

Beyond the supermarket

Acculturation processes of the Chinese diaspora
& the Argentinian society

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Abstract

The Chinese diaspora account for almost 120.000 people in Argentina, and they represent the fourth largest foreign community in the country. Not only the newcomers needed to adapt to the Argentinian culture, but also the host members needed to adjust to the new culture they were receiving. This thesis aims at explaining how both, the Chinese diaspora members and the Argentinians experienced the acculturation processes as a result of the interaction of the two cultures. The Chinese immigrant situation in the country is considered through a broad framework including economic, social and cultural aspects. The acceptance and interest of the Argentinians towards the Chinese culture is analyzed from the participation of the host members in activities, institutions and celebrations that used to be exclusively for the Chinese community. Both situations are examined under relevant theoretical concepts within the Acculturation studies with special focus on the work of John Berry (2005), Young Kim (1977, 1982) and Annie Montreuil & Richard Bourhis (2001, 2004).

The paper concludes that the Chinese people in Argentina is considered as “valued” immigrants, specially compared to Bolivians, Paraguayans and Peruvians, who represent the three largest foreign communities in the country and are considered as “devalued” immigrants. Moreover, the most difficult obstacle to overcome for this diaspora was the language barrier, followed by the acquisition of a local social network. From the acculturation strategies developed by Berry (2005), it can be inferred that the Chinese immigrants who arrived to Argentina when they were still young, were more likely to endorse acculturation strategies such as integration. In contrast, immigrants who arrived in Argentina when they were already adults, usually followed acculturation strategies such as separation. Finally, from the perspective of the host society and following the five acculturation orientations presented by Montreuil & Bourhis (2001, 2004), it can be induced that Argentinians are more likely to endorse orientations such as integrationism or individualism towards the Chinese diaspora settled down in the province of Buenos Aires, rather than segregationism, assimilationism or exclusionism.

Keywords: Chinese diaspora – Chinese culture – Argentina – Acculturation strategies – Acculturation orientations

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List of Abbreviations

AAACHI	Civil Association of friendship among Chinese and Argentinians
AAMTCA	Association of Traditional Chinese Martial Arts
ACCACH	Civil Association for the Cooperation Argentina - China
ACP	Africa – Caribbean – Pacific
AMAMARCH	Metropolitan Association of Chinese Martial Arts
CASRECH	Chamber of Supermarkets and Self-services owned by Chinese Residents in Argentina
CEAM	Special Committee on Migration Issues
CELAC	Community of Latin American and Caribbean Countries
CELADE	Population Division for the Economic Commission of Latin American and the Caribbean Countries
CONICET	National Council of Scientific and Technical Research
CPC	Chinese Communist Party
DC	District of Columbia
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL)
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
ICUBA	Confucius Institute of the University of Buenos Aires (UBA)
INDEC	Statistics and Census National Institute of Argentina
IOM	International Organization for Migration
LA	Latin America
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
MPI	Migration Policy Institute
No.	Number
OAS	Organization of American States
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
PRC	People's Republic of China
SSRC	Social Science Research Council
U.S.	United States
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economical and Social Affairs
VIP	Very important person
Vol.	Volume
WB	World Bank

1. Introduction

**- What comes to your mind when you think
about the Chinese in Argentina? -**

SUPERMARKETS! – Is probably the most popular answer to this question and it is effectively based on real facts: there are 6.000 Chinese supermarkets located all over Argentina, from which 4.500 are located in the city of Buenos Aires. There is one Chinese supermarket every 900 meters in the capital city and one Chinese supermarket every 2.000 meters in greater Buenos Aires (Varise 2011). 42% of the consumers in the capital do their shopping in such establishments (Rodiño 2006) and 8.000AR\$¹ is the average revenue per day (I Profesional 2011). The Chinese community in Argentina, specially the one settled down in Buenos Aires province, has definitely changed the rules of the national supermarket business. Nevertheless, the mark of the Chinese diaspora in the country goes further than its economic impact; typical Chinese activities, customs, traditions and celebrations are experiencing a growing participation of the Argentinian society. The Chinese stamp in the country seems to spread as the migration flow of Chinese individuals to Argentina keeps increasing.

We are living in an era characterized by profound migration flows. People are moving from their hometowns to new places and the purposes are many, so are the implications and consequences. According to the 2013 World Migration Report of the International Organization for Migration, the number of international migrants was estimated at 220 million in 2013. In addition, according to the World Bank (2010), five out of the top ten emigration countries were in Asia in 2010 and China was the fourth emigration country with 8.5 million people moving abroad. Argentina is probably not the most selected destination for the Chinese immigrants, but for the second biggest South American country, the Chinese diaspora represents the fourth largest foreign community living within its borders. The Chinese community accounts today for almost 120.000 persons within a nation of 42 million people. According to specialists (Bogado 2011), the migration flow from China to Argentina is going to continue, as the country is recovering well in terms of its economy since the deep crisis in 2001.

¹ 1USD is approximately 8.00AR\$.

Argentina remains one of the top immigrant-receiving countries in the region. Its popular multicultural profile seems attractive for people who are planning to move abroad. The first migration flows were coming from Europe and they contributed to fill a young nation characterized by its empty, immense lands and little working force. In the 21st century, regional movements, specially the immigration from bordering states, are what currently characterize the migration flows to the country. Poverty, famine, violence, lack of job opportunities, precarious health system and sanitary conditions are some of the main push factors of countries such as Bolivia, Paraguay and Peru. Immigration flows from these nations represent the largest foreign communities in Argentina, causing in turn, huge demographic and social impacts. The Argentinian society is said to be born due to a multi-ethnic melting pot, but nowadays, the level of tolerance towards immigrants, together with the migration flows, have slightly changed (Pacecca & Courtis 2008).

For Argentinians, immigrants from Europe, immigrants from China, and regional immigrants are different. This is in fact, one of the starting points of this thesis; why do people have preferences towards the settlement of immigrants coming from a specific country or region, and how the stereotypes are created in relation to “valued” and “devalued” immigrants. The second starting point has to do with the lack of studies within the national context about the Chinese diaspora and the Chinese culture in Argentina. The Chinese community is an active part of the economic system and many academics and media have already documented this, however, the social aspect of this growing Asian group has not yet been deeply examined. Perspectives about the daily life and adaptation of the Chinese in the Argentinian society have been the general norm, but how the Argentinians have received and adapted to them is relatively an uncertain field. This latter fact represents the third starting point for the current investigation. In general terms, acculturation researches put emphasis on the immigrants’ viewpoint and how they adapt and integrate into the new host culture, not paying much attention to the host members’ attitude and their adjustment to the newcomers. The same situation takes place within the migration theoretical and empirical studies in Argentina and Latin America, where much effort and focus are put on the immigrants but less emphasis is put on the host society.

The main objective of this paper is to go into depth in the Chinese migration phenomenon in Argentina, accounting for its acculturation process and stressing the barriers they had to overcome in order to adapt to the new culture. As well, this work that remains part of my final examination to obtain my Master Degree in

Development and International Relations with a specialization on Chinese studies, intends showing how Argentinians experienced acculturation due to the presence and interaction with the Chinese diaspora settled down in the province of Buenos Aires in the last decades. From an academic perspective, the present study aims to be a departure point for further local research about the Chinese community in Argentina, specially having in mind that China is one of the most influential and active global players in the international system, and one of the main trade partners of the South American nation. A better understanding of the Chinese community and further knowledge about Chinese culture and language in the country could lead to progress and tighten relations with the possible future global power, as predicted by some International Relations scholars.

In order to achieve the previous general objectives, the paper will be conducted by following some of the most relevant statements of the Acculturation theory, specially the perspectives developed by acculturation experts such as John W. Berry, Young Yu Kim, and Anne Mountreuil & Richard Y. Bourhis. The paper is structured in a way so that the main hypothesis, which is the problem statement and its sub-research questions, can be explained and developed along the whole body of research. After this introduction, the problem formulation will be presented, followed by the methodological approach, where the reader can find how this thesis was planned and executed. Then, some background information regarding the Chinese diaspora in Argentina, the legal framework, the migration situation in the country, among other general but necessary issues are provided, specially focusing on aspects that are relevant for this project. Afterwards, the Acculturation theory applied to the case study is discussed in order to contribute to the analysis of the acculturation processes of the Chinese diaspora in Buenos Aires province and the adaptation of the Argentinian society as host culture to the Chinese community. Once the analysis is presented, partial considerations elaborated by the author are expressed, followed by the final conclusions of this paper. Later, it is possible to find the annexes, where the questionnaires conducted to significant characters for this study are exposed. Finally, all the material and bibliography used for the research is introduced.

2. Problem Formulation

The last celebration of the Chinese New Year in the Buenos Aires' Chinatown, better known as "Barrio Chino" in Spanish, has experienced the presence of more than 200.000 people (Czerwacki 2014). The majority of the participants were not Chinese but actually Argentinians. Besides, languages centers teaching Mandarin all over the country are becoming more and more frequented. As well, good news for the Chinese diaspora in Argentina (also for Argentinians who want to learn Chinese language) was the recent opening of the first bilingual school Spanish – Mandarin in Buenos Aires. The Chinese diaspora in Argentina is growing; there are almost 120.000 Chinese people living in the country and 80% of them are established in Buenos Aires province and particularly in the capital and its surroundings (Bogado 2011). The economic impact of this diaspora has been part of vast research but the cultural aspect of the Chinese settlement in the province has not yet being deeply investigated. On this basis, my problem formulation statement is:

How the Chinese diaspora and the Argentinians have experienced the acculturation process due to their interaction in the province of Buenos Aires?

In order to develop the previous problem formulation, the following sub-research questions are to be clarified:

Which cultural barriers did the Chinese diaspora had to overcome when settling down in Buenos Aires province?

According to the Acculturation theory and John W. Berry's four strategies, how the Chinese diaspora experienced the process of acculturation in Buenos Aires as a host place?

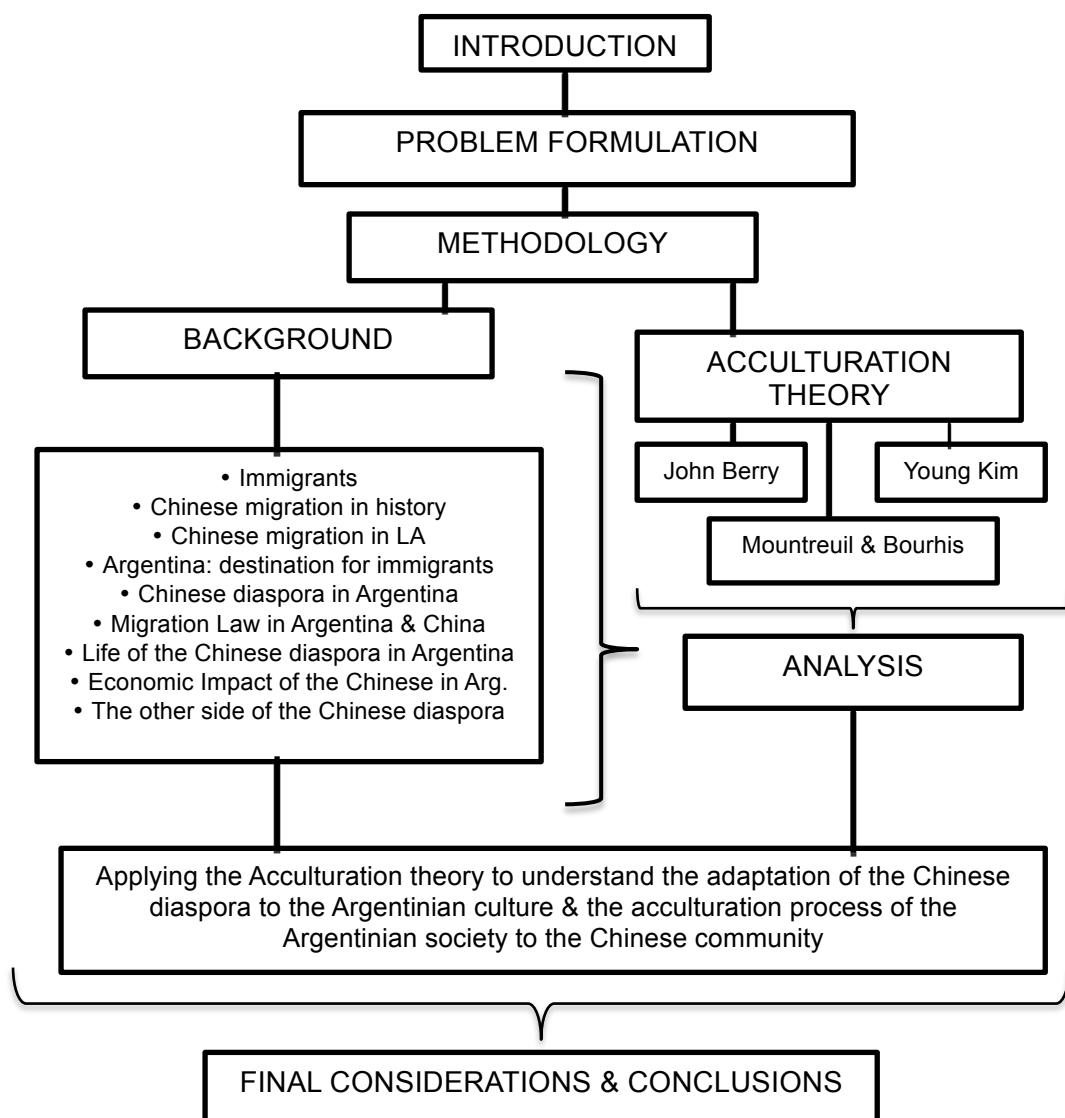
According to Anne Montreuil & Richard Y. Bourhis's acculturation orientations for the host society, how the Argentinians experienced the process of acculturation due to the presence of the Chinese diaspora?

How the Argentinians' general attitude towards the Chinese diaspora in the province of Buenos Aires can be described?

3. Methodological Approach

In this section, the tools used to produce this paper will be described in order to reach the aims defined in the introduction. The first step will be presenting the general methodology of the thesis through a clarifying scheme, followed by the research design, where the case study is exposed. Afterwards, the sources, methods, significances and limitations established for the research will be exposed. Finally, there is a brief presentation of the chosen theoretical framework and a clarification of two of the main key concepts used along the research.

3.1. Methodology



3.2. Research Design

Taking as a reference Alan Bryman's work (2012) and following his guideline and distinction between the different research methods, the design of the present paper was chosen. Among other kinds of research designs, this work follows a case study with the main focus on the Chinese diaspora in Buenos Aires, the most populous province in Argentina. As Schell (1992) points out, a case study is an empirical inquiry in which the researcher investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context and multiple sources of evidence are used. In this research, I will analyze the Chinese diaspora settled down in Buenos Aires some years ago, its adaptation and its acculturation process to the Argentinian culture. As well, the Argentinian adjustment to this diaspora is going to be examined. Regarding the sources and despite the popular misconception that case studies are limited to qualitative analysis, they can use both, qualitative and/or quantitative information (Schell 1992). In fact, along the paper, qualitative data is the main source, but quantitative information is also present. On the other hand, according to the classification of case studies into three categories, the exploratory (which is the traditional form), the descriptive, and the explanatory; this study will follow a combination of descriptive and exploratory case studies as relatively little research has been done in the area.

The reasons why the case study of the current paper is the Chinese diaspora in Buenos Aires province are plenty and are related to different aspects; the first is probably the most obvious, Argentina is the author of this thesis country of origin. Second, unfortunately there is not yet considerable research about the Chinese community in the country, not from a cultural perspective, although there are now a couple of Confucius Institutes in Buenos Aires and one center of Chinese studies. Taking into account the dimension of the Chinese community in the country and the economic dynamic they brought to the local economy, the presence of a body of academic investigations needs further development. On third place, the Chinese diaspora in the country is growing. Argentina keeps being among the recipient nations for Chinese overseas, therefore, an analysis about their needs and obstacles in adapting to the Argentinian culture should be deeper. There is already enough research about the economic impact of the Chinese diaspora in Argentina and also about the Argentina-China commercial ties, but the study of their cultural and social influence seems to be still in its initial stages.

3.3. Sources

The thesis will be mainly based on secondary sources; however, primary data will also be present, although on a smaller degree. Primary data in this paper does not represent the main source of information. The thesis is based on information taken from reports, researches and articles from different national and international agencies. For example, reports taken from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Migration and Remittances Factbook 2010 of the World Bank (WB). Researches, for example the one about migration corridors by the ACP (Africa, Caribbean & Pacific) Observatory on Migration, which is an organization funded by the European Union (EU).

Furthermore, I employed articles by recognized international organizations such as the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and researches held by the Organization of American States and its Special Committee on Migration Issues (CEAM-OAS) and by the population division for the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC, CEPAL in Spanish). The information used along the thesis and obtained from the previous sources, primarily from the WB and the UN and its branches, have an outstanding validity. They are reliable sources specially because they obtain the data themselves and they have direct access to the information. The collection of the data is corroborated and certified by the best specialists on each topic, thus, these prestigious organizations are usually the main sources for International Relations scholars and analysts.

I also consulted newspapers, journals and specialized magazines from Argentina, such as “La Nación” and “Clarín”, which are two of the most important Argentinians newspapers. As for magazines; I consulted “Dang Dai”, an Argentinian magazine with news from China; “I Profesional”, an economic website that belongs to “La Nación”, and “Revista Todavía”, a magazine specialized in culture and Latin American thought. Furthermore, I accessed to three online journals when searching about Chinese lifestyle in Buenos Aires; “Periodismo Actual”, “Danwai” and “La Autentica Defensa”. As well, the paper is based on information from many websites and online portals, such as the official website of the Government of Buenos Aires City consulted at www.buenosaires.gob.ar and the official website of Argentina available from www.argentina.gob.ar. I also found very useful some portals consulted online such as a local blog about people living in Buenos Aires called “All Buenos

Aires Cultural Blog”; “China Law Blog”, a Chinese portal about law issues and finally; the official website of the Chinese neighborhood in Buenos Aires city.

