

**Chinese University Students' Views on Globalization:
Exploring Conceptions of Citizenship**

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Chinese University Students' Views on Globalization: Exploring Conceptions of Citizenship

Introduction

A recent controversy about Starbucks in the Forbidden City calls to mind the growing impact of globalization on Chinese society and culture (Reuters, 2007). The iconic American purveyor of coffee in one of Beijing's ancient palaces provides a multidimensional context for the convergence of East and West. Is it symbolic of an erosion or hybridization of culture in which coffee displaces or joins tea, the traditional Chinese beverage of choice? Does it reflect economic expansion to all spaces across the globe in the endless game of profit seeking and brand domination? Are there political connotations when a perceptibly American enterprise occupies space in the historic home of Chinese authority? What these questions suggest is that globalization is embedded within a particular context and making sense of that context is as important as understanding the phenomenon itself. Whether in economic, political, or cultural terms, there are varying dimensions of globalization that enable analysis from myriad perspectives.

Given the power of globalization and the changing dynamics of societies and nation-states, an important area of concern for us is the concept of citizenship and the ways in which citizens are redefining their rights and responsibilities in light of a multitude of global forces, including the spread of global capitalism. This is particularly the case in China, where increased participation in world affairs has produced rapid economic, political, and cultural changes. The dramatic shifts taking place in China draw our attention in this paper as we explore students' views of globalization and how such views help us to make sense of changing notions of citizenship. More specifically, we focus on students at Southern Teaching University (STU), a

pseudonym for a teaching university in southern China with a strong emphasis on international affairs.

Globalization and Citizenship

A concise definition or conceptualization of globalization is elusive and multiple definitions can be advanced depending upon the context and/or discipline (Burbules & Torres, 2000; Kellner, 2000; Rhoads & Torres, 2006; Suárez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard, 2004). In the contemporary sphere the term seems ubiquitous and is often understood somewhat dichotomously, such as global versus local, homogeneity versus heterogeneity, above versus below, and good versus bad. Globalization also carries a good deal of ideological baggage associated with ideas such as global capitalism, neoliberalism, transnationalism, neo-colonialism, and neo-imperialism (Chomsky, 1999; Harvey, 2003; Said, 1993; Torres & Rhoads, 2006). The reality of globalization, however, may be best understood as one of postmodern ambiguity, wherein complexity and nuance are perhaps its defining characteristics (Kellner, 1997). Although the danger is that this can mire any analysis of globalization in a tangle of relativism, an important point to acknowledge is that globalization is a contested phenomenon of “sustained tensions and difficult choices” (Burbules & Torres, 2000, p. 14).

While bearing in mind the fluidity and ambiguity of globalization, it is nevertheless helpful to offer a few key economic, political, and socio-cultural points. From an economic perspective, globalization is dominated by neoliberal and neo-Fordist beliefs in free trade and free markets in which increased consumption and commodification—including transforming educational activities into products to be exchanged or sold—are desired (Apple, 2006; Brown & Lauder, 1999; Morrow & Torres, 2000; Rhoads & Torres, 2006). The privatization of public

services is a key element of the neoliberal version of globalization and is seen as the “path to development and growth” (Suárez-Orozco & Qin-Hilliard, 2004, p. 10). Additionally, transnational flows, for example in the form of capital and labor, create new opportunities for global economic integration and growth.

In political terms, globalization is concerned with the impact on the nation-state given the increasing economic interdependence across borders. National sovereignty, autonomy, and notions of national citizenship are weakened, and power among states, markets, and civil societies shift such that structures, actors, processes, and values are redefined (Burbules & Torres, 2000; Milani & Laniado, 2006). Non-state actors enjoy greater influence in global affairs and as institutions and policies no longer operate discretely, the political changes “bring in new blood to the definition of democracy itself” (Milani & Laniado, 2006, p. 8). Questions arise concerning who governs and how, and on behalf of whom, especially as citizenship is no longer synonymous with nationality.

