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5

New Youth Mobilities: Transnational Migrations, Racialization and Global Popular Culture

Diana Yeh

Introduction

This chapter draws on a project on so-called 'British Chinese'/'Oriental'[1] youth cultures to examine new forms of mobility among young people who have grown up as children of migrants. It traces changing mobility patterns, from the migration and settlement patterns of the parental generation to the physical and virtual mobilities of the next generation. Children of migrants move locally to participate in activities with ethnic and racial co-peers, take transnational trips and engage virtually as global youth. As the editors to this volume suggest, examining the short-term and the micro-movements of children and young people within major migration fluxes brings to light experiences that are presently invisible and undertheorized. By using the concept of 'mobility-in-migration', they capture new complex, changing forms of movement that occur in response to migration and global economic and social change. By discussing how the mobilities of children of migrants are shaped by family transnational migrations, this chapter illustrates how shifts from childhood to youth intersect with migration trajectories. However, by tracing the ways in which young people also craft their own forms of movement, it considers how their present mobilities, shaped by processes of racialization, relate specifically to a localized global youth culture shared with both migrant and nonmigrant co-racial youth and thus transcend pathways forged by familial and ethnonational ties. This chapter therefore argues that these young people cannot be understood solely as children of migrants and that their mobilities must also be examined

within broader processes of racialization, the transnational migrations of other young people and the globalization of culture.

A central theoretical aim of the chapter is to bring together the literatures on migration, mobility, racialization and global youth cultures. My analysis stands in line with recent studies of transnational migration that complicate the dichotomy between 'migrants' and 'nonmigrants' and between 'first' and 'second' or subsequent generations of migrants by exploring their shared social fields and overlaps in their experiences (Levitt and Glick-Schiller 2007; Levitt and Jaworsky 2007). Research within the mobility paradigm, however, has also expanded understandings of human movement beyond migration by examining the myriad ways in which a range of people, not just 'migrants', live 'mobile' lives (Urry 2007). Meanwhile, work on cultural globalization explores the impact of the global flows of people, culture, ideas and information on people's lives whether they themselves move or not. Despite this, children of migrants are still primarily studied as indicators of the degree of their families' 'assimilation' or 'integration' into 'receiving' countries, and thus associated with settlement (Olwig 2003; Gardner 2012). Scholars have begun to examine their virtual or corporeal movements, but usually within the context of transnational familial links to an ancestral homeland. Thus, the very construction of the categories 'children of migrants' or 'the second generation' can lead scholars to overlook their mobility tout court or focus only on those forms of movement associated with their migrant parents. So far, there has been little research on children of migrants as mobile young people in their own right, who create their own forms of mobility and shape their own paths of movement. Nor has there been sufficient attention paid to the centrality of processes of racialization in studies of youth migration and mobility.

This chapter therefore examines the different forms of mobility – virtual and physical – unfolding locally, transnationally and globally – in the lives of young people who have

grown up as children of migrants and are racialized in specific ways. Subject to a 'model minority' discourse that revives racial discourses on the capacities of particular 'Oriental' bodies, young 'British Chinese' and others subsumed within this category[2] are largely invisible in the anxious and often racialized debates that construct youth as a threat and in more celebratory accounts of global youth cultures. Yet, in the last decade, as a response to continuing marginalization and racial discrimination in British society, they have begun to create new social and cultural spaces, including what they call – despite the highly contested nature of the term 'Oriental' – 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' 'nights', 'clubs' or 'parties' (Yeh, forthcoming). In this chapter, I examine the different types of mobilities that participants of this nightlife practice, their intersection with the mobilities of migrant youth, and the centrality of both to the 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' nightscape. Although drawing on research among participants of officially 'adult' spaces, this chapter focuses on their transitions from childhood to youth and how these intersect with individual, transgenerational and new migration trajectories in 'superdiverse' (Vertovec 2007) contexts that are undergoing rapid change. It explores what it means to be young from a processual, multisited and contextual perspective. My analysis shows that these young people's present mobilities, shaped by processes of racialization, are informed by but also transcend childhood experiences of their families' migratory trajectories, as they forge new connections with people and places, and as their mobility both shapes and is shaped by changing local and global conditions. In locating the mobilities of these young people in the wider context of racialization, the transnational migrations of other young people and the globalization of culture, this chapter embeds migration research within broader processes of social transformation (Castles 2010).

Migration, globalization and youth

While studies of migration conventionally examine the long-term movements of people from one nation-state to another, often in the context of labor and settlement, in an increasingly globalized era marked by intensified movement of people, technologies and culture across borders, new approaches to migration and mobility have emerged. In recent decades, concepts of diaspora and transnationalism have offered a means of transcending earlier models of 'assimilation' by highlighting the way in which migrants forge identifications and social relations that transcend the nation-state. Much of this work, however, has focused on specific ethnic groups and their homeland connections (Anthias 1998). Recent studies, however, attempt to transcend the methodological nationalism and 'ethnic lens' of such research (Glick-Schiller et al. 2006; Olwig 2007). Transnational social spaces are now conceptualized as fluid social spaces that incorporate migrants and nonmigrants, not only in home and host countries but other sites around the world (Levitt and Jaworsky 2007). Scholars also examine nonethnic forms of migrant incorporation (Glick-Schiller et al. 2006), and both physical and virtual movements internal to the nation-state (King and Skeldon 2010; Parker and Song 2006).

