' alternative images of the gateway express dynamic struggles between state authorities' neo-liberal framings of their gateway and significant international social processes to which they also contribute.* In other words, gatekeepers' views on their state's neo-liberal gateway between East/China and the West reveal many layers of transnational social relations at play in these locations. I will first discuss the various alternative images of gateways by gatekeepers to deconstruct their state's neo-liberal designs. These images will help to show how gatekeepers are negotiating between neo-liberal social codes and other international social processes taking presence at the gateway.[2] I will then illustrate how dynamic these struggles actually are. The state construction of gateways as places where international mobility across civilizations is enabled will be put in conversation with the everyday activities of gatekeepers in order to show how these actions are giving meanings to international mobility between East/China and the West in particular ways.

Pluralizing gateways

While buying into the neo-liberal parameters of their states' gateway projects, gatekeepers' actions in Singapore and Vancouver are also putting into question the aseptic image of the gateway provided by these state authorities. In this section, I would like to de-sanitize the state authorities' neo-liberal representations of their gateways by showing how gatekeepers are appropriating them. Speaking of struggles in both accommodating and contesting these neo-liberal projects, these alternative representations illustrate how specific international social processes such as ethnicity, religion and language are evolving and influencing the lived experiences of gateways constructed between East/China and the West.

Business matchmaking

In Singapore and Vancouver, economically driven community associations have decided to ride the wave of their states' gateway projects. Through their alternative representations of the gateway as matchmaker and Smart Link, associations like the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI) and the Hong Kong-Canada Business Association (HKCBA) are not questioning their state's neo-liberal project. They are giving it an ethnic flavour by referring, beyond their state's projects, to transnational ethnic Chinese business networks.

The SCCCI and the HKCBA are officially supporting and building on the gateway initiatives respectively developed by the Singapore and Canadian authorities. On the one hand, the SCCCI has collaborated with the Singaporean government– through SPRING Singapore – to support the latter's new focus on small and medium enterprises (SMEs).[3] As a niche for Singapore's gateway between East/China and West, the SCCCI supports the state authorities' views that besides gateways like Hong Kong and Taiwan focusing on 'big business', many SMEs may be tempted by Singapore's corporate-friendly environment. For example, the SCCCI's 2006 initiative of the Enterprise Development Centre (EDC) for SMEs fits this objective as well as the strategic aims of SPRING Singapore.[4] On the other hand, the HKCBA has followed the Canadian authorities' opening to the East/China, particularly for corporations and businesspeople interested in the Mainland, by helping them through various networking activities to enter Chinese markets. This association is increasing business relations between Vancouver and Hong Kong as a way for Canadian business and business opportunities from the Mainland to get closer.[5] One has to note, for example, the HKCBA's annual Hong Kong Forum, in which more than a third of the participants have come from Canada.[6]

Some may see a *win-win* situation in the relations developed between these state projects and their gatekeepers' activities.[7] Indeed, the SCCCI and the HKCBA found renewed life through their state's gateway project, because they offered them new marketing strategies and refined markets for their

business between East/China and the West. The SCCCI built its image of the matchmaker on the government of Singapore's essentialization of the Chinese race and of the Western world.[8] With initiatives such as the Singapore Chinese Chamber Institute of Business, it speaks of two worlds in which it is in the middle: the business world organized around Mandarin-speaking networks and the business world organized around English-speaking networks.[9] The SCCCI tries to profit from the position of the translator – for business purposes – between those two constructed civilizations for business purposes. The HKCBA builds in its own way on the Canadian authorities' marketing of Vancouver as the closest North American city to Eastern/Chinese markets. The HKCBA presents itself as an association able to put Western businesspeople in contact with Chinese markets and business contacts. Promoting events in strategic collaboration with the other agencies of the *Hong Kong Family* (i.e. Hong Kong Trade Development Council, Invest Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Tourism), Cathay Pacific and the HSBC, the HKCBA is creating for itself the role of the perfect meeting point between business communities.[10]

Nonetheless, both the SCCCI and the HKCBA have neo-liberal pretensions that are ethnically anchored in a different locale than their state's gateway project. On the one hand, with initiatives like the *World Chinese Business Network*, the SCCCI is claiming to be a world leader in Chinese-speaking (read Mandarin) business networks, notably because of its well-established leadership among Chinese chambers of commerce around the world.[11] Well before the Singaporean authorities' image of the gateway, the SCCCI had conceived of its role as intrinsically linked to the fate of ethnic Chinese business communities in different parts of the world. On the other hand, the HKCBAs most recent marketing strategy as being a Smart Link to Hong Kong clearly subordinates Vancouver to Hong Kong as the *real* gateway to Chinese markets. With the annual *Hong Kong Forum*, the HKCBA establishes that Hong Kong is *the* gateway between East/China and the West, because it is the meeting point for all Hong Kong-based business associations. In this view, Vancouver is perceived as another Western location serving as springboard to the gateway.[12]

Even if economically driven gatekeepers like the SCCCI and the HKCBA support their state's neo-liberal gateway project and profits from it, they have both shown alternative images of *their* gateway activities, anchored in transnational ethnic Chinese business networks. As a significant international social process, the rise of ethnic-based business networks finds a presence at gateway locations like Singapore and Vancouver that cannot be reduced to the states' attempts to profit from them.

Rooting of professionals

Gatekeepers like Singapore's Kowloon Club and Vancouver's Association of Chinese Canadian Professionals (ACCP) are ironically participating at the

margins of their state's gateway project. Despite the *desirability* of their memberships and the neo-liberal assumptions of their state's gateway projects, these gatekeepers are committed to critique the prejudices and discrimination built into their state's neo-liberal gateway projects.

Both the Kowloon Club and the ACCP are run by desirable migrants, as designed by state authorities in Singapore and Vancouver. Whereas neo-liberal assumptions of both gateway projects limit state support of social issues like integration, these gatekeepers are taking care of the young professionals – the *foreign talent* – recruited to work at the gateway and making it the *place to be* between East/China and the West. In Singapore, the Kowloon Club makes sure Hong Kongese – perceived as model migrants – stay in Singapore, by offering social events, scholarships, sporting tournaments and various classes to its membership. Although the association's original goal has changed to cultural preservation, the Kowloon Club focuses on helping young professionals from Hong Kong make, and consider, Singapore as their home.[13] In Vancouver, the ACCP has a similar role. It was created by professionals of Chinese origin who wanted to give back to Vancouver without falling into traditional divisions of Chinese community associations. The ACCP caters to Chinese professionals who see themselves as professionals first and who participate in civil society in Western ways, other than their affiliation by clan, family name, district, dialect, city and province of origin.[14]

It is interesting to note that both the Kowloon Club and the ACCP developed during the 1990s, simultaneously to their respective state's gateway projects. They are both gatekeepers that were not well-established before the emergence of a gateway narrative. They were neither recently created, like the new Mandarin-speaking associations showing up in the last few years in Vancouver everyday life. They have about 10 to 15 years of history and their objective directly relates to the original intentions of their states' gateway projects and their targeted migrant audiences. The Kowloon Club is based on the Singaporean government's movement towards the creation of new migrant associations helping to cater to the needs and interests of new migration patterns from China to Singapore.[15] The ACCP is a Western take on a Chinese community association along professional lines and social status, that helps to cater to the growing sociological importance of Chinese Canadians, whether they consider themselves Chinese newcomers, second and third generation or fully Canadians.[16] As such, both associations do fit perfectly with their state's gateway project since they complement them by offering a local community to the desirable migrant.

Nonetheless, both the Kowloon Club and the ACCP's activities are not framed as parts of gateway initiatives and they have become critics of these projects. Even if their memberships are clearly targeted by state authorities and other gatekeepers as the desirable migrants to Singapore and Vancouver, these associations have evolved outside of the gateway logic to

cater to their membership's localized needs and interests. From the same social position, however, the Kowloon Club and the ACCP have developed opposite critiques of their state's gateway project. On the one hand, the Kowloon Club is increasingly criticizing the essentializing processes of Chineseness occuring in Singapore. By reducing this Chineseness to speaking Mandarin, both state authorities and some gatekeepers are marketing what it means to be Chinese in the most homogenized way. They are looking for quick profit and access to Chinese business opportunities to the detriment of the lived nuances and differences in being Chinese.[17] The use of Cantonese by the Kowloon Club represents a significant difference not taken into consideration by state authorities and gatekeepers building a Chinese identity based on Mandarin. On the other hand, the ACCP is critiquing the gateway dimension of Vancouver life for being too Western and not open enough to difference. The ACCP puts into question the reproduction of these everyday civilizational lines on which Vancouver as a gateway between East/China and the West is constructed. With initiatives such as career fairs and seminars on glass-ceiling effect for racial minorities, the ACCP fights and criticizes the Western racial prejudices in doing business at the gateway in relation to their Eastern/Chinese counterparts.[18]

Both the Kowloon Club and the ACCP represent not only the views of desirable young professionals that state authorities in Singapore and Vancouver are targeting. They represent strong critiques of the disarticulation of everyday life at the gateway, where artificial constructions of Chineseness and race are at play. Despite neo-liberal frameworks of their state's gateway project, both associations are revealing important cultural biases built into these projects. These critiques are quite telling of international tensions developing from the inherent biases of neo-liberal projects, in which questions of ethnicity, culture, language and race divide everyday life at the gateway.

Bridging social life

In the case of the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan and the Pui Ying Christian Services Society, their activities as gatekeepers must be recognized as ways of pluralizing the bridges between East/China and the West, beyond their state authorities' neo-liberal assumptions about the two gateway projects. Despite their direct contribution to these gateway projects, both associations have stimulated and built on particular social and cultural dimensions of their gateway. They are putting forth their own identity-based networks and particularizing our understandings of Singapore and Vancouver as gateways between East/China and the West.