Some of the information is represented by investigations held by professionals as sinologists, International Relations scholars and migration analysts, such as R. Kent and Eduard Slack Jr., who are specialists in the diasporas movement in Latin America (LA); L. Hong, who is an immigration researcher for the IOM; R. Skeldon, who is an expert in migration issues for Asian countries; and finally, K. Newland, who is Co-Founder of the Migration Policy Institute (MPI), among other relevant researchers. Concerning Argentinians analysts on Chinese migration, few works can be cited, but specially relevant for my thesis are the investigations from L. Bogado Bordazar (2011): “La Inmigración China en la Argentina: principales flujos y proyecciones” and A. Pappier (2011): “Inmigración China en Argentina: el Barrio Chino de Buenos Aires como caso de estudio intercultural”, both researchers are part of the Centre of Chinese studies of La Plata University. Some other national agencies and organizations to collect useful data are: The Confucius center in Buenos Aires City and La Plata City; languages centers in Mar del Plata, La Plata and Buenos Aires depending respectively on the National Universities of those cities; martial arts academies; Chinese cultural associations; one Chinese Buddhist Temple in the Chinatown in Buenos Aires; and the Chamber of Supermarkets Owned by Chinese Residents (CASRECH).

Moreover, the general information about the Chinese community in Argentina and specifically in Buenos Aires, is mainly collected through documentaries, interviews and testimonies where it is possible to appreciate their lifestyle, personal experiences, positive and negative aspects of living in Argentina, obstacles they faced when settling down in the country, their jobs, family and friends, school and studies, among other personal perspectives and feelings. Some of the sources for this information have been different reports presented by the Centre of Chinese studies in Argentina and its researchers, a questionnaire made to Ma Huiwen (my ex Chinese teacher in Mar del Plata), newspaper articles, specially from La Nación and Clarín, and a documentary found online and produced by Gomez La Rosa (2010) for his journalistic online channel. Some of the sources for the quantitative data are reports, charts and informs from international agencies such as the World Bank, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC in Spanish), the Migration Policy Institute in Washington DC, and from national agencies such as the Chamber of Supermarkets

and Self Services owned by Chinese Residents, the National Immigration Bureau, and the National Institute of Statistics and Census of Argentina (INDEC).

The data collected from the previous national institutions such as INDEC, the National Immigration Bureau, and CASRECH; and from international organizations such as IOM and MPI, can be more reliable and precise than the ones obtained from newspapers and magazine's articles, since they have more resources and availability to collect trustworthy data. Moreover, in some cases, they provide figures that deal directly with transactions or operations they are involved in. For instance, the quantitative data regarding Chinese immigration to Argentina collected from the IOM's official website; the UNDESA's report "Migrants by origin and destination: the role of South-South migration" (2011); information from the Migration & Remittances Unit of the WB (2010); and researches such as "What we know about Diasporas and Economic Development" (2013) held by K. Newland and S. Plaza for the MPI. However, some data collected from newspapers, magazines, and portals, mentioned above, are more traceable. They offer a different perspective and personal points of view, which can contribute to the development of the analysis, specifically in dealing with migration issues. La Nación and Clarín are two of the most prestigious and most sold newspapers in the country and they are often cited in academic works. On the present paper, many articles, specially those that provide information about how the Chinese community lives in Argentina and how the Argentinians participate in Chinese celebrations, are taken from these two newspapers.

Some of the primary sources for quantitative as well as qualitative data that will be employed in the analysis, are taken directly from Chinese-Argentina organizations, associations, institutes, martial arts academies, language centers, a Chinese Buddhist Temple established in Buenos Aires and from Chinese specialized magazines and newspapers in Argentina. The collection of this information was personally accomplished via e-Mail, Facebook, other social networks and personal contact with the mentioned sources. The quantitative data collected here, will be crucial in understanding the degree of the adaptation and cultural impact of the Chinese diaspora in Buenos Aires province, its evolution through the years, and the general attitude of the Argentinians towards the Chinese community. As well, these data will be essential to comprehend the acculturation processes that resulted from the interaction between the Chinese culture and the Argentinian culture.

3.4. Methods

In order to reach an appropriate answer to the problem formulation, this paper will mainly deal with qualitative data, as the principle perspective is cultural. However, a portion of quantitative data will be presented as well, particularly when referring to the migration flows to the country and the continent, the immigrant's permanent/temporaries permits of residence, and the participation of Argentinians in Chinese activities and associations. Concerning to this last point, it is relevant to stress that the information gathered through the questionnaires prepared by myself to different languages centers, martial arts associations, different kinds of Chinese-Argentinian organizations, magazines specialized on Chinese news and relevant characters representing the Chinese community in Argentina, contributes to the present paper with useful and important data. The information personally collected gives powerful evidence to the research as well as it sustains the authenticity and reliability of it. The amount of qualitative data is wider than the quantitative data; therefore, the kind of study is predominantly qualitative, although defining the research, as a combination of qualitative and quantitative data could be also accurate.

Finally, the approach adopted in this thesis is deductive, which means that the study of a phenomenon is guided by one or more theories that contribute to answer a main problem. In the present paper, some aspects of the Acculturation theory, specially the concepts and ideas developed by John Berry (2005), Young Kim (1977, 1982) and Montreuil & Bourhis (2001, 2004), are applied in order to identify the acculturation process of the Chinese diaspora in Buenos Aires province as well as the adaptation process of the Argentinians to the newcomers. Different aspects of the Acculturation theory are going to be connected with the two perspectives of the cultural interaction between the Chinese diaspora and the Argentinian society.

3.5. Significances

Most academic analyses dealing with the Chinese impact in LA and Argentina adopt economic or trading perspectives. This thesis aims to contribute to the body of research about Chinese influence in LA and particularly in Argentina in two different ways. There is enough evidence of how the Chinese diaspora has economically changed the dynamic of the cities where they established, but there is little about

how they influenced the cultural dynamic of the hosting places. First, this study aims to support the growing interest that Argentinians have on Chinese culture, specially on Chinese language. Second, the work aims to complete and be part of the body of studies and researches about the Chinese community in Argentina. The Centre of Chinese Studies is in its initial stage, therefore, this kind of investigation can help the discipline to get broader and with a stronger presence for the future. China is a key global player, is one of the most relevant actors in the international scene apart from being the second largest Argentinian trade partner, thus, developing and supporting the growing interest on Chinese studies in the country is fundamental.

Finally, the research aims to strengthen the connection between the already known International Relations field with a more recent academic area, which are the Intercultural Relations studies. In this sense, the global nature of many widely diverse issues such as the environment, development, poverty, technology and international terrorism call for cooperation not only among nations, but also among cultures. Global problems that used to call the attention of International Affairs specialists are now also issues analyzed under intercultural lenses, because contemporary dilemmas have surpassed the boundaries of the states to reach the individuals, the social groups, the different communities and the most diverse kinds of cultures on earth. In sum, International Relations and Intercultural Studies; they both share a communication culture link and there is also the possibility of a shared experience and knowledge (Zaharna 2000).

3.6. Limitations

The limitations hereby do not follow an order of importance. One of the main limits to my paper is the lack of time as well as the limited length, reasons whereby the thesis is mainly based on secondary sources, although it deals with a small portion of primary sources, as it was mentioned before. Secondly, there is a geographical limitation. The focus is on the province of Buenos Aires and particularly on Buenos Aires city and its surroundings because is where almost 80% of the Chinese immigrants have established.

In addition, and regarding the chosen research design, I present some limitations to my work. One of the main criticisms to this kind of research has to do with the fact that one cannot generalize from a single case; therefore, the single case study cannot contribute to scientific development (Campbell & Stanley 1966 and

Diamond 1996 in Flyvbjerg 2006: 3). Unlike what is general believed, mainly in natural science, one can generalize in different ways as Giddens proposed (1984 in Flyvbjerg 2006), specially taking into account that generalizing depends upon the case one is speaking of (Flyvbjerg 2006: 8). In this respect, I assume that there may be certain difficulties generalizing this case information to other situations and to other Chinese diasporas around the world. Despite that this case study may not be applied to all Chinese overseas in Latin America or different parts of the globe, it is helpful in order to understand some changes that the Chinese diaspora can generate in a hosting culture, as well as it is helpful to achieve an overview of the main difficulties that Chinese overseas can face during the adaptation process.

Finally, I am aware that the execution of the research may lead to practical problems. For example, the access to information, specially because I am writing from China, where the Internet access is sometimes restricted. Besides, the study deals with a limitation related to value imputation by the different actors, specifically in the answers obtained from the questionnaires realized to many Chinese-Argentinian associations in Buenos Aires and the testimonies present in the documentary about the life of some Chinese people in Buenos Aires city. These two limitations, together with the fact that I do not employ sources in Chinese, due to the language barrier, need to be considered. Regarding this latter point, even though I am learning Chinese, I am still not able to comprehend academic material in Mandarin, and I am aware that including some bibliography in Chinese would have been valuable to carry on a more integral analysis, mainly in relation to the sources.

3.7. Theoretical Choice

I have chosen the Acculturation theory as the theoretical framework of the thesis because in these types of theories, culture occupies an essential role, as well as in my work. The concept of acculturation appears as early as 1880, but the earliest classic formulation comes from Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits (1936): “Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups” (p. 149). The concept has been used in fields like sociology, psychology, and cultural studies to explain the dynamics involved when people from diverse cultural backgrounds come into continuous contact with one another (Ngo 2008). Throughout the years,

theories of acculturation have evolved from the unidirectional school of thought with focus on assimilation, particularly developed by Milton Gordon (California State University 1964,1974) through his “Seven Stages of Assimilation” theory, to bidimensional perspectives such as the one developed by John W. Berry (1980, 2005). Berry is one of the main contributors to the field of acculturation psychology, specially because of his four-fold model of acculturation strategies, which is essential for this research.

Acculturation theories could potentially offer insights into multifaceted and versatile interactions between immigrants and the dominant culture. The processes of acculturation are complex and have often been dealt within the literature in confusing ways. Today, the literature about acculturation is extremely wide. However, in most of the cases, as Lakey (2003) explains, the focus has been only on the immigrants. This is the “monistic” view of the acculturation process, which sustains that changes occur primarily on the newcomers and was particularly developed by Marden and Meyer (1968).

Other well-known contributions to the vast acculturation theories have been the work of Young Kim (1977, 1982) and Kalervo Oberg (1960). Kim has become one of the main contributors from a communication perspective. “Communication is viewed as essential to the acculturation process; acculturation occurs through the identification and the internalization of the significant symbols of the host society” (Kim 1982 in Wichert 1996). Oberg’s contribution has to do with the introduction of the concept of “culture shock”, described as an “occupational disease...the anxiety that results from losing all of our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse such as customs and words” (Oberg 1960: 177). On the other hand, the acculturation research focus on the host culture has been particularly developed by Montreuil & Bourhis (2001; 2004), and more recently by Dominguez & Maya-Jariego (2008). These acculturation theorists, who represent a small and non-traditional stage of the acculturation research, highlight the impact and changes in the dominant culture when newcomers arrive to their home places and they are exposed to continuous contact to them.

For the purpose of the analytical section of this thesis, different acculturation theories and streams will be employed to different aspects of the case study, specifically because as explained before, different acculturation researches have focus on different sides of the same process. Firstly, Berry’s Acculturation theory and his four acculturation strategies presented in his article “Acculturation: Living

successfully in two cultures” (2005), will be employed to understand the adaptation of the Chinese immigrants in Argentina and the cultural barriers they had to overcome in the new culture. As well, some theoretical concepts from Young Kim and her works: “Communication and Acculturation” (1982) and “Communication patterns of foreign immigrants in the process of acculturation” (1977), will be employed to comprehend the differences regarding communication competences among the immigrants.

Secondly, Montreuil & Bourhis’s five acculturation orientations, basically expressed in two works: “Majority acculturation orientation towards valued and devalued immigrants” (2001) and “Acculturation orientations of competing hosting communities towards valued and devalued immigrants” (2004), are going to be employed in order to analyze the acculturation process of the Argentinian society due to the interaction with the Chinese diaspora. Moreover, based on two important theoretical concepts introduced by this host culture approach, the research will determine whether the Chinese community in Buenos Aires province is considered “valued” or “devalued” for the Argentinian society and explain its implications. As well, the analysis of the acculturation process of the host society will also be examined according to some relevant concepts and statements introduced by Berry (2005) for the host members.

3.8. Definition of Key Concepts

There are two main concepts used along the project that need to be clarified, specially because their meanings are pretty debatable and could lead to misunderstandings. Firstly, originally employed to describe the Jewish populations in the world, the term “diaspora” has evolved to incorporate a range of other people who have been seen to share similar misfortunes (Martin 2008). According to Robin Cohen (1997), diaspora is that group of people who share some key features; forced dispersal; communal suffering; uneasy relations with the host community; retained sense of group identity through cultural aspects (language, foods, religion); and the desire to return to a homeland.

Not all diaspora specialists agree that the Chinese communities overseas are actually a diaspora. For example, Wang (1991) argues that the term diaspora is misused in reference to Chinese. They tend to retain their cultural aspects, their dispersal is often not forced, and ties with the homeland are often retained over

many generations. In sum, according to Wang (1991), the Chinese diaspora is better described as “sojourners” and self identified as temporary migrants who retain cultural and family ties with their native places. Adam McKeown (1999) also challenges the usefulness of the traditional definition of diaspora when applied to Chinese migration. He argues that by focusing on the dispersal of institutions, identities, links and flows we can get a more global perspective on the narratives of Chinese migration (McKeown 1999: 307).

The present paper does not aim going deep upon this interesting but complex debate about whether the Chinese in Argentina should be called diaspora or sojourners. This study will consider the Chinese community in Buenos Aires province as either diaspora or Chinese overseas; both concepts will have the same meaning. Furthermore, in this study, the term diaspora does not have any negative connotation, it does not imply difficult relations with the host culture nor it implies any suffering or misfortunes, as the definitions suggested by Cohen (1997) and Martin (2008). The use of the term “diaspora” in this work tries to avoid any positive or negative connotation such as the meaning expressed by the Free Dictionary (2014) consulted online: “Diaspora is any group that has been dispersed outside its traditional homeland”. Diaspora will be used to indicate the group of Chinese immigrants settled down in Argentina, and also the term “Chinese community” is going to be employed as a synonymous of Chinese diaspora.

The second debatable concept is “acculturation”. Acculturation has become a well-recognized area of study, thus, many authors from diverse specializations have come up with different definitions of the same phenomenon. Acculturation is most often studied in individuals living in cities, countries or regions, other than where they were born, that is, among immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and sojourners. Acculturation’s studies focusing on the host society are not the main branch of the Acculturation theory, although this situation has recently started to being reverted. Some different definitions about acculturation can be cited in order to achieve a better comprehension of this cultural phenomenon.

Acculturation was originally conceptualized as a one-dimensional process in which keeping of the heritage culture and acquisition of the host culture were understood as opposing extremes of a single process. According to this model, as immigrants gain the values, practices, habits and beliefs of their new homelands, they are expected to abandon those from their original culture. One definition from this perspective is the one proposed by Marden & Meyer (1968); acculturation is the

change in individuals whose primary learning has been in one culture and who takes over traits from another culture. Lakey (2003), in his review of acculturation literature, cites a relevant viewpoint; the Social Science Research Council (SSRC)² has defined in 1954 acculturation as: "Culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems. Its dynamics can be seen as the selective adaptation of value systems" (Lakey 2003: 104). For Gibson (2001), the nature of the acculturation process will be shaped, at least in part, by where immigrants settle down, the ethnic and social class composition of the communities in which they settle, and whether or not they are surrounded by co-ethnics or are isolated from their ethnic culture.

Berry (2005) defines acculturation as the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members. Berry (2005) explains that contact and changes occur for a number of reasons, such as colonization, military invasion, migration, and sojourning, and it continues long after initial contact in culturally plural societies, where ethno-cultural communities maintain features of their heritage cultures. In addition, Montreuil & Bourhis (2001, 2004) suggest that acculturation is a term used to describe the process of bidirectional change that takes place when two ethno-cultural groups come in sustained contact. The definition of acculturation implies that dominant as well as non-dominant cultural groups are influenced by their respective culture as a means of adaptation. The authors assert the main trend in the acculturation approach; the lack of importance given to how the dominant host majority can shape and be shaped by the acculturation orientations of immigrants groups (Montreuil & Bourhis 2004: 508). Furthermore, Raymond & Bardin (1974) have worked on the clarification of the concepts of acculturation and assimilation; they are terms often used in the same way. They assert that acculturation and assimilation are separate processes. Assimilation is not a phase or a product of acculturation; rather, it is a separate and distinct process (Raymond & Bardin 1974: 364). Acculturation is not a result; it is a process that can be conceived as a group or an individual experience.

Finally, the communication approach to the study of acculturation needs to be mentioned, although only in recent years has become a focal point of the acculturation research (Lakey 2003:104). Communication is essential to the process

² The SSRC is an international organization pioneer in the studies of acculturation; they have profoundly influenced many fields of social inquiry since its foundation in 1923. More information available from <http://www.ssrc.org/about/>

of acculturation. Lakey (2003) explains; is the tool assisting the immigrants to satisfy their basic personal and social needs in the new host culture. As immigrants master the communication process of the host culture, they will become acculturated. In this sense, Young Kim, who has extensively contributed to this approach, asserts; “acculturation occurs through internalization of significant symbols of the host society” (Kim 1982 in Wichert 1996). Kim (1977) indicates that acculturation is a continuous process that evolves in and through the communication of an immigrant with the new socio-cultural environment. The acquisition of communication skills reflects the degree of the immigrant’s acculturation. Thus, communication is central as it facilitates the adaptation. The interpretation of acculturation employed along the paper will mainly be a combination of the previous definitions. Having clear these concepts, some general information will to be presented in the next section in order to reach the analysis.