From a socio-cultural perspective, attention turns to the dialectical strains between global and local cultural changes. There is a “tension between the ways in which globalization brings forth more standardization and cultural homogeneity, while also bringing more fragmentation through the rise of locally oriented movements” (Burbules & Torres, 2000, p. 14). The ability for cultural homogeneity and cultural heterogeneity to exist concurrently through “integration” and “internationalization” is a manifestation of globalization that moves beyond the economic consequences (Rhoads & Torres, 2006, p.8). Within the cultural context, however, it is important to note that what is meant by “culture” is itself diffusely defined, but its significance as it relates to globalization is to think about “a set of ideas, attributes, and expectations that is constantly changing as people react to changing circumstances” (Watson, 2004, p. 145).

Another important aspect of globalization to consider involves recognition of anti-globalization movements, sometimes also referred to as “globalization from below.” In this form, “oppositional individuals and social movements resist globalization and use its institutions and instruments to further democratization and social justice” (Kellner, 2000, p. 301). These individuals and movements endeavor to defy and weaken the hegemonic neoliberal vision of economic globalization. This anti-globalization perspective, therefore, can be somewhat of a “misnomer,” because while there is resistance to “corporate globalism,” there is not necessarily any opposition “to increased international integration in general” (Rhoads & Torres, 2006, p. 8).

While acknowledging that multiple “globalizations” exist with respect to context and by no means privileging one conception of globalization over another, Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, and Perraton (1999) offered a broad definition of globalization that unites the varying perspectives. According to them, “Globalization can usefully be conceived as a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions, generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction and power.” Changes in the “spatial organization of social relations and transactions” also raise questions about the degree to which conceptions of citizenship may need to be redefined given the growing prominence of globalization.

Traditionally, most scholars have framed the concept of citizenship within the boundaries of the nation-state. In other words, the idea of a citizen was associated with a particular society, which in modern times is pretty much defined by the nation-state. Recently though, globalization has forced a revision of work on citizenship to such an extent that one might reasonably speak of postnational, cosmopolitan, or global citizenship. For example, Soysal (1994) noted that guestworkers, without legal status as citizens, nonetheless are “incorporated

into various aspects of the social and institutional order of their host countries” (p. 6). She explained that, “The participation of guestworkers in the host polity as social, political, and economic actors with a wide range of rights and privileges contests the foundational logic of national citizenship” (p. 6). The solution to this conceptual dilemma for Soysal is a “postnational” definition of citizenship in which one’s rights and responsibilities are rooted not in the nation-state, but instead are tied to one’s personhood: “What were previously defined as national rights become entitlements legitimized on the basis of personhood” (p. 7).

Building upon the work of Soysal, as well as a large body of work on citizenship and education, Szelényi and Rhoads (2007) explored the experiences of international graduate students from Brazil, China, and Italy studying at one university in the United States. Based on extensive interviews with 30 graduate students, they identified three general conceptions of citizenship. One conception of citizenship, described by the authors as “free marketeering,” focused more on rights than responsibilities. Free marketers tended to stress their own opportunities for professional and economic gain in an increasingly global environment. A second concept of citizenship also was globally informed, but focused more on a sense of responsibility to the motherland. This version may be more or less described as “globally informed nationalism.” Finally, a third conception focused on a sense of obligation and belonging that extended beyond the nation-state to a more global view of community and society. This version of citizenship reflects in part Soysal’s (1994) idea of postnational citizenship and may be described as “global citizenship.” Overall, we find the typology developed by Szelényi and Rhoads (2007) helpful as we examine students at STU.

With the preceding perspectives on globalization and citizenship in mind, this paper focuses on the perceptions that undergraduates at one university in southern China have about

globalization and its impact on their academic experiences and prospective professional lives. The findings derive from interviews conducted with 20 undergraduates, many of whom specialize in the study of foreign languages and cultures as well as international affairs. Their responses are used to illuminate some of the transformations occurring in Chinese society, including changes in the conceptualization of citizenship. The intent of the study is to better understand the ways in which the experiences of students at one university in China are shaped by the nation's growing involvement on the global stage. First, it is helpful to understand some of the broader changes at work in Chinese higher education.