In the case of Chinese clan associations in Singapore, most of the influential ones like the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, have evolved along a corporate model of activity, notably registering as corporations to the Singapore government. They are contributing to Singapore's gateway project by creating local wealth and funding many local activities and programs to

support the government's vision of what being Chinese at the gateway means. Supporting, for example, the Speak Mandarin Campaign, these associations are also supporting their state's gateway by increasing transnational business opportunities through trade delegations and participating in world conventions of clan associations.[19] However, their participation in these neo-liberal gateway projects must be qualified along social and cultural lines. They are building particular bridges to the Mainland through their affiliation to specific Chinese provinces, languages and families. They are promoting everyday practices based on particular, exclusive and eclectic substantive identities. Moreover, these bridges found, in recent years, more public attention with the increasing interest of youth members and overall membership to clan affiliations, as *proper* (read historical) Chinese Singaporean roots and bridges to the Mainland. For example, the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan youth group, formed by young professionals in increasing contact through their business life with Mainlanders, have requested to know more about their dialect and distinct Chinese history.[20]

Similarly, the Pui Ying Christian Services Society has contributed to the Canadian authorities' new focus on Mainland China by shifting their focus to incorporate Mainlanders. Representative of a broader movement in religious life in Vancouver, the Pui Ying Society shows an opening of well-established Hong Kongese gatekeepers to the new cultural practices and ways of Mainlanders, such as the common use of Mandarin in providing local services. The Pui Ying Society and Chinese Christian churches are offering social support for these Chinese newcomers to feel at home in Vancouver.[21] Nonetheless, the Pui Ying Society's main successes are a direct result of its privileged Christian linkages to Hong Kong and specific locations in China. As with Chinese Christian churches, the association is contributing to Canada's Pacific gateway by building on specific religious affiliations as an intricate part of local everyday life.[22]

Both the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan and the Pui Ying Christian Services Society are showing the substantive parameters which social embeddedness gives to their appropriation of their state's neo-liberal project, may they be based on dialect and/or religious affiliations. Both Chinese dialects and religious life are controversial issues in the Mainland China, it is interesting to note how they have somehow developed as significant parts of gateways between East/China and the West, by giving substantive identity markers on which these neo-liberal projects are appropriated, lived and experienced.

Embodying China

The emerging gatekeepers in locations in Singapore and Vancouver have positioned themselves as the *heart* of China at the gateway. Their presence and agenda are nonetheless stressing ambivalence towards Singapore and Canada's gateway projects. Both Singapore's Overseas

Chinese Students Union and the University of British Columbia's (UBC) Chinese Students and Scholars Association (CSSA) are representative of new Mandarin-speaking associations in both locations that are formed by desirable migrants and that are compatible with these neo-liberal gateway projects. However, they are also expressions of cultural, emotional and political views seemingly more closely linked to the People's Republic of China's (PRC) worldviews than the ones of Singapore and Vancouver.

As both Singaporean and Canadian authorities have framed their gateway projects to keep international students as *foreign talent* after their graduation, many Chinese international students have expressed their interest in such programs.[23] Mainlanders' associations on university campuses possess the distinctive role of finding local employment and business opportunities for their members. In Singapore, the Overseas Chinese Students Union collaborates in organizing activities with the new migrant associations and the Chinese Embassy to offer their members access to important Mainlander business networks in Singapore, particularly because of their members' bonded scholarships' requirements.[24] Through an event like "Our Chinese Heart", the CSSA of UBC in Vancouver is developing similar localized networks. Developing these networks is seen to help the CSSA's membership to find local employment rapidly as well as to fulfil the residency requirements for those who want to stay in Vancouver.[25] These emerging gatekeepers are indeed contributing to the neo-liberal gateway projects in Singapore and Vancouver by tapping into business networks present at the gateway and transforming the desirable international student into the desirable young professional.

Nonetheless, both associations are problematizing the gateway neo-liberal project through their self-proclaimed affiliation to the PRC's political and economic interests. As direct results of the migration patterns created by Singapore and Canada's gateway projects, these emerging gatekeepers have strong linkages to the Mainland and strong China-centric worldviews. Speaking of their memberships' obligations to the motherland, they are reproducing strong everyday divisions with local populations living at the gateway in terms of cultural and political affiliations, even with ethnic Chinese migrants from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan.[26] Through emotional attachment to the *motherland*, their understandings of Singapore and Canada's gateway projects seem secondary to their affiliation to the PRC, no matter how gateway neo-liberal social codes stress individual freedom of choice.

As such, the Overseas Chinese Students Union of Singapore and UBC's CSSA in Vancouver are not only expressions of self-isolating newcomers to the gateway, they also represent the emerging presence at these gateway locations of the PRC's interests and social codes. Increasingly significant migration patterns from the Mainland to gateway locations are changing everyday perspectives on a myriad of social issues, giving China-

centric positions more exposure, presence and legitimacy in everyday life around the world.

Pluralizing trajectories of mobility

Despite the state authorities' aseptic neo-liberal gateway projects, gatekeepers' eclectic alternative images show the presence of a plurality of international social processes at the gateway. The struggles of the gatekeepers are not, however, static. They are constantly disciplined into participating to the neo-liberal gateway social codes, despite their own commitments. In this section, I would like to explore the alternative images gathered so far with a focus on one specific dimension of the state's neo-liberal gateway projects. By focusing on the idea of gateway as *enabling* international mobility across civilizations, I would like to look at the participation of gatekeepers in the developments of mobility as social code at the gateway. Their struggles and negotiations will be expressed as different trajectories building on specific understandings of mobility capital at the gateway. After a brief reminder of my Bourdieu-inspired understanding of mobility capital at the gateway, I will discuss the gatekeepers' struggles and contributions to this dimension of gateway life through their production and consumption of mobility capital.

Singaporean and Canadian state authorities have marketed their gateway projects between East/China and West, notably by playing on the idea that both Singapore and Vancouver are privileged locations *enabling* international mobility to another civilization. Despite the fact that these civilizations are artificially constructed, these state authorities are playing on the fetishization of national borders to market Singapore and Vancouver. In light of Pierre Bourdieu's work, the fetishization of borders is taken as a form of symbolic knowledge giving to *international* experiences more worth than domestic experiences of similar quality.[27] As such, state authorities in charge of gateway locations like Singapore and Vancouver have developed mobility capital not only for people to come to these locations as an *international* experience, but for them to come to these locations to increase their opportunities to get access to another civilization.

Similarly to state authorities' production of mobility capital, gatekeepers in both Singapore and Vancouver have profited from this idea of *enabling* international mobility at the gateway. By marketing their capacity to enable mobility across civilizational lines to elite migrants, some gatekeepers renewed their relevance.[28] Singapore's gatekeepers like Chinese clan associations have found in the gateway initiatives, a new audience in international students to actualize their role in contemporary Singaporean life. For example, the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan gives Singapore's future Chinese elite international experiences in China and at home through new bicultural curricula for primary and secondary school children. Moreover, the Teochew Poit Ip Huay Kuan and the Char Yong (Dabu) Association are funding overseas experiences through student scholarship programs to both

renew their membership through this targeted audience and to find new purpose and success in Singaporean life as transnational nodes.[29] In a similar fashion, the Pui Ying Society in Vancouver adapted to demographical changes in the local Chinese communities by putting forth their capacity to give students from both China and Canada, overseas experiences, whether through study, work or volunteering.[30]

In both contexts, however, their new activities and audience are increasingly contributing to the associations' concerns. The success and profitability of these activities, in contrast to their more traditional, localized and less popular focus, tend to guide and re-shape these associations, because they end up being consumers of the mobility capital they help produce. In contrast to state authorities that produce mobility in more detached ways, gatekeepers are producing mobility capital from their positions *within* the everyday life of the gateway. When a gatekeeper performs or buys into a state practice of the gateway, particularly through funding overseas education or promoting students exchange programs, one can observe an initial intent to ride the wave of the gateway project and profit from it. However, it seems such initiatives have the potential – markedly through their success – to re-shape the gatekeepers' frameworks of action and overall direction.[31]

The dynamic created between a gatekeeper's production and consumption of mobility capital helps to show how, when it comes to the gateway as enabling international mobility across civilizations, specific lived trajectories are developed. These trajectories are expressions of the gatekeepers' struggles between their perceived roles and the development of gateway social codes, notably within a neo-liberal framework of marketability, competitive advantage and profitability. For example, well-established Chinese community associations in both Singapore and Vancouver have produced programs to cater to elite migrants and have expanded these activities for the benefits and relevance they bring their associations. Specific trajectories can be seen in the activity developments of gatekeepers like the SCCCI and Vancouver's HKCBA whose most successful and marketable programs such as their business networking events guide their developments and exclude parts of the association's previous scope of activities. On the one hand, the SCCCI possesses deep anchors and transnational business networks in Southern China.[32] Historically linked to dialect-based Chinese clan associations like the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan, the SCCCI's strength and influence as matchmaker between the East/China and the West comes from very specific linkages, markedly through clan associations, locally-determined trade delegations, governmental officials having studied at the SCCCI and more specific diplomatic channels. With the government use of the gateway narrative, the SCCCI was able to market itself as an international source of contacts and networks to access Chinese markets, by significantly emphasizing its second dimension: its leading role in Mandarin-speaking business communities around the world

such as through the SCCCI Institute of Business revamped since the end of the 1990s, the Mandarin Toastmasters Club established since 2001, the Enterprise Development Centre created in 2008.[33] The success of its Mandarin courses to Western professionals, and the overall interest of Western-based corporations to access this Mandarin-speaking business world, pressured the SCCCI to develop a series of activities taking the organization away from its dialect local roots and leaving, for the most part, dialect-based trade delegations to Singapore's clan associations.[34]

On the other hand, the HKCBA in Vancouver has developed in specific ways since the Canadian authorities' framing of Vancouver as gateway. Whereas the Hong Kong business community in Canada has strong anchors in Toronto, a shift of attention towards Vancouver as a privileged Canadian site of doing business in China can be seen over the last four years. In this shift, Vancouver's chapter of the HKCBA refined its targets to address the needs and concerns of Western businesspeople interested in doing business in China by offering a Smart Link to Hong Kong.[35] Since its successful activities became networking events where members can find business opportunities in China, the HKCBA offers less general activities linking Canadian businesspeople to the Hong Kongese business community at large, as much as linking them to specific contacts in Hong Kong helpful in getting business in China.[36] As Yang Qiang, the Consul General of the People's Republic of China to Vancouver, Canada in 2008 says: "the HKCBA has made remarkable contributions to the growth of trade and investment between Canada and Hong Kong as well as the strengthening of Hong Kong's position as a gateway to the Mainland for Canadian business community."[37] By adapting to the gateway narratives in marketing their mobility capital to the desirable migrants and profiting from the success of these activities, both the SCCCI and HKCBA created specific trajectories in their appropriations of their state's gateway project, defining their understandings of mobility across civilizational lines through specific practices and targeted audiences.