Mobility research has also expanded understandings of human movement, by exploring its multiple forms and questioning rigid divisions between different categories of 'travelers', such as tourists, students and business people. While early research tended to associate physical and social mobility, couching movement as a positive, even liberating, cosmopolitan force, scholars now speak of 'regimes of mobility' to highlight the role of states and international administrations in determining people's ability to move and contributing to the 'glamorization' and 'demonization' of categories of mobile people (Glick-Schiller and Salazar 2013: 184). Until recently, research on cultural globalization has remained quite separate from questions concerning migration studies. Amid Samuel Huntington's vision of a 'clash of civilizations', debates have focused instead on the extent to which globalization is

leading to the increasing standardization and uniformity of culture across the world. While some emphasize the power of multinational corporations in shaping consumer desires, others explore local appropriations of global products in forms of expression or as resistance. This study links questions of cultural globalization with migratory processes by examining the centrality of globalized forms of popular culture in the lives of children of migrants.

In doing so, it draws on insights from work in the diaspora paradigm, which emphasizes processes of racialization and locates youth as consumers and producers of global and transnational forms of popular culture (Sharma et al. 1996; Back 1996). Concepts of diaspora and hybridity, however, are highly contested (Anthias 2001), and in focusing on the 'hybridization' of 'diasporic' cultural identity and production among youth, discussions have often privileged ethnic-specific and panethnic 'marked' cultural forms (Brah 1996; Gilroy 1993; Hall 1988), rather than the 'virtually open-ended archives of differences' spread by global media (Appadurai 1996: 14). Scholars, for example, have argued that young Chinese in Britain have yet to develop a 'hybridized' culture (Parker 1995), but arguably overlook those that might not conform to reified conceptions of 'British Chineseness' (Yeh, forthcoming). This chapter extends this debate by demonstrating how global popular culture consumption and production, shaped by but also contesting processes of racialization, intersect with youth mobility, thus connecting work in the diaspora paradigm to questions of mobility, in ways that are rarely considered in migration studies (Castles 2010).

Youth mobility is itself marginal within migration research. Studies on migrant and immigrant youth tend to be bifurcated. The movements of migrant children are often examined within the context of their families' migrations and their place within the ethnic or transnational 'community'. More recently, there has been work on the autonomy of independent child migrants, focusing on development and poverty (e.g., Iversen 2002). By contrast, immigrant youth have conventionally been studied within an 'integration' paradigm,

which focuses on social and economic indicators of their ‘assimilation’, segmented or otherwise, into the ‘receiving’ society, and thus tends to be associated with settlement (Gardner 2012; Olwig 2003). Young Chinese in Britain are, for example, positioned as ‘a model minority’ due to their achievements in education and employment and subsequent social mobility (Archer and Francis 2007). Migrant transnationalism has generally been regarded as a first-generation phenomenon, although new research is emerging on second-generation transnational practices (Levitt and Waters 2002) and ‘return mobilities’ (King and Christou 2011). These, however, still usually focus on transnational movements and imaginaries that connect youth to a homeland in the context of family and ethnic ties, paying less attention to the wider social connections of young people that are significantly shaped but not necessarily delimited by racial identification. This chapter fills a gap in the research by examining the independent mobilities of children of migrants and their participation in transnational social spaces that transcend parental ‘homeland’ and ethnic ties and incorporate both migrant and nonmigrant youth across ethnic and sometimes racial divisions.

By bringing together these different bodies of research, this chapter examines the complex mobility of children of migrants in the context of the intersecting processes of racialization, the transnational migrations of people and the globalization of culture. The young people in this study were born to migrants, some migrated with their families, and most have taken familial transnational trips to the homeland. However, as they grow up and become aware of their position as racialized youth, they have also become independently mobile, virtually and physically and on multiple scales, and affected by the growing ‘superdiversity’ of Britain’s cities (Vertovec 2007). I begin by discussing how their families’ transnational and internal migration trajectories have shaped their childhood mobilities, and how global flows of people, cultures and tehcnologies have fed into the construction of a ‘mobile’ ‘British Chinese’/‘Oriental’ nightlife. I then discuss participants’ attempts to ‘go

global' by connecting and traveling virtually and physically beyond the nation-state. Finally, I focus on the consequences of wider youth mobility on the lives of participants, by examining the impact of international students on participants' sense of mobility. International student mobility is an underdeveloped area of study (Dolby and Rizvi 2008; King and Ruiz-Gelices 2003), and existing research focuses mainly on those who move. This chapter contributes new debates by exploring how international students affect the lives of children of migrants.

In examining the mobilities of children of migrants as twenty-first-century young people, this chapter does not only describe the new forms of youth movement afforded by advanced globalization but also highlights 'the power and politics of discourses and practices of mobility in creating both movement and stasis' (Hannam et al. 2006: 2). These young people's lives show that celebratory discourses of globalization, which imagine a borderless world inhabited by jet-setting cosmopolitans, nourish aspirations that are easily thwarted in a society stratified by access to global mobility (Bauman 1998). While these young people are highly mobile, their lives – and indeed their very mobilities – remain structured by the political and economic forces of globalization, which exacerbate existing inequalities and exclusions.

'British Chinese'/'Oriental' nightlife and ethnography on- and offline

As other chapters in this book illustrate, in an increasingly globalized era, multisited ethnography (Marcus 1995) has become more common, as scholars 'follow' the movements of the people they study and conduct research in multiple localities or even on the move. To capture the mobility of today's generation of youth, researchers need to follow them as they engage in circular, serial, onward and virtual movements. As young people use web-based technology to mobilize and connect for both social and political purposes, virtual

methodologies are an important emerging multisited and ‘transtemporal’ means of conducting research. This study draws on research conducted in London between 2010 and 2012 that combines ethnography in multiple online and offline environments. In migration research, scholars primarily explore the Internet as a space where virtual diasporas are constructed (Greschke 2012). However, like multisited research, virtual ethnography helps eschew such methodological nationalism and ethnocentrism. Rather than focusing on ethnic-specific websites, my fieldwork unfolded on promoters’ and social networking sites, which reflected participants’ concerns not only as ethnicized youth but more generally as young people.