The Changing Context of Higher Education in China

Consistent with the central thesis of this paper, we examine changes taking place in Chinese higher education with globalization in mind. The different manifestations of globalization are shaped by the “dynamics of international relations of the past few years, and by implication, influence the role that higher education and reform play in the improvement of people's lives and the societies in which they exist” (Rhoads & Torres, 2006, p. 8). China is no exception and the opening up of the Chinese economy to global markets, orchestrated through reforms championed by Deng Xiaoping that began in 1978 with the Open Door Policy and further facilitated by its 2001 entry into the World Trade Organization, has had notable effects on Chinese higher education.

The ethos of “socialism with Chinese characteristics” embraced in the post-Mao era is exemplified by China's seemingly paradoxical “socialist market economy.” China is opening up to market forces, but it does so under its own terms and with its own agenda. According to Mok, a new social policy paradigm emerged post-1978 that “stressed personal interests, material

incentives, differential rewards, economic efficiency, market distribution, and competition” (1997, p. 262). Defined by “marketization (*shichanghua*), commodification (*shangpinhua*), and socialization (*shehuihua*),” the “social engineering process” permeated throughout the country and led to rapid structural changes (pp. 262-263). Education was not immune to these dramatic shifts, as principles of marketization and privatization extended to the Chinese higher education sector. Yin and White described this sea change as “a process whereby education becomes a commodity provided by competitive suppliers, educational services are priced and access to them depends on consumer calculations and ability to pay” (1994, p. 217).

Included in the national planning that has led to China’s contemporary prominence on the global stage are economic development goals to expand higher education and establish world-class universities (Pan, 2006). Two motives behind these aspirations are “the increasing demand for high-level human resources and technological innovations due to rapid economic growth and globalization, and the need for a developed tertiary education sector to strengthen the international profile of China as a prospering nation” (Levin & Xu, 2006, p. 910). Clearly, China not only recognizes a practical need for upgrading its system of higher education, but is also positioning itself to be a global leader in the higher education realm. Although the concept of a world-class university is ambiguously defined, high-quality research, creativity, and innovation appear to be some of the essential characteristics. Through its Project 211 and Project 985, China has invested substantial monies in a few selected universities, such as Peking and Tsinghua, that exhibit these traits with the conviction that these institutions will attain international prestige and rank alongside Oxford, Yale, and the Sorbonne (Mohrman, 2005).

Concomitant with the quest to build world-class universities is the provision of mass higher education and China is achieving this by shifting from the Maoist “centralist model” to a

policy of decentralization that privileges local authority and control (Mok, 2002). The central Chinese government still exercises “macro control” over higher education policies, but local governments are given the autonomy and flexibility to independently manage educational institutions, while bearing in mind the goal of creating more educational opportunities and responding to societal needs. Within this context has been the proliferation of private (*minban*) higher education institutions to meet market-generated demands. The emergence of these new educational providers has helped transform the state’s role from “sole provider” to “facilitator, enabler and regulator” of education services (Mok, 2002, p. 269).

The dual elite and mass developments in Chinese higher education demonstrate the pressures of globalization. As evidenced by its desire for world-class universities, China has every intention of being a global player in higher education, while also remaining cognizant of its own domestic needs. In the post-Mao era, China has strategically embraced and adapted to global forces, but as its higher education sector continues to expand, changes in provision, financing, and governance also alter the state-society relationship (Levin & Xu, 2006; Mok, 2005). For example, in the process of decentralization and marketization, higher education is no longer “virtually free” as tuition and fees have risen and become the student’s responsibility. Furthermore, Chinese higher education is being driven toward a more socioeconomically stratified system, complete with an institutional “pecking order of prestige and competitiveness that is highly recognized among parents, students, and employers” (Levin & Xu, 2006, p. 921).

Given the broader changes taking place in higher education, an examination of globalization and its growing influence on university students in China seems particularly relevant. The ways in which global pressures are impacting students’ lives, including their perceptions of professional opportunities, both at home and abroad, as well as the ways in which

they may be rethinking personal commitments and obligations are some of the issues that this study seeks to illuminate.