These trajectories find co-presence with a plurality of gatekeepers' production and consumption of mobility capital, such as the emerging Mainlander gatekeepers. Embodied particularly by Mandarin-speaking business associations, Chinese international students' unions and the membership of Christian Chinese circles, these gatekeepers' visions of the gateway are shaped by an understanding of mobility capital that is more China-centric. Starting from a reverse understanding of the world, the emerging gatekeepers' production and consumption of mobility capital is different from the SCCCI and the HKCBA. These emerging gatekeepers in both Singapore and Vancouver are becoming reputable in enabling mobility, because they cater to increasing numbers of elite migrants from Mainland China. Both the Overseas Chinese Students Union in Singapore and UBC's CSSA in Vancouver are close to the PRC's worldviews by selling – what would be considered from the gateway – *reversed* mobility capital to China's

students, encouraging these individuals to gain Western knowledge and experience before going back to China. These emerging gatekeepers are also consuming mobility capital, finding success with their activities linking their memberships to – what is seen as – international employers and future graduate studies opportunities in Western societies. As such, they are highly involved in creating networks at the gateways for corporations and businesspeople to access their membership as potential employees, as well as to expand their influence through students and alumni networks.[38] Since they negotiate between the concern of Chinese officials for students to remember their obligations to the *motherland* and their members asking more for – of what they see as – international experiences, these students associations' actions, concerns and horizons are developing within these specific trajectories. Not aiming, for example, to integrate the Western people interested in studying in China or to integrate permanently their membership to the gateway everyday life, these associations are catering to privileged Chinese people interested and able to consume mobility capital in Westernized societies, which differs immensely from the trajectories that associations like the SCCCI and the HKCBA have developed.[39]

Even if gatekeepers' trajectories are developing from activities and programs that are perceived to be more profitable for them within the changing social contexts of the gateways, one has to note that the dynamic relation developed between producing and consuming mobility capital cannot be taken as structurally deterministic, like a path-dependency perspective would suggest.[40] By focusing on enabling international experiences and travels, through exchange programs and scholarships as well as language and culture courses and workshops, gatekeepers may seem sometimes to tap into what they think is more marketable – i.e. putting mobility capital first. They may be viewed as buying into the neo-liberal social codes at play at the gateway. However, some gatekeepers' activities have evolved away from producing and consuming mobility capital. For example, when the ACCP in Vancouver does not see either itself or Vancouver as gateways between East/China and West, one has to look at how the association *fails* to utilize the pool of mobility capital available to it. By focusing on localized activities, the development of youth programs and local social issues such as the glass ceiling effect for racial minorities in Canadian corporations, the ACCP is right in saying the Canadian government initiatives of the gateway do not relate to them and that this association is understood by its members as a non-gateway place to start.[41] Although its members may be involved in gateway initiatives as young professionals and consumers of mobility, the association has not developed a culture of consumption or production of mobility capital, nurturing rather the development of a locally based symbolic and cultural capital in Bourdieusian terms.[42] Similarly, the Kowloon Club in Singapore was supported in its creation by the Singaporean authorities because of its potential role in producing mobility as capital. The Singaporean authorities

thought they could use Hong Kong migrants in Singapore to recruit other Hong Kongese, seen as desirable migrants by these authorities. Nonetheless, the community association developed along the lines of the ACCP by focusing on localized activities and social issues, which in this case took the form of the preservation of the Hong Kong Chinese culture in Singapore. Whereas most members of the Kowloon Club are connected to Hong Kong through their work and family life, the association has not taken advantage of its positioning within the mobility field.[43]

As states' gateway projects are based on the idea of marketing international mobility from a neo-liberal perspective, gatekeepers' actions are contributing to making it a reality through their everyday activities and programs. The symbolic worth attributed to *international* experiences has radically changed the focus and purposes of many of these associations. For example, Chinese clan associations have evolved through the gateway narratives to become modern networking agencies to speak to young professionals as well as funding agencies to international students who want to get the best education to further either their studies or their career. Such focus on marketable programs for the consumers of mobility, or elite migrants, has also shaped the gatekeepers' increasing attention to consuming the mobility capital they help produce. They are expressions of gatekeepers' struggles to negotiate and develop trajectories through neo-liberal social codes and the international dynamics present at their gateway between East/China and the West.

Conclusion

Gatekeepers' representations of their states' gateway projects are alternative images in the sense that they cope with these neo-liberal projects, while expressing the presence of significant international social processes at the gateway. Even if their memberships are constituted mostly of *desirable* migrants, these gatekeepers' alternative images are sources of critiques of the states' gateway projects by showing the limitations of neo-liberal social codes in dealing with the messiness of everyday life. As such, these alternative images are giving us a glimpse of the substantive social processes, along the lines of ethnicity, language, culture, political and religious affiliations, that are shaping Singapore and Vancouver as gateways between East/China and the West. More precisely, the gatekeepers have had direct impact in shaping mobility capital at the gateway. As with state authorities, gatekeepers have utilized gateway narratives to market to elite migrants the unique experience of working, studying or doing business in close relation to the *other* civilization. Contributing to the creation of a mobility capital, or a symbolic worth given to crossing borders and *international* experiences, gatekeepers have developed specific trajectories by which this gateway social code is experienced in everyday life. As a site where the state's neo-liberal projects and the gatekeepers' own participation in significant international social

processes meet, the gatekeepers' trajectories reveal in a dynamic and pragmatic fashion the gatekeepers' contributions to both everyday gateway social codes in Singapore and Vancouver as gateways between East/China and the West.

Endnotes

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Chapter 10:
Social de/codification of everyday gateway politics

The frameworks in which gateway projects developed in Singapore and Vancouver, either by the state authorities' initiatives or the gatekeepers' trajectories, can be critically assessed from the perspective of the individuals and social groupings living, experiencing and evolving at the gateway. The producers of mobility are indeed marketing their gateway initiatives and everyday trajectories to specific migrant groups, notably the *desirable* neo-liberal subjects, characterized as privileged international students, highly skilled young professionals and businesspeople. Gatekeepers in both Singapore and Vancouver are also linked to specific social groupings. Successful programs have been developed based on their elite migrant clientele, which has deeply impacted the strategic direction of these activities.

Everyday gateway politics involves complex relations between the neo-liberal objectives of state authorities, the ambivalent position of gatekeepers and these un/desirable migrants living at the gateway. Despite their status as such, individuals living in both Singapore and Vancouver may encounter specific places and social codes by which they are included or excluded in gateway initiatives and gatekeepers' trajectories. They are finding ways to negotiate who they are at the gateway and what they want from the gateway through the power relations at play by participating, shaping, denying and instrumentalizing the operating ways which characterize everyday life at the gateway.

In this chapter, I will problematize the gateway initiatives and gatekeepers' trajectories in both Singapore and Vancouver through the life stories of desirable migrants such as international students and young professionals. *It is my contention that various gateway social codes are disciplining people living at the gateway. Everyday gateway politics necessarily impacts individual lives through state authorities and gatekeepers imposing rules about what should be included and excluded as gateway everyday life. These gateway social codes express the local power relations which shape how gateway actions are thought of and conceived. One of them – the social code relating to neo-liberal mobility across civilizational lines – is especially important since it disarticulates everyday gateway political and social life.* After a brief discussion on how gateway social codes are enacted by states authorities and gatekeepers, I will present the stories of various international students and young professionals living in either Singapore or Vancouver.[1] Their stories will help to show how limitations and exclusions are formed in the producers of mobility's understandings of the gateway projects and their desirable migrants. They will also show how neo-liberal mentalities are framing many desirable migrants' instrumentalization of the gateways projects.

It is also important to note that the following stories of international students and young professionals living at the gateway are not necessarily

representative of all students and professionals experiencing the similar life conditions in both Singapore and Vancouver. These stories are used as heuristic tools to better grasp some of the limitations of both state authorities' gateway projects and their gatekeepers' trajectories in everyday life.

Gatekeepers' operating ways

Paul Ricœur and Alfred Schutz indicated that people in their everyday lives find some structure to their actions and thoughts through the social games situated in their social environment.[2] In light of Ludwig Wittgenstein's work on language-games, both authors stress the importance of comprehending these social games to better understand people's everyday actions in a specific social context.[3] In the context of the construction of gateway projects, the everyday life expresses struggles and re-definitions through the sociological and social changes. Both in Singapore and Vancouver, social codes have become a site of everyday gateway politics, particularly between well-established gatekeepers, state authorities and the gateway's desirable migrants.

On the one hand, well-established gatekeepers in Singapore had to find ways to negotiate between the government views of what is marketable for its gateway project, and their own views and social games. In Singapore' Global Schoolhouse, for example, Chinese clan associations like the Hokkien Huay Kuan, the Ngee Ann Kongzi and the Char Yong (Dabu) Association have been instrumental in supporting the state authorities' vision of education through curriculum development, school and program-building, alliances with foreign universities and scholarship programmes for local and international Chinese students. However, they have also been part of many activities promoting the distinct Chinese cultures and heritages of their dialect-based associations through dialect-based festivals and workshops, museums and exhibits as well as public events that question the Mandarin-speaking and homogenized past Chinese heritage of Singapore.[4] In a context like Singapore, such practices, with an implicit approval of the state authorities, have to be considered significant changes in allowing the development of alternative social codes on what being Chinese means in Singapore's multiracial system.