Party promoters, disc jockeys (DJs) and musicians host their own websites and use social networking and other sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and SoundCloud, to advertise their events and work by posting flyers, video footage and photographs of club nights and music samples. Clubbers also post their own photographs and ‘chat’ between themselves and promoters on these sites. ‘British Chinese’/‘Oriental’ clubbing thus unfolds on- and offline. Alongside participant observation at events, where I met promoters, DJs, musicians and clubbers and observed their performances and interactions, I conducted online ethnography, which involved immersion in these sites. While I actively participated by joining as a member, I primarily employed observation without interacting with others; however, this was in line with the behaviors of the majority of members. Although I did not hide my role as a researcher, such observation still raises ethical issues of privacy, anonymity and the protection of subjects (Constable 2003). Ways of dealing with the ethics of virtual ethnography are highly contested, and as with all field research, must be developed in context. Although considering sites that do not require registration as in the public domain, where I have drawn on observation in sites requiring registration, I have not used direct

quotations or described details that could identify individuals, but have used examples commonly found across the field.

In addition to participant observation on- and offline, I conducted in-depth interviews with nine men and one woman involved in 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' parties in several ways. Four were aged between 19 and 25, and six were in their 30s, but most had attended clubs since their teens and some since as young as 14. All except one still attend events as clubbers, but also work as website editors, DJs, club promoters or artists across England and Scotland. They were identified through the snowball method, but show that the scene is concentrated in London and organized mainly by university-educated young men. Nine had either ethnic Chinese and/or Vietnamese migrant parents born variously in China, Vietnam, Hong Kong or Malaysia. One is white English, and runs a club with 'a British-born Chinese' (hereafter 'BBC') whose parents are from Hong Kong, and a migrant from Malaysia. This reflects the fact that promoters work with others across the ethnic and racial divide, including, as discussed later, migrant youth. Eight were born in the UK, five in London, and the others in Glasgow, Portsmouth and Greater Manchester, although one grew up in Malaysia between the ages of one and seven. Two were born outside the UK, one in Holland and one in Trinidad and Tobago, but moved to the UK at the ages of seven and younger than one, respectively. Although seven participants were at the time of this research based in London, with the others in Newcastle, Nottingham and Bristol, most travel frequently to work or socialize in 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' parties in other cities. All were either attending or had attended university, although two had left without a degree. At the request of participants, real names are used in all cases except one, although some comments are anonymized to protect confidentiality. As participants and key informants of the nightscape, their views are not generalizable, either to others within 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' nightscapes or to 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' young people as whole. However, their

narratives provide insights into complex mobilities of young people, whose lives unfold at the busy intersection of major migration fluxes and multiple cultural flows.

My interactions with participants confirmed the centrality of new technologies in their lives. After face-to-face field encounters and interviews, participants kept in touch through Facebook, emails and mobile phone texts and conversations. When participants were too busy to meet in person, or I was unable to travel, they suggested we use Skype or the telephone. Like multisited research, online ethnography and the use of such technologies can pose challenges to conventional ethnographic ideals of long-term immersion and bodily copresence in a demarcated field. However, Olwig (2007) argues that multisited ethnography provides rich data on nonlocal spheres of life that are increasingly important as people become more interconnected and mobile, and which are not easily captured by traditional fieldwork methods. Similarly, in studying 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' nightlife, which unfolds both on- and offline, I learned about different types of local and nonlocal interactions among participants, and analytical insights emerged from movement between sites. I was able not only to corroborate findings but to learn how participants renegotiate their identities in different contexts – to investigate the virtual and its relationship to the actual (Boellstorff 2012). As widely noted, the Internet is a space of identity play and performance. In this study, virtual ethnography allowed insight into the aspirations of young people as they sought to construct themselves as mobile subjects and into the role of technologies in facilitating such constructions. Observations and interviews, however, provided different perspectives on their mobility. The disjuncture between the two formed a central part of the analysis. The methodological approach of this chapter thus helps make visible how children of migrants are actually and aspirationally embedded in migratory circuits and mobile worlds, and reflects the 'global' nature of emerging forms of mobility among them.

Family migrations and childhood mobilities

Children of migrants grow up in 'social fields' informed by their parents' migration. Yet the traditional paradigm of migration – of migrants who move for work and settle long-term in 'host' societies – has often erased the complexity of family 'mobilities-in-migration'. For participants in this research, their parents' transnational and internal migration trajectories significantly shaped their experiences of growing up and childhood practices of mobility. Yet in their transitions to adulthood, as they begin to find themselves marginalized as racialized youth, they develop ways of practicing their own forms of mobility and forge new paths independently from their parents.

Studies on the 'Chinese in Britain' conventionally focus on the large-scale migrations of the 1950s and 1960s as a singular, one-way journey from Hong Kong into Britain. Several participants, however, spoke of more complex family trajectories. Kevin described his parents as 'immigrants from China'; his father arrived in London to study and work, but then moved to Malaysia, where he married, before returning to Britain. GK's parents were from Hong Kong, and went to Holland for work, where she was born, before they moved to the UK to work in a family member's takeaway. Johnny's father grew up in Malaysia, but went to Hong Kong for work, where he married before coming to the UK, and George was born in Trinidad and Tobago to a father from Hong Kong and a mother who is 'three-quarters Chinese'. Jon was born in London, but his family moved to Malaysia, where he lived until the age of seven, before returning to the UK. Participants thus grew up with understandings of the world in which distances are to be traversed for work, study and love.