Methodology

Two key research questions served to guide our inquiry: 1) What impact is globalization having on the nature of students' interests and experiences? 2) How are global forces interpreted by students acting on the basis of their own culturally rooted experiences and understandings? The site for our study is Southern Teaching University (STU), a pseudonym for a teaching-oriented university of some 20,000 students located in one of China's southern provinces. STU was selected because many of its students have an international focus and give serious consideration to global matters. STU includes some 1,600 staff members, including nearly 400 full and associate professors and nearly as many lecturers. Additionally, STU employs more than 50 foreign instructors who play a significant role in helping students to develop international and cross-cultural competencies.

Data was collected using qualitative methods, including 20 formal structured interviews, 50 informal interviews, a focus group with six students, and more than 300 hours of participant observation, including observations of campus life and classroom interactions. The sampling of students was purposeful based on the criteria that students have exhibited an international academic focus and/or have given serious thought to an international career. Our sample of 20 students participating in formal interviews included 14 females and 6 males. Their age ranges from 18-23 with an average age of 20.3. Their majors include Chinese, Japanese, Thai, English (5), English for business (2), English for international finance, business administration (2), international business, accounting, computer science (4), and public policy and administration.

In terms of class year, the following breakdown applies: 4 first-year, 5 second-year, 7 third-year, and 4 fourth-year.

Although a range of data collection strategies were used, this paper reports mostly on findings deriving from the formal structured interviews. Interview transcripts were coded utilizing both deductive and inductive analysis. Deductive analysis involved processes of thematic coding of transcripts based on the key research questions and related concerns. Inductive analysis was used to identify unanticipated themes, deriving largely from reading and re-reading the data. Our analysis and subsequent findings provide insight into globalization's influence on university students, although they represent the views of 20 students at only one university in China and therefore may not be generalizable. Nonetheless, we see these findings as a starting point for further exploration of the impact of globalization on the lives of university students in China and elsewhere.

Findings

We organize our findings into the following four categories: globalization conceptualized, globally informed ambitions, Western influences, and international engagement. Findings from these categories are then used to discuss the general impact of globalization on students and what it reveals about their notions of citizenship.

Globalization Conceptualized. An understanding that there are both advantages and disadvantages to globalization was a central determinant of students' conceptions of globalization. Many students used metaphors in describing globalization, saying things such as "a coin has two sides" or "globalization is a double-edged sword" to capture the multifaceted nature of the complex phenomenon. Also noting that there are positive and negative

implications of globalization, Deng Jia,¹ a 20-year old English major, stated, “I think it means we will sooner or later face a knowledge, technology, and information explosion because the border among nations can no longer impede them. Obviously, we will have more chances and better jobs in the future, but the pressure we face will also be greater because we will have to compete with the foreigners as well as the Chinese. It is a give-and-take dilemma...success and failure are both possible.”

Like Deng Jia, many students talked about the challenges and opportunities that globalization brings on a personal level, but a few students also linked emerging opportunities to governmental responsibilities. Chang Huiling, a 22-year old business English major, noted, “Global markets offer greater opportunity for people to tap into more and larger markets around the world. It means that they can have access to more capital flows, technology, cheaper imports, and larger export markets. But markets do not necessarily ensure that the benefits are shared by all. Countries must be prepared to embrace the policies needed, and in the case of the poorest countries, they may need the support of the international community. We should be more competitive and well-prepared to handle the threats and grasp the opportunities.” Although students such as Chang Huiling are cognizant of the pros and cons of globalization, most embrace its “inevitability” and believe they are already living in the midst of a global age.

In terms of the expansion of social, political, and economic activities across borders, Deng Jia noted, “The world is joining together and different countries will rely more on each other. Take the EU [European Union] for example. It is a successful case of different countries enhancing their overall power by relying on each other. The EU is just a beginning. More and more countries in the world will join together in order to make full use of global resources.” Granted this is a sugar-coated view of nation-state alliances, Deng Jia’s comments nonetheless

suggest that students see globalization within a context of thinning national boundaries.