4. Background

4.1. Immigrants

A person who comes to live permanently in a foreign country; this is the meaning of immigrant according to the Oxford dictionary (2014), but this simple definition implies much more than only the action of moving. Actually, the IOM (2014) suggests that, at the international level, no universally accepted definition for "migrant" exists. The term migrant was usually understood to cover all cases where the decision to migrate was taken freely by the individual concerned for reasons of "personal convenience" and without intervention of an external factor. The UN (2014) defines migrant as an individual who has resided in a foreign country for more than one year irrespective of the causes, voluntary or involuntary. People all around the world have been migrating from one country to another for many and very different reasons such as wars, famine, or simply looking for better living conditions. According to the WB, China was the fourth emigration country in 2010, with 8.5 million people³, after Mexico (11.9), India (11.4) and the Russian Federation (11.1) (Migration and Remittances Factbook 2010)⁴. According to the IOM's 2013 World Migration Report⁵, the number of international migrants last year was estimated at 220 million. Moreover, the report indicates that the majority of international migrants are originated in the South (at least 69%) and most of them are male, except in the case of North–North migration.

4.2. Chinese migration in history

Chinese emigration is definitely not a new phenomenon. Chinese people began emigrating from China prior to the 14th century and the outflow accelerated in the early 19th century due to a combination of push factors like population explosion, famines, political instability, and pull factors such as better life conditions and more opportunities abroad (Enoch 2003). Authors like Slack (2010) and Look Lai (2010)

³ Including three million people in Macao, China and Hong Kong. Macao and Hong Kong are considered as territories of destination for the Chinese people from Mainland China.

⁴ More information about Migration and Remittances available from <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1199807908806/Top10.pdf>

⁵ More information of the report available from http://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/What-We-Do/wmr2013/en/WMR2013_FactSheet_EN_final.pdf

exhort that already between the 7th and the 10th century Chinese started to move to new territories. At that time, many Chinese merchants chose to settle down in the Southeast Asian ports such as Cambodia, Sumatra, and Java (Ho Khai 2009). However, the mass emigration, according to Skeldon (1996), occurred from the 19th century to 1949 and it was mainly caused by wars and starvation in Mainland China, invasion from various foreign countries, as well as by the problems resulting from political corruption. In addition, the majority of China's migrants historically came from two southern coastal provinces, Fujian and Guangdong; this has been a tradition going as far back as the 7th century (Look Lai 2010: 45). The *modus operandi* of the Chinese migrants in China and overseas has been characterized by a sequential procedure. This method of family migration usually took the form of a well-planned process of gradual but well coordinated movement. First, the able bodied young men, followed by their younger siblings, who could learn and help out in the business. The dependent would come later and make their stay permanent. Once the basic unit was established in the urban center, the chain of other relatives would follow. The original unit would serve as the safety cushion, making extra sacrifices to help relatives in their adventure in the new environment (Hong 1976: 510).

Skeldon (1996) has identified three broad periods in China's recent migration history. The first period is from the 1850's to the foundation of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. Two events marked the beginning of this period of Chinese emigration; Hong Kong was established as a British colony in 1841, and the year 1860, because it was the year where the late Qing restrictions on emigration were lifted and the Chinese accepted that their nationals had the right to go overseas (Skeldon 1996). In general terms, this period was one of pronounced emigration to various destinations dominated, by males, who saw themselves going overseas temporarily. Discoveries of gold in Western U.S. in 1848, in Southern Australia around 1851, and in Western Canada in 1858 set in motion a flow of millions of Chinese. The vast majority of migrants were finally never involved in mining and never reached the more distant destinations, but those returning were instrumental in spreading information about the world beyond Chinese boundaries.

The second period covers the socialist economy of Mao Zedong and his successors, from the formation of the PRC in 1949 until 1978. During these years, migration was tightly controlled and sometimes prohibited by the Chinese State. The main flow out of Mainland China during this period was to Hong Kong with around 40.000 persons a year entering the British colony during the 1950s (Skeldon 1996).

December 1978 can be considered an inflection point in the migration evolution of contemporary China. As Skeldon (1996) asserts, because of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CPC), China shifted direction towards a more open economy and started establishing formal diplomatic connections with the U.S. and other nations, which allowed more Chinese people to move abroad. On the other hand, the third period, starting from the beginning of 1979, experienced migration increase in volume. In 1985, the Immigration Law was adopted, guarantying the rights of China's citizens to travel outside the country and finally allowing many Chinese to move to other territories. However, as Skeldon (1996) points out, there was still not complete freedom of movement and the process to obtain a passport was long and really complex, together with significant obstacles in transport infrastructure that used to make the trip to and from China very difficult.

Guest (2011) explains that today top's emigrating destinations for the Chinese overseas are in Asia. Some of the most popular nations are Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, Myanmar, Vietnam and Indonesia. However, the American continent has also occupied a relevant role. The most selected destinations in America have been; in first place the U.S., with a Chinese population of about 3.5 million; followed by Canada, with almost 1.3 million Chinese people in 2011. Enoch (2003) affirms that the distribution of the 34 million of overseas Chinese is as follows: 80% in Asia, 15% North & South America, 2.8% in Europe, 1.7% in Oceania, 0.4% in Africa. As regards Latin America, an article of *The Economist* (2011) asserts that Peru is the Latin American country where the Chinese diaspora is the largest, with more than one million people. International migration in the South American region is characterized by two patterns: intra-regional and extra-regional flows, Chinese overseas in Latin America are part of this second group.

4.3. Chinese migration in Latin America

As Kent (2002) exhorts, Chinese immigration, albeit on a small scale, has figured in the migration history of Latin America and the Caribbean since the colonial period. During this time, most Chinese probably entered Spain via Acapulco, where the Spanish fleet landed on its annual trips between the Philippines and the "New World". The Chinese disembarked at Acapulco as sailors, slaves, and servants. A small number of Chinese found their way to Mexico, Lima (Peru) and La Havana (Cuba) during the early colonial period (Slack 2010: 9). In Brazil, Chinese migration

dates from the late colonial period, in 1810, about 400 Chinese were brought to cultivate tea in the vicinity of Rio do Janeiro. Between the middle of the 19th century and the middle of the 20th century, two distinct migration movements characterized Chinese immigration to LA. The first involved the immigration of several thousand of laborers, who arrived on long-term labor contracts, in the 1850s. A second migration flow involved free migrants and occurred after the turn of the century until the Great Depression in 1930. The number of migrants during this period was between 10.000 and 20.000 people, and they were mostly of working class origins (Kent 2002: 117).

The migration from China to LA is usual referred as South–South migration. It is estimated that roughly half of all migrants originating from Southern countries reside in another developing country. The UN estimates that South–South migrants are up to 73 million people⁶ (UNDESA 2012). As the ACP Observatory on Migration⁷ asserts, although South–South migration is mostly intraregional, extra regional mobility represents an important trend that seems to be increasing. A report of the Special Committee on Migration Issues of OAS, published in 2010⁸, has defined the phenomenon of extra regional migration to LA as “new and growing”, and has indicated Eritrea, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Somalia in Africa, and Bangladesh, China and Nepal in Asia, as the major origin countries of migrants (CEAS-OAS 2010). The information presented before is simplified in the following charts.

International migrant stock by major area of origin and destination, 2013 (millions)

2013		Origin							
Destination		Africa	Asia	Europe	LAC	NAM	Oceania	Various	TOTAL
	Africa	15.3	1.1	0.8	0.0	0.1	0.0	1.4	18.6
	Asia	4.6	53.8	7.6	0.7	0.6	0.1	3.4	70.8
	Europe	8.9	18.6	37.8	4.5	0.9	0.3	1.3	72.4
	LAC	0.0	0.3	1.2	5.4	1.3	0.0	0.2	8.5
	NAM	2.0	15.7	7.9	25.9	1.2	0.3	0.0	53.1
	Oceania	0.5	2.9	3.1	0.1	0.2	1.1	0.1	7.9
	TOTAL	31.3	92.5	58.4	36.7	4.3	1.9	6.4	231.5

Source: Population Facts United Nations No. 2012/3

⁶ More information available from

http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/popfacts/popfacts_2012-3_South-South_migration.pdf

⁷ The ACP Observatory on Migration is a reference network of migration researchers funded by the EU., and implemented and financed by the IOM and the UN. The website is available from

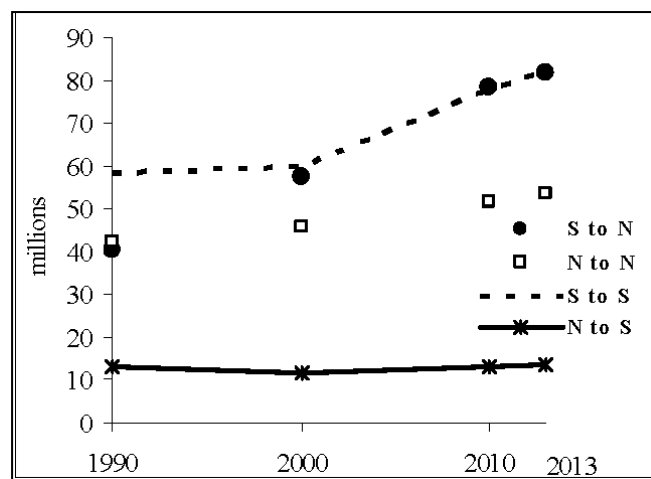
<http://www.acpmigration-obs.org>

⁸ More information available from

http://scm.oas.org/doc_public/ENGLISH/HIST_10/CP23971E07.doc

It is visible that most of the Asian migrants choose other Asian country to move in. In this sense, the 2013 World Migration Report indicates that from the South-South migration corridor, the most relevant movement is represented by the next flows: Ukraine to the Russian Federation (3.7 million) and vice versa (3.5 million); then Bangladesh to India; Kazakhstan to the Russian Federation; and finally Afghanistan to Pakistan. In addition, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) do not represent one of the main destinations, even though the number of Asian migrants workers in the region has increased in the last years and is expecting to keep following this pattern in the future.

International migrant stock by origin and destination, 1990-2013



Source: Population Facts United Nations No. 2012/3

It is appreciable how the South-South migration corridor has gained importance particularly since the year 2000, accounting for the same level as the traditional migration corridor South-North. This traditional corridor is characterized, according to the 2013 World Migration Report, by the following flows: Mexico to the United States (12.2 million, equal to 6% of the global migrant stock); then by Turkey to Germany; and China, Philippines and India to the United States.

4.4. Argentina: important destination for Immigrants

In South America, Brazil is the second most chosen destination for the Chinese overseas after Peru. The ex Portuguese colony is where the Chinese community currently represents the sixth biggest foreign community. This is due to

the growth of some strategic sectors of the Brazilian economy, such as the textile and the agriculture, attracting Chinese as well as Korean labor migrants (ACP Observatory 2012). Although not the most important destination, Argentina is in the top ten destinations for Asian immigrants in the American continent (ACP Observatory 2012). Argentina holds a long migration history; it was one of the biggest recipients of European immigration in the 19th century, mainly coming from Italy and Spain. It also received a large number of Jewish escaping from persecutions, making Argentina the place with the highest Jewish population in LA and the 7th in the entire world, as pointed out by the Argentina-Israelite Mutual Association⁹. According to the Argentinian official website¹⁰, immigration was one of the main factors that gave place to the transition from traditional to modern Argentina, and without it, it is not possible to understand Argentina's cultural history and it would have been impossible to have the rich culture that characterizes the nation today.

At the beginning of the 20th century, based on the end of the First World War and the need for more laborers, Argentina encouraged the income of immigrants who sought for new places and better well-being for their families. However, during the period 1914–1918, a negative immigration balance was registered, particularly because Italians, Spanish and other European immigrants went back to support their compatriots during the war. According to Panettieri (1970), the census of 1914 indicated a significant increase in the foreign population in the group of men over 20 years old; 1.550.000 foreigners outnumbered 950.000 Argentinians. During this period, the maximum entry of foreigners was received in Argentina, with a positive balance of 1.538.240 immigrants. Although Italians and Spanish remained the biggest group, the nation also received Poles, Russians, French, Germans, Austrians, Portuguese, Greek, Ukrainians, Croats, Scandinavians, and Syrians and Lebanese. Between 1947 and 1957, another big influx of migrants from overseas arrived to Argentina, most of them Italians and Spanish again, attracted by the wealth of the young nation and pushed by the situation after the Second World War in Europe. At that time, a considerable flow of migrants from neighboring countries was as well registered.

At the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the current century, Argentina is still being considered as an important destination for immigrants. The

⁹ In Spanish: Asociación Mutual Israelita Argentina and also well as AMIA. More information about the Jew community in Argentina at <http://www.amia.org.ar/index.php/content/default/show/content/20>

¹⁰ Consulted at <http://www.argentina.gob.ar>

influx has been characterized by economic migrants, meaning a person leaving his or her habitual place of residence to settle outside his or her country of origin in order to improve his or her quality of life, and it also applies to people leaving their country of origin searching for employment (IOM 2011). The origin of this migration has been mainly from Bolivia, Peru, Paraguay, Chile, Uruguay, Colombia, Central America, the Caribbean, Korea, China, Taiwan, Africa, and from Central and Eastern Europe, thus, a somewhat different profile from the immigration of the 18th, 19th and beginning of 20th centuries. According to the IOM (2011), Argentina, which is second compared to Brazil in size and population in South America, in 2011 had 1.531.940 immigrants, most of them coming from Paraguay, Bolivia, Chile, Uruguay and Brazil.

Even though Argentina and Venezuela are still the two countries in South America where immigration is larger than emigration (IOM 2011), in the last years, Argentina has become origin of migratory flows to Europe and the U.S. This phenomenon started to take place in the late 90s, when a large group of Argentinians left the country integrated by middle class members and highly skilled people on account of the lack of opportunities and satisfactory living conditions. The main destinations were the U.S., Spain, Italy, Israel, Brazil, Chile, Canada and Australia. As the IOM (2011) indicated, the number of emigrants increased quickly as a result of the contraction of Argentina's labor market and the rise in unemployment and poverty. In this sense, the Argentinian migration profile is interesting because as the economy recovered, the emigration of nationals decreased and the return process of Argentinian citizens living abroad increased. The number of Argentinians living overseas in 2008 was 806.369 people (IOM 2011).

4.5. Chinese Diaspora in Argentina

It is estimated that 120.000 Chinese currently live in Argentina, of which about 4.000 are Taiwanese (Gomez La Rosa 2010). According to the Ministry of Interior of Buenos Aires, 60.000 of them started coming since 2005 and 80% of them are living in the city of Buenos Aires and Greater Buenos Aires¹¹. The National Immigration Bureau estimated that, in 1999, the Chinese in Argentina were 10.124, while in 2003; the Chinese registered was about 60.000. Between 2005 and 2006, a new boom of Chinese arrived to the country reaching 100.000 individuals. Bogado (2011) has

¹¹ According to the Observatory of Communities for the Government of Buenos Aires City. More information available from http://www.buenosaires.gob.ar/areas/secretaria_gral/colectividades/?col=44

explained that the Chinese in Argentina came mostly in three waves.

The first wave of immigrants arrived from Taiwan in the 1980s and over the years, they have become accustomed to the “porteño”¹² lifestyle. In this period, the reasons and conditions for emigration were mainly driven by the “fear factor” of the Taiwanese because of the rumors of expansion of the Chinese communist system to the island under the slogan “One Country, Two Systems”. The necessity to improve their family’s quality of life, threatened by the population explosion, was as well an important push feature. At that time, Taipei already showed high levels of population density, causes for social, environmental and healthy deterioration. These reasons were enough for the family group to emigrate, who generally chose those countries where they have a family member or friend, thus diminishing the risks associated with migration due to an existing network of support in the host country. Meanwhile, in the mid-eighties, the return of democracy in Argentina after the military government and the promise for a more dynamic economy was an attractive alternative for the establishment of new groups of migrants looking for personal and family security, and also for better job opportunities.

In short, this first outflow was characterized by displacement of the family group with savings, which was crucial for their economic development. This situation had a positive influence on the integration of migrants in the host society and the formation of a stable Chinese community in Argentina, encouraging the formation of different national civil associations that were linked to other international and regional networks of Chinese overseas. They began to form “networks of clans” and “family networks” as a support system for newcomers, offering help with housing, language, job searching and psychological support. Overseas Chinese assigned significant value to their family groups, believing that the net of relationships and loyalties are its most important asset (Bogado 2011: 132).

The second wave of Chinese arrived in Argentina in the 1990s. This group was mainly formed by young drifters who came, most of the times, through the illegal smuggling route originating in Fujian Province in China, without a work contract and very little capital (Bogado 2011: 133). Apart from Fujian (Fuzhou in English), some cities of origins were Shanghai, Zhejiang and Guangdong, among others coastal places. The end of the Cultural Revolution in China in 1989, resulting in more flexibilization and openness from the Government, generated an accelerated

¹² Porteño is the term used to refer to the person who is from or lives in Buenos Aires, because of the port located in this city. The word is in Spanish literally derived from the word “port”.

emigration process. These young Chinese immigrated to Argentina encouraged by the economic growth of the country and by the presence of someone of the family, from whom they expected to receive some assistance for installation. Finally, it was the same community the one that provided these young immigrants with their first job and housing. Until the 90s, the Chinese from Taiwan outnumbered mainlanders, but since the year 2000, the trend was reversed. In fact, in 2008, the Chinese from Mainland were 60.000 while the Taiwanese were 10.000 (Bilbao & Farber 2009). Furthermore and taking into account the Asian immigration to the country, it was also in those years that the immigration from China numerically exceeded that of Japanese and Korean origin (Fucci & Ossés 2010). The severe economic and political crisis that hit Argentina in 2001, meant a slowdown in the immigration to the country in general, and a slowdown of the Chinese migration flow to the LA nation in particular. Moreover, it was because of the economic situation that Argentinians started to emigrate, a phenomenon earlier explained. As well as Argentinians, some Chinese already established in the country decided to move to countries such as Chile, Mexico and Brazil or to the U.S. and Canada, nations offering a greater economic stability within the continent (Bogado 2011: 134).