Yet, these complex migration trajectories continued within the UK. Due to a concentration in the takeaway trade, which boomed in the 1970s, Britain's Chinese populations dispersed across the country to avoid coethnic competition, and thus are the most highly geographically dispersed of all ethnic groups. In the 1990s, 90 percent lived in wards

in which only around 1 percent of the population were from the same ethnic group (Benton and Gomez 2008: 170). While not all participants came from catering families, they had similar stories of family relocations either across different parts of Britain or within different areas of Greater London. Steven was born in Glasgow, but his family moved to Norwich and then Bristol. Wayne was born in East London, but his family then moved to the northwest of the city, while Kevin 'moved around quite a lot from Hampstead to Colindale to Harrow'. Almost all spoke of being the only Chinese or 'Oriental' child at school, if not the wider locality, an experience engendering early feelings of ethnic and racial otherness, common among British Chinese youth (Parker and Song 2009).

As a result, further mobility was a feature of participants' childhoods. Steven spoke of 'traveling 15–20 miles' to meet Chinese friends. Even those whose parents had not relocated for work recalled travel as a requirement to be with other Chinese people. Jon recalled:

> There were no other Chinese people in Portsmouth, there were no Chinese around me…. So my cousins became the anchor. We lived by the sea, they lived in outer London, you know, Croydon, Feltham, but they used to come to see me.

Given the isolation of these migrant families from coethnic peers, and the prohibitive costs of travelling in terms of time and money, it is unsurprising that virtual mobility, in terms of the consumption of homeland media, was also a common feature in their lives. Parker (1995) has highlighted the importance of Hong Kong Chinese media among British Chinese families. Similarly, as Jon recalled, 'the thing that shaped me growing up was the fact that…once we started getting video recorders, they used to send over the Chinese soap operas in the '80s'. Yet, opportunities to access Chinese media in Britain, once limited to buying predominantly Hong Kong Chinese videos and music from Chinatown, expanded dramatically during the 1990s. For younger participants especially, their transitions into adulthood coincided with the new availability of Chinese satellite and cable television and the emergence of the Internet.

Therefore, they consume ‘Chinese’ media, accessed both through their parents and independently. As Kevin, a DJ, said,

> Growing up, in the car my dad would have cassettes and he’d have a lot of Chinese songs, so...I do steal off my mum and dad’s music collection, but then, more generally Chinese TV, Chinese movies. Especially with the Internet now, people just post Chinese songs, it’s a lot easier to learn about new stuff.

Yet, with the rise of Asian cultural industries in the 1990s and of Chinese American hip-hop groups and rappers in the 2000s, unlike earlier generations of British Chinese, participants also began consuming – alongside global youth musics popular at school – not only Cantopop from Hong Kong but also hip-hop, rap, techno and trance from China and Vietnam and by Chinese American artists. Their narratives, however, highlighted the significance of these artists not as Chinese but as ‘*Oriental*’ role models, who challenged the racial stereotype of the invisible ‘model minority’ of ‘nerds’ and ‘geeks’ (Yeh, forthcoming). Participants thus also consumed nonhomeland Asian popular media, such as J-pop (Japanese pop) and, particularly, K-pop (Korean pop), and virtual ethnography also highlighted the popularity of nonhomeland Asian film stars, singers, models, dancers and other celebrities among them.[3] The rise of ‘Oriental’ superstars, who were famed for their good looks, for singing, dancing and rapping, enabled them to imagine themselves anew – as potential creators as well as consumers of global youth culture (Yeh, forthcoming). This illuminates the centrality of participants’ experiences not only as children of migrants but, more specifically, as racialized youth.Virtual access to Asian stars thus encouraged participants to ‘chase the dream’ of working in the nightlife industries. Some started while still at school, with Kevin and Jay both making music in their early teens, and one participant promoting underage clubbing events around London at the age of 16. Yet, on leaving home and entering

university, their activities expanded dramatically, as they came into contact, often for the first time, with coethnic and co-racial youth.

Complex family mobilities-in-migration shaped the physical and virtual mobilities of these children of migrants. Their transition to adulthood, however, coincides with racial subjectification, which they reinterpret through a consumption of Asian popular culture. Both familial and independent trajectories continue to shape their mobilities as young adults as they now seek their own work, leisure and love.

'British Chinese'/'Oriental' nightscapes: a mobile world?

Mobility, both virtual and physical, is a central feature of 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' nightscapes. Informed by their childhoods, participants continue to engage in internal mobilities and the consumption of global cultures in the formation of these social spaces. Yet, in doing so, they also respond to new changes brought by the restructuring of urban cities by global flows of people and capital, and the availability of online and mobile technologies. Their practices and aspirations suggest a generational transition from 'migrant' to 'mobile' identities.

Patterns of settlement of the migrant generation and processes of racial marginalization are the twin factors contributing to the formation of 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' nightscapes. The geographical dispersal of the Chinese across Britain has led to the emergence of different 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' parties in Newcastle, Edinburgh, Bristol, Manchester, Nottingham, Sheffield and other cities across Britain. Like the British Chinese websites discussed by Parker and Song (2009), these spaces provide rare opportunities for coethnic and co-racial interaction and dating and for the collective public consumption of Asian popular culture (Yeh, forthcoming). Events are sometimes organized around 'homeland' and nonhomeland popular culture, such as DiscoVietnam and K-pop parties, and often a range of Asian as well as global youth music is played. The South to

North cultural flows in the 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' nightscape reflect how childhood consumption of Asian popular culture continues to shape the work of young people as promoters, DJs and musicians.

Further, while participants once traveled as children with their families to be with other 'Chinese', they now regularly travel as young adults, alone or with peers, but significantly, to be with not only other 'Chinese', but also 'Orientals'. In recent years, organisers have begun to respond to the rapid rise of international student mobility from Asia into the UK. In 2010–2011, China was the UK's largest sender, with 67,325 students in UK higher education institutions. Malaysia, Hong Kong and Thailand were also among the top ten senders (HESA 2010–2011). These demographic flows have significantly impacted the 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' nightscape. While it emerged from a desire to create opportunities for coethnic socializing, the large influx of students from these countries as well as from Japan, Korea, Singapore, the Philippines, Vietnam, Burma and Taiwan has enabled the expansion of the scene, transforming them from largely 'British Chinese' to 'Oriental' parties.