Regarding the intensification of interconnectedness in flows of trade, investment, migration, and culture, Lin Fang, a 20-year old international business major, offered the following sentiments: “More foreigners are moving into China and more Chinese are moving out of China, thus the world population is on the way to integrating. This trend is such a complicated problem and there are both advantages and disadvantages. Since China is developing at such an unbelievable speed, more opportunities appear. On the one hand, China has the biggest advantage of a cheap labor force because of the huge population. On the other hand, more Chinese are pursuing higher education today so there are a great many qualified people available here in China. However, those people who are not content with the job prospects in China will find work abroad. This could benefit China with foreign funds flowing inside, but could also be risky since more human resources are flowing out.” Students such as Lin Fang recognize that the flows associated with globalization are two-way and therefore express a certain level of caution and protectionism in their responses. In general, students readily acknowledged the growing magnitude of globalization, but they did so with an awareness of the potential harm to their country, some expressing a sense of guardianship of their own culture.

Finally, the speeding-up of global processes and interactions is an aspect of globalization appearing throughout the students’ responses. From the choice of words and phrases such as “convenience,” “smaller world,” and “more frequent communications” to “accelerations in trade,” “quicker development,” and “faster information and technology exchange,” speed and immediacy are consistently revealed in the ways in which students conceptualize globalization. Zhou Bin, a 20-year old English major, however, expressed a degree of dismay and discomfort

with the level of speed and immediacy of a global world, especially in terms of telecommunications: “It’s getting easier to communicate with others, but sometimes we will be depressed by the excessive information. Just imagine how down you will be when you open your mailbox and find 200 emails unread! So globalization provides us with convenience, while also causing inconveniences as people can find you wherever you hide.”

Globally Informed Ambitions. One of the most obvious influences of globalization on STU students concerns their career aspirations. It is important to note that the students participating in this study were purposefully selected because of their international orientations, so it is not surprising that their ambitions would be informed by knowledge of global processes. Nevertheless, some interesting patterns emerged from the interviews, including widespread mercenary objectives. For some students, they selected their majors expressly because there would be a “profitable” market for their talents after graduation. Desires for great financial gain permeated these students’ aims, which included “earning as much money as possible,” “being well-paid,” and having a “fairly high salary.” Unsure of what his career would be, Chao Huabiao, a 21-year old Thai major, merely hoped to make a decent living: “To me, career is too large a word. I am from a backward area, the countryside, and although I always tell myself that no matter what I do, I am the best, I know it is impossible as I lag thousands of miles behind those from the big cities. I am quite sure I won’t go back to my hometown after graduation. The only dream I now have is to find a job with a comparatively good income in the big city.” What is interesting about this student’s response is the social commentary embedded within it. He perceives himself as coming from a “backward area” signifying the stratification between rural and urban life in China. While other students hope to earn a lot of money so they can realize their dreams of “traveling around the world,” for Chao Huabiao, a good income is his “dream”

and means to social mobility.

Another consistent theme revealed by the students concerns their entrepreneurial spirit. Many students expressed a desire to be self-employed and/or own their own businesses. This may reflect a departure from the Mao-era ethos of collectivism toward a more globally oriented individualism. According to Chang Huiling, “I think the environment here in China is now very favorable to be self-employed as the competition is becoming more fair and open after entering the WTO. Moreover, I don’t want to be exploited by the boss and I don’t want to be under someone else’s control. However, when I graduate I will first be an employee at a company to gain experience, but later I will run my own business. I know it will be hard, but I prefer facing that challenge rather than being someone else’s salaried employee.” Lin Fang echoed the preceding sentiment: “I want to have my own firm in the future. Only by working in my own firm can I use my management knowledge fully and freely. If I am employed, I have to be subject to my superiors and that will confine me a lot.” Hu Wei, a 20-year old computer science major, had similar aspirations: “My career goal is to own my own website and listed company. It is a wild dream, but I think the global environment is very favorable for us to have our own companies, especially if we possess skills in the area of advanced technology.” More than entrepreneurialism, these three students, all young women, exhibit a sense of empowerment and ambition that previous generations of women might not even dare to consider.