Recently, there has been a third and newer wave of Chinese immigration formed by ambitious and educated members of China's growing middle-class. A small group of the Chinese people in this wave came to learn Spanish and work in businesses and trade transactions related to China. Others, came to set up their business, while probably the majority of the Chinese people on this wave, came to work in the businesses that were opened before by friends or family (Smith 2011). Moreover, young employees of Chinese companies have recently arrived to work for at least two years. Liu (2009) explains that students who come mainly from China's coastal cities are looking to turn to account the untapped reservoir of Spanish language abilities, whereas, their classmates are assiduously learning English, they see their future in Spanish. This third wave of Chinese migration to the country started around 2005, where the negative immigration flow started to change (Bogado 2011). New projections of economic growth and social stability in Argentina were again attractive for the entry of more Chinese citizens. According to official data, in 2005 more than 9.000 migrants from China were settled and legally regularized (Smith 2011). Miguel Angel Calvete¹³ explained to La Nación¹⁴ that although the

¹³ Calvete is secretary of CASRECH, one of two entities that unify the Chinese supermarkets, self-services and groceries and he is the Argentinian director of the China-Argentina Chamber of Production, Industry and Commerce.

authorities registered a slowdown on the Chinese migration since 2009, there are still some Chinese people choosing Argentina when thinking about moving abroad.

4.6. Migration Law in Argentina & China

The Migration Law of Argentina is the migration policy legal framework. In this sense, Law No. 25.871 was approved in December 2003 and finally promulgated on January 2004. It includes high standards for the protection of migrant rights and it is the basis for the implementation of public policies aimed at their integration. Among other measures, it envisages that all foreigners have rights to health and education, regardless of their migration situation, equal treatment, right to migration, and right to information. Furthermore, the State guarantees the right to family reunion of migrants with their parents, spouses and children. It also makes possible the access to a regular migrant status. Immigrants in Argentina are well supported by the law and they can obtain one of these categories: permanent or temporary residences. Permanent residents are foreigners who want to settle permanently in Argentina. It also applies to relatives of Argentinian citizens by birth or by choice. In contrast, temporary residents are those entering Argentina as migrant worker, investor, scientist or scholar, etc., who may remain in Argentina for three years, extendable, with multiple entries and exits. These residents can perform tasks or gainful activity only during the period of authorized stay.

In order to get the Argentinian nationality by naturalization, a person needs to be over eighteen years old and have two years of uninterrupted residency. Another important feature of the Argentinian law is that all individuals born or to be born in the territory of the country, regardless of the nationality of their parents (except for the children of foreign ministers and members of the diplomatic community resident in Argentina), are Argentinians. Besides, Argentina allows with specific countries such as Italy and Spain, the existence of a double nationality. The PRC do not allow its citizens to have dual nationalities, therefore, any Chinese in Argentina who wants to become Argentinian having the Chinese nationality, should quit to this one first. Harris (2011) explains about the dual nationality that any Chinese national who has settled abroad and who has acquired a foreign nationality, will automatically lose the Chinese nationality. Furthermore, the Chinese law indicates that any person born

¹⁴ The complete article "Los Chinos en la Argentina, más allá del supermercado" available from <http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1413378-los-chinos-en-la-argentina-mas-alla-del-supermercado>

abroad whose parents are both Chinese nationals and or at least one of whose parents is a Chinese national, shall have Chinese nationality. However, if at least one of the parents has resigned the Chinese citizenship and has acquired a foreign one, its child shall not have Chinese nationality¹⁵.

According to Valero (2011), there were about 14.553 official permanent establishments (permanent residents) recorded from 2004 until the mid of 2011, which corresponded mostly to new families and groupings within the province of Buenos Aires. As well, there were about 11.475 temporary establishments (temporary residents) recorded since 2004. These kinds of residents are usually the ones employed in Chinese supermarkets or self-services. To this figure, Gomez La Rosa (2010) adds that the annual average between 2005-2010 was 5.000 residencies a year. Even though the Argentinian law regarding immigration seems to be flexible, and often described as an “open immigration policy” (Smith 2011), it may be at the same time not really updated and not taking into account the new migration trends. In this sense, the National Constitution in its article 25th claims that: “The Federal Government would encourage European immigration and may not restrict or limit with tax any entry into the Argentinian territory of foreigners who arrive for the purpose of working the soil, improving industries, and introducing and teaching science and arts”¹⁶. Despite of the fact that the National Constitution still encourages European immigration (the old immigration trend), the openness of the Argentinian migration law is really engaging for Chinese citizens, as well as for other foreign communities.

4.7. Life of the Chinese diaspora in Argentina

Firstly, it is relevant to highlight that the coexistence between Chinese and Taiwanese residents is peaceful and generally the migrants have recognized same origin and culture (Bogado 2011). Secondly, the Chinese community is a population of young age, on the economically active stage and today, there is a full existence of a “second generation” of Chinese-Argentines, which is characterized by a high level of instruction, with complete secondary education, tertiary and even university. The Spanish language is, in most cases, learnt once they are in the country. Thirdly, there is a tendency and need for own actions and practices of their culture, which is

¹⁵ China Law Blog consulted at <http://www.china.org.cn/english/LivinginChina/184710.htm>

¹⁶ The National Constitution of Argentina consulted online from <http://www.constitution.org/cons/argentin.htm>

manifested through the conservation of eating habits, speaking Mandarin at home, celebrating traditional Chinese holidays, practicing Chinese medicine and marriages among the community.

As regards to education, three Chinese schools in the city of Buenos Aires were established specially for immigrants. Chinese Children attend mainly these schools and also received extracurricular classes (because they are not officially authorized) about Chinese history, language and culture. Recently, the Buenos Aires' Mayor Mauricio Macri opened the first public bilingual school Argentinian-Chinese under an agreement with Beijing, and with the official support of the Chinese Government. This will allow the Argentinian children to learn the language of the Asian nation as the main foreign language, from kindergarden through seventh grade of primary, breaking the traditional model of English-Spanish bilingual schools. About this event, the Mayor argued: "This fact is an unprecedented and historic step within public education. Never before Beijing had made an agreement of this type. We are confident that this model of integration will give us great satisfaction because it builds a great future for our children and youth. Furthermore, the coexistence of children of both nationalities has been considered by experts, as an excellent way of stimulating the proximity and integration of both cultures"¹⁷. The school is located in the south area of Buenos Aires, and this year in one course of twenty children, eight are Chinese and the rest Argentinians¹⁸. The Chinese Ambassador in Argentina, Yim Hegmin, stressed that the agreement "helps and strengthens the integration and coexistence between Argentina and China and is very important for the future of the youngest generations of both nations" (2014).

In Buenos Aires, three weekly newspapers are published about international, national and local news in Mandarin, and are distributed among the community. "Horizonte Chino"¹⁹ was the first Chinese newspaper in Argentina. Founded in 1984, it has a weekly circulation of about 2.000 copies and the readers account today for about 4.500 people. The second newspaper, "Semanario Nuevo Continente", was founded in 1997, while the third newspaper is called "The Epoch Times" or Da Jiyuan in Chinese. Regarding religion, a high proportion of Chinese migrants, almost 48%, practice Buddhism (Bogado 2011: 134). The Tzong Kuan Temple is one of the three

¹⁷ The article is available from the oficial website of the Government of Buenos Aires city

<http://www.buenosaires.gob.ar/noticias/la-ciudad-inauguro-la-primera-escuela-bilingue-argentino-china>

¹⁸ The goal of the first Spanish-Chinese school in Buenos Aires city is to launch from 2015 the first grade of primary modality bilingual, according to the Mayor Macri (2014).

¹⁹ "Chinese Horizon" is its english name. It can be consulted at <http://www.horizontechino.com.ar/Quienes-somos.htm>

Buddhist temples in Buenos Aires and is located inside the Chinese neighborhood. It was founded in 1988 by Master Pu Hsien and supported by the Chinese community in Taiwan, with the financial support of the Chinese-Taiwanese community in Argentina. The temple also serves as headquarter of the China-Buddhist Association in Argentina and is mainly dedicated to teach and spread the religion in the country²⁰.

In terms of location, the Chinese are concentrated in metropolitan areas, fulfilling the hypothesis that characterizes most of Chinese communities around the world. The main centers are: city and province of Buenos Aires, but Chinese also established, albeit on a smaller scale, in the provinces of Santa Fe, Córdoba, Santa Cruz, Rio Negro, Corrientes, Mendoza, Entre Rios and San Juan (Pappier 2011). Within Buenos Aires city, as in other countries in the world, the Chinatown or typical Chinese neighborhood cannot be missing. In the “porteño” neighborhood of Belgrano, between Arribeños and Mendoza streets, the Chinese enclave has been established. More often called in the city as “Barrio Chino”, one can find the most popular of the three Buddhist temples in Buenos Aires, one Chinese school, and lot of Chinese stores and restaurants. In the stores the most typical stuff are incenses, fortune cats, elements for acupuncture and other gifts, of course “made in China” or “made in Taiwan”. According to Sergio Cesarín, a CONICET researcher, Chinese immigrants chose to establish in Belgrano neighborhood because it is a middle class area, but is out of the center of the capital. He argues that the area was not highly demanded when the Chinese settled down and the property value was relatively low. The arrival of a large mass of Chinese immigrants during the 90s, actually established the neighborhood as Chinatown (Cesarin in Dema & Barco 2010). It is important to notice that this Chinatown is a place where a lot of Chinese people have their daily and economical activities but not many of them actually live there. This idea will be further developed.

Still living outside the place of residence, some eating habits do not change, such as chicken legs or chicken claws that are usually eaten in China. This tradition seems to be commercially exploited by Argentina, as it is one of the main exporters of this type of meat, which in the country is not consumed. Moreover, as Liu (2009) explains in her article about Chinese life in Buenos Aires, egg rolls, Chinese raviolis and pork-filled dumplings are very popular among Argentinians. According to the “All Buenos Aires Cultural Blog”²¹, the cultural fusion makes the celebrations of Chinese

²⁰ The official website of the Temple can be consulted at <http://tzongkuan.org>

²¹ More information about the “Barrio Chino” in Buenos Aires available from <http://allbuenosaires.blogspot.com/2008/09/barrio-chino-de-belgrano.html>

New Year be crowded, not by the number of Chinese residents, but by the huge amount of locals who attend the festivity. It is already a tradition for Argentinians to visit the neighborhood around February each year and to attend the nice and colorful parades, the immense Dragon, and the several food specialties. The Chinese community considers this neighborhood as their place of reference and as a place for social and cultural interaction, not only among themselves, but also with locals (Pappier 2011).

4.8. Economic impact of the Chinese diaspora in Argentina

Diasporas can and, in many cases, do play an important role in the economic development of their countries of origin. Beyond sending remittances, they can also promote trade and foreign direct investment (FDI), create businesses, spur entrepreneurship, and transfer new knowledge and skills (Newland & Plaza 2013). The economic impact of the diasporas in their country of origin is a field covered by a vast amount of researches. In this sense, Nanji (2005) asserts that remittances have been the most studied area of diasporic impact on development. In 2010, remittances are estimated to have reached 440US\$ billion, while official Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) was estimated at 126US\$ billion. Newland & Patrick (2004) explain that remittances have a visible impact on development, particularly in alleviating the plight of the poor to meet their basic needs. The countries with the largest remittances and diaspora-driven investment pools are: China, India, Philippines, and Mexico. Thus, the role of the Chinese overseas is vital for the economic development of China.

Newland & Plaza (2013) point that the impact of diaspora engagement is felt strongly in trade, investment and the transfer of skills and knowledge. Regarding trade; diaspora members create links between producers and consumers in countries of origin and destination. Diaspora communities also buy the products of their countries of origin and introduce these products to new markets in the hosting countries. Furthermore, diasporas invest directly in their countries of origin and persuade non- diaspora investors to do the same, boosting investor confidence in emerging and undeveloped markets. As regards skills and knowledge transfers, diasporas often gain valuable skills, experiences and contacts abroad, that they can “transfer” back to their country of origin by seeding businesses and entrepreneurs.

Regarding the economic impact of the Chinese community in Argentina and

as it was mentioned before, the Chinese, specially those in the first and second immigration flows, have come with a considerable amount of savings, which allowed them to run their own businesses. The result of this has been that nowadays, many Chinese-Argentiniens run self-services and supermarkets, which dominates the second tier of grocery stores in Buenos Aires. Dry Cleaners for laundry are also a common Chinese-run business, as well as Chinese restaurants, which can be found in almost every street corner in the capital. Chinese have also been developed in other activities such as tourism services, medicine, car mechanics, hairdressers and import-export area. The presence of the Chinese in the supermarket business has been the most evident of the economic impact in Buenos Aires. This has been particularly proved by the striking fact that Chinese citizens installed around 20 supermarkets per month (Varise 2011). On April 2004, CASRECH was created with the purpose of consolidating the growth of the Chinese supermarket sector, unite all this kind of stores owned by the Chinese in Buenos Aires City and avoid any kind of discrimination against them. CASRECH have today, about 6.000 associates located in different parts of the country, while 4.800 are located only in Buenos Aires city²².

According to I Professional (2011), the Chinese supermarkets are estimated in 10.000 points of sale throughout the country and annual sales of over 25.000AR\$ million annually. The sector's growth today is basically given from the installation in the interior of Argentina, specially in small towns of less than 30.000 inhabitants. Unlike the past years, the new trend about the Chinese supermarkets is the opening of new stores not from scratch, but through the purchase of goodwill and self-service supermarkets already in operation. One of the reasons, as Calvete (2011) explains, is that the city of Buenos Aires is already saturated in this area. The second reason has to do with avoiding adverse reactions in the towns where they want to install. For example, in Monte Quemado, a town of less than 20.000 inhabitants in the province of Santiago del Estero, there were two large groceries, before installing a new supermarket, the Chinese decided to buy one of the two already existing. Chinese supermarkets now control over 15% of domestic sales of food, drinks, toiletries and cleaning in Buenos Aires city (Duchini 2014).

The success of the Chinese supermarkets is based on the changes in buying habits that occurred in recent years in the Argentinian society and benefited them. "Today people have less time, thus, the closer location of a store plays a key role when choosing the place of a purchase, which ends favoring Chinese supermarkets,

²² According to the official website of CASRECH consulted at www.casrech.com

that are spread all over the capital and do not close during national holidays”, expressed Calvete in an interview with *I Profesional* (2011). Another feature of this success is, on one hand, the tendency to sub-rent the different sectors of the supermarket (as the butcher and greengrocer) to generate greater value in the overall purchase, and on the other hand, the culture of family labor which contributes to lower costs because the house is work and the work is home (Seggiaro 2010). In addition, the success of the Chinese supermarkets is explained by Sun, a Chinese businessman from Campana, Buenos Aires province: “The low retail price may be due to the fact that bulk purchases between different members of the community allow a better discount from wholesalers. Undoubtedly this situation means that prices are more favorable”²³. Another article has recently suggested that large supermarket chains reacted to the advancement of the Chinese supermarkets by installing small versions of their stores in the neighborhoods. Some of the traditional big chains that grew most in this small format were Carrefour and WalMart²⁴.

The creation of CASRECH, explained above, has helped the Chinese supermarkets a lot, mostly on legal matters. In addition to advising on tax and labor law, they have systematized all the advice previously passed from mouth to mouth and from generation to generation (Rodiño 2006). The chamber is not only result of the economic impact of the Chinese diaspora in Argentina, but also a consequence of the economic integration of the Chinese in the local dynamic. As well, it represents a key factor in the economic integration between Chinese and Argentinians. As the supermarket business is reaching its saturation point, members of the Chinese diaspora actively participating in the local economy are studying new proposals; they know it might be engaged in something completely different (Rodiño 2006). A recent study from *I Profesional* (2014) has revealed that the Chinese are now getting involved in the food business. In the last months, more than 400 selling points of food by weight were detected to be owned by Chinese businessmen. Moreover, it is estimated that 10% of the stores that sales food by weight in the capital, belongs to Chinese owners that used to be connected with the supermarket business. Other economic areas, where the Chinese community has recently started to invest, are the construction sector and the acquisition of lands throughout the country, particularly in the southern region (*I Profesional* 2014).

²³ La Autentica Defensa: “El problema de los supermercados orientales: Cuentos Chinos en Campana”, published 4th April 2014. Digital edition available from <http://www.laautenticadefensa.net/6815>

²⁴ ¿Cuántos supermercados Chinos hay en el País? by Periodismo Actual, 25th May 2013. Available from <http://www.periodismoactual.com.ar/2013/05/25/cuantos-supermercados-chinos-hay-en-el-pais/>

4.9. The other side of the Chinese diaspora

Not everything is celebration and tasty food within the Chinese community in Argentina. Recent local news about members of the Chinese diaspora, specially in Buenos Aires province, are tragic. This diaspora has recently become the target of murder attempts, kidnapping and extortion, bringing to light the existence of Chinese criminal gangs in the South American nation (Messi 2002). The local and international media are connecting these cases to the “Chinese mafia” present in the country, even though the national authorities do not want to mention this issue on the public media in order to avoid conflict with the Chinese Government and generate segregation towards the Chinese community.

One of the features of the Chinese mafia is the attack to owners of Chinese supermarkets. Ryan (2008) points out that, they offer protection to the supermarkets through threatening messages and they ask for a high protection fee back, if they do not get this amount of money they just kill the owner of the store. This *modus operandi* was explained several times by the local police and the family of the victims. Furthermore, it seems that supermarkets are grouped by region of origin; therefore, each region is represented with a color, which is on the door of each place. This signal is also the one followed by the mafia to detect those who are not “contributing” with the protection fee. There is a marked prevalence of light blue in supermarkets that match with the place of origin of most immigrants, Fujian province. This situation indicates strong internal codes among the Chinese diaspora.

Another kind of extortion from the Chinese mafia to owners of supermarkets is related to the help and support they give to Chinese citizens who want to move to Argentina and install a business there. The mafia manage to bring them to the country with apparently no bad intentions, they offer a good initial financial support, but then, they charge them with an eternal monthly fee estimated in 2.500US\$. If the owners refuse the payment, they send someone to kill them (Messi 2002). The Argentinian Federal Police has explained to the media that they have many difficulties in investigating the episodes within the Chinese mafia. One of the main barriers is the language, and another is that, in most of the cases, the relatives do not want to talk because they are afraid of a future murder. However, as Ryan (2008) suggests, the main cause of the silence is due to immigration irregularities.