The appeal of international students from Asia, as with local-born co-racials, emerges from a complex mix of racial and cultural identification. As James said, 'They like the same music, and behave in same way, that's why they like to socialize together'. While they may not speak the same language, being among Asian students provides 'British Chinese'/'Orientals' temporary relief from the 'tense and potentially vulnerable engagement' (Parker 2000) of interracial interaction. According to James, if 'the English come into an Oriental party, they'd ask: "Why are all the girls walking round holding hands and acting like school kids?" but the Thai, Malaysian Chinese, and Cantonese all have very similar behavior'.

Some promoters network among international students to create their own market. In Nottingham, Kevin created a club scene of around 2000 'Oriental people', including 'Burmese, Filipino, Taiwanese'. Most promoters, however, depend on the infrastructure of university societies to access the fluid international student market and on employing international students, who often socialize with conationals or other students from Asia (Spencer-Oatey and Xiong 2006). As one promoter explained, he employed an overseas student from Hong Kong as 'his network consists of Japanese and heavily South East Asian, Thai, Malay and Singapore guys, but he gets on very well with the Hong Kong guys and gets the Taiwanese as well'.

As well as responding to new demographic flows, promoters face challenges brought on by the increasing dominance of multinational corporations in the nightlife industries. The geographical dispersal of these parties, and their constant movement to different venues, also reflects promoters' attempts to find affordable venues for a marginalized nightscape, further requiring the mobility of promoters, DJs and musicians as well as participants. While GK first started a club night in Edinburgh, she later took it to Newcastle, and now collaborates with promoters in other cities. Now a DJ, Kevin regularly travels between London, Bristol, Manchester and Nottingham to play at events.

Given the constant change of venues and its fluid, scattered market, new media technologies play an essential role in providing a sense of stability to this mobile landscape, while contributing further to its reach. In addition to hosting websites and using Facebook and Twitter, participants also employ mobile phone technologies to broadcast their events. As GK exclaimed, 'I can't survive without What's App, I use it every single day!' The use of new technologies also has a significant impact on those too young to attend events – as Wayne, whose social horizons at his younger brother's age (16) were limited to a local karaoke, put it:

> To be honest, Facebook transformed, like, Facebook transformed, the whole world. When I was younger, I didn't know about ['British Chinese'/'Oriental' nightlife]. But now, my younger brother knows about everything that's going on cos of Facebook.

It is through these new technologies that promoters are able to attract a nationwide clientele of young people willing to travel across Britain to attend events. As Newcastle-based GK said,

> You can easily find out on Facebook if there's a Chinese party in London…you might see, oh, there's an event in London, I might go there, or there's an event in Sheffield, I might go there.

However, as these interview excerpts suggest, new technologies are not only used as tools by promoters, musicians and DJs for advertising purposes. As vehicles of globalization as well as its ideology, they are a valued means of performing mobility. As Elliot and Urry (2010) state, the 'freedom of movement…is the ideology and utopia of the twenty-first century'. Using various web-based applications, clubbers map the events they have attended, post photos of different nights and create timelines of their movements to prompt comments from others. As James said,

> In the old days, you'd just tell people you'd been there, but it's now becoming common nature where people'll've all been there, and all checked in on Facebook and taken a picture there, and loaded it up, and that's just become regular now.

New technologies are thus not only vital to the 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' nightscape but also facilitate the construction of mobile identities – through Twitter and Facebook, participants post minute-to-minute updates of their movements as they zigzag across urban cities to attend events. Among their posts are also stories of activities further afield – hen nights in Ibiza, romantic holidays in Europe and shopping trips to Hong Kong.

The ‘British Chinese’/‘Oriental’ nightscape can thus be seen as a mobile world, defined by flows of people and cultures from the homeland and beyond, requiring the physical movements of participants as club nights move to different venues and cities, and partially unfolding in a virtual world. Mobility becomes a feature of the identities of those involved, but in ways that also transcend the nation-state.

Going ‘global’

Among participants in this research, desires to be mobile are framed by discourses of globalization, which appear to afford different opportunities of ‘going global’. Participants seek to develop ‘British Chinese’/‘Oriental’ parties as a part of global youth culture by forging international collaborations, bringing in artists from elsewhere and promoting youth mobility. They also seek to engage in transnational mobility themselves. Yet, ultimately, they seem thwarted in their attempts to become part of a mobile elite circuiting a global nightscape.

‘British Chinese’/‘Oriental’ or global nightscapes?

Participants’ narratives demonstrated strong aspirations of developing international connections. For some promoters, the discourse of China’s rise on the global stage presents new opportunities, specifically for Chinese youth, to go ‘global’, by forging transnational collaborations. Playkrown’s vision statement, for example, states that

> There are now increasing opportunities for China and Europe to collaborate…Chinese entertainment shall form an important bridge to reinforce the relationship between both parties.

Or, as one promoter, imagined telling Chinese companies,

> ‘Look we could do a concert in London, you don’t need to go to all these other promoters cos they don’t speak your language and we’re Chinese, so you should let us

do it.' And to be fair they will do that cos…no matter what you do, the race thing is still a question, it's still there.

These comments reflect a common belief that diasporas act as a bridge between their countries of origin and places of settlement, and discourses specifically, that highlight the role of race/ethnicity in networking among the Chinese. Yet Benton and Gomez (2008) argue that there is little evidence of Chinese firms working with British Chinese, as they prefer to work with non-Chinese to access the UK market.