A few other students also had grand ideas about their careers, but articulated them in the context of changing times that unveiled more than the possibility for monetary gain. Yang Hui, a 23-year old business English major, stated, “I want to become a great businessman. A great businessman should be knowledgeable as we are now in an information era. Several decades ago, there were many businessmen who were illiterate in China and these people are no longer

suitable for the new economy. They will be washed out by fierce competition. More importantly, a great businessman should have business ethics and social responsibility, which are of great essence in the age of globalization.” Li Ming, a 21-year old accounting major, also spoke about ethics, albeit somewhat humorously: “I want to be a successful accountant and I promise I will never cook the books.” Whether in jest or not, these two students’ goals acknowledge a sense of greater accountability and responsibility. This is also evident in a response from Chen Li, a 21-year old public policy and administration major: “I want to be a civil servant. I am interested in knowing more about the relationship between government and society, government and law, and the function of government in mainland China and Hong Kong; people need to have a better understanding of the law and their rights. Moreover, I make an effort to solve problems by considering the perspectives of both sides.”

Western Influences. One of the most practical manifestations of the Western influence of globalization on these students’ lives is their near unanimous desire to master the English language, partly as a means of furthering their own professional success. Tsai Yun, a 20-year old business administration major, explained, “In order to get better jobs and have greater opportunities, I must learn English. If my English is good enough, then I’ll have the opportunity to study abroad. In that case, my future choices will be greatly enhanced. When I hunt for a job, I will have more choices.” Hu Wei made a similar point: “English is becoming more and more important for people’s everyday lives and their work. I think no matter how well you know English, you can always do better. There’s an old Chinese saying, ‘if you know yourself well and your enemy well, you can win.’ So if you know yourself well and know the other’s language well, then you can always get ahead of the competition.”

Besides providing a competitive edge and more options for better jobs, the students also

explained that English has become the global language and thus is a necessary tool for adapting to globalization. Even a student majoring in Japanese language, 21-year old Tang Qian, affirmed this point: “English is an international language. It’s used almost all over the world, especially in modern times. One who doesn’t know English can be considered illiterate.” Lin Fang concurred about its widespread use: “English is extremely important. It is the key for me to open my future door. If you know English, you can communicate with almost everyone in any country.”

While English is an obvious linguistic impact of globalization, students also noted the influence of Western culture. The vast majority of students spoke in glowing terms about the positive and exciting ways in which Chinese culture was being transformed by Western norms, values, and beliefs. They seemed particularly enamored with the influence of popular culture, including well-known films, television shows, and the stars who act in them. Others highlighted influences from the mundane to daily habits of dress. For example, Chao Huabiao noted, “Chinese people like to copy what the outside world does. Take Valentine’s Day. We Chinese didn’t have such a day before, but now it is very popular and even middle-aged couples are fond of celebrating it.” Pang Mingzhi, a 19-year old English for international finance major, conflating corporate fast-food businesses with culture, claimed, “We cannot deny that McDonald’s and KFC [Kentucky Fried Chicken] are now a part of our lives. Foreign countries influence our economy. Their culture influences ours.” And Lin Fang pointed out the visible change in dress brought about by globalization: “We Chinese no longer dress in our traditional costumes, except for some special occasions. Instead, we put on t-shirts and jeans like the foreigners and such casual wear are no longer the mark of a certain country.”

Only a couple of students, such as 21-year old accounting major Li Ming, warned of the negative cultural influences that come with globalization: “Globalization has brought us better

goods and services which is a favorable trend, but at the same time our traditional culture is now facing a great challenge by this trend of global integration. We must on the one hand, protect our traditional culture, but on the other hand, we must embrace globalization. We have to find balance in this issue or our national characteristics will diminish.” Similarly, 20-year old computer science major Liang Qi noted some of the negative aspects of globalization: “China has changed a lot and gradually opened its gate to the world. China’s economy now heavily relies on the flow of capital, technology, and people from the outside world. China cannot achieve modernization without opening up to the outside world. However, in this process the outside world, especially the Western world, has plundered a lot from China, such as resources and cheap labor. China is craving to adjust itself to international standards, but I worry that some of our traditional essence will get lost in this overheating trend.”