Roberto Locles (2010), an Argentinian criminologist, explained in details the reality of some Chinese immigrants in the country: “The Chinese mafia control the

flow of immigrants from China to Argentina. They have recently brought poor immigrants into the country, then they gave them IDs, and finally they forced them to work under slavery-like conditions, such as those in textile factories". He added that, because of the immigration irregularities, most of the homicides of Chinese people remain unpunished. One of the attacks, for example, took place on July 2010, when unknown assailants killed the owner of a Chinese supermarket in Palermo neighborhood, in Buenos Aires city. In just 15 seconds, the suspect, who was covering his face, shot seven times Chen Huaxi of 43 years old (Feres 2010). Huaxi was threatened the day before and he was told he would have to pay 50.000US\$ if he wanted to open a new store nearby, as expressed by his wife to the local media.

On the other hand, the police have confirmed to "Clarín" journalists that the murderers are always Argentinians assassins hired by members of the mafia in Buenos Aires (Feres 2010). Moreover, the local police was not alone in the investigations; police from China has participated in some of the cases. In fact, during a joint action in 2011, they dismantled a criminal gang acting upon supermarkets. The members of the band, who called themselves as "Eternally prosperous", threatened more than 1.000 Chinese entrepreneurs to kill them if they did not pay the protection fee. According to I Profesional (2013), the Chinese security agency together with the Argentinian police are going to open an office specialized in the detection and detention of Chinese criminals in Buenos Aires, particularly because these episodes are affecting relations between both nations.

Finally, Virginia Messi (2002) has asserted that today, there is a huge business with the ID cards and passports of the Chinese people. The problem is that they enter Argentina through bordering's countries in an illegal way; therefore, they do not have the official arrival stamp to get the residence permit in the country. Afterwards, they report their IDs as stolen or lost and they initiate the procedure to get a new ID or passport from China. When they want to get the residence permit in Argentina, they say that the official stamp was in the previous passport. This situation is facilitated by the Argentinians regulations regarding the national frontiers and the lack of rigid control on these zones. In just three months, 840 Chinese people have reported loss of their ID or passport in 2002. Moreover, in the triple border, the Federal Police has detected "Fu Chin" mafia members dedicated to this kind human trafficking (Messi 2002). Thus, the mafia do not only offer "protection" to the Chinese businesses, but also "help", "support" and "advice" to Chinese citizens when entering Argentina.

In sum, not only the flexible legal framework of the country, but also the presence of this group of Chinese gangs make easier the arrival of Chinese people to Argentina. However, the bloody episodes among the Chinese community are not a contributing factor to achieve adaptation and integration into the host culture. This idea will be retaken. The background segment was about presenting the main features of how the Chinese community has been social, cultural and economically established in Buenos Aires. In the coming section, the analysis based on this information, is going to be exposed.

5. Analysis

5.1. Acculturation of the Chinese Diaspora

John W. Berry's work about acculturation remains essential for this section, as he has developed useful concepts to understand the changes occurred in the immigrants, due to the contact with a new host society. In this regard, Berry (2005) proposes that there are two different, but inter-connected domains of psychological research that make up group relations; acculturation and ethnic relations. Both domains are rooted in contextual factors such as historical, political and economic background and they can lead to outcomes like conflict, stress, harmony and effectiveness. As Berry (2005) suggests, ethnic relations are already a well-known field of the cultural studies, but acculturation is often considered a blurred area. Acculturation is a dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between two or more cultural groups and their individual members (Berry 2005: 698).

At the group level, what occurs is general acculturation; changes in social structures, institutions and in cultural practices. The individual level involves changes in person's behavioral repertoire, recognizing variable degrees of participation in the process. What is more, "these cultural and psychological changes come about through a long-term process, sometimes taking years, sometimes generations, and sometimes centuries" (Berry 2005: 699). In the present study, the two distinct cultures that interact are the Argentinians living in Buenos Aires province and the Chinese diaspora, who have settled down in the same geographic place in the last decades. At the group level, the main strategies followed by the Chinese community are going to be identified. At the individual level, one member of the Chinese community settled down in the host province is being examined. The testimony of a Chinese boy called Tara Wang is taken from a documentary about the Chinese diaspora in Buenos Aires produced by Gomez La Rosa (2010). As well, Tara Wang's mom and Yuri, another Chinese boy working in a supermarket in Buenos Aires, are relevant testimonies and will be further exposed.

Acculturation involves different forms of mutual accommodation, leading to psychological and socio-cultural adaptations between both groups in contact. Berry

exemplified this with the fact of learning each other's languages, sharing each other's food preferences, and adopting forms of dress and social interactions that are characteristic of each group. The mutual adaptations can easily take place, but also can generate culture conflict and acculturative stress during intercultural contact (Berry 2005: 700). In this sense, the case of Tara Wang, who was born in Buenos Aires, represents a good example of how he adapted to the new culture and which obstacles he faced within the new society. Tara Wang explains that he was born when his parents arrived in the country in 1991 and after a couple of months, he was sent back to China to spend time with his grandparents until his parents managed to open a gift store in the "porteño" Chinatown. Tara Wang spent a total of five years in China, assisting to a Chinese kindergarden, playing with his cousins, learning Chinese language and acquiring many traditional Chinese habits and customs. He adds that his parents decided to move to Argentina because they could not find a job in China. He highlights the huge crowd living in his hometown, unlike Buenos Aires, as well as he points out that his family came with a lot of savings in order to install a business in the city.

For Tara Wang, growing up in Argentina was difficult, specially the first five years; the difficulties had to do with assisting to a Spanish school, learning the language and making new friends. He also expressed that when he turned ten, everyday life started to be little easier; he managed successfully to make new Argentinians friends and got to know more local cultural things. Tara Wang likes Argentinians as he describes them as sociable, friendly, funny and humorous. To this, Yuri, another Chinese boy living in Buenos Aires city, said: "Los argentinos son muy buena onda, son jodones" (Argentinians are funny), while Tara Wang added: "Los argentinos nos tratan bien", meaning that they have good relation with them and they are nicely treated. Despite the "good" relations with Argentinians, Tara Wang comments that he does not have a close Argentinian friend and explain that is due to the fact that they have different cultural background. About their future, Tara Wang plans to study Chinese-Spanish translation, taking advantage of his skill on both languages and he also plans to have a family in Argentina while Yuri plans to go back to his hometown in China, after saving some more money.

Tara Wang's mom has learnt Spanish but after more than 25 years, her vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation is not as good as her son's language adaptation to the Argentinian particular accent. On the other hand, she also asserts that the best thing in Argentina, compared to China, is the quiet and peaceful

environment, the clean air and the variety of job opportunities. Regarding the obstacles, for the mom, the hardest time was learning Spanish: "Spanish is difficult, it is really difficult", while running the gift store was not a hard task. She also affirms that she really misses home and family back in China, but the fact of having a good and stable job in Buenos Aires is determinant. Tara Wang still maintains most of his Chinese habits, like celebrating all the important Chinese dates and keeping close ties with his family, but he confesses that he loves Argentinian barbecue, he hangs out with Argentinian girls and also became a big fan of soccer (Argentina's undisputed favorite sport) and what is more important, he profoundly considers himself Argentinian.

Tara Wang, his mom and Yuri represent how the process of acculturation can take different forms of accommodation depending of each individual. In the case of Tara Wang and his mom, the differences in the way they have being acculturated, within the same host culture, varies within the family, just as exposed by Berry (2005). The three examples also embody dissimilar and particular psychological and socio-cultural adaptations to the Argentinian society. With regard to the psychological adaptation, it can be observed that while Tara Wang's mom still misses her family and friends back in China, her son has made good friends and has built a vast social network so he did not even mentioned the word "missing" during the interview. Regarding the socio-cultural adaptation, Tara Wang speaks perfect Spanish, eats Argentinian food like barbecue and "guiso", and in the video, he is wearing an Argentinian brand t-shirt. Thus, as Berry (2005) suggested, one can think that the young boy has adopted the local form of dress and also some local food habits. Furthermore, Tara Wang seems to be more used to the local people and local traditions than his mom, who still watches Chinese soap operas, does not have Argentinians friends and prefers speaking Chinese at home.

The differences concerning the acculturation process between Tara Wang and his mom are evident and easily visible. Young Kim's investigation helps to comprehend some of the factors that make acculturation to be different depending on each person. The educational background, sex, time among the host society, and age at the time of immigration are the key determinants of one's language competence, acculturation motivation and accessibility to host communication channels (Kim 1977: 69). Thus, based on Kim's explanation, it can be induced that the younger the immigrant is at the arrival to the new society, as the case of Tara Wang, the better he or she can speak the local language, be more motivated about

knowing the new culture and have easier access to the host communication channels. This factor can explain why his mom still does not speak proper Spanish and does not have close interaction with Argentinians. The time among the host society and the age at the time of immigration, as determinants in the acculturation process, is intimately related. The younger the individual is at the time of immigration; more is the time he or she spends among the host society.

As mentioned before, social networks are significant to immigrants; they are a crucial area to the acculturation process of the Chinese diaspora in Buenos Aires. For Young Kim, social networks and native's ties are useful conceptualizations facilitating the study of the immigrants' host communication. The higher the level of inclusion of non-ethnic individuals in an immigrant's personal network, the higher is the level of host communication competence (Kim 1977: 72). In the present case study, Tara Wang's personal social network shows his developed communication competences, mostly concerning the language fluency, unlike his mom, who has a small or non-existing social network including Argentinians. Therefore, it can be pointed out that, Tara Wang's mom has limited communication competences, easily proved by listening to her speech.

Following Berry's theoretical framework and retaking the essential idea that there are large variations in how people seek to engage the process of acculturation, some acculturation strategies were built. Berry's acculturation strategies consist of two components; attitudes and behaviors and both emerge from the non-dominant group perspective. It is possible to cite four different ways in which individuals or groups undergo acculturation: *Assimilation* is when individuals do not wish to maintain their cultural identity and seek daily interaction with other cultures, in other words, individuals prefer to shed their heritage culture and become absorbed into the dominant society. *Separation* is when individuals place a value on holding on to their original culture, and at the same time, wish to avoid interaction with others. Members of the non-dominant group do not want to be involved in other cultural groups and strongly keep their own culture. *Integration* takes place when there is an interest in both; maintaining one's culture and developing daily interactions with other groups. This option is usually the most balanced as there is some degree of original cultural integrity and at the same time, the person seeks to participate as a complete member in the host society. Mutual accommodation is required to attain fully integration. Unlike this last one, *marginalization* is when there is a small interest in heritage cultural maintenance and little interest in having relations with others, often

for reasons of exclusion or discrimination.

On a previous empirical study, Berry has identified some features that need to be observed in the immigrants to prove preferences for the strategies cited earlier. Immigrants that reject to be integrated to the host culture, have low ethnic and national identities, feel no attachment to either group, have high proficiency in their ethnic language and low proficiency of the national language, have high contact with own ethnic peers but low contact with nationals; can be understood under the marginalization strategy. Secondly, those immigrants who reject assimilation have high ethnic and low national identity, predominant use of ethnic language and friends, mainly from their own ethnic group; are included in the separation strategy. Meanwhile, immigrants defined by a pattern of attitudes and behaviors that are the opposite of the separation strategy are identified with the national or assimilation strategy. Lastly, immigrants that want to be integrated, prefer the use of both languages, are characterized by positive ethnic and national identities, and by having a friendship network that includes youth from both cultures; are comprehended under an integrative strategy of acculturation.

Upon the previous concepts, it can be inferred whether the Chinese diaspora as a group level, and Tara Wang and his mom representing the individual level were integrated, separated, marginalized or assimilated into the Argentinian culture. Starting with Tara Wang, it can be estimated that the he went through an integrative acculturation strategy due to some reasons. First, the Chinese boy speaks, writes and comprehends perfectly both languages, Chinese and Spanish. He learnt Chinese at home and with his grandparents in China, but also learnt Spanish at school, when he was still a kid. Second, he recognizes himself as a Chinese-Argentinian person, while always having in mind that his roots are in China, today he feels his identity has to do with Argentina. Third, he stated that he likes to be treated as an Argentinian because he feels it. Apart from having the Argentinian nationality, he has made explicit that he preferred integration within the host society. Fourth, he is really interested in maintaining both cultures; the Chinese, which represents his origin and personal past and the Argentinian, which represents his present and future, because he wants to get married and have a family in Buenos Aires. Last, his social network includes not only Chinese peers but also Argentinians, although they do not represent his closest friendship ties. He also hangs out with Argentinians girls and does not seem stucked to the marriages among the community.

Tara Wang's mom, despite being from the same family, has adapted to the

Argentina's culture in a different way, some causes of this phenomenon were mentioned before and analyzed under Young Kim's concepts. It is evident that she was not integrated as her child but not even marginalized, which can be situated in the opposite extreme of the acculturation strategies. Even though she has high proficiency in Chinese language and low proficiency in Spanish, high contact with Chinese people and low contact with Argentinians (except for the time she spends at work), she did not reject to be integrated into the Argentinian culture. Moreover, Tara Wang's mom has high ethnic identity, and feels attachment to the Chinese community, unlike the parameters that were established by Berry (2005) for the marginalization strategy, which indicates that low ethnic and national identities, plus no attachment to either group are required. The mom's acculturation strategy is not even assimilation, if we take into account that immigrants defined by this, need to feel the Argentinian identity and she actually wants to keep her heritage culture. The strategy remaining is separation, which could be the most suitable to explain the acculturation process of Tara Wang's mom. She strongly holds the Chinese culture and she is not really involved in any social activity or interaction with host members. As well, she is characterized by her high ethnic (Chinese identity) and low national identity (Argentinian identity) and she feels more comfortable with the use of Chinese language rather than Spanish. Additionally, her social network and friends are mainly within the Chinese community, and within the Chinese neighborhood in Belgrano, where she actually works and lives.

The previous explanation, thus, indicates that Tara Wang has experienced a better socio-cultural and psychological adaptation than his mom, which does not necessarily mean that he did not face any difficulties. Those who pursue and accomplish integration appear to be better adapted, and those who are marginalized are less adapted, while assimilation and separation are associated with intermediate adaptation outcomes (Berry 2005: 709). In spite of the fact that he managed to adapt quite well to Argentina, Tara Wang, as well as his mom and Yuri, actually did experience some cultural conflict and/or have passed through acculturative stress during their interactions with Argentinians. Cultural conflict is defined by Berry (2005) as part of one of the possible outcomes derived from the acculturation process, which involves changes in the individual behavioral repertoire, and is usually non-problematic. Some degree of cultural conflict is always expected at the beginning of the contact with a new culture. Therefore, the difficulties that Tara Wang faced during the first period of his adaptation to Argentina could be comprehended under the

definition of acculturative conflict. On the other hand, it is possible to talk about acculturative stress when greater level of cultural conflict takes place: individuals comprehend that they are facing problems resulting from intercultural contact and cannot be dealt with easily and simply adjusting to them (Berry 2005: 708). Acculturative stress can be as well understood as cultural shock, although Berry (2005) suggests that this term implies only a negative connotation and actually stress can vary from positive to negative aspects.

As previously expressed, Tara Wang's first five years in the city were hard, while his mom still thinks that getting in touch with Argentinians, and getting used to the Argentinian culture are not easy tasks. It seems that, whereas the cultural conflict that Tara Wang has faced during his adaptation to the new culture was successfully surpassed, his mom still deals with some kind of acculturative stress that has to do with the language barrier and her "poor" social network. It can be inferred from her testimony that she is still experiencing some degree of acculturative stress, while Tara Wang has experienced the least stress, in opposition to those people who are defined by marginalization and experienced the most stressful situation. Regarding this issue, Berry (2005) proposes that in the case of those pursuing a separation strategy, as the mom, they may withdraw from the acculturation arena in order to avoid continuing cultural conflict. For those immigrants seeking integration, as Tara Wang, conflict can be avoided only when the two cultural groups in contact agree that mutual accommodation is the appropriate course to follow (Berry 2005: 708).

It took many years for Tara Wang to be integrated into the Argentinian society, specially because integration requires, not only non-dominant groups to adopt the basic values of the larger society, but at the same time, the dominant group must be prepared to adapt national institutions (education, labor, health, etc.) to better meet the needs of all groups now living in the plural society (Berry 2005: 706). To adapt to the new host culture, the separation strategy followed by the mom is characterized by the fewest behavioral changes. Meanwhile, Tara Wang defined by integration, has actually experienced selective adoption of new behaviors from a larger society and retention of valued features of the Chinese culture. Following the distinction between psychological and socio-cultural adaptation by Ward (1996), it can be stated that individuals following integration are adapted in both ways, such as the Chinese-Argentinian boy. Meanwhile, his mom has moderately good psychological adaptation and lower socio-cultural adjustment, which can be proved considering two aspects. She likes Argentina because of the peacefulness and the

clean air of the place, thus, it can be inferred that from a psychological perspective she is quite adapted. However, when analyzing her social network, it can be induced that from a socio-cultural view, she is not fully adapted.

From a group level perspective, finding just one suitable acculturation strategy becomes a tough task, particularly because the strategies are based on attitudes and behaviors and it is difficult to generalize on this. Nevertheless, from a compilation of testimonies on documentaries, newspapers articles and the interview conducted to Ma Huiwen (better known among students as Macarena), together with the results of different empirical studies of this type, it can be assumed that the Chinese diaspora in Buenos Aires follows two big trends depending on the immigrants' age at arrival, which is one of the key determinants of the acculturation process according to Kim (1977). On one hand, it can be inferred that immigrants who were born or at least grew up in Argentina, have more language and communications competences and skills, while tending to go through strategies such as integration or assimilation. On the other hand, immigrants who are already adults when arrived to Argentina tend to have more difficulties in adapting into the host culture, while the hardest barriers are often learning a new language and acquiring a local social network. In these cases, the strategies to follow are usually separation as Tara Wang's mom or, on a smaller scale, marginalization. Ma Huiwen's case serves as an example of how parents and grandparents have, in general, more difficulties to adapt than their child's, who usually grows up within the Argentinian culture, acquiring local values, habits and customs almost from the beginning. As Ma Huiwen, there are thousands of Chinese people that have undergone similar situations and who everyday struggle in their cities to be better integrated into the host culture.