Participants in this research do collaborate transnationally, although not necessarily with coethnics in their parental 'homeland'. The K-pop team, run by two Malaysian 'BBCs', works with companies in Hong Kong and Korea, as well as the Korean government, in its attempts to export Korea's pop culture for economic and diplomatic benefits (Chua 2012). So far, K-pop has organized three junior events (for under 18-year-olds), subsidized by the Korean government for 200 people. One event was themed around the Korean flag. Other collaborations highlight how promoters seek to create a sense of 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' events as a part of global youth culture, by bringing in international artists and thereby contributing further to the mobility of youth. While DiscoVN, run by 'Vietnamese-cultured' James Dang, brings Vietnamese artists from the United States and Vietnam, most promoters work with artists who are unconnected to their parental 'homeland'. BBC Malaysian Kevin hosted Sam Lee of the rap group LazyMuthaFucka from Hong Kong. The K-pop team hosts artists from Korea, and Chi Nights hosts African Caribbean artists from the United States and the British Virgin Islands, showing connections across the racial divide.

Choices of artists reflect financial limitations and also, specifically, an online youth culture, in which children are increasingly constructed as consumers. A2 Entertainment held an 'all-age' talent show with Toronto-based Nu-Lite Entertainment, at which the judges included an online Korean Canadian artist and other 'Oriental' 'online singers' from

Vancouver and Chicago. Promoters bring over 'YouTube superstars' to provide British youth 'the opportunity to meet the stars they always see on YouTube for real'. For their 'London Foreign Exchange' concert, for example, Playkrown brought over Thai-born and Vietnam-born American YouTube rappers to perform alongside London-based Jay Differ. While the concert was an '18+' event, a 'meet-and-greet' was held for the underaged, 'so they know about us, and when they do turn 18, they're legal to come to our parties'.

Prizes at events include trips to Toronto, Hong Kong and Seoul, further promoting the transnational mobility of a few – but the desire for mobility among many – and in some cases, with contradictory results. In 2012, for example, the K-pop team helped advertise the Korean government's all-age 'Birth of an Amazing Star' talent show for broadcast on Korean television, which offered the winners trips to Korea. Despite the popularity of K-pop among 'British-Chinese'/'Orientals', however, the winners were 'five non-Orientals'. The significance of Korean stars as role models to young 'British Chinese'/'Orientals' in Britain was incompatible with the Korean government's desire to prove K-pop's 'cross-over appeal' – 'any Oriental person just wouldn't look right for what they wanted to achieve, which is to show that K-pop reaches non–Oriental-looking people'. What some scholars optimistically refer to as the creative local appropriations by youth of global popular cultural forms are easily stymied by the global political-economic intentions of nation-states.

In some cases the presence of global media companies in the UK can also enable promoters to export their cultural productions globally. GK's events are under negotiation to tour China, and 'it all started off with someone who went to our parties, who is from China, they…said, "why don't you bring this to China?"' Meanwhile, the work of Kevin and other DJs was filmed by TVB for broadcast in Hong Kong. The Internet was also seen as a means of becoming 'global'. While K-Pop's iPhone App was downloaded in Japan and the

Philippines, Kevin's fans are mainly in the US, while Jay Differ has followers in the US, Europe and Canada. GK emphasized the importance of her Internet podcast:

> If the podcast wasn't there, people from China or the US wouldn't know about the event we do in Newcastle, so there's a lot of DJs in America, in China, in Hong Kong that have actually heard of Go Ape events.

The young people in this study thus find different ways of developing 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' nights as a part of global youth culture, and in ways that can transcend the pathways of their families' migrations and are shaped by wider, especially but not exclusively Asian, youth culture. They engage with processes of globalization by becoming recipients and promoters of global youth cultures – and indeed of youth mobilities. Their position simultaneously as twenty-first-century young people, emerging artists or entrepreneurs and ethnicized and racialized children of migrants prompts them to engage with global youth culture and craft complex forms of hybridized cultures and identities. Marginalized within the racial landscape of Britain, they pursue opportunities and a sense of validation and belonging by building business links and connecting socially and imaginatively to other parts of the world. The interaction between their experiences of becoming an adult and of forging global links remains shaped by the broader structural constraints of globalization. Yet, as they begin to develop a sense of themselves as global citizens, they also develop new perspectives on familiar transnational journeys, as evidenced by their visits to the parental homeland and beyond.

From family trips to transnational partying

Like many children of migrants, the participants in this study often traveled with their parents as children to visit family in the 'homeland'. However, for most, their participation in 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' nightlife has altered the nature of travel from 'family trips' as children to

‘business trips’ or ‘transnational partying’ as adults. While these visits to Asia thus provide further evidence of ‘return mobilities of the second generation’, they also demonstrate the limitations of couching their visits in this way. Shaped by the young people’s independent concerns, rather than those of their families, their travels are described as movements to new places or social spaces, which they did not experience as children, and which are a part of new translocal practices emerging from participation in the ‘British Chinese’/‘Oriental’ nightscape.

Wayne, who visited Hong Kong every year with his family from the age of 14 to 18, now planned to go with his business partner:

> I never really got to enjoy the adult life, the clubbing scene, going to China by myself, whereas this year, it’s different…if my market is the Hong Kong crowd, I’d love to see what their scene is like.

On her last trip to Hong Kong, GK visited her grandparents, but

> Over the whole duration of my two weeks there, I only spent two days with them because the rest of my days I spent catching up with different people…that was all because I’d done the whole Chinese events stuff.

The friendships she formed with international students who frequent her parties in Britain have expanded her horizons in her ‘homeland’: ‘I go to Hong Kong or I go to China and I hit them up and they show me round and take me to clubs’. Rather than visiting family, she will now ‘go shopping, go sing karaoke, go to bars and go to...you *have* to go to Lan Kwai Fong and Tsim Sha Tsui’. Other participants also confirmed that, due to their nightlife work in Britain, they have become part of a transnational party network, as international students attend parties in the UK, return to their home countries and ‘the word gets around’. As George, who visits Hong Kong twice a year, exclaimed,

> Apparently we're international! Every time we go to Hong Kong, it's like 'Hello Johnny, Hello George!' And I'm like 'I've never seen you before in my life, but how you doing?'