Through constant everyday negotiations, well-established gatekeepers like Chinese clan associations have developed structural power[5] over localized social codes that go beyond people's awareness of their influence, and that remains important in their power relations with emerging gatekeepers and newcomers. Singapore's most reputable Chinese New Year celebration is probably the River Hongbao, a two-week carnival-like festival, during which most of the international students and young professionals I talked to have taken the time to visit. When I talked to many of them about the role of Chinese clan associations in their everyday lives, most of them said they do not know what their activities are and that they believe they are irrelevant associations in contemporary Singapore. As a 25-year old young professional

of Chinese origin shared with me: "Who cares about clan associations?", believing they are for older men to find young wives.[6] Like many others, Cathy did not know that Singapore's River Hongbao is actually organized by the Singapore Federation of Chinese Clan Association (SFCCA) with the clan associations' usual partners like the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI). She did not know that every year, the SFCCA is fighting to keep the carnival a *Chinese* event to their standards, keeping Western/ized music and performances out of the River Hongbao. As with many other everyday life decisions like school curricula and overall directions, these students and professionals are rarely aware of the influence of Chinese clan associations on their everyday social games.[7] Whereas Western education and increasing numbers of Mainlanders in everyday Singapore are limiting youth engagement with local Chinese clan associations, these associations have found new ways to remain current and even in control of many gateway social codes by which Singapore's youth, newcomers and overall society participate and get disciplined.

On the other hand, Hong Kong-managed associations in Vancouver, such as Chinese Christian churches, the Hong Kong-Canadian Business Association and the United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society (SUCCESS) have also found ways to deal with the state authorities' views on the gateway. They are, for example, opening up to the state authorities' implicit focus on Mainland China by offering services in Mandarin to newcomers and by integrating these newcomers into their membership. However, they still distinguish in everyday life their Hong Kongese background and mentality – as more Westernized and more adaptive to North America than Mainlanders – markedly by limiting Mainlanders' access to the management of these associations. In talking to a Hong Kongese woman highly involved in Chinese Christian churches, she shared with me the impressions of many Hong Kongese managers of churches about Mainlanders. Depicted as "pretty demanding" and "very difficult people", she told me Mainlanders do not know the meaning of "boundaries" because of their cultural (read less Westernized) background.[8] She hints to the establishment of an everyday social code in which managers are of Hong Kongese background and members are increasingly Mainlanders. Instead of incorporating Mainlanders to the management of churches, there seems to be the creation in everyday life of a sphere in which the Mainlanders' mentality is seen as not genuinely engaging with the Chinese Christian churches' faith and mission. Despite the community engagement with all newcomers in Vancouver, social codes are created to maintain the centrality of well-established gatekeepers' views, notably by drawing a line between two mentalities and ways of acting at the gateway. Such dividing mentality and practice is opposed to the recent momentum of the new Mandarin-speaking associations in Vancouver, such as the Canada Wenzhou Friendship Society;

having decided to manage and represent Mainlanders in a separate fashion than through well-established gatekeepers.

Structural power over emerging gatekeepers and newcomers remains for now in the hands of these associations managed by Hong Kongese population of Vancouver. For example, many Chinese international students are volunteering for SUCCESS, as part of their local work experience towards their community college requirements and visa applications for Canadian permanent residency. Coming from Hong Kong, Macau and different places in Mainland China, these international students are not aware of the Cantonese and Hong Kongese heritage of well-established community associations like SUCCESS. Even if SUCCESS is considered by many the unofficial leader of the Chinese communities in Vancouver because of its resources, extended programs and deep anchors in both older generations of Chinatown and the Hong Kong business community. These individuals like SUCCESS for the opportunities it provides to meet new people and practice their English. They are not aware of the other Chinese community associations that are increasingly offering volunteering opportunities and access to other Chinese social circles in Vancouver, especially since the rise in recent years of Mainlander community associations.[9] SUCCESS presents itself as the main and most influential association, despite the critiques of these emerging gatekeepers. SUCCESS has found ways to adapt – and is still adapting – to increasing numbers of Mainlanders, notably by shifting its language of operation to Mandarin, by re-locating specific services to the newcomers' residential areas, and by creating mechanisms, such as volunteering programs, to recruit newcomers to its activities. Such rapprochement techniques have even been witnessed during the "Our Chinese Heart" event organized by the new Mandarin-speaking associations from influential Hong Kongese and official representatives of the well-established gatekeepers.[10]

In both Singapore and Vancouver, social codes at the gateway reflect everyday political struggles developing with specific gateway projects. Well-established gatekeepers are indeed the first one to adapt to the changing social codes of a state-constructed gateway project.[11] Social codes become sites to express this negotiation between adapting and contributing to the construction of a gateway project and the maintaining of a community association's main objectives, views and influence in everydayness. Both in Singapore and Vancouver, well-established gatekeepers have found ways to structurally ensure their influence and position in everyday gateway politics, in relation to an emerging influential position developed for recently formed gatekeepers.

Gateway silences

Despite everyday gateway politics at the community level, gateway social codes do affect the desirable migrant, particularly the one who chooses

to stay at the gateway. As expressions of the power relations at play, these social codes are excluding specific components of one's life and social issues. In this section, I would like to grasp the *borders* of these social codes by looking at how gatekeepers' actions are ignoring specific social realities at the individual level. Through the individual stories of international students and young professionals, it is my contention that these life stories will help to frame our understanding of specific gateway social codes by showing what is part of, and what is excluded from, both gateway projects – either through state or gatekeeper's action.

Chris and the Global Boarding School[12]

Chris is an Engineering student at Nanyang Technological University (NTU). As an international student, his everyday life in Singapore in mainly limited to campus life: his friends and surrogate family are the people around the international house and he actually has made special arrangements to keep accommodation on campus for the remaining of his time in Singapore. When he graduates, he is looking forward to continuing his graduate studies in the United States (US). His school has agreements with universities in the US and he has been working hard since his first year to get on the list of students offered places for their graduate studies in the US. So far, he has very little intention of returning to Singapore after his departure. When asked about keeping future connections to Singapore, he does not think he will apply for permanent residency. If he were to come back, it would be for a vacation or a short visit only. Singapore is too small for him and he is certain that he would get bored rapidly.[13]

Singapore's Global Schoolhouse brings many students like Chris, since they are seen as the desirable migrants to Singapore who can be bonded through scholarships to work for a few years in the city-state with the possibility of staying afterwards to fuel Singapore's pool of 'foreign talent'.[14] In this scenario, Singaporean society has only a minimal role, especially since students like Chris do not leave their university campus. While it is true that Chris would like more direct engagement with everyday Singapore, everything is actually made accessible to him on campus. Many gatekeeper associations have even increased their presence on campuses to reach desirable migrants like Chris. For example, the Overseas Chinese Students Union offers important sporting events through funding received from the Chinese Embassy and Chinese clan associations are funding directly social clubs, as well as offering students funding opportunities and investing in the universities' programs.[15]

Chris' story speaks of a gateway social code created in Singapore for desirable Chinese international students like him. Separated from Singapore's everyday life, they are in direct contact with important and influent Singaporean players such as the Hokkien Huay Kuan and the Chinese Embassy, both known for their exclusionary practices and privileged

networks. Through the Global Schoolhouse, Singapore's gateway practice becomes physically situated and determined by the boundaries of campus life to cater, train and prepare students like Chris to become *foreign talent* in Singapore, despite the students' own plans. By putting them in separate circles, state authorities and gatekeepers – to the extent that they re-locate themselves on campuses – are building as everyday social code, an exceptional space for the desirable international student. They are, therefore, contributing to everyday life tensions in which Chinese international students are depicted by many Singaporeans as not caring for the fate of Singapore and Singaporean society at large.[16] By creating a privileged exclusionary gateway space – as social code – for desirable migrants like Chris to be trained and catered to, Singapore's Global Schoolhouse takes the shape of a Global Boarding School, where students are cut off from the local society, despite the society's and their own wishes.

Melanie and the temporality of desirability

Melanie is a 27-year-old graduate student in nursing at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver. She came to Vancouver eight years ago to complete her undergraduate degree and stayed to work before deciding to go back to school.[17] As an international student in Vancouver, she adapted in her own way to everyday life by moving to Richmond (a suburb of Vancouver), getting her Canadian permanent residency and developing her own social circles, sometimes participating in gatekeepers' events. Even though she left Mainland China and her family a long time ago, she has no intention of going back to China and considers herself a Canadian citizen of Chinese origin. She made her life in everyday Vancouver and sees her future developing there. She says she found a great support system, notably by participating and receiving social support from Chinese community associations like SUCCESS in the first years of her re-location to Vancouver.

As a desirable migrant to the gateway a few years ago who has become, in her view, a Canadian of Chinese origin in Vancouver, Melanie is very critical of the *new* orientation given to the gateway initiatives and gatekeepers' support. For example, she does not agree with the 2008 Canadian legislation enabling international students with a completed degree at a Canadian university to get their residency papers fast-tracked if they are employed by a local company for a few years. In a gateway context, such a process is built on attracting as many people as possible to profit from the act of displacement and migration to Vancouver. She does not see how these gateway initiatives frame and support the Chinese populations who have been through the process a few years previous. Through her work as a nurse, she has seen the other side of the gateway: all the students, professionals and family members who have not succeeded in profiting from gateway initiatives. The ways in which they are struggling to make ends meet is confirmed by community service associations noticing a reduction in the

relative terms of their capacity to help a growing Chinese population in need. But these needs are not addressed and acknowledged as part of the gateway project.[18]

Melanie's story speaks of the temporality associated with gateway social codes and their marketing to the desirable migrant. The gateway narrative in Vancouver seems to limit the desirable migrant in time, since it does not involve initiatives dealing with people who have immigrated or who have stopped moving between East/China and West after some time. The social consequences of these migration patterns created as part of gateway projects seem excluded from them. The medium and long-term effects of these migration patterns in terms of demographical and sociological changes are not conceived as intricate parts of these gateway projects. Questions of inflation, housing affordability, social integration of reunified families are not linked to the changes brought by these gateway initiatives. As such, gatekeepers' resources and applications for funding of these specific social problems cannot be geared towards, and are not framed in terms of immigration, or gateway issues, instead they are considered local social problems.[19] By giving temporal limitations to the state's (and gatekeepers') framing of its gateway project and to the status of desirable migrants, state authorities are building a temporally discriminatory gateway social code to exclude many social processes developed at/through the gateway project.