With regard to this issue and according to Bogado (2011), it has been perceived in recent years a greater propensity to integration, particularly due to two factors. On one hand, the Chinese community has been more willing to spend spare time and money on recreational activities, which they share with the Argentinian society, this might mean a need to be completely part of it. On the other hand, greater openness and interest is displayed from the Chinese to the Argentinians, specially in knowing and getting involved with their traditions and customs. The explanation of Bogado (2011) fulfills Berry's idea that at the group level, acculturation can be expressed through changes in social structures, institutions and in cultural practices. Despite that the main social structures of the Chinese diaspora have not

been deeply modified, primarily understood through the close ties that characterizes the family and the maintenance of the marriages among the same community; changes in institutions and cultural practices can be effectively detected. First, Argentinians are now actively integrating some Chinese institutions that used to be exclusively for their own community. For example, the Chinese Buddhist Association used to be a space only for Taiwanese and Chinese people practicing Chinese Buddhism, but today, the association is open as well for Argentinians interested in their religion. This has been also perceived in the massive celebrations of the different Chinese festivals in the Chinatown of Belgrano, which shows that there is greater interaction with members of the host society. Secondly, Chinese people is participating, more than in the past, in Argentinian celebrations and social activities, such as the regular family meetings for barbecue in the different parks during the weekends and the traditional walks along the River Plate's coastline on Sundays, among others typical outings within the city and its surroundings.

Another factor that has make the acculturation process of the Chinese diaspora closer to strategies such as integration or assimilation rather than marginalization, is the fact that they did not settle in only one specific area. Unlike what happens in other parts of the world, the Chinese community in Buenos Aires city is not concentrated in only one neighborhood; their businesses and homes are distributed all over the city. The same occurs at the provincial level, Chinese people in different towns tended to establish throughout the town area and not only in the main urban sector (Pappier 2011). The Chinatown in Buenos Aires is the place of reference for the Chinese community and is where they mainly work but they have their homes scattered throughout the city, which opens the possibility of a better integration. However, as Bogado (2011) asserts, the Chinese diaspora still appears as a "conservative" community trying to keep their traditions and customs and usually strengthening intra-network relationships, although the young generation of Chinese is more open minded and is more willing to integrate into the host culture than its parents.

The "conservatism" mentioned by Bogado (2011), which sometimes can be understood as lack of interest from the Chinese diaspora regarding the integration issue, can be explained under the collectivism that characterizes the Chinese culture. China is a traditionally collectivistic country (Yu Hsu 2011). In this sense, the work of Hofstede (1984) remains essential, the study has proved that while United States scored the highest in individualism, the Chinese society showed the highest

scores in collectivism. Similarly, Triandis, McCusker and Hui's (1990) study showed that the Chinese culture could be better identified under collectivism rather than individualism. Hofstede (1984) exhorts that people in collectivistic cultures make decisions based on their own in-group and the "extended family or tribal structure" is the primary unit in this type of cultures. Additionally, Gudykunst (2003) sustains that "collectivism" incorporates cultural norms and rules related to group identities. Collectivists, like Chinese people, classify or associate themselves with family and ethnic group much more than individualists. There are many in-groups in collectivistic cultures that can affect people's decisions, such as family, friends, colleagues, and religious groups (Gudykunst 2003: 9). It is relevant to comprehend that the inclination of the Chinese diaspora in Argentina to keep close ties within the family and within the same ethnic community has to do with the collectivism that prevails in their culture rather than because of a lack of interest or a denial to be adapted and integrated into the host society. In order to identify the acculturation strategies on different non-dominant communities it is essential to have in mind the most relevant features and specific characteristics of the immigrant group and its culture, otherwise the acculturation strategies could be misunderstood.

Lastly, Berry (2005) highlights that the strategies are based on the assumption that non-dominant groups and individuals have the freedom to choose how they want to acculturate, but this has not always been the case. There is empirical evidence proving that the dominant group had enforced certain forms and types of acculturation or constrained the choices of them. In both cases, Berry (2005) proposes that the strategies needs to be termed in a different way, which corresponds to the viewpoint of the majority group and will be detailed in the next pages. Particularly, the expert in acculturation exhorts: "Integration can only be "freely" chosen and successfully pursued by non-dominant groups when the dominant society is open and inclusive in its orientation towards cultural diversity" (Berry 2005: 705). Due to the migration law in Argentina, the migration background of the country, and the personal stories and opinions about the Argentinians, specifically from Yuri, Tara Wang and his mom, it may be induced that there is no enforcement from the host society to the non-dominant culture. But, this statement, together with a description of the main features of the dominant group, are going to be further examined in the coming segment.

5.2. Acculturation of the Argentinians

In this section, the process of acculturation of the Argentinian society due to the Chinese presence in the country is going to be analyzed. The first relevant theoretical concepts are “valued” and “devalued” immigrants and are fundamental to comprehend the acculturation process of the Argentinians as host members. Montreuil & Bourhis (2004) assert that host majority acculturation orientations may differ depending on the national origin of the immigrant group. Therefore, it is relevant to establish whether the Chinese immigrants are considered valued or devalued by the Argentinians. An empirical study developed by Global Advisor²⁵ in Argentina, has shown that 50% of the interviewed people rejected immigration, even though they may be immigrants’ grandchildren, while 32% has said that their arrival has no impact (Cronista.com 2011). In response to the survey, Luis Costa, director of a company for social studies, explained that Argentina is today exposed to new migration flows; immigrants are not European anymore. Today, Bolivians, Paraguayans and Peruvians represent the main origin of the migration flows and people often have a negative opinion about them. Costa (2011) suggests that one of the causes of this negative stereotype of the regional immigrants has to do with the fact that they collapse the public transportation system, hospitals and other social services. Thus, Argentinians believe that immigrants are part of their everyday problems and also one of the main causes of them.

In addition, Mauricio Macri, mayor of Buenos Aires city, has blamed, on several public occasions, some of the local issues on the uncontrolled migration from the bordering countries. In this regards, Silvia Léopore, researcher specialized on local poverty and migration, has pointed that bordering immigrants are considered devalued as most of them are concentrated in Buenos Aires, making the problem more visible. Moreover, Bolivians, Paraguayans and Peruvians represented 70% of the householders in the poorest neighborhoods in the capital. All these, explains Léopore, make the regional immigrants being conceptualized under a negative perception. Although the survey does not mention the Chinese community in particular, it does indicate that Argentinians consider Bolivians, Paraguayans and Peruvians as devalued immigrants, while Europeans or North Americans are often the valued ones, just as suggested by Dema & Soler (2011) in their article: “VIP

²⁵The complete article and results from the survey available from <http://www.cronista.com/we/La-mitad-de-los-argentinos-rechaza-a-los-inmigrantes-20110902-0023.html>

immigrants”²⁶, where they describe the life and adaptation of Belgium people and other European immigrants in Buenos Aires.

Furthermore, two empirical researches regarding immigration in Argentina support the previous ideas. First, L. Ceglia Kotolowski (2009) in his study about the representations of the immigrants in Buenos Aires city, proved that Bolivians, Paraguayans and Peruvians are associated with low social class and with “villas”²⁷ as their territorial space. Meanwhile, the case of the Chinese and Korean immigrants is different. Although their presence on discourses is quite discriminatory, they are associated with a middle social class and their territorial and workspace is the supermarket. Thus, the Argentinian appreciation of the regional immigrants differs from the one of the Asian immigrants, which includes the Chinese people. Second, a research by Lelio Marmora (2002), a migration specialist working for the ECLAC and the IOM, exhorts that in the case of Argentina, many of the policies and migration management, conducted during the second half of the 20th century, was permeated by a kind of epic reading of ancient European immigration, crystallized as a paradigm of high civilization and development. The last century was also permeated by a stigmatizing gaze of Latin American immigration, which is still considered invasive, “wild” and predatory of public and social services (Marmora 2002 in Pacecca & Courtis 2012: 7). This latter point matches with the speech of the Mayor of Buenos Aires city, as well as with the Argentinians general opinion about regional immigrants as expressed above. Additionally, these different perceptions of both groups were accompanied by consistent rules, Marmora (2002) continued; legitimacy and rights of residence for the former European migration, precarious conditions of residence and work, and obstruction to the access of rights for contemporary Latin American migration.

Representations about immigrants from EU and LA seem to be evident, whereas opinions regarding the Chinese migration are pretty dissimilar. From a relational and comparative perspective with the bordering immigrants, Chinese people can be considered valued immigrants, because they do not form part of the poorest neighborhoods and they are thought to be hard workers, specially in relation to their jobs at the supermarkets and the long hours they are used to work. As well, despite of the fact that most of the Chinese people is concentrated in the capital,

²⁶ To access the complete article visit <http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1363628-inmigracion-vip-me-ven-y-piensen-en-euros>

²⁷ The term “villas” in Spanish refers to slums, really poor neighbourhoods or shantytowns. These can be found in Argentina, but also in the rest of Latin America. They are mostly settled down around the largest urban areas.

they live in different neighborhoods around the city, avoiding the residential concentration that characterizes the regional immigration in Buenos Aires. Another important factor is that their businesses, particularly the supermarkets, compete mainly among each other. Thus, they do not create a big economic competition with other businesses or stores of this type, avoiding possible misgivings and confrontation with locals. A forum in Yahoo.com, where Argentinians expressed their opinions regarding the Chinese immigrants in the country, represents a valuable source to support the previous idea. In response to the question: What is the attitude towards Chinese people in Argentina?²⁸ Some answers were: "Animosity against Chinese people is rather an isolated incident"; "There are hundreds of Chinese supermarkets in Argentina. They are normal, nobody says anything about them"; "Chinese supermarkets are everywhere! I never saw anything bad, Argentinians love buying in Chinese supermarkets"; "Argentinians think that Chinese are very hard workers".

Taking into account the comments about the Chinese diaspora in the country and the quoted literature, it can be appreciated that there is no general bad perception about Chinese people, apart from some negative opinions related to the long hours their employees have to work, the cleaning and health situation of their supermarkets and the recent mafia situation. Most of the time, these issues are present in the general discourses of the Argentinians, as pointed by Ceglia Kotolowski (2009), but in practice, there are no bad or discriminatory attitudes towards the Chinese community. The last tragic deaths of some Chinese businessmen in Buenos Aires have slightly affected their image; the Chinese people used to appear really often on the media news. However, the Argentinian president is concerned about the relationship with the central government of the PRC, so the official media actually does not expose most of the episodes. Both governments already took some security measures regarding this matter, so the Chinese diaspora's situation in Buenos Aires does not get more dangerous and specially, does not affect their main economic source, which are the supermarkets. So far, it seems that the acts of the Chinese mafia has not deeply modified the general opinion concerning the Chinese community in the country. Argentinians appear to be trying to separate the mafia's violent situations from the daily life of the hard working community.

²⁸ All the answers available from
<https://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20100627190633AAuL1GD>

The second important theoretical concept come as well from Montreuil & Bourhis (2001, 2004) and these are the five acculturation orientations of the host majority members, as counterpart of the acculturation strategies presented by Berry (2005) for the non-dominant group. When the host members accept and value the maintenance of the heritage culture of immigrants and also accept that immigrants adopt important features of the host culture, they endorse an *integrationist* orientation. In the long term, integrationists may contribute to cultural pluralism as an enduring feature of the host society. When host members define themselves as individuals rather than as members of group categories such as immigrants or host majority members, they follow an *individualist* orientation. In this case, personal characteristics and achievements of individuals are more valuable than belonging to a group. The *assimilationist* orientation corresponds to the traditional concept of absorption whereby host community members expect immigrants to relinquish their cultural heritage for the sake of adopting the culture of the majority. *Segregationists* accepts that immigrants maintain their heritage culture as long as they keep their distance from host majority members, as they do not wish immigrants to adopt or transform the host culture. Members of the host society who are intolerant of immigrants that maintain their heritage culture and also refuse to let them to adopt or transform features of the majority culture, endorse an *exclusionist* orientation. The last three orientations have in common the rejection of immigrants, or at least the rejection of some of their cultural characteristics.

Having in mind the description of each orientation, it is appropriate to find out whether the Argentinian culture could be better defined by one orientation or another. Some factors to observe in host members, in order to detect whether the host society endorse intregationism or individualism, have to do with having friends who are immigrants, showing interest in their culture, feeling comfortable with immigrants and perceiving that immigrants want good relations with in-group host majority members (Montreuil & Bourhis 2004: 511). Meanwhile, assimilationism, segregationism, and exclusionism are expected to be associated with an insecure social identity, feeling uncomfortable with immigrants and feeling threatened by the presence of devalued immigrants.

From a questionnaire sent via e-mail and Facebook messages to many organizations, institutions, associations and language centers established in Buenos Aires province and related to the Chinese culture, it could be inferred that Argentinians' general attitude towards the Chinese community is good and

acceptable. Argentinians are really interested in Chinese culture and the Chinese diaspora established in the country has emphasized this situation; they made the Chinese culture to come closer to the host society. Besides, it could be assumed that the adaptation of some institutions, from a group level perspective, is relatively new and huge in terms of the amount of organizations connecting China and Argentina that were created in last decades all over the country. Next, there are exposed some institutions and associations that prove the adaptation of the local institutions to the non-dominant culture, as one of the determinants for acculturation suggested by Berry (2005).

For example, Marcelo Cipitelli, the director of the Academy of Chinese Martial Arts “Lao Long”, explained that the Academy was founded in 1995, just with four students and there are currently 500 people assisting to different classes such as Kung Fu Wu Shu, Kung Fu Shao Lin, Tai Chi Chuan and Qi Kung, apart from Buddhist and Taoist philosophies. He also added that the interest on Chinese martial arts, in Argentina, started in the 90s because of the movies starring by Jean-Claude Van Damme. Particularly, the interest on Chi Kung has to do with a slimming treatment followed by the famous Argentinian soccer player, Diego Maradona. Similar to this case, Fabian Gonzalez, coordinator of the Association of Traditional Chinese Martial Arts (AAMTCA) in Buenos Aires city, asserted that the association was founded in 1990, teaching only one type of Kung Fu to 40 students. Today they have around 60 people assisting to Kung Fu because new kind of martial arts came up and people started to attend the new ones rather than the traditional Kung Fu art. Wing Chun and Tai Chi Chuan are two of the “new” martial arts; classes of Wing Chun are markedly more crowded than 15 years ago. Gonzalez affirmed that Argentinians started to be interested in the mix martial arts since the year 2000 when the Wing Chun movies came up. Today, AAMTCA receives much more inquiries about classes of Chinese martial arts than in the past, particularly thanks to the Facebook page. Cipitelli and Gonzalez have highlighted the harmony in the coexistence among the Chinese culture and the Argentinian culture. Moreover, the growing interest on Chinese martial arts can be part of the outcomes of the Argentinians’ positive attitude towards the Chinese diaspora and its culture.

In addition, due to the high interest of a group of Argentinian journalists in China, its power, its culture, its position in the international economy and the close ties between the two nations, Dang Dai Magazine was born. Nestor Restivo, co-director and editor of Dang Dai Magazine, explained that the magazine is mainly

distributed within the business world in Argentina and among the members of the Chamber of Bilateral Trade China-Argentina. As well, there are also some distributions in universities where Chinese language is taught, in different Argentinian-Chinese organizations, the Chinatown in Belgrano, hotels, and specialized bookstores, etc., In September 2011, when the magazine was created, there were only 500 subscribers, but this number reached 2.000 in 2014 and, if taking into consideration the online newsletters' subscribers, the number reaches 3.000 people. Moreover, the website and the online magazine have an average of 600 visits a day. Restivo expressed that Argentinians' attitude towards the Chinese diaspora and towards the Chinese culture is definitely positive and good; locals go more often to Chinese restaurants, they visit the Chinatown on weekends, there are more and more Chinese-Argentinian couples (topic of Dang Dai magazine No. 8) and he exhorted: "Do not forget that the supermarkets where we shop everyday are Chinese, and like it or not this situation involves contact across the existing cross-cultural distances".

Next, the experience of Ma Huiwen, who arrived in Argentina in 1995 from Beijing with his husband, can also show how the acceptance and interest of the Argentinians on Chinese culture has grown in the last decades. She started teaching Mandarin in 2003 to two students and today, she teaches Mandarin to almost 30 people. In 2007, she joined the language center of the National University of Mar del Plata because there were not enough Chinese teachers. Seven students were assisting to level 1 at that time, and today there are 20 people in level 1 and there is more than one of these courses. As well, the number of students performing the HSK²⁹ has increased. In the past, only a few students were interested on this exam, but today Ma Huiwen has more than 30 students that want to be proficient in Mandarin. Moreover, she exposed an important issue regarding the China-Argentina relations; since the year 2007, 12 of her students have been to China to improve their level of Chinese due to a scholarship program sponsored by the PRC Government. In response to the question of how the general attitude of the Argentinians towards the Chinese diaspora can be described, she answered: "The Asian country is becoming a stronger economy, and part of its power is its culture, therefore, in order to know more about China, Argentinians studies Mandarin". She added that the Argentinian society seems to be compatible with the Chinese

²⁹ Hànyǔ Shuǐpíng Kǎoshì or better known as HSK is China's only standardized test of Standard Chinese language proficiency for non-native speakers.

community and that she personally feels comfortable in the city and among Argentinians, in fact, she does not have plans to go back to China.