As mentioned earlier, STU employs more than 50 foreign experts/lecturers. Given that the students also interact with these experts, who are primarily from Western countries such as Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, the students also noted the ways that these teachers have influenced their academic lives. According to Li Ming, “What I learned from them is self-confidence. Through my observations, they have a ‘Believe yourself, never-give up’ spirit, which makes them very open-minded and outgoing. On the contrary, we Chinese value moderate spirit, which makes us conservative.” Tsai Yun had a similar experience: “I have found out that foreign teachers have a more open way of teaching. They teach students that studies need to be active rather than passive.” Huang Hailan, a 22-year old computer science major, noted this as well and believed that the outspoken nature of foreign teachers should be embraced: “Their character is quite different from Chinese people. It seems that they’re more active, extroverted, and never afraid to speak out about their ideas. I think this is worth learning

because you can make people understand you more clearly. The Chinese are afraid of losing face, thus on most occasions, they will stay silent, but chances slip away when you don't speak out." These types of educational experiences have opened up students at STU to more Western "guide-on-the-side" pedagogical styles to be contrasted with more traditional Chinese "sage-on-the-stage" ways of teaching. The students appear to view such changes quite positively.

International Engagement. A final theme that emerged through our interviews with STU students was an interest in international engagement connected to a sense of national pride and promotion of China as a main player in the global arena. In terms of international issues, most students indicated they were concerned about China's relations with Japan, Taiwan, and the United States. Some offered political and geo-political reasons, while others based it on their professional interests. Chen Li engaged the former: "I am interested in US-Japan-China relations and their influences on the whole world. It is due to my realization of the importance of China in the world market and that the relationship among China, US, and Japan involves not only economic cooperation, but also is related to political, historical, and geographical issues." On the other hand, Chang Huiling referenced professional interests: "The relationships between China, Japan, and Taiwan concern me. I think the reason why I care about Japan and Taiwan so much goes beyond my patriotism. I will do business targeted mainly in these countries so I should pay attention to the policies toward them." One student, Pang Mingzhi, expressed interest in environmental issues, but not political ones: "I'm quite concerned about environmental problems like global warming and acid rain. I think development is at the sacrifice of the environment. We tend to feel content at cheering on economic achievement, but ignore the environmental loss. It will have a lifelong negative impact on our offspring." Aside from Pang Mingzhi, no other student mentioned environmental concerns.

For several students, China's engagement on the world stage included changes within the country as well as the country's external impact. To them, the most notable domestic changes related to globalization included that of political ideology. Chen Li explained: "Through investment and other support from the outside world, China's economy will become more prosperous and people's living conditions will improve. Meanwhile, China will be more integrated into the global system, which has great implications for its cooperative relationship with other countries. With China integrating more into the world, ideology such as freedom and democracy will be brought in too and this will have great implications for China's politics." Chen Shunwen, a 19-year old English major, agreed that there have been ideological shifts: "One of the most impressive points for me is the change of ideology. A lot of new ideas, which were forbidden 20 years ago, are now widely accepted by the public. People now show more understanding about different ideological trends. The transparency of society is far greater now. The way we lead our lives, the way we judge things, even the hot issue about 'management buyout' in China reflects certain influence of globalization on Chinese enterprises."

Although students asserted that China was experiencing visible changes at home, they were also quick to point out that influence flows both ways and China has had an impact worldwide as well. According to Lin Yuye, an 18-year old Chinese major, "China today is more open and more developed with the influence of the world. We know fully the importance of being compatible with international standards and we get benefits from it. At the same time, China is changing the outside world, too. Our delicate and long history has drawn more and more attention all around the globe." Shen Baoyin, a 20-year old business administration major, likewise emphasized China's capacity to hold its own on the global stage: "China has become the focus of the world and as Chinese people we have every reason to make our own contribution

to build a stronger and better country and show our ability and talents to the world that we are capable of doing so.” On the issue of international engagement, what these students’ comments suggest is that China’s introduction to the world stage began with opening its doors and welcoming the world, but has now shifted to China making an entrance and assuming a leadership position. One student said it best: “We have full confidence in the future of our country.”