Maxime and the generational gap

Maxime is a 21-year-old young professional of Chinese origin in Singapore. He works as a consultant for a communications corporation dealing with many customers in both Singapore and Mainland China, especially Beijing. He is proud of being a Chinese Singaporean, although he considers himself to be more Westernized than Chinese: "We are not real Chinese, but who is?"[20] He is very conscious of building his career on Singapore's unique position as the Oriental Venice, the perfect bridge between China and the West. Accordingly, Maxime is looking to further his career as one of Singapore's bicultural elite in the business sector. He feels less Chinese than Chinese international students in Singapore and his Chinese counterparts in Beijing. Nonetheless, he admits living quite well with his Chinese ambiguity and found ways to profit from it. According to him, the idea of one Chinese nation does not even work in the Mainland. He was English-educated in Singapore and although his Mandarin skills are more than functional, he plays on this distinction to other Singaporeans and Chinese newcomers to further his personal and economic situation in local Singaporean life.

His own experiences in getting involved with Chinese community associations, or gatekeepers, in Singapore are limited to specific self-interested purposes. In his view, young professionals may attend church or go to events offered and organized through their former schools but nothing more. He

emphasized that the Western education received by his generation makes him unable to agree with and adhere to the many exclusionary practices of organizations like Chinese clan associations, especially when it comes to promoting specific Chinese cultures in distinction to other cultures. Since I met him at an event organized by the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI),[21] he does admit that he is participating in such a forum for the economic and personal contacts he can develop to further his career. For him, young professionals may use these gatekeepers' activities because they have no other choices. These gatekeepers are institutionalized channels for contacts known and accessible to them – as elite young professionals of Chinese origin. The people he meets there, even if the SCCCI has a bad reputation of being an exclusive Chinese elite circle, can, and have, opened so many doors for him and his company.

Maxime's story speaks of the ways in which gateway social codes refer to the perspective of older generations and the institutionalized channels of well-established gatekeepers. Although the education he received and his Western ways of life may not make him agree with, for example, business practices limited to some Chinese ethnicity in which he does not believe, Maxime is using what he considers old ways of doing business to further his career. Singapore's traditional practices emphasizing the Chinese ethnicity as the main pillar of transnational networks are still reproduced within the Singaporean authorities' gateway initiatives and most of the gatekeepers' practices. Gateway initiatives and gatekeepers' trajectories are, in fact, developed to find ways to recruit and engage more with young generations, as if to initiate and discipline them to specific gateway social codes, such as the *old ways*.[22] Even if young professionals like Maxime are critical of these older ways of doing business, they seem to know how to play on these boundaries and utilize them to their advantage. By doing so, Maxime actually reifies the gatekeepers' position and the influence of their social codes. He reifies the relevance of the old ways of doing business as an intricate and relevant part of Singapore's gateway project and gatekeepers' trajectories. Moreover, he implicitly participates in limiting the developments of other, *newer* gateway social codes as alternative ways of thinking and conceiving of a gateway project.

Tristan and gateway heteronormativity

Tristan is a 35-year-old professional who has worked in the high technology sector of Canada's Pacific gateway for the last 4 years. Although he was born in Vancouver, he came back to the gateway from Hong Kong 16 years later, in 1989, by himself to study. When asked to qualify his origins, he replied: "a Canadian... and I always say made in Hong Kong. It makes it [the answer] interesting".[23] His engagement with Vancouver as gateway is not limited to the extent that he meets and makes a lot of friends from Hong Kong in Vancouver and that he can stay somewhat connected with Hong

Kong from Vancouver. He likes the quality of life he gets from Vancouver, especially as a gay man. Even if his friends in Hong Kong are making more money and are in a better position with similar qualifications to him, he likes Vancouver for the space, the nature and the working conditions. He does not exclude the possibility of re-locating to Hong Kong for his retirement but, for now, he enjoys his time in Vancouver and has made a great circle of friends.

He admits he never really cared for becoming a member of a local Chinese community association. Although he will participate in a gatekeeper's event sometimes, "to know what's going on", he does not miss this environment. When he was working in Chinatown, he liked having Hong Kongese colleagues: "with the same race, the same language... it's closer that way. I kind of miss that."[24] Nonetheless, he finds that he gets enough bonding time with his former home, with his trips to Hong Kong, time with his family and friends, as well as internet news websites. Living in the Davie Village and working in the financial district, he does not have the opportunity, will or desire to mix with local Chinese community associations, especially because they are not really involved in *his* own community. Since most of the gatekeepers are *neutral* in dealing with religious, political and social affiliations, one can assume that they are neutral with sexual identity.

However, heteronormativity is rampant in gateway narratives and gatekeepers' trajectories, assuming an heterosexual model for families of Chinese origin living in Vancouver.[25] For example, the history of this gateway through the Hong Kongese *astronaut families* with the father travelling back and forth to Hong Kong and the wife and children staying in Vancouver, has developed an heteronormative framework in which queer people may find difficult identification. Young queer professionals of Chinese origin in Vancouver may find it more comfortable to engage at a distance with these gatekeepers, since they do not fit the picture well. Moreover, it is harder for young queer professionals to associate with the emerging gatekeepers' associations based on a stronger Mainlander membership and with more vocal heterosexist views.[26] Both the developments of gatekeepers' activities to cater to young heterosexual families and new migration patterns from the Mainland supporting non-Westernized principles about social life and sexual identities guide the gateway project away from queer-friendly gateway social codes.[27]

By his partial engagement with these gatekeepers, Tristan is reifying their *neutral* heteronormative (and sometimes heterosexist) gateway social codes. Tristan's story speaks of endorsing gateway social codes to the extent that they address one side of his identity only. It speaks of gateway social codes based on only the promotion of an all-encompassing *racial/ized* identity – as Chinese living in Vancouver – to the detriment of other dimensions of one's identity, such as Tristan's sexual identity.

Gateway social codes may be understood to some extent through the creation, for example, of exceptional spaces (Chris' story), along specific

timelines (Melanie's story), generational (Maxime's story) or heteronormative frameworks (Tristan's story), but their complexity and plurality of meanings reside first and foremost with the individuals – as bearers of meanings. Since everyday practice refers to individual and collective daily tactics and strategies by which people adapt, contest and instrumentalize social codes, one must emphasize the positionality of the person re-appropriating and giving meanings to these social codes.[28]

Neo-liberal mobility as gateway social code

The desirable migrants are attracted and trained to become neo-liberal subjects at the gateway, notably when it comes to utilizing mobility to meet personal objectives. In light of Aihwa Ong's work, neo-liberal mobility as gateway social code can be understood as a political rationality by which subjects are "obligated to become an *entrepreneur of himself or herself*".[29] As a particularly strong gateway social code promoted and marketed by both state authorities and gatekeepers, neo-liberal mobility is of special interest, as it gives the ability to individuals to think and act beyond and above everyday gateway politics. In this section, I would like to share the story of a few desirable migrants to illustrate how neo-liberal mobility is inculcated to them as a gateway social code and how it has the potential to disarticulate local political and social life at the gateway.

Lucille and the privatization of political life

Lucille is a soon-to-graduate 20-year-old Chinese Singaporean who wants to become a realtor. As a young Chinese Singaporean, Lucille is atypical since she became involved in a Chinese clan association. Although she joined an Hakka clan association to profit from scholarships offered to youth members, her clan affiliation is now very important to her. She has developed a great circle of friends, and extended family. She participates every year in many activities and likes travels to visit sister clan associations across Southeast Asia.

On paper, however, Lucille is the archetype of the young bicultural elite conceived by the government. Despite her active involvement in a local Hakka clan association, she knows very little about the distinctive history of the Hakkas in Singapore and its historical struggles with the government. Lucille identifies as a strong Chinese Singaporean as per the government's social engineering strategies. Her future aspirations reflect, nonetheless, important distinctions between how she feels and how the government understands its bicultural elite. With the help of her clan association, she discovered an interest in Southeast Asia, despite the government's main focus on China or Western countries like the United States (US). She thinks of working in Malaysia for a while and she has already developed, through her involvement in the Hakka clan association, significant contacts and networks there. Whereas the government would have liked in theory to bond her

through scholarships, she got funding through her clan association. Singapore's reputation in terms of the quality of its education has given Lucille the means to easily find a job anywhere in the region and her clan associations has given her ideas about specific projects.

Lucille's story speaks of a disarticulation that occurred between her identification as a neo-liberal subject of Singapore and a political subject affiliated to a Chinese clan association. Neo-liberalism as political rationality pushes indeed social, political, personal and political issues to the realm of private issues, which in Lucille's view means to go against the Singaporean authorities' plans for her. Since neo-liberal social codes, like neo-liberal mobility, are taught in Singapore's meritocratic and highly competitive education system Lucille learned to become a self-governed *entrepreneur* of her life and her future. She has successfully disjointed her common life as student in a Singaporean university from her social, political, personal and emotional dimensions. Instead, these dimensions are lived through Lucille's affiliation to private spheres and activities like the ones of her clan association. When deciding her future, as a good neo-liberal citizen-subject, she ends up relying on this private dimension of her life, instrumentalizing her status as desirable talent to Singapore and her neo-liberal mobility, to the detriment of Singapore's views and interests. She chose to favour her clan association's gateway trajectories to give meaning to her life as a realtor. By moving to Malaysia and entering the job market there, she utilized the neo-liberal mobility gateway social code learned in Singapore to the detriment of the objectives of Singaporean authorities' education system.