On the other hand, the Confucius Institute of the University of Buenos Aires (ICUBA) was founded in 2009 with only a few courses. Today, they offer more than ten different options: Chi Kung I; Confucian thought I; Ching I; Business I; Chinese Economy; Folk Art; Chinese Calligraphy; White Book; Chinese Political History; Chi Kung II; History of China; Ching II; Chinese Opera; Tourism; Chinese Art; Traditional Medicine; Painting; Business II; Tai Chi Chuan; Culture and Everyday Life; Feng Shui; Book of Rites; Book of Poems; Geography; and a seminar about the 5.000 years of Chinese characters. Moreover, they teach Mandarin and occasionally they organize seminars and art expositions associated with the Chinese culture. Just attending the language course, which is the most popular among Argentinians, they have 800 students, and 300 for the rest of the courses; by each year this number increases. In the first year, the institute had almost 300 students and few years later, the number of students reached 800, from which 300 perform today the HSK³⁰. ICUBA effectively recognizes a positive attitude towards the Chinese culture, a notable acceptance of the Chinese community in Buenos Aires and a growing general interest on China. ICUBA affirmed: "There are more students learning Chinese language, thus, there are more students interested on Chinese Culture, because you cannot finish learning a language without knowing the culture".

Apart from the previous cases, the participation of the Argentinians in the Chinese New Year's celebration in the Chinatown also affirms the acceptance, the positive general attitude towards the Chinese diaspora, as well as the growing interest in Chinese culture. Moreover, Argentinians' massive participation proves the feeling of being comfortable in the interaction with Chinese people. According to Dema & Barco (2010) 50.000 people participated in the 2010 Chinese New Year's celebration, most of them were Argentinians. However, during 2011, more than 70.000 people assisted to this festivity, experiencing lots of stands and two scenarios in which they perform the Dragon Dance and the Argentinian Tango, as a whole symbolism of friendship and harmonious coexistence among the communities (Pappier 2011). Hui Ping Ho, member of the organization of the Chinese New Year's celebration, expressed: "When I arrived in 1983, the Chinese New Year was something familiar, only for Chinese, but in recent years, Argentinians are massively participating" (Bilbao & Farber 2009). As well, Smith (2011), a journalist working

³⁰ More information available from http://www.institutoconfucio.edu.ar/noticias_HSK.html

every year on this Chinese festivity, stated that organizers remember the celebration in 2011 as a massive party, one of the most crowded in the last decades. However, two years later, the number of visitors reached 150.000 during the celebration of the Water Snake Year (Sánchez 2013). As exposed earlier on this paper, this year, the Chinese celebration has seen the participation of 200.000 people only on its first weekend (Czerwacki 2014). The Association of the Chinatown in Belgrano and its organizers are optimistic; they expect more than 220.000 people the following years, as well, they expect people to come from other cities and provinces to experience the real Chinese New Year.

Another important factor that proves the adaption of the local institutions to the Chinese diaspora, exposes the acculturation process of the host society as well as it demonstrates the fact that Argentinians feel comfortable with the presence of the Chinese culture in the country, is the existence of hundreds of different associations and institutions related to China, which flourished specially in the last 20 years. Pappier (2011) explains that in the early '80s, when the Chinese people first arrived in Buenos Aires city, just the Taiwanese Neighborhood Association, the Buddhist Temple and the Presbyterian Church were established in Belgrano. Besides, educational and cultural activities were held and aimed only at Chinese immigrants (Pappier 2011). Later on, the most diverse kind of association for Chinese and to tight the Chinese-Argentinian relations from different perspectives were settled down within Belgrano and all around the province of Buenos Aires.

To present some examples, it is possible to mention the Confucius institutes in La Plata, Buenos Aires city and Mar del Plata, the ArgenChina Chamber, Asia & Argentina Association, the Chinese International Radio, the Chinatown Association, languages centers teaching Mandarin in many Universities located in cities such as La Plata, Buenos Aires, Lanus, Lomas de Zamora, Mar del Plata, Tandil, Bahia Blanca, etc., the Civil Association of friendship among Chinese and Argentinians (AAACHI), the Civil Association for the Cooperation Argentina-China (ACCACH), the Argentinian Society of Acupuncture, the Argentinian School of Traditional Chinese medicine, the Association of young Chinese-Argentinians students, the Chinese School of Martial Arts, the Argentinian Association of Chinese Martial Arts, the Metropolitan Association of Chinese Martial Arts (AMAMARCH), the Association of Traditional Chinese Martial Arts Argentina, the school of Chinese Martial Arts Chan Kowk Wai and the Chinese Buddhist Association, among others.

In addition to all the quoted associations and institutions, the Cultural

Chinese-Argentina Association can be cited as an outstanding example of how host institutions adapted to the non-dominant culture. The Association was created in 2005 to support Chinese families and children who needed to learn Spanish, but due to the high demand of the Argentinian community, they opened Mandarin courses, Kung Fu lessons, calligraphy and Chinese cuisine, among other courses, to the local community. The Tzong Kuan Buddhist Temple, also located in Belgrano, has shown as well a great opening for the Argentinians. The Temple has enabled visits as well as the participation in religious ceremonies and meditation meetings, unlike its first years, when the assistance was restricted to Chinese people and taking a photograph inside was unthinkable (Pappier 2011). The adaptation of the institutions in these cases came from both, the Chinese community as well as from the Argentinian society.

In sum, the positive and good general attitude of the Argentinians towards the Chinese diaspora in Buenos Aires can be assumed through the considerable acceptance of the community and the growing interest of the Argentinians in Chinese culture, arts, film, music, traditional celebrations, food, cuisine, calligraphy, history, religion, medicine, trade, economy, etc. It is important to note that the interest and the positive attitude towards the Chinese diaspora have to do, not only with the presence of this community in Buenos Aires, but also with the idea of the “Rise of China” as a global power. The belief that China will lead the world in the future and the economic opportunities derived from this fact, are also one of the main reasons of why people in Argentina is increasingly studying Mandarin and Chinese culture. Learning is complex, but there are increasingly risky students because they think in their possible job opportunities, asserted Kitto (2012) in his article “Mandarin Chinese is popular among Argentinians”.

Apart from newspapers and magazines like “Dang Dai” that brings all the Chinese news to the Argentinian public, in Youtube, the most popular video-sharing website in Argentina, one can spend hours watching different performs related to Chinese celebrations in the country, Chinese culture, curiosities in Buenos Aires’ Chinatown, different Chinese food specialties, how Chinese people live in Buenos Aires, among the most diverse topics. Just to mention some of them: “Walking in Chinatown Buenos Aires”; “Chinese New Year in Buenos Aires, Belgrano”; “Amulets in Buenos Aires Chinatown”; “Chinese New Year’s celebration 2014”; “GPS Special Chinatown”; “Haul in Buenos Aires Chinatown”; “Dragon Dance for the bicentennial in Buenos Aires Chinatown”, among more than 10.000 results from one searching.

The presence of the Chinese culture in the local media is evident and it seems an increasing tendency. Thus, this fact can also be understood as one of the outcomes of the acceptance and comfort of the Argentinians towards the Chinese people.

The exposed information sustains that, Argentinians as host members endorse either integrationism or individualism as acculturation orientations, based on what Montreuil & Bourhis (2004) suggest. Some of the factors that can be observed, according to the authors and are confirmed in the analysis segment are; showing interest in their culture, specially understood from the massive Argentinian participation on the Chinese New Year's celebration and the amount of Mandarin students all over the country. Feeling comfortable with immigrants, particularly based on two facts; the large amount of documentaries and videos available on Argentinian websites about the Chinese people and its culture in the country; and the increasing number of visits to the Chinatown in Belgrano each weekend as a "must" walk in Buenos Aires. Finally, perceiving that immigrants want good relations with in-group host majority members, which is mainly supported by the big number of associations with the aim of tightening relations between both communities, as well as by the integration of Argentinians to many typical Chinese events and ceremonies, that used to be exclusively for the community.

Furthermore, from a theoretical point of view, favorable contact conditions leading to positive intercultural relations, associated with integrationism and individualism include; absence of competition for scarce resources between groups and equal status between groups (Montreuil & Bourhis 2001: 702). In this sense, from an economic perspective, the establishments of the Chinese supermarkets were pioneer in this kind of big groceries inside each neighborhood. Chinese people found an innovative strategy to call the Argentinians customers' attention, they offer better prices than the regular groceries or big supermarkets and they are located in every corner, thus, as mentioned before, the competition is mainly among each other. On the other hand, the issue of equal status leading to good intercultural relations can be related to the appropriate legal framework that the country offer to immigrants in order to regularize their status, avoiding discrimination episodes and prejudice from the host society.

As previously mentioned, the flexible migration law in Argentina benefited not only the regional immigrants in the country, but also the Chinese. An analysis of the migration policies is essential because the acculturation orientations of the host members are influenced by the integration policies adopted by the governments of

the receiving country (Montreuil & Bourhis 2001: 717). In 2004, the migratory regularization was established upon the belief of “ethical imperative” to facilitate the regularization of non-native MERCOSUR³¹ immigrants residing in Argentina. The measure softened the requirements to start the immigration process and provided temporary residence for two years, renewable and eventually convertible to permanent residences, for which immigrants were requested for accreditation of licit livelihoods. With the payment of a residence fee, the measure allowed, specially the Chinese immigrants, to obtain a legal status. According to the National Migration Bureau, in six months, 12.456 Chinese people regularized their situation and in one year from the decree, 9.383 Chinese people got their residence (Pacecca & Courtis 2008: 68). The last changes in the migration legal framework in the country are consistent to the modification of some cultural practices, social and political institutions for an integrationist orientation (Berry 2005: 711). Thus, the creation of new social and cultural institutions to bring the Chinese culture to the Argentinian society, together with the adaptation of the law in order to regularize the immigrants’ status is for Berry (2005), indispensable for a host majority who is following a multicultural model and an integrationist orientation.

Based on Berry’s (2005) appreciation regarding host members, the general orientations that a society has towards immigration and pluralism, influences the immigrant acculturation process. Therefore, the process of acculturation of the non-dominant group cannot be properly understood without an analysis of the process of acculturation of the host culture and vice versa. In fact, immigrants are better adapted in societies that have being built by immigration over centuries, as exemplified by Argentina. Migratory movements have influenced and shaped the Argentinian society historically and continue to do so today, though the migrants vary (Benencia 2012: 9). Since 1850, Argentina has been an attractive destination, mostly for European migration, but some years later, immigrants started to come from neighboring countries, other LA nations and from Asia. The migration flows have changed during the last decades, but they have been pretty constant. On this basis, researchers and historians (Peccecca & Courtis 2008; Benencia 2012) agree that Argentina has a vast and varied migration profile.

Berry (2005) believes that some societies accepting the cultural pluralism resulting from migration, creates an environment that helps the cultural adaptation of

³¹ MERCOSUR (Southern Common Market) is a customs union of six South American countries: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia and Venezuela, and it was established under the 1991 Treaty Of Asunción. Chile, Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana and Suriname are associated nations.

the immigrant, this position represents a positive multicultural ideology. In contrast, other societies seek to eliminate diversity through policies and programs of assimilation and still, other societies attempt to achieve the segregation or marginalization of their diverse populations. However, as Berry states: “even when pluralism is accepted, there are well known variations in the relative acceptance of specific cultural, racial and religious groups” (Berry 2005: 704). This means that even though intregationism is the general orientation followed by a host society, there could be some groups that do not feel comfortable with the presence of immigrants. This situation is also a reality in Buenos Aires, where there are as well, individuals against the establishment of the Chinese diaspora in the country. The presence of the mafia within the Chinese community is often part of the arguments against them.

The connection between orientations and valued/devalued immigrants comes from the empirical study of Montreuil & Bourhis (2004) in Quebec, Canada. While segregationism and exclusionism endorse ethno-centric and authoritarian ideologies, reject devalued immigrants and do not seek friendship with them; integrationists and individualists do not reject either any kind of immigrants and they actually have contacts with them. The cited empirical study is relevant because it has shown that intregationism and individualism are endorsed more strongly towards valued immigrants, while acculturation orientations such as segregationism and exclusionism, are more strongly endorsed towards devalued immigrants. This result is applicable to the present case study where Argentinians seem to be integrationists and individualists towards valued immigrants like Europeans and Asians, and segregationist or exclusionists towards devalued immigrants such as Bolivians and Peruvians. In the following section, some partial considerations will be expressed, primarily connecting both sides of the acculturation phenomenon recently explained.

5.3. Partial Considerations

In this section, some ideas that deserve special attention, together with some partial considerations of the previous analytical segment are exposed. First, it is vital to understand that both processes, the acculturation of the Chinese people in Buenos Aires and the acculturation process of the Argentinians as host members, are cause and consequence of eachother. Therefore, in order to comprehend the Argentinians’ attitude towards the Chinese culture and the acculturation process

derived from the contact with this diaspora, a complete analysis of the interaction between these two cultures is a needed step. Empirical studies analyzing how the newcomers adapt to a new host culture unavoidably needs to detect the acculturation orientation of the host society.

Secondly, the role of the State within any acculturation process is essential and deserves special focus. As Montreuil & Bourhis (2001) suggest, State integration policies adopted at the national, provincial, regional, and municipal levels combine to create an “official integration climate” that can influence the acculturation orientations of dominant majority members, which in turn, impact the acculturation orientations of the immigrant. To put it in a nutshell, official measures can help the immigrants feel comfortable within the new host society, whereas, from the host perspective, State policies towards immigrants (such as the regularization of their legal status) contribute to avoid discriminatory situations and create a more peaceful environment. State policies generate and contribute to a more multicultural and tolerant society, our politicians and governors should therefore act accordingly. In this context, Tara Wang, the Chinese boy living in Buenos Aires, is integrated because Argentina can be defined as a multicultural State. As Berry (2005) sustains, integration within immigrants is only possible when there is a multicultural orientation in the host society that matches the integrative strategy among the non-dominant groups. In sum, it is important to highlight that the strategies followed by the immigrants need to be analyzed and understood together with the recognition of the acculturation orientations of the dominant culture as well as with a proper identification of the main features of each of the cultures in contact.

On third place, even though the integration strategy can be found among Chinese immigrants and the Argentinian society could be considered as endorsing a general integrationist orientation; conflict, due to the interaction of the two cultures, cannot be denied. As Montreuil & Bourhis (2001) assert, combinations of acculturation orientations held by the host members and the acculturation strategies of the immigrant group are expected to yield relational outcomes, which may be harmonious, problematic or conflictual. Among the most common outcomes, it can be cited interethnic attitudes and creation of stereotypes, acculturative stress, and discrimination between the immigrant and host majority members in domains such as housing, employment, schooling, police and the judiciary. In this regard, even though not as much as regional immigrants, Chinese are often treated as dirty in their supermarkets and abusive with their employees. Similarly, the recent tragic

situations involving the mafia, further strengthen the existing stereotypes built upon the Chinese diaspora. It could be argued that, in order to achieve a better adaptation within the Argentinian society, the security measures towards the mafia issue need to be effective and carefully tackle the main problem because their image can be deteriorated, creating obstacles for them to feel fully part of the host culture. However, not only the police can do something for a better adaptation of the Chinese immigrants, but also themselves can improve their image by being more careful about the cleaning and health conditions of their businesses. Finally, on one hand, it is understandable that the Chinese diaspora in Argentina has established close ties among themselves, which prevails until today and has to do with the collectivism that characterizes the Chinese culture, as explained in section 5.1. This situation is particularly expected during the first stage of the adaptation into the new culture that is usually arduous. However, on the other hand, this circumstance might not have encouraged a complete integration. As Lakey (2003) suggests, strong immigrants involvement with one's native ethnic community can help the acculturation process in the beginning, but may retard acculturation in the long run, depending on the immigrant's intensity of communication with the members of the host society. The extent to which strangers adapt to the host culture depends on their personal and social communication processes (Kim 1982 in Wichert 1996). It is actually possible for Tara Wang's mom to get more involved into the Argentinian society, following the adaptation process of her son, which is effectively the most desirable and least stressful way to accomplish acculturation, but both sides of the acculturation process need to agree on that. In the following segment, the final conclusions and last considerations of the paper are exposed.

6. Conclusions

This paper aimed to examine the acculturation processes that occurred due to the establishment of the Chinese diaspora in Buenos Aires province, Argentina. Both parties; the Chinese diaspora and the Argentinian society have experienced acculturation processes. Not only the newcomers have experienced adaptation, conflict, and changes on behavior and attitudes, but also the members of the host culture have undergone through a process of adjustment. The study has also sought to find out how the general attitude in Argentina towards the Chinese diaspora can be described, as well as to identify the main difficulties that the newcomers faced in their integration into the Argentinian society. The research tried to answer the following problem formulation: **How the Chinese diaspora and the Argentinians have experienced the acculturation process due to their interaction in the province of Buenos Aires?** The paper also intended to explain some sub-research questions that were useful to develop the main problem: Which cultural barriers did the Chinese diaspora had to overcome when settling down in Buenos Aires province? According to the Acculturation theory and John W. Berry's four strategies, how the Chinese diaspora experienced the process of acculturation in Buenos Aires as a host place?; According to Anne Montreuil & Richard Y. Bourhis's acculturation orientations for the host society, how the Argentinians experienced the process of acculturation due to the presence of the Chinese diaspora? Finally, how the Argentinians' general attitude towards the Chinese diaspora in the province of Buenos Aires can be described?

6.1. Empirical Findings

This part will synthesize the empirical findings to answer the study's research problems exposed in the problem formulation section. Beginning from the Chinese diaspora viewpoint, it can be stated that the cultural barriers in order to adapt to the Argentinian culture were many, but the most outstanding one has been the language. Learning Spanish was the most difficult stage of the adaptation, particularly for those immigrants who arrived to the country when they were already adults. However, their involvement in the supermarket business implied that they do not necessarily need to know Spanish, so these immigrants successfully managed their life at work. The second most difficult obstacle was probably establishing and

creating a local social network. This was specifically hard for Tara Wang's mom, who is actually lacking this type of network among Argentinians, unlike her son, who after some years formed a group of friends that includes locals. It seems that getting a job and finding a place to live were not major concerns for the Chinese community, as their close ethnic ties and the collectivism that generally characterizes the culture helped them solving these issues rapidly. The place where the Chinese people work is usually where they sleep, so the housing issue was solved together with the problem of finding a job.