Discussion

An interesting approach to analyzing our findings is to think about them within the context of changing notions of citizenship. That is, given these students’ perceptions about globalization and its impact on their experiences and prospective professional lives, what implications are there for understanding citizenship, or even global citizenship? Here, we rely heavily on the work of Szelényi and Rhoads (2007) and their research on international graduate students from China, Brazil, and Italy studying in the United States. Given that Szelényi and Rhoads focused on the increasing role of globalization in shaping notions of citizenship, their work seems most appropriate as an analytic guide for the present study. And as noted previously, a key finding of their study focused on three general patterns to the conceptualization of citizenship that, broadly speaking, may be understood as globally informed nationalism, global citizenship, and free marketeering.

Several STU students saw a solid foundation in global education and international affairs as a starting point from which they could better serve their home country. These students’ comments tended to reveal a conception of citizenship similar to globally informed nationalism. For example, one student discussed how globalization is making it possible to build a “stronger

and better” China. Another spoke of the confidence he had about China successfully competing in the global arena. A third spoke of the environment and a concern about future generations of Chinese citizens. And still others discussed a general desire to advance their career interests in a manner that benefited the homeland.

In contrast to globally informed nationalism, a group of students seemed disinterested in applying their knowledge of globalization in service to the “motherland” and instead were more concerned with the world as a collective system. These students hinted at a conception of citizenship akin to forms of global citizenship described by Szelényi and Rhoads (2007). For example, several students spoke of the importance of building peaceful relations among key countries such as China, Japan, and the United States. Other students expressed much excitement and satisfaction that Chinese society increasingly was taking on characteristics of a global society with influences from the West particularly salient.

Several of the students from STU exhibited “free marketeering” tendencies. These students seemed to place a concern for their own career advancement over global or national issues. They tended to see knowledge of globalization and international affairs as a foundation for their own economic advantage in a manner consistent with the individualistic and entrepreneurial spirit so common in the West. For example, several students spoke of China’s global engagement with much enthusiasm because it was opening up career and financial opportunities for them all over the world. A few of these students were not shy about their dreams of making as much money as possible and saw little reason to remain in China after graduation. Indeed, their international and global orientations were for the express purpose of advancing their own careers.

In addition to the three conceptions of citizenship noted in the work of Szelényi and

Rhoads (2007), and highlighted thus far in this section, a fourth possibility was suggested by one student in particular. This student alluded to a notion of citizenship in which one is oriented toward personal economic gain, grounded in global awareness and knowledge of the international realm, but focused on using one's talents within the homeland. This version of citizenship has similarities to the globe-trotting interests of free marketeers in that individuals acting on both forms of citizenship seek personal gain and have extensive knowledge of the global realm, but while free marketers seek their opportunities abroad, more *locally oriented* free marketeers prefer to use their global knowledge within the context of their home country. Thus, our study suggests somewhat of a revision of the Széleányi and Rhoads framework, distinguishing two forms of free marketeering: global free marketeering and local free marketeering. Both types certainly are informed by globalization and the growing importance of individualism and the free market, but one is more nomadic in nature, moving across national borders whenever necessary, while the other is more confined to a particular national context or homeland.

Conclusion

The findings from this study pose some interesting possibilities, but we must be mindful of the fact that the data derive from interviews with students at only one university in China. Future research might include comparative case studies to determine if similar themes emerge among students at other universities located in different regions of China. Additionally, the students in this study were selected because of their international orientation and in a very real sense they have already bought into the idea of globalization. Indeed, the students we interviewed at STU are already actively engaged in exploring their role in an increasingly global environment. But how is globalization understood by students who are less conscious of

international affairs and global connections? What kinds of changes do they perceive taking place in China and how would their responses differ? What conceptions of citizenship might other students offer? These are important questions for future studies of globalization and its impact on Chinese students and their educational experiences. Such studies seem increasingly important as China becomes ever more connected to the rest of the world and shifts from global prominence to global dominance. A deeper understanding of students' perspectives on the implications of globalization will no doubt lead to important insights about the ways in which changes in China are influencing students academically and professionally.

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¹ All names for students used in this paper are pseudonyms.