Martin and the freedom to exit

As a young 35-year-old Chinese Singaporean working in high technology sector, Martin is a desirable returned migrant to Singapore, as a self-styled Westernized Chinese person who studied in the US and has work experience both in the US and Mainland China. He was educated in Singapore as part of the future elite generation of Singapore, but now has a young family to care for and does not believe Singapore offers the best environment and quality of life for them. He has used Singapore's schooling system, its preferential agreements with US universities and is still using his status of young elite of Chinese origin in Singapore to be on top of the economic and professional hierarchies but he has no intentions of staying. He learned through his time in the US that his family would have a better life there and is making plans and preparing to re-locate in the next few years.[30]

Speaking also of the re-location of his political life and concerns in the private realm like in the case of Lucille's story, Martin's story speaks more specifically of the consequences of the disciplining process by which neo-liberal mobility is transmitted and experienced by desirable populations living at the gateway. Martin learned as a student how to use and profit from mobility to advance his goals. Stressing one pillar of neo-liberal gateway

social codes, which is the freedom to exit one political community at any time, Martin's story falls at the extreme the application of the code, because no attachment to Singapore is felt. Martin's story expresses the normality for desirable populations to think of moving and re-locating with little to no sense of belonging to their *home* country. Since Singaporean authorities market the city-state in a neo-liberal fashion, it becomes nothing more than a social environment and is compared to other cities and states at a global scale by its local quality of life, even by its own citizens.[31]

Philippe and the individualistic irony

Philippe is a Chinese international student doing his graduate work at UBC in Vancouver. After two years in Vancouver, Philippe is quite disillusioned about the gateway everyday life, finding it too individualistic and Westernized for his liking. As a very intelligent student getting an opportunity for university studies in Canada through *Project Hope*, he is driven, since he left Mainland China, by his desire to become a university professor and an intellectual. He is somewhat active in campus-based societies but he engages minimally with everyday life at the gateway. He does not feel comfortable with most Westernized forms of socializing and the Western lifestyle. More specifically, Philippe has harsh words for both the Western media's crude report of world events, and the Western social codes such as sexual freedom among people of his age. Nevertheless, he is looking forward to conducting his doctoral studies in the United Kingdom (UK) before returning to China. When I spoke with him, he made it clear that although he enjoys his studies, he is only going through the motion of living in Vancouver until he gets his degree and can move onto his doctoral studies.[32]

Philippe's story is quite telling of the individualistic assumption on which neo-liberal mobility, as gateway social code, is based. Whereas Philippe rightfully criticizes the lack of community engagement in Western societies in comparison to China's (at least in his case), his story depicts ironically how he chooses not to engage with the gateway's different ways of life and community associations, since he will be moving on to the UK in a couple of years anyway. He admittedly suffers from isolation but he does not allow himself to become socialized and trained in Vancouver's forms of community, because he will be leaving soon. As neo-liberal social codes leave decisions of lifestyle to the individual, Philippe – like many others – is choosing to re-create temporarily their own ways of life with no real engagement with the plurality of everyday life at the gateway. Rightfully accusing the gateway of being an extremely individualistic social environment, he does however contribute to his own isolation by focusing on moving to the UK in the near future instead of finding a community in the present. Everyday neo-liberal gateway social codes are based on individual choices, which necessarily include the individual choice of not engaging with local life, promoting instead individual detachment from community life.

Sherry and the neo-liberal dream

Sherry is a young 27-year-old Chinese professional with Canadian permanent residency, who studied in Montréal at first in 2001 then moved to Ottawa and Toronto before choosing Vancouver in 2008 for work. As a young female desirable migrant, Sherry finds Vancouver "fake" and a very difficult social context in which to integrate, but she likes it because it is close to the US. Her current and future re-location is based on which city, in China or North America, can help her advance her career. Sherry is ready to move to better her personal opportunities at any time: "I do have Canadian papers, but I don't care. It's about the money. You still have to pay for your flight, right?"[33] She is now considering going back to China, to Beijing or Shanghai, because it is now more opened to the world, more cosmopolitan. For her, travel is an important part of what she likes to do and she wants to be able to continue travelling more and more, with no particular attachment to specific places.

Sherry's story speaks of her own ways of perceiving what the neo-liberal dream is and the ways in which she can, in her mind, achieve it. Despite her strong personal feelings for both China and Montréal, Sherry utilizes her status as a desirable migrant at the gateway to work towards her life goals. Her choice of Vancouver is especially interesting, because she somewhat dislikes it. Vancouver, as gateway, is promoting mobility between East/China and West, especially targeting migrants like Sherry. In this environment, Sherry may be more successful in becoming a rich and powerful businesswoman than, for example, in Ottawa or Montréal, where her linguistic limitations in French may hinder such achievement. Despite her dislike for Vancouver, like many other young professionals, Sherry's story speaks of the importance of the gateway social codes in place that are favourable to her situation and that may facilitate her re-location in the near future to a city she prefers elsewhere. It also speaks of the importance she gives to travel in defining her successful neo-liberal life to the detriment of a physical location in which she enjoys living. Sherry's story is quite telling of the personal sacrifices required by the young neo-liberal subject to instrumentalize gateway social codes and make specific locations work to their advantage. It speaks to the systemic sustainability problems gateway projects based on neo-liberal assumptions developed, especially in terms of keeping highly skilled workers and professionals.

Conclusion

Individuals living at the gateway, either considered desirable migrants or not, are negotiating not only with the state authorities' constructions and practices of their gateway initiatives. They are also negotiating with the many social codes performed, reproduced and imposed in everyday life by gatekeepers and other individuals. From the individual stories gathered, it is possible to find many points of contention with the state authorities and

gatekeepers' positions in everyday gateway politics. These individual perspectives are giving us an insight into the gateways' social codes and their parameters. They are also showing how neo-liberal frameworks delimit gateway projects and how social codes like neo-liberal mobility create important disarticulations in everyday gateway political and social life. These stories are also helpful in framing specific social issues developing as part of everyday gateway politics. One of these issues is notably the false and artificial distinction created between an international student and a young professional. Considered both desirable migrants, their stories show the continuity of the everyday transitional life from one to the other and the ways in which state authorities are actually facilitating the transition from one to the other. Both the international student and the young professional are two other tools by which state authorities can actually recruit and incite participation to their neo-liberal gateway projects in various forms.

Endnotes

[1] The functional distinction between international students and young professionals finds limitations in the preferred use of the 'desirable' migrant, as it ensures to take into account the fluidity and continuity from one category to the other.

[2] Paul Ricœur. *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 147-84, 1981; Alfred Schutz. *Life Forms and Meaning Structure.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul: 96-127, 1982.

[3] Ludwig Wittgenstein. *Philosophical Investigations.* Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers: § 180, 1997.

[4] Petra [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an executive of the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan. Notebook. Singapore, 18 February 2008; Gerard [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an executive of the Teochew Poit Ip Huay Kuan. Notebook. Singapore, 14 March 2008; ----. Collective interview with five youth members of the Char Yong (Dabu) Association. Notebook. Singapore, 16 February 2008.

[5] See Susan Strange. "Towards a Theory of Transnational Empire." In Roger Tooze and Christopher May (eds). *Authority and Markets: Susan Strange's Writings on International Political Economy.* New York: Palgrave MacMillan: 141-55, 2002.

[6] Cathy [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a Chinese young female professional living in Singapore. Notebook. Singapore, 23 January 2008; Martin [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a Chinese young male professional living in Singapore. Notebook. Singapore, 19 February 2008.

[7] Felicity [fictitious name]. Personal interview with Chinese professional involved in some clan associations' activities. Notebook. Singapore, 17 January 2008.

[8] Frida [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a Chinese Christian church manager. Notebook. Vancouver, 6 June 2008.

[9] ----. Collective interview with four international Chinese students. Notebook. Vancouver, 24 April 2008.

[10] Carl [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a local Chinese news director in the Greater Vancouver area. Notebook. Richmond, 3 November 2008.

[11] Michel de Certeau. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. London: University of California Press: preface, 1984.

[12] Some elements of this section have already been published. See Jean Michel Montsion. "Re-locating Politics at the Gateway: Everyday Life in Singapore's Global Schoolhouse." Accepted for publication in *Pacific Affairs*. Forthcoming.

[13] Chris [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a Chinese international student. Notebook. Singapore, 22 February 2008.

[14] See Saw Swee-Hock. *The population of Singapore*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies: 262, 2007.

[15] Harry [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an executive of the Overseas Chinese Students Union. Notebook. Singapore, 8 March 2008; Nanyang Technological University Chinese Society. "Sponsors." 2008. (http://clubs.ntu.edu.sg/chinesesoc/eng/page34/page34.html). Last accessed on 14 April 2008.

[16] ----. Collective interview with five youth members of the Char Yong (Dabu) Association. Notebook. Singapore, 16 February 2008.

[17] Melanie [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a former Chinese international student at UBC and now nurse in the Greater Vancouver area. Notebook. Vancouver, 30 May 2008.

[18] Alex [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a local expert of social services catering to Chinese populations in the Greater Vancouver. Notebook. Vancouver, 14 May 2008; Frank [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a person involved with SUCCESS everyday operations. Notebook. Vancouver, 22 May 2008.

[19] Bruce [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a person involved in SUCCESS everyday operations. Notebook. Vancouver, 9 May 2008; Frida [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a Chinese Christian church manager. Notebook. Vancouver, 6 June 2008.

[20] Maxime [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a young Chinese Singaporean professional. Notebook. Singapore, 7 February 2008.

[21] Participant observation at a Chinese New Year Celebration. Organized by the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Notebook. Singapore, 7 February 2008

[22] Gary [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an executive of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Notebook. Singapore, 22 January 2008.

[23] Tristan [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a young Chinese professional living in Vancouver. Notebook. Vancouver, 22 May 2008.

[24] Tristan [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a young Chinese professional living in Vancouver. Notebook. Vancouver, 22 May 2008.

[25] Bruce [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a person involved in SUCCESS everyday operations. Notebook. Vancouver, 9 May 2008; Participant observation at an Official Networking Event. Organized by a business group. Notebook. Vancouver, 8 May 2008; Participant observation and the 2008 Sichuan Earthquakes Vigil, Remembrance Ceremony. Organized by the Chinese Students and Scholars Association of the University of British Columbia. Notebook. Vancouver, 30 May 2008; Participant observation at a Monthly Gathering. Organized by a Chinatown-based community association. Notebook. Vancouver, 3 June 2008.

[26] Participant observation at an Official Event. Organized by a neutral Chinese community association. Notebook. Vancouver, 16 May 2008.

[27] See Katharyne Mitchell. "Education for Democratic Citizenship: Transnationalism, Multiculturalism, and the Limits of Liberalism." *Harvard Educational Review* 72: 51-78, 2001.

[28] Certeau. Practice: 77-83, 123-9; Ricœur. Hermeneutics: 17-22.

[29] Aihwa Ong. *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty*. Durham: Duke University Press: 14, 2006.

[30] Martin [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a Chinese young male professional living in Singapore. Notebook. Singapore, 19 February 2008.