Connections in Asia can also have social benefits for life in the UK. Through their frequent visits to Hong Kong, Johnny and George played football in London with some Hong Kong stars and found that 'everyone was stopping them in Chinatown'. Rather than 'returns home', such trips to Hong Kong are constitutive of new translocal formations among the younger generations. More likely to frequent 'McDonalds' than 'typical Chinese restaurants', participants confirm Parker and Song's (2009) identification of Lan Kwai Fong as a popular 'hangout' for British Chinese youth. In George's words, it is 'a little London Hong Kong' made up of 'expats born or bred in Britain, the United States and Canada', who enjoy 'Hong Kong culture or Western culture in a Hong Kong environment'.

Scholars have highlighted how family narratives of 'return' are inherited and actualized by children (Reynolds 2008; King and Christou 2011). Two participants spoke of the parental influence on their thoughts of moving permanently to Asia. Yet such moves were not couched in terms of a 'return' to a 'homeland' for family purposes. GK, born to parents from Hong Kong, wanted to relocate not to her parents' 'homeland' but to China, which she saw less as an 'ancestral' homeland than as 'the future, the gold mine'. While Wayne also envisioned relocating to Hong Kong as a fulfillment of his family's orientation, 'cos that's how my dad sees it, he always says he's going to retire there', this 'return' was couched in terms of a 'lifestyle migration' (Benson and O'Reilly 2009):

> Friends tell me it's like having a really long holiday…purchasing power is more, there's more variety of things to do there – going out, places are 24 hours, you don't need to be afraid that things aren't open, also like the leisure side, you go to massages, go to spas, everything's cheaper.

Yet other narratives show the stratified nature of mobility-in-migration. While some could not afford to travel, another explained that his family could not travel due to his younger brother's illness. Meanwhile, for Jay, who visits family in China and Vietnam 'every couple of years', such trips were not so much about the new adult pleasures of transnational partying as reminders of the need for everyday subsistence:

> It was a big shock to see the struggle that they were going through just like for food, I mean, feeding the family and stuff…seeing how my cousins are living over there and how they're like 'Oh, you've always got nice clothes, or you're always like, you've got nice stuff'…they're not privileged enough to have the same.

Visits to the 'homeland' and other parts of Asia are thus experienced differentially by participants in this research. While some may continue to visit with their family, most also have experiences of traveling as independent adults. In these cases, their visits are not shaped primarily by family ties, but by wider transnational mobilities among both diasporic and migrant youth.

Fragile Mobilities

Participants partially achieve their aspirations to 'go global', as demonstrated by their transnational mobility, their international collaborations and the movement of their cultural products from the North to the South. Yet this sense of global mobility is fragile, dissolving in the presence of international students, who are so vital to these nightscapes.

While offering co-ethnic and racial identification, international students also constitute a necessary market, within an economy increasingly dominated by corporate ownership, which aims to attract highly mobile global capital (Chatterton 2010). As Wayne said,

> We target a crowd which is more international, like for overseas students, cos they're the ones that can provide us with the bar spend that enables us to get a nicer club.

As this suggests, attendees of these clubs are ordered hierarchically according to spending power, but as important is their conversance with the 'habitus' of the elite. One high-end club promoter described his target market as students from 'global cities' – 'Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Seoul and Tokyo', who were not only 'the premium rich' but also 'fashion aware, know the good stuff, know their brands of vodkas'. Excluded from this were students from mainland China, who 'don't go to nightclubs and [are] so unaware of what to do'. The hierarchy between different international students, however, was not as pronounced in participants' discourses as that constructed between international students and local 'BBCs'/'Orientals'. In a highly stratified scene, the latter were aligned with 'locals' as the least lucrative: 'The BBCs and the locals, they tend to pre-drink and they don't really spend at the bar'.

In the 'exclusive geographies' of the nighttime economy (Chatterton 1999), local 'BBCs' are, like mainland Chinese students, also perceived to lack the social and cultural capital required to fit in at high-end clubs. According to one promoter,

> They're too hip-hoppy, with their street wear…you've got these 19–20 year olds from Hong Kong and Singapore, they know good stuff, and you'll get comments: 'Why would you come into a club wearing that?'

As this promoter acknowledged, exclusive clubs 'alienate' those from a 'technically working-class background', especially young men: 'They're never going to impress the ladies and they know that'. Local BBCs are also seen as a risk due to potential violent behavior. Thus, international students constitute a vital market for the 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' scene, but

one that leads to the construction of 'British Chinese'/'Orientals' as economically, socially and even morally inferior (Yeh, forthcoming).

This is felt equally among the promoters themselves. Even mainland Chinese students, although excluded from the most elite clubs, were perceived by some as 'better off' than them, disrupting past hierarchies in which, as one participant admitted, 'the Hong Kong Chinese were a little bit higher up and the mainland Chinese were the dregs', due to UK citizenship rights. As another told me,

> When I was younger, I used to think…people from China, they just want the red passport…BBCs would say, 'Ah these girls that come here and they want to get in with these BBC guys, they just want a red passport'.

While this participant 'used to call them Fresh-off the Banana boat', increasing contact with mainland Chinese in the clubbing scene, 'who can be quite snobby', has thrown doubt on this formulation:

> Why would they want a red passport when they've got more money than you? You know, they probably got a better family background, they're not in the typical BBC chop-suey or restaurant. Why would they want a red passport?