On one hand, Chinese immigrants who arrived when they were young present better psychological and socio-cultural adaptation and could be identified with acculturation strategies such as integration like Tara Wang's case. In contrast, for those immigrants who arrived in Argentina when they were already adults, the adaptation was harder; they experienced higher level of acculturative stress and they could be better identified with acculturation strategies such as separation. This is the case of Tara Wang's mom, who after more than twenty years in the country still does not speak good Spanish, prefers speaking Chinese, watches Chinese soup operas and still misses her homeland. In sum, from the non-dominant culture perspective, the group level is characterized by two main trends; integrationism, specially for the young immigrants; and separation, particularly for the adult immigrants. At the individual level, Tara Wang and his mom exemplify these two main trends. Despite of the recognition of these general tendencies from the newcomers' perspective, individuals who experienced assimilation and marginalization can also be found among the Chinese diaspora in Argentina. The tendency does not deny the existence of immigrants who feel rejected by the host members or simply, do not want to be integrated into the host society.

On the other hand, after analyzing some relevant features of the Argentinians as host members, it is possible to assert that the Argentinian society is more likely to endorse orientations such as integrationism and individualism, rather than segregationism, assimilationism or exclusionism towards the Chinese diaspora. The immigration history of the South American country and its multicultural formation are key factors in comprehending the acculturation orientations of the Argentinians. Furthermore, host members consider the Chinese immigrants established in Argentina as "valued" rather than "devalued" migrants. This was particularly supported by the Argentinian's stereotype about Bolivians, Paraguayans and Peruvians, who are negatively appreciated and thus; considered as "devalued"

immigrants. However, it is relevant to highlight that the perception of the Argentinians about the Chinese community in the country could change in the future, specially if the mafia issue is not favorably solved.

Argentinians seem to be comfortable with the presence of the Chinese diaspora in the country, and particularly in the province of Buenos Aires, which is the place where most of them have settled down. The Argentinian society shows a general positive attitude towards them; the visit to the Chinatown on weekends has become a popular plan among locals, besides, they enjoy Chinese food, they shop everyday at their supermarkets, they actively participate each year in the celebration of the Chinese New Year, they even learn different Chinese martial arts and they are more and more curious about the practice of Chinese Buddhism. Additionally, an increasing number of Argentinians are concerned about what is taking place in China and therefore, they have subscribed to different publications, to be aware of the news coming from the Asian nation. It is evident that Argentinians are more interested than before in Chinese culture, and this interest, express acceptance and comfort with the presence of the Chinese diaspora in the country. All the institutions and associations quoted in the analytical section, that connects the Argentinians with the Chinese culture, have proved this fact. However, the most outstanding symptom is the growing amount of Argentinians learning Chinese language, which is definitely an essential part of the Chinese culture.

6.2. Future Research

Three different and further studies can be accomplished since the elaboration of the current thesis. The first has to do with the realization of a deeper research of the acculturation strategies endorsed by the non-dominant groups, meaning the Chinese diaspora, but from a group level perspective. In order to achieve this kind of analysis more time and more cases of study are needed; scarce elements in the present work. The second possible research that could be deduced from this paper is investigating whether the Chinese community in Argentina could be better understood as diaspora or sojourners. The debate, which was mentioned when defining the key terms, needs special emphasis on the different groups of Chinese people established in the country to determine whether they are permanently living in Argentina or they are actually temporary workers who plan to return to homeland.

Finally, the last research that could be produced from the elaboration of this paper is a further analysis of how Argentinians perceive the Chinese diaspora after

reevaluating the situation of the Chinese mafia in the country. If the Chinese mafia issue is not effectively solved and in fact, the situation becomes more serious, inevitably the Argentinian appreciation and the general attitude towards the Chinese diaspora will change. Therefore, a new analysis about the Argentinian's acceptance towards the Chinese will be needed. The mafia episodes can make the Chinese people to be considered by the Argentinians as "devalued" immigrants, such as Peruvians or Paraguayans. Images and perceptions of the immigrants may vary, thus, it is relevant to stress the importance to reach a solution to the sad episodes that are taking place among the Chinese diaspora, particularly in Buenos Aires.

6.3. Final Consideration

Overall, the present paper wants to highlight the need of a more tolerant and humanitarian society. Argentinians have experienced and successfully overcome many socio-economic and political situations. This is why the society effectively accounts for the strength to make the country a more welcoming place for immigrants, specially considering that most of our grandparents used to be migrants. It is essential to understand that the Chinese diaspora in Argentina is much more than the supermarkets where Argentinians do their everyday shopping. The Chinese diaspora is contributing to make themselves more tolerant, multicultural, open minded, patient, inclusive and better prepared to take the advantages of knowing the Chinese culture, in order to increase professional and academic opportunities in the future. The "Dragon dance" and the "Tango" are not opposites. The Chinese celebrations with a massive participation of Argentinians has shown that the coexistence between the two cultures can lead to benefits for both, for the Argentinians as well as for the Chinese people. The study of the Chinese diaspora in a specific place is a valuable and sometimes forgotten perspective for International Relations researches. This viewpoint is determining, because we cannot understand the position of China in the international system without cognition of its people and culture. The Chinese culture goes further than the supermarkets and China could be more than just a good trade partner for Argentina.

"Argentina and China share a relationship of mutual trust and support. We have worked together and we have achieved concrete cooperation agreements in favor of our people".

Wang Yi, Foreign Minister of China in a meeting with Cristina Fernandez,
President of the Argentinian Republic.
Telam News - 23rd April 2014

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8. Annexes

- ❖ Questions sent via Facebook message to the Academy of Chinese Martial Art Lao Long (Academia Superior de Arte Marcial Chino Lao Long). Person of contact: Marcelo Cippitelli, director of the Academy.

- 1) Cuándo arrancó la academia?
- 2) Con cuántos alumnos empezó? y cuantos alumnos hay actualmente?
- 3) Qué tipos de artes marciales o actividades relacionadas con las Cultura China se enseñan en la Academia?
- 4) Con respecto a su pagina de Facebook, en qué año surgió? Cuántas personas tenían como seguidores en sus comienzos? Se acuerdan?
- 5) Ustedes creen que hubo un pico en donde la gente empezó a estar mas interesada por las artes marciales de origen chino?

Answers of Marcelo Cippitelli, via Facebook

- 1) *Arrancó en el año 1995.*
- 2) *Arrancó con 4 alumnos. Actualmente la matrícula debe ser de alrededor de 300 alumnos en la sede central, pero tambien hay una matrícula móvil de unos 500 alumnos de todas las artes marciales.*
- 3) *Se enseña Kung Fu Wu Shu, Kung Fu Shao Lin, Tai Chi Chuan y Chi Kung (mas conocido como Qi Gong), ademas de filosofía budista y taoista (Chan).*
- 4) *La página de facebook está desde hace un año aproximadamente (2013) y el numero de seguidores subio rápidamente a un actual de unos 314.*
- 5) *El mayor interes de los argentinos en general y de la gente común por las artes marciales chinas en realidad estuvo en los años 90, especialmente por la difusión de películas, sobre todo las de Jean Claude Van Damme. Tambien hubo mucho interes en el Chi Kung a raiz de una noticia sobre un supuesto Chi Kung para adelgazar al que se sometió el jugador de futbol Diego Maradona hace unos años atrás.*

- ❖ Questions sent via e-Mail to Dang Dai Magazine at restivo60@yahoo.com.ar
Person of contact: Nestor Restivo, co-director and editor of Dang Dai Magazine.

- 1) De quién ha sido la iniciativa de crear la revista? y cual fue el mayor impulso para esta creación?
- 2) En dónde se puede conseguir la revista?
- 3) Cuántos lectores se registraron en los primeros meses de la revista?
- 4) Cuántos lectores hay actualmente?
- 5)Cuál es el perfil del lector? Solo argentinos o también hay Chinos entre ellos?
- 6) Creés que los argentinos están más interesados que antes en la cultura China? Cuál, según vos, es el origen de este menor/igual/mayor interes?

Answers of Nestor Restivo, Dang Dai Magazine

- 1) *Por diversas razones de inquietudes personales (sobre la cultura china, relaciones de sangre e interés por el nuevo papel de la RPCh en la economía mundial) un grupo de periodistas nos propusimos crear un medio de intersección entre las crecientes relaciones entre Argentina y China, en el más amplio registro. Nos presentamos a un subsidio para revistas culturales que dio el impulso inicial, pero luego pudimos financiar no sólo la revista sino un sitio web, programa de radio y newsletter, más otras tareas de comunicación que unan a las dos culturas, y hemos podido hacerlo muy bien hasta ahora*
- 2) *Somos socios de la Cámara de Comercio bilateral y se distribuye entre sus asociados. Fuera del mundo empresario, en universidades donde se enseña idioma o cultura china, organizaciones argentino-chinas, Barrio Chino, hotelería, librerías especializadas de varios puntos del país, gobiernos en sus tres niveles y medios.*
- 3) *Aproximadamente 500*
- 4) *Cerca de 2000 más 3000 suscriptores a la Newsletter, en tanto la web tiene visitas diarias con picos de 600.*
- 5) *Si bien llega a China es muy poco allí, la mayoría son argentinos.*
- 6) *Definitivamente sí, se acercan más, a sus restaurantes, al Barrio Chino, a las escuelas, hay parejas entre chinos y argentinos (dimos una nota al respecto en el último número), etc. No olvides que muchísimos supermercados en Argentina son chinos, y vamos todos los días!, eso se quiera o no, produce contacto más allá de*

las distancias culturales y aunque éstas parezcan infranqueables en esas situaciones. También hay más turismo en ambas vías. Muy de a poco se van acercando más luego de siglos de distancias.

❖ Questions sent via Facebook message to Ma Huiwen better known as “Macarena” Lao Shi. Chinese teacher living in Mar del Plata, Argentina. She is teacher of Chinese language at the Language Laboratory of the University of Mar del Plata.

- 1) Cuándo viniste a la Argentina? Con quien viniste?
- 2) De qué ciudad y provincia de China sos?
- 3) Cuándo empezaste a dar clases cuantos alumnos particulares tenias?
- 4) Cuándo alumnos particulares tenes hoy?
- 5) Recibis más consultas que antes sobre las clases de idioma Chino?
- 6) Cuándo empezaste a dar clases en el Laboratorio de idiomas de la Universidad?
- 7) Cuántos alumnos habia en el laboratorio cuando vos empezaste a dar clases? Aproximadamente, no tiene que ser un numero exacto.
- 8) Cuántos alumnos asisten hoy a clases de Chino? O cuantos alumnos tenes vos en el laboratorio de idiomas?
- 9) Hay más alumnos que antes interesados en rendir el Hsk???
- 10) Creés que hubo un quiebre en donde la gente empezó a estar mas interesada por la Cultura China?

Answers of Ma Huiwen

- 1) *Llegué a la Argentina en septiembre del año 1995 con mi marido.*
- 2) *Soy de Beijing, la capital de CHINA.*
- 3) *Empezé a dar clases de chino mandarín en el año 2003, en ese momento tuve 2 alumnas.*
- 4) *Hoy casi 25 a 30 alumnos.*
- 5) *Si, cada año hay mas gente interesada.*
- 6) *Empezé a dar clase en el laboratorio de idioma de la Universidad en el año 2007.*
- 7) *No me acuerdo bien, había 6 o 7 personas.*

- 8) *Es muy difícil contestar esta pregunta, justo MAÑANA va a empenzar la clase en el laboratorio, hay 20 personas que se inscribieron para nivel inicial. como la universidad tiene un a regla de llegar a las 15 personas para poder abrir el curso, los alumnos de nivel avanzado estudian particularmente o en grupos pequeños.*
- 9) *Si el año pasado tuve 30 alumnos que rindieron el examen hsk nivel 1 y 2. Tambien mandé a 12 alumnos que vayan a china a estudiar con la beca del gobierno durante el año 2007 hasta ahora.*
- 10) *Creo que si, porque China es cada vez mas fuerte por su economia y su cultura milenaria. mucha gente del occidente quiere conocer la cultura china, y estudiar el idioma (Han yu) es un mejor forma.*
-

❖ Questions sent via e-Mail to the Confucius Institute of the University of Buenos Aires (UBA). Contact: ICUBA info@institutoconfucio.edu.ar

- 1) Cuándo arrancó la instituto Confucio de UBA? Por iniciativa de quien?
- 2) Cuánta gente de origen Chino y cuánta de origen Argentino trabaja hoy en el Instituto? Cambió este numero a lo largo de los años?
- 3) Qué cursos, clases o seminarios se dictan hoy en día? Qué cursos, clases o seminarios se dictaban cuando arrancaron?
- 4) Con cuántos alumnos empezaron esos cursos? (en general, no hace falta cifras exactas) Con cuantos alumnos cuenta hoy el instituto, entre todos sus cursos y clases?
- 5) Cual es el curso o clase al que más asisten los alumnos?
- 6) Reciben más consultas que antes sobre cursos, horarios y clases?
- 7) Cuando armaron la pagina de facebook?
- 8) Tienen alumnos que se preparan para rendir el examen HSK? Cuántos se anotaban hace unos años para rendir el examen y cuántos se anotan hoy?
- 9) Creen que hubo un quiebre en donde la gente empezó a estar mas interesada por la Cultura China? Por qué crees que ocurrió esto?

Answers of ICUBA

- 1) *El Instituto Confucio de la Universidad de Buenos Aires se fundó en el año 2009 por iniciativa de la UBA.*

- 2) Hay aproximadamente 20 personas de origen chino y 15 de origen argentino trabajando en el Instituto. Cada vez contamos con más personal.
- 3) Este año se dictan los siguientes cursos: Chi Kung I; Pensamiento de Confucio I Ching I; Negocios I; Economía China; Arte Folklórico; Caligrafía China; Libro Blanco; Historia Política; Chi Kung II; Historia de China; I Ching II; Opera China; Turismo; Arte musical; Medicina Tradicional; Pintura; Negocios II; Tai Chi Chuan Cultura y Vida Cotidiana; Feng Shui; Libro de Ritos; Libro de Poesías; Geografía; Gastronomía; Método de Enseñanza; 5 mil años de caracteres chinos. Además de las clases de idioma chino y distintos seminarios o muestras de arte.
- 4) Contamos con 800 alumnos de idioma, y con 300 de los cursos de cultura. Cada año se inscriben más alumnos.
- 5) Las clases de idioma son a las que más alumnos asisten, y en cuanto a los cursos de cultura, a los que más asisten son los de caligrafía china y QiGong
- 6) Si
- 7) Todavía no contamos con página de facebook.
- 8) Sí, hay muchos alumnos que se inscriben para rendir el HSK. El año pasado tuvimos 300 alumnos; todos los años esta cantidad aumenta.
- 9) No creemos que haya habido un quiebre, sino un interés creciente por la cultura y el idioma chino; al haber más alumnos de idioma, hay más de cultura, ya que no se puede terminar de aprender un idioma si no se aprende su cultura.

❖ Questions sent via Facebook message to the Association of Traditional Chinese Martial Arts in Buenos Aires city (Asociacion de Artes Marciales Tradicionales Chinas Argentina - AAMTCA). Contact: Fabian Gonzalez, AAMTCA coordinator.

- 1) Cuando arrancó la Asociación?, Por iniciativa de quien?
- 2) Con cuantos alumnos empezó? Cuantos alumnos hay actualmente? (en general)
- 3) Que tipos de artes marciales o actividades relacionadas con las Cultura China se enseñan en la Asociacion?
- 4) Cual es la clase en donde el publico aumentó mas los ultimos años?
- 5) Cuantas personas de origen chino y argentino trabajan en la Asociacion?
- 6) Ustedes creen que hubo un quiebre en donde la gente empezo a estar mas interesada por las artes marciales de origen chino? Por qué se dio este fenómeno?
- 7) Reciben más consultas que antes sobre clases, actividades y horarios?

Answers of AAMTCA

1) Fuimos un grupo de profesores que comenzamos a ser alumnos del Maestro Li Hon Ki; a partir de enero de 1990; quien estaba radicado en Brasil-Sao Paulo- y comenzamos a aprender un estilo de Kung Fu que se llama Hung Gar. Luego anualmente seguimos viajando a Brasil continuando aprendiendo el estilo Hung Gar, y también en esa época practicábamos Capoeira, en forma paralela.

Luego pudimos traer al Maestro Li Hon ki por primera vez a la Argentina-Rosario en 1994 y como el Maestro enseñaba los estilos Hung Gar-Wing Chun y Tai Chi Chuan Wu; comenzamos a aprender esos 3 estilos y decidimos crear la Asociación de artes marciales tradicionales chinas de Argentina.

2) A comienzo de los 90 había mas alumnos dedicados al Kung Fu Tradicional; luego fue variando con altibajos hoy en día se estabilizó la cantidad de alumnos. Por ejemplo, a comienzos de los 90 teníamos 100 alumnos; luego decae a 40 alumnos y hoy son 60 alumnos aproximadamente, aclaro que siempre nos interesó la calidad y no la cantidad.

3) Difundimos los 3 estilos que nos enseña nuestro Maestro (Hung Gar-Wing Chun - Tai Chi Chuan Familia Wu).

4) La clase dónde el publico aumento en estos años es del estilo Wing Chun.

5) En la Asociación solo trabajamos Argentinos; 3 profesores fundadores y otros profesores que dictan clases.

6) Creo que hubo un quiebre con respecto a las Artes Marciales Tradicionales Chinas; antes no existían las Artes Marciales Mixtas (mezcla de Jiu Jitsu; Muay Thai; Kich Boxing etc). A fines la década del 2000 mucha gente se volcó al entrenamiento de MMA (Artes marciales mixtas); pero hace unos años a partir de películas de Wing Chun, mucha gente se interesó por este estilo tradicional y el Kung Fu comenzó a crecer nuevamente (desde mi lugar y modesto punto de vista).

7) Actualmente gracias a Internet (Blogs y Facebook; recibimos mas consultas que antes y la gente se entusiasma rápidamente, ya que hacemos participar algunas clases sin costo para que prueben y vean si realmente le gusta el arte marcial Chino. Aclaramos que solo deseamos enseñar los estilos como lo aprendemos sin mezclar, ni quitar o agregar nada, lo mas tradicional posible, sin competencia y que sirva para mejorar la salud y calidad de vida y a su vez aprender a defenderse en caso de alguna situación no deseada.