[31] Lucille [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an undergraduate student. Notebook. Singapore, 16 February 2008.

[32] Philip [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a Chinese international graduate student to UBC. Notebook. Vancouver, 5 May 2008.

[33] Sherry [fictitious name]. Personal interview with Chinese young female professional with Canadian permanent residency. Notebook. Vancouver, 11 May 2008.

Conclusion:
Gateway life and the *international*

From my critical assessment of both the Singaporean and Canadian state authorities' gateway projects, three main themes can be drawn and discussed: (1) gateway initiatives and alternative representations made by gatekeepers living at the gateway are putting into perspective a traditional understanding of *international mobility* and the ways in which it is enabled and restricted following specific frameworks of thought and action; (2) gateway projects between East/China and the West build on and help shaping many layers of *substantive social processes*, giving some structure to the international political economy, such as ethnic-based networks and transnational religious movements; and (3) gateway initiatives based on *neo-liberalism* tend to disarticulate political life at the gateway and limit the success of everyday gateway life to economic success and desire. From these three themes, implications for future research will be discussed. Despite forthcoming work which will further problematize places constructed as gateways between East/China and West, an everyday perspective allows us to focus on the complexity of social practices that give meaning to the *international*. This approach brings us a better understanding of these gateways based on the layered series of observations and an emphasis on the conversations of social life trajectories. Moreover, it has specific implications for the discipline of International Relations (IR), as an everyday life perspective enriches and complements many traditional IR understandings of cities like Singapore and Vancouver.

International mobility

The gateway metaphor has developed in both Singapore and Vancouver around the *problématique* of enabling mobility across two conceived civilizations: East/China and the West. By allowing and restricting mobility in very specific ways, state authorities and gatekeepers' actions are framing their understandings and uses of this gateway narrative, as a delimited performative of where East meets West. Whereas mobility is restricted in practice, the myth of consuming international mobility has made its way as an intricate part of the role and competitive advantage of gateways between East/China and the West.

International mobility speaks of marketed strategies that developed in both Singapore and Vancouver, particularly for international students and young professionals. Based on mobility capital, there is added symbolic value given to experiences, study, and work opportunities at the gateway, as if the contact with another civilization, and especially the fact that one is living across borders, makes a degree or an employment position more significant. The University of British Columbia (UBC), as with its counterparts in

Singapore, is for example marketing to Chinese and American international students based on this idea of experiencing unique insights and developing potential opportunities in another civilization.

By catering to a specific targeted audience, deemed *desirable* by state authorities – with the support (to some extent) of gatekeepers – international mobility is constructed at the gateway as something that is produced, sold and consumed. Gatekeepers like the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI) and Vancouver's Pui Ying Christian Services Society have adapted to their state construction of a gateway project by refining their understandings and practices of their role to focus on international experiences, considered and perceived as optimizing on the most profitable channels, audiences and programs.[1] The success of this new direction through mobility capital helps gradually change these associations to fit the consumers of mobility's interests, desires and concerns; making gatekeepers intricate parts of the mobility field of activity between East/China and the West developing at the gateway.

Everyday gateway politics develops from the production, marketing and consumption of international mobility, notably between well-established and emerging gatekeepers. Well-established gatekeepers such as the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan and Vancouver's United Chinese Community Enrichment Services Society (SUCCESS) have adapted to new gateway priorities and *desirable* migrants by funding and offering volunteering opportunities to international students.[2] Emerging gatekeepers, such as Singapore's Overseas Chinese Students Union and UBC's Chinese Students and Scholars Association, also appeared on campuses, to cater separate events and programs aimed at the same kind of audience. The main distinctions are in the emerging gatekeepers' linkages to the People's Republic of China's (PRC) interests and concerns, usually framed through ideas of ethno-cultural difference.[3] Important power relations are getting constantly re-defined between gatekeepers and their alternative understandings and representations of the gateway, as well as their own role within ever-changing gateway conditions.

Mobility capital, as a fetishization of borders, is embedded in the power relations at play, since mobility is usually accessed by people who can choose to be mobile and engage in international mobility as market.[4] State authorities and gatekeepers are not only fighting to maximize their profits and reputation, they are fighting to integrate the elite migrants to their social networks: people who are conceived to be future elite generations. Mobility capital is, therefore, geared towards elite to give them more prestige and reputation, as well as to bring them in specific circles from where they can, in the future, give back to these locations, states and gatekeepers. In neo-liberal terms, elite migrants as self-governed entrepreneurs are *ethically* perceived as better migrants because they can profit state authorities economically with minimal social support and political intervention.[5] Gatekeepers' increasing

involvements with the elite migrants may be justified differently, markedly in terms of necessity, but remains reification of a neo-liberal mentality framed within the power relations at play and present at the gateway.

International students and young professionals are not only desirable migrants for their capacity to be self-governed entrepreneurs. They also fuel many derivative industries to their direct participation to universities, colleges and corporations. With international students fees, supplementary language courses, everyday accommodation, insurance, transportation and so forth, they are as elite migrants, people with some means, ideal migrants who become more generally sources of economic stimulation.

Layers of substantive social processes

Despite the development and reproduction of the mobility field at the gateway by state authorities and gatekeepers, a plurality of social dynamics have been present, re-shaped and shaping the performances of gateway projects in both Singapore and Vancouver. For example, the use (or not) of the notion of Chinese diaspora in locations constructed *between* East/China and the West can be understood as an intricate part of the power relations at play, notably from businesspeople and intellectuals, who can profit from this use, and make their voice heard. From transnational ethnic-based business networks to global social issues of human rights and political persecution, significant substantive social processes find presence at the gateway and are making for complex sites of everyday international political economy (IPE) and everyday gateway politics.

In the context of the economic 'rise' of China and the emerging markets of the East, the development of supplementary industries in hybrid locations such as Singapore and Vancouver has been illustrated by the rise of the demand for international education and opportunities to cross-civilizational borders. More specifically, Singapore's positioning in the current context of IPE and international affairs, includes regional tensions in which it is still perceived as the 'Chinese island', regrouping a lot of financial resources deemed to have been appropriated with a questioned legitimacy.[6] In this perception and with Singapore's economic achievements, it has been perceived at the regional level and now in both China and Western societies, as a safe haven, a strong first step to the region with a clean and safe local environment, especially for people of Chinese origin.[7] In the case of Vancouver, historical developments since the Cold War and involving the 1997 annexation of Hong Kong to the PRC have influenced its development as gateway, a project developed from the top-down for Canadian state authorities to stop looking South to the United States for economic development and to start looking East.[8] With circular migration patterns developing between China/Hong Kong and Vancouver, current developments involve significant redefinitions of power relations and

identities as Eastern/Chinese/Hong Kongese living in Vancouver, and particularly involving the rise of strong players from the Mainland.[9]

In relation to broad IPE movements, gateway projects in Singapore and Vancouver have built on and are built through specific trajectories of substantive cross-border social processes. In Singapore, one has to stress the importance of ethnic-based business transnational networks that have developed globally, especially in Southeast Asia, and especially since the political and economic opening of China. Either through the SCCCI or more traditional forms of transnational ethno-cultural belonging such as Chinese clan associations, these trajectories are showing more precise players and channels by which gateway initiatives in Singapore are experienced. They are also appropriating gateway initiatives beyond state authorities' views to fit their own understandings and representations of international affairs between East/China and the West, such as the matchmaker and particular dialect-based bridges. Moreover, they are representative of broader trajectories. The importance of associations catering to international students, former students and young professionals are especially important in the context of East Asia, where alumni associations have been proven to be a new powerful transnational force in Asia.[10] By developing from the interests and concerns of the people who are seen to be future local elites and elite migrants, these associations such as the Kowloon Club add influential individuals into their rank, and are influencing both local gateway politics and international trajectories from the gateway.[11]

In the case of Vancouver, one has to stress, despite the important and precise trajectories well-established between Vancouver and Hong Kong, the importance of social processes that are developing transnationally in a unique way. For example, the well-documented process of *astronaut families* linking Hong Kong to Vancouver is now expanding to other ethno-cultural groups and markedly the Mainlanders coming to Vancouver.[12] Speaking of the racism of a local context such as Vancouver, it also expresses the use of a Western destination for its perceived quality of life versus *home* in Hong Kong or China, understood as a familiar and successful environment in which to do business.[13] Moreover, the importance of religious life, in parallel to the increasing importance demographically and sociologically in Vancouver's everyday life from the Mainland speaks of broader social processes developing at an international scale.[14] Since Chinese Christian churches are booming in a context where religion is still officially considered illegal in the PRC, religious life in Western societies is getting re-defined and revamped from international migration patterns, notably coming from the East.[15]

Gateway projects in Singapore and Vancouver are also constructed on the exclusion of substantive social processes taking presence at the gateway. Like the stories of Chris and Melanie tell us, gateway initiatives are created on specific spatial and temporal limitations to include and exclude the *un/desirable*.[16] As such, dynamics like the social consequences of increased

migration from Mainland China are excluded from a state focus on gateway initiatives. It is through the actions of gatekeepers that one can see the linkages between the increased numbers of Chinese migrant and increased social tensions with local populations in both Singapore and Vancouver, either between populations of different Chinese origin or between different racial/ized social groupings.[17] These gatekeepers' actions are also pointing at the effects gateway initiatives have in shaping particular local social realities, such as inflation, housing affordability and even crime.[18]

Moreover, stories like the ones of Maxime and Tristan show how gatekeepers are also silencing specific social realities from their understandings and practices of the gateway, such as agism and heteronormativity.[19] Whereas the *old ways* of doing business still influence and frame business practices at the gateway, mythical processes like the *astronaut family* have framed what a nuclear family is. Despite the increasing importance of social processes such as young professionals' new business techniques and successes as well as increasing international migration patterns of queer people to Western societies, these gateway initiatives are still based on privileged neo-liberal understandings of social positionality.[20]

Struggling with neo-liberalism

One particular theme of gateway projects and their appropriations by various gatekeepers has been the disciplining processes by which neo-liberal social codes are anchored and evolving in gateway locations like Singapore and Vancouver. Neo-liberalism, understood in Aihwa Ong's terms as a political project based on the freedom of both markets and the self-governed entrepreneur to engender and define wealth,[21] had deep impacts in re-shaping gateway everyday life.