Local British Chinese, who once felt privileged by UK citizenship rights, now feel themselves lacking in a global hierarchy. The 'red passport' fails to afford the mobility that is perceived to be enjoyed by the global elite, as 'they have money, right, they have a lot of money'. As James said,

> The rich kids, you go to Phuket or Hanoi or wherever at a certain time of year and they'll all be there. They all socialize on a global level. They're all cut from the same cloth…. It's about marketing, the upmarket world, the glamorous clubs, the big money – they mix together.

As he continued, 'The guys from KL [Kuala Lumpur], you can almost guarantee they've been clubbing in Singapore, they probably transited and been out in Bangkok, they've probably been to Hong Kong'. By contrast, local 'British Chinese'/'Orientals' 'club at home and that will be it'.

In addition to their perceived wealth and social cachet, the temporary stays of international students heighten feelings of a comparative lack of mobility among participants. This, coupled with the international mobility of other local youth, can have a devastating impact on the children of migrants, who lose both a market and friendships. As Kevin, who built up a party scene in the Midlands, said,

> now everyone's graduated and dispersed across the world…a lot of my uni friends have gone abroad, either traveling or working…a lot of international students have gone back home. Before I kinda knew everyone who came to my events, and by the fourth year, I didn't know anyone. I lost that personal connection, and it didn't feel as enjoyable or satisfying any more. I've moved back to London, where I've had to start again, from scratch. It's frustrating.

As this suggests, children of migrants may experience being left behind not only by their families but also by their peers. Youth mobility, then, has contradictory effects on them. While enabling the expansion of the 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' nightlife and of homeland horizons, in a neoliberal economy, the presence, and then absence, of international students also creates a sense of inferiority and of immobility. It highlights the thinness of participants' agency in fully participating in the global.

Conclusion

This chapter contributes to the emerging literatures on youth mobility by drawing attention to new forms of online and offline mobilities among the children of migrants, a

group usually associated with settlement. Locating their independent mobilities as racialized youth within family migrations that challenge 'old' notions of migration as arrival and settlement, and the contemporary global flows of people and cultures, draws attention to their complex and dynamic nature within intersecting processes of racialization, migration and youth cultures. A focus on mobility within major migration fluxes draws attention to the relationship between the experiences of children of migrants and their families, between migrants and nonmigrants, and between dynamics of mobility and immobility. Young people use different types of mobilities for different purposes in response to changing social, economic and cultural circumstances over time and across different places. As children, their practices are shaped by their families' mobilities-in-migration, but in their transition to adulthood, they craft independent movements shaped by racial subjectification, that transcend familial and ethnic pathways. Through movement, they participate in translocal social fields that incorporate both migrants and nonmigrants, including both those who may and may not share their ethnic or racial positions. Their mobilities thus highlight a need for more complex understandings of the worlds in which they live, simultaneously, as children of migrants, racialized subjects and twenty-first-century young people.

These young people's lives capture a dynamic and situated agency as they respond to changing circumstances in the transition to adulthood through mobility. Within the particularities of their movements, there are varying degrees of 'thick' and 'thin' agency, which are experienced fluidly. Their use of global flows of people and cultures to craft new identities and cultures could be conceived as capturing 'thick' agency, the capacity to act within a broad range of options, not necessarily restricted by family relationships or structures of ethnicity and race. Yet in changing contexts, as subjectively experienced, that agency quickly thins. The way in which these young people draw on the global to feel at home in the local produces contradictory effects. Their narratives of mobility do not only

reflect their actual practices but also the way in which technologies and discourses of 'the global' shape their aspirations, precisely, to become part of a mobile elite. Their active attempts to craft their identities as 'mobile' young people mask the conditions in which their mobility has been prompted by necessity and the way it is often thwarted.

There is tension between the aspirations and initiatives of these young people in taking advantage of the benefits of globalization, and the structural constraints that prevent them from being fully part of it. While engagement with the global promises a sense of belonging that cannot be found at a national level, they find themselves positioned on the margins of global processes. They are becoming 'mobile' as they actively respond to their position as racialized children of migrants by drawing on the opportunities afforded by travel, new migratory processes and global flows of culture and technology in the twenty-first century. Yet, their movements remain subject to neoliberal political and economic forces of globalization, in which different forms of mobility highlight – indeed, exacerbate – social stratification in highly unequal ways. The focus in this chapter on children of migrants who participate in specific social and cultural spaces does not allow for generalization of their experiences. Nonetheless, paying attention to new forms of mobility among youth embeds migration research within broader processes of social transformation and prompts an understanding of the lives of young people, even those who are not migrants, as simultaneously shaping and shaped by specific processes of racialization, intersecting transnational migrations and complex global cultural flows.

Notes

[1] The terms 'British Chinese', 'Chinese' and 'Oriental' are often used interchangeably among participants, although sometimes with different emphases in meaning (for further discussion, see Yeh, forthcoming). My use of the term 'British Chinese'/'Oriental' reflects the unresolved, irreducible ways in which the terms are used. The use of 'Oriental' reflects a British context in which 'Asian', until the 2011 Census, referred to those from South

Asia and their children. Here, despite its racist connotations, I follow participants' uses of terms, and use 'Asia' to refer to East and Southeast Asia.

[2] Britain is home to ethnic Chinese from all over the world, but mainly Hong Kong, China, Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore and Taiwan. Thus, the terms 'Chinese' as well as 'British Chinese' and 'British-born Chinese' are highly contested. In the 2001 Census, there was a separate category for 'Chinese' and a subcategory of 'Chinese: Other'. 'Chinese' thus effectively functioned as a racial categorization to include, for example, Filipinos, Japanese and Vietnamese.

[3] The adoption of the term 'Asia' in some participants' narratives to refer to East and Southeast Asia (as opposed to British discourse in which 'Asia' usually refers to South Asia) reflects the growing significance of global discourses in their lives.

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