Gatekeepers are seen as the first ones to struggle with the neo-liberal assumptions on which gateway projects are built. On the one hand, they do profit from making their activities part of gateway projects. They can justify their social relevance and make profits as an organization by entering this neo-liberal mentality and targeting the neo-liberal subject by their activities. Influential Chinese clan associations and the new migrant associations in Singapore are functioning as corporations and are supplementing to the Singaporean authorities' neo-liberal understanding of their gateway by supporting both the desirable migrant's integration and expanding economic opportunities for and on behalf of the gateway.[22] Similarly, the Hong Kong-Canada Business Association in Vancouver has evolved and became more influential by catering to the desirable migrants and corporations' needs to enter Chinese markets, which in terms of Vancouver, makes the gateway ride Hong Kong's wave of success.[23]

On the other hand, many gatekeepers' activities are questioning the lack of substantive commonalities in gateway projects by procuring some to their membership. Besides their role in problematizing the *un/desirable*

distinction by catering to the people forgotten and not addressed by state authorities' gateway projects, gatekeepers are offering, through their alternative representations of the gateway, substantive political projects. As ways of discussing and acting upon what is conceived to be good/bad in common,[24] gatekeepers are offering, for example, religious life, ethno-cultural communities, professional social circles for young families and various forms of giving back. They are offering ways to complement and fill in a political need at the gateway.[25]

Even in Singapore where state authorities are trying to push their public interest into institutionalized programs such as the bonded scholarships to fuel its pool of *foreign talent*, the lack of *true* political projects beyond economic gains has not only put gatekeepers' trajectories in precarious and ambiguous relations to state authorities. This absence has directly impacted the individual and particularly the desirable migrant, getting disciplined by various gateway social codes in his or her everyday life. Where the model of the self-governed entrepreneur reigns supreme, these social codes disarticulate further political and social life at the gateway by privatizing political concerns and social issues and by making the idea of community life, a choice – notably based on future economic and career-based opportunities. It has been brought up in people like Lucille and Philippe looking for a better political life away from the gateway and in people like Martin and Sherry a total instrumentalization of gateway life.[26] When state authorities for both Singapore and Vancouver have pushed their neo-liberal assumptions to frame their projects, they have simultaneously developed strong limitations to the social developments in both locations. The recurrent problem with neo-liberal mobility, as gateway social code, is that it reifies concerns about the sustainability of gateways. Since it incites the development of deterritorialized desires and needs of individuals, it exacerbates the vulnerabilities of territorially-defined gateway projects.

Future research possibilities

An everyday life perspective of cities marketed as gateways between East/China and the West helps us understand the frames and limitations through which state authorities must act. In this research, the gateway metaphor used to market locations between East/China and West is first linked to the perceived advantages for cities bridging disparate cultures and civilizations in the context of the economic 'rise' of China. From San Francisco to Hong Kong, and other Chinese and Australian cities as well, privileged linkages between East/China and West are promoted in new ways, well beyond initiatives that focus on international students and young professionals.[27] As such, increased systematic research on these gateways and their relations to one another can help better explain developments in IPE and reveal less-observed transnational connections. An in-depth study of the recent developments in Hong Kong, for example, would be insightful not only

to see Hong Kong's transnational connections to Singapore and Vancouver, but to contrast marketing strategies of gateways from *within* and *outside* China.

Moreover, this research critically frames states' gateway initiatives through the particular relational meanings that emerge in peoples' everyday lives. This study shows the impacts of Singapore and Vancouver's gateway initiatives on the marketing and fetishization of borders between East/China and West, especially for elite migrants and local populations. Incorporating many local community associations and their efforts to reconcile the state-sponsored neo-liberal gateway initiatives to their own objectives, allows us to see how gateway initiatives are not only a disciplinary force but also a series of social codes, such as the myth of the *self-governed entrepreneur.* Gateway initiatives can also be seen as fragile enterprises to the extent that they lack strong political and social embeddedness. Singapore and Vancouver, as gateway locations, have been plagued by problems of sustaining economic and social development. Attempting to keep resources at the gateway becomes a challenge when the dominant political rationality of gateways is individualized neo-liberalism. Separating a sense of belonging and over-emphasizing the importance of economic opportunities through neo-liberal mobility, gateway projects seem unable to avoid these problems of sustainability. They cater to, while disciplining, their elite migrants, exaggerating the importance of their mobility and the capacity to move based on economically driven motivations.

The emphasis of this research on the glorification of neo-liberal mobility across the East/China and West divide can be complemented by future research on other mechanisms by which people are disciplined at the gateway. A focus on the actions of gatekeepers, as Chinese community associations living at the gateway, helps us explain the specific importance of the everyday social codes through which ethnicized groups and individuals struggle, while de-emphasizing their linkages and similarities to Western gatekeepers and less ethnicized gateway practices. People in their everyday lives appropriate neo-liberal gateway social codes beyond ethno-centric circles and the theme of neo-liberal mobility across civilizational lines. For example, a forum like Vancouver's Gung Haggis Fat Choy, a Chinese New Year event mixed with Scottish traditions, has become an important annual business networking event in Vancouver and even in Seattle.[28] It speaks more directly of the transformative capacity of gateway initiatives and neo-liberal social codes to deconstruct ethnicity as an impediment for local business and to facilitate mobility across civilizational lines.

In this view, an everyday life methodology finds its relevance and strength in the process of gathering some of the everyday trajectories of people dealing strategically or not with gateway initiatives. This process is helpful to shed new light on the relations between daily life actions and substantive transnational social processes as well as overall IPE dynamics. In other words, a systematic questioning of everyday people's practices and

understandings of gateway initiatives presents otherwise untold stories of gateway initiatives. These stories reveal the less-observed relations between daily life actions and the larger dynamics in such a way that we begin to understand the specific parameters from which we can assess gateway initiatives.

Everyday life and the discipline of IR

My critical assessment of gateway projects in both Singapore and Vancouver brought up discussions which many IR theorists would deem relevant for other disciplines, such as Sociology, Anthropology, Geography and so forth. In contrast to traditional IR investigations, an everyday life perspective requires a *more* pluri-disciplinary understanding and investigation of both locations. By looking for example at the role of ethnicity, religion and language in structuring power relations and representations at the gateways, an everyday life perspective puts social practices at large on the centre-stage.

Against IR's tendency for self-referentiality, this everyday life perspective focuses on the social codes at play and their development in gateway locations. These social codes are the glue making international processes a local concern and giving to local power relations, international significance. For example, neo-liberal idea(l)s, representations of Chineseness and expectations about international mobility are structuring and making international relations to the extent that they are anchored in everyday life and that people are reproducing their belief in them.

Everyday IR is based on the stories and actions of people in their everyday lives and how they construct and question matters considered *international*. This approach remains quite ambivalent in giving a definition of the *international*, since it is necessarily changing and fought for by people giving meanings to it. On the one hand, the actions of people in their everyday lives tend to show that the *international* is mostly experienced locally, when people create places where they are at home and others that are considered foreign. On the other hand, the action of crossing borders, especially in a gateway context, is fetishized and develops a specific mythical quality. It is this ambivalence of constructing and deconstructing the *international* that makes everyday IR a productive approach to better understand the substance, scope and limitations of such notions in understanding how the world works.

Moreover, such perspective re-situates the role of the researcher as negotiating him or herself with many everyday social codes, including disciplinary pressures, ethical questions and perceptions researchers may get from participants to their investigation. As a situated being, the researcher's subjectivity and positionality are put at the forefront, not as a vulnerability, but rather as a frame to one's understanding and contribution. Better served by the hermeneutic than the scientific tradition to IR and Social Sciences,[29] the everyday researcher becomes both the flâneur, walking through his or her

case study to understand its intricacies, and the playwright, putting together the various stories gathered to have a more layered understanding of his or her object of study.

Everyday IR cannot but remain at the margins of the discipline of IR, because it strives on putting in perspective IR's core notions and showing their fluidity and various adaptations in everyday life. It is an approach that cannot offer clear, systemic and macro-explanations of the world. While recognizing that the discipline of IR fulfils specific roles and expectations in our everyday life, everyday IR focuses on the complexity, messiness and ever-changing social codes, supplementing mainstream IR approaches. By offering different layers to traditional understandings of IR, it has a *definite* ambivalent place, at the margins.

Endnotes

[1] Gary [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an executive of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry. Notebook. Singapore, 22 January 2008; Debra [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a representative of the Pui Ying Christian Services Society. Notebook. Vancouver, 19 June 2008.

[2] Petra [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an executive of the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan. Notebook. Singapore, 18 February 2008; Bruce [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a person involved in SUCCESS everyday operations. Notebook. Vancouver, 9 May 2008.

[3] Harry [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an executive of the Overseas Chinese Students Union. Notebook. Singapore, 8 March 2008; Mike [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a former president of the Chinese Students and Scholars Association of UBC. Notebook. Vancouver, 19 June 2008.

[4] Beverly Skeggs. *Class, Self, and Culture*. London: Routledge, 2004.

[5] Jonathan Xavier Inda. *Targeting Immigrants: Government, Technology, and Ethics*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2006.

[6] Lawrence [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an expert on ethnic relations in Malaysia and Indonesia. Notebook. Singapore, 30 January 2008.

[7] Marie-Geneviève [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a young Chinese Malaysian working in Singapore. Notebook. Singapore, 27 January 2008.

[8] Alice [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a local news director. Notebook. Richmond, 14 May 2008; Rick [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a senior official at the Vancouver airport authority. Notebook. Vancouver, 28 May 2008.

[9] Carl [fictitious name]. Personal interview with a local Chinese news director in the Greater Vancouver area. Notebook. Richmond, 3 November 2008.

[10] See AnnaLee Saxenian with Yasuyuki Motoyama and Xiaohong Quan. *Local and Global Networks of Professional Immigrants in Silicon Valley*. San Francisco: Public Policy Institute of California, 2002.

[11] Matt [fictitious name]. Personal interview with an executive of the Kowloon Club. Notebook. Singapore, 20 February 2008